

TIES 2020**International conference «Trends and innovations in economic studies»****DISCOURSE AND TECHNICAL FEATURES OF VIDEOGAMES
LOCALIZATION**

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Abstract

The article highlights the categorical features of both the translation discourse in the field of IT and the discourse of videogames. As a unique media of the XXI century, videogames studies require more meticulous studying in all categories, not only language and translation features. It is also worth to notice that language studies in the terms of videogames crossed with technical features of its environmental area. Which is why it is important to descry special features that imply the localizing process in general and translation process in particular. As well as translation of movies and other forms of visual content, in videogames some audiovisual difficulties may distract the recipient from the process of Implying, such as audiovisual translation errors and bad lipsync. There is also a new feature, which was created a few years ago due to the increasing popularity of the mobile gaming and rapidly modifying videogames – continuous localization. It is a new form of translation new texts that should be included into the whole text block. It should be noticed that these are only few features that show how poorly studied among scholars localization is. More complex studying may improve translation process and reveal new standards of working in this area.

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1. Introduction

Over the past decades, videogames have transformed from a form of entertainment to different media. Today the discourse of videogames remains poorly understood by the scientific community. Meanwhile, textual and non-textual elements of discourse represent an entirely new form of speech culture (Juul, 2013).

The number of users of the video game product—players around the world is more than 2 billion people (according to an analytical report by the marketing Agency NewZoo). All these people are native speakers of different language systems, so for the greater popularity of their product, studios always translate games into the most popular languages of the world. However, the translation of the text component is only one of the elements of adapting the video game to a particular cultural and linguistic background. Being at the intersection of a work of art and a complex engineering product, translating videogames requires special attention. For a more accurate description of the process of recoding all information, it is customary to use the term "localization". Although the concepts of translation and localization are identical in most sources, it should be noticed that localization is still a broader term and affects all levels of product transformation for a new cultural environment, while translation is the process of "converting a speech work in one language into a speech work in another language while maintaining an unchanged content plan" (Nekrasov, 2019, p.27).

Translation studies in its current state include all fields of research that study translation as a process and as a result (Alexeeva, 2011).

2. Problem Statement

According to the financial dictionary, localization is usually understood as the process of a recast of an existing software product in order to use it in countries with a different language. "Localization includes translation of documentation and user interface, changes in calculation methods as well as some reworking of programs" (Finam, 2020, par.1).

Due to the lack of research in this particular field, there is no clarified opinion whether videogames should be explored separately as a product of language speech, a number of codes and a visual representation during the localising process or should it be researched as a united object.

3. Research Questions

We are facing two main questions during our research paper:

What are the main features of the videogames localisation and text translation?

How can they be similar to the translation of other forms of discourse, such as movies, books etc.?

4. Purpose of the Study

The process of localization of a video game often requires a translator to have basic technical knowledge and the ability to work with specialized software (hereinafter referred to as SOFTWARE).

Each of the proposed characteristics is a distinctive feature not only from a technical point of view. It also related directly to the linguopragmatic aspect of computer discourse in general and the discourse of videogames in particular.

5. Research Methods

The following methods were used in this article: the linguistic description method, which allowed revealing the functional features of units in translation; general scientific methods (classification, interpretation); discourse analysis, which allowed describing the functions of textual and non-textual discourse elements. The leading method was selected contextual analysis (the study of types of translation based on context).

6. Findings

Based on the features of the product adaptation process, we have identified three characteristic features of video game translation:

- Audiovisual translation
- Continuous localization
- Lip synchronisation

6.1. Audiovisual translation

Today, linguists and translators cannot agree on whether audio-visual translation should be classified as a science of translation studies (Akulina, 2017).

At his time, Lotman (1973) has attributed this concept to the category of film/video translation. In most cases, the audiovisual translation as an object of scientific research is analyzed based on translations of film/video materials. Although the translation of videogames is directly related to this concept, is not so widely studied neither in the Russian nor English-speaking scientific communities.

According to Ivanova (2001) the most important feature of the film text is a collective functionally differentiated author. In other words, when creating a text, not one, but several authors are involved. However, the film text and the artistic text also have common features. Thus, Ivanova (2001) points to the existence of the most important General textual categories (addressability, intertextuality, integrity, articulability, modality).

In the Russian scientific society, audiovisual translation has long been considered a type of literary, oral or simultaneous translation, since audio-visual text was considered exclusively as an element of written speech.

At the same time, the audiovisual translation has long remained in the shadow of the classical theory of translation, which, according to Kozulyaev (2015), is due to the following factors:

- classical literary works still play a leading role in the selection of research material. In recent decades, a big step has been taken towards the study of movies, but videogames still remain undervalued in terms of significance.

This attitude seems very strange when we remember that today more than 50 percent of the current day-to-day intercultural exchange of information, especially between English-speaking countries and countries of other language groups, is carried out within the framework of these carriers. At the same time, a number of foreign researchers, based on data on global audiences of TV series, movies and videogames, note that in terms of the degree of everyday impact on society, audiovisual translation surpasses other types of translation. (Kozulyaev, 2015, p.4)

- uncertainty of the audiovisual translation status in translation theory: in contrast to the classical structure "translator-text", in the context of audiovisual translation, there is a simultaneous work with 4 data streams:
 - a) visual nonverbal imagery;
 - b) nonverbal noise music audio series;
 - c) verbal audio series (monologues/heroes' dialogues);
 - d) verbal video series (captions on the screen, subtitles)

This also raises difficulties, since different requirements for adequate translation will apply depending on the genre classification of a particular video game.

6.2. Lip synchronization

Another technical difficulty that is common to the audiovisual translation in the field of videogames and movie studies is the so-called lip synchronization or lip-synch. There are often some overlays, during which the translator has to tighten or shorten the translated replicas so that during visual verification there are no obvious discrepancies with the original.

Lip-synch is the synchronization of lip movement with a sound. It cannot be considered as a synonym of dubbing since the latter does not provide for full synchronization of the character's facial expressions with sound. In lip-synch, the key role is played by full synchronization, which creates the illusion that replicas belong directly to the game character (Bogdanova, 2017).

Many users consider the problem of phonetic accompaniment discordant to be one of the most annoying. Most often, problems occur in the form of an incorrect timecode, when the character either speaks before the voice-over goes, or, on the contrary, is "silent" during one's own replica. For example, on a forum dedicated to the game the Witcher 3, the author faces a problem of unsynchronization:

"I know I'm not the only one, but with a great soundtrack, this game always accelerates by milliseconds. It distracts me and I can't find a solution to the problem"

It should be noted that in the example above, we were talking about the version of the game for personal computers. Often, the problem of so-called "lags" may be insufficient technical requirements for the SOFTWARE on which the product is used. In the case of game consoles such as the Xbox and Playstation series, the parameters are clearly standardized and the problem with voice acting is usually considered an error by localizers and developers.

6.3. Continuous localization

The next feature that can be classified as a problem related to video game translation is continuous localization. This concept arose as a result of the global development of mobile applications and the expansion of the mobile and video gaming market.

As the name suggests, continuous localization is a constant updating of the product's translation database by introducing new text elements into the source code. Continuous localization is a segment of machine translation in which work is maximally automated. **In a simplified form, the operation diagram of the continuous localization tool looks like this:**

- The CAT tool determines the strings to be translated
- sends material for localization;
- implements it back in the finished form.

The whole process may be interpreted as a patch system(in some ways): there is no need to retranslate the whole script, there is an upgrade of a number of strings which should be localized according to the common text. It should represent the same chronological style, have links to the other parts of the tests and look like as if it has already been here. Nevertheless, it should be tested before the release so there would not be any technical or visual issues; the amount of the new text should form into the space for subtitles and voiceover should be made by the same voice actors (Nimdzi, 2020).

7. Conclusion

Thus, we can draw the following conclusions:

- 1. The translation discourse of videogames needs to form its own translation categories.
- 2. Technical features of both video game localization in General and translation in particular should be considered at the linguistic level.
- 3. In audio-visual translation, we need to add a subcategory- audiovisual translation of videogames.

Localization is one of the new stages in development translation studies; therefore it is not surprising that many linguists drew his attention to her study. Being a young industry and combining so diverse aspects, localization contains many unexplored areas, and can also serve as the basis for writing modern approaches to the translation process (Fatkullina, Kazantseva, Valiakhmetova, Sulejmanova, & Anokhina, 2018).

Despite the fact that industry affects adaptation of various kinds of software products, namely computer or videogames are is of particular interest to the translator (Saiakhova & Fatkullina, 2020). Firstly computer games experience an unprecedented rise in connection with the growth of software and graphic features. Secondly, unlike other products, many games have a full story and developed characters, making them look like artwork. As with translation of works of art, translation of games localizer may encounter intolerance problems complicated by technical features of the process.

Our results and indicated approaches may turn out to be useful in the theory and practice of translation, as well as in the localization of various videogames. Question about discursive and technical

features of localization games, in our opinion, is worthy of deeper study, since It is a poorly studied and relevant area of linguistics.

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