HOW TO GET FCITX TO WORK ON PCLINUXOS

Written by Archie, March 19, 2020

A forum post (20200318) from a user `memmed` got me working on adding (and in other cases, changing) `FCITX` to my **PCLinuxOS** install. `FCITX` provides the means to type in **Simplified Chinese**. In simple words, it is an **Input Method** (`IM`). There are other input methods available, such as `SCIM`, `IBUS`, etc.
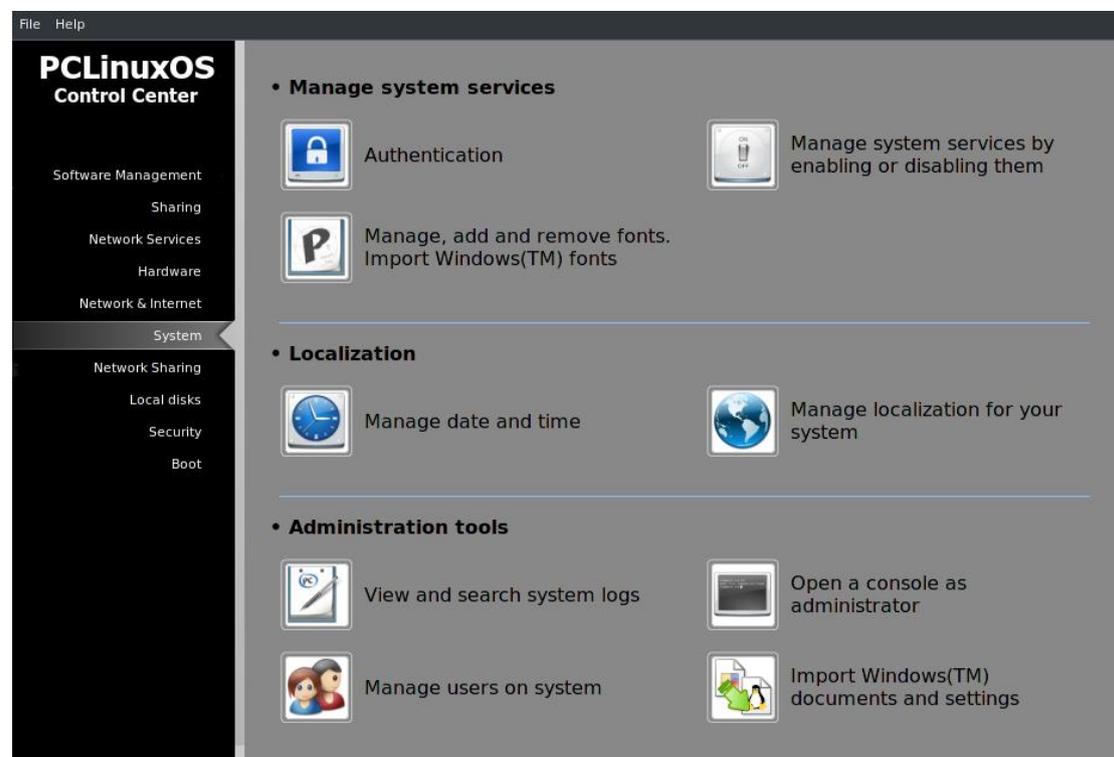
I posted the same procedure as I've laid out on this document, and hopefully was able to help memmed on the issue of installing an Input Method. The procedure might be different in other Linux distribution, and I have not tried the procedure on any distro but I believe that the steps are logical and in two parts.

The first part is the localization, and the second part is installing and configuring the Input Method. The **FCITX wiki** also provided valuable insights on the configuration part of the procedure.
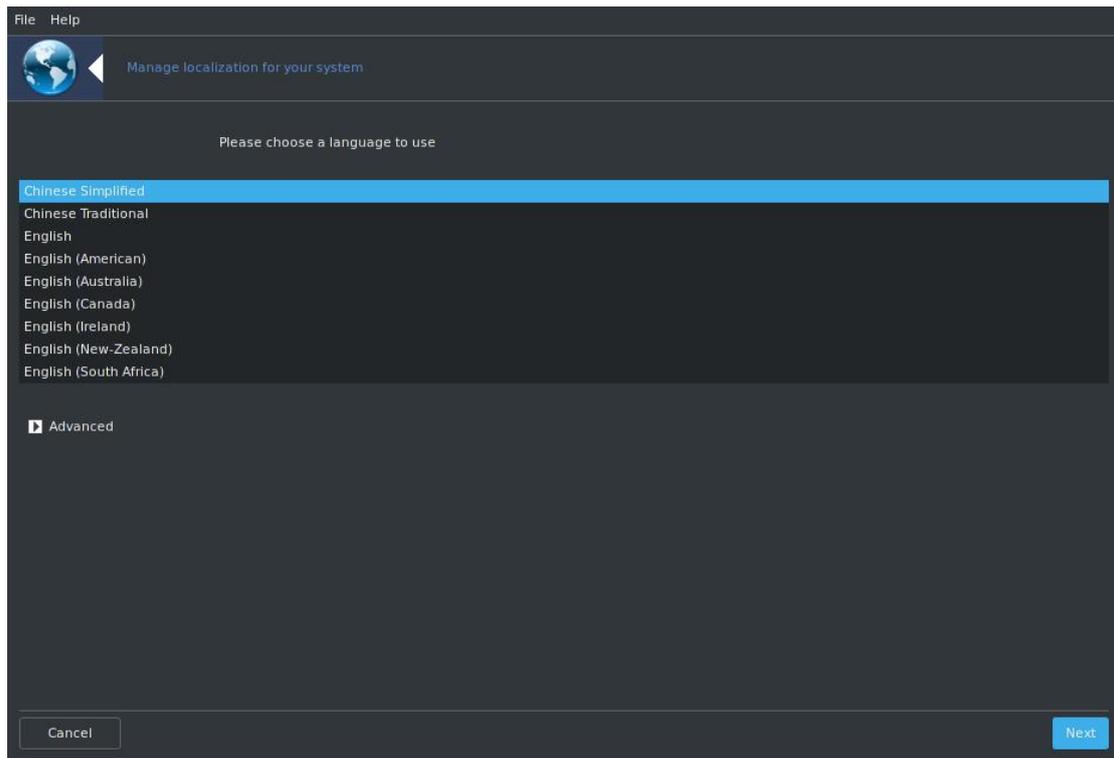
Well, I had not done this type of addition for a long while now and what better time to do it than now. So, I'll describe the process on how I got FCITX to work.

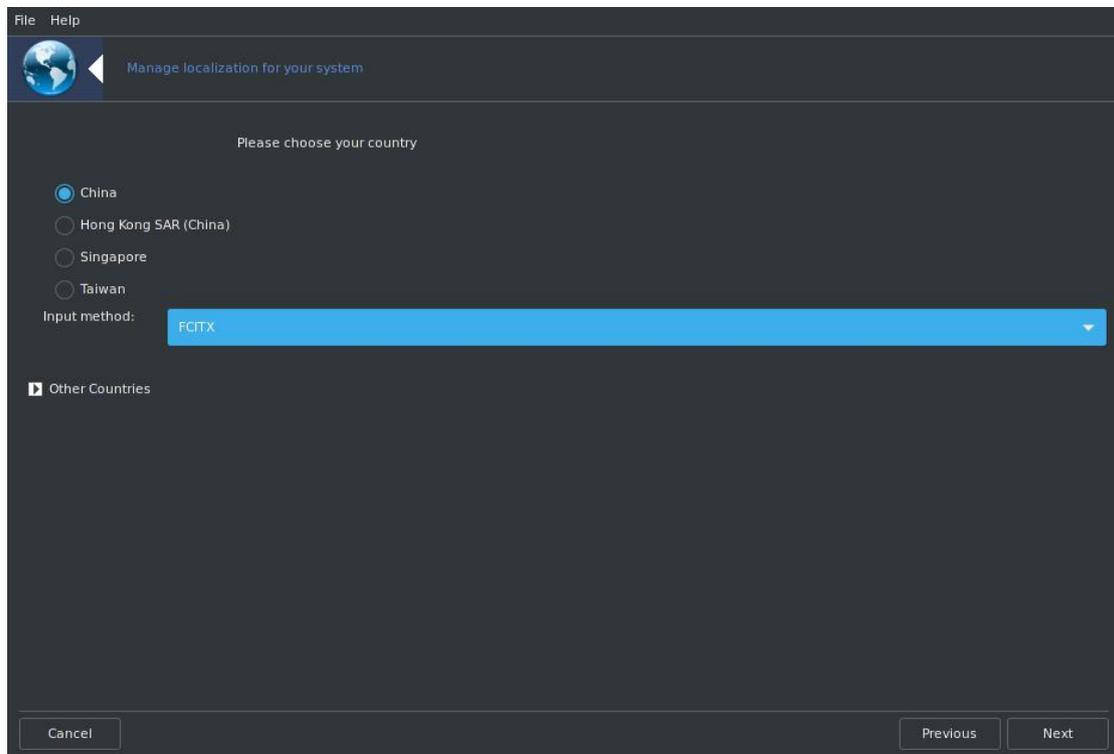The first thing is to ensure that your installation is fully updated.

Next was to launch **drakconf** or **PCC** and navigate to **System** and click on **Manage localization for your system**.
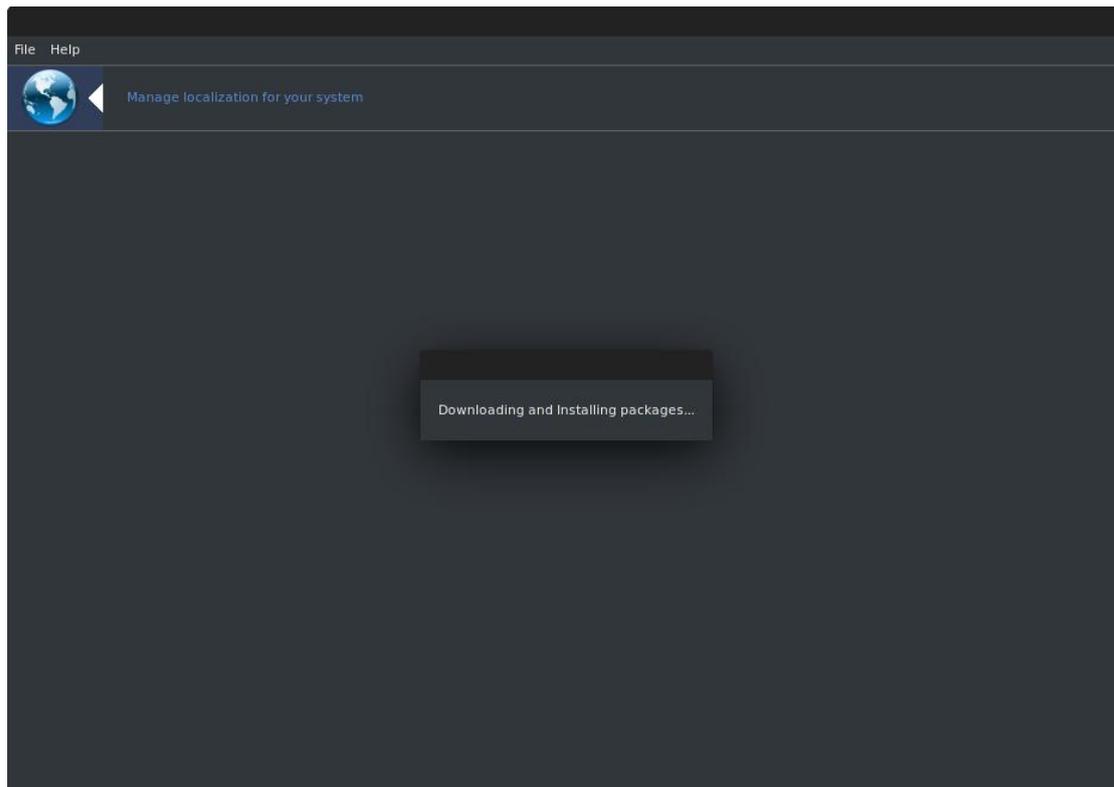

On the next window (**Please choose a language to use**), select **Chinese Simplified** and click **Next**.
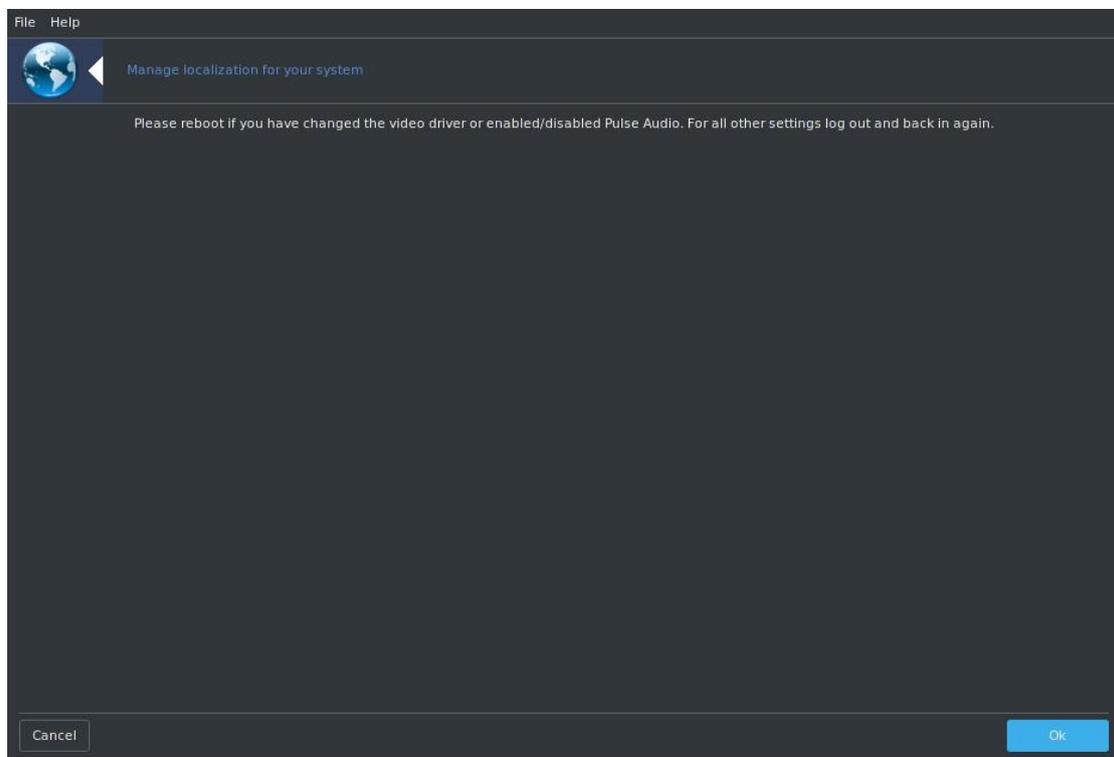
On the next window (**Please choose a country**), select **China**, and on **Input Method:** select **FCITX**. Click **Next**.

At this point, relevant packages will be downloaded and installed.

After the installation of the packages are completed, a window requiring a **log out and in**, or a **reboot** is displayed. Just click **OK** and do neither ... at least not at the moment.
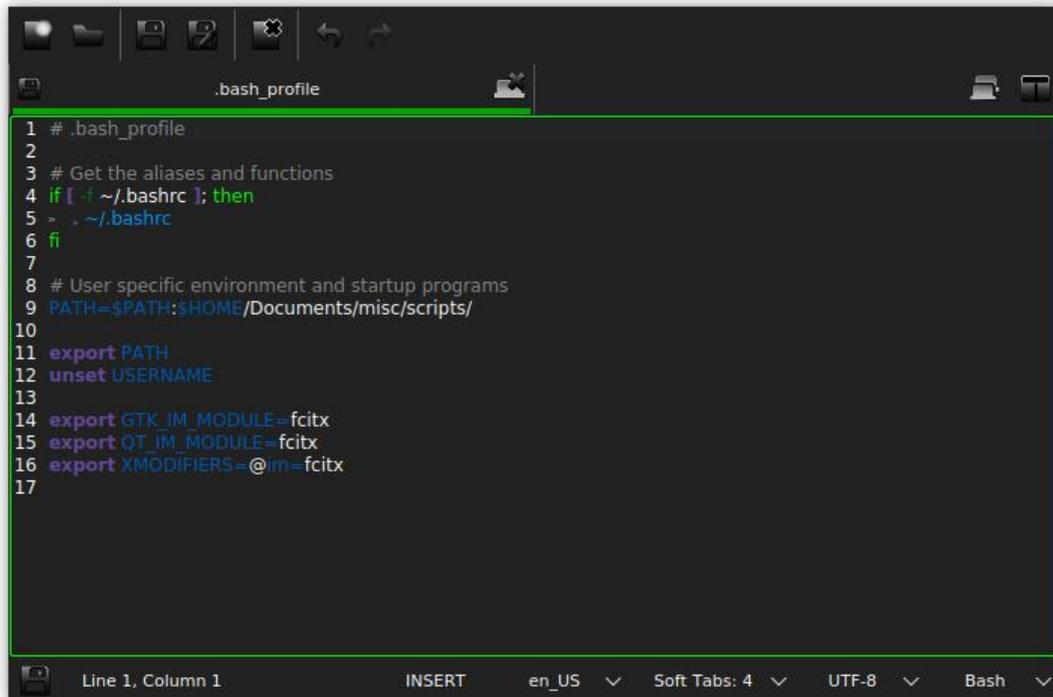

The next steps are very crucial and must be followed carefully.

Open `~/.bash_profile` on your favorite text editor and at the bottom of the file, add

the following:

```
export GTK_IM_MODULE=fcitx
export QT_IM_MODULE=fcitx
export XMODIFIERS=@im=fcitx
```

And **Save** the file.

```
 1  # .bash_profile
 2
 3  # Get the aliases and functions
 4  if [ -f ~/.bashrc ]; then
 5  »   . ~/.bashrc
 6  fi
 7
 8  # User specific environment and startup programs
 9  PATH=$PATH:$HOME/Documents/misc/scripts/
10
11  export PATH
12  unset USERNAME
13
14  export GTK_IM_MODULE=fcitx
15  export QT_IM_MODULE=fcitx
16  export XMODIFIERS=@im=fcitx
17
```

.bash_profile

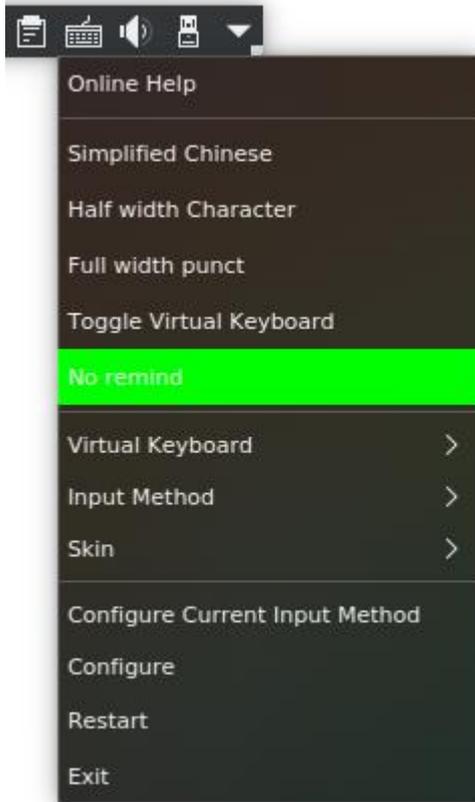Line 1, Column 1   INSERT   en_US ∨   Soft Tabs: 4 ∨   UTF-8 ∨   Bash ∨

Equally important is you will most definitely need to **install** `fcitx-configtool`, a GTK frontend for FCITX. As of this writing, there is no QT frontend for FCITX although I did notice that there is a plasma widget for Input Method.

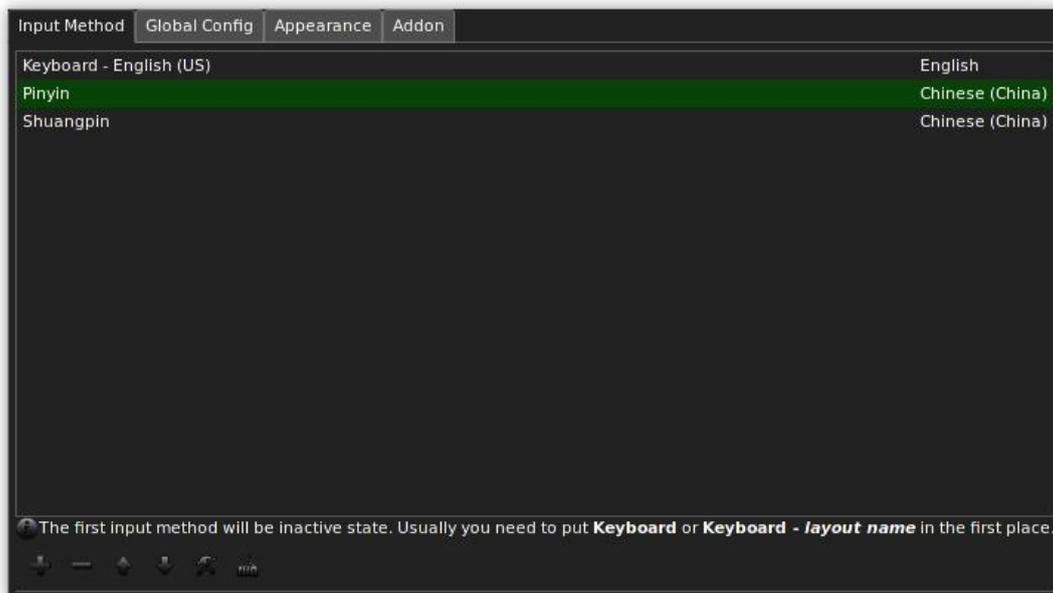In addition, you should also install the following:

```
fcitx-gtk3
fcitx-pinyin
fcitx-qt4
fcitx-qt5
fcitx-qw
```

Now, to be safe, let's do a soft reboot. Once the system boots to the desktop, much of the text will be in Chinese but note that not everything is translated.
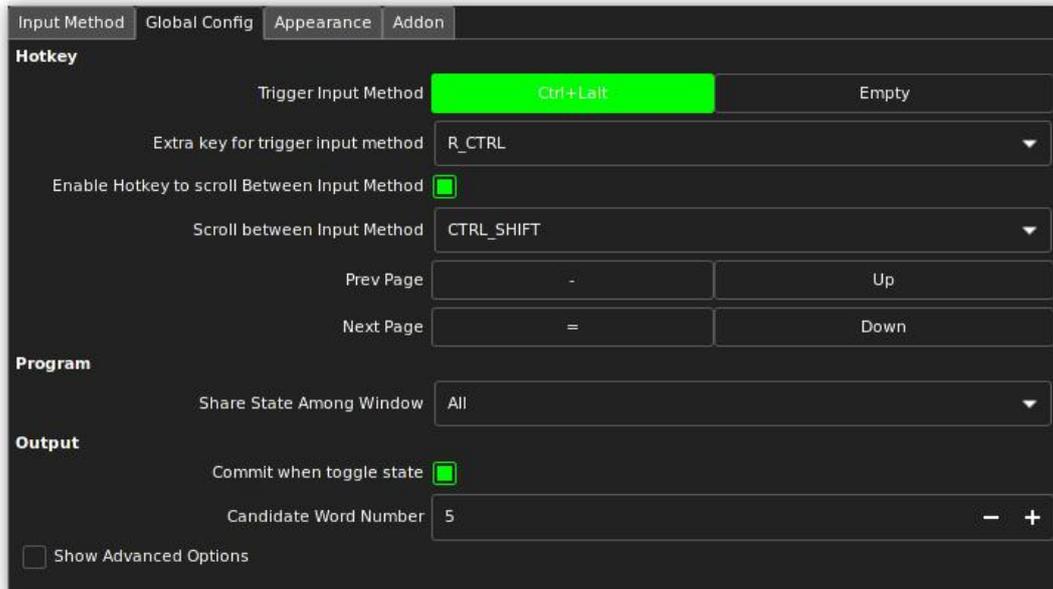
The last thing we need to do is configure FCITX. On a **KRunner** (Alt+Space), type in `fcitx -r` and you'll notice that you now have an **IM** (a keybooard) **icon** on the system tray.
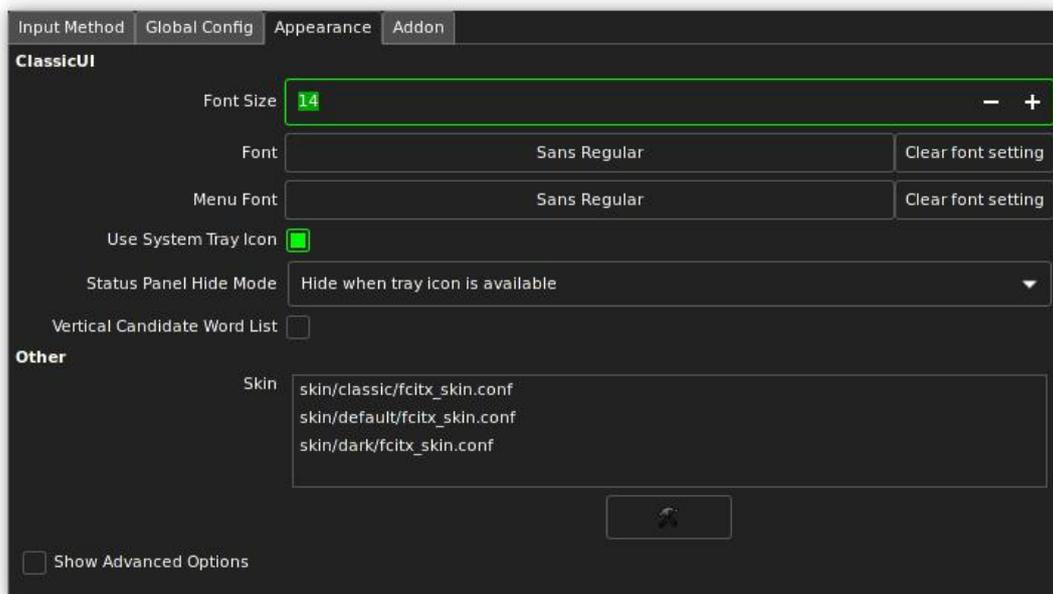
Right-click on the icon and select **Configure**. The configuration window has four tabs - **Input Method**, **Global Config**, **Appearance**, and **Addon**. The Input Method should look something like:

I couldn't get `Alt+Space` to work, as I suspect it is in conflict with another hotkey (KRunner) so on the **Global Config** tab, I changed the trigger to `Left Ctrl+Alt` keys.

Next, is very important because the size of the font was set to 0 and there's nothing to see on the input. On the **Appearance** tab, set the **Font Size** with a higher value. I set mine to 14. You'll also have a choice of what font to use; I left mine to the default.

It's probably best to leave the **Addon** tab alone unless you know what you're doing. Close the configuration window.

Finally, right-click the **IM icon** on the **systray** and select **Restart**. You should be good to go.

Now, the Input Method runs in the background only for the current session. You can either run the `fcitx` command the next time or you can have it on **autostart**.

To autostart the Input Method, open a terminal and as root:

```
# cp /usr/share/applications/fcitx.desktop ~/.config/autostart/
```

Wait a minute! Am I now stuck with a Chinese PCLinuxOS? Not at all. Simply launch **drakconf** or **PCC** again and on **System** > **Manage localization for your system**, just revert the language setting back to English.