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Translation Crowdsourcing –  
an Insight into Hows and Whys  
(at the Example of Facebook and Skype)

Master's Thesis

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## Introduction

Say you were offered to translate a product for a profit organization – without getting any pay for it – would you agree to do it? The chances are you would decline the offer and maybe even find it a bit offensive. However, there is a growing trend in the business world to involve consumers in translation process by inviting or enabling them to shape the way the final product reads. This is called translation crowdsourcing and an increasing amount of people are willing to dedicate their spare time to contribute to such undertakings. Why do they do it? And what precisely is translation crowdsourcing and how it works? The current thesis aims to provide an insight into this matter.

As crowdsourcing is a phenomenon that has started to gain its momentum over the last ten years there is still a lot of mapping to be done and great deal of knowledge and understanding to be obtained about it. For example, when looking at Daniel Gouadec's book from couple of years back which provides an overview of different kinds of translators, community translators are not mentioned once. Due to the lack of awareness, crowdsourcing experiments of many businesses have failed because they have mistaken crowdsourcing for simply free labour. It is essential to understand, however, that the crowdsourcing business is not about free lunches – even though community translators are typically not getting paid for their contribution, they are not as altruistic as one might suppose at the first glance. There are a variety of other reasons why they want to be involved, just like there are a variety of reasons why businesses choose to open a part of their production process to customers. Knowing these reasons can help companies who have not yet turned to crowdsourcing but are considering it better decide whether it makes sense for them to try translation crowdsourcing or whether letting go of the idea altogether would save them time and trouble.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the reasons why businesses turn to translation crowdsourcing and which models and methods they apply for that purpose. The focus is on the information technology industry as crowdsourcing has gained its strength in this industry and the majority of businesses that apply crowdsourcing are active in this field precisely. The overview relies on previous studies carried out on this topic in the localization world. A more detailed focus, however, is on the "crowd" itself. The thesis attempts to bring some understanding into why people are willing to participate in the translation crowdsourcing projects and what can increase their motivation. For this purpose two case studies are carried out among the volunteer translators of two different

communities – the open community of Facebook and the closed community of Skype. In the course of the case studies, a survey is conducted among 10 translators from either of the communities.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. Chapter 1 describes the essence of crowdsourcing in general. It illustrates the phenomenon by giving examples of various crowdsourcing projects, explains why businesses can benefit from the collaboration with the crowd, briefly describes how crowdsourcing came into being and names some of the most essential elements of successful crowdsourcing projects. Chapter 2 takes the focus on translation crowdsourcing. More particularly, it concentrates on two aspects: it points out *why* businesses apply crowdsourcing, and *how* they do it. The how-section introduces different models used in translation crowdsourcing and compares two contrasting models in more detail (at the example of Facebook and Skype). Chapter 3 looks at the motivation of volunteer translators. It introduces the findings of previous studies carried out in the industry and provides examples how businesses support motivation via incentives. A more detailed attention is again on the incentives provided by Facebook and Skype – this serves as a supporting material for the surveys carried out. The findings of the surveys are also revealed in this chapter. In addition to establishing the reasons why the respondents have chosen to be involved in these crowdsourcing projects, the surveys also aim to disclose if there are any substantial differences in the motivation of Facebook’s open community and Skype’s closed community translators. Depending on the survey results, it is possible that some conclusions will also be made about what Facebook and Skype can do to sustain or increase their community translators’ motivation.

# 1. Crowdsourcing

“The best person to do a job is the one who most wants to do that job.”

– Jeff Howe

This simple yet thought-provoking quote pretty much summarizes the function of crowdsourcing – the practice of mass-collaboration in the corporate world. Discussions about the purposes of this practice have caused a lot of stir over the recent years as crowdsourcing has gained more and more attention and followers. The current chapter aims to describe the essence of this form of partnership between producers and consumers. It illustrates the phenomenon by giving examples of various crowdsourcing projects, explains why businesses can benefit from the collaboration with the crowd, provides a brief overview of its emergence, and names the most common elements of successful crowdsourcing projects.

## 1.1. The notion of crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing – the term coined in 2006 by journalist Jeff Howe – is by definition the act of taking a job traditionally performed by employees and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call (Howe 2008:back cover).

Clay Shirky, technology professor and the author of *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*, has referred to the same notion as downsourcing and defined it as a situation where a job that has been so far viewed in the context of a profession is becoming a more widely practiced skill (“Situated Software”). To put it differently, in the case of downsourcing the manufacturer shifts the burden of certain functions down the supply chain to the customer (Howe 2008:112). This way the customers themselves can shape and improve the product they use. However, as the phenomenon is better known by the name of crowdsourcing, this term is used in the current thesis.

It is relevant to stress right from the start that crowdsourcing is not a single strategy. As Howe puts it, it is an umbrella term for a highly varied group of approaches that share one obvious attribute in common: they all depend on some contribution from the crowd, but the nature of those contributions can differ tremendously (2008:280).

To put the definitions into context, below are some examples of different crowdsourcing projects.

### Wikipedia

This multilingual, Web-based, free-content encyclopaedia project is mostly based on anonymous contributions. Wikipedia is written collaboratively by an international group of volunteers; anyone with internet access can write and make changes to Wikipedia articles. Wikipedia's intent is to have articles that cover existing knowledge, not create new knowledge (original research). This means that people of all ages and cultural and social backgrounds can write Wikipedia articles. Most of the articles can be edited by anyone with access to the internet (Wikipedia: "About").

In other words, the job of writing this online encyclopaedia – which by the way was at first meant to be done by a community of scholars (academics, philosophers) – is outsourced to a crowd. What is perhaps also interesting to know is that half of all edits to the encyclopaedia are made by just 2.5 percent of all users (Howe 2008:227).

### Threadless

Threadless online design community is an ongoing open call for T-shirt design submissions (Threadless: "What is Threadless?"). The submitted designs are scored by the public and the ones that get the highest score are then being printed and sold. In other words, all products sold by Threadless are inspected and approved by user consensus before any larger investments are made into a new product. And this way that the company not only gets virtual volunteers to create their shirts, it also knows how much demand exists for every shirt it produces (Howe 2008:229).

### American Idol

This hugely popular televised singing competition puts some of the most (and least) talented singers in the country on a national stage and lets the viewers decide who is the best (Howe 2008:223). Each season's winner receives a million-dollar contract as a reward, but the real winners are the recorded music companies who have the contractual right to represent the winner and sign a recording contract with them (Howe 2008:230). The show that debuted in June 2002 in the US is now broadcast to over 100 nations across the world, including Estonia (Wikipedia: "American\_Idol").

### SETI@home

This is a scientific experiment that uses internet-connected computers in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI). People can participate by running a free program in their computers that downloads and analyzes radio telescope data (SETI@home: “What is SETI@home?”). By recruiting the public, the scientists are able to significantly increase the amount of data gathered, recorded and analysed without the need for powerful computers (Howe 2008:12).

### InnoCentive

InnoCentive is an open innovation community of smart, creative people who provide solutions to tough problems in business, science, product development, math, and computer science. Companies, government agencies, and non-profit organizations post challenges and offer cash awards for the best solution (InnoCentive: “About Us”). The people participating qualify mostly as amateurs in the sense that they are not professionally trained as scientists, yet they are passionately curious PhDs who are eagerly willing to expend their free time for the sake of an intellectual challenge (Howe 2008:43).

As illustrated by the above examples, the types of crowdsourcing and the reasons for applying it can vary to a great extent. For example, the cases of Threadless and American Idol relate to James Surowiecki’s theory that “large groups of people are smarter than an elite few”. According to this theory, the key to the “right answer” lies in individual guesses that are aggregated and then averaged (whereas the best way for a group to be smart is for each person in it to think and act as independently as possible) (“Excerpt”, “Audio”). The phenomenon of the intelligence of the crowd is further analysed in Surowiecki’s book called “The Wisdom of the Crowd”.

The crowdsourcing theory behind InnoCentive is somewhat similar to the wisdom of the crowd theory. However, the main difference is that while in the case of wisdom of the crowd theory the answer is in the averaged guesses, crowdsourcing at InnoCentive relies on the diversity of the crowd theory. This theory says that as the people that the crowd consists of are diverse, the strategies they employ to solve a problem are also very diverse (as opposed for example to a group of scientists who have studied by the same books and thus also have a similar way of thinking) (Howe 2008:132, 143). Thus, thanks to a different way of thinking, a hobbyist from the crowd can be able to figure out a solution to a problem

that has left the in-house scientist puzzled (Karpen). Typically, such types of crowdsourcing projects involve monetary rewards to the crowd as they also require a lot of individual input and dedication.

The value of the crowd for the initiators of SETI@home project relies on the fact that the crowd is massive. It is neither the intelligence of the crowd nor the diversity of the crowd that is sought, but the large amount of people that allows increasing the amount of data gathered. The same model is also employed by the Estonian Genome Center that is inviting people to “donate” their genes for the creation of a database of Estonians’ health, genealogical and genome data. The aim of the database is to enable scientists to diagnose diseases, improve treatment and determine risk groups more efficiently in the future (Geenivaramu.ee: “Küsimustiku tutvustus”).

The example of Wikipedia illustrates the combination of the characteristics of different types explained above. On the one hand, it takes advantage of the massiveness of the crowd – a group of employed experts would hardly be capable of creating such massive encyclopaedia in a time period even comparable to the time it has taken for the "crowdsourced" Wikipedia to become what it is today. On the other hand, Wikipedia makes also great use of the diversity of the crowd and the fact that we are all smart but in different subjects.

The examples provided above are not meant to give a comprehensive overview of crowdsourcing models, but rather aim to give a general idea of the variety of models and purposes for engaging the crowd. For different types of classification see for example Howe’s categorization in *Crowdsourcing: How the Power of the Crowd is Driving the Future of Business* (2008:280-282), Karpen’s classification in terms of pay (“The Next Big Thing: Crowdsourcing”), or Hutch’s classification of competitive crowdsourcing models (“Four Models for Competitive Crowdsourcing”).

## **1.2. The emergence of crowdsourcing**

It is safe to say that the greatest contributor to the emergence and growth of crowdsourcing has been the development and spread of internet. For this reason, the beginning of crowdsourcing as we know it today can be regarded to be the development of GNU operating system, which among other things served also as a springboard for the software development in the form of mass collaboration. So how did it start?

In the early years of software development, all source code was *open* source code – i.e. open for anyone to see, copy, tweak and use for whatever purpose. As a result, the spirit of collaboration and free exchange of information developed in computer programming. At the beginning of the era of personal computers, however, patented software was beginning to be produced, giving rise to protest among a group of principled programmers who found that since the source code had once been open it should always stay open. One of those programmers was Richard Stallman who began writing a Unix-based operating system GNU in a way, which enabled other users to “steal”, copy, cut, paste, edit and – most importantly – help improve Stallman’s source code.

As other programmers were fascinated by the availability of Stallman’s source code, they started to work with him on his project. A good thing about GNU was that it was based on Unix – i.e. it consisted of thousands of small files with a clearly defined function and a mechanism for grouping these small files into a big programme. This meant that it was easy for other programmers to choose on which part of the programme they want to work, depending on how much time (or interest) they had for this project. This, in turn, meant that anyone could contribute a small part, yet do it very well. In 1985, Stallman founded a non-profit organization called Free Software Foundation “to promote computer user freedom and defend the rights of all free software users.” (Howe 2008: 47–52; “Unix”; Free Software Foundation).

The importance of the success of the GNU project from the crowdsourcing perspective lies in the fact that it went to prove that when a large and diverse labour pool works together they can provide just as good solutions as the most talented and specialized work-force. This is another one of the central principles of crowdsourcing that applies not only in software development, but also in other fields such as corporate science, product design, and content creation (Howe 2008:54).

### **1.3. Common characteristics of successful crowdsourcing projects**

The success of crowdsourcing projects might depend on a number of aspects. However, there are some characteristics that can be suggested as success factors on the basis of a variety of triumphant projects, such as Wikipedia, GNU or Threadless.

#### The community

It is self-evident that without the crowd there is no crowdsourcing. However, the crowd is not composed of every living person on the planet. As illustrated in the example about GNU above, one fundamental

thing that powered the phenomenon of crowdsourcing was the development of internet and emergence of online communities. According to Internetworldstats, there were over 1.8 billion internet users as at the end of 2009, the estimated population of the world being 6.8 billion people. This means that at large, “the crowd” consists of about 1.8 billion people who are online across the globe. In crowdsourcing terms, this means 1.8 billion people have the potential to contribute in some way to any crowdsourcing project. These 1.8 billion are spread across innumerable overlapping online communities, composed of people with similar interests. Thus, the basic organizing force behind crowdsourcing is the community (Howe 2008:99–100). Moreover, what unites all successful crowdsourcing projects is a deep commitment to the community, and collaboration is its own reward. The company, in this context, is just one more member of the community (Howe 2008:15, 189). In fact, the founder of iStockphoto, Bruce Livingstone, has implied in his interview to Jeff Howe that in the crowdsourcing business, the community does not work for a company but it is actually the other way around (Howe 2008:189).

Another thing that needs to be understood about the way communities work is that even though people may be enthusiastic and capable of some level of self-organization, they also require direction and guidance and someone to answer their questions (Howe 2009:284). This is why successful communities tend to have some sort of crowd management in place.

### Rewards

In addition to the commitment to the community, people also need to feel rewarded for their efforts in order crowdsourcing to work. People are drawn to participate because some psychological, social or emotional need is being met. And when the need is not met, they do not participate (Howe 2008:288).

In certain cases, the rewards can be monetary, although usually this is not the case. Instead, people are looking for, among other things, personal glory (ambition), the chance to interact with like-minded peers, the opportunity to improve their skills or simply learn something new. They might also participate to promote things they think have social value, to gain recognition and respect or to achieve self-fulfilment. Sometimes the reward can be the sense of ownership (Howe 2008:189, 282–283; Translia: “Free Translation”).

Despite the fact that people typically contribute to crowdsourcing projects for little or no money, they are very well aware when they are being exploited and viewed as a cheap labour, and in such cases

nothing stops them from leaving (Howe 2008:15). Therefore, people need to sense that the work they do is not serving business' needs only, but the beneficiary is the crowd (the community) itself.

### Divisibility

For a large amount of crowdsourcing projects, another essential characteristic is also the divisibility of the task. This means that it must be possible to divide the task into small enough components to facilitate participation. As Howe puts it, it is not because the people in the crowd are not intelligent enough; it is because they are busy (2008:285). The time people have available for contributing to a project varies greatly and therefore, the more people a business wants to attract to take part in its project, the smaller tasks it must be able to offer, allowing people to contribute as much as they can or are willing to, either time-, knowledge- or interest-wise.

There are certain crowdsourcing models where divisibility is not a necessary characteristic (InnoCentive, for instance). Yet it seems that in those cases the rewards tend to be monetary, which is probably related to the fact that they require much more dedication, especially time-wise. So possibly divisibility is an essential factor only in projects where the "work force" does not receive substantial monetary rewards.

## **1.4. Delimiting the notion of crowdsourcing**

In the situation where "crowdsourcing" has become a new trend term used for various types of crowd collaboration, it is useful to remember that crowdsourcing is not everything that a crowd of people are doing together. Yet as we are talking about a relatively newly defined phenomenon, it is not always easy to determine the thin line between crowdsourcing and other types of crowd co-operation. For the purposes of this thesis crowdsourcing will be referred to in the context of Howe's definition, according to which the collaboration of the crowd can be regarded crowdsourcing when the crowd does the job that is traditionally performed by employees. From that it follows that the initiator of the process should be an institution (a corporation, non-profit organization or any other economic entity) that uses the crowd instead of hiring employees or outsourcing from services providers. In other words, crowdsourcing involves building a business around the project (Howe 2008:177), while user-generated content, for example, is generally created outside of professional routines and practices and does not have an institutional or a commercial market context (Wikipedia: "User-generated content").

This idea is supported also by the article about “mass-collaboration” in Wikipedia, which lists crowdsourcing – as a form of mass-collaboration – under the “Business” section:

*The concept of mass collaboration has led to a number of efforts to harness and commercialize shared tasks. Collectively known as crowdsourcing, these ventures typically involve on an online system of accounts for coordinating buyers and sellers of labour. (Wikipedia: “Mass collaboration”)*

Put another way, crowdsourcing is not really a new way of working, but applying the practice of mass-collaboration in the corporate world (Imas).

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To sum up, one of the most remarkable things about crowdsourcing is that it has not only changed the way businesses work but also the way they perceive the role of their customers. And more importantly, the fact that crowdsourcing has become so popular and applicable shows that the way customers perceive themselves has also changed – there are surprisingly many people out there who do not want to consume passively, but to participate in the development and creation of products meaningful to them (Howe:14). And this is precisely where crowdsourcing steps in.

## 2. Translation crowdsourcing

As the name implies, translation crowdsourcing is a branch of crowdsourcing, sometimes also called community translation. To prevent any misunderstanding as to the terms used in this thesis, it is expedient to specify that while a community can translate any text on their own initiative as well (e.g. a group of enthusiasts agree to translate a book, film, play etc), the current thesis refers to community translations only in the context of crowdsourcing.

Drawing on the definition of crowdsourcing in general, translation crowdsourcing refers to a situation where a company outsources translation to a crowd. This way, people (i.e. usually the community of the product users) are invited to translate the product by themselves.

The example often used when talking about community translations is Facebook. This social networking site that was launched in 2004 has been translated by Facebook community. Currently, Facebook supports over 70 languages, while their Translations application that was developed for translation crowdsourcing was launched only at the beginning of 2008; up to then, Facebook was available only in English. Facebook model and its peculiarities will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2.1 below, while the following sub-chapters focus on different models used in translation crowdsourcing and analyse the reasons why businesses hand translation over to the crowd.

### 2.1. The reasons for applying translation crowdsourcing

Since translation crowdsourcing is not related to innovation or problem solving *per se* (as opposed, for example, to InnoCentive's crowdsourcing model), there are typically no monetary rewards involved. This has led to the often prevailing understanding among bystanders that the main reason why businesses are using volunteer translators as cheap labour is to cut their costs. However, this assumption has been rejected by a study carried out by Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA) where the majority of companies indicated that they are *not* implementing crowdsourcing to reduce their costs (Ray and Lommel 2009:1). Furthermore, myGengo's publication on the state of translation industry adds that "while the idea of free translations by crowdsourcing translators may be appealing, the process itself is not as easy (or as free!) as it sounds. Developing a system to take advantage of crowdsourcing costs money, time and development expertise – inevitably creating a hurdle for most people wishing to implement this approach" (Romaine and Richardson 2009:16). Looking from the opposite angle,

however, the advantages of implementing crowdsourcing are contributing to the increase in revenue. So what are then the reasons that make businesses turn to their communities for translation, and in what way do they help increase revenue? Below is a summary of the main reasons that have been outlined in various studies and articles.

One of the main reasons for using crowdsourcing is considered to be increased language reach. Crowdsourcing can drastically increase the number of languages that are covered but would not be covered when traditional (i.e. paid) translation model was used. On the one hand, greater language reach helps companies to gain a better market share and trust of its potential customers and/or members. To put the value of language reach into numbers, myGengo's study on the state of the translation industry reveals that only 52% of non-English speakers surveyed buy from websites where the information is presented in their language, while people who have little to no English skills are 6 times more likely to *not* buy from English-only sites. What is perhaps even more surprising, 56.2% of the respondents said that when making a purchase decision, information written in their own language was more important than a low price (Romaine and Richardson 2009:10). Although this data concerns distinctively the field of e-commerce, it certainly gives reason to consider as wide language support as possible in all business fields, as in the business world everything usually comes down to revenue.

In addition to serving commercial interests, the opportunity to translate into any given language can also serve the interest of smaller languages for which there is often little or no business justification to localize into. Many of such languages benefit from the willingness and motivation of native speakers to support and promote their language on various websites and applications (Ray and Lommel 2009:4). From the company's perspective, applying a crowdsourcing model for small languages allows to test whether a new language will be successful or not "in the wild", so to speak, without requiring a huge amount of overhead (Ray and Lommel 2009:85).

Some of the respondents in the above-mentioned LISA survey regarded the issue of language reach as an ethical matter. They said they have an ethical responsibility to provide as much high value content as possible in as many languages as possible, to provide a fairer chance for millions of people to access content that the developed world takes for granted. This was supported by the explanation that in the non-English speaking world there are many people with domain expertise who may eventually be willing to contribute to sharing knowledge that transforms human life (Ray and Lommel 2009:26).

Another important motivator for using translation crowdsourcing is believed to be the opportunity it provides for businesses to become closer to their customers. According to this theory, enabling your customers to participate in the development process and empowering them to create new solutions leads to building brand recognition and builds up loyalty (Ray and Lommel 2009:4). This, in turn, allows growing the user-base and further engaging the community for other activities in the future, e.g. in providing feedback on products and services (Ray and Lommel 2009:17).

One frequently mentioned reason is also fast turnaround time, which enables businesses to accelerate the time-to-market, especially for versions that they would not be doing if it were not for the crowd (e.g. in Ray and Lommel 2009:4, Tom Edwards). One of the best examples to illustrate quick turn-around times is definitely the Facebook who crowdsourced the translation of its whole site into French in less than 24 hours, into German in a week and into Spanish within two weeks. Put aside the quality issues, the fact that it happened so fast was basically a revolution in translation crowdsourcing, giving a reason to highlight it even more than two years later.

Reaching these objectives grows user-base, which most probably results in the increases of revenue. However, to reach these objectives, translation crowdsourcing requires investments into a proper supporting infrastructure. In the case of software/user interface translations, an additional functionality is often required to the code so that the software can be easily integrated into the crowdsourcing platform (Ray and Lommel 2009:25). Facebook, for example, developed its own Translations application, which, among other things, is intuitive and easy to use, so no special training is required. In addition, as explained above, investments into crowd management resources might also be necessary.

## **2.2. Different models for translation crowdsourcing**

Just like crowdsourcing is an umbrella term for various crowdsourcing workflows, there are different ways to implement translation crowdsourcing as well, based for example on business goals and needs (e.g. how important are translation deadlines, which rewards is a business willing to offer in turn etc). Broadly speaking, translation crowdsourcing models can be divided into two distinctive categories, based on the openness and exclusivity of the community.

### Open community

Open community means that anyone can participate in the crowdsourcing project, but as a rule, participants must be registered users and there is usually an automated vetting system for linguistic testing or a voting mechanism to allow the best content to rise more quickly to the top (Ray and Lommel 2009:59). A typical characteristic of open crowd model is that there are no fixed deadlines; the company can probably use different motivators to hurry the crowd, but the actual turnaround time depends on the crowd. For that reason, at the time of the release, the only language that supports the whole user interface (or a document, website etc) is the source language. When users select any another language, they see a mixed-language version. In terms of rewards, the current study has not managed to identify any cases where open community would be motivated with monetary rewards. Moreover, as the amount of contributors is usually huge and deadlines are loose, there is actually no motive for the business to offer monetary or material rewards. A good example of a translation crowdsourcing project that engages an open community is Facebook (see also chapter 2.2.1 below).

### Closed community

In the case of closed community, the company limits crowd membership and selects the members carefully (the membership is subject to certain requirements). This means that the community is more exclusive and belonging to the community can also place certain obligations on the crowd, e.g. confidentiality agreements and translation deadlines. Being able to set translation deadlines enables the businesses to release the translated versions together with the source language release. This can help to ensure positive and consistent user experience for example in cases where the releases are improvements/upgrades of the previous product versions. Thanks to the closed nature of the community, the business has a better overview of its members, and thus a more personal approach to members is possible. The rewards offered in return for translation include for example free products or token gifts. According to Ray and Lommel, closed community model is currently the prevalent trend in translation crowdsourcing in the software industry (2009:59). Closed model is applied for example by Skype (for further details see chapter 2.2.1 below)..

In addition to these two models, LISA's crowdsourcing survey has pointed out two variations of open and closed crowd model (2009:59–60).

### Moderated crowd

In the case of moderated crowd the company opens crowd membership to everyone, but implements some type of moderation function. The control consists of a set of rules, controls or gatekeepers. Anyone can apply to play, but the company decides whether and how they play. For example, in the case of TEDTalks, the TED<sup>1</sup> organization matches volunteer translators with a vetted editor from the crowd and then allows them 30 days to finish the project, but TED itself controls the final "publish" button (TED: "TED Open Translation Project").

### Hybrid model

We can talk about hybrid model if one of the models above is combined with in-house linguists/testers/project managers etc, and/or with services from language services providers. For bigger languages, Facebook employs also this kind of model.

To get a better insight into the different models and their details, let us compare two businesses, one of which applies an open crowd and the other one a closed crowd model.

## **2.2.1. Comparison of the open and closed model at the example of Facebook and Skype**

As the title of this subchapter reveals, the companies chosen to illustrate translation crowdsourcing models in this thesis are Facebook and Skype. The rationale for selecting these two companies is explained below.

Firstly, differences always become best visible in case of contrasts. That is why I am aiming to compare the open and closed model as they are more contrasting towards each other than towards the moderated or hybrid model.

Secondly, Facebook has created a lot of stir with its unexpectedly successful crowdsourcing model and is a prominent example of the open crowd. Additionally, Facebook provides a good opportunity to get into contact with most active community translators (via the Leaderboard) to carry out a case study, and to personally test the application used for crowdsourcing translations.

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<sup>1</sup> TED is a small nonprofit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. See <http://www.ted.com/>

And thirdly, my job at Skype localization team has enabled me to get a thorough understanding of Skype closed crowd model and allows me to get into contact with the closed community translators for the purposes of the case study.

Considering all that, Facebook and Skype were the most appropriate objects of study for this thesis.

## **Facebook**

Facebook – a social networking site that came into being in 2004 – launched its Translations application in January 2008, turning the translation process over to their users, that is, “to the people who understood Facebook and their languages best” (Lee).

The translation process consists of three main steps.

### Step 1: Translating the glossary

In this step, Facebook users discuss, translate and vote to decide translations for core Facebook terms. Using voting helps complete this step faster.

### Step 2: Translating Facebook

This step covers the translation of the whole site and Facebook has developed quite an elaborate system for this purpose. To start with, users can view the phrases that remain to be translated in random order, or they can browse the strings based on the pages where they are displayed in Facebook (this requires inline translation option to be switched on). Once the user has selected the string they want to translate, the original phrase, and a description if available, is displayed. The words that are listed as terms in the glossary are shown as underlined in the translatable string. In case other translators have previously translated the same string, their translations are also displayed.

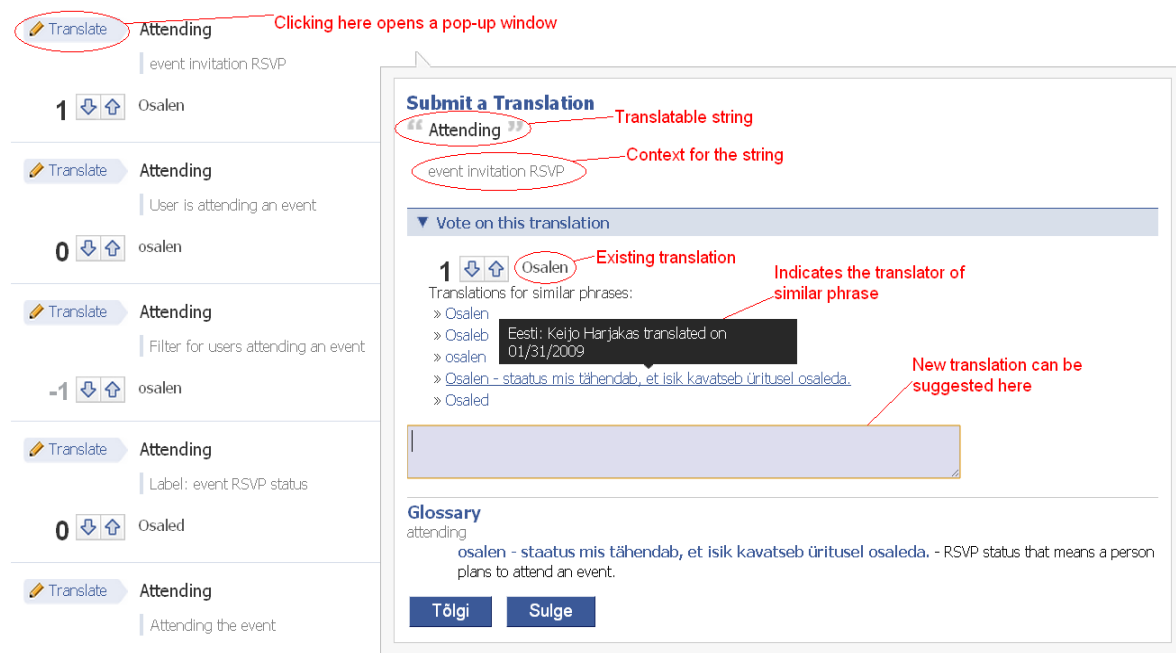


Figure 1. Facebook Translations application – translating an already translated string (source: Facebook)

Variables included in the string are displayed below the translatable string so that clicking on them inserts them to the field where translation is to be added. This makes translation process easier, as it eliminates the need to type them in manually. At the same time it prevents falsely inserted placeholders<sup>2</sup> and helps to guarantee that no placeholder is omitted (when a placeholder is clicked on, it is not only included in the translation, but also removed from the list of placeholders waiting to be added to the translation).

<sup>2</sup> Placeholders are untranslatable parts of a sentence or a phrase that are used to denote the location where a dynamically generated word/phrase is later inserted. E.g. "{name1}, {name2} and {name3} posted {=a blog post} to {name}'s {=Wall}: {share-title}".



Figure 2. Facebook Translations application – translating a string with placeholders (source: Facebook)

Users can also activate inline translation, which means that translations can be submitted while browsing Facebook. When this translation mode is enabled, the translatable strings are underlined in red on all pages that the user opens in Facebook. Strings that the user has previously translated are underlined in yellow, while strings translated by someone else are underlined in green. A right-click on any of the underlined strings opens the translation pop-up window where translation or correction can be submitted.

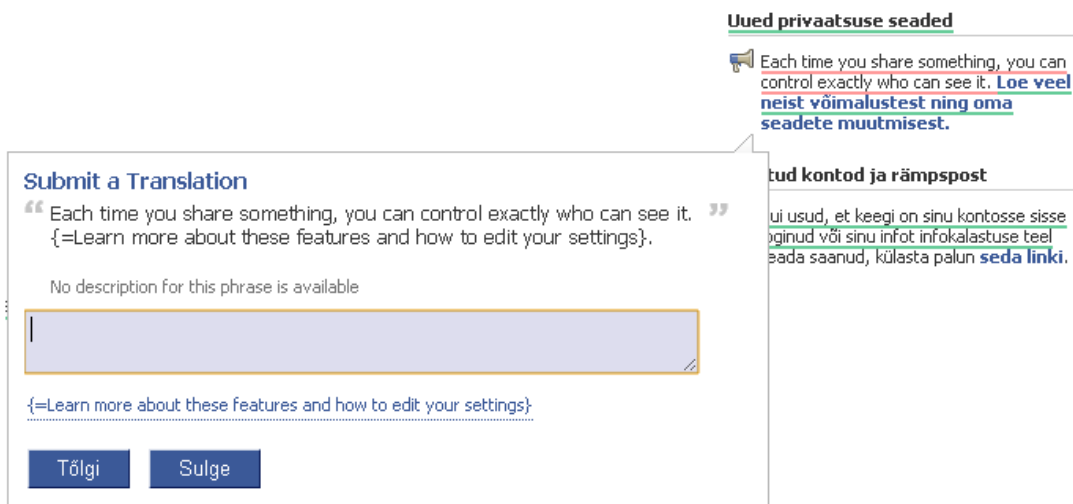


Figure 3. Facebook Translations application – inline translation (source: Facebook)

### Step 3: Voting and verification

In addition to translating, users are also invited to „assure high quality by voting up good translations and voting down poor translations“. This process is very similar to the translation process in step two, except that instead of submitting translations, users can cast votes. Here, too, inline voting mode can be enabled. Users are asked to „test and confirm that all parts of Facebook work well in the given language, and review and verify important pages, emails, and workflows“.



Figure 4. Facebook Translations application – voting (source: Facebook)

Besides these three steps, there are also other supporting elements incorporated in the Translations application. For example, there is a discussion board that allows for a discussion throughout all three steps. It is a good place to discuss language-specific topics: to ask others' advice with grammar or spelling issues, or to make agreements on a consistent translation of some terms. Additional elements within this application are style guide (not available for all languages), glossary, help documentation with detailed instructions and the leaderboard, which ranks the most active Facebook translators with their names and profile pictures included.

When we look at Facebook from the perspective of the crowdsourcing models explained in chapter 2.2, it is evident that Facebook employs the open crowd model. Almost any Facebook member has the

access to use the Translations application. The only restriction is imposed on newly joined members who will get the following error message when trying to access the application:

"We require users to have joined Facebook for a certain amount of time before they can participate in the Translation Application. Please come back again later."

## Skype

Skype implements two different types of crowdsourcing models – one for its so-called official languages (closed crowd) and another that enables anyone to translate Skype into any other language (open crowd). Since the aim of this chapter is to compare the closed and open model, this subchapter focus mainly on the model that is applied for the official languages.

### Closed model

“Official languages” in Skype terminology means that the translations into these languages are done prior to the release and the respective language files are included in the installer that can be downloaded from Skype’s website. This group of languages can also be referred to as main languages.

The translations into these main languages are provided by Skype translators community that grew partly out of its pool of beta testers<sup>3</sup>. It is a closed community and since these people are doing pre-release translations, they have also signed a non-disclosure agreement with Skype that forbids them to share any info about Skype that is not publicly available.

In addition to the translations, Skype uses community’s help also for other aspects of localization. For example, the translators help to check if locale-specific norms are taken into account – that lists are displayed in the correct alphabetical order, dates are displayed properly etc. In other words, they do not just look at the translatable strings, but the bigger picture.

As the community is a closed one, it makes it possible for Skype to have a personal relationship with them. This means that the translators as well as their contact details are known to the employees. In general terms, it can be said that there is one translator or a team of translators per language. However,

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<sup>3</sup> A beta tester is someone who tests a product before it is released. Product testers help companies identify weak points in their products which could cause consumer frustration, and they also identify specific issues which need to be corrected before a product can be released. Most commonly, beta testers work with electronics and software. (Wisegeek)

since Skype has developed slightly different applications for different platforms (e.g. Skype for Windows, Skype for Mac, Skype for Linux), there might also be different (teams of) translators for each platform. On the one hand this is related to the fact that the translators might be interested in translating only for the platform they are using. But there is also another consideration. One of the reasons why Skype uses community translators is to make sure that the user interface is translated by heavy Skype users who know how the application works and looks like. Yet the versions of Skype for different platforms vary to certain extent in terms of their look, features and functionalities, while the translators might not be using Skype on all those platforms. For this reason, it is good to have different translators for different platforms. Nevertheless, there are also exceptions, as some translators use Skype on all platforms and are also willing to translate Skype for all platforms. It is worth mentioning that a number of those community translators have been with Skype for many years.

The translation process in the case of Skype's closed crowd consists of two main steps.

- Translation – translators receive a language file directly from Skype and use the translation application appropriate for the given platform.
- Validation – translators have access to the unreleased version of Skype which already includes all the functions (strings) that are to be translated. They load their translation in Skype and use the application in that language to test whether the translations are valid and correspond to the functionality. To give some examples, validation can help to make sure that translations fit properly into the given space, and that button names, titles of dialogues etc are translated consistently (in some languages, the correct grammatical form depends on the location of the string).

It is not necessary to complete the translation before moving on to validation. In fact, translators can even choose to get familiar with the new functions or updates before translating anything. However, it is important to do a full validation once the translations are complete in order to eliminate potential issues caused by too long translations for example.

After the final translations have been submitted by the translators, a technical validation of the language file is done by Skype employee. The purpose of the technical validation is to check that nothing is broken, no placeholders have been accidentally deleted etc.

## Open model

Since Skype uses also the open crowd model next to the closed one, it is expedient to say a couple of words about that as well.

As mentioned above, Skype enables translations into any language. This means that anyone who wants to add a new language to Skype or change the existing translation to match their linguistic taste has the opportunity to do so. At the same time they are invited to share their translations with other Skype users on a public forum hosted at Skype website.

Why does Skype use the open crowd model in parallel with the closed one? The reason for limiting the number of official languages is partly related to the size of the installer file. If too many languages are included, it will make the download file too big and inconvenient to download. In addition, the closed community needs to stay small enough so that it would be possible to manage it, while the increased language reach is deemed important and supported via the open crowd model.

The translations process for Skype open crowd model is the following: Skype user takes the language file with all translatable strings from Skype application and translates it into the language of his or her choice. In some cases the translator can benefit from the official translations by choosing for example the Russian language file as a source file for translation into Ukrainian (nevertheless, the original source language is always present in all language files). Once the translation is completed, it can be uploaded to the official Skype forum (or anywhere else for that matter), thus making it available to the wider public. Skype does not check the completeness or quality of the translations nor take any responsibility or credit for them.

## **Which steps are taken to ensure quality?**

### Facebook

One of Facebook's means for quality assurance is Step 3 in the translation process: voting and verification. The translated strings are displayed for voting one by one. This voting mechanism can be accessed directly from the Translations application. Alternatively, users can also choose to turn on the inline voting option. This is a clever solution since this way users see translations directly in the context and when they discover something they do not like (or like) while browsing around in the environment, they are more likely to take action, because it is made easy for them.

The voting system itself enables to vote a translation either up or down, depending on whether you like the translation or not. Often there are several translations for one string, so the most pleasant one can be voted up and others down. To prevent cheating, everyone can cast only one vote per translation; voting one's own translation is not possible. Consequently, this should help guarantee that the user interface will be translated the way the majority of users prefer it to (provided that the majority are aware of their opportunity to have a say in the translation process).

Voting is not the only quality assurance method in Facebook (although the only one that is present for *all* languages). For bigger languages, Facebook has hired in-house linguists to review and improve translations. Below is an example of a job offering for a Turkish language specialist, describing the main responsibilities in and requirements for this position.<sup>4</sup>

### **Responsibilities**

- *Acting as company's representative for the overall quality of the language on our site. This includes supporting our community of volunteer translators, vendors, and internal groups within the company*
- *Reviewing and approving community-supplied translations*
- *Maintenance of the glossaries and style guides and performing various translation tasks, especially for highly sensitive content*
- *Work with remote teams in different time zones*

### **Requirements**

- *Great attitude towards work and people*
- *Native fluency in Turkish language and near-native fluency in English*
- *Strong familiarity with the Turkish culture and trends in social networking*
- *Familiarity with the Facebook Translations application as well as other computer-aided translation tools*
- *Experience in the translation and localization space as a translator and/or project manager, especially in high-tech industry*
- *Knowledge of additional languages (other than Turkish and English) –desirable*
- *An active Facebook user who is well-connected with the Turkish culture*

This means that in languages where there is a linguist hired, quality is further assured by linguistic proofreading/editing and signoff as well as by the availability and maintenance of glossaries and style guides.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Facebook

The fact that only users who have been with Facebook for a certain amount of time can provide translations serves also as a quality assurance tool, aiming to increase the likelihood that translators know the *meaning* of the English strings.

### Skype

In Skype closed crowd model, it is easier to avoid some of the problems that can be regarded as quality issues. For example, since there is one translator or a small team of translators per language, the occurrence of inconsistencies can be expected to be less frequent.

Like in the case of most community translations models, one of the guarantees as to the correct meaning of the translations is considered to be the fact that translators know the product through and through. However, if the function of an element or its location in the programme is unclear for the translator, they can consult with Skype employees or other community members, as there is a constant direct communication opportunity via dedicated group chats and one-to-one IMs.

Partly similarly to Facebook, Skype also uses hired linguists to help improve linguistic quality, but the approach is a bit different. The linguists are reviewing translations done by volunteers, but they are not authorizing their corrections as “the final” translations. Instead, their suggestions for corrections are returned together with their comments to the translators. If the translator agrees to a correction, they implement it in the language file; if not, they are not obliged to implement it, provided that they have a reasonable argument for disagreement (Skype employee also keeps an eye on such linguistic reviews and discussions and intervenes in the discussion if necessary). It is worth mentioning that most of the translators appear to appreciate that kind of feedback, as this helps them to improve their linguistic skills, and at the same time it prevents the situation where their opinion is ignored. Additionally, the co-operation between community translators and linguists supports consistency throughout all Skype translations, since the linguists are also reviewing other materials that Skype translates, while volunteers only handle the Skype client, which is proportionally a relatively small part.

As for Skype open crowd model, there are no steps taken to ensure the quality.

## Summary

To conclude this chapter, below is a table that summarizes the similarities and differences between the open and closed translation crowdsourcing model at the example of Facebook and Skype. It should be kept in mind that this table is not aiming to provide neither an exhaustive nor exclusive list of the characteristics of these two models, but highlights the differences between these two specific cases.

|              | Facebook  | Skype  |
|--------------|---|--|
| Similarities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Translation within the environment/context</li> <li>+ Linguists hired for review</li> <li>+ Non-monetary rewards</li> </ul>  |  |
| Differences  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A large group of translators per language</li> <li>+ No obligations</li> <li>+ Can choose the strings they want to translate</li> <li>+ Linguists have the final say</li> <li>+ No deadlines. A mixture of source and target displayed</li> <li>+ Post-release translations</li> <li>+ Communication with other translators via discussion board</li> <li>+ Impersonal relationship between Facebook and translators</li> <li>+ Allows for a vast language reach</li> <li>+ All users can vote and suggest new translations (aiming towards a consensus)</li> <li>+ More room for inconsistencies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ One translator or a small team per language</li> <li>+ Non-disclosure agreement signed</li> <li>+ Have to translate all strings</li> <li>+ Translators can argue with linguists</li> <li>+ Fixed deadlines, linguists translate if necessary</li> <li>+ Pre-release translations</li> <li>+ Communication with employees and linguists in dedicated chats</li> <li>+ Personal relationship between Skype and translators</li> <li>+ More limited language reach</li> <li>+ Translators get personal feedback from linguists</li> <li>+ Translators contribute also to other aspects of localization in addition to translation</li> </ul> |

Table 1. Similarities and differences between Facebook and Skype in translation crowdsourcing.

To sum up, it is not relevant to discuss which one of those solutions is better because a lot depends on which model meets company's needs and priorities, e.g. how strict are deadlines, how important is language-reach etc.

### **3. Motivation of the crowd**

One of the most puzzling questions in translation crowdsourcing as well as in crowdsourcing in general is: what motivates the crowd to contribute and dedicate their time for the benefit businesses, to serve their commercial interests. In fact, LISA's survey on translation crowdsourcing identifies the question of how to motivate and manage the crowd over long term as the number one concern of businesses that apply crowdsourcing (Ray and Lommel 2009:15):

[What are] the biggest challenges that everyone sees? It's not quality, tools, cost savings or having a community to leverage. It's engaging, recruiting, motivating and rewarding the crowd for the long haul that everyone perceives as the biggest challenge (Ray and Lommel 2009:21).

According to this survey, in the initial phase, communities are happy to help businesses in exchange for recognition, free products etc. However, to sustain this engagement over the long term, or to pull from crowds that are not already engaged in some way may require other methods and models that have not been figured out yet (Ray and Lommel 2009:21).

It is evident that the crowd has to get something in return. To quote Jeff Howe, "the crowd will give away their time – their excess capacity – enthusiastically, but not for free. It has to be meaningful change." Although the question of what is a "meaningful change" has been briefly touched upon in the previous chapters, the current chapter will look into in more depth. It will investigate which motivators have already been identified or suggested by others, and introduce the findings of a case study for the motivation of Skype and Facebook communities.

#### **3.1. Previous studies**

Jeff Howe suggests various reasons why people are contributing to crowdsourcing projects. For example, he writes that crowdsourcing capitalizes on the fact that people's interests are more diverse than their business cards would have one believe (2008:38). He explains that together with the emergence of internet – the greatest instrument for distributing knowledge – people have begun to feel overeducated and under-fulfilled, which makes them seek more meaningful work outside their workplace (2008:29). In other words, crowdsourcing provides an opportunity for everyone to realize their potential.

Another relevant point on motivation is presented by Daniel Pink<sup>5</sup> in his TED talk titled "The Surprising Science of Motivation". He claims that monetary rewards and the "carrot and stick" method that worked in the 20th century are no longer appropriate in the 21st. Instead, people have a desire to do things that matter, that they like, that are interesting or a part of something important. The new operating system for businesses, he concludes, revolves around three elements: autonomy (the urge to direct our own lives), mastery (the desire to get better and better at something that matters) and purpose (the yearning to do what we do in service of something larger than ourselves). Although Pink talks about motivation in the context of how to motivate employees, the elements of mastery and purpose can be applied to crowdsourcing as well. For example, the opportunity to contribute to the development of one's native language can be seen as something that matters.

A further element that is partly related to the motivators suggested above and is often pointed out when talking about the motivation aspect is the factor of ambition. Symantec<sup>6</sup>, for example, is convinced that people not only love having products in their language, but they also love the fact that other people in their own country know that they contributed to making it possible (Ray and Lommel 2009:80). Howe illustrates the factor of ambition with an example where a newspaper was looking for ways to motivate the community submit articles for the paper. When they first included a feature for that purpose on their website, it invited people to "Be a citizen journalist". Due to the lack of submissions the invitation text was changed to "Tell Us Your Story", but there was still no interest. The words that finally had an effect were "Get Published" (2008:106). Howe explains that ambition relates to the sense of ownership and the crowd likes to feel ownership over their contributions. They can sometimes even develop proprietary feelings over the company itself (2008:181). For this reason the contributors also expect transparency from the company, while any sense that they are being used or exploited will drive them away (2008:182).

In order to understand how companies have reinforced the sense of ambition, here are some examples<sup>7</sup>:

- *Leaders board*. A leader board is usually an element on the company or community website, listing the most active or otherwise most valued contributors. Leader boards are applied for

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<sup>5</sup> Daniel Pink is an American writer who has written four books focusing on the changing world of work (Wikipedia: "Daniel H. Pink").

<sup>6</sup> Symantec is a large software company providing security, storage and systems management solutions (<http://www.symantec.com/about/profile/index.jsp>).

<sup>7</sup> Based on Ray and Lommel 2009:76-79.

example by Asia Online, Second Life and OpenOffice. Second Life's translator-of-the-month title can also be categorized under this approach.

- *An insignia on member's profile or avatar.* This means that the (most active) contributors can add a corresponding notice, title or insignia to their profile or avatar and thus distinct themselves from other members (for example, Second Life).
- *Blog entries.* Several companies thank their translators publicly also via company blog entries (e.g. Second Life, OpenOffice and Symantec). Twitter and company forums are also used as platforms for acknowledgement.

Communities are also rewarded with material incentives. The most common ones appear to be token gifts (e.g. T-shirts), product discounts or free products, etc (Ray and Lommel 2009:80). Although such motivators can be much appreciated by the contributors, they cannot probably be considered as the driving force for joining the community of volunteers; common sense says they constitute as added value. It can be assumed that given the characteristics of the open crowd model, material incentives are used mostly in closed crowd models.

Some companies that participated in LISA's survey (e.g. Second Life) also pointed out community events as motivators (2009:78). At those socializing events the community can come together (possibly from different parts of the world) and meet in person not only with the other community members but also with the company's representatives with whom they usually communicate online. A similar practice is in place also in the iStock community (Howe 2008:194). The importance of such events? They help sustain the sense of belonging and being part of something – a group of like-minded makers or thinkers. *Collaborative Futures* – a book written by collaborators about collaboration – suggests that some collaborators feel a need to belong to something bigger; some like being part of a community purely for the sake of belonging; while others, whether they admit it or not, feel that they don't have the motivation to create outside of a structure ("Motivation").

*Collaborative Futures* adds two more significant elements to the list of motivators: learning and productive selfishness. Learning can be motivating as a means of gathering experience, knowledge and skills to make self more marketable. This happens by working with better qualified others and is commonly the case in free software projects, but is also true in many areas of cultural production. In other words, the lack of payment is traded off against the knowledge acquired (*ibid.*). Productive

selfishness, on the other hand, can motivate consumers when they find a product is lacking some feature or function, or it does not meet their needs. Such people take action to improve the product exactly the way they want; they are acting out of personal need, and this selfishness is productive. It fulfils their personal requirements in a way an out-of-the-box solution could never do, and in the process creates useful tools and cultural artefacts for many other people (*ibid.*).

In conclusion, there are no universal instructions on how to keep the crowd happy. It is not so much about offering the right incentives; instead, there probably needs to be a “valuable something” that makes the crowd feel interested and come around, and only then it is possible to start learning which incentives make this particular crowd stay around.

## **3.2. Incentives by Facebook and Skype**

This chapter will outline the incentives provided by Facebook and Skype. The purpose of this is to use these findings in the surveys carried out among Facebook and Skype volunteer translators and to see if the communities appreciate the provided incentives and to what extent do they find them motivating.

### **3.2.1. Incentives by Facebook**

As is characteristic to an open crowd model, Facebook does not offer any material incentives. However, it has developed a system of ambition-related incentives, which are the following.

- Recognition via Leaderboard

The most active Facebook translators and voters are ranked in the Leaderboard under Facebook Translations application. The leaders are listed with their full name and profile picture, and there are different lists for week’s, month’s and all-time most active members.

- Recognition via insignia

By clicking on a name in the Leaderboard, statistics and awards for this member are displayed. The statistics includes details such as the time of the first and last translation and vote, as well as the number of votes submitted. Beneath the statistics, there is a dedicated awards area that shows which awards this user has received for their efforts. The awards are provided in the form of insignia and are divided into the following groups:

- Voting participation: titles granted for number and accuracy in voting on translations.
  - ✓ Mayor
  - ✓ Senator
  - ✓ President
- Published translations: titles granted for accuracy and number of translations submitted.
  - ✓ Blogger
  - ✓ Journalist
  - ✓ Novelist
- Published words: titles granted for accuracy and length of translations submitted.
  - ✓ Typesetter
  - ✓ Bookbinder
  - ✓ Publisher

First Translation: at 10:44am on January 8th, 2009  
 First Vote: at 10:36am on January 8th, 2009  
 First Award: at 10:14pm on December 16th, 2009  
 Votes Submitted: 7476  
 Last Translated: at 1:16pm on March 12th, 2010  
 Last Voted: at 11:28am

**All Awards**

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <br><b>Mayor</b><br>Dec 16, 2009      | <br><b>Senator</b><br>Dec 16, 2009    | <br><b>President</b><br>Dec 16, 2009 | <p><b>Voting Participation</b></p> <p>Awards granted for number and accuracy in voting on translations.</p>   |
| <br><b>Blogger</b><br>Nov 14, 2009    | <br><b>Journalist</b><br>Nov 22, 2009 | <br><b>Novelist</b><br>Nov 22, 2009  | <p><b>Translations Published</b></p> <p>Awards granted for accuracy and number of translations submitted.</p> |
| <br><b>Typesetter</b><br>Nov 14, 2009 | <br><b>Bookbinder</b><br>Nov 22, 2009 | <br><b>Publisher</b><br>Nov 22, 2009 | <p><b>Words Published</b></p> <p>Awards granted for accuracy and length of translations submitted.</p>        |

Figure 5. Facebook’s awarding titles granted for translating and voting (source: Facebook)

The more strings one translates or votes, the higher (and more prestigious) title in the given group one receives. What is perhaps a bit surprising is that these titles can be seen only via the Leaderboard in Translations application – they cannot be included to one’s profile page, for example. The same goes for the Leaderboard. Among other things, the case study will also try to identify whether the opportunity to attach such awards to one’s profile or displaying the ranking of the translators outside the Translations application would be considered more motivating by the current translators.

### **3.2.2. Incentives by Skype**

There are four kinds of incentives offered by Skype:

- When a new version of Skype is released, the names of all translators who were involved in the translation process are included in the official release notes<sup>8</sup>. The release notes are available at Skype webpage; search for the translator’s name in a search engine can also lead to the release notes.
- Community events – once a year Skype organizes an event for all its volunteer translators and beta testers (so-called Beta Days). It is a place where community can meet in person, socialize with others, but at the same time it is also an informative event with different exclusive seminars and presentations on Skype.
- Material incentives – token gifts, e.g. T-shirts, long-sleeves, bags, memory sticks, etc with Skype logo (usually twice a year – for Christmas and Beta Days).
- Free products – Skype provides the translators with free Skype Credit. Skype Credit can be used for calling landlines and mobiles or sending SMS from Skype, or for purchasing other Skype products, such as Online Number or Voicemail. However, Skype Credit is also necessary for testing purposes (i.e. to validate the translations).

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<sup>8</sup> An example of release notes: [http://blogs.skype.com/garage/2010/04/27/ReleaseNotes\\_4.2.0.163.pdf](http://blogs.skype.com/garage/2010/04/27/ReleaseNotes_4.2.0.163.pdf) (see pg 15: Appendix B – Languages supported)

### 3.3. Motivators for Facebook and Skype translators

To get an insight into what the community itself finds motivating, a survey was carried out among 10 Facebook translators and 10 Skype translators. The next two sub-chapters will present an overview of the study and analyze the responses of the participants.


#### 3.3.1. Facebook

The Facebook survey consisted of 13 questions, which covered the following topics:

- how heavy Facebook users these people are and how did they become Facebook translators;
- what are their reasons for translating Facebook;
- how do they feel about the incentives offered by Facebook; and
- what do they like and dislike about the Facebook translation system.

Ten survey participants were all translators for Estonian language. All of the respondents were in the all-time top 15 in the Leaderboard ranking (some of the people in top 10 could not be contacted or were not willing to participate, that is why the selection expanded to the top 15). The survey reflects the opinions of and info about these ten people and thus provides only an initial insight into the matter. It is not aiming to draw any conclusion about the whole Facebook community.

#### Findings

Not surprisingly, all of the respondents said they visit Facebook either at least once a day (40%) or at least two to three times a week (60%), which means they are very active Facebook community members. About two thirds of the respondents said they discovered the opportunity to translate Facebook either because their friends were doing it already (30%) or because they received the corresponding invite or notification from Facebook (40%). The rest of the respondents said they had noticed the icon of Translations application (  96% at the bottom of each Facebook page) and clicked to see what it was about (30%). In other words, Facebook has managed to catch the attention of some of their most active Estonian translators by invites, notifications and the shortcut icon, but word-of-mouth has also had a role to play.

To begin with, the survey asked the respondents to explain why they think it is important to have Facebook available in Estonian and why they personally have helped to translate Facebook or vote the translations. About a third of the respondents said that they could cope well with the English version, but it is probably more important for others to have a translated version. The other two thirds admitted that for them it is the question of patriotism and convenience to have Facebook available in Estonian. The reasons that were named were the following:

- more convenient (both for me and others), easier to use (both for me and others), makes Facebook available for all Estonians (i.e. also for those who do not understand English very well);
- it is important that everyone has the opportunity to use internet in their native language for searching info as well as for communication;
- (despite the fact that Facebook's Estonian translation is a bit clumsy) it encourages the youth to speak more in Estonian and use Estonian terms instead of the English ones;
- patriotic interest, but also convenience – having got used to using it in the native language, it would cause slight inconvenience if this opportunity was suddenly taken away;
- patriotism – updating/shaping the Estonian language (new terminology). Other than that, Estonian Facebook does not offer any other benefits at the moment because of the poor quality of translations;
- patriotism: Estonian translation of Facebook contributes to the development and survival of the Estonian language, and community-based translation model enables to make sure that the Estonian translations in Facebook apply the modern language.

As regards their personal reason to contribute, all of the survey participants pointed out the passion for languages or interest in translation. Additionally, the following reasons were named:

- I have done some translating in the past as well but Facebook poses a challenge because the volume of translatable strings is huge and the site is very popular;
- I am an editor/reviewer by profession and at first I voted to improve the quality of the Estonian user interface; later I also tried translating and enjoyed it;
- translating is one of my hobbies and I like correct Estonian language;
- at first I was curious to try translating, later I wanted to improve the quality;
- self-accomplishment (opportunity to put myself to test and improve my skills); something new and interesting; competitive nature (desire to provide the "right" translation). All in all, I did it

because there was a personal inclination and willingness to do it at that moment; it didn't necessarily have to be Facebook – Facebook was just there at the right moment to enable my self-accomplishment and getting feedback to my skills;

- a challenge to myself; the desire to improve the quality of translations because poor-quality and mistranslations became disturbing (e.g. misplaced or missing commas);
- opportunity to improve quality (not to allow others to worsen it); improve my linguistic skills; pleasant translation environment;
- enthusiasm for the Estonian language and the desire to improve the quality of translations;
- I like to translate and improve my translation skills; a good pastime. I also like that I can correct the translations that disturb me.
- I enjoy translating and use every opportunity I have to do it, but the fact that I can improve the quality of translations is also an important argument.

To summarize, the answers that were given support Daniel Pink's idea that people have a desire to do things that matter or are a part of something important – on the one hand the respondents deem it important that everyone can use internet and communicate in their native language, and on the other hand they feel they can give their tiny share to contribute to that and at the same time they can shape and support the survival and development of the Estonian language. In addition, Howe's standpoint that crowdsourcing provides an opportunity to realize one's potential was also proven by the responses. The Translations application definitely provides a good opportunity to put one's translation skills to test and also get feedback via voting. There is certainly a challenge in overcoming the conflict between "correctness" and "fluency" and trying to figure out translations that would on the one hand be grammatically correct (to win the sympathy of the "linguistic" people) and at the same time pleasing and fluent to read (to appeal to those for whom the grammar rules are not that important). Thus it can be said there is also a learning aspect to it. In addition, the desire to improve existing translations is related to productive selfishness, as this makes the environment more pleasant to use.

The next five questions in the survey focused on the topic of the rewards or incentives offered by Facebook: the Leaderboard and the awards (titles such as Mayor, Blogger, Typesetter). Two of these five questions focused on the Leaderboard and were posed as follows:

1. Do you like that there is a Leaderboard in the Translations application? Would you prefer if you could choose whether your name and profile picture are displayed there?
2. Do you think that the names of the most active translators could be highlighted somewhere else besides the Leaderboard? (E.g. as an expression of gratitude in some other part of Facebook)

Half of the respondents indicated that they do not care much about the Leaderboard. The other half did not consider the Leaderboard very important either, but pointed out some reasons why they liked it anyway:

- it is one of the few ways to get feedback for their efforts;
- it adds some competitiveness to the process and enables to see one's progress, plus it is interesting to see who are your fellow-translators;
- the competitive element is somewhat motivating;
- it is the main source for recognition, but it is necessary that the ranking took account of both the quality and quantity.

As for the opportunity to choose whether their names are displayed in the list, half of the respondents again said that it does not make a difference for them; three of them said that such opportunity should exist or that it would be nice if it existed; one respondent found that if s/he deserves a place in it then s/he is not ashamed of it, and another one admitted that s/he likes that his/her name and picture is listed there.

When asked if the ranking could be presented also somewhere outside of Translations application, 40% of the respondents deemed it a good idea because the translators contribute a lot and it would be a nice way to receive recognition for it. One respondent suggested that this could be done for example when the translation process has been more or less completed, while another one added that it would be nice to have a ranking where the translators of all languages would be included. 60%, however, said that the Leaderboard in the Translations applications alone is quite sufficient.

Based on the above it can be said that the Leaderboard was not considered very important from the point of view of ambition – none of the respondents seemed to have translated or voted considerably more just to get (peer) recognition from being listed in the top of the list. Instead, it was considered to

be a nice-to-have added value that creates positive competitiveness and enables to compare oneself with others.

The rest of the three questions about rewards concentrated on the titles granted for translating or voting a certain amount of phrases. The questions asked were the following:

3. Are you familiar with the titles (Mayor, Blogger, Typesetter, etc) that Facebook grants for voting and translating?
4. Would you like to have the opportunity to link these titles to your Facebook profile?
5. Have you voted or translated more phrases just to receive some of these titles?

The majority of the respondents said they are aware of such awards, but they had not created much interest in them. For example, some of the respondents admitted that they had noticed them but not bothered to investigate what they were really about; they also said that they are not sure which titles they have received themselves. Two of the respondents were totally unaware of these awards.

However, when asked about the opportunity to link the awards to their profile, the majority of the answers (70%) favoured the idea. It was explained that it might increase others' awareness and thus also interest towards the possibility to translate Facebook, but the titles should be clearer or self-explanatory so that everyone would easily understand what they are about. In addition, it was found that adding the insignia to one's profile would make the award more meaningful and there would be more motivation to make efforts for receiving it. 30% of the respondents said, though, that they would not want to attach the insignia to their profile. One reason for that could be the fact that the current titles are somewhat unclear or difficult to understand, but this requires further investigation.

As regards the motivational aspect of the awards, only one of the respondents said that s/he is currently trying to meet the criteria for receiving one of the titles in voting. Another respondent said that s/he is currently missing only one title, but it was not clear whether s/he was consciously taking steps to deserve that title. Other than that, everyone else said that they have not translated or voted phrases just to get an award, and about half of them added that receiving an award became as a surprise to them or that they had discovered these awards only after they had received all or majority of them.

Given the above, the titles have not had a very motivational affect on the ten respondents who participated in the study, but in general terms it might be worth testing if more meaningful titles that

could be also displayed on one's profile page served to increase motivation to be involved in the translation and voting process. All in all, based on this study, ambition has not been as significant motivational factor for these respondents as for example the desire to do things either because they matter (making communication available in native language, contributing to the development of the language) or simply because it enables them to realize their potential.

The next set of questions concerned the translation system and studied what the translators like or dislike about the Translations application. The following three questions were asked:

1. Was it easy to learn the translation and voting system in Facebook?
2. Is there something you do not like about this system?
3. Is there something you particularly like about it?

As expected, all of the respondents said that the translation and voting system was easy to grasp. However, there were some things that the respondents pointed out as negative aspects of the application. From the technical point of view, the following things were pointed out.

- The peculiarities of different languages have not been taken into account and/or not enough context is provided:
  - + the fact that some languages use case endings instead of prepositions is disregarded – this becomes a problem when words are added into sentences dynamically and in the nominative case when a different case should be used instead. It should be kept in mind that not all languages have the same structure as Indo-European languages;
  - + there is not enough context, as a result of which the translations are vague (words translated instead of the meaning). This is a problem in the case of single words that will be dynamically integrated into other sentences.
- Incomplete solution for displaying phrases that require voting or translation:
  - + only some of the proposed translations are shown and often these are the worst ones. In addition there is a lack of transparency as to which criteria needs to be met before a translation becomes final („locked“);
  - + all translations proposed for the given phrase/sentence could be displayed at once, so that really the best one could be voted up or a new translation could be suggested.

In addition to the technical deficiencies, some respondents were also concerned about the following.

- Inconsistent style and quality, the lack of style guide and the resulting incorrect „locked“ translations.
- Negligent translators who do not bother to pay enough attention and are not familiar with elementary language rules.

From the positive side, however, the following things were pointed out.

- Inline translation:
  - + facilitates the process and provides better context;
  - + members can correct mistranslated phrases and translate new ones as they come across them while using Facebook.
- Simple, comprehensible and convenient system.
- Facebook motivating translators by granting titles (“Have not met something like this before and it is nice”).
- Complicated phrases that require pondering.
- Glossary that enables to agree on terminology.
- Facebook members who notice translation errors and help to fix them.
- The fact that anyone can participate.

To summarize, the biggest source of discontent among the respondents was the fact that the Translations application does not take account of the peculiarities of different languages and there is certain extent of unclarity when it comes to the principles of locking the translations as final. However, the user interface was considered to be simple and convenient and the inline translation was pointed out by several respondents as a positive aspect. Beyond the technical aspects, linguistic inconsistency was also considered something that needs to be dealt with.

As a general remark, some respondents concluded that it is a good idea to include users in the translation process. It was found that even though there are cases where incorrect translation has been chosen by voters, it is still nice that users can have a say and be involved in shaping the environment.

### 3.3.2. Skype

The Skype survey consisted of 15 questions that mostly matched the topics covered in Facebook questionnaire:

- how heavy Skype users these people are and how did they become Skype translators;
- what do they like and dislike about Skype closed community;
- how do they feel about the incentives offered by Skype; and
- what do they like and dislike about the Skype translation system.

The survey was conducted among 10 randomly chosen Skype volunteer translators. Since several Skype community members have more than one role (e.g they can be just translators, or just beta-testers, or just forum moderators, or all at once), it is expedient to specify that 9 of the 10 respondents either consider translator as their main role or like this role the best. In addition, just like in the case of Facebook, it is necessary to remember that the results of this study reflect the opinions of and info about these ten people. There are currently altogether about 25 active volunteer translators, so the answers represent the views of approximately 40% of the whole Skype translators' community.

### Findings

As expected, all of the respondents said they use Skype on a daily basis, which makes them very active Skype community members. In the majority of cases (60%) Skype was the one who made the first contact with these translators. More specifically, these people had translated Skype user interface into their native language on their own initiative and posted the language file on the forum to share it with other users. After some time they were contacted by Skype and offered to become a Skype translator. There was one case where Skype invited a beta tester to become a translator (as the seat of a translator in that language had become vacant) and three cases where the translator contacted Skype and suggested that their translation could be included in the installer.

The next question in the survey asked the respondents to describe the main reason why they want to be Skype translators. The vast majority of the respondents (80%) said that the reason why they first translated Skype was related to the fact that Skype either did not support their language at that time or they were dissatisfied with the original translation. Since having Skype in their native language was more convenient for themselves as well as for their friends, family, co-workers etc, it can be said that

productive selfishness was the initial drive. As for the reasons why they have decided to stay with Skype, they can by and large be classified as follows.

- Learning & passion:
  - + the opportunity to practice translation – a passion and a hobby;
  - + passion for my language;
  - + passion for Macintosh internet software in my language<sup>9</sup>;
  - + while translating, one becomes better aware of all the opportunities and features a programme includes.
- Productive selfishness:
  - + general desire to have my software in my language.
- The sense of being part of something important:
  - + to help Skype achieve its vision of easy communication for everybody.
- The sense of belonging to an exclusive and like-minded community:
  - + it is really cool to tell other people that *you* are doing the translation;
  - + I enjoy very much being part of Skype community.

Additionally, the questionnaire asked the respondents to name the best thing about belonging to Skype community and to point out whether there is anything that they do not like about the community or their role of translator in it. The following things were highlighted as positive aspects:

- finding out product roadmaps in advance and being able to influence the direction of products;
- being the first one to know what is coming up next and being able to try it out exclusively;
- translating and testing new Skype versions;
- being part of a nice and exclusive community of people;
- learning how big companies work and getting to know – both virtually and in person – lots of great people from many places (people who share a great passion for their job, have positive thinking and are always persistent to make Skype better);
- knowing that you are part of the process;
- being able to influence the shape of Skype's future;

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<sup>9</sup> The respondent is translating only Skype for Mac

- meeting other localizers and discussing problems, tips, bugs etc;
- Skype caring about its community. It's in the 'co-workers', the localization team, the small presents, etc.

To summarize, the respondents enjoy mostly belonging to an exclusive and like-minded community, being the first to know where Skype is going and being able to influence how Skype looks and feels.

As for the negative aspects, it was pointed out that sometimes Skype staff could pay more attention to the community's suggestions for improvement, and that sometimes exchange of information between sub-communities (e.g. platforms) is too little.

The next four questions in the survey focused on Skype incentives and tried to find answers to the following questions:

- 1) In the opinion of the respondents, what is the best kind of added value offered by Skype? (Free Skype products, token gifts, community events or their name being associated with Skype)
- 2) How do they feel about community events?
- 3) How important incentives are token gifts and which ones are preferred?
- 4) Does the fact that their name is associated with Skype motivate them?

The majority of the respondents (60%) considered community events as the best added value offered by Skype. It was explained that such events are both useful and fun for far more reasons than just the presentations and it is exciting to meet in person the people that you usually only chat with and who share the same passion. Additionally, it was pointed out that such events help to create and maintain the "Skype family" spirit.

There was only one respondent who named free Skype products as the best bonus, but s/he also admitted that s/he has never had a chance to participate in the community events (yet found it a very good idea to gather and discuss all the things around Skype).

All of the respondents admitted that having their name associated with Skype is definitely an added value and feels rewarding, though only three of them referred to it as the most significant reward. Some of the respondents thought of it as a recognition rather than a motivator. In general, this recognition was welcomed because Skype has a positive association and thus it leaves a positive impression on

others and can also open new doors in the labour market. Two respondents found that having their name appearing in the release notes is sufficient (because the release notes are copied through the whole internet, so one's connection with Skype is revealed in search results), while the rest of them were more ambitious in that matter and said that they would like (or that they would not mind) if their association with Skype was more visible; for example, having their name appear in the "About Skype" window within the application. It was explained that this does not mean taking only credits for the translation, but it also lets others know who is responsible for the quality.

Token gifts with Skype logos were appreciated by all the respondents, but no-one named them as the greatest added value. As such items are not sold in stores, they are exclusive to the closed Skype community and perceived as expression of appreciation. Several respondents said also that they enjoy wearing or using the gifts because they are proud of belonging to Skype community and like to show it to others as well. This indicates that they think highly of Skype and see it as something that matters. When asked which type of gifts they prefer the most, there was no clear preference, although the first choice for over half of the respondents seemed to be any type of clothing, while the rest of them like gadgets and electronic gifts the best (including the products that are sent for testing purposes). In general, however, the most essential feature was exclusivity (i.e. items with Skype logo or design; things that cannot be purchased). As to the frequency of receiving the gifts, most of the respondents (70%) said it would be nice to receive them more often; for example, not only for Christmas but also for other holidays (Easter, Valentine's Day). One of the respondents added that getting the gifts seasonally adds to the sense of belonging to a family, while in terms of motivation, it would be a good idea to get the gifts together with a milestone release where a lot of new strings had to be translated.

Relying on the answers of these ten respondents it can be summarized that community events are the most valued rewards that increase the sense of belonging and being part of something that has value. Probably for the same reason, having one's name and person associated with Skype (either via release notes or via Skype gifts that show others their connection with Skype) is also seen as a remarkable reward.

As regards the localization process, there was a prevailing agreement among respondents that the processes in place are clear and easy to learn. However, some of those who translate Skype for more than one platform indicated that some platforms have a more convenient system than the other(s). In addition, a couple of respondents pointed out that information sharing and coordination could be

improved in certain aspects (e.g. schedules, announcements). A suggestion was also made to bring people who speak the same language closer together, i.e. create a group chat with all community members (Skype for Windows/Mac/Linux translators, salaried translators/linguists, developers, beta-testers) who speak the same language to enable better cooperation and translation feedback.

The survey also tried to establish if the respondents considered their relationship with Skype personal enough and if they felt that their contribution is appreciated. Overall, the responses were affirmative. One of the respondents added that s/he considers large parts of the community his/her close online friends, while some others said that it is personal enough for the purposes that need to be achieved. The fact that there are group chats (where everyone can chat together) as well as the opportunity for on-to-one private conversations was considered to be important. None of the respondents complained about communication problems; in one case it was mentioned that sometimes Skype staff is so busy that personal feedback is not possible, but it was not pointed out as a disturbing problem. Moreover, two respondents said that there is no need for more personal feedback and the current amount of feedback is just enough. Without exceptions, all of the respondents felt that their contribution is appreciated.

As the last question, the survey asked the respondents what would make them consider leaving Skype community. The reasons that were named were the following:

- the company making a major decision that I can't approve of (e.g. giving up user privacy);
- change in life that results in not having time for the volunteer work anymore;
- lack of communication between translator and managers;
- too little freedom (e.g. too many rules set from by Skype, incl. too strict deadlines);
- external interventions in my localization work (incl. reviews by people who don't understand what is software localization);
- Skype disregarding translators' opinion;
- Skype becoming too impersonal;
- lack of appreciation by Skype;
- too complex localization process.

Thus, what Skype can do at their side to keep the community satisfied is to maintain reasonable deadlines and personal approach, keep listening and respecting the community, and allow for enough freedom of decision.

As an additional comment, one of the respondents suggested the following:

- Skype translation community could engage more with other (open source) translation communities to share terminology, and
- Skype should help getting more languages into the user interface more easily, e.g. by a repository where additional translations can be stored and downloaded easily. There are still so many languages not covered yet and it would enrich Skype's cultural variety.

### **3.3.3. Summary of the findings**

The surveys conducted among the volunteer translators of Facebook and Skype revealed the following aspects about their motivation.

The main source of motivation for Facebook's some of the most active Estonian translators has been the opportunity to realize their potential and develop one's linguistic skills. Enthusiasm for the Estonian language – ability to contribute to its persistence and development – as well as the desire to operate in one's native language in an environment that is linguistically both fluent and correct are also among the reasons why these people have decided to get involved in shaping the Estonian translation of Facebook.

The study carried out among Skype community pinpointed the following things as the main motivators: the opportunity to shape how Skype looks and feels, and the opportunity to meet and socialize with like-minded people across the world. The exclusivity of belonging to Skype community turned out to be also an essential factor.

In both of the cases parallels can be drawn with Daniel Pink's statement that people like to do things that matter, that they like, that are interesting or a part of something important. In the case of Facebook, it is the patriotism for the Estonian language and passion for languages and translating in general that matters the most (followed by the factors of learning and productive selfishness). In the case of Skype, on the other hand, it is mostly the sense of belonging and being part of something that has value that make the translators stick around.

Although the surveys revealed that the passion for languages was stronger in the case of the open crowdsourcing model (Facebook) and the sense of belonging was a more significant factor in the case of

the closed model (Skype), there is not enough evidence to claim that this is always the case. It is also possible that the results would have been different if the survey questions were posed differently. As Skype model obviously provides a lot more community-related benefits for the translators, this might have caused the respondents to focus mainly on those aspects, and their passion for languages as a motivator was overshadowed. Moreover, as several of the respondents explained that the initial drive to translate Skype (before they even joined the closed community) was the desire to have Skype available in their language it suggests that productive selfishness as well as the passion for languages and/or translation is a prerequisite for becoming a volunteer translator also in the case of a closed community. However, this is something that requires further investigation before any extensive conclusions can be drawn.

As regards incentives, Skype translators perceived community events as the most valued reward. This can be explained by the fact that such events increase the sense of belonging to a community. Having one's name and person associated with Skype (either via search engine results or exclusive Skype gifts that show others their connection with Skype) was also seen as a remarkable reward. Facebook translators, however, did not think of the current incentives (Leaderboard and insignia) as significant motivators.

The findings of the two surveys support the hypothesis that winning the crowd over is not so much about offering the right incentives but about having a valuable product that makes the crowd feel interested in contributing to it; learning about the incentives that could make a particular crowd stay around for longer is only the second step.

Last but not least, the following suggestions can be made to Facebook and Skype based on the analysis of the survey results.

#### Facebook:

- Maintain easy-to-learn translation system and the option of inline translation.
- Allow for the peculiarities of different language structures (e.g. find a solution how to avoid grammatical or fluency problems that are caused by the fact that some languages use case endings instead of prepositions).

- Improve the way how phrases that require voting or translation are displayed (i.e. display all suggested translations not just a part of them).
- Provide info about which criteria needs to be met for a translation to become final („locked“).
- Develop a style guide for all languages and find other solutions to improve overall consistency and quality (one opportunity could be hiring an in-house linguist for all languages not just for the bigger ones).
- Consider improving the insignia system to make it more motivating. For example, have more meaningful titles (e.g. Facebook Translator) that could be attached to one’s profile as well.

Skype:

- Maintain reasonable translation deadlines and personal approach, keep listening and respecting the community, and allow for enough freedom of decision.
- Consider rewarding the translators with token gifts per milestone release, or sending the gifts also for other holidays in addition to Christmas to add to the sense of belonging to a family-like community.
- Facilitate communication between sub-communities; bring people who speak the same language closer together, i.e. create a group chat with all community members who speak the same language to enable better cooperation and translation feedback.
- Consider engaging with other (open source) translation communities to share terminology.
- Support getting more languages into the user interface more easily, e.g. by a repository where additional translations can be stored and downloaded easily.

## Conclusion

The aim of the current thesis was to provide an overview of the reasons why businesses turn to translation crowdsourcing and which models and methods they apply for that purpose. The main focus, however, was on the reasons why the crowd is willing to participate in translation crowdsourcing projects and what increases their motivation.

The fact that there are typically no monetary rewards involved in translation crowdsourcing has led to the often prevailing understanding among bystanders that businesses are using volunteer translators mainly to cut their costs. However, based on the case studies carried out in the industry, the following goals have been pointed out as reasons for applying translation crowdsourcing:

- to increase language reach (e.g. by including smaller languages for which there is often little or no business justification to localize into);
- to accelerate time-to-market (e.g. using the crowd can sometimes shorten turnaround times; however, this may happen at the expense of quality);
- to become closer to customers (e.g. by enabling customers to participate in the development process and empowering them to create new solutions);
- to provide a fairer chance for millions of people to access content that the developed world takes for granted (i.e. sense of ethical responsibility).

While reaching these objectives results in grown user-base and thus also in increased revenue, getting a successful crowdsourcing model in place requires also investments into technical solutions and crowd management, and preferably also into quality assurance resources. Thus, sustainable crowdsourcing is not about cutting costs, and the beneficiaries are not only the businesses who increase their revenue, but also the users who benefit, for example, from the increased language reach.

As regards different models for applying translation crowdsourcing, they can be divided into two distinctive categories, based on the openness and exclusivity of the community: open community model and closed community model. In the case of the open community, participants must be registered users, but as a rule, there is usually an automated vetting system for linguistic testing or a voting mechanism to allow the best content to rise more quickly to the top. A typical characteristic of open crowd model is that there are no fixed deadlines; the company can try using different motivators to hurry the crowd, but the actual turnaround time depends on the crowd. As a result, the amount of contributors is huge

and deadlines are loose. In the case of closed community, the company limits crowd membership and selects the members carefully (the membership is subject to certain requirements). This means that the community is more exclusive and belonging to the community can also place certain obligations on the crowd, e.g. confidentiality agreements and translation deadlines. Thanks to the closed nature of the community, a more personal approach to members is possible. Typically, there are also rewards offered in return for the translation (e.g. free products, token gifts etc).

The survey carried out among the volunteer translators of Facebook revealed that the main source of motivation for Facebook's some of the most active Estonian translators has been the opportunity to realize their potential and develop one's linguistic skills. Enthusiasm for the Estonian language – ability to contribute to its persistence and development – as well as the desire to operate in one's native language in an environment that is linguistically both fluent and correct are also among the reasons why these people have decided to get involved in shaping the Estonian translation of Facebook. Thus, it can be assumed that the Facebook model in its current form will continue to succeed as long as there are enough people who want to put their potential and skills to test.

In the case of Skype community, the main motivators disclosed by the survey were the opportunity to shape how Skype looks and feels, and the opportunity to meet and socialize with like-minded people across the world. The exclusivity of belonging to Skype community turned out to be also an essential factor.

Although the surveys revealed that the passion for languages was stronger in the case of the open crowdsourcing model (Facebook) and the sense of belonging was a more significant factor in the case of the closed model (Skype), there is not enough evidence to claim that this is always the case. It is also possible that the results would have been different if the survey questions were posed differently. As Skype model obviously provides a lot more community-related benefits for the translators, this might have caused the respondents to focus mainly on those aspects, and their passion for languages as a motivator was overshadowed. This assumption is supported by the fact that several of the respondents of the Skype survey indicated that they first started to translate Skype out of the desire to have Skype available in their language (or to improve the existing translations), but the thing that currently motivates them the most and what they value is the community that makes them feel they are appreciated and provides an opportunity to meet and socialize with like-minded people across the world.

As regards incentives, Skype translators perceived community events as the most valued reward. This can be explained by the fact that such events increase the sense of belonging to a community. Having one's name and person associated with Skype (either via search engine results or exclusive Skype gifts that show others their connection with Skype) was also seen as a remarkable reward. Facebook translators, however, did not think of the current incentives as important motivators.

All in all, the findings of the two surveys support the hypothesis that winning the crowd over is not so much about offering the right incentives as about having a valuable product that makes the crowd feel interested in improving; learning about the incentives that can help make a particular crowd stay around for longer is only the second step. Additionally, the findings of Skype survey partially answered the question posed by LISA about community's long-term engagement by showing that personal and strong community itself can be one of the main motivators for the members to stick around.

To sum up, the following suggestions can be made to Facebook and Skype based on the analysis of the survey results. Although these suggestions concern specifically Skype and Facebook, they can be useful tips also for other businesses who consider translation crowdsourcing.

#### Facebook:

- Maintain easy-to-learn translation system and the option of inline translation.
- Allow for the peculiarities of different language structures (e.g. find a solution how to avoid grammatical or fluency problems that are caused by the fact that some languages use case endings instead of prepositions).
- Improve the way how phrases that require voting or translation are displayed (i.e. display all suggested translations not just a part of them).
- Provide info about which criteria needs to be met for a translation to become final („locked“).
- Develop a style guide for all languages and find other solutions to improve overall consistency and quality (one opportunity could be hiring an in-house linguist for all languages not just for the bigger ones).
- Consider improving the insignia system to make it more motivating. For example, have more meaningful titles (e.g. Facebook Translator) that could be attached to one's profile as well.

### Skype:

- Maintain reasonable translation deadlines and personal approach, keep listening and respecting the community, and allow for enough freedom of decision.
- Consider rewarding the translators with token gifts per milestone release, or sending the gifts also for other holidays in addition to Christmas to add to the sense of belonging to a family-like community.
- Facilitate communication between sub-communities; bring people who speak the same language closer together, i.e. create a group chat with all community members who speak the same language to enable better cooperation and translation feedback.
- Consider engaging with other (open source) translation communities to share terminology.
- Support getting more languages into the user interface more easily, e.g. by a repository where additional translations can be stored and downloaded easily.

It is possible that the results of the surveys carried out in the course of this study were different if there had been a larger group of respondents, if the respondents had been chosen differently (e.g. not among the most active translators in the case of Facebook or from different language groups) or if different crowdsourcing projects had been studied. It would be also interesting to know which variations would become evident if 2+ closed models or 2+ open models were compared to one another. Thus there is definitely room for additional surveys before any substantial conclusions can be made about the reasons why people want to participate in crowdsourcing projects as well as about the factors or motivators that could make them stay around for longer. Another thing that would be useful to study is the aspect of quality in translation crowdsourcing. The current paper touched very briefly upon the steps that are taken by Skype and Facebook to ensure quality, but it could be investigated in more detail which quality problems tend to occur, what could be done to prevent them, and if the fact that closed community members are "more responsible" for their translations means they take the quality issue more seriously.

## Resüme

Käesolev magistr töö teemal „Kogukonnatõlkeid ärimaailmas – ülevaade võimalustest ja põhjustest (Facebooki ja Skype'i näitel)“ keskendub uut sorti koostööpartneritele tõlkemaailmas – vabatahtlikele ehk kogukonnatõlkijatele. Töö eesmärgiks oli aidata kaardistada kogukonnatõlkijate motivatsiooni ja võimalusel selgitada välja, kuidas nende motivatsiooni tõsta. Samuti püüti anda ülevaade sellest, mis põhjustel ettevõtted oma kogukonda tõlkimisse kaasata soovivad (ülevaade varasemate uuringute põhjal) ja milliseid mudeleid nad selleks kasutavad (põhjalikum analüüs Facebooki ja Skype'i näitel). Nimetatud ainestiku käsitlemine on asjakohane, kuna tegemist on vähekäsitletud teemaga, kuid huvi selle vastu näib lisaks kogukonnatõlkeid kasutavatele ettevõtetele olevat muuhulgas ka lokaliseerimisagentuuridel ja elukutselistel tõlkijatel. Põhjuste teadmine võib ühest küljest aidata mõista, mis valdkondades või milliste ettevõtete puhul on kogukonnatõlkijate kasutamine võimalik, teisest küljest aga aidata leida vastust ettevõtete küsimusele, kuidas tõlkijate kogukonda pikaajaliselt kaasata.

Kuna vabatahtlikud kogukonnatõlkijad ei saa oma panuse eest üldiselt rahalisi hüvitisi, on levinud arvamus, et ettevõtted kasutavad kõnealust tõlkemudelit eelkõige kulude kärpimiseks. Selles valdkonnas varasemalt läbi viidud uurimused on seevastu viidanud, et kogukonnatõlkijaid kaasatakse tõlkeprotsessi järgmistel põhjustel.

- Ulatuslikum keeletugi. Eelduseks on tõlkekeskkond või -rakendus, mis võimaldab ilma täiendavate investeeringuteta (või väikeste kulutustega) lisada väiksema kõnelejate arvuga keeli, millesse poleks äriselt kasulik eraldi investeerida.
- Lühemad tähtajad. Näiteks kogu Facebooki tõlgiti prantsuse keelde 24 tunniga ja hispaania keelde 2 nädalaga, kuid tuleb silmas pidada, et lühenenud tähtaeg võib tähendada ka järeleandmisi kvaliteedi osas.
- Vahetum side tarbijatega. Kogukonna kaasamine annab ettevõttele hea võimaluse kogukonnaga tihedamat kontakti luua ja toote/teenuse kohta tagasisidet küsida. Lisaks võib kogukonnale antud võimalus kaasa rääkida suurendada nende lojaalsust ettevõtte suhtes.
- Eetiline/sotsiaalne vastutustunne. Ettevõtete soov võimaldada rohkemate inimeste juurdepääsu sisule, mida inglise keelt kõnelev maailm peab enesestmõistetavaks. Samuti panustamine väiksemate keelte püsijäämisse.

Võib eeldada, et kõik see kokku kasvatab toote või teenuse kasutajaskonda, mille tulemuseks on tõenäoliselt ka kasumi kasv, kuid siiski nõuab nende eesmärkide saavutamise ka investeeringuid eduka mudeli väljatöötamisse (tehnilised lahendused, kvaliteeditagamise mehhanismid, kogukonna juhtimiseks vajalikud inimressursid). Sellest tulenevalt võib väita, et kogukonnatõlkijate kasutamine ei ole jätkusuutlik, kui ainueesmärgiks on kulude kokkuhoid. Lisaks tähendab ulatuslikum keeletugi ja võimalus kaasa rääkida kasu mitte üksnes ettevõttele, vaid ka kasutajaskonnale.

Kogukonnatõlkijate kaasamise mudelid võib laias laastus jagada kaheks: avatud kogukonna mudel (nt Facebook) ja suletud kogukonna mudel (nt Skype). Avatud kogukond tähendab, et soovi korral saab osaleda (tõlkida, teiste tõlkeid korrigeerida jms) igaüks. Tänu sellele võib panustajate hulk olla väga suur ja igaüks saab valida, kui palju ja mida tõlkida. Samas tähendab osalejate paljusus varieeruvaid keelelisi teadmisi ja stiili. Avatud mudelit iseloomustavad veel asjaolud, et üldjuhul ei saa ettevõtte määrata tõlgetele tähtaegu ning tõlkijaid ei motiveerita materiaalsete stiimulitega. Suletud kogukonna puhul on osalemine piiratud ning osalejate valik tehakse vastavalt mingitele kriteeriumitele (nt olemasolevate liikmete soovitusel, varasemad tõlked jne). Erinevalt avatud mudelist on suletud mudeli puhul iga keele kohta kas üks tõlkija või väike tõlkijate rühm. Kuna kogukond on eksklusiivsem, võib sellesse kuulumine tähendada liikmete jaoks teatud kohustusi (nt konfidentsiaalsusleping, tähtaegadest kinnipidamine jne). Lisaks iseloomustavad suletud mudelit isiklikumat laadi suhte ettevõtte ja kogukonnaliikmete vahel ja tõlkijate premeerimine materiaalsete stiimulitega (nt ettevõtte sümboolikaga kingid).

Kogukonnatõlkijate motivatsiooni uurimiseks viidi käesoleva töö raames läbi juhtumiuuring Facebooki ja Skype'i tõlkijate seas. Uuringu käigus küsitleti kummagi kogukonna kümnet tõlkijat ja püüti välja selgitada, mis on motiveerinud neid vabatahtlikule tõlketööle. Facebooki tõlkijate vastustest selgusid järgmised põhjused.

- Võimalus oma võimeid proovile panna ja keelelisi oskusi arendada.
- Eesti keele patriotism:
  - võimalus anda oma panus eesti keele püsijäämisse ja arengusse,
  - soov kasutada eestikeelset Facebooki, mis oleks ühtaegu keeleliselt korrektne ja samas ladus.

Skype'i kogukonna uuringus viitasid vastused järgmistele motivaatoritele.

- Võimalus Skype'i kujundada – nii keeleliselt kui ka funktsionaalselt.

- Võimalus kohtuda ja suhelda samade huvidega inimestega üle maailma.
- Kuulumine eksklusiivsesse kogukonda, mis neid väärtustab.

Teisisõnu, läbiviidud küsitlused osutasid, et Facebooki mudeli puhul oli suurimaks motivaatoriks huvi keelte vastu ning Skype'i mudeli puhul peeti olulisimaks kogukonda kuulumist. Siiski tuleb arvestada, et Skype'i puhul tähendab kogukonda kuulumine tõlkijatele tunduvalt rohkem eeliseid kui Facebooki puhul, mistõttu võisid Skype'i tõlkijad keskenduda just sellele aspektile kui peamisele motivaatorile ja huvi keelte vastu võis seetõttu tahaplaanile jääda, kuid oli siiski olemas. Seda oletust toetab ka asjaolu, et paljud Skype'i küsitluses osalenud tõdesid, et nende esialgne põhjus Skype'i tõlkimiseks oli soov kasutada Skype'i oma emakeeles (või parendada olemasolevat tõlget).

Juhtumiuuringute käigus uuriti ka Facebooki ja Skype'i pakutavaid stiimuleid ja nende olulisust tõlkijate jaoks. Skype'i puhul selgus, et suurimaks stiimuliks peeti kogukonna jaoks korraldatud üritusi. Seda võib selgitada asjaoluga, et sellised üritused tugevdavad kogukonda kuulumise tunnet. Samuti peeti oluliseks stiimuleid, mis näitavad tõlkijate seotust Skype'iga: nende nimede esiletoomine versioonimärkmetes (ja seeläbi seotuse esiletulemine ka otsimootorite tulemustes), aga ka Skype'i logoga riided jm kingitused, mis viitavad, et nende omanik kuulub Skype'i kogukonda. Facebooki tõlkijad ei pidanud pakutavaid stiimuleid – liidrite edetabelit ja aunimetusi – eriti olulisteks motivaatoriteks.

Läbiviidud juhtumiuuringutes osalenud tõlkijate motivatsiooni võib kokku võtta Daniel Pinki sõnadega, et inimestele meeldib teha asju, mis on olulised, mis neile meeldivad, mis on huvitavad või osa millestki olulisest. Saadud tulemused viitavad, et vabatahtlike kogukonna kaasamiseks on ettevõttel esmalt vaja väärtuslikku toodet, mille omapoolsest täiustamisest tõlkija isiklikku või ühiskondlikku kasu tunnetab. Õigete stiimulite pakkumine on alles teisene samm, mille eesmärk on kogukonda pikemaajaliselt kaasata. Seejuures on võimalik, et üheks olulisimaks stiimuliks tõlkijate pikemaajalisel kaasamisel on personaalne lähenemisviis ning tugev kogukond.

On võimalik, et uurimus oleks andnud teistsuguseid tulemusi, kui küsitluses oleks osalenud suurem hulk vastajaid, kui osalejad oleks valitud teisiti või kui oleks uuritud teisi kogukondi. Järgmise sammuna oleks huvitav analüüsida, kas ja millised erinevused tuleks tõlkijate motivatsioonis esile, kui võrrelda omavahel kahte või enam avatud mudelit või kahte või enam suletud mudelit. Uurida tuleks ka tõlke kvaliteedi aspekti. Käesolev töö andis küll põgusa ülevaate Facebooki ja Skype'i kvaliteedi tagamise mehhanismidest, kuid kasulik oleks põhjalikumalt uurida, millised kvaliteediprobleemid esinevad, kuidas

oleks võimalik neid ennetada, ning kas asjaolu, et suletud kogukonna puhul vastutab tõlke eest üks inimene või väike rühm mõjutab seda, kuidas tõlkija oma töö kvaliteeti suhtub.

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