Accra, We Have A Problem

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WikiIndaba, 20 January 2017
Outline

1. Where we were in 2014
2. What we know in 2017
Our plans at WikiIndaba14

Outreach to OtjiHerero speakers in eastern Namibia in order to develop the OtjiHerero Incubator

1. Persuasion: use games, feedback, encouragement, competition through persuasive computing and communication

2. De–bushing: bypass the English Wikipedia for now to avoid training that is focused on teaching rules

3. Evolution: re–interpret existing rules

4. Revolution: A viable local language Wikipedia might look quite different from what we are used to:
   - Notability
   - Citation types
   - Flagged revisions
   - Oral content
   - Quite possibly other factors
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1. Where we were in 2014
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Persuasion

- Persuasion works well . . . for exactly its duration
- Allowed us some remarkable observations on work flow:
  1. Participants met in person to discuss article content
  2. Coordination of the meeting via a closed Facebook group
  3. Only people of own ethnicity invited (problem 1)
  4. All article content discussed in person until consensus was achieved
  5. Result of consensus uploaded by group representative
- Not really how (the rest of) Wikipedia works
- Painfully slow (1–2 sentences of content creation per session)
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De–bushing

- Fewer rules and less control on the Incubator
- Bypassing the English Wikipedia works . . .
  - more open atmosphere during workshops
  - more work getting done
  - amazing variety of editing tasks
  - but no editor recruitment (problem 2)
  - participants don’t get reverted because they cease editing
- very successful for the participating scientists
- at least very enjoyable for the participants
- at most a valuable experience for the editor community
  - As in: This is how it doesn’t work
  - Quite a bit of money ‘invested’ (not all WMF, but still . . . )
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Peter Gallert (FCI)
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Evolution

- Oral Citations Experiment, October 2014, Otjinene

Figure: An Elder Tells a Tale. Picture by Daniel Gonzalez–Cabrero, CC-BY-SA 4.0
Results and Implications

1. Oral knowledge is relevant, persistent, peer-reviewed, and useful
   - White spaces in Wikipedia articles could be filled
   - Results at Wikipedia:Oral citations experiment
   - Policy debate still outstanding

2. No way we can train the elders to edit Wikipedia
   - Aversion to technology is part of being an elder
   - Most are completely illiterate, not just on the computer
   - We might not do them a favour
   - Split role required: Elder — Interviewer [ — Wikipedian ]

3. Interviewing is no outsiders’ job
   - Answers regularly appear as riddles, also in further interviews
   - Insider knowledge required to understand answers
   - Insider knowledge required to ask questions
   - Only feasible people for this role: Community’s own offspring (problem 3)
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Revolution?

1 Audiovisual Wikipedia?
   - Got no further than a single page: Incubator:Opuwo
   - Available audio files too long, off-topic, not translated
   - Participants came from further away and didn’t know Opuwo proper
   - Technically rather challenging—needs a WikiGnome in the background

2 OtjiHerero Wikipedia with own rules?
   - Flagged revisions, group accounts, oral citations, IP editor restrictions, file uploads, civility rules, hidden areas (DarkWiki), and quite a bit more
   - But not on the Incubator (problem 4)
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Vicious Circle

Language in Incubator

Restrictions

No editing activity
End of Presentation

Any questions?