Encouraging Language Students to Contribute Inflection Data to Wiktionary

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**Proposal:** Build custom interface to simply lookup and update of inflection data
(Proposed application would display Wiktionary’s inflection data using different interface)

**Access:**
- Provide simple means for students to enter foreign characters
- Make suggestions when words misspelled
- Allow lookups of inflected words

Note: University of Pittsburg maintains web site with similar features for Polish. Site does not permit user updates.

**Update:**
- Allow users to modify single entries in inflection table without using template syntax
- Allow advanced users to use templates where convenient

**Challenge:** Current Wiktionary interface may discourage students from making corrections and/or additions

- Users must learn MediaWiki template syntax to update inflection data (both general MediaWiki template syntax and the syntax of the specific templates in use).
- Example: The template below contains all the necessary information to generate the conjugation table for *mieszkać*:
  ```
  {{pl-conj-ai-am,asz|mieszkać}}
  ```
- Concern: Students busy studying won’t take the time to learn template syntax and, therefore, won’t contribute.

**Discussion:**
- Which languages will potentially benefit from the proposed interface?
- Is the inflection data in Wiktionary accurate enough to be used as an educational resource?
- Will simplified access to inflection data hinder learning (e.g., make students lazy)?
- Will simplifying the update process increase or decrease the amount and quality of inflection data?
- Which features will be most important in attracting student use?
- On what platforms should we build application (stand-alone, web application, iPhone, etc.)?

**Idea:** Use Wiktionary to help foreign language students

- Languages such as Polish have very complex inflection systems. It can be very difficult to both choose the correct rule then correctly apply it (i.e., change a vowel and/or soften a consonant when necessary).
- Users have been populating the English Wiktionary with conjugation and declension data for many languages. Perhaps this data can help students verify that they have applied inflection rules correctly.

Note: The authoritative (i.e., correct) complete inflection data for some languages (including Polish) is freely or cheaply available. This discussion is directed at those languages without inexpensive authoritative grammar sources.

**Note:**
- *mieszkać:* verb “to live”
- *pies:* noun “dog”
- *niebieski:* adjective “blue”

Currently under study

Will students rely on “easy” lookup instead of memorizing rules?

There will be more contributors; but they will be less experienced