VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION

A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO THE INDUSTRY

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VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION

• What is video game localisation?
• Stages in localisation
• The average localisation project
• Text types
• Translation difficulties
WHAT IS VIDEO GAME LOCALISATION?

Sometimes, slight changes are made in a game to make sure it will be properly received by different cultures.
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.

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.

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)
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 product’s 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

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|                     | familiarization (translator & editor) | glossary creation | text translation | manual & packaging translation |
|                     | script translation | recording (2 weeks after casting) | pickup recording (if necessary) |
|                     | casting | audio & text integration | 1st N test | final QA |

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
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: $\text{AnimalName}$ = zebra, cavern lion, saber-toothed tiger

• Spanish: $\text{AnimalName}$ = 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 Sombrereto
- sesc2: of Doom condenado

Frío Armadura condenado
Frío Sombrereto 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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