Chapter 4. Localization

Activities

Additional resources for activity 1
For more real-life situations where something went wrong in localization, you may want to have a look at Max Deryagin’s website: https://www.md-sub.com/what-game-sub-got-wrong-in-2017. The website provides screenshots and videos showing instances where gamers are deprived of the best gaming experience because of problems related to subtitles. Teachers can use these examples to complement the situations we outline in the book (Activity 1, Part B).

Partial key to Activity 1
Some ideas about what could have gone wrong in the situations outlined in Activity 1 are listed below.

- Pre-localization phase or pre-translation phase: poorly executed market analysis, language tiering or internationalization (product design, engineering or testing); quotation was wildly off for a given project; localization kit was ill-prepared (non-existent or poorly executed glossary and style guide; incorrectly set up translation memory), lack of brainstorming session.
- Localization or translation phase: poorly executed translation (inadequate use of machine translation or translation memory; insufficient post-editing or revision: lack of communication between different translation teams, etc.).
- Post-localization or post-translation phase: insufficient testing.

Adaptation of activity 2
If you know Polish, in activity 2 from chapter 4 you may prefer to consider these characters from the Final Fantasy IX (instead of the ones from the Witcher, CD Project 2007-):

– Japanese: ジダン
– American English: Zidane
https://finalfantasy.fandom.com/wiki/Zidane_Tribal

– Japanese: サラマンダー・コーラル
– American English: Amarant Coral
https://finalfantasy.fandom.com/wiki/Amarant_Coral
Extra activity 1

Indirect translation as a homecoming: from a Chinese novel, to an English-language novel, to an English-language video game, to in-game text assets in simplified Chinese. Read the article “Video game localization as homecoming in Total War: Three Kingdoms” by Wenqing Peng (Perspectives 2021) and reflect how you would classify the practice described there. Is it an indirect translation? Or perhaps back-translation or retranslation are better terms? Or maybe a combination of all of the above terms will work better. Do you know of books that followed a similar trajectory? Is the final product more distant from the original than the mediating text (as is typically assumed to be the case with indirect translation)?

Extra activity 2

Sentences in Table 4.1. are English translations of narrative passages from a video game. The video game was originally developed in a language other than English. Read these sentences carefully. Reflect:
- what could be written inside the variables? what type of variables would they be?
- How will these variables affect the way you will translate these sentences into your strongest language?

Note that the possible different resulting sentences need to be grammatically correct in your language. This means that you need to mind the plurals, the gender, the case, etc.

Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English pivot text</th>
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| 1 Time to next life:  
<Current>/<Max>
Delivery rate: <Rate> every day
Next delivery: 
<UpdateTime_Hours> hours
Or exchange lives with your friends. |
| 2 Sell for $%d. |
| 3 Get %x to find %y's reward! |
| 4 Janek doesn’t have #G%i#W!? Bring it to him and he will give you something in return. |

Once you are done, try translating these sentences into your strongest language (A language). How did you feel about translating without a context, and with all these constraints? In your opinion,
● Is the English text well prepared for localization?
● Will it be easy to translate these strings into your language while adhering to the grammar rules in your language?
● How would you improve the English text to make sure that it can be more easily localized into your language/culture?
● How would you improve the English text to make sure that it can be more easily localized into other languages?
● Are there any differences between the two improvements?
● Which additional information would be helpful to give you more context?
● Who in the localization workflow can provide you with this information?