The Artikulate Handbook

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Abstract

Artikulate is a pronunciation trainer, designed to help in improving and perfecting pronunciation skills. Learners train their pronunciation skills by recording their own voices and comparing those recording to native speaker recordings. Artikulate is part of the KDE Education project.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Artikulate is a pronunciation trainer for improving and perfecting pronunciation skills for a non-native language. For this, Artikulate provides courses created by native speakers, who recorded their own voices as comparison material. A student can download these recordings in form of courses from the Internet. The training then consists of iterative playing of a native speaker's recording of some phrase, recording the own voice, and comparing both until the result is good enough to proceed with the next phrase.

1.1 The Learning Concept

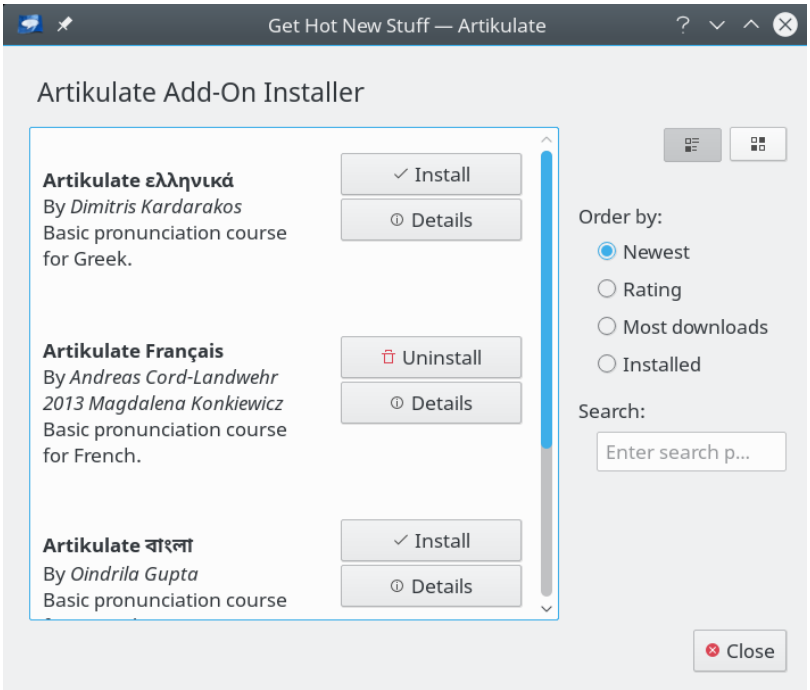
The study concept of Artikulate is based on honest self-assessment of the student. A student trains several phrases in one training session. For each such phase, first he/she plays the native speaker recording for the phrase and listens to it. Then, by recording his/her own voice when attempting to repeat this phrase, we get a second recording. The student then can compare both recordings and either decides that the phrase is mastered or that another attempt is needed. The provided courses provide trainings for special scenarios (like ordering food in a restaurant) but can also focus on learning how to pronounce difficult syllables and words of a particular language correctly.

1.2 First Steps in Artikulate

This chapter explains how to make the first steps in Artikulate.

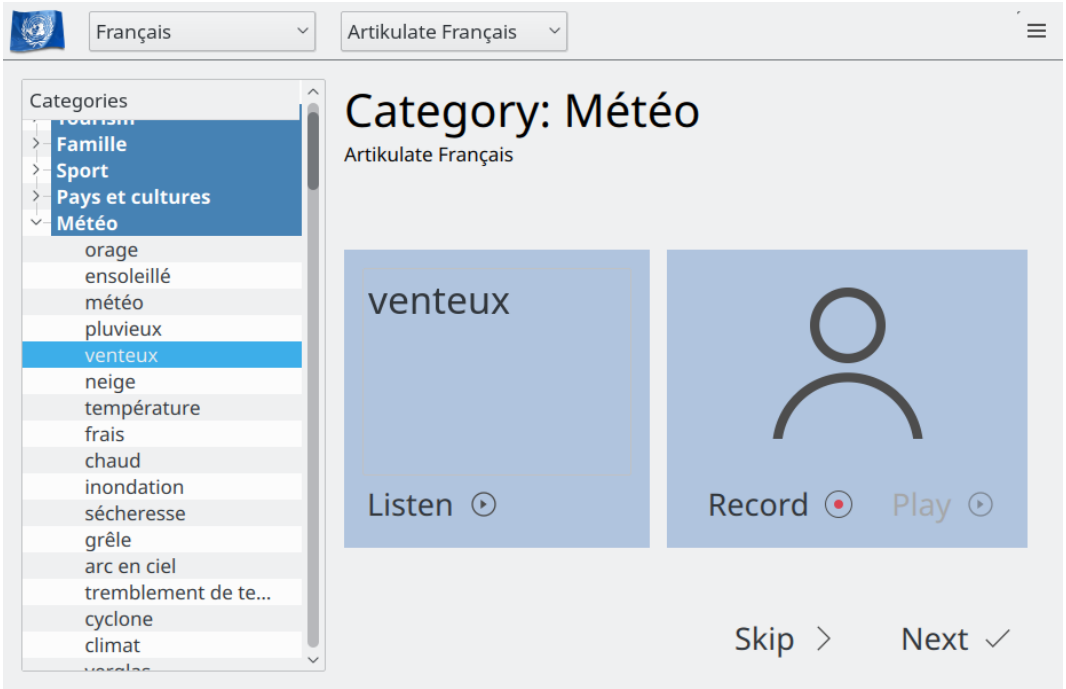
1.2.1 1. Download a New Course

You can download courses through **File** → **Download Courses**. If the menubar is not activated, you can open the **File** menu by clicking at the top-right button. A download window will appear, listing the available languages provided by the KDE Community. You can sort through them using the order by functions at the right. We download the Polish course by clicking on **Install**.



1.2.2 2. Start Training

Courses consist of multiple training units, each usually grouping a set of phrases according to a scenario. They can be switched by using the combo boxes for language and course at the top boarder of the screen.



1.2.3 Finish Training

The training can be finished at any point by just closing the program.

Chapter 2

Editor

The integrated course editor is an advanced tool for language course contributors that allows the creation and collaborative work on language courses for Artikulate. On the one hand it allows the creation of language courses and recording of the native speaker sound files. On the hand, it enables work on so called *skeletons*, which are language course prototypes that allow easy and fast creation of new courses derived from a prototype. The editor only edits files outside of the training course set, i.e., the set of courses downloaded in Artikulate.

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 Editor Notions

For the course editor we use a specific set of terms, which is also used for the following descriptions.

Language:

Languages are only available in Artikulate if they are given by language specifications.

Course:

A course is associated to one language and contains a list of units.

Unit:

A unit consists of phrases that are ″somehow″ homogeneous. E.g. those can be phrases spoken in a restaurant or phrases spoken at a conversation at the street by a tourist searching for the way.

Course Skeletons:

A course skeleton forms the prototype of a course. This is, skeletons help to ease creation of courses in several languages as they state a set of units and phrases (in English) that then can be used as a blueprint to create a course in a new language. Updates of course skeletons can also be imported into courses that are created from a skeleton.

Phrases:

Phrases are given by a text string and a recording by a native speaker. We differ phrases by their lengths. The following phrase lengths exists

- word: a single word, letter, or number

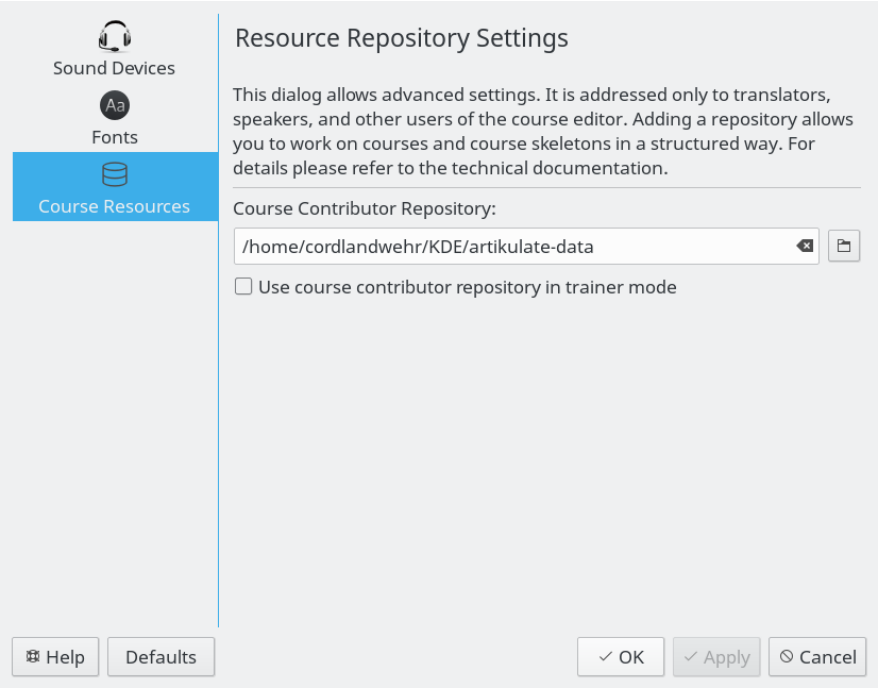
- expression: an expression of several words that does not form a complete sentence
- sentence: a complete sentence
- paragraph: several sentences (usually 2-3)

A course is associated with a specific language, consists of different units and each unit is given by a sequence of phrases in different lengths.

2.1.2 Set Storage Folder/Course Repository

The editor operates within a separate folder (in the following called *repository*, as it is recommended to be under some version control system). In that folder, the editor searches for editable courses and skeleton files and also stores new files.

The course repository can be set in the configuration dialog. It can be found at **Settings** → **Configure Artikulate** and the course settings are at the menu option **Course Resources**.



Set course repository for editor.

Chapter 3

Credits and License

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