Small Wiki Multilingual Editor Personas

Product | Design Strategy | Language Team

Prepared by Eli Asikin-Garmager
November 2020

WIKIMEDIA
FOUNDATION

Overview

With the goal of helping small wikis grow with translation, in 2020 the Language Team conducted research across 7 small wikis to investigate the editing and translation experiences of current editors, and better understand workflows of potential editors. A total of 42 contextual inquiries were conducted across these wikis: Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Punjabi, and Telugu.

From the research session data, the following 5 personas were constructed, and highlight the experiences of 3 existing, and 2 potential, small wiki contributors - all of whom are multilingual and regularly use translation in various ways to contribute to Wikipedia and/or online platforms.

Dharuna *
Current Marathi Editor — 37 years old

📍 Pune, India   🎓 Bachelor of science
🈯A Marathi, Hindi, English   ⚙ Electrical engineer

Niranjan
Potential Malayalam Editor — 44 years old

📍 Kochi, India   🎓 Master's degree
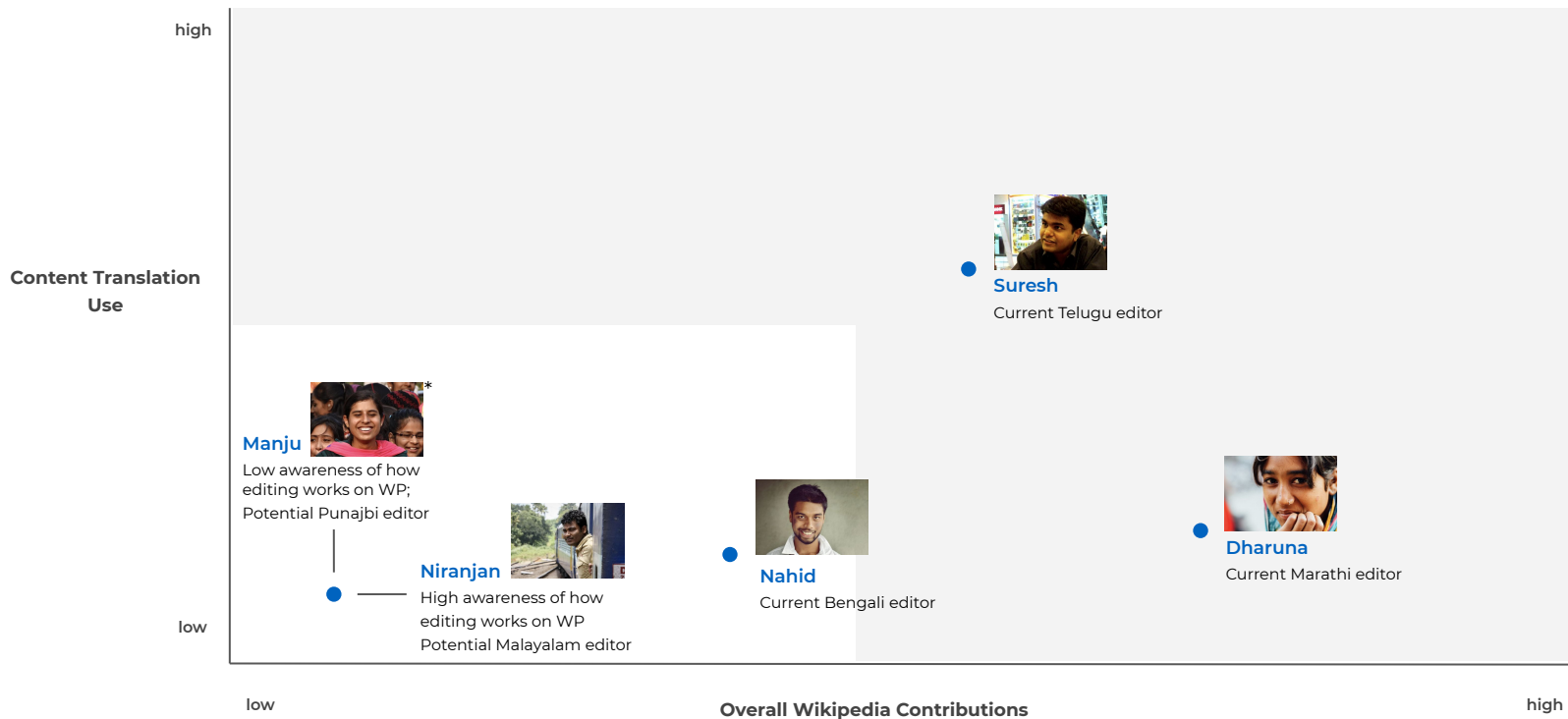🈯A Malayalam, English   ⚙ Journalist

Suresh
Current Telugu Editor — 27 years old

📍 Hyderabad, India   🎓 Master's degree
🈯A Telugu, English, Hindi,   ⚙ Small business owner
    Kannada

Manju
Potential Punjabi Editor — 41 years old

📍 Ludhiana, India   🎓 Bachelor degree
🈯A Punjabi, English, Hindi   ⚙ Teacher

Nahid
Current Bengali Editor — 22 years old

📍 Kolkata, India   🎓 Bachelor degree
🈯A Bengali, English   ⚙ Travel Industry

Editing & Translation at a Glance

Content Translation Use (vertical axis: low → high)

Overall Wikipedia Contributions (horizontal axis: low → high)

Suresh
Current Telugu editor

Manju *
Low awareness of how editing works on WP; Potential Punajbi editor

Niranjan
High awareness of how editing works on WP
Potential Malayalam editor

Nahid
Current Bengali editor

Dharuna
Current Marathi editor

* Please refer to individual personas for full image credits

Dharuna

Current Marathi Editor — 37 years old

📍 Pune, India

🎓 Bachelor of science

🗣 Marathi, Hindi, English

⚙ Electrical engineer

> "
> I try to compare how many people have read my articles and how helpful they've been. If the article I wrote isn't read by anyone, then what's the point?
>
> Women in India have many responsibilities other than just their work - the household, kids, etc. We want to spend our time positively, not engaging in long talk page debates to protect our edits.

Editing 🖥

Dharuna began editing English Wikipedia in 2014, but switched to editing Marathi Wikipedia after learning of it. Currently, she edits every week, focusing on both producing high quality articles, but also making the smaller edits she feels improves article quality - adding images and references.

She used Content Translation (CX) more as a newer editor after finding out about it in the Village Pump, but less so now. She likes the side-by-side language view of CX, but the machine translation output quality is demotivating. For drafting articles, Dharuna uses a combination of Source Editor, Google Translate, and Google Input Tools. She's accustomed to predictive input methods..

Marathi 9,000+ | WIKIDATA 1500 | WIKIMEDIA COMMONS 1600 | 1000

USE OF OUTSIDE TOOLS

few ———————————●——————— many

COMFORT WITH MARATHI INPUTS ON WP

low ——————●———————————— high

TECH SAVVINESS

low ———————————————●—— high

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS IN MARATHI WIKI

few ———————————●———— many

CONTENT TRANSLATION USE

infrequent ———●———————————— frequent

Goals

- Create high quality articles with images and links
- Maintain her reputation as an editor of high quality articles
- Make content available locally for people of her region
- Close the gender gap for articles on Marathi Wikipedia
- Receive recognition for her contributions and efforts

Challenges

- Finding sources
- Translating technical vocabulary
- Editing the Marathi script directly on Wikipedia
- Maintaining language consistency when co-editing articles
- Staying motivated when editing low quality machine translation outputs
- Finding Content Translation
- Protecting her edits from being reverted

Motivation

- *Wide reach* — knowing people read her articles and connecting with a wide audience through Wikipedia
- *Positive Impact* — doing something positive for her mother tongue and improving coverage of geographically- and culturally-local topics
- *Recognition* — receiving recognition for her editing activity

Suresh

Current Telugu Editor — 27 years old

📍 Hyderabad, India

🎓 Master's degree

🗛 Telugu, English, Hindi, Kannada

⚙ Small business owner

"
By reading English Wikipedia, I can see there are many topics still needed in Telugu Wikipedia. This makes me feel very disappointed ... and then I start writing.

What I enjoy about Content Translation is that it saves my time spent typing in Telugu, and it also adds references.
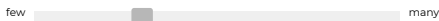
Editing 🖥

Telugu 3,000 | English 250 | W 200 | 350

Suresh began editing Telugu Wikipedia in 2017. He identifies articles needed in his wiki by starting at English Wikipedia. His editing activity follows his stream of reading and learning about new topics. He prefers to read on his smartphone, but edits primarily on a laptop. He uses Source Editor for small changes and Visual Editor for editing infoboxes and drafting new content.

Starting at the language selector on an English Wikipedia page, he often uses Content Translation to speed up the process of ensuring Telugu Wikipedia has coverage of current events topics and what he's reading about in local newspapers. If they're short articles, when he feels motivated, Suresh may publish 3-4 articles a day with the tool.
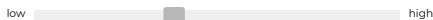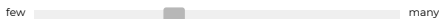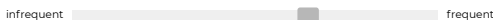
USE OF OUTSIDE TOOLS
few ▬▬■▬▬▬▬▬ many

COMFORT WITH TELUGU INPUTS ON WP
low ▬▬■▬▬▬▬▬ high
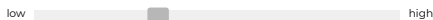
TECH SAVVINESS
low ▬▬▬■▬▬▬▬ high

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS IN TELUGU WIKI
few ▬▬▬■▬▬▬▬ many

CONTENT TRANSLATION USE
infrequent ▬▬▬▬■▬▬ frequent

Goals

- Improve Telugu Wikipedia coverage of topics in current events and local newspapers
- Increase the number of articles available in his wiki
- Build social connections and learn to edit more efficiently

Challenges

- Writing in Telugu, especially when editing machine translation outputs
- Editing infoboxes
- Machine translation limits, which block publication of content he feels is good quality
- Working on an article with Content Translation little-by-little when other editors may not know he's working on it and start again
- Images he adds keep getting deleted; he doesn't know why

Motivation

- *Wide reach* — reaching a wide audience through Wikipedia
- *Helping others* — providing access for those who don't read English or Hindi
- *Self-improvement* — learning and improving his English while translating articles
- *Positive feedback from community* — encouraging messages from other editors; knowing he's editing correctly
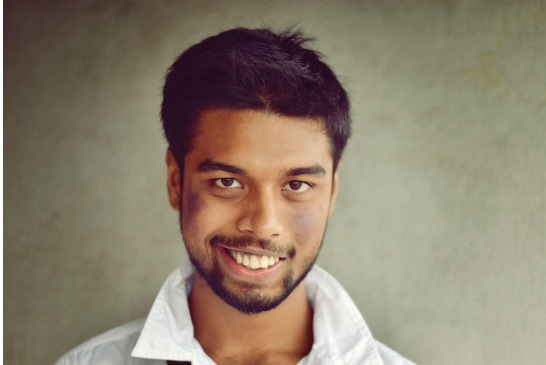
Nahid

Current Bengali Editor — 22 years old

📍 Kolkata, India   🎓 Bachelor degree

🔤 Bengali, English   ⚙️ Travel Industry

"

What I enjoy most is when others read what I've edited...I feel good.

Work that takes 5 minutes on a laptop takes me 10-15 minutes on smartphone.

I feel that if I continue editing, my talent and skills will increase from it.

Editing 📱

Bengali 450   English 150

Nahid began editing Wikipedia during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. He uses a smartphone for about 90% of his editing, and generally focuses on short edits and editing 2-3 paragraphs at a time. He enjoys editing topics that are geographically- and culturally-relevant to where he lives. His inherent knowledge of these topics provides confidence when faced with other editing challenges.

Using Google Translate, he may add 2-3 paragraphs to articles at a time. Typing in Bengali is easy on mobile, but Nahid relies on the Google Translate interface for writing on a laptop. He found out about Content Translation through an editing competition. But, he doesn't know it's out of beta in his wiki and cannot locate the Content Translation dashboard.

USE OF OUTSIDE TOOLS

few ————————————●——————— many

COMFORT WITH BENGALI INPUTS ON WP

low ——————————————●———— high

TECH SAVVINESS

low ————————————————●—— high

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS IN BENGALI WIKI

few ——————●———————————— many

CONTENT TRANSLATION USE

infrequent ———●———————————————— frequent

Goals

- Create content that readers find valuable
- Increase his skills and make some new friends
- Provide information for people in remote areas who don't speak English
- Keep the Bengali Wikipedia as up-to-date as larger wikis

Challenges

- Writing in Bengali on a laptop (enabling keyboard options)
- Editing infoboxes, especially on a smartphone
- Templates not available in Bengali Wikipedia
- Finding the best words when translating
- Editing more than a short paragraph on his smartphone
- Finding Content Translation

Motivation

- *Self-improvement* — feeling like he's learning new skills
- *Reach* — seeing content he's helped edit appear on Google searches and getting accessed by others
- *Article quality* — knowing an article on Bengali Wikipedia is just as up-to-date as the same article on a bigger wiki

Manju

Potential Punjabi Editor — 41 years old

📍 Ludhiana, India 🎓 Bachelor degree

🅰 Punjabi, English, Hindi ⚙ Teacher

"

When I start editing, there should be some help or recommendations, like knowing how to change settings so I can write in Punjabi more easily.

After publishing, I feel good that I wrote something and people will get to see that.

Content Translation turned out to be helpful, I think it's very beneficial when just getting started.

Reading & Editing 📱

Manju sees Wikipedia as the place to go get authentic and complete information. She reads both Punjabi and English Wikipedia. For example, she reads English Wikipedia to access information about specific medicines, but prefers reading about general health-related articles on Punjabi Wikipedia. While she understands that many writers are involved in creating Wikipedia, she doesn't understand who creates content and how.

After being invited to try editing, she first thought about editing when reading about a local village, and enjoys correct mistakes - fixing factual errors. Manju has access to a laptop, but generally writes and translates for her personal blog on her phone. One reason for this is because she feels she types fluently in Punjabi on her smartphone, using predictive text options.

When invited to try Content Translation, she had difficulty with keyboard settings and writing. She also faced challenges knowing how to interact with the tool and how to engage with the very long infobox that appeared at the top of the article.

KNOWLEDGE OF HOW WP EDITING WORKS

basic ▭————————————— advanced

COMFORT WRITING IN LOCAL LANGUAGE(S)

low ———▭——————— high

TECH SAVVINESS

low ————▭————— high

Goals

- Create visually-rich content
- Receive recognition for editing and writing
- Benefit large groups of readers
- Be part of a well-known and respected platform
- Understand her impact (feedback loop)
- Share her contributions with friends

Challenges

- How to start editing Wikipedia?
- Understanding who creates content
- Getting help understanding the process: how is content reviewed, where does she draft and save?
- Feeling confident about her content knowledge
- Adopting what the community would consider a neutral stance
- Feeling anonymous

Motivation

- *Positive feedback & recognition* — getting feedback from readers and recognition for her efforts
- *Wide reach* — a feeling of satisfaction from reaching a wide audience on Wikipedia
- *Writing to learn* — suddenly watching something that makes her want to learn and write about it

Niranjan

Potential Malayalam Editor — 44 years old

📍 Kochi, India   🎓 Master's degree

🗛 Malayalam, English   ⚙ Journalist

"

If it's not user-friendly, I won't use it.

Content Translation provides formatting, photos, and links. You can't get that from Google Translate.

Even a 50-year-old man can use Facebook easily. I expected that Wikipedia would be as easy, but it's not. It takes much more effort to learn.

Reading & Editing 🖥💻

Niranjan generally defaults to reading English Wikipedia, except for learning about local authors, films, and regionally-famous people. He rarely navigates within Wikipedia and instead relies on Google searches to navigate the site.

He has a good understanding of how anyone can contribute to Wikipedia, but a more limited technical understanding. Niranjan uses a Google search to find an English article he can translate to Malayalam. His first editing experience involved composing in Google Input Tools and pasting into Visual Editor. Outside of Wikipedia, he's accustomed to the interfaces of WordPress, Quora, and Medium.

Only with assistance did Niranjan find Content Translation (CX). He likes how it can translate simple sentences very quickly, and how links and references are automatically inserted. Two major barriers to use are feeling like it was too much work to edit machine translation output, and knowing 'what to do next'.

KNOWLEDGE OF HOW WP EDITING WORKS

basic ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬◼▬▬▬ advanced

COMFORT WRITING IN LOCAL LANGUAGE(S)

low ▬▬▬▬▬◼▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ high

TECH SAVVINESS

low ▬▬▬▬◼▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ high

Goals

- Contribute longer form articles
- Be able to draft articles in a way that feels familiar to current writing processes
- Receive recognition or credit for contributions
- Understand who co-contributors are and the 'behind-the-scenes' of articles

Challenges

- Adding citations
- Saving unfinished drafts to complete later
- Navigating the Wikipedia ecosystem
- A slow connection, causing tools like Content Translation to load very slowly
- Writing in Malayalam without predictive phonetic input tools

Motivation

- *Wide reach* — reaching a wide audience is very satisfying
- *Prestige* — participating as a writer on a platform seen by thousands
- *Feedback* — receiving feedback from readers is highly motivating

Appendix — Definition of Quick Matrices

USE OF OUTSIDE TOOLS

Use of Wikimedia-external tools while writing and editing

COMFORT WITH LANGUAGE INPUTS ON WIKIPEDIA (WP)

Degree of exclusive reliance on WP input tools vs. use of external tools to aid input

CONTENT TRANSLATION USE

Frequency of Content Translation use for writing articles

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS IN SMALL WIKI

General activity in social areas, including talk pages, Whatsapp or Facebook groups, and in-person gatherings

Potential editors

TECH SAVVINESS

General level of tech savviness on/off Wikimedia projects

KNOWLEDGE OF HOW EDITING WIKIPEDIA (WP) WORKS

Awareness of how content is created and ability for newcomers to edit

COMFORT WRITING IN LOCAL LANGUAGES

General level of comfort writing in non-Latin scripts, especially for most relevant local language(s)