Possibilities for University Cooperation: the Estonian Example

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Wikimania 2015
What we have:

People: 1–2
Money: –
So it's a small project?

well...
In Estonian Wikipedia:

* since 2009
* 2000 articles (1/70)
* 22 M characters of text
In Võro Wikipedia:

* since 2007
* ca 70 articles (1/80)
What else?

Special course:
"About Free Culture on the Example of Wikipedia"

Image donations
Ca 300 so far
(and even more waiting to be uploaded)
So, this talk is about...

... how to get the best out of what you have.
Some background: what does it mean to write in Estonian?
Estonian language

* 2000+ years old
* highly complex
* not of Indo-European origin
* key element of Estonian culture
* spoken only by 1.2 M
Estonian language

* language of higher education for ~100 years
* highly advanced language technology
Why all that?

What does it mean for a language to survive and prosper in the age of information and globalization?

What if there are only 1 M speakers?
Learning no 1

Target the most important.

ex. What we offer is a way to preserve Estonian as a language of science.
That is...

we take one of the most important questions in Estonian higher education and provide a simple solution.
Who do we work with?

University of Tartu: the biggest and highest-ranked university in Estonia.
Setting the perspective

Monterrey Institute of Technology in Mexico is highly successful in its work with Wikipedia.
Setting the perspective

Our cooperation with the UT is about the same size.
Remark

It's a growing norm in Estonian universities that all the materials are made freely available.
Results for Estonian Wikipedia
Case studies

Examples on what has been done.
1) Our biggest course.
2) Our most unique course.

+ some bonus tracks
„Väljendusõpetus“

„Estonian Composition and Conversation“
Faculty of Science and Technology

mandatory to all 3rd year BSc students
200–270 students per year

https://et.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vikipeedia:V%C3%A4ljendus%C3%B5petus
It is helping to cover the empty fields in natural sciences in Estonian Wikipedia. By doing so it supports the use of Estonian language in the field of natural sciences. Students work is benefiting the society!
Course stats.

Wiki exercise has been held 4 times
900 articles (ca 86% new)
min of 8000 ch. of pure text per art.
that results on an average of 12kb art.
0.86 art. / 1 reg. student
Stats.

Avg. article receives 100 views per month.

That is well above the general average.

[students work on notable topics]

Thus, by now articles have been viewed over 2.5 M times!
Stats.

"Väljendusõpetus"

- Articles
- Students per reviewer

Ivo Kruusamägi | 2015
How is it done?

It's 1 out of 3 exercises.
The goal is simple: practice writing.

Students write about something related to their research.
How is it done?

„Our side“
* Reviewers (5 last year)
* Coordinator (1)
Reviewers

Nonwikipedians (mainly uni. students)
Give feedback on articles created into user subpages.
Ca 40 students per reviewer.
Paid job: covered by university.
Coordinator

Prepares materials, wiki and reviewers.
Gives lecture about Wikipedia / exercise.
Monitors activity and solves problems.
Answers general questions.
Deals with problematic students.
Goes through created articles.
Reporting.
Some learnings

Big courses are good
- easy to focus
- high reach
- influential

...but they DO NEED a wellmade system.
Special course about Wikipedia

„About Free Culture on the Example of Wikipedia“ (3 ECTS)

Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science

https://courses.cs.ut.ee/2014/Vikipeedia/spring/Main/HomePage

held 3 x
The course gives an overview about the Wikipedia and its interactions with the society.

Some of the best specialists in country step up as lecturers for this course.
Academic year of 2012/13: the course got an average feedback of 4.83 (out of 5).

In addition to theoretical lectures and seminars there is an important part for the practical work and home exercises.
Curriculum example (spring 2014)

Lectures:
2: Estonian Wikipedia
3: Free culture in Estonia
4: Crowdsourcing in Estonia
5: Copyright law
6: Free software
7: Building encyclopedias
8: Science journalism
Curriculum example (spring 2014)

9: Wikipedia and media
10: Open Science
11: Small languages in the web
12: Informative content of photos
13: Citizens role on creating, holding and developing free society
14: Information society

+ 4 sessions of practical work
+ 2 seminars (Wikipedia in Education, Future)
Well received by students and university, but...

how to get the students to take this course:
- „I know everything about Wikipedia“
- non-mandatory subject
- not an easy subject to pass
Conclusion

There is a lot to talk about Wikipedia.

Interactions with WP are interesting.

We need more academic research on topic.
What else can be done?

Universities have a lot of media content. Why not get that into Commons?
European Science Photo Competition

* November 2015

* Based on the Estonian Science Photo Competition held in Wikipedia

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:European_Science_Photo_Competition_2015
Future plans – WikiComment

better system for feedback

Naatriumsulfaat

Naatriumsulfaat on väevilhappe naatriumisool. See esineb nii veevaba formina (Na₂SO₄) kui ka kristallhüdraatdena (Na₂SO₄·7H₂O ja Na₂SO₄·10H₂O).

Veevaba naatriumsulfaat on kibeda maiusega valge kristalne pulber. pH on neutraalne. Naatriumsulfaadi dekahüdraadi leibud loodusliku mineraalina (sai mirabilis) ja puhastatud kujul on see tuntud nimetusega glaubrisool (Johann Rudolf Glauben järgi), mida on kasutatud meditsiinis lahtistina.


2 Na⁺

Koelmine välimus

| Na₂SO₄ (veevaba) |
| Na₂SO₄·10H₂O (dekahüdraat) |

Molaarmass

| 142,04 g/mol (veevaba) |
| 322,20 g/mol (dekahüdraat) |

Tihedus

| 2,664 g/cm³ (veevaba) |
| 1,464 g/cm³ (dekahüdraat) |

Lahustuvus vee

| 4,76 g/100 g (0 °C), 42,7 (100 °C) |
More software development
Future plans

Adding some resources to this.

One volunteer can't handle over 400 students per year.

Better feedback.
Future plans

Diversifying the Wikipedia experience.

More emphasis on teamwork.

Multimedia creation by students.
Summary

Address the right questions.
No course is too big (or small).
Find additional ways to cooperate.
Constantly keep on developing.
Education cooperation could help to produce the content on truly important topics.

Not every article that gets a lot of views is significant, but the ones that are, are really important.
Summary

You don't need much to do big things.

Just find a way that works in your country.
Summary

Wikipedia is an educational project.

Let's go out there and make it part of the education system!
Questions?