Of Code and Context: Collaboration between Developers and Translators
Malte Ressin, José Abdelnour-Nocera, Andy Smith

Software for international markets often requires cultural adaptation, done by developers and translators. Internationalizing and localizing the product. This poster contrasts differences in work, education and values, and illustrates other important factors with an impact on collaboration. Results suggest an improvement of collaboration by integrating translators into development, and by understanding each other's work better.

Introduction:

Developers

- internationalize
- work iteratively
- develop
- practice teamwork
- are engineers
- utilize colocation

Translators

- internationalize and localize
- work linearly
- adapt
- work individually
- are linguists, sociologists etc.
- are often outsourced

Relationship to the product:

Developers are very close to the product and are paid for time. Translators have work only indirectly on the product, are often outsourced and are paid per word [2].

Different Work Processes:

Work processes in software projects are geared highly towards engineers and reusability and extensibility [4]. Translation is linear work step dealing with static text and symbols.

Our Ongoing Research:

Research questions
- What factors have an impact on localization effort and quality?
- How do concepts, expectations regarding localization differ between translators and stakeholders?

Data sources
- Interviews: Gather stakeholder experiences.
- Surveys: Gain process information.
- Focus groups: Insights into issues.
- Case studies: Observe execution in situ.

Goals
- Create a comprehensive scientific model of localization in agile software development.
- Enable guidelines for facilitated localization though tools, process guidelines etc.

Preliminary results
- Communication between developers and translators.
- Automated content pipeline.
- Context information for translations.

Concepts of Quality and Achievement:

Developers have measurable quality metrics such as speed and completeness. Translation quality is much more subjective and difficult to quantify [3].

Understanding Each Other's Subject:

Developers' specialist knowledge is clearly outlined. Translation is done by many people do on a daily basis. As a result, translators' knowledge and skills are easily underappreciated.

References: