

HTW BERLIN - UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Bachelor's Thesis

Facilitating the use of Wikidata in Wikimedia projects with a user-centered design approach

by

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Abstract

Facilitating the use of Wikidata in Wikimedia projects with a user-centered design approach

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This thesis aims to develop a concept using user-centered design to improve the editing of Wikidata from a client. Using various tools from the field of usability and design thinking it will aim to create an approach that will result in both an improved user experience and an easy implementation for the software development team.

For this thesis the approach will be selected according to the outcome after evaluating the community/user-generated input.

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Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Wikimedia and Wikidata

The Wikimedia foundation is a non-profit organization whose goal it is to support and encourage free knowledge projects(should i add that they're free of charge and publicly available or is that clear?) such as Wikipedia and Wikidata.

Wikidata was launched in 2012 by the Wikimedia foundation to support other Wikimedia projects (e.g. Wikipedia, Wikisource etc. but also 3rd party projects) by providing a free linked database of structured data. Structured data is is machine readable and is usually stored in a relational database. All data is community-generated and maintained and published under a free license (CC0 1.0). It is inherently multi lingually available and can thus be used across many platforms.

Explaining how it works

Most objects in the database consist of items. Items have descriptions and labels which have statements. These statements have properties which hold a value and qualifiers Every item statement of an item should have references.

It is a secondary database because it also stores sources to all objects

insert
this
somehow

1.2 Initial Problem Statement

As of (07.10.15), Wikidata has almost 15 million entries. This broad database is not as heavily utilized as hoped for by the organization and its community. It has been hypothesized that this is most likely caused by a multitude of reasons which possibly

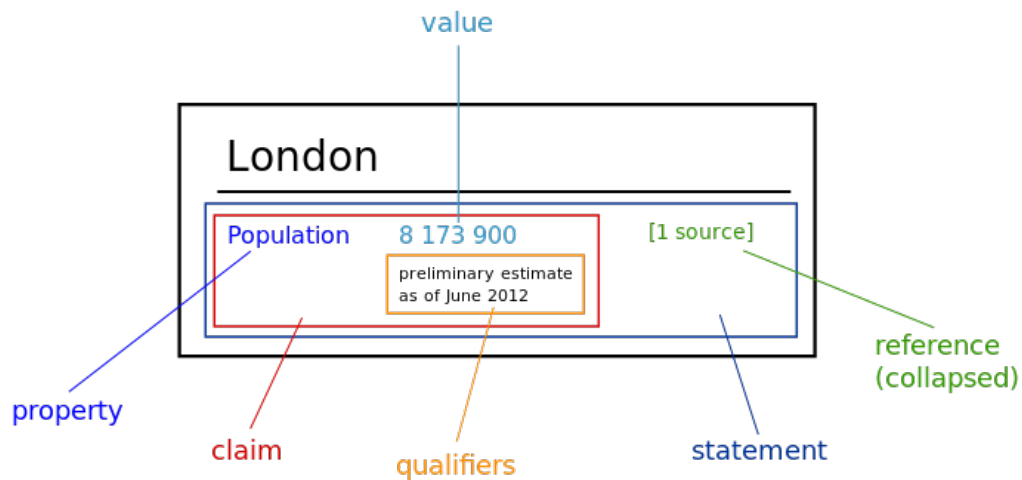


FIGURE 1.1: *Composition of an Item*: This diagram shows the structure of an *item* in *Wikidata*

include the lack of usability of the data integration and editing functions and their visibility.

Currently the editing process involves being directed away from the client, and after completing the edit, being redirected back to the client. This makes many users uncomfortable because they are leaving their comfort zone which is on their local Wiki. Often one can witness a basic lack of understanding what Wikidata is amongst other Wiki users/editors. In Wikidata you can have multiple sets of the same statement with different data backed up by different sources. Wikidata is a platform for free knowledge not for imposing the true knowledge on anyone. Unlike Wikipedia where it must be agreed upon one truth which will be published(not the best word). Thus the habit of editing of Wikipedia editors is one of replacing and not adding which is what is required when editing Wikidata. Another problem that most Wikis face is that most communities prefer not to deviate from their own Wiki. It's outsourcing data (in a way) and thus handing over control and responsibility to a certain extent although preferably the loyalty should be to all Wikimedia projects and not separated into the separate Wikis. Unfortunately the Wiki communities have had a bad experience when Wiki commons came out. (cite)

To improve the current editing situation a concept is needed that that will ease the editing process for the editors when working from a client such as Wikipedia. (From now on, client will stand for Wikipedia unless otherwise specified). The field of usability yields many methods and tools to approach this problem. In the scope of this thesis many will be tested and used to narrow down the possibilities to an optimal solution. There is no one way to approach a problem like this. Another big task will be to keep all communities

involved satisfied. The various Wiki communities are known to have (source?) very strong bonds to their respective Wikis and usually don't welcome changes to them. Thus it will be very important to convey a sense of ownership when working with them. It can be assumed that an implementation of any kind will not result in success, which is defined by how frequently the feature is ended up being used, if the community is not going to be involved in the process of development.

1.3 Requirements Analysis

It must be ensured that vandalism is not being facilitated, which would otherwise sequentially degrade the data quality while still having a low entry barrier. Another important issue is one of locality. Things that happen locally must also convey that that, as well as things that are happening remotely, otherwise the user can get confused about where the edit is happening.

It will be important to create a sense of ownership when coming up with a concept because otherwise there is a chance of the community feeling overlooked. (make a section for community?)

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Charlene Kritschmar, declare that this thesis titled, "Facilitating the use of Wikidata in Wikimedia projects with a user-centered design approach" and the work presented in it are my own. I confirm that:

- Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed.
- Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work.
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help.
- Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself.

Signed:

Date:
