XVIII week of the Italian language

The L3S Research Center of the University of Hannover, in collaboration with the Italian Consulate, organizes the XVIII edition of the week of the Italian language which focuses on the theme "The Italian language and the network, the networks for the Italian language".

The topic will deepen the links and influences existing between the Italian language, the world of the Internet, the information technologies and social communication including social platforms.

Different types of presentations (scientific talks and stage performances) will be organized during the third week of October from the 15th to the 22nd in Hannover, Hildesheim and Osnabrück.

Scientific talks on Thursday 18. October at the L3S Research Center will be held in English.

We start at 16.00 with


Please find the abstracts reported below.

The abstract of the other contributions are available on the website of the Deutsche Italienische Kulturgesellschaft (DIK) at https://dik-giornale.de/sli2018_hannover/

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Prof. Bernardo Magnini (FBK Trento)
"Language Technologies for Italian in the Time of the Internet"
18 October 2018, 16:15
Multimedia Room, 15th Floor, L3S

Language Technologies work “over our shoulders”, allowing us to retrieve and to exchange multilingual content on the web, using a variety of increasingly sophisticated services. The impact of these tools is so pervasive that the “digital” presence of a language in Internet-based applications nowadays plays a crucial role in preserving the cultural vitality of that language.

In recent years, thanks to the progress of Artificial Intelligence (for instance, through the use of neural networks), significant improvements have been achieved in areas such as speech recognition, machine translation and person-machine dialogue systems. Despite the evident progress, the development of competitive technologies for the Italian language must be squared with the continuous changes to which Internet application have accustomed us. Due to the high variety and large amount of digital content, technologies operating on digital content need to be constantly updated: the writing style used in social networks is very different from that of a newspaper article, speech in a video differs from telephonic speech, and when interacting with a chatbot, a user conforms to the style typical of messaging platforms like Whatsapp.

Some initiatives, for instance the Evalita evaluation campaign, this year in its sixth edition, are crucial to help us understand where we are with respect to other
languages, and which scientific and technological challenges for the Italian language are still in front of us.

Play helps children grow. The so-called “serious” games have other goals besides entertainment; serious games can have educational, therapeutic or other ‘serious’ goals. Over the years, serious games have been designed and used to stimulate reading comprehension, also in Italian. The FP7 TERENCE project, for example, has created a series of “serious” games that ask kids to reason with what they read and enable them to improve their skills of analysis and in-depth understanding of the text. Lately, research has also considered “gamification” as an extension of the concept of “serious game”. Gamifying means changing a tool, such as an educational tool, and giving it characteristics typical of games, so as to reach other goals than pure entertainment. More recently, gamified products for children are “head-up”, or screenless. Anything, like a magic box for turn taking in conversation, are gamified so as to train children to conversation norms or introduce them to cultural habits. This talk will introduce the audience to the basics of gamification and latest research in the area of head-up games for children, with case studies and applications in the Italian context.

The project Storytelling in English L2 for young learners and adolescents in informal contexts of acquisition is the result of the partnership between the University of Udine and the Municipal Library V. Joppi of Udine. The project focuses on acquisition/learning of English L2 through narrative and informal modalities based on the use of language in significant contexts for children and adolescents in the interaction with expert adults and/or other children. The need to share materials, experiences and resources connected to the project gave rise to the Storytelling group, within the online community YELL. It is a virtual space that fosters the creation of a network between library operators, educators, parents, teachers and students of training courses for teachers who can exchange ideas, information and proposals based on children’s language learning through narration and storytelling.