or: why primary disambiguation is not the solution

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**Introduction**

“Disambiguation in Wikipedia is the process of resolving conflicts in article titles that occur when a single term can be associated with more than one topic, making that term likely to be the natural title for more than one article.”

Several methods of disambiguation exist on Wikipedia. All of them have their advantages and disadvantages. This poster introduces the two main systems in use, and discusses two alternatives: one handled with the current software, one with a future software change.

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**Normal Disambiguation**

- **Advantages:**
  - Easy to maintain: all links to [Amsterdam] are wrong.
  - A ‘lazy link’ links to a disambiguation page so a reader never gets to the wrong page first.

- **Disadvantages:**
  - Even the primary topic has an ‘ugly’ subtitle in brackets

**Primary Disambiguation**

- **Advantages:**
  - Most ‘lazy links’ link to the right page.
  - The primary topic has no subtitle

- **Disadvantages:**
  - Impossible to maintain: almost all links to [Amsterdam] are correct. The incorrect links are -literally- a needle in a haystack.
  - Lazy links can lead to the primary topic incorrectly

**Redirect Primary Disambiguation**

- **Advantages:**
  - Easy to maintain: all links to [Amsterdam] are wrong.
  - Most ‘lazy links’ are correct, thanks to the redirect.
  - The primary topic has no subtitle

- **Disadvantages:**
  - A redirect notice is shown when clicking a link on [cities]

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**Additional Solutions**

The redirect notice of the redirect solution can be hidden by using javascript or related techniques.

Another solution would be to extend the MediaWiki parser. By creating a way of ‘tagging’ separate links, it is possible to find the unchecked (untagged) links, without searching through all checked links: the big haystack.

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**Conclusion**

It is possible to enhance the primary disambiguation in order to maintain the list of links. This has its own disadvantage, which can be handled with display techniques.

For a more long term solution, extending the parser is desirable, as tags could add other options in the future

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**Sources**

- Disambig-dark.svg (Stephan Baum, GFDL)
- VOC_Amsterdam.jpg (User:Deepak, GFDL/CC-BY-SA)
- Flag_of_Amsterdam.svg, Redirect_arrow_without_text.svg (PD)

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