Section Translation Survey Feedback

Learning from the experiences of editors who used Section Translation during a Bengali Wikipedia article quality improvement competition in 2022.

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Introduction

During March 2022, 1049 Wikipedia article sections were translated into Bengali. Previously, the highest number of monthly translations had been 84.

On Bengali Wikipedia, a campaign running from February to March 2022 resulted in a significant number of mobile translations using Section Translation.[1] Given this sudden influx of adopters of the tool (as well as overall use), the goal of this project was to collect feedback from the editors who used Section Translation as part of this campaign. In addition, we collected feedback from some of the editors tasked with reviewing the translations from this campaign.

The sudden influx of organic Section Translation use provided a unique opportunity to learn if we could gather meaningful product feedback by timing a survey with the close of a campaign or competition.

Section Translation has become available on an increasing number of wikis over the last year. While the Language Team has conducted usability testing to learn more about the experiences of early adopters, aside from two studies,[2] most user feedback on the

tool continues to come through talk page messages and direct contact from active editors. Given the sudden influx of Section Translation activity, the team viewed this as a moment of opportunity to increase the number of editors from whom we are receiving feedback, including newcomers. It was also a unique opportunity to try and learn from the editors who reviewed translated sections as part of the competition.

Goals and approach

The goal of this project was to collect feedback via a survey from participants of the Bengali Wikipedia Article Quality Improvement Competition 2022.

The goal of the competition (organized independently of the Language Team) was to improve the quality of Bengali Wikipedia by completing short and/or incomplete, but important articles.

We aimed to collect feedback around the following topics:

- General usability - What are user preferences, pain points, and barriers to use?
- Discoverability - How do users discover Section Translation and learn to use it?
- Perceptions of machine translation outputs incorporated in Section Translation.

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[1] Although translation was discussed as one method of contribution by organizers, Section Translation specifically was not promoted as part of this campaign.

[2] Section Translation Usability Testing (Bengali Wikipedia), Section Translation Post-Improvements Testing (Thai Wikipedia)

- Section Translation value proposition and perceptions, especially as it relates to its use as a tool to improve wiki content.

The survey was developed, translated to Bengali, and distributed to potential respondents identified through the competition project page. With assistance from the Language Team's community relations specialist, we recruited both editors and reviewers for the competition.
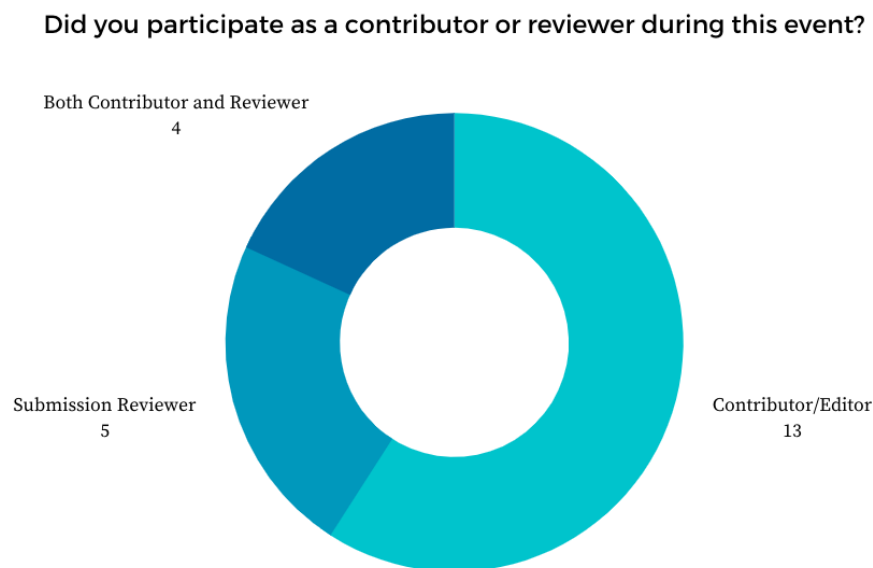
Respondents

In total we received 25 responses (20 complete and 5 partial). All respondents were active Bengali Wikipedia contributors.

As shown in *Figure 1,* the majority of respondents participated in the event as editors/contributors. However, we also received responses from submission reviewers, and a small number of individuals who participated both as editors and reviewers.

Although we received a fairly high response rate of approximately 70%, there were a limited number of editors who had at least one approved edit as part of the campaign. Specifically, as of 16 May, there were 26 editors with approved edits, from a total of over 1k accounts registered for the event. Given the small number of event participants with approved edits, we also attempted to reach those
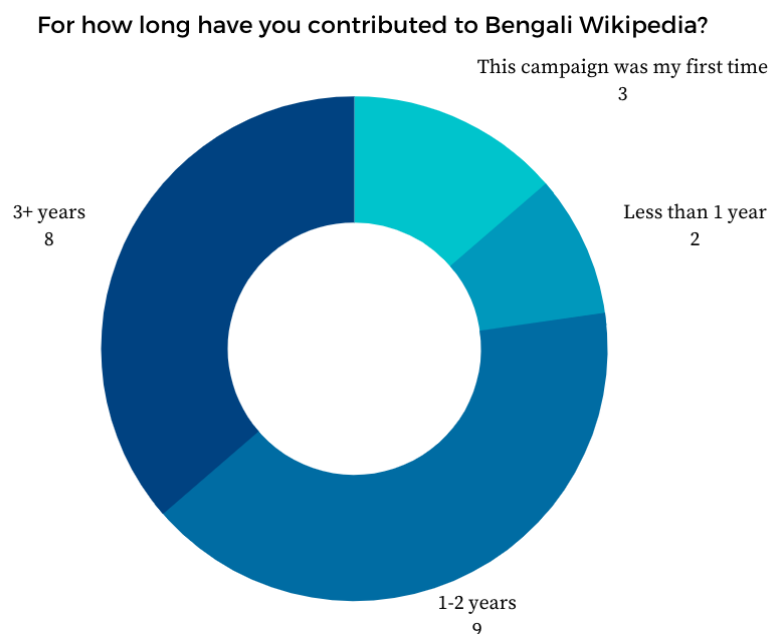
who participated but did not have approved edits from what we could observe.

Fig 1. **Respondents by event participation type**

Did you participate as a contributor or reviewer during this event?

Both Contributor and Reviewer
4

Submission Reviewer
5

Contributor/Editor
13

As for experience contributing to Bengali Wikipedia, the majority of respondents had at least one year experience contributing to this language edition of Wikipedia. A smaller number reported less than one year of experience. A breakdown of editing experience is shown in *Figure 2.*

Fig 2. **Respondents by experience contributing to Bengali Wikipedia**

For how long have you contributed to Bengali Wikipedia?

This campaign was my first time
3

3+ years
8

Less than 1 year
2

1-2 years
9

Because we received responses primarily from individuals with accepted edits to the competition, this may explain why respondents in general had more experience contributing to Wikipedia. In other words, one might posit that having more experience led to a greater chance of having accepted submissions, but we can't confirm or reject this hypothesis on the basis of these survey results.

Results

This section presents survey results, focusing on use of Section Translation during and beyond the editing competition, discovery and ease of use, and feedback related to reviewing Section Translation publications.

Experience with Section Translation during the Wikipedia editing competition

For the respondents who participated exclusively as editors during the competition, approximately half of respondents used Section Translation to publish new sections during the editing competition. Except for one of these individuals who reported using the tool for very few of their contributions, the majority reported using the tool for some or all of their contributions. For respondents who participated as both editors and reviewers during the event, similarly half of these individuals used Section Translation for competition submissions.

For respondents who answered that they hadn't used Section Translation during the event, we followed up by asking why.

As shown in *Figure 3*, lack of adoption for some respondents can be attributed to lack of awareness. For others, lack of adoption was more related to more general editing preferences.

Fig 3. **Reasons for not using Section Translation** (multiple responses allowed)
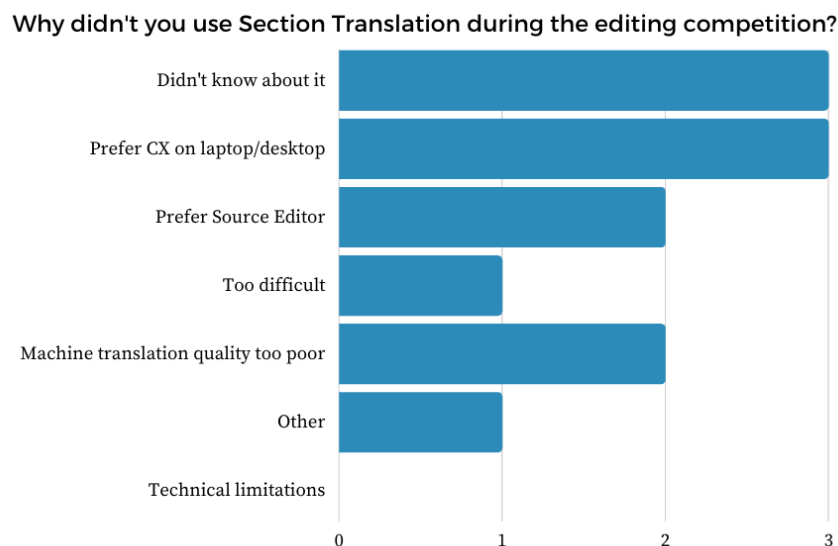
For example, some respondents preferred to use Content Translation (CX) on a laptop/desktop device, or preferred to use the Source Editor interface, which is not currently available with either Content or Section Translation. No respondents reported technical limitations as their reason for not using the tool. However, among the respondents who used Section Translation, there were technical limitations noted, as discussed in a later section of this report.

For respondents who used Section Translation during the event, we learned that six used the tool to publish 20+ sections; another two respondents reported publishing 11-20 sections.

In addition to asking respondents to self-report the number of sections they published, we also asked about the time they spent translating sections.

As shown in *Figure 4*, the majority of respondents report that it takes them 20 minutes or longer to complete a section. Although the sample size is too small to break these responses down further by editing experience or device type, an initial glance at such a breakdown is not suggestive of any correlations. In other words, we are unable to confirm if, for example, mobile users experienced longer completion times for publishing a section translation. It's also worth noting that section length was not controlled for (i.e., respondents translated sections of varying lengths), so responses to this question should be interpreted as a general trend or average time it takes participants to translate sections. Moreover, it may be most reflective of how users *perceive* the time it takes to complete a section since it is self-reported data. These perceptions are still

important as they related to adoption and continued use of the tool.

Fig 4. **Time to translate a section**

Typically, how long does it take to complete a section with Section Translation?
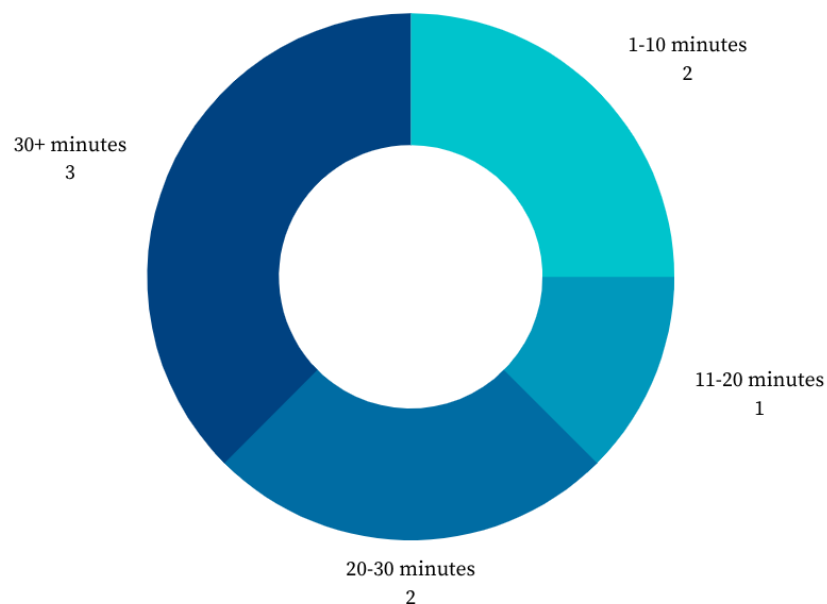
In addition to total time to translate a section, we also asked if respondents generally completed sections in a single setting, or paused their work and returned later to complete it. Respondents were split 50/50, with half reporting they complete sections across

multiple sessions, "pausing work and then continuing later".[3] Overall, the most common response selected to this question, as shown in *Figure 5*, was related to being interrupted or simply needing a break.

Although general confidence to publish wasn't selected as a reason for pausing work, a few respondents noted that they needed time to think about word and language choices made in the translation.

Fig 5. **Reasons for pausing and returning work on a section** (multiple responses allowed)

Why do you prefer to pause work on a section and return later to finish?

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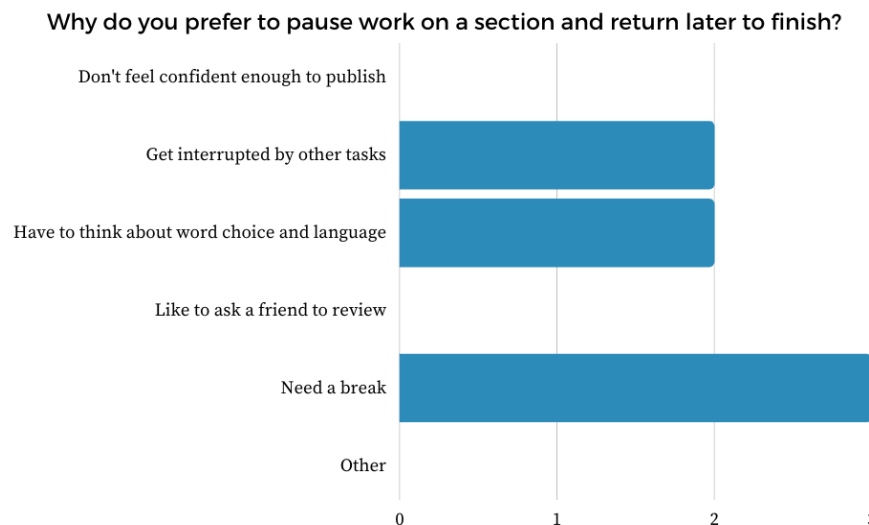
[3] 'Single setting' or 'session' in this context must be interpreted in a flexible sense since respondents were left to interpret that in their own way.
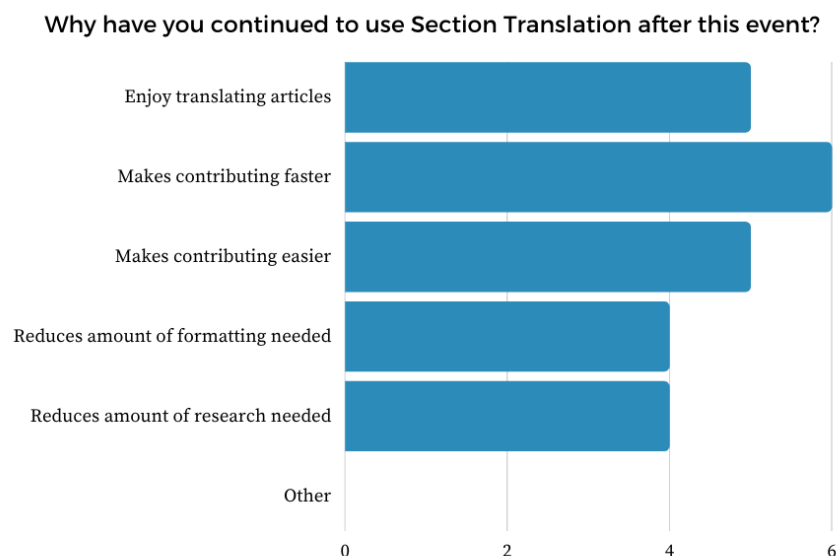
Use of Section Translation beyond the competition

For respondents who used Section Translation during the editing competition, all but one continued using the tool after the competition ended.

Fig 6. **Reasons for continuing to use Section Translation after the editing competition** (multiple responses allowed)

Why have you continued to use Section Translation after this event?

Enjoy translating articles	
Makes contributing faster	
Makes contributing easier	
Reduces amount of formatting needed	
Reduces amount of research needed	
Other	

0   2   4   6

Allowed to select more than one response to the follow-up question about why they continued to use Section Translation, respondents' reasons for continuing to use the tool varied, as

shown in *Figure 6*. Overall, the response choice selected most often was that Section Translation makes contributing faster. Although greater ease and a general preference for translation were also frequent responses, the response option related to speed of contributing was one selected by editors of all experience types (from those who had just started editing Wikipedia to those with three or more years of experience).

So, what about the one respondent who reported that they hadn't continued to use Section Translation after the event? They provided three reasons for their lack of longer-term adoption. First, they reported that they simply prefer using Content Translation on their laptop/desktop. Secondly, they reported too many general technical limitations. Finally, related to technical limitations, they noted that templates do not work.

Discovery

Next, let's visit the question of how respondents first learned about Section Translation. This is important since translation generally, but not specifically Section Translation, was promoted as a way of contributing to this editing competition.

As shown in *Figure 7*, only two respondents reported discovering the tool on their own while editing.[4] The majority of respondents either learned of the tool through personal communication before or during the editing event, or learned of it through a training/tutorial or general community announcement.

No one reported learning of it through a community announcement made off-wiki (e.g., another messaging app or off-wiki platform).

Fig 7. **Discovery of Section Translation**

How did you first learn about Section Translation?

Discovered it while editing
2

Wikimedia training/tutorial
2

Someone during the editing competition
1

Someone in the community
1

Community announcement
2

Device patterns

Although Section Translation is currently only available on mobile web, we know that sometimes editors may intentionally load desktop or mobile versions of sites in order to accomplish certain goals. For example, although Content Translation continues to not be available on mobile web (only Section Translation is), we have observed users who may load the desktop site on a mobile device in order to access and use the tool. Because a similar work around is possible in order to access Section Translation, we didn't want to simply assume that all Section Translation users during this editing event were necessarily using a mobile device. We were also interested in understanding if there is a demand for the functionalities of Section Translation (especially the ability to translate sections) among laptop/desktop users.

So, as part of this survey we asked respondents to report the type of device they primarily used while using Section Translation. We learned that around 40% of respondents were actually using Section Translation from a laptop/desktop device (no respondents reported using a tablet).

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[4] Given that most entry points the Language Team has been working on were not available at the time of the campaign, it's almost surprising that anyone reported finding the tool on their own.

The most frequent responses for why respondents used Section Translation from a mobile device were that (1) 'I always have it [my mobile device] with me, so it's ready when I feel like editing', and (2) 'It's the only device available for me to use'.

Only one respondent selected that they couldn't access Section Translation on any other device, and no one selected, 'I have other devices, but prefer to use my mobile phone'. Even so, one open-ended response for 'other' indicated that, 'working in Bengali on a laptop/desktop is not easy'. In other words, overall the reasons for using a mobile device generally come down to (1) it being the only device available, or (2) the convenience of it nearly always being available.

Overall ease

Next, we move to the topic of ease/difficulty of use, exploring the reasons that respondents gave for their ease of use ratings, common edits to machine translation outputs, and general suggestions for Section Translation improvements.

Overall, respondents only reported Section Translation as _easy_, _sort of easy_, or _average_ to navigate and use.

Fig 8. **Ease of use**

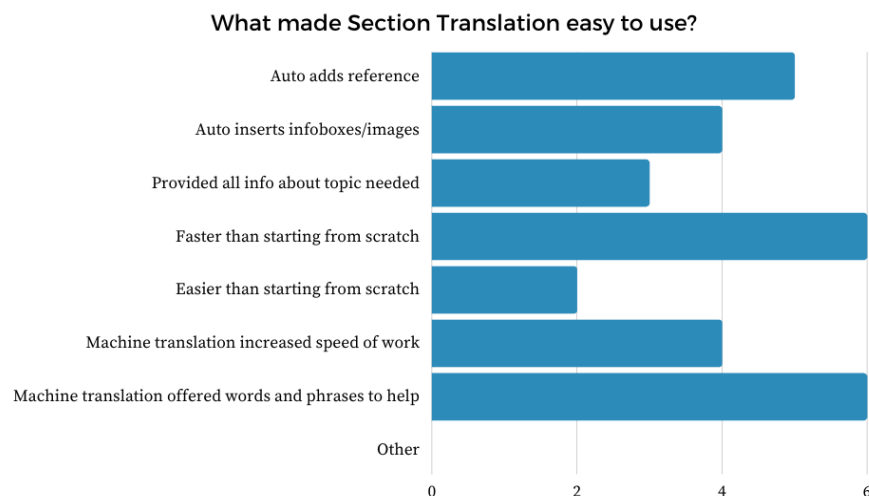Overall, how easy was it to navigate and use Section Translation?
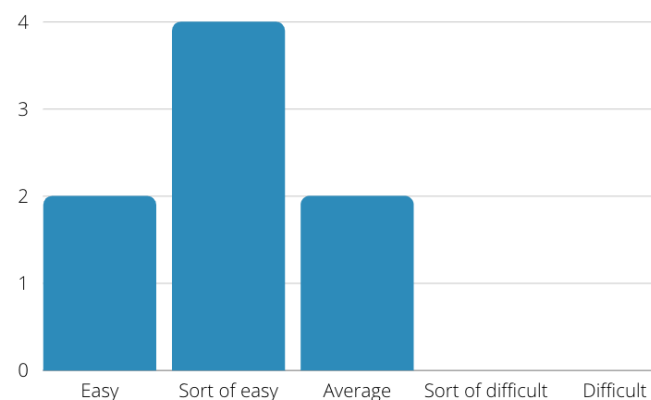
Because we know many respondents may have had accepted edits for the competition, there may be some natural filtering of responses to this question. In other words, having an accepted edit for the competition entails some level of successful editing, and therefore respondents may have skewed more towards those who were generally successful using the tool. As we'll discuss in the final section of this report, there's good motivation for exploring how to reach editors who were overall less successful, and learning

from the potential formidable challenges and difficulties they faced.

Nonetheless, let's look more closely at the reasons given for what aspects of Section Translation were more/less difficult to navigate and use.

For any respondents who reported the tool as anywhere from *average* to *easy*, they were asked what made the tool easy to use.

Fig 9. **What makes Section Translation easy to use** (multiple responses allowed)

What made Section Translation easy to use?

Response	Count
Auto adds reference	5
Auto inserts infoboxes/images	4
Provided all info about topic needed	3
Faster than starting from scratch	6
Easier than starting from scratch	2
Machine translation increased speed of work	4
Machine translation offered words and phrases to help	6
Other	0

As shown in *Figure 9*, the top responses to this question included overall increased speed of producing content (i.e., faster than

starting from scratch); speed was also referenced in another popular response that the machine translation increases the speed of work. Aside from speed, respondents also noted the support they received from machine translation outputs in terms of giving words and phrases to help, as well as auto inserting article content like references and images. As for the comparison between starting from scratch and using Section Translation, it's notable that respondents more frequently noted that Section Translation was *faster* than *easier*.

Although no respondents noted Section Translation as 'difficult' to use, for any who responded 'average', we asked a follow-up question to learn about what they may perceive as difficult to use about the tool since they didn't describe it as easy. Overall, only two respondents submitted responses to this question, and the following issues were noted; all may be generally classified as what could be perceived as technical difficulties:

- Adding or editing infoboxes is difficult
- Editing link text is difficult
- Adding references is difficult
- Selecting a section is difficult
- The process is confusing

One open-ended response was also submitted under 'other', which described the respondent's inability to translate the introductory text of an article.

Although the number of respondents answering this question was very few, it may be notable that none of the following response options were selected; again, keep in mind that most respondents had accepted edits to the campaign.

- I didn't feel confident about the translation I created
- I worry my section won't be approved
- The quality of the machine translation was very poor

As for machine translation, we also asked respondents about the most common edits they needed to make to machine translation outputs. Respondents most frequently responded that they needed to change the order of words in sentences, and occasionally adjust the form or spelling of words. They did not select that they changed individual words, deleted extra spaces, or changed punctuation. Two open-ended responses were submitted under 'other', both related to the fact that English numbers had to be repeatedly manually translated into Bengali.

Reviewing Section Translation publications

Finally, let's take a look at what we learned about the 'reviewer experience', the experience of those tasked with reviewing competition submissions, which included Section Translation publications. The reviewers who responded to this survey reported reviewing a varying number of articles or sections as part of their role in the competition review; anywhere from 1-5 to 30+.

More than half reviewed submissions that were produced with the use of Section Translation, and none were unsure if the submissions they reviewed were produced with the tool.

For all respondents tasked with reviewing Section Translation publications, all described these publications as, "about the same as article improvements made without the use of Section Translation".

Notably, none reported that Section Translation submissions were either higher or lower quality.

As shown in *Figure 10*, the most commonly selected response to what made reviewing submissions time-consuming or difficult was the process of determining if a submission should be accepted. The second most common response was, 'helping new editors understand wiki policies for editing'. Although submitted under 'other', some of the open-ended responses could similarly be categorized as 'helping newcomers', suggesting supporting newcomers is a common challenge. Consider, for example, the open-ended responses highlighted below *Figure 10*.

Fig 10. **Most time-consuming or difficult part of reviewing submissions**

What's the most time-consuming or difficult part of reviewing submissions?
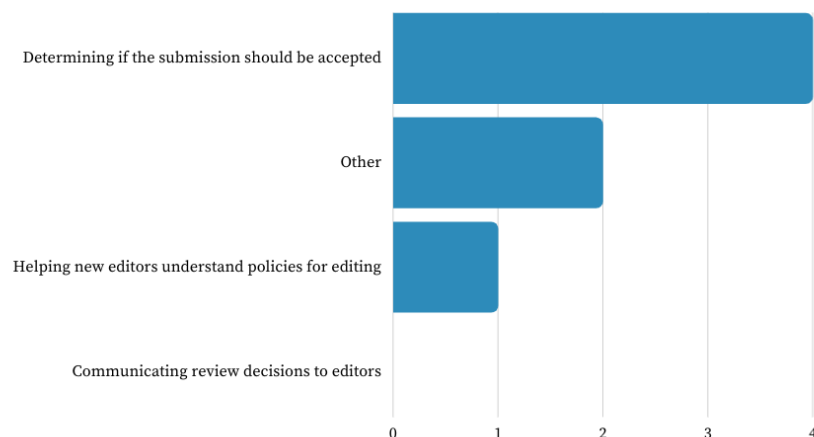
"Even if you tell newcomers the problems of the article, they can't learn it quickly; it takes time"

"Fixing errors in articles made by new users [is the most time-consuming/difficult part]"

Next, reviewers were asked about tools and resources that might make their role easier. A number of response options were offered, as well as the option to provide an open-ended response under 'other'. Respondents could make multiple selections.

The top 3 options for reviewer support selected were:

1. **A way to flag parts of the section/article that need more work to make the language read more naturally.**
2. **A method of inspecting which parts of the translation were edited by a human and which were generated automatically.**
3. **An easier way to compare the translated sections/articles with the original article.**

Three other options were also selected by reviewers, but less frequently. These included:

- A quick and effective way to ask editors to review the section/article further.
- Tools to organize a parallel reviewing campaign to get more people to help with reviewing
- A way to find articles and sections published as translations

Additional feedback

A final question in the survey asked for open-ended feedback about how Section Translation could be improved. Both editors

and reviewers were also asked if they'd to share anything further about their experience. The following is a condensed version, or summary, of feedback provided. Many of these responses were submitted by multiple respondents.

Better support for more content types:

- Way to correct infoboxes
- Numbers have to be translated again and again (a Google Translate problem)
- Templates and other elements are not added properly
- Some templates may not automatically translate text

Support for more diverse workflow preferences:

- Option to save work and pause translation activity between parts of a section
- Ability to translate on any device type

Technical improvements:

- Integration of Microsoft's Bing Translator
- Improved loading times; it takes a long time to load machine translations
- Option to select from multiple word options for a single word translation

The categories provided above are for purposes of analysis; they were not submitted by respondents, but generated for the purposes of categorizing and grouping responses.

Summary

This section recaps some main findings from the survey, along with recommendations, and then discusses limitations and next steps.

10 Key takeaways and recommendations

1. The most common reasons given for not using Section Translation (SX) during the competition were (1) lack of awareness, (2) a preference for Content Translation (CX) on laptop/desktop or preference for the source editor interface, and (3) machine translation quality.

   Recommendation 1 - **Prioritize ways of helping more users discover the tool, as this impacts editors of all types. Expand the functionalities of CX to include translation of article sections.**

2. Time to complete the translation of a section varies, but it's not uncommon for editors to need 20-30+ minutes, with a

break to think about word and language choices or simply deal with other distractions.

Recommendation 2 - **Ensure workflow design makes it easy to stop and start a translation in progress. Learn more about ways of supporting editors' needs around word and language choices.**

3. Most participants who used Section Translation during the competition continued to use it after the competition ended, for a variety of reasons related to speed and ease of creating content.

Recommendation 3 - **Focus efforts on recommendation 1 (entry points) as it appears helping users discover the tool is more difficult than supporting them in sustained adoption of the tool.**

4. Lack of long-term Section Translation (SX) adoption can also be attributed in part to a general preference for using Content Translation (CX) on a laptop/desktop device.

Recommendation 4 - **Unify the technical capabilities of SX and CX, making them available for all users, regardless of the device type they prefer.**

5. Of the respondents we heard from, very few discovered Section Translation while editing; most learned about it through personal contacts, trainings, or general community announcements.

Recommendation 5 - **Increase opportunities for users to learn about Section Translation through general editing tasks. Provide easy ways for individuals to share about SX with others as recommendations from contacts may carry greater weight/persuasion.**

6. Nearly 40% of respondents used Section Translation from a laptop/desktop.

Recommendation 6 - **This finding lends further support to recommendation #4 (making all features of CX/SX available to users on any device type).**

7. Mobile Section Translation users' most frequent response for why they used a mobile device related to it being the only device available and the fact that it was always available.

Recommendation 7 - **This finding lends further support to recommendations #2 and #4. Improve technical capabilities available to mobile-only users, and ensure editors are able to start and stop translation tasks easily.**

8. Reviewers are looking for ways to flag parts of sections for further work, inspecting translated content, and comparing translations with original source articles.

Recommendation 8 - **Invest in work that falls under the umbrella of 'reviewing and improving translated content'. This area of work would support reviewers, overall quality of translated content, and more widespread acceptance of translation as a contribution method if translation edits improve.**

9. Open-ended feedback for improvements fell into three categories: (1) better support for more content types, (2) support for more diverse workflow preferences, and (3) general technical improvements.

Recommendation 9 - **Prioritize additional content types that need better support in CX and SX.**

10. Overall, the survey approach presented in this report appears to be a moderately successful way of reaching users, including reviewers, when there's a spike in activity related to a campaign or competition. Although there was a high response rate, the overall pool to recruit from may be limited.

Recommendation 10 - **Improve upon this approach by finding ways of increasing the sample size, and reaching those who we may consider having 'less successful' participation in the event, so that we can learn about what can go wrong with product use and adoption.**

Limitations and next steps

Overall, two main limitations of this survey are related to sample size and reaching those who were less successful in their adoption and use of Section Translation. Despite a relatively high response rate, the overall sample size was limited, making further breakdown of responses difficult. In particular, finding ways of reaching those who were less successful (e.g., lack of accepted edits for the competition and those who did not succeed in publishing translations with Section Translation) would allow use to learn about what can go wrong and, relatedly, critical supports that may be missing, especially for newcomers.

As for next steps, we suggest the following four items as they relate to the current project and further work.

1. Explore the logistics, feasibility, and value of organizing a follow-up focus group (either now or in the future with

similar outreach/feedback efforts). We received some level of interest from a few respondents in participating in further conversations around the survey topic.

2. Refine the recruitment methods for future surveys conducted in the spirit of this one (inspired by a spike in activity related to editing events), especially as it relates to the diversity of voices represented and hearing from those who had less successful experiences participating.

3. Identify ways of reliably recruiting translation reviewers across multiple wikis (both with efforts like this one, and also more generally). This survey was the first semi-structured attempt at receiving feedback from this segment of users, and we need to be able to receive such feedback from reviewers across more language editions.

4. As part of the team discussions around this support, discuss and compare what we learned as part of the survey with findings from previous usability tests. What are areas of strong overlap, if any?