

[ACCESSIBLE] VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION

Dubbing, subtitling and more

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Objectives

- To learn about the different texts in video games liable to be translated.
- To learn about the concept of texts and *paratexts*.
- To learn about difficulties in game localisation and strategies to overcome them.
- To learn about the peculiarities of dubbing and subtitling in video game localisation.



Textual vs. Paratextual elements

Are you familiar with the concept of texts and *paratexts* in video games?
How would you define the latter?

Visit <https://answergarden.ch/1217518> and type your answer.



Textual vs. Paratextual elements

Classify the following elements in games depending on whether they are textual or paratextual, according to the definition provided.

cheat books – codes and variables – dialogue lines – legal texts – manuals – promos – subtitles – teasers

Textual elements	Paratextual elements



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Textual elements	Paratextual elements
<i>codes and variables – dialogue lines – subtitles</i>	<i>cheat books – legal texts – manuals – promos – teasers</i>



Textual elements

- Ingame text: variables and constants
- Dialogue lines: dubbing
- Subtitles



Variables and codes

Codes

are statements that a programmer writes when creating a game, which are typically turned into machine instructions when read.

Variables

are temporary indicators that appear in games and can later be replaced by figures, words or phrases from another source



Variables

3. Translate the following sentences into your language:

%s is driving %d's car.



%s está conduciendo %d coche.

%s conduit %d voiture.

%s sta guidando %d macchina.

%s está conduciendo el coche de %d.

%s conduit la voiture de %d.

%s sta guidando la macchina di %d.



Variables – Concatenation

*The [*maincharacter*] is driving [*secondcharacter*]'s [*colour*] [*vehicle*].*



male / female character
noun – adjective agreement

🇪🇸 *El [*m_maincharacter*] está conduciendo el [*m_vehicle*] [*m_colour*] de [*secondcharacter*].
La [*f_maincharacter*] está conduciendo la [*f_vehicle*] [*f_colour*] de [*secondcharacter*].*



Variables – Lack of context

4. Translate into you own language:

ID	Max_Length	EN	Translation
Action	6	Play	



Variables – Lack of context



Variables – Lack of context



Variables – Lack of context



Variables – Character restriction

5. Translate into you own language:

ID	Max_Length	EN	Translation
Weapon	6	Armor	
Action	4	Exit	
PowerUp	10	Cooldown	
Weapon	10	Electric Gun	



Variables – Character restriction

5. Translate into you own language:

ID	Max_Length	EN	Translation
Weapon	6	Armor	Coraza / Lorica / Armure
Action	4	Exit	Sal / Esci / Sors
PowerUp	10	Cooldown	Recarga / Ricarica / Recharge
Weapon	10	Electric Gun	Taser 



Variables – Agreement

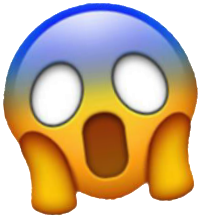
6. Translate into you own language:

ID	Max_Length	EN	Translation
Weapon	7	Gun	
Weapon	7	Sword	
Weapon	12	Machine gun	
WeaponAct		You have got a new @Weapon@!	
WeaponWarn		You have run out of @Weapon@s!	



Codes

7. Translate the following sentence into your language:



`The @src name@ has got a new
@des weapon@to kill enemies!
(Extra: +@des bounty@$)`



Codes

7. Translate the following sentence into your language:

``The `@src name@` has got a new
```@des weapon@` to kill enemies!
(Extra: ```+@des bounty@$`)

The Outsider has got a new machine gun to kill enemies! (Extra: +1,000\$)



Tips

- Watch out for variables and code.
- Look for clues in string names to make up for lack of context.
- Keep abbreviations to a minimum.
- Do no hesitate to ask (once you have made sure you are in doubt).



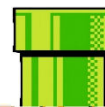
Video games vs. other media

Think about the characteristics of video games as an audiovisual product.

How are they different from other traditional media like films or series?

Do you think this differences bear an impact on the dubbing and/or the subtitling of the linguistic codes?

How?



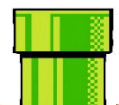
Video games vs. other media

- On-screen game controls
- Interactivity (including ability to pause)
- Game situations vs. TCR
- Types of shots
- Materials provided
- Etc.



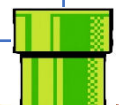
Subtitling standards

Parameter	TV subtitling	DVD subtitling	Game subtitling
Time on screen			
Characters per line			
No. of lines			
Position on screen			
Alignment			
Font type	<input type="checkbox"/> With serifs <input type="checkbox"/> Without serifs	<input type="checkbox"/> With serifs <input type="checkbox"/> Without serifs	<input type="checkbox"/> With serifs <input type="checkbox"/> Without serifs
Font size	___ pixels	___ pixels	<input type="checkbox"/> Smaller than in TV <input type="checkbox"/> Bigger than in TV
Font color			
Sense and grammatical blocks	<input type="checkbox"/> Preserved <input type="checkbox"/> Not preserved	<input type="checkbox"/> Preserved <input type="checkbox"/> Not preserved	<input type="checkbox"/> Preserved <input type="checkbox"/> Not preserved
Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



Subtitling standards (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007)

Parameter	TV subtitling	DVD subtitling	Game subtitling
Time on screen	6 seconds rule	7-8 seconds	Variable User controlled in some games
Characters per line	35-37	40	30-143
No. of lines	2 lines	2 lines	Variable: 2 +
Position on screen	Bottom	Bottom of screen	Variable: bottom, top, centre Speech bubbles Text boxes
Alignment	Left and centred	Centred	Left and centred
Font type	Font without serifs	Font without serifs	With and without serifs
Font size	32 pixels	32 pixels	Variable (16-26 pixels)
Font color	White / Yellow	White	White, different colours used for highlighting information
Sense and grammatical blocks	Preserve	Preserve	Often not preserved
Reduction	Yes	Little	None for intralingual subtitles Little for interlingual subtitles

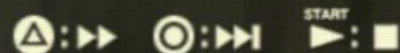


信 Codec

END 141.12

REAR

OTACON



AT Corp's unmanned bipedal weapons.
Officially designated "Irving" by the US military.



Preston Garvey

Wow, you really aren't from around here, are you? Ghouls are... irradiated people. Most are just like you and me. They look pretty messed up, and live a long time, but they're still just... people. The ones I'm talking about are different. The radiation's rotted their brains. Made them feral. They'll rip you apart, just as soon as look at you. Anyway, we figured Concord would be a safe place to settle. Those Raiders proved us wrong. But... well, we do have one idea.

Richtofen's Laboratory

Philendrium

Richtofen: Maxis! Stop it Edward... This may be just another delusion - It must be. Surely, I would never lead myself into such a... Such a...? Mein Gott! Everything could change!



2 **500**
200

Brew Cola Soda Tonic



WELLING **8**
40



Foehammer, we need you to disengage your Warthog. The Master Chief and I are going to see if we can save some soldiers.



0:06:07

Subtitling standards in video games

‘There are no specific professional standards or guidelines for game subtitling’.

Mangiron, C. (2013). Subtitling in game localisation: a descriptive study,
Perspectives: Studies in Translatology, 21(1), 42-56



Subtitling standards. A proposal (Griffiths, 2009)

1. Subtitles should be in a nice, simple **font** which is easy to read.
2. The font needs to be **large** enough to be easily read
3. The font should always be the same **size** and in mixed **case** to ensure good readability
4. Usable on various **output devices**
5. Try to keep the **line length** under control
6. Ensure there is enough **space** between the words
7. Ensure subtitles can be switched **on** or **off** (at any time)
8. **Separate button** for in-game controls



Subtitling standards. A proposal (Griffiths, 2009)

9. Give the player the ability to **control** how they **appear** on the screen.
10. Recommended **colours** are white, yellow, cyan, and green, against a solid black background to provide the best contrast
11. Ensure **staggered** subtitles if in conversation (add **names**)
12. Include **captions** and other relevant non-speech information.
13. Always keep text within the safe caption **area**
14. Make sure the **subtitles matches** the **speech**
- 15. Careful** when using unusual speech -- like **slang**
16. Ensure the **quality** is perfect



Dubbing standards

- Articulatory movements (*lyp-sync*)
- Body movements (*kinesic synchrony*)
- Length of utterances (*isocrony*)



Types of synchrony (Mejías-Climent, 2017)

- *Wild (VO)*: no time restriction applies.
- *Time constraint (TC)*: same length as the originals, with a 10% or 20% margin.
- *Strict time constraint (STC)*: exactly the same length as the original ones (not taking into account internal pauses or specific intonation).
- *Sound-sync (SS)*: exactly the same length as the original ones, including internal pauses and intonation.
- *Lip-sync*: exactly the same length as the original, including pauses, and must resemble the lip articulation.



Dubbing in video games

- Dependent on game situations
 - *Tasks*. VO: usually transmitted by voice-over (no specific restriction)
 - *Game action*. TC: players move around constantly (voices from different sources, such as on-screen characters, thoughts or walkie-talkies)
 - *Dialogues*. STC/SS: closer perspectives tend imply stricter synchrony
 - *Cinematics*. LS: film-like dubbing. Typically done over the original audio wave



Onirike

Original ES	Translation for dubbing	Translation for subtitling
Los sueños son alimentados por la ilusión, los tenemos desde pequeños y se llaman así hasta que se cumplen.	Dreams are fed by our own desires. They dwell within us since we are born and this is we call them until they become real.	Dreams are fed by our own desires. They dwell within us since we are born / and so we call them 'til they come true.
Pero... ¿Te has preguntado alguna vez qué le sucede a los sueños que nunca se hacen realidad?	But, have you ever wondered what happens to dreams that never come true?	But, ever wondered what happens / to dreams that never come true?



Onirike

You may download an up-to-date version of the game (which is still in progress) from https://clientes.devilishgames.com/onirike/onirike_alpha1_5_windows.zip (pass: Onirike2020) to take a look at the actual look and feel of the dubbing and subtitles.



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