

Bugs & Wish list

Nonprinting characters in Tiki source code that make life of translators harder | Tiki Wiki CMS Groupware :: Development

Nonprinting characters in Tiki source code that make life of translators harder

Status

✖ Closed

Subject

Nonprinting characters in Tiki source code that make life of translators harder

Version

18.x

Category

- Usability
- Consistency
- Less than 30-minutes fix
- Easy for Newbie Dev

Feature

Admin Interface (UI)

Resolution status

Fixed

Submitted by

hman

Lastmod by

hman

Rating

★ ★ ↘ ↘ ★ ★ ★ ★ ↘ ↘ ★ ★ ★ ★ ↘ ↘ ★ ★ ★ ★ ↘ ↘ ★ ★ ★ ★ (0) ?

Related-to

- ● [Umbrella bug report for new missing tra\(\) bugs](#)

Description

Once again I stumbled upon texts of Tikis admin GUI had resisted being translated, and later I found that nonprinting characters were hardcoded that will block tra() or tr() from pattern matching. Even spaces can block a translation. I won't make new bug reports for those, but rather use this one as sort of an umbrella bug report which I will amend with comments.

So the first new occurency of nonprinting characters that block translations is found on line 130 of /lib/prefs/tracker.php:

```
'description' => tr("Require users to fill in a tracker form if not done already by  
prompting them with a modal dialog  " ),
```

Those two spaces (yes, two, not one or three...) may look like a little glitch from a dev's perspective, but since they do not print, you cannot translate this string by copy & pasting from the GUI into custom.php giving a translation: The pattern matching cannot find it. There is a workaround, but this may not be so easy for translators with little experience and with small toolboxes (Windows comes with FAR less useful tools for this than Linux...), since if you encounter those, you have to grep through the entirety (!) of Tiki source code to find the origin of the string, to be able to look at it's source code, to be able to copy & paste from there...

Importance

4

Easy to solve?

10 easy

Priority

40

Demonstrate Bug (Tiki 19+)

This bug has been demonstrated on show2.tikiwiki.org

SVN update

Ticket ID

7443

Created

Sunday 26 July, 2020 17:56:06 GMT-0000

by hman

LastModif

Friday 22 October, 2021 12:29:14 GMT-0000

Comments



Marc Laporte 10 Sep 20 18:43 GMT-0000

This is a very good report. Thank you hman. We will get this solved.



Marc Laporte 10 Sep 20 18:52 GMT-0000

I don't see issue in latest code:

<https://gitlab.com/tikiwiki/tiki/-/blob/master/lib/prefs/tracker.php>

<https://gitlab.com/tikiwiki/tiki/-/blob/21.x/lib/prefs/tracker.php>

But I see here:

<https://gitlab.com/tikiwiki/tiki/-/blob/18.x/lib/prefs/tracker.php>

Not sure how important it is to fix for 18.x, but for sure, we want to solve this on a global level for the future.

Sounds like we need to search throughout the whole code base for issues like this. So

- leading spaces (1 or more)
- trailing spaces (1 or more)
- 2 or more consecutive spaces anywhere in the label
- Anything else?

Then, we need to fix without breaking the translations. Ref: [Mass spelling correction](#)

This script should be ran at each release. So we fix before releasing:
[How to release](#)



hman 10 Sep 20 18:59 GMT-0000

IMHO you should also look for newline characters in strings that are passed through tra(), or tabs, or unicode. Newlines are especially bad, because they eliminate the possibility to browse through the source with simple means of sed and awk, they both are allergic to newlines when you look, for instance, for strings "between {tr} and {/tr}" or between "tra(" and ")"...



Jean-Marc Libs 11 Sep 20 12:22 GMT-0000

Definitely something for future Tiki version unless someone finds time to look up how it looks in actual Tiki.

- It might come from bad application of TR tags in smarty like: {tr}Author: {/tr}{ \$authname} in which case the template needs to be fixed together with the translation or the end result is: "Author:jyhem"
- It might come from a lack of CSS margin which the developers knew how to fix using spaces because they had no clue about how to change the default Tiki CSS rules.
- Maybe other reasons, like newlines due to over-enthusiastic respect towards coding standards which restrict line length.

What I'm saying is please don't just do a blind search and replace in the language files on LTS versions.



hman 11 Sep 20 21:47 GMT-0000

I built my new translation of de.de by clicking everything, activating everything, trying to provoke every error and by that I build a VERY large custom.php which you can find attached to my feature request "please update german localiation". So far I haven't touched language.php. And I only went to the source when I found I could not translate strings I discovered, most of the times that was due to either compositional tra() calls, nonprinting characters, weird escaping, or unicode. At the moment I dig into the source of the calendar to try to fix it (it is utterly broken).

The nonprinting characters, almost all of them newlines and tabs, were in most all cases uses to impose indentation in the source code (!!). Indentation in source code is good practice, but not within (!!) text strings that are part of the GUI.... As I said they also break the easy way to extract strings (in order to translate them) with sed or awk.



hman 11 Sep 20 22:01 GMT-0000

Congrats, in the code example you gave there really are no two consecutive spaces in the strings anymore... But another issue: Some of the sentences are terminated by a point, some are not. This kind of inconsistency can be found throughout Tiki...

This is a good example of why coding standards really are necessary.

Btw., why is sometimes tra() called, but most of the time tr()? What is the difference? When is tra() used, when tr() and when tr in curly braces? It really ain't self-explanatory...

Thanks.



Jonny Bradley 13 Sep 20 12:43 GMT-0000

Hi hman

In PHP `tr()` is the function to use - it does argument

replacement so "code stuff" shouldn't end up in the translated strings, e.g.

```
tr('This %0 has %1 replacements', 'string', 2)
```

Internally this calls `tra()` which doesn't do the replacements so some people use that because it runs very slightly quicker.

In Smarty you need to use `{tr}` like this:

```
{tr _0='string' _1=2}This %0 has %1 replacements{/tr}
```

HTH!



Marc Laporte 21 Sep 20 13:53 GMT-0000

Some related ideas / links:

- [Creating or maintaining translations](#)

Maybe the [get_strings.php](#) script could be enhanced to report strings that will be problematic. Ex.: extra spaces at the end.



Marc Laporte 21 Sep 20 13:58 GMT-0000

@Ramsha: Here is the tool translators use to translate strings via the web interface: <https://doc.tiki.org/Interactive-Translation>



Marc Laporte 22 Oct 21 12:28 GMT-0000

https://gitlab.com/tikiwiki/tiki/-/merge_requests/965

Attachments

filename	created	hits	comment	version	filetype
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No attachments for this item

The original document is available at

<https://dev.tiki.org/item7443-Nonprinting-characters-in-Tiki-source-code-that-make-life-of-translators-harder>

Show PHP error messages