



Community based translations of games

Why babelfish ain't enough

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Content

- 1 Introduction
 - Why translate games?
 - About me
 - About Wesnoth
- 2 Best practices
- 3 Common problems and challenges
- 4 Conclusions & discussion



Why translate games?

- there is more than English (or „insert your language here“)
- many people don't speak English
 - either (well) enough to enjoy a game
 - or prefer their own language
- because it can be done!



About me

Real Life

- German (mother tongue)
- studied computer science
- working in research

Involvement in Battle for Wesnoth

- translator since 2004
- Internationalization manager since 2005
- Release manager since 2006
- now: all the above and more...



About Wesnoth

- turn based strategy game
- fantasy scenario
- singleplayer and multiplayer supported
- content for >100h singleplayer gameplay included
- close integration of user generated content
- (partially) translated into 53 languages in 1.10.7
 - 7 translations 100% completed (mainline)
 - 18 translations >90% completed (mainline)
 - 15,327 strings in mainline, comparable to amount of text in LotR 1+2
 - 62,835 strings in mainline + UMC, no translation at 100%



Content

- 1 Introduction
- 2 **Best practices**
 - i18n basics
 - Wesnoth setup
 - What to do?
- 3 Common problems and challenges
- 4 Conclusions & discussion

i18n basics

gettext

- standard for internationalization in open source projects: gettext
- good tools for devs and translators available
- (rather) easy to use but powerful
- can be used for „standard“ code and for other languages using extra tools
- in Wesnoth: C++, Lua and WML (Wesnoth Markup Language)

make it easy

- non techies afraid of technical parts
- reduce technical barrier
- for games: don't make it too easy or the quality will suffer!

Structure and domains

structure

- translators
- translation maintainers
- internationalization managers
- release manager

textdomains

- split translatable text into different textdomains
- try to group textdomains by content (e.g. one domain per campaign)
- split helps teams to break up the work



Tools

tools

- gettext.wesnoth.org
- units.wesnoth.org
- [po2po](#)
- [pofix.py](#)
- [wmlxgettext](#)
- sanity checks on files to find strings not marked translatable
- wiki and mailing list



gettext.wesnoth.org



Wesnoth translation stats (last update: Sat, 25 Jan 2014 13:03:59 +0000)

Order by: # of translated strings || [Team name](#)

Version: [Development](#) || 1.10

Show: **All official packages** || [Official core packages](#) || [All packages](#) || [All unofficial packages](#) || [By language](#)

Official: [wesnoth](#) || [wesnoth-lib](#) || [wesnoth-editor](#) || [wesnoth-help](#) || [wesnoth-ai](#) || [wesnoth-units](#) || [wesnoth-multiplayer](#) || [wesnoth-test](#) || [wesnoth-anl](#) || [wesnoth-tutorial](#) || [wesnoth-manpages](#) || [wesnoth-manual](#) || [wesnoth-aol](#) || [wesnoth-did](#) || [wesnoth-dm](#) || [wesnoth-dw](#) || [wesnoth-ei](#) || [wesnoth-httt](#) || [wesnoth-i](#) || [wesnoth-low](#) || [wesnoth-nr](#) || [wesnoth-sof](#) || [wesnoth-sotbe](#) || [wesnoth-tb](#) || [wesnoth-thot](#) || [wesnoth-trow](#) || [wesnoth-tsg](#) || [wesnoth-utbs](#)

Unofficial: [2p_campaign](#) || [battle_system](#) || [A New Land Classic](#) || [A New Order](#) || [A Rough Life](#) || [A Simple Campaign](#) || [A Story of the Northlands](#) || [A Vision Blinded](#) || [After the Storm](#) || [Age of Tentacles](#) || [Antar](#) || [Archaic Era](#) || [Au dela de l horizon](#) || [Bad Moon Rising](#) || [Brave Wings](#) || [Burning Souls](#) || [By the Sword](#) || [Children of Dragons](#) || [Classic era](#) || [County of Beichlingen](#) || [Crim of Crenhyn](#) || [Custom Campaign](#) || [Dov MP Maps](#) || [Dungeon Wars Creepfest](#) || [Dystopia](#) || [Eastern Europe at War](#) || [Elf War](#) || [Eliador](#) || [Elves and Wose](#) || [Era Khalifate AoH](#) || [Era of Chaos](#) || [Era of Four Moons](#) || [Era of High Sorcery](#) || [Era of Legends](#) || [Era of Magic](#) || [Era of Music](#) || [Era of Myths](#) || [Fate of a Princess](#) || [For Power](#) || [GambClv](#) || [Gobowars](#) || [Grafted Era](#) || [Grmk](#) || [Gunpowder Age](#) || [Imperial Era](#) || [Inky Quest](#) || [Invasion from the Unknown](#) || [Love To Death](#) || [Magic Wars](#) || [Maps by Inanna](#) || [Mystery Campaign](#) || [NX-RPG](#) || [Nightmares of Meloen](#) || [Only Death Behind](#) || [Ooze Mini Campaign](#) || [Pack Sapient](#) || [PantherLord](#) || [Peninsula Survival](#) || [Random Campaign](#) || [ReturnToNoelren](#) || [Return from Captivity](#) || [Return of the Monster](#) || [Roar of the Woses](#) || [Savino Elensefar](#) || [Settlers of Wesnoth](#) || [Sigurd-s Random Maps](#) || [Stickmen Era](#) || [Story of Wose](#) || [Swamplings](#) || [Sweet Revenge](#) || [Tale of a Mage](#) || [The Aragwaithi](#) || [The Attack Of The Western Cavalry](#) || [The Dark Hordes](#) || [The Devils Flute](#) || [The Fall of Wesnoth](#) || [The Fellowship of the Clay](#) || [The Flight of Drakes](#) || [The Founding of Borstep](#) || [The Ice Age](#) || [The Legend Begins](#) || [The Settlers of Light](#) || [The Sojournings of Grog](#) || [The Stolen Sword](#) || [The Three Elves](#) || [The Wesnoth Forum Faction Era](#) || [To Lands Unknown](#) || [Trinity](#) || [Troubled Times](#) || [Valley of the Ancients](#) || [War of Legends](#) || [Warmaster](#) || [Watbesh Rule Pack](#) || [WesCamp Translation Insertion Test](#) || [Wesnoth Lua Pack](#) || [White Troll](#) || [World Conquest](#) || [betrayal_of_thaeylan](#) || [kulikovo_pole](#) || [roe_Era](#) || [sunkenstories](#) || [torneo_wif_2012](#) || [ugly_era](#)

position	team name	translated	%	fuzzy	%	untranslated	%	total	graph
1	Galician (gl)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	French (fr)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	Hungarian (hu)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	Italian (it)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	Vietnamese (v)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	German (de)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
1	Indonesian (id)	15327	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	15327	
8	British English (en_GB)	15325	99.99	2	0.01	0	0.00	15327	
9	Estonian (et)	15323	99.97	4	0.03	0	0.00	15327	

units.wesnoth.org



Wesnoth Units database

Kampagne

Era

Rasse

- Draken
- Elfen
- Fledermäuse
- Greifen
- Kobolde
- Kriegsgeräte
- Meervolk
- Menschen
- Monster
- Naga
- Oger
- Orks
- Saurianer
- Trolle
- Untote
- Waldschrate
- Wölfe
- Zwerge

Language

[Overview](#)

Einheiten

Draken

Drakengleiter L1



Kosten: 16
LP: 32
MP: 8
EP: 35

6 - 2 Nahkampf (Wucht)
3 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)
(Schießkunst)

Himmelsdrake L2



Kosten: 30
LP: 45
MP: 9
EP: 80

6 - 3 Nahkampf (Wucht)
5 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)
(Schießkunst)

Sturmdrake L3



Kosten: 40
LP: 58
MP: 9
EP: 150

8 - 3 Nahkampf (Wucht)
8 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)
(Schießkunst)

Drakenkämpfer L1



Kosten: 17
LP: 39
MP: 6
EP: 42

7 - 3 Nahkampf (Klinge)
3 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)

Drakenkrieger L2



Kosten: 30
LP: 60
MP: 6
EP: 70

11 - 3 Nahkampf (Klinge)
5 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)

Drakenklingenmeister L3



Kosten: 47
LP: 80
MP: 6
EP: 150

16 - 3 Nahkampf (Klinge)
8 - 3 Fernkampf (Feuer)

Armageddondrake L4



Kosten: 100
LP: 98
MP: 5
EP: 200

15 - 2 Nahkampf (Klinge)
12 - 6 Fernkampf (Feuer)



poedit

The screenshot shows the Poedit application window titled "de.po - Poedit". The menu bar includes "Datei", "Bearbeiten", "Katalog", "Starten", "Ansicht", and "Hilfe". The toolbar contains icons for "Öffnen", "Speichern", "Prüfen", "Aktualisieren", "Ungelklärt", and "Kommentar".

Quelltext	Übersetzung	Zeile
Left		4538
RightUp		4542
RightDown		4546
LeftUp		4550
LeftDown		4554
Campfire	Kampagne	266
Rainforest	Nadelwald	337
Palm Forest	Nadelwald	344
Dense Palm Forest	Nadelwald	351
Tropical Forested Hills	Tropischer Wald	534
Palm Forested Hills	Bewaldete Hügel	541
Dense Palm Forested Hills	Bewaldete Hügel	548
Savanna Forested Hills	Bewaldete Hügel	555
Unwalkable Overlay	Unpassierbar-Overlay	731
Hanging Bridge	Morsche Brücke	1193
Stone Chasm Bridge	Rundbogenbrücke	1203

Below the list, the "Quelltext:" field contains "Palm Forested Hills" and the "Übersetzung:" field contains "Bewaldete Hügel".

The "Anmerkungen für Übersetzer:" section shows a comment: "[terrain_type]; id=forest_palm_desert_hills".

At the bottom, a status bar indicates: "80 % übersetzt, 879 Texte (64 unklar, 104 nicht übersetzt)".



Releasing

best practices for releasing

- make sure translators are aware of plans for releases
- moving targets suck!
- provide fixed targets (stable releases) which feature bugfixes and translations
- string freeze before start of new stable series



Implementation of system

- write clean code where (visible) strings are touched!
- raise awareness of known problems among coders
- include translators in release processes
- update files regularly
- don't forget complimentary files (manual, ...)
- don't reinvent the wheel, using existing libs (e.g. pango cairo)
- make sure people know it can be translated and help is wanted!
- make use of your brains ;)



Motivation of translators

- treat translators like other contributors (coders and artists)
- listen to translators and provide platform
- motivation of translators very similar to coders, make sure they can be proud
- ask your existing community members (even coders!) to kickstart the translations
- repeating same work sucks, provide and use tools
- create „competition“ between teams (e.g. show stats of other langs)
- provide treats for accomplishments (e.g. announcement exclusive in language ABC if goal XYZ met)



Content

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Best practices
- 3 Common problems and challenges**
 - What is translatable?
 - Common problems
 - Images and textures
 - Consistency
- 4 Conclusions & discussion

What is translatable?

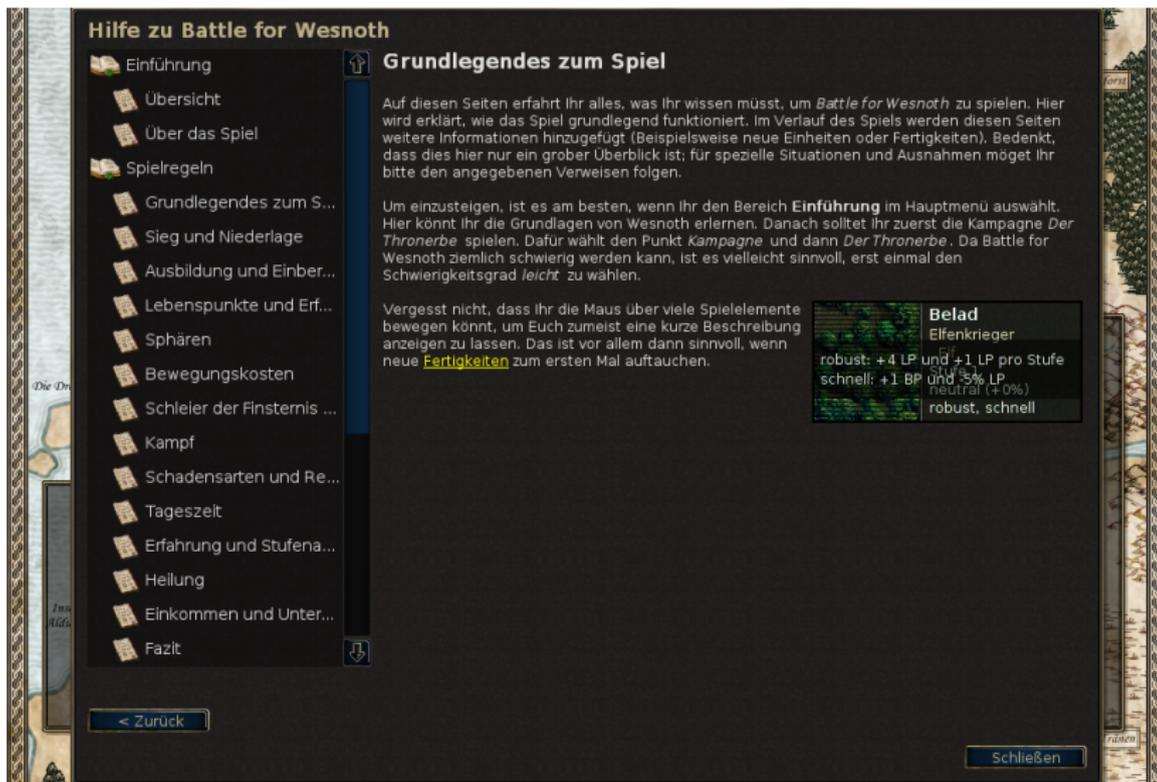




Common problems

- string length differences
- no fitting/known abbreviations
- context differences („general“ in the preferences and as unit)
- plural form problems
- gender fun
- LTR support
- font challenges

Images and textures



The screenshot shows the 'Hilfe zu Battle for Wesnoth' (Help for Battle for Wesnoth) window. The left sidebar contains a list of help topics, with 'Grundlegendes zum Spiel' (Basics of the game) selected. The main content area is titled 'Grundlegendes zum Spiel' and contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph explains that the user will learn the game's basics and that the difficulty level is set to 'leicht' (easy). The second paragraph mentions that the user can learn the basics by selecting 'Einführung' (Introduction) in the main menu and then 'Kampagne Der Thronerbe' (Campaign The Heir to the Throne). The third paragraph notes that the mouse can be used to move game elements and that a description will appear. A tooltip for the 'Belad' (Load) action is visible, showing its effects on LP and BP. At the bottom, there are buttons for '< Zurück' (Back) and 'Schließen' (Close).

Hilfe zu Battle for Wesnoth

- Einführung
- Übersicht
- Über das Spiel
- Spielregeln
- Grundlegendes zum Spiel
- Sieg und Niederlage
- Ausbildung und Einber...
- Lebenspunkte und Erf...
- Sphären
- Bewegungskosten
- Schleier der Finsternis ...
- Kampf
- Schadensarten und Re...
- Tageszeit
- Erfahrung und Stufena...
- Heilung
- Einkommen und Unter...
- Fazit

Grundlegendes zum Spiel

Auf diesen Seiten erfahrt Ihr alles, was Ihr wissen müsst, um *Battle for Wesnoth* zu spielen. Hier wird erklärt, wie das Spiel grundlegend funktioniert. Im Verlauf des Spiels werden diesen Seiten weitere Informationen hinzugefügt (Beispielsweise neue Einheiten oder Fertigkeiten). Bedenkt, dass dies hier nur ein grober Überblick ist; für spezielle Situationen und Ausnahmen moget Ihr bitte den angegebenen Verweisen folgen.

Um einzusteigen, ist es am besten, wenn Ihr den Bereich **Einführung** im Hauptmenü auswählt. Hier könnt Ihr die Grundlagen von Wesnoth erlernen. Danach solltet Ihr zuerst die Kampagne *Der Thronerbe* spielen. Dafür wählt den Punkt *Kampagne* und dann *Der Thronerbe*. Da Battle for Wesnoth ziemlich schwierig werden kann, ist es vielleicht sinnvoll, erst einmal den Schwierigkeitsgrad *leicht* zu wählen.

Vergesst nicht, dass Ihr die Maus über viele Spielelemente bewegen könnt, um Euch zumeist eine kurze Beschreibung anzeigen zu lassen. Das ist vor allem dann sinnvoll, wenn neue **Fertigkeiten** zum ersten Mal auftauchen.

Belad
Elfenkrieger
robust: +4 LP und +1 LP pro Stufe
schnell: +1 BP und 5% LP
neutral (+0%)
robust, schnell

< Zurück

Schließen



Consistency

- drive by translations problematic for consistency
- style clashes break atmosphere
- encourage teams to use list of common terms
- encourage teams to have people responsible for domain
- translation maintainer for lang should coordinate / try to enforce this
- make sure content belonging together is grouped in domain



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- 1 Introduction
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 - Conclusions
 - Discussion



Conclusions

- easy to do basics, hard to master
- many problems because people think English
- keep thinking „what would this be in my language?“
- abbreviations are evil!
- you will always encounter new problems



Time for discussions and questions



Thanks for your attention!