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## XLIFF (XML Localisation interchange file format)

*XLIFF (Format de fichier XML pour l'échange de données de  
localisation)*

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This document was prepared by OASIS (as XLIFF Version 2.0, August 2014) and was adopted, under a special “fast-track procedure”, by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Terminology and other language and content resources*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Translation, interpreting and related technology*.

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# XLIFF Version 2.0

## OASIS Standard

**05 August 2014**

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This version:

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/os/xliff-core-v2.0-os.html> (Authoritative)

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/os/xliff-core-v2.0-os.pdf>

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/os/xliff-core-v2.0-os.xml>

Previous version:

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/cos01/xliff-core-v2.0-cos01.html> (Authoritative)

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<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/cos01/xliff-core-v2.0-cos01.xml>

Latest version:

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/xliff-core-v2.0.html> (Authoritative)

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/xliff-core-v2.0.pdf>

<http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/xliff-core-v2.0.xml>

Technical Committee: <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/60e7a35e-3427-4b2f-9e85-000000000000/oasis-21720-2017>  
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Additional artifacts:

This prose specification is one component of a Work Product that also includes:

XML schemas accessible from <http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/os/schemas/>

Related Work:

This specification replaces or supersedes:

*XLIFF Version 1.2*, 1 February 2008. OASIS Standard. <http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/v1.2/os/xliff-core.html>

Declared XML Namespaces:

urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:2.0

## ISO 21720:2017(E)

- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:matches:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:glossary:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:fs:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:metadata:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:resourcedata:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:changetracking:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:sizerestriction:2.0
- urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:validation:2.0

### Abstract:

This document defines version 2.0 of the XML Localisation Interchange File Format (XLIFF). The purpose of this vocabulary is to store localizable data and carry it from one step of the localization process to the other, while allowing interoperability between and among tools.

### Status:

This document was last revised or approved by the membership of OASIS on the above date. The level of approval is also listed above. Check the "Latest version" location noted above for possible later revisions of this document.

Technical Committee members should send comments on this specification to the Technical Committee's email list. Others should send comments to the Technical Committee by using the "[Send A Comment](#)" button on the Technical Committee's web page at <http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/xliff/>.

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# 1 Introduction

XLIFF is the *XML Localisation Interchange File Format* designed by a group of multilingual content publishers, software providers, localization service providers, localization tools providers and researchers. It is intended to give any multilingual content owner a single interchange file format that can be understood by any localization provider, using any conformant localization tool. While the primary focus is on being a lossless interchange format, usage of XLIFF as a processing format is neither encouraged nor discouraged or prohibited.

*All text is normative unless otherwise labeled.* The following common methods are used for labeling portions of this specification as informative and hence non-normative:

Appendices and sections marked as "(Informative)" or "Non-Normative" in title,  
 Notes (sections with the "Note" title),  
 Warnings (sections with the "Warning" title),  
 Examples (mainly example code listings but also any inline examples or illustrative exemplary lists in otherwise normative text),  
 Schema and other artifacts listings (the corresponding artifacts are normative, not their listings).

## 1.1 Terminology

### 1.1.1 Key words

The key words MUST, MUST NOT, REQUIRED, SHALL, SHALL NOT, SHOULD, SHOULD NOT, RECOMMENDED, MAY, and OPTIONAL are to be interpreted as described in [RFC 2119](#).

### 1.1.2 Definitions

Agent

any application or tool that generates (creates), reads, edits, writes, processes, stores, renders or otherwise handles *XLIFF Documents*.

*Agent* is the most general application conformance target that subsumes all other specialized user agents disregarding whether they are defined in this specification or not.

Enrich, Enriching

the process of associating module and extension based metadata and resources with the *Extracted* XLIFF payload

*Processing Requirements*

- *Enriching* MAY happen at the time of *Extraction*.

### Note

*Extractor* knowledge of the native format is not assumed while *Enriching*.

Enricher, Enricher Agent

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any *Agent* that performs the *Enriching* process

Extract, Extraction

the process of encoding localizable content from a native content or User Interface format as XLIFF payload, so that localizable parts of the content in the source language are available for *Translation* into the target language along with the necessary context information

Extractor, Extractor Agent

any *Agent* that performs the *Extraction* process

Merge, Merging

the process of importing XLIFF payload back to the originating native format, based on the *full knowledge* of the *Extraction* mechanism, so that the localized content or User Interface strings replace the source language in the native format

Merger, Merger Agent

an *Agent* that performs the *Merge* process

### Warning

Unless specified otherwise, any *Merger* is deemed to have the same knowledge of the native format as the *Extractor* throughout the specification.

*Mergers* independent of *Extractors* can succeed, but it is out of scope of this specification to specify interoperability for *Merging* back without the full *Extractor* knowledge of the native format. [ISO 21720:2017](https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/60e7a35e-3427-4b2f-9e85-726f09dc69f8/iso-21720-2017)

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Modify, Modification

the process of changing core and module XLIFF structural and inline elements that were previously created by other *Writers*

*Processing Requirements*

- XLIFF elements MAY be *Modified* and *Enriched* at the same time.

### Note

*Extractor* or *Enricher* knowledge of the native format is not assumed while *Modifying*.

Modifier, Modifier Agent

an *Agent* that performs the *Modification* process

Translation, Translate

a rendering of the meaning of the source text, expressed in the target language

Writer, Writer Agent

an *Agent* that creates, generates, or otherwise writes an *XLIFF Document* for whatever purpose, including but not limited to *Extractor*, *Modifier*, and *Enricher Agents*.

## Note

Since XLIFF is intended as an exchange format rather than a processing format, many applications will need to generate *XLIFF Documents* from their internal processing formats, even in cases when they are processing *XLIFF Documents* created by another *Extractor*.

### 1.1.3 Key concepts

#### XLIFF Core

The core of XLIFF 2.0 consists of the minimum set of XML elements and attributes required to (a) prepare a document that contains text extracted from one or more files for localization, (b) allow it to be completed with the translation of the extracted text, and (c) allow the generation of *Translated* versions of the original document.

The XML namespace that corresponds to the core subset of XLIFF 2.0 is "urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:2.0".

#### XLIFF-defined (elements and attributes)

The following is the list of allowed schema URN prefixes for *XLIFF-defined* elements and attributes:

urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:

However, the following namespaces are NOT considered *XLIFF-defined* for the purposes of the XLIFF 2.0 specification:

urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:1.0  
urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:1.1  
urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:1.2

Elements and attributes from other namespaces are not *XLIFF-defined*.

#### XLIFF Document

Any XML document that declares the namespace "urn:oasis:names:tc:xliff:document:2.0" as its main namespace, has `<xliff>` as the root element and complies with the XML Schemas and the declared Constraints that are part of this specification.

#### XLIFF Module

A module is an OPTIONAL set of XML elements and attributes that stores information about a process applied to an *XLIFF Document* and the data incorporated into the document as result of that process.

Each official module defined for XLIFF 2.0 has its grammar defined in an independent XML Schema with a separate namespace.

## 1.2 Normative References

## ISO 21720:2017(E)

[**BCP 47**] M. Davis, *Tags for Identifying Languages*, <http://tools.ietf.org/html/bcp47> IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force).

[**HTML5**] W3C, *HTML5. A vocabulary and associated APIs for HTML and XHTML*, <http://www.w3.org/TR/html5/> W3C Candidate Recommendation 17 December 2012.

[**NOTE-datetime**] M. Wolf, C. Wicksteed, *Date and Time Formats*, <http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime> W3C Note, 15th September 1997.

[**RFC 2119**] S. Bradner, *Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels*, <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2119.txt> IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) RFC 2119, March 1997.

[**UAX #9**] M. Davis, *UNICODE BIDIRECTIONAL ALGORITHM*, <http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr9/> Unicode Bidirectional Algorithm.

[**UAX #15**] M. Davis, K. Whistler, *UNICODE NORMALIZATION FORMS*, <http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr15/> Unicode Normalization Forms.

[**Unicode**] The Unicode Consortium, *The Unicode Standard*, <http://www.unicode.org/versions/latest/> Mountain View, CA: The Unicode Consortium, 2012.

[**XML**] W3C, *Extensible Markup Language (XML) 1.0*, <http://www.w3.org/TR/xml/> (Fifth Edition) W3C Recommendation 26 November 2008.

[**XML namespace**] W3C, *Schema document for namespace* <http://www.w3.org/XML/1998/namespace> <http://www.w3.org/2001/xml.xsd> [<http://www.w3.org/2009/01/xml.xsd>] at <http://docs.oasis-open.org/xliff/xliff-core/v2.0/os/schemas/informativeCopiesOf3rdPartySchemas/w3c/xml.xsd> in this distribution

[**XML Schema Datatypes**] W3C, *XML Schema Part 2: Datatypes*, <http://www.w3.org/TR/xmlschema-2/> (Second Edition) W3C Recommendation 28 October 2004.

### 1.3 Non-Normative References

[**ITS**] MultilingualWeb-LT WG *Internationalization Tag Set (ITS) Version 2.0*, 29 October 2013, <http://www.w3.org/TR/its20/> W3C Recommendation.

[**LDML**] *Unicode Locale Data Markup Language* <http://unicode.org/reports/tr35/>

[**SRX**] *Segmentation Rules eXchange* <http://www.gala-global.org/oscarStandards/srx/>

[**UAX #29**] M. Davis, *UNICODE TEXT SEGMENTATION*, <http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr29/> Unicode text Segmentation.

[**XML I18N BP**] *Best Practices for XML Internationalization*, 13 February 2008, <http://www.w3.org/TR/xml-i18n-bp/> W3C Working Group.

## 2 Conformance

1. *Document Conformance*
  - a. XLIFF is an XML vocabulary, therefore conformant *XLIFF Documents* MUST be well formed and valid [XML](#) documents.
  - b. Conformant *XLIFF Documents* MUST be valid instances of the official [Core XML Schema](#) that is part of this XLIFF specification.
  - c. As not all aspects of the XLIFF specification can be expressed in terms of XML Schemas, conformant *XLIFF Documents* MUST also comply with all relevant elements and attributes definitions, normative usage descriptions, and Constraints specified in this specification document.
  - d. *XLIFF Documents* MAY contain custom extensions, as defined in the [Extension Mechanisms](#) section.
2. *Application Conformance*
  - a. XLIFF *Writers* MUST create conformant *XLIFF Documents* to be considered XLIFF compliant.
  - b. *Agents* processing conformant *XLIFF Documents* that contain custom extensions are not REQUIRED to understand and process non-XLIFF elements or attributes. However, conformant applications SHOULD preserve existing custom extensions when processing conformant *XLIFF Documents*, provided that the elements that contain custom extensions are not removed according to XLIFF Processing Requirements or the extension's own processing requirements.
  - c. All *Agents* MUST comply with Processing Requirements for otherwise unspecified *Agents* or without a specifically set target *Agent*.
  - d. Specialized *Agents* defined in this specification - this is *Extractor*, *Merger*, *Writer*, *Modifier*, and *Enricher Agents* - MUST comply with the Processing Requirements targeting their specifically defined type of *Agent* on top of Processing Requirements targeting all *Agents* as per point c. above.
  - e. XLIFF is a format explicitly designed for exchanging data among various *Agents*. Thus, a conformant XLIFF application MUST be able to accept *XLIFF Documents* it had written after those *XLIFF Documents* were *Modified* or *Enriched* by a different application, provided that:
    - i. The processed files are conformant *XLIFF Documents*,
    - ii. in a state compliant with all relevant Processing Requirements.
3. *Backwards Compatibility*
  - a. Conformant applications are NOT REQUIRED to support XLIFF 1.2 or previous Versions.

### Note

*XLIFF Documents* conformant to this specification are not and cannot be conformant to XLIFF 1.2 or earlier versions. If an application needs to support for whatever business reason both XLIFF 2.0 and XLIFF 1.2, these will need to be supported as separate functionalities.