VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION

A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO THE INDUSTRY
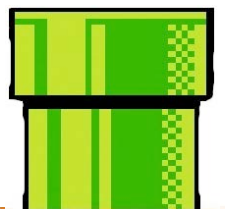
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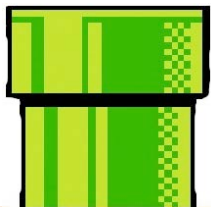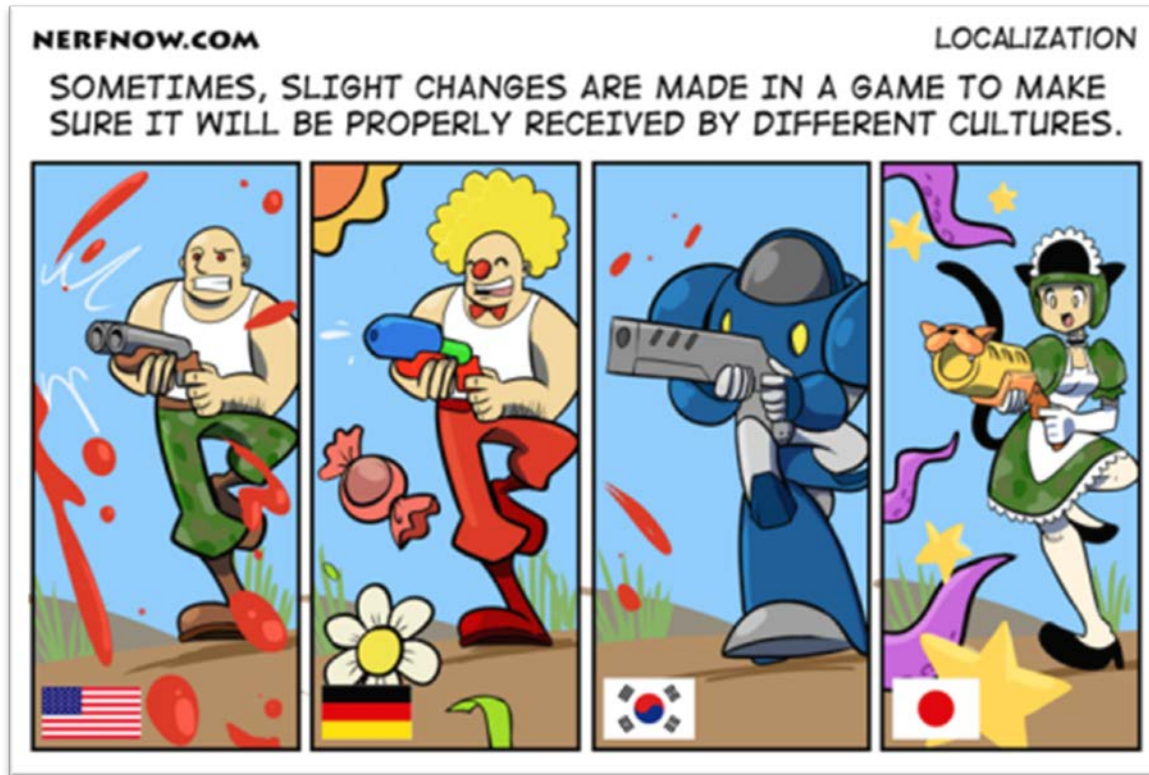Universidad de Alicante

VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION

- What is video game localisation?

- Stages in localisation

- The average localisation project

- Text types

- Translation difficulties

WHAT IS VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION?

WHAT IS VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION?

- [...], game localisation, which combines elements of **audiovisual translation and software localisation**.

- While theory is still catching up with the **practice of localisation**, a commonly accepted principle in the industry is that localised products should retain "**the look and feel of the locally-made products**" (Fry, 2003).

- The main priority of game localisation is **to preserve the gameplay experience for the target players**, keeping the 'look and feel' of the original.

O'Hagan, M. (2006). Game Localisation: Unleashing Imagination with 'Restricted' Translation (http://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art_ohagan.php)
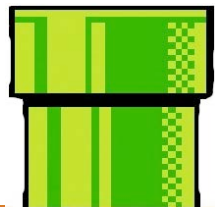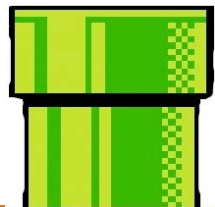
WHAT IS VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION?

- Localization, abbreviated as **L10N**, is the process of **creating a product suited to a specific locale**. It includes producing localized resources or assets, implementing the assets in an internationalized build, testing, editing and bug fixing. The localization assets can include translated resource files, localized voice over files, translated packaging material, and translated metadata among others.

Honeywood, R., & Fung, J. (2012). Best Practices for Game Localization. Game Localization Special Interest Group (SIG), International Game Developers Association (IGDA).

WHAT IS VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION?

- Game localization is a **vital function** of the ever-expanding global game industry as it's responsible for **half of the industry's total revenue stream**. Successful game publishers and developers realize that localized versions of their games can drive revenues and increase international appeal. Beyond existing gaming markets, the demand is quickly increasing from a growing number of countries and emerging markets around the world, **which is prompting publishers to localize and even culturalize more titles into more languages to maximize their ROI**.
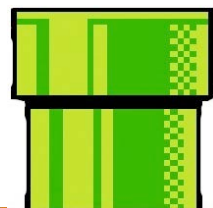
Localization Summit at GDC (http://www.gdconf.com/conference/gls.html)
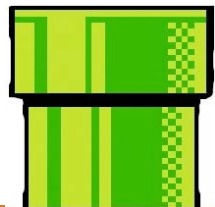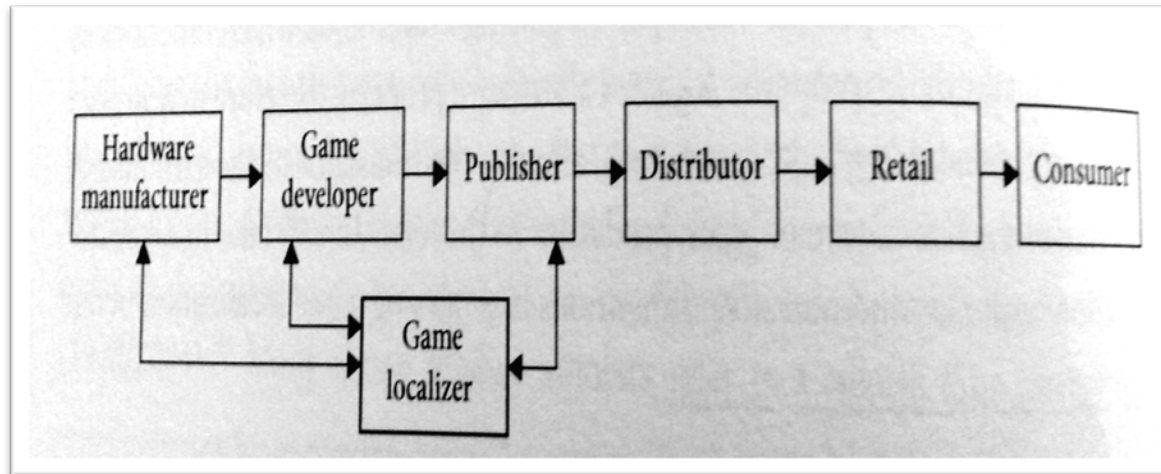
STAGES IN L10N

O'Hagan, M. & Mangiron, C. (2013). *Game localization: translating for the global digital entertainment industry*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
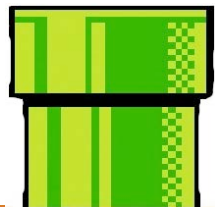
STAGES IN L10N

Internationalization

Internationalization, abbreviated as I18N, is the process that enables game localization to take place. Before internationalization a product can only display game content in one language. After internationalization, a products code base, architecture, and user interface are capable of processing and displaying game content in multiple languages. An internationalized product does not contain any elements that differ by locale.

1. Familiarization
2. Glossary and Style Guide Creation
3. Translation
4. Voice Over Production
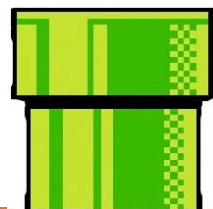5. Linguistic Quality Assurance (Bug fixing)
6. Master Up and Sign Off

STAGES IN L10N

	Production								Alpha Phase				Beta Phase			
	MONTH 1				MONTH 2				MONTH 3				MONTH 4			
	Week1	Week2	Week3	Week4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12	W13	W14	W15	W16
Familiarization		‖‖ familiarization (translator & editor)														
Glossary & Style-Guide			‖‖ glossary creation													
Translation					‖‖ script translation				‖‖ text translation				‖‖ manual & packaging translation			
Voice Over Production		‖‖ casting			‖‖ recording (2 weeks after casting)								‖ pickup recording (if necessary)			
Development Team						‖‖ ‖‖			‖‖ I18N bug fix	debug debug debug						
Linguistic Quality Assurance					audio & text integration				‖‖		‖‖ ‖‖	‖‖ ‖‖				
Master Up and Sign Off									I18N testing		localization testing		‖‖ final QA			

Honeywood, R., & Fung, J. (2012). *Best Practices for Game Localization.* Game Localization Special Interest Group (SIG), International Game Developers Association (IGDA). Online version: http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.igda.org/resource/collection/65D89F6D-3BD8-46EA-B32E-BE34236408D5/Best-Practices-for-Game-Localization-v21.pdf
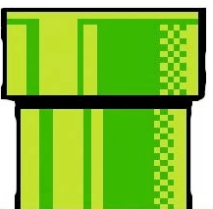
# THE AVERAGE L10N PROJECT

- Project size/length: 100k-150k - 2 months
  - Average translation rate: 2-2,5k / day
  - Average proof-reading rate : 5-10k / day
  - Team: 2 translator + 1 proof-reader

- Dubbing: 2 months

- Testing: 1 month
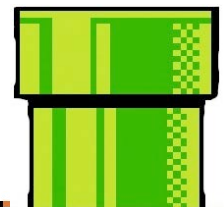
  Average length: 4 to 8 months

TEXT TYPES

- In-game text

- Script: dubbing and subtitling

- Graphic art

- Marketing

- Manuals, cheatbooks, webs, trailers…

- Legal texts (EULA, terms and conditions, etc.)
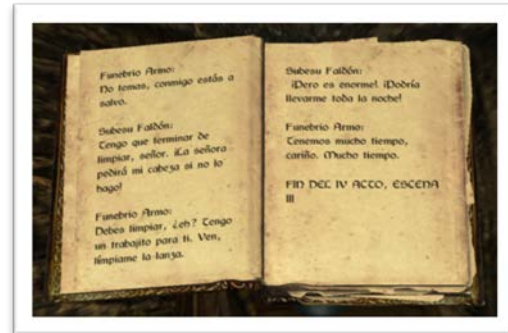
TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Capital letters

- Register

- Gender ambiguity

- Character restrictions

- Lack of context

- Collaborative environments

- Deadlines

TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES
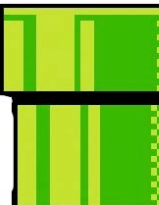
- Translate into your own language

Armor [Character restriction: 6]

Exit [Character restriction: 4]

Cooldown [Character restriction: 10]

God! [Character restriction: 4]*!*

Electric Gun [Character restriction: 6]

TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES
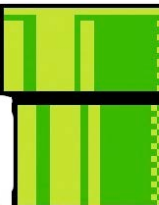
- Translate into your own language

  Armor [Character restriction: 6] *Coraza*

  Exit [Character restriction: 4] *Sal*

  Cooldown [Character restriction: 10] *Mejora*

  God! [Character restriction: 4] *Oh!*

  Electric Gun [Character restriction: 6] *Taser*

TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

| CHARACTERS_John_game_spell_tooltip_JohnR	The Sacrifice (@Level@) @Cost@ mana @Cooldown@ sec Cooldown John moves freely while firing rapidly in a single direction for @Effect1Amount@ seconds. His shots collide with the first enemy they hit and each do @Effect2Amount@ (+@CharAbilityPower@) (+@CharBonusPhysical2@) physical damage.
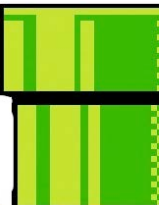
TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Translate into your own language

  Singular: There's a @AnimalName@ in the woods.

  Plural: There're three @AnimalName@s in the woods.

  - English: $AnimalName$ = zebra, cavern lion, saber-toothed tiger

  - Spanish: $AnimalName$ = cebra, león de las cavernas, dientes de sable
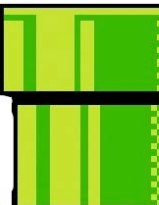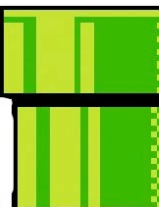
TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Translate into your own language

    Singular: There's a @AnimalName@ in the woods.

    Plural: There're three @AnimalName@s in the woods.

    Singular: Hay un ejemplar de @AnimalName@ en el bosque.

    Plural: Hay tres ejemplares de @AnimalName@ en el bosque.
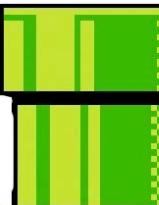
TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Translate into your own language

Item: @desc1@ + @obj@ + @desc2@
- desc1: Frozen   Frío
- obj: Armor   Armadura
- obj: Hat   Sombrero
- sesc2: of Doom   condenado

Frío Armadura condenado
Frío Sombrero condenado
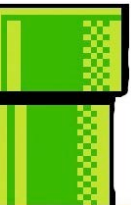
TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Translate into your own language

  Item: @desc1@ + @obj@ + @desc2@
  - Frozen
  - Fun
  - Armor
  - Hat
  - of Doom
  - of the Rangers

  Frozen Armor of Doom
  Fun Hat of the Rangers

TRANSLATION DIFFICULTIES

- Translate into your own language

Item: @desc1@ + @obj@ + @desc2@

- Frozen   *Glacial*
- Fun   *Alegre*
- Armor   *Armadura*
- Hat   *Sombrero*
- of Doom   *de la perdición*
- of the Rangers   *de los guardabosques*

Frozen Armor of Doom   *Glacial armadura de la perdición*
Fun Hat of the Rangers   *Alegre sombrero de los guardabosques*

THANKS!

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