SIMPLE INTERLINEAR GLOSSES SHORTCODE PLUGIN FOR WORDPRESS

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For a long time I've been slightly annoyed of formatting interlinear glosses in HTML by hand. I had hoped that there would be a plugin for WordPress at least, as a widely used content management system, that would do things automatically and to my liking. But as far as I can tell, nobody has published anything like that so far. Thus, I finally tried and programmed a shortcode plugin for very simple interlinear glosses myself, hoping that it may be useful for others, too. Especially blogging linguists and conlangers, of course 😃 [Last updated: 2012-02-15]

Now, what does this thing do? Basically, what you enter in your post or page editing pane is:

```
[gloss]Ang kamayan para dagās vala, bahu ca!
ang kama-yan para daga-as vala, bahu ca!
AF be_as_as-3PM quick turtle-P lovely, shout-IMP 3PM.LOC[/gloss]
'If they are as quick as a lovely turtle, shout at them!'
```

And get out:

Ang	kamayan	para	dagās	vala,	bahu	ca!
ang	kama-yan	para	daga-as	vala,	bahu	ca!
AF	be_as_as-3PM	quick	turtle-P	lovely,	shout-IMP	3PM.LOC

'If they are as quick as a lovely turtle, shout at them!'

If you want to know the details, the HTML behind this formatted gloss looks basically like this:

```
<div class="cb-gloss">
  <dl>
    <dt>Ang</dt>
    <dd>ang</dd>
    <dd>AF</dd>
  </dl>
</div>
```

The formatting of elements can be adjusted in the `style.css` file in the plugin's folder. Basic style functionality is hardwired so that columns ought to show up as columns next to each other and not under each other even when the article you include the gloss in is accessed by RSS and the reader doesn't load the whole CSS definitions of your website – provided that your RSS reader doesn't strip CSS or even HTML completely, of course.

The shortcode does not demand a certain number of lines, but simply maps the first, second, third etc. word of the first line you enter to the first, second, third etc. word of the subsequent lines. The main option the shortcode takes as an argument is `div="…"`, which sets the dividing character for the

individual columns. For example, if you choose `div=" / "` as your divider, the individual lines will be split at that sequence:

```
[gloss div=" / "]Ang / kamayan
ang / kama-yan
AF / be_as_as-3PM[/gloss]
```

becomes

Ang   kamayan
ang   kama-yan
AF   be_as_as-3PM

If nothing is set, a blank space will be assumed. However, you can also assign CSS classes to individual lines by simply putting their names into the tag part, so for example `[gloss " " ipa small]` will assign no class to the first line, the class `ipa` to the second line and the class `small` to the third. You can also add the most basic styling to individual elements in the [gloss] block, e.g. to emphasize certain parts:

```
[gloss]<strong>Example</strong>[/gloss]
```

becomes

Example

Something that is done automatically is turning what is guessed to be an abbreviation for a functional morpheme into small capitals. The script assumes that every sequence of more than two capital letters, numbers, or punctuation marks is to be put in small caps. If you want to circumvent that, for example if acronyms are involved, you need to put the sequence into backticks, for example `` `CEO` ``. You can also put things into small caps explicitly by using the pipe character around the sequence, for example `|text|`. Also compare the following illustration:

```
[gloss]3SG\MASC.AGT CEO `CEO` text |text|[/gloss]
```

becomes

3SG\MASC.AGT CEO **CEO** text TEXT

Another function that uses bracketification is grouping multiple words to one unit. In this case, you will need to put curly brackets around the text, for example `{like this}`. What the script does is to replace the regular space with a non-breaking one (i.e. ` ` or U+00A0). For example:

```
[gloss]ang kamayan para
ang kama-yan para
AF be_as_as-3PM quick
Ø {they are as} quick[/gloss]
```

becomes

ang	kamayan	para
ang	kama-yan	para
AF	be_as_as-3PM	quick
Ø	they are as	quick

As you can see, handling this is rather simple. You may of course tweak the code to suit your needs. I don't consider myself a programmer, so if you find awkward coding that direly needs improvement, you may of course tell me, especially if bugs are involved.

To install, download the file, unzip it and upload the folder *simple-interlinear-glosses* to *./wp-contents /plugins*. You can then log in to WordPress as an administrator and activate the plugin on the plugin options page. I tested this only with WordPress 3.1.3 and 3.3.1, so I can't give a guarantee that this plugin works with *much* older versions.

Known Bugs, Issues, and Limitations

- HTML tags like `<a>` and `<span>` aren't yet supported because I need to figure out how to make the script *not* match punctuation inside the tags. All HTML tags but `<strong><b><em><i><s><strike><u><big><small><sup><sub>` are currently stripped. (2012-02-15)
- Overwriting the files will remove your settings in `style.css` when you're updating because the plugin is *simple* and doesn't make use of WordPress's database. (2012-02-15)