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Tips to make it easier to locate an online course

How to make an online course not only understandable but also culturally suitable for a foreign audience?

As we saw in the article " **Multilingual online courses: the importance of localisation**", localising an online course is a complex but fundamental process to make your course suitable for an international audience.

Locating an online course means not only translating it, but also adapting all those elements that could be influenced by the culture of reference (images, formatting, elements of the user experience, symbols, colours, etc.).

Considering the amount of materials to analyse, in this article we will provide you with some tricks to keep in mind to facilitate the localization of an online course.

Identify target audiences

Ideally you should have a clear list of the countries where the course will be used from the design phase, so that you can plan the **multilingual content** from the beginning. This, in fact, will guide the course author to exclude a priori all those contents that have clear cultural references (such as idiomatic expressions, puns and all those elements that might be difficult to adapt in other languages).

Playing in advance reduces the need to modify or replace educational content at a later stage, saving a significant amount of time and resources.

Create texts that are easy to translate

Using short, **simple sentences** will facilitate translation and adaptation into another language. In this case, it will also be essential to avoid jargon, idiomatic expressions and local references (cultural, political or social), because they will lose their meaning once translated and make the localisation process more complex.

In addition, it is better not to insert **text on images**, as text extraction is an additional work that increases translation time and costs.

Consider the space occupied by the text

Not all languages are the same, which means that the translated text ends up being longer or shorter than the original. The difference may not seem significant, but depending on the language, the localised text may expand or contract by up to 50%. For example, when translating from English to German, the text expands on average by 10 to 30%.

This becomes a challenge when text has to be inserted into a video, transformed into a voice-over or incorporated into slides or other graphical elements.

If it is mainly written text, therefore, be aware of the space occupied by the text and the languages into which the course will be translated, so as to leave enough space for text content and avoid formatting problems with right-to-left written languages such as Arabic. Also consider that it may be necessary to retouch backgrounds and images to adapt them to the different text encumbrance.

If it's video or audio tracks, however, provide extra footage or slides so that scenes can be expanded to fit the longer script.

Pay attention to non-verbal communication

Elements such as **colours, symbols and images** can take on different connotations depending on the culture of reference.

So make sure that each element is appropriately modified to suit the country of destination.

And, if you intend to use the same graphic elements for all translated versions, use only neutral elements so that anyone can understand your content the way you understand it.

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