Expert interview

Case: Wikipedia
Interviewee (IE):   Amir Aharoni
Interviewer (IR):   Anja Ebersbach
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	[Welcoming]
1	IR: Ok, let's go back to the interview. Last time we stopped at the topic of the incubator. We talked about the year 2006 and that there were changes. Before this time the application for a new Wikipedia was quite a bit - let us say – unorganized. So there were no rules and it changed with new rules and a kind of committee? #00:00:38#
2	IE: Yes, the language committee was created in 2006. There were several cases of hoaxes, domains were created, people tried to create domains and languages that don't actually exist. Probably the most famous case was the Siberian language. I don't know if you heard about that there was a whole Wikipedia was created for it. Which was supposed to be a certain dialect of Russian. The tragic thing about this is that such a dialect of Russian actually does exist but it doesn't have an ISO code. In theory it could receive an ISO code - and if somebody seriously applied for ISO code, that will be created - , but that project was so badly done and probably intentionally badly and it was eventually completely deleted. That was one of the reasons why the language committee was created. I actually supported that and if you dive deeper in history you will find me for some time actually supporting this project but eventually I gave up on that because I understood that they were just trolls. Took me too much time to understand this. It was eventually deleted and the language committee was established more or less at the same time. And pretty much from the start, there was a very hard rule in the language committee that from now on only languages with official register ISO 639 code will be created and that is not the only requirement. Actually, there are some languages that do have an ISO code but which are probably not going to be created as Wikipedias, even though there are requests. The most common reason for that is that they do have a distinct ISO code but they are essentially identical to some other language. So some famous examples are Dari, the language of Afghanistan, which is, according to most people who know this language, actually the same like the Persian language of Iran. Just has a different name in Afghanistan for political reasons. Another common example is the Montenegrian language of the country of Montenegro which is the same as Serbian, but again it has its own ISO code and its own name for political reasons. People who support these two languages repeatedly asked to create a Wikipedia in their language and the language committee repeatedly rejected. There is also the Valencian language which is the same as Catalan and this one even doesn't have an ISO code, so they stopped trying. So, that's more or less the kind of thing that we do and yes, I joined the language committee in 2010. I was invited. The year 2010 was when I first went to Wikimania and somebody from the language committee met me

there and just spoke to me, noticed my interest and invited me to join. And that was it. Since then I have been a member. #00:01:40#

3	IR: What is your opinion on the procedure now? Is it a good one? Has it been changed in the last time or do you plan to change it somehow? #00:05:25#
4	IE: Yes, so the history is not perfect. It's kind of ok, but there are several things to improve. I am gradually trying to improve them. When I joined it, a pretty big difference that used to be then is that…., how should I describe this? So people were writing articles in the incubator and if the articles were good and there was approval from a third party expert who checked that this is indeed the right language and not some kind of hoax, then we would send an email to the Wikimedia Foundation board. If the Wikimedia Foundation board approved it, then we would start the process of actually creating the domain, the technical function of creating a domain. In 2011 there was a real life meeting of the language committee in Berlin. And we met with representatives of the Wikimedia Foundation board there and we agreed that this is no longer needed. They just trust us to create it and we no longer have to send an email to the board about each language. They just agreed to do this. So a little bit less bureaucracy. After that in 2018 or so, another member asked to join but not as a member but as, I think he called himself a secretary or something like that, and he was actually very helpful with going over requests because there was a big backlog of requests. A lot of them were just stale, because people asked for something like to create a Wikipedia but didn't actually write any articles in Incubator. And some did write articles in Incubator but we didn't know they were active so we started helping them. He hasn't been active unfortunately in the last few months. Maybe he just lost interest. I have to check what is up with him, but yes he was quite helpful. I hope he comes back because he is useful. But generally the procedure is pretty ok. I guess the biggest procedural problem at this point is with the requirement to be checked by a third party expert that this is not a hoax. The problem with this is that we cannot just stop doing this because hoaxes did happen and there are actually still attempts for hoaxes. We found that early but we found that there was an incubator which was written in total gibberish. Several committee members noticed that it is gibberish and we just deleted it. So, people still try to put hoaxes there which is not great, which is sad so we do have them checked by experts. However, we are already beyond 300 languages, so it's getting harder and harder to find experts who can help. #00:05:38#
5	IR: How can you check if something is a hoax or not? What kind of experts are you talking about? You get an application for a language maybe you never heard before and what happens then? #00:09:23#
6	IE: What we usually try to do - that is practice what we usually do - we try to find some university or college or some kind of cultural institution or library in which there is a teacher who teaches that language, or a linguist or researcher who researches that language … This is the very best thing that can be done. And then we just ask them, sometimes they quickly reply to our emails, sometimes they say „yes, that is that language and everything is ok", this is like the best outcome. Sometimes they say „it's that language but they have few spelling mistakes but generally it is ok". This is also a fine outcome. Sometimes they say that this is not actually that language it's actually some other language. This also happened. And

the saddest thing is when they just do not reply to emails, which is a problem. And this unfortunately happens more often than we want. For example there is a Wikipedia that we approved just a few days ago in the language of India, called Awadhi. It's ISO code is AWA and it will be created, finally, a few days from now. So we are happy about that. It took us many months to get somebody to reply to our emails. I sent a lot of emails to different people and nobody replies and finally I find somebody who did reply. #00:09:42#

| 7 | IR: Aha, ok. #00:11:21# |

8   IE: It was an Indian researcher who is a faculty member in a university in Europe which is probably Leiden. So anyway, he is Indian, but he is in a European University and he replied to our email. And he said, yes, it is that language and everything is fine and like for this short email it's taken us several months to actually get somebody. So that is a serious bottleneck. We don't have a good solution for that, but we are thinking about that. #00:11:23#

9   IR: And do you have cases where you don't even find hints about an expert or a university which deals with this language? #00:11:58#

10   IE: This may happen. If you talked to me two months ago, I would have told you yes, we are stuck and we cannot find anybody. And now finally I can tell you we did find somebody. Currently I cannot think of any language in which we are totally stuck, but it's definitely imaginable. #00:12:10#

11   IR: Ok. But you are only talking about the first step until the incubator is set up. And then there has to be community. #00:12:34#

12   IE: This is actually the last step. Because creating an incubator is really easy. Pretty much anybody can create an incubator. If an experienced user notices that something is odd then the incubator will be deleted. Like this one with the gibberish that I told you that we found a few weeks ago on the incubator, and we deleted it. But other than that, the incubator is one of the most free and anarchist projects that are there. The real problem with the incubator is how technically difficult it is to use it. If you understand well how the MediaWiki software works then you can do pretty much everything there. Like it's the wild, wild west. But for a lot of people by now it became very difficult, because there are all kinds of strange technical rules there. Like every page has to have every ugly prefix like for Wikipedia. For all the pages in the incubator out of Wikipedia every page title has to begin with wp for Wikipedia / (slash) awa / (slash) the page type. This is really ugly and this means that you have to do this in every page that you create and in every link that you have to make internal links, and in every template and so on. And you cannot use Wikidata and you cannot use content translation and you have to use templates in a really strange way, and you have to add categories manually to every page and these are things that are not necessary on regular Wikipedias. So if you are an experienced MediaWiki editor it's not a problem. But ten years ago a lot of people who were creating new incubators, well not ten years more like 13-14 years ago, people who were creating new incubators they were experienced editors in other wikis. For example you would have an experienced editor in Russian and he would create a new Wikipedia in one of the minority languages of Russia or an experienced editor in Italian and he would

create a new Wikipedia in one of the regional varieties of Italian. By now, a lot of people who create new incubators are not experienced editors in other languages. So we get a really weird situation where the newest and least experienced people have to use the hardest software, which is really, really unfair and really, really bad. I have been trying to change this for a long time and I wrote a pretty detailed plan on how this could be changed, to make it easier for everybody, but this plan just needs developers to execute it. I don't have the technical skill to do it myself, and until now I haven't managed to convince any software engineers to get it done. I don't think that is such a complicated thing to do, but somehow it looks like it is. #00:12:43#

13   IR: And, this software is a kind of vanilla MediaWiki, or what is the problem? It's more difficult than the normal Wikipedia because the extensions are missing, or the installation is a totally different set? Is it just MediaWiki? #00:16:37#

14   IE: The reason mainly is that the general assumption in MediaWiki is that there is one content language per each site, like the English Wikipedia is in English and the German Wikipedia is in German, and the Italian Wikisource is in Italian. Some sites are built from the start to be multilingual, like Wikidata, and on Wikidata it works really well. Some sites are built from the start to be multilingual, like Commons, and it's not perfect, but Commons does not have a lot of text, and Commons is mostly images, so it's not a huge problem. It's a bit of a problem, because the main function of Commons is to upload the images, and this part works mostly well, and there are bunch of hacks there to make it more multilingual, and I think we spoke about this in one of our previous conversations, there is this new project about structured data on Commons, and one of the ideas behind structured data on Commons is to make it better translated. It's getting improved in Commons. Commons is a far more popular site than Incubator. Incubator is a really weird thing there on the site. Incubator is only important to people to whom almost nobody listens. I listen to these people, I really want to support them, I really want to help them develop, but except myself, there is almost nobody, so that is the problem. #00:17:01#

15   IR: You said that you are looking for an expert after the incubator phase is through, is this right? 00:18:40#

16   IE: Yeah, when we see that people created a lot of new articles in the Incubator, and the articles look kind of ok, I cannot totally judge if the article is ok, because I never know these languages. But if it looks kind of ok, if every article has few paragraphs of text and maybe some images, and does not immediately look like obvious gibberish or some nonsense, and it looks like they make a few edits every week for some time, and we judge them to be sufficiently active, then we ask another person to check whether this was actually written in this language. And if the expert says yes, then we approve it. Another requirement is to translate a certain number of messages on Translatewiki. For an experienced MediaWiki translator like me, it's not a very large number, it's about 500-600 messages, which is something I can do in 3-4 days as a volunteer. For people who are not as experienced as I am, this sometimes takes several months, which is not a big deal because, several months is something that you have to do anyway, to prove that you are active on the Incubator. But for some people, it's even harder, sometimes it takes years to translate 500 messages, so I am also looking for ways to improve

that. On one hand, it kind of does not make sense to start Wikipedia in your language if the software is not translated, at least partially. The whole translation of MediaWiki is much more than 10.000 messages, I think even more than 15.0000, it's huge. As a bare minimum, we ask for about five or six hundred, but I'm looking for ways to make it simpler, maybe bring it down from 500 to like 300, or maybe go over this minimum list of messages and make it somehow more relevant and up to date. Something like that. So, I'm looking for ways to make it easier also, but the much bigger problem is what I already mentioned, the problem with how the Incubator works, with these prefixes and lack of Wikidata support and so on. #00:19:10#

| 17 | IR: Do you have a feeling that this might hinder a new Wikipedia because of technical things? #00:22:00# |

| 18 | IE: Definitely. There is no doubt, absolutely no doubt. I speak a lot to people who write in Incubator, and I have to answer the same questions all the time, and I would really love, instead of having to answer the same questions all the time, I would just love these bugs to be fixed, so that they wouldn't even have to ask them, and would be able to write more easily. But, I don't have the necessary technical knowledge to do it myself and I need to find somebody who would work on that. That's a really sad situation. #00:22:09# |

| 19 | IR: Yes, it is. The project in Translatewiki, do they have to start it themselves? Or, if they get an incubator, is there also somebody from the Wikimedia Foundation who opens a new project at Translatewiki? Do they have to do it themselves or can you help them somehow? #00:22:48# |

| 20 | IE: It's usually me, people usually come to Translatewiki and they go to support page on Translatewiki, support forum, where people ask technical questions and sometimes people ask to add a new language, and when people ask for a new language usually it goes through me. Sometimes through some other people, who maintain the Translatewiki configuration, but basically if I see such a request, I make some really, really basic sanity checks, like I don't add a new language if it does not have an ISO code. I try to the best of my ability, to check whether this person actually speaks that language and does not try to cheat something, but really, this check is very, very basic and flexible. If I don't see any huge red lights, I usually just create the language without any problems. The next thing that happens is that people start to translate or, sometimes, they think that if somebody adds a language, somebody else will come and do the translations, and it sometimes happens that languages are configured in Translatewiki, but there are zero translations. At least, that is never my fault. When somebody asks me to add a language, I just add a language. Very often, people actually start translating and after a few weeks, they make all necessary translations. This is the best scenario. #00:23:12# |

| 21 | IR: Are there many cheaters? #00:24:53# |

| 22 | IE: There are cheaters. I don't know what you would call many, but it happens several times a year. #00:25:03# |

| 23 | IR: And do you know why they do that? #00:25:15# |

24	IE: I don't know, why do people troll online? Some people think that it's fun. I don't really want to talk to them, it's a waste of time to talk to them. #00:25:18#
25	IR: That is really strange, to have the idea to do that. #00:25:42#
26	IE: You know, people troll and post all kinds of flames and hoaxes, whatever, on various internet forums, StackOverflow, Facebook, Twitter, and people vandalize Wikipedia articles, and it seems completely stupid and unnecessary and a terrible waste of everybody's time. And, yeah, people sometimes try to cheat with languages, and create hoaxes. It does not happen very often, but when it does... We try to not let it happen, we try to cut it as early as possible. #00:25:50#
27	IR: Do you treat every language as equal? Do you promote minority languages, for example? #00:26:34#
28	IE: By now, there are only minority languages, after more than 300 languages, there are only minority languages. What is a minority language? We still have some languages that have more than a million speakers, and don't have any presence on Wikipedia, complete zero. Literally yesterday, I found out about a language spoken in Africa, and it has a million or two milion speakers, called Eleme. I've never heard about that and I am really interested in this topic, but I've never heard about it. Somebody is interested in creating articles in this language, so I'm going to add this to the Incubator and to Translatewiki soon. This is great, but a million people, it's a lot of people, do you call it a minority language, in terms of how much it is used on the internet, yes, it's a minority language, it's not present almost anywhere on the web. So, in this sense it's a minority language, but if you are speaking about a million people... I think its spoken in Nigeria, and there are more than like 200 million people living in Nigeria, if you look at just the country of Nigeria, then yes, it's less than 1% of people in Nigeria, so is it a minority language, yeah, I guess it is, but still, it's a million people... it's huge. It's more people of all of Luxemburg, and Luxembourg has its own language and there is a Wikipedia in that language. Is that language a minority language? I don't know. It has more presence on the internet than this language that is spoken by two million people. Basic answer: yes, I treat all languages equally. #00:26:45#
29	IR: Are there no policies - not only for the new Wikipedias, but also for existing ones - that say: we want to have as many as possible Wikipedias of the existing seven thousand languages, and we want to have them at an equal base concerning the number of editors, number of articles... and we foster that somehow, with money, with public relations. Is there anything like that in the policies of Wikipedia? #00:28:58#
30	IE: In a very theoretical sense, yes, we want all of them to be equal, all 7.000. Personally, I have this really crazy notion, this is very personal, this is just me, I have this really crazy notion that we are not the most multilingual site on the web, there are sites on the web that are more multilingual than Wikipedia. However, they have a pretty different kind of content. The two most notable websites of this kind are jw.org, Jehova's witnesses. They recently crossed 1.000 languages on their website, and another Christian website is jesusfilm.org, they have a certain film about Jesus, dubbed definitely into more than 1.000 languages, I think more than 2.000 languages. It's just one video, of about two hours, but it has full audio

dubbing into a huge number of languages. They have a very particular limited type of content, and they treat every language equally. They have a basic set of texts that are translated completely to every language. We don't really do that. The closest that we get is that we require every language to translate a minimum number of messages on Translatewiki, and that is about it. We don't require translation of any particular Wikipedia articles, for example. Every language creates Wikipedia articles, about whatever they want. I guess it's fine, nobody is pressuring anybody to write Wikipedia articles about, I don't know, London, the city of London in every language. If you don't want it in your language, you don't write it. If you want some very local topic to be in your Wikipedia, it's also fine. Do we, by „we" I have to say WMF, do we pay people to write in certain languages? We don't, I think that there is even some policy somewhere that we don't give grants to... I'm not responsible for grants, but I think there is a written policy somewhere that we don't just give grants to people to just write articles, we give grants to hold workshops, where you teach other people to write articles, we give grants to organize contests, where many people write articles about a certain topic, and then the person who wrote the best article, gets some kind of a prize, an award, sometimes it's a laptop, sometimes it's a camera, sometimes it's like 500 USD. These are the kind of grants that we give. I'm of the opinion that we should start in some careful, limited way, we should start giving grants to people to just write articles in some languages. This hasn't happened yet, I think it may happen, during the next three or four years, this might start happening. #00:29:44#

31 IR: So that you prefer certain languages, small languages, in a way? #00:33:16#

32 IE: Yeah, it will be a very difficult question of how do we decide to select a particular language, and not another one, out of the hundreds that we could give a grant, and I currently don't have a good answer, but we should start doing that in one way or another. #00:33:24#

33 IR: Ok. Where is the hotspot of multilingualism in the Wikimedia Foundation? Where are the people who are concerned about that, where are the discussions, where do I have to look if I'm looking for relevant discussions? The language team? #00:33:46#

34 IE: Do you talk about Wikimedia Foundation organization, or the Wikimedia community, Wikimedia websites? #00:34:16#

35 IR: Both. First of all, the Foundation. #00:34:23#

36 IE: In the Foundation, it's our team, of course, the language team in the Foundation, and somehow, in practice... it's not my official role, but somehow I'm doing most of the communication with the outside world, like I'm doing it with you now, but we are pretty open, all of us are pretty easily reachable, but I guess that I actually respond to various questions most often. There are a few other people inside the Foundation, who are interested in this topic. I guess Trey Jones is the most notable one, he is in the search team, and search is the technology that needs very sophisticated language support, so he is working on that. Who else? There are a few other people, there are some other people. There is Muriel, she used to work on VisualEditor and now she works, I think, on Community tech,

but she is quite interested in various inter-language, internationalization things, so yeah, that is inside Foundation staff, what else? #00:34:27#

37	IR: Do you think that the topic has the right priority? #00:35:53#
38	IE: No. #00:36:02#
39	IR: No? #00:36:05#
40	IE: No, it should be much bigger, the language team for example: we actually grew in the last year or so, we have some new people, which is great, but I think that we should grow much more, we are currently about ten people, I think that should be more like... not just one ten people team, it should be more like, two of three, four teams working on various things, because our team mostly works on Content Translation, which is a very important product, but it's not the only thing to do, there a quite a lot of other things that should be done. #00:36:07#
41	IR: What are they supposed to do? Is it a more technical point of view? #00:36:48#
42	IE: Technical, yeah, things in technical infrastructure needs improvement, this Incubator thing needs improvement, major improvement. I have a plan for this, but it needs developers. The templates, I think I mentioned the issues that templates cannot be shared across wikis, I think we spoke about this. This needs a big change... what else? Wikidata is pretty good with multilingual support but also needs a few improvements. There are certain things in core MediaWiki, in how core MediaWiki supports languages, there are some pretty major bugs to fix there, and we are just ten people, working on ContentTranslation and on maintenance for Translatewiki, and ten people is not enough, we need more. At the current pace, it will take us many years until we fix all these things that I just mentioned. #00:36:55#
43	IR: So the language team, they are ten people? #00:38:04#
44	IE: Yes, I can give the precise count in just a few seconds... let's see... twelve, but not all of them are full-time. #00:38:07#
45	IR: Ok. And you are not situated in the United States, you come from all over the world? #00:38:26#
46	IE: Yeah, well... we recently hired two new people from United States, but everybody else is from Europe and India, and myself in between. #00:38:37#
47	IR: And there is no hierarchy in this team? #00:38:58#
48	IE: There is a hierarchy. #00:39:02#
49	IR: Yes? #00:39:03#
50	IE: There is a manager, the official title is engineering director, she also manages another team, which is pretty different. They do different experimental things, kind of related to languages, but not really the same thing, much more oriented at readers and not so much at editors. Not that it's not important, it's very important, it's a new team and they do some very different things of which I know very little, and we also have a product manager, yeah, that's the hierarchy. We also have a

program manager and a program manager is like a manager but the director is more like senior and strategic and the program manager it's more about administrating day to day things. #00:39:04#

51 IR: Ok. And what about the community. The committee, I think, is not only Foundation, there are community members as well? #00:40:02#

52 IE: It's most community members. I became a member of the community before I was on the staff of the Wikimedia Foundation. Language committee is definitely related to that, that is definitely an area, the talk page of the language committee. So if you just go to Meta and search for language committee, the talk page there is pretty active, and it's actually quite embarrassing, because language committee members should respond there more often, and we don't go there very often. We actually, we just discussed recently on our mailing list, how we can respond to questions there more efficiently. We managed to do that, because people asked relevant questions there. Translatewiki is definitely an important area, because Translatewiki has a support page where people ask a lot of questions about messages that are difficult to translate, and report all kinds of bugs, ask for new languages and so on. These are the import areas. #00:40:14#

53 IR: And do you meet personally as well? #00:41:33#

54 IE: Last time we met was in 2017 or 2018, it was a Wikimedia conference in Berlin. Two committee members happened to live in Berlin and another one lives elsewhere in Germany, and another one lives in Ireland, so it was relatively easy to travel from Ireland to Germany, and yet another one in Norway, which is also pretty reachable from Germany. We had a meeting in Berlin, that was the last one, and before that we had another meeting in Berlin in 2001. So yeah, two meetings in total over ten years, we should do it more #00:41:37#

55 IR: So, the members, they don't change a lot? #00:42:30#

56 IE: Sometimes they change, sometimes people just stop being active, or sometimes people on the internet get angry about something and just smash the door, this also happens. At the latest Wikimania in Stockholm, I met a really great linguist, Wikipedian and linguist, and I asked her whether she wants to join and she agreed, so she joined, which is great, because we needed new people. I think, we were becoming kind of stale and boring. We added her and she is really helpful. There should be more... it should be more active. I would love to see new people. Almost everybody is from Europe, which is not great, currently we have one member that is from India, we have zero people from Africa, which really sucks. There used to be two people from India, now it's just one, there used to be one member who was German, but he lived in Africa, and he was a big expert in African languages, which was really great, but for some personal reason he could not remain a member. He had to go offline, so we currently don't have any experts in African languages, which is really really bad, because Africa is a major area of potential growth. #00:42:41#

57 IR: I think we talked about that already, in Meta wiki, there was a different model in multilingualism chosen. Do you know why and are you involved in the discussion somehow? #00:44:17#

58	IE: I can tell you why. Meta is mostly English, officially it's not supposed to be exclusively English, and it's not exclusively English, there is a lot of content in other languages as well. It's mostly English. It kind of just reflects the practical facts on the ground that English is the most important language for the communication between the different communities, and when it began - I don't remember the year exactly, it was 2002 or 2003 I guess - it was before I was around. People just didn't think very much about different languages and also, back then, social media didn't really exist, barely existed, and MediaWiki was simply... I'm just guessing what happened. Instead of installing some kind of forum software for discussions, or using social networks, because again, social networks did not exist, Facebook started 2005, I think, they just used familiar software, which was MediaWiki, for discussions and various documents and stuff like that. I suggested to add the Translate extension there because for this very particular reason... well, two reasons... one was fundraising banners, writing and translation of fundraising banners happened on Meta, for a long time. It was extremely inconvenient to get them translated, because you would just have to write everything as raw wiki pages, which really sucked, especially for right-to-left languages it is a total nightmare to do that, whereas the Translate extension makes it very convenient, because it separates text from all the formatting and the tables and all these weird things. I suggested installing it there and now it has become much more convenient. So fundraising banners are translated there on Meta and another thing that is good for translation there is that quite often, I think it happens less now, but back then, there were a lot of big notifications, like a letter from the executive director of the Wikimedia Foundation to the communities, or a letter from the Wikimedia board about such and such thing, and various liaisons, Wikimedia Foundation liaisons, asked to translate this to various languages. And again, this was extremely inconvenient, and manual, you had to translate the whole page at once, and doing it in a right-to-left language was extremely difficult, so I recommended doing this also using the Translate extension, so for these two purposes Translate extension was installed on Meta. #00:45:45#
59	IR: And when? #00:49:25#
60	IE: When it was installed? 2011 or 2012. #00:49:26#
61	IR: Aha, ok. And before that it was only in English? #00:49:31#
62	IE: It was not only in English, but all other languages were added there without any structure at all, just were raw text without any markup. The funny thing was that I was recommending to install the Translate extension there before I was on staff, and then I became myself a staff member, that was one of the first things I did, I actually performed the installation #00:49:35#
63	IR: Yeah, and it was very successful #00:50:03#
64	IE: It was pretty successful, yes #00:50:07#
65	IR: I mean, this is really important information about this extension... I thought that Meta started already with Translate extension #00:51:11#

66	IE: Why didn't it start with Translate extension? I don't know, because initially Translate extension was only used for translating messages in software, not for pages, and then support for pages was added as a very experimental thing by Nicolas Laxström some time in 2009, or 2010, and initially it was, just a weird experiment for him, but I liked it and then I said: we can use the same thing for translating these notifications, and newsletters and fundraising banners, so I suggested installing it, and then we made a few changes there and we installed it, and that is more or less how it happened. #00:51:22#
67	IR: And do you think it's sufficient for multilingualism in Meta, or would you recommend ContentTranslation as well? Imagining that the project will grow and there will be a lot of translations, not only from English, but maybe also from the German chapter... #00:52:16#
68	IE: This is already possible. #00:52:49#
69	IR: Really, it is? #00:52:50#
70	IE: Yeah, it's possible. It's a bit of a hidden feature, but it totally exists, you can write a page in German, and there is a certain special page where you can change the source language, and then you can say, this page is in German, and then it will be translated from German to English or any other language, so this is very possible. #00:52:51#
71	IR: Ok, I didn't know that. #00:53:13#
72	IE: Yeah, this is possible. It is a relatively new feature from like two year ago, but, yeah, it exists. #00:53:14#
73	IR: But nobody knows... #00:53:23#
74	IE: I know that people use it, so it's not just me. Is it generally a good solution? It's mostly a good solution, there are some things to improve there, but we have two people in the language team working on this, it used to be just Nicolas, and he was doing it part time, now we have a new person, since like two months ago, and he is working on it full-time, so it's great, so Translate extension has been improved a lot recently. It's mostly a good solution, I don't think that we need Content Translation there, because Content Translation, at least in its current form, it's good for creating new pages, it's not very good for maintaining pages, and the Translate extension is very good for maintaining pages, but it's good for pages that are very tightly structured, and Wikipedia pages are not very tightly structure. So Content Translation is good for Wikipedia, and the Translate extension is good for more tightly structured page of the kind we find on Meta, so this is good, mostly good. The most common complains, which is quite expected, is that you have to add a lot of these ugly translate tags to translatable pages, which makes the page in the source language a bit more difficult to maintain and edit, with all these <translate> and <Tnumber> or <Tvar> and all these tags, but it's not a very big problem, it would be a nice problem to solve, but it would be a bit of complicated software project to make it easier to maintain. So currently it's not a super high priority. It's mostly ok, it's mostly appropriate. And the fact is that people use it a lot. #00:53:25#

75	IR: And it's a totally different way of translating I think. There are two ways, the Content Translation thing and Translate extension, it's totally different #00:55:33#
76	IE: Yeah, I mean, I can imagine in some very distant future that these two will possibly merge, and one on them will be abandoned and replace the other, but that won't happen next year, more like in a very distant future, maybe in five or seven or ten years .#00:55:45#
77	IR: Good, our time is up again. #00:56:03#
78	IE: That is ok, I can actually continue if you have any more questions. #00:56:09#
	[Goodbye]