
Symbols Linguist

Job Description

Reports to: Head of Symbols

Company Core Values

At Widgit, we're proud to be a purpose-driven software company and Certified B Corp. Putting people before profit, we're committed to making a positive difference to the communities we serve, and the planet we call home.

Our core values of integrity, kindness and quality shape everything we do. Whether we're designing symbol-supported resources, supporting schools, or working together as a team, we expect everyone to reflect these values in their day-to-day work.

Being a B Corp means we believe business should be a force for good. We want our work to have a lasting, positive impact, not just for those we work with now, but for future generations too. That's why we aim to operate with care, respect, and consideration for others, in everything we do.

We ask all team members to bring a positive, thoughtful attitude to their work, both inside and outside the office, so we may continue to grow a culture we're proud of and make a real difference through our products and practices.

Job Purpose

Providing dedicated oversight of the linguistic data attached to Widgit's symbol language system, the Symbols Linguist will ensure grammatical accuracy and data integrity across English vocabulary whilst overseeing translation efforts for the multiple European languages we support.

The Symbols Linguist will also be responsible for assigning new concepts and vocabulary to graphics as they are created, maintaining the data integrity of the symbols vocabulary, and providing quality assurance for translation work conducted by overseas partners.

A key objective is to reduce the time between a symbol graphic being drawn and the concept being created, enabling faster deployment of new symbols in the software. The role will shape the long-term evolution of the symbol set and its vocabulary.

Main Duties

English Language Management

- **Vocabulary expansion and maintenance:** Expand and maintain the English vocabulary database within the symbol system, ensuring comprehensive coverage of concepts and appropriate word selection for symbols.
- **Grammatical data rigour:** Maintain high standards of grammatical accuracy and consistency across all English language data, including parts of speech classification, inflection management, and semantic categorisation.
- **Concept assignment:** Assign new concepts and vocabulary to graphics as they are drawn, ensuring appropriate linguistic mapping between visual symbols and their corresponding English terms.
- **Quality assurance:** Review and validate existing English language data for accuracy, consistency, and appropriateness within the symbol language framework.
- **Linguistic tagging:** Tag concepts with accurate linguistic tags (and potentially semantic tags in the future), utilising smart tools, AI, and data processing techniques where appropriate, whilst ensuring manual verification and quality control of all automated tagging processes.

Translation Oversight

- **Translation quality control:** Oversee translation efforts by overseas partner developers and paid translation companies, ensuring accuracy and cultural appropriateness of translations into the multiple European languages we support.
- **Cross-linguistic validation:** Review translated content for grammatical accuracy and structural consistency, identifying and correcting errors in foreign language implementations.
- **Translation workflow management:** Support external translation partners technically to ensure timely delivery of high-quality translations that maintain the integrity of the symbol language system.
- **Language structure expertise:** Apply knowledge of European language structures and grammar to validate translation quality and identify potential issues across multiple target languages.

System and Data Management

- **Hub system administration:** Utilise the Hub system for managing symbol vocabulary, concepts, and translations, including creating and managing projects, assigning tasks, and maintaining data integrity.
- **Symboliser technology understanding:** Work with the symboliser natural language processing technology to understand its logical processes for text processing and data lookup, ensuring optimal linguistic data structure for system performance.
- **Concept coding and categorisation:** Assign appropriate concept codes, categories, and tags to ensure proper organisation and discoverability within the symbol system.
- **Data export and integration:** Manage data exports and ensure proper integration of linguistic data with Widgit's symboliser and other Widgit products.
- **Documentation and reporting:** Maintain comprehensive documentation of linguistic decisions, translation guidelines, and quality standards for the symbol language system.

Person Specification

Skills and knowledge

Essential

- **Linguistics or Languages degree:** A degree in Linguistics, Modern Languages, or a related field, providing strong foundation in language structure, grammar, and semantic analysis.
- **Advanced linguistic and technical expertise:** Demonstrable understanding of language structure, linguistic analysis, data management, and language technology (ideally at degree or postgraduate study level).
- **Translation experience:** 1-3 years' experience working in a translation company or similar linguistic role, with understanding of translation workflows and quality standards.
- **Attention to detail:** Exceptional attention to detail and quality focus, essential for maintaining data accuracy and consistency across the symbol language system.
- **Time management:** Strong time-management skills to handle multiple projects and deadlines effectively, particularly when coordinating with external translation partners.
- **Project management:** Basic project management and organisation skills to coordinate translation projects and manage multiple concurrent tasks.

Desirable

- **MA in Translation:** A Master's degree in Translation, Translation Technology, or Applied Linguistics, providing advanced understanding of translation theory and practice.
- **Software tool familiarity:** Experience with translation tools, data management systems, or similar software applications that demonstrate comfort with technical workflows and logical data processing.
- **Natural language processing understanding:** Familiarity with or ability to understand natural language processing concepts and logical data processing workflows.
- **Academic background:** Strong academic approach to language analysis and research, beneficial for maintaining a logical approach to the symbol language system.
- **Communication skills:** Excellent people and communication skills for working effectively with external agencies and internal teams.

Characteristics

- **Quality-focused approach:** A commitment to maintaining the highest standards of linguistic accuracy and consistency in all work.
- **Long-term project orientation:** Enjoyment of long-term projects and the ability to maintain focus and quality over extended periods.
- **Collaborative mindset:** Ability to work effectively with diverse teams including designers, developers, and external translation partners.
- **Problem-solving attitude:** Creative approach to solving linguistic challenges and finding appropriate solutions for complex translation scenarios.
- **Logical rigour:** Strong analytical thinking and logical approach to problem-solving, essential for maintaining data consistency, understanding the symboliser's natural language processing workflows, and managing complex linguistic relationships within the symbol system.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Understanding and appreciation of cultural nuances in language and communication, essential for effective translation oversight.