

mw:Translate: User workflow design

wmf ux:Localization Team



Version 1

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This design document outlines the interaction workflow of the mediawiki translate extension used on translatewiki.net

It identifies usability issues in the current workflow and proposes guidelines to redesign a more efficient translation process

Document Revisions:

1. Initial document for localization team feedback

Mediawiki:Extension:Translate

The mediawiki translate extension is used to convert mediawiki into a powerful translation platform for any kind of text.

Design goal

Enable collaborative translation of user readable strings in an easy and efficient way

Primary Features

- Structured wiki content page translation
- In-wiki localisation and exporting of software interface messages
- Proofreading and translation reviewing
- Translation memory and automated suggestions
- Translation message grouping
- Project and language translation progress and statistics
- Message translation history

Homepage: <http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/Extension:Translate>

User Interaction: Activities and Tasks

The interaction workflow for the extension can be divided into broad activities which are made up of smaller tasks

Primary Activity

1. Translate the most important translatable messages to my language

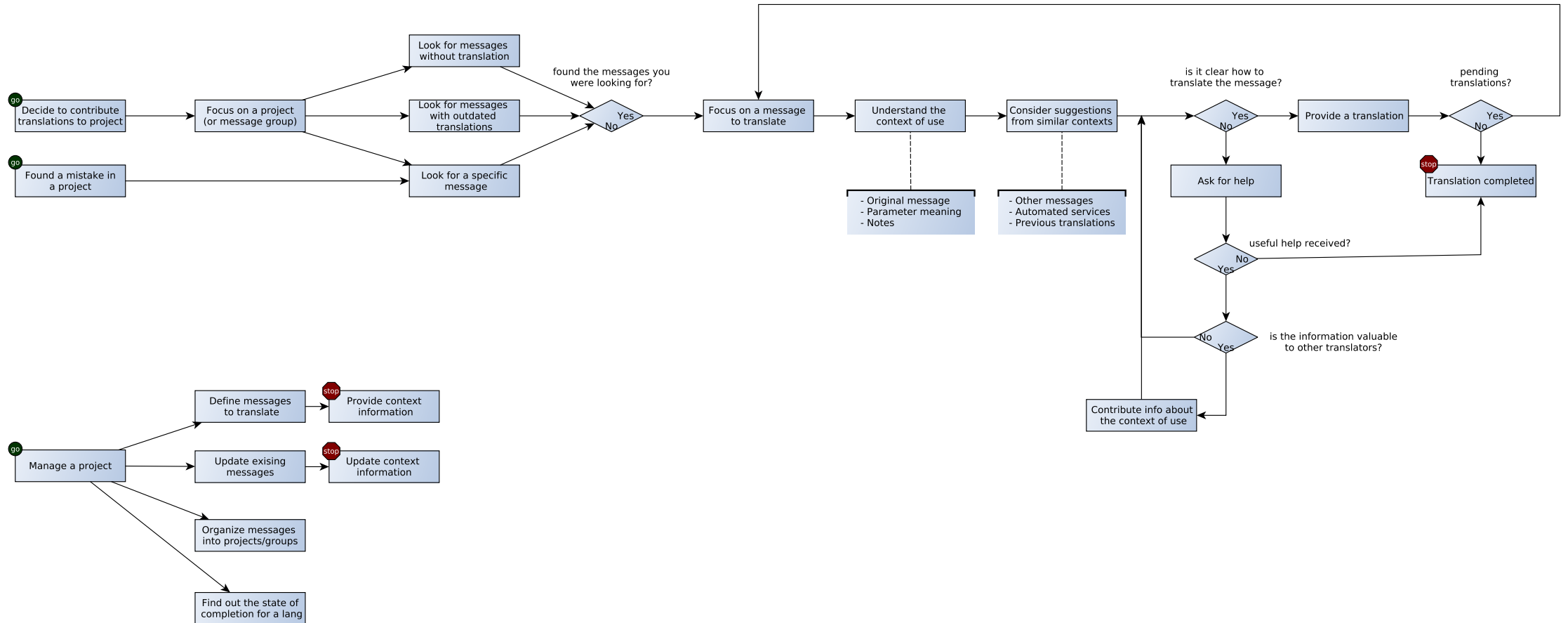
Secondary Activities

- 2A.Improve translated messages in my language
- 2B.Import/Export translatable messages for external translation
- 2C.Track translation progress and statistics
 - in my language
 - of a project of my interest
 - of my translations or of other translators

Auxillary Activities

- 3A.User registration and translation profile setup
- 3B.Create and maintain translation documentation

Existing Interaction Workflow - Translation



Source: Pau Giner, Wikimedia Foundation

Competitive Analysis

Study of similar translation platforms helps identify common features and functionalities that serve the same goal

Notable features of other crowd translation projects

Twitter Translation Center <http://translate.twtr.com/welcome>

- Translator leaderboard
- User translation stats: translations, approved, translator level, votes
- Learning center, translation feedback, message groups
- Translation suggestions, voting and commenting
- Message translation status in various languages
- Language dictionary/glossary/style guide and support forums
- Message search

Transifex <https://www.transifex.net/>

- Project stats: maintainers, translators, activity
- Language team creation and management
- Flexible import and export of files
- Integrated google translate, translation memory and user suggested translations
- Project watchlists and updates
- Project manager and translator rating

Notable features of other crowd translation projects (Cont I)

TED Open Translation Project <http://www.ted.com/OpenTranslationProject>

- Requests for translation and review
- Limited translator task assignment
- Translator messaging

HootSuite Translation Project <http://translate.hootsuite.com/>

- Project and language activity monitors
- Language coordinators
- Message group preference
- Language+message group updates
- Fuzzy translation flag

Facebook Translations <http://www.facebook.com/?sk=translations>

Voting of user translations

Message descriptions

Translation or source language search

Weekly translator leaderboard

Translation impact stats

User Observations

Observing existing translators of various skill levels helps identify common usage patterns and usability issues in the current workflow

User observations were performed with 3 members of the wikimedia localization team who are the extension developers, 2 translators from the indic language community each with over 1000 translations and 1 new user who has not translated before

Observations were performed over screen sharing on skype and as text interviews over chat

The findings documented are selected issues which were thought to impede a seamless translation process

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Signup	The ability to change the interface language during signup is not obvious. Also, the captcha is available only in English	Narayam or language options can be displayed along with the signup form
First steps	The meaning of primary and assistant language is not clear at first and the implications of choosing it.	Example scenarios and auto suggested languages will help to better convey the meaning of primary and assistant languages. Also consider change in wording
Start translating	The start translating link on the homepage takes you to the Language statistics tab. This tab does not appear on the homepage. Also, now a translate tab appears which is confusing	Rework on wording and structure of tabs to reflect translator workflow

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Language stats	In few cases the language shown in the language stats was not what the user wanted and had to be edited manually. This requires the knowledge of the language code	There must be alternate methods for selecting languages and a history of selected languages to quickly switch between multiple languages
Language stats	When there are no search results, it is not clear what needs to be done to display messages	The message suppress filters must indicate numbers on how many results will be displayed if activated.
Language stats	Some users had favourited the language stats url with certain options for quick access to the message list	Ability to create translation watchlists will aid the user in this task

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Language stats	Expanding certain groups like mediawiki extensions can result in a large list that is difficult to browse through. Sorting also takes significant time	Ability to hide certain groups or show only that of interest will help speed up the process for the most frequently used groups
Language stats	A new user was not sure how to evaluate the completion and outdated percentages to evaluate progress	A better visualization scheme which integrates the numbers into a single graphic
Language stats	The primary usage of the page seems to be to decide which group to translate first	Filter and sort options that can prioritize groups will help a translator identify groups needing attention with lesser effort

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Message stats	Was used in only one observation for the purpose of project management	The metrics in this page can be combined with the language stats to give a more integrated view of a project's translation progress and requirements
Translate popup	After using the popup editor, the user manually refreshes the page to see the message update message list	An indicator that a message has already been translated will provide the necessary user feedback of a successful translation
Translate page	An expert translator used his browser find tool to find messages with common mistakes, and then open the editor in multiple background tabs for later translation	Capability to mark and group messages for later translation can enable translators to perform such repeated tasks seamlessly

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Translate popup	Most used the popup editor over the inline editor. It was found that users did not know the existence of the inline editor or tried using it before	Make the interaction to invoke inline editor more obvious
Translate inline	A major pain point using the inline editor was that the layout of the messages shifts after loading new page elements	An integrated layout that keeps elements in place will address this issue
Translate	Selecting and deleting !!FUZZY!! tags is a common time consuming procedure	Having checkboxes to indicate such flags will make the task a single click process

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Translate	Magic words, variables, html tags and wikisyntax has to be navigated around during translation	Making such text display as a non editable blocks will avoid accidental code breakage
Translate	Translation memory is helpful and is regularly used to replace translations. The link to copy however is small and one user was found manually copying text	Make actionable links bigger
Translate	Down arrows at the starting of each message row was never observed being used. When asked to try it out, users said they thought it was for scrolling through the list	The repeated arrows clutter the list with very little utility. It can be relocated and shown differently to preserve functionality

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Translate	All users preferred to translate short messages or single words to bring down the untranslated message count quickly	Sorting options to do the same
Translate	In only one case, a user wanted to list all the messages for the project. This was to use the browser search tool to go through a large pool of messages	A more advanced and customizable search function to search through multiple projects
Translate	Dictionary sites, google search and google translate were commonly used as references to look up unfamiliar words	Creating hotlinks that will enable translators to directly lookup a word or phrase from multiple source will make this easy for the user

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Translate	A translator wanting to check for messages with user discussion needs to manually open every message talk page. There is no indication of message discussions during translation itself	Every message can have talk page links with the status of any open or recent discussion. This will help translators communicate more effectively with each other and provide support
Proofreading	An advanced translator make extensive use of the browser and wiki search tools to find common words and phrases that require correction	Having a search and replace mechanism will integrate the user experience within the platform

Findings from translator observations

Component	User observation	Suggested improvement
Proofreading	Majority of the users did not wish to spend time on proofreading existing translation. They felt that creating new translations was more important and they trusted existing translators to a certain extent	Statistics indicating quality of translations and high impact messages will allow users to prioritize their proofreading effort
Hotkeys	Usage of hotkeys during the translation process was rare. Users reported not having tried it and were not sure how to use it	Hotkeys can dramatically improve translated messages by reducing mouse interactions. A more intuitive layout and control will make this easy to use

Workflow Design Guidelines

These guidelines based on user observations will form the basic reasoning for design decisions in the design process to make translating more effective and efficient

Workflow design guidelines

Increase translation revisions

The accuracy and quality of translation generally improves with each revision of a trusted translator

Expose impact of translations

Users are motivated to contribute to translations that have the highest impact and usage

Provide a handy language translation guide

Having an easy to access language style guide and faq's will help improve quality of contributions and confidence levels of translators

Recognition and ranking for translators

Translating is a resource intensive human activity which requires continuous motivation to sustain. Leaderboards and badges become symbols of pride for a translator.

Language community building

Tools for translators of the same language to collaborate on tasks will make it a social activity and boost translation activity in that language

Prioritize translation tasks

Easily achievable translation targets in manageable chunks will take advantage of a translators need to experience completeness and will speed up translation of the most important messages

Advanced text processing tools

Functionalities like search and replace need to be more powerful and customizable for different scenarios

Workflow design guidelines (Cont I)

Easy access to translation aids

Access to commonly used language references, tools and suggestions for a particular project or language are a useful aid for translators to speed up the translation process

Optimize for keyboard operation

Translation requires extensive use of the keyboard and the interface for translators must be operable without the need to use another input device

Motivate to become a power translator

Create special translator roles that have access to power tools and privileges. This will help maintain a healthy balance of expert and amateur translators

Translation watchlists

Translators have certain projects and languages of interest whose progress they would like to easily keep track of. This also an important starting point for the translation process

Flexible data management options

Allowing import and export of messages in various formats will help translators make use of other external tools that they are more efficient with

Reduce unnecessary interactions

Interactions like selecting and deleting FUZZY text can be eliminated by simple one click interactions

Translator relevant content

Projects and languages that are outside the user's interest can be suppressed to make the interface more relevant to the translator's task and reduce clutter

Workflow design guidelines (Cont II)

Customizable message lists

Options to filter and sort message lists based on various factors help translators identify messages of interest

No waiting in between translations

It must be possible to translate multiple message seamlessly without the need to wait for page elements to update

Simple instructional language

All instructions to translators including message descriptions must be in simple language with examples if possible. This will eliminate ambiguity and improve the quality of output

Target users and stakeholders

Professional Translators

are linguistic experts and are capable of creating a large number of high quality translations very efficiently in their language of expertise. The work of professional translators can be trusted for quality and this minimizes the need for proofreading and corrections

Language Enthusiasts

are translators with basic skill of typing in their native language but are willing to spend the time and effort to become better. Language enthusiasts are motivated by the prospect of improving the progress of their language in terms of technology

Project Managers

are managers of projects that require translation. Project managers can help improve the effectiveness of a project's translation by prioritizing components that are most important and require translators' attention

Next Steps

1. Create user personas and prioritize requirements
2. Rough sketches of improved workflow shared with the localization team for technical feasibility
3. Low-fi wireframes that detail the workflow of all user activities and tasks
4. Mid-fi wireframes that details the workflow and functions for the primary translator activities and tasks
5. Creation of interactive prototypes and user testing