It's All About Context!

Introducing EzGlobe's In-Context Translation Solution

INTRODUCTION

A significant number of software applications today are web-based. The user interface strings are held in properties files. Properties files, unlike resource files, for example, do not provide much context or screen layout information. In many cases, this leaves translators guessing as to what might be the most appropriate translation for a particular term. In some cases, such guess work can lead to as many as 20 – 30% mistranslations and layout issues leading to hours of rework and regression.

KEYWORDS: *Translation, In-context translation, properties files, web-based applications, linguistic quality assurance, LQA*

The Challenge

The localization industry has evolved tremendously during the last two decades introducing great efficiencies via standardized processes and technologies. When translating .NET RESX files, for example, translators can display the UI screens in real time, so that they know exactly what they are translating and also if there are any so-called real estate limitations.

Web-based applications are relatively new and there aren't any standard tools available that would treat the files the same way as the RESX files. The translations are done out-of-context, which brings two main problems:

1. Mistranslations
2. Layout issues (Truncations)

Correcting these problems is very laborious which has negative impact not only on the costs but also the schedule. Now think, if

your application is multi-lingual then your problem just got multiplied by the number of languages.

Just consider this defect life cycle:

1. Perform linguistic and visual QA
2. Find a defect (a truncated or mistranslated strings)
3. Enter the defect in the defect tracking database.
4. Triage the defects
5. Identify the defect (In other words, find the corresponding string in the source files.)
6. Correct the defect
7. Update the defect tracking database
8. Repeat for each defect in each language.

Yes. The QA and regression process is extremely expensive. Preventing the defects from happening in the first place is the most logical way to go.

EzGlobe's solution

EzGlobe solved the problem by developing a tool that displays the strings within the context, as they will appear on the customer's screen. This **In-Context Translation Solution** brings several benefits:

- Shortened cycles
- Decreased engineering and debugging costs
- Improved translation quality
- Improved layout quality
- More predictable localization costs and schedules
- More productive time, less time debugging the localized variant.

IMPROVING THE TRANSLATION QUALITY

Mistranslations are very common when translating strings out of context because an English term may have different translations depending on its function (title, label, button etc.). For example, the word "print" can be translated as the noun "impression" or verb "imprimer" in French. Or, if you are localizing a software for the agriculture, you may not be sure if the term "field" is a field within the software or a pasture.

Correcting these problems in a localized application is very laborious and time consuming. You have to find the corresponding strings in the source files, see where else they appear, request new translations and fix them…

By providing context information to the translator, EzGlobe's solution suppresses most of these mistranslations.

REDUCING LAYOUT ISSUES

The lack of context also impacts the ability of the translator to propose a short translation in the case of an obvious size restriction. In the absence of this information, however, they translate the strings as they see best fit linguistically. This causes some strings to be truncated and you will find these problems only after you have compiled your user interface and performed a visual QA.

While the truncation issue may seem simple to fix (providing you have enough space on your screens) it can become harder when dealing with Asian languages. In these languages, the truncated strings are less obvious to testers who do not read the target language and are even harder to identify and fix.

EzGlobe's solution enables the translator to see, in real time, if each translation fits. If no shorter translation can be found, the translator can proactively report a layout issue that the engineering can fix at a later stage.

Conclusion

The problem causing significant budget overruns and missed revenue due to the late product deployment can be solved by a simple engineering solution. While it requires some up-front investment, this solution can turn your inefficient localization project to a smooth phase of your development cycle. Contact EzGlobe to learn more about this solution and how it can be deployed within your organization.

EzGlōbe acts as a strategic partner for companies that believe in the importance of addressing their clients, partners or employees in their own language. The company helps its clients go global by providing **professional translation, localization and internationalization services**.

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