

Curious Code on on Wikipedia

David Branner
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20150826

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<div id="p-variants"  
  role="navigation"  
  class="vectorMenu emptyPortlet"  
  aria-labelledby="p-variants-label">  
  <h3 id="p-variants-label">  
    <span>Variants</span><a href="#"></a>  
  </h3>  
  <div class="menu">  
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  </div>  
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English Wikipedia pages contain some strange code – a list that is always empty and a class to mark it as such:

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This p-variants div generates a “Variants” list

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This `p-variants` div generates a “Variants” list, invisible on English pages because of class “`emptyPortlet`”.

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none of which heads a list on the page in question.

That is the situation on pages for most languages.

Where does this `p-variants` div actually have an effect?

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<https://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/>



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```
... <span>sr</span><a href="#"></a> ...  
<div class="menu">  
  <ul>  
    <li id="ca-varlang-0" class="selected"><a  
href="/sr/Пјатра_Њамц" lang="sr" hreflang="sr" >sr</  
a></li>  
    <li id="ca-varlang-1"><a href="/sr-ec/  
Пјатра_Њамц" lang="sr-EC" hreflang="sr-EC" >Ћирилица</  
a></li>  
    <li id="ca-varlang-2"><a href="/sr-el/  
Пјатра_Њамц" lang="sr-EL" hreflang="sr-EL" >Latinica</  
a></li>  
  </ul>
```

</div>

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<https://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

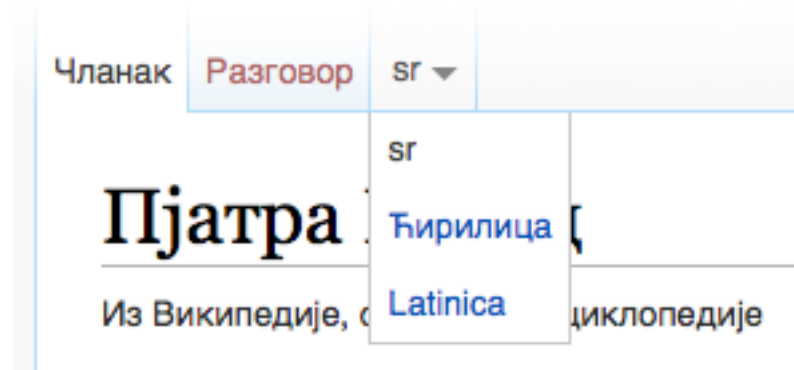


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... <span>sr</span><a href="#"></a> ...  
<div class="menu">  
  <ul>  
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href="/sr/Пјатра_Њамц" lang="sr" hreflang="sr" >sr</  
a></li>  
    <li id="ca-varlang-1"><a href="/sr-ec/  
Пјатра_Њамц" lang="sr-EC" hreflang="sr-EC" >ћирилица</  
a></li>  
    <li id="ca-varlang-2"><a href="/sr-el/  
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a></li>  
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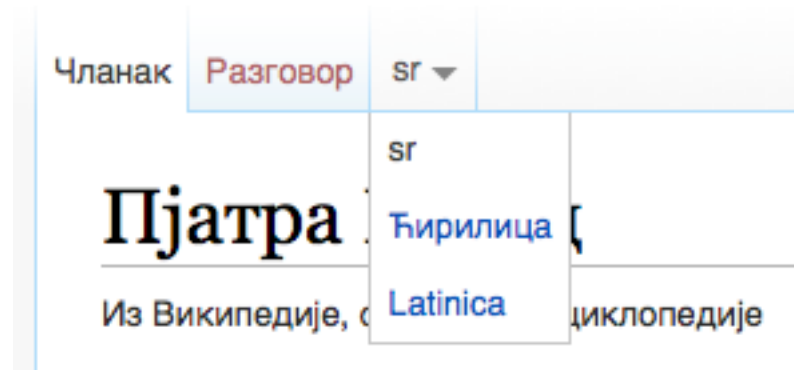
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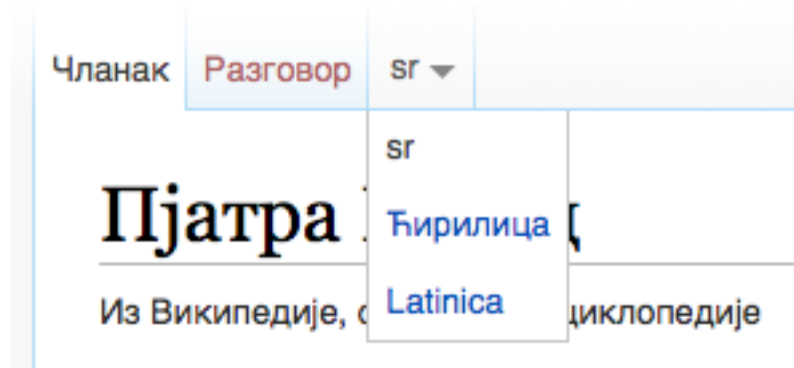


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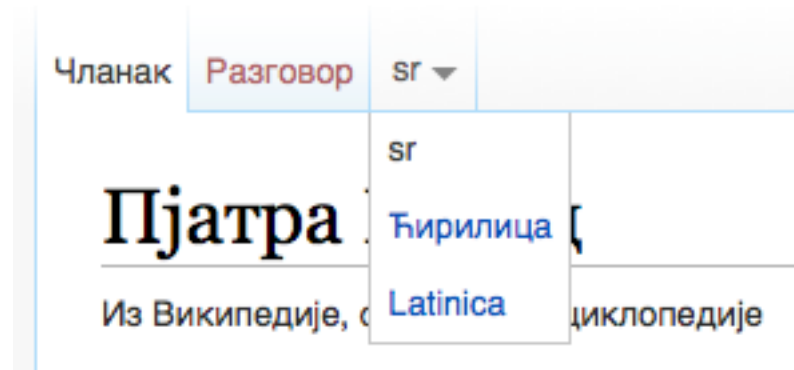
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This code creates a menu



allowing the user to select which of two scripts – “Ћирилица” (Cyrillic) or “Latinica” (Roman) the content appears in.

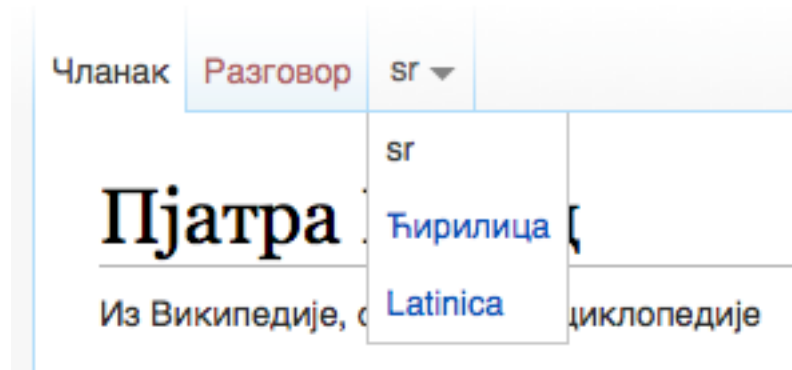
This code creates a menu



allowing the user to select which of two scripts – “Ћирилица” (Cyrillic) or “Latinica” (Roman) the content appears in.

The two forms of the page have identical content

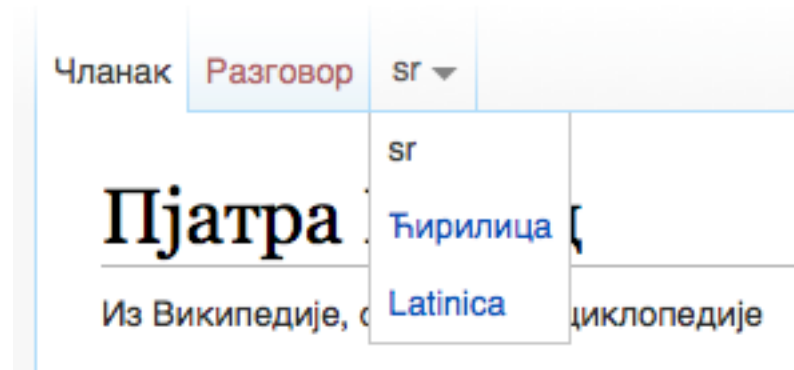
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The two forms of the page have identical content – the only difference is which script that content is displayed in.

This code creates a menu



allowing the user to select which of two scripts – “Ћирилица” (Cyrillic) or “Latinica” (Roman) the content appears in.

The two forms of the page have identical content – the only difference is which script that content is displayed in. Different Serbian-speakers may read in either script.

Cyrillic:

Чланак

Разговор

Ћирилица ▼

Пјатра Њамц

Из Википедије, слободне енциклопедије

Пјатра Њамц (рум. *Piatra Neamț*) је град у [Румунији](#), у источном делу земље, у ист управно средиште округа [Њамц](#).

Пјатра Њамц има површину од 77,4 km, на којој је по последњем попису из 2002. г

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Roman

Чланак [Разговор](#) [Latinica](#) ▼

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A change to the content of the page is reflected immediately on both versions:

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na kojoj je po poslednjem popisu iz 2002.

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and it immediately doubled itself in the Roman version:

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(Yes, I deleted it afterwards. And yes, it disappeared immediately from both versions.)

Other languages offering you this sort of choice:

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	<i>Cyrillic</i>	<i>Roman</i>
Tajik:	кирилликӣ	lotinī

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ᠨᠨᠴᠠᠳᠤᠷᠢᠭᠦᠨ ᠮᠣᠴᠢᠨ

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Inuktitut:		ilisaunik		ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

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Kazakh:	Кирил	Latin	توتە	
Inuktitut:		ilisautik		ᑭᑎᑎᑕᐅᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑕᐅᑭᑭᑭ

and Chinese...

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不转换	[no transformation – may be mixed forms]
简体	[generic simplified forms]
繁體	[generic traditional forms]
大陆简体	[Mainland China simplified forms]
香港繁體	[Hong Kong traditional forms]
澳門繁體	[Macao traditional forms]
马新简体	[Malaysia-Singapore simplified forms]
台灣正體	[Taiwan “official” forms (avoids “繁體”)]

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Why does Chinese need the last five regional forms?
Aren't generic “simplified” and “traditional” enough?

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As an example, here are the three names registered for the title of the movie “**The Matrix**”:

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黑客帝国 [Hacker Empire]

Hong Kong:

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Taiwan:

駭客任務 [Hacker Duty] (different word for “hacker”)

Here are transcriptions of Hillary Clinton's name:

Mainland China: 希拉里 [Xīlālǐ]

Hong Kong: 希拉莉 [Xīlālì]

Taiwan: 希拉蕊 [Xīlāruǐ]

Here are transcriptions of Hillary Clinton's name:

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Hong Kong: 希拉莉 [Xīlālì]

Taiwan: 希拉蕊 [Xīlāruǐ]

Here is Oprah Winfrey:

Mainland China: 奥普拉·温弗里 [Àopǔlā Wēnfúli]

Hong Kong: 奥花·雲費 [Àohuā Yúnfèi]

Taiwan: 歐普拉·溫芙蕾 [Ōupǔlā Wēnfúléi]

“highway junction / interchange”:

Mainland China: 立交桥 [elevated intersection bridge]

Hong Kong: 交匯處 [convergence place]

Taiwan: 交流道 [exchange road]

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“motor”:

Mainland China: 电动机 [electric machine]

Hong Kong: 摩打 [módǎ (phonetic transcription)]

Taiwan: 馬達 [mǎdá (phonetic transcription)]

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- Most often it is Taiwan and Mainland China that have different words; Hong Kong appears less often, and Macao and Malaysia-Singapore are very rare.

I attribute this to the Chinese tradition of viewing Chinese language as being a single entity, however varied regionally.

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Not only page titles but sometimes many other words are assigned regional synonyms. The words are placed in a `div` with a special attribute, `data-noteta-code`:

```
<div class="noteTA-title"
  data-noteta-code="zh-cn:贝拉克·奥巴马; zh-tw:巴拉克·歐巴馬; zh-
hk:巴拉克·奧巴馬;">
</div> ...
<div class="noteTA-local">
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:肯尼亚; zh-tw:肯亞; zh-hk:肯雅;"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:可卡因; zh-tw:古柯鹼; zh-hk:可卡因;"></
div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:伊利诺伊州; zh-tw:伊利諾州; zh-hk:伊利諾
伊州;"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:火奴鲁鲁; zh-tw:檀香山; zh-hk:檀香
山;"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:新罕布什尔州; zh-tw:新罕布夏州; zh-hk:新
罕布什爾州;"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:切尔西·克林顿; zh-hk:切爾西·克林頓; zh-
tw:雀兒喜·柯林頓"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:希拉里; zh-hk:希拉莉; zh-tw:希拉蕊"></
div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:米歇尔; zh-tw:蜜雪兒; zh-hk:米歇爾"></
div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:奥普拉·温弗里; zh-hk:奧花·雲費; zh-tw:歐
普拉·溫芙蕾"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:乔治·克鲁尼; zh-tw:喬治·克隆尼; zh-hk:佐
治·古尼;"></div>
<div data-noteta-code="zh-cn:格莱美奖; zh-tw:葛萊美獎; zh-hk:格林美
獎"></div> ...
```

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In the mean time, it's a simple matter to scrape this content using the `lxml` module:

Notice how many more words than just the title are supplied:

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```
In [1]: import scrape as S
In [2]: S.get_words('黑客帝国') # English: 'The Matrix'
Out[2]:
[{'zh-hk': '廿二世紀殺人網絡', 'zh-hans': '黑客帝国', 'zh-tw': '駭客任務'},
 {'zh-hant': '尼歐', 'zh-hans': '尼奧'},
 {'zh-hant': '母體', 'zh-hans': '矩阵'},
 {'zh-cn': '史密斯特工', 'zh-hk': '史特工', 'zh-tw': '史密斯探員'},
 {'zh-cn': '托马斯·安德森', 'zh-hk': '安湯武', 'zh-tw': '湯瑪斯·安德森'},
 {'zh-cn': '艾波克', 'zh-hk': '天啟', 'zh-tw': '艾巴'},
 {'zh-cn': '开关', 'zh-hk': '變體', 'zh-tw': '蘇薇琪'},
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 {'zh-cn': '坦克', 'zh-hk': '戰車', 'zh-tw': '坦克'},
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 {'zh-cn': '重装上阵', 'zh-hk': '決戰未來', 'zh-tw': '重裝上陣'},
 {'zh-cn': '矩阵革命', 'zh-hk': '驚變世紀', 'zh-tw': '最後戰役'},
 {'zh-hant': '程式', 'zh-hans': '程序'}]
```

```
In [3]: s.get_words('馬達') # English: 'motor'
```

```
Out[3]: [{'zh-hk': '摩打', 'zh-hans': '电动机', 'zh-tw': '馬達'}]
```

```
In [3]: s.get_words('馬達') # English: 'motor'
```

```
Out[3]: [{ 'zh-hk': '摩打', 'zh-hans': '电动机', 'zh-tw': '馬達' }]
```

```
In [4]: S.get_words('程式') # English: 'computer program'
```

```
Out[4]:
```

```
[{ 'zh-hant': '電腦程式', 'zh-hans': '计算机程序' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '執行', 'zh-hans': '运行' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '程式設計', 'zh-hans': '编程' },  
 { 'zh-hans': '计算机', 'zh-mo': '電腦', 'zh-sg': '计算机', 'zh-cn':  
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 { 'zh-hant': '程式', 'zh-hans': '程序' },  
 { 'zh-hk': '軟件', 'zh-cn': '软件', 'zh-hans': '软件', 'zh-tw': '軟  
體' }]
```

```
In [3]: s.get_words('馬達') # English: 'motor'
```

```
Out[3]: [{ 'zh-hk': '摩打', 'zh-hans': '电动机', 'zh-tw': '馬達' }]
```

```
In [4]: S.get_words('程式') # English: 'computer program'
```

```
Out[4]:
```

```
[{ 'zh-hant': '電腦程式', 'zh-hans': '计算机程序' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '執行', 'zh-hans': '运行' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '程式設計', 'zh-hans': '编程' },  
 { 'zh-hans': '计算机', 'zh-mo': '電腦', 'zh-sg': '计算机', 'zh-cn':  
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 { 'zh-hant': '程式', 'zh-hans': '程序' },  
 { 'zh-hk': '軟件', 'zh-cn': '软件', 'zh-hans': '软件', 'zh-tw': '軟  
體' }]
```

```
In [5]: S.get_words('滑鼠') # English: 'computer mouse'
```

```
Out[5]:
```

```
[{ 'zh-hant': '滑鼠', 'zh-hans': '鼠标', 'zh-sg': '滑鼠' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '滑鼠', 'zh-hans': '鼠标', 'zh-sg': '滑鼠' },  
 { 'zh-hk': '鐳射', 'zh-hans': '激光', 'zh-tw': '雷射', 'zh-sg': '鐳  
射' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '簡報', 'zh-hans': '演示' },  
 { 'zh-hant': '光學', 'zh-hans': '光电', 'zh-sg': '光学' }]
```

```

In [3]: s.get_words('馬達') # English: 'motor'
Out[3]: [{'zh-hk': '摩打', 'zh-hans': '电动机', 'zh-tw': '馬達'}]

In [4]: S.get_words('程式') # English: 'computer program'
Out[4]:
[{'zh-hant': '電腦程式', 'zh-hans': '计算机程序'},
 {'zh-hant': '執行', 'zh-hans': '运行'},
 {'zh-hant': '程式設計', 'zh-hans': '编程'},
 {'zh-hans': '计算机', 'zh-mo': '電腦', 'zh-sg': '计算机', 'zh-cn':
'计算机', 'zh-hant': '電腦', 'zh-tw': '電腦', 'zh-hk': '電腦'},
 {'zh-hant': '程式', 'zh-hans': '程序'},
 {'zh-hk': '軟件', 'zh-cn': '软件', 'zh-hans': '软件', 'zh-tw': '軟
體'}]

In [5]: S.get_words('滑鼠') # English: 'computer mouse'
Out[5]:
[{'zh-hant': '滑鼠', 'zh-hans': '鼠标', 'zh-sg': '滑鼠'},
 {'zh-hant': '滑鼠', 'zh-hans': '鼠标', 'zh-sg': '滑鼠'},
 {'zh-hk': '鐳射', 'zh-hans': '激光', 'zh-tw': '雷射', 'zh-sg': '鐳
射'},
 {'zh-hant': '簡報', 'zh-hans': '演示'},
 {'zh-hant': '光學', 'zh-hans': '光电', 'zh-sg': '光学'}]

```

Lesson? Be surprised at what is hidden on the Web...

End