Introduction

What can I translate?

The translated files for Tamil can be found at https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/ta/.

1. The 'messages' subdirectory contains translations for buttons, menu items, and error messages that appear in applications

2. the 'docmessages' directory contains strings which will appear in the 'help' files (https://docs.kde.org/)

3. If you wish to translate the various KDE websites (e.g. https://kde.org/ and https://okular.kde.org/) to Tamil, you will find the relevant files at 'messages/websites-*'.

Simplified process of translation

For each KDE application, a script generates template po files (with extension .pot). These can be found at https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/templates/ (I will call this the 'templates folder'). The process of translation is essentially: take a .pot file from the templates folder, fill in the translations, rename it to have the .po extension, and add it to https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/ta/ (I will call this the 'language folder'). Some applications may have already been partially translated in the past, so you can take those files from the language folder, fill in additional translations, and add the updated file back to the language folder. To reiterate, use a template file (.pot) only if the corresponding file (.po) doesn't already exist in the language folder.

Suggested workflow

(In case any step is not clear, please read the next section)

1. Choose an application or file to translate (and let us know which one so we can concentrate on other applications instead). Completion percentages and other statistics for application messages can be found at https://l10n.kde.org/stats/gui/trunk-kf6/team/ta/.

2. At the statistics website, you can find direct links to the files needed for each application. Alternatively, download the .po files corresponding to that application from https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/ta/messages/. If necessary, also get .pot files from the templates directory (https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/templates/messages/).

3. Translate whichever strings you can in the files. Don't worry about leaving strings untranslated, just translate whatever you can. Once you are done with a particular file (even if not completely translated), please run `msgfmt --check filename.po`. If it shows any errors, fix as many as you can. Also, feel free to correct existing translations in the files you are working on.

4. Email me (kishore96@gmail.com) the files, and I will check and add them to the repo. Once they are added to the repo, if you want to continue working on the same file (for example if you only partially translated it), download the file again from the repo (I may have made some changes to correct syntax issues etc.) and continue working on it.

Details

Software and file format

You will be working with .po files. These files essentially contain strings in English, and their corresponding strings in the language we are translating to (i.e. Tamil; you can download one of the files at https://websvn.kde.org/trunk/l10n-kf6/ta/ to see an example). Many programs exist to aid in translation; the one I'm currently using is Lokalize, but you

can use whatever you are comfortable with (only the final .po file matters). If you don't want to download a special software for this, you can try using https://pofile.net/ or even just a basic text editor.

https://rabbitictranslator.com/wordpress/index.php/2020/01/19/contributing-to-kde-localization/ is a blog post, parts of which may be useful to familiarize yourself with .po files and Lokalize (read from the section 'The first contact' onwards).

Version control and submission

Uploading files: In general, the coordinator of a language team will have the access rights to upload the translated files to the server. So what typically happens is that people download the .po or .pot files, translate them, and them email them to the coordinator, who will upload them to the server.

Branching: Sometimes, multiple versions of a software are simultaneously maintained (branches). All KDE software will have a branch called 'trunk'. While downloading the po or pot files, please download them from trunk (you can see the name in the URL) and not stable.

Setting system language

- In some applications (e.g. Kate) you can configure the language in the 'Settings' menu. In principle, one can set the systemwide language by going to System Settings > Regional Settings > Language. If Tamil doesn't appear in that list but you want to set your system language to Tamil, you can create a file `.config/plasma-localerc` with the contents (append to the file if it already exists):

  ```
  [Translations]
  LANGUAGE=ta:en_GB
  ```

  The second language above is a fallback language to use if the Tamil translations are not available. You can add more languages in a similar way, in order of your preference.

Suggested reading

https://rabbitictranslator.com/wordpress/index.php/2020/02/24/contributing-to-kde-simple-localization/ is a short guide which may be useful.