An Assessment of Consumable and Inconsumable Item Description Localization Quality in Fattoy's Swordash

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Abstract :   The process of localization in video games goes beyond the the transfer of meaning. Thorough analysis is needed to ensure that the target audiences comprehend the purpose and functions of the message that is implied in the descriptions for items that are classified into consumable and Inconsumable. The aim of this study is to examine the localization strategies found in the localization of Swordash game (Fattoy, 2023), a Role Playing Game (RPG) that relies extensively on items in the gameplay. The method employed is a qualitative descriptive approach in examining both visual and textual components in the items. Visual data consists of the item's icon, whilst textual data contains their descriptions. This study is in pursuit to analyze the numerous elements that are involved in the localization for consumable and Inconsumable items found in Swordash. The objective of the study is to identify the localization strategies employed and evaluate the overall quality of the localization in the game's item descriptions. Not only aiming to provide clarity on the result of the identified strategies and the end product but also to provide insights for future localizations in games that assuring, smooth, informative, and transformative experience for the audience to connect with the world in the game.

Keywords: Localization, Strategies, Assessment, Game

Abstrak : Proses pelokalan dalam video game lebih dari sekadar transfer makna. Analisis menyeluruh diperlukan untuk memastikan bahwa target audiens memahami tujuan dan fungsi pesan yang tersirat dalam deskripsi untuk item yang diklasifikasikan ke dalam consumable dan Inconsumable. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memeriksa strategi pelokalan yang ditemukan dalam pelokalan game Swordash (Fattoy, 2023), sebuah permainan peran (RPG) yang sangat bergantung pada item dalam gameplay. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan memeriksa komponen visual dan tekstual dalam item. Data visual terdiri dari ikon item, sementara data tekstual berisi deskripsi item. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis berbagai elemen yang terlibat dalam pelokalan untuk item yang dapat dikonsumsi dan tidak dapat dikonsumsi yang ditemukan di Swordash. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi strategi pelokalan yang digunakan dan mengevaluasi kualitas pelokalan secara keseluruhan dalam deskripsi item game. Tidak hanya bertujuan untuk memberikan kejelasan tentang hasil dari strategi yang diidentifikasi dan produk akhir, tetapi juga untuk memberikan wawasan untuk pelokalan di masa depan dalam game yang meyakinkan, lancar, informatif, dan pengalaman transformatif bagi audiens untuk terhubung dengan dunia di dalam game.

Kata kunci: Pelokalan, Strategi, Penilaian, Game

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

The quality localization in Role Playing Game (RPG) games is seemingly overlooked by its authentic appearance to the end user for most of the major RPG titles games, they able to display such attention to detail thanks to their capital leverage over niche titles that tend to cater a smaller audience to justify the investment in high quality localization, this disparity lies in the economics of localization that based on the user bases and commercial potential that in turn deliver subpar localization quality that impact the user experience.

The issue that often found in the localization quality are poor translation that translate to failure of capturing the nuances and idioms of the target languages due to literal translation that employed as a method in which the game received its new identity. That impacting the experience of the user that play the games that may using inconsistent terms leading to confusion of the player and possibly break the immersion that the game. in addition, missing or incorrect context causing lost in translation moments in transferring the cultural references or humor that may cause a loss of meaning, since there is possibility of improper cultural nuances that not just turns to misunderstanding but even to greater extent of becoming an offensive content instead. Thus, outlining the importance of accuracy in these localization process since not only the user experiences at stake but also the game's own reputation

The field in which discussing localization quality of video games is relatively young compared to other medium since video games are deemed to be something of game, that in turns lacking the attention that it deserved that worth considering to be deeply studied by the masses, well that changed for some time ago, the examples is the study carried by Hasibuan, et al., (2022) that examines the acceptability of translation qualities that containing fantasy and gaming terms in the game of *Dungeon of Draagons* that further identifies the difficulty arose within the interpretation of unfamiliar terms. They argued that the transcreation strategy is less well received since the strategy observed to be often utilized is literal translation and is might have altered the intended meaning of the target language. While this allows the translator a degree of creativity and freedom in the process that comes with its discrepancy. The other studies are carried by Xinyan & Jianguo, (2019) that specifically delving in the culture specific items (CSI) in translated word and neologies in *League of Legend,* in this case the translated material being discussed appeared to be not true to the meaning and seeing a reasoning behind the deviation which is to serve as flexibly appealing content to the user instead of fully faithful to the true meaning of the material.

There is even study that linked localization quality with ecological consequences primarily in the retrospect of E-waste by Wibowo, Et al., (2019) they argued that the quality of processing the localization by which of efficient in resource that reduce the impact of localization by keeping it as efficient to not increasing the hardware bound aspect like increasing file size and energy consumption. These are become the focus in the resulting localization as to reduce the impact of E-waste and being conscious to the environment while also maintaining its effectiveness in the result wise of the localization that satisfy the standard. There is also study that driven the focus in the translation on narrative side of the games carried by Nawrocka, (2020) that states translation play significant role in shaping the text that drive the narrative and the strategies in which to achieve the goal of the narrative while also retain the immersion that player go through in the game world. And the other studies is about the classic in video games, carried by Mangiron C., (2021) that discussing about the approach of the current practice of localization for japanese games particularly in

western market, from there the researcher found that the strategies of localizing japanese video games have evolving from higher to lower degree of cultural appropriation in order to meet the markets expectations with increasing tendency of preserving sociocultural content from the original.

The gaming industry market of interactive descriptive narratives demands a more multifaceted approach to translation. The concept of shapeshifting in English refers to how text, context and meaning can change when moving from one language and culture to another. Aarseth (1997) emphasizes that games can create a simulated reality that can deeply engage players. Diegesis in the narrative is the cornerstone of every game. According to Aarseth (1997), diegesis in games is a simulated reality. Effective translation needs to maintain the continuity of this fictional world. In a diegesis-based translation strategy, the aim is to maintain the consistency of the game world by adjusting the text, context and target culture without sacrificing the core meaning. Bassnett (1991) says that translation is always a negotiation between the unknown and the known.

Localization involves the process of adapting the text to the norms, values, and references of the target culture. This process involves cultural appropriation (Venuti, 1995) to ensure that the text is acceptable to the intended audience. Adaptation involves changing elements of the game mechanics or narrative to make them more relevant to the target culture. In this process there is a process of domestication (Venuti, 1995), where the foreign text is changed to make it more familiar to the target audience. However, the hybrid approach combines localization and adaptation to achieve a balance between authenticity and cultural embeddedness. The approach is a more flexible one and allows translators to adapt their strategies to the specific context of each play. Therefore, shifts and deviations in meaning are unavoidable in diegesis-based strategies. Bassnett (1991) explains translation always involves some degree of loss. This occurs due to cultural differences, language varieties, and play mechanics. Similarly, Venuti (1995) asserts that translation always involves changes to the original text.

Additionally, to assess the quality of video game localization, a ludification approach can be used. Based on Juul (2005), a game is an activity that involves rules, goals, feedback, and interaction. In the localization context, the ludification assessment is utilized to evaluate how well a translated game engages the player's interest and improves their gaming experience. In this assessment, there are some criteria that are assessed, the elements of ludification such as Narrative Mechanics, Diegetic Symbiosis and Localization Levels, (Purnaomo, 2019). The Narrative Mechanics are representations of Ludic Linguistics (Patterns and Preferences), Ideology of Influence and Ludology -Narratology. Furthermore, Diegetic Symbiosis represents Ludic Linguistics (Patterns and Preferences) and Textonomy in textual and visual. Therefore, Localization Level is the representation of localization in the text whether it follows the standard or not.

2.   RESEARCH METHOD

This research utilizes a qualitative descriptive approach by examining the visual and textual components in the items. The objective of this research is to analyze the various elements involved in localization for consumable and inconsummable items found on *Swordash*. Cresswell (2009) in his book Research Design, qualitative research is a method for understanding how individuals or groups define a social or human problem. Qualitative research involves questions that arise, data collection based on the participants' environment,

data analysis that starts from specific themes to general themes, and researchers provide interpretations regarding the interpretation of the meaning of the data that has been studied. The final report of this research has a flexible structure (Cresswell, 2009). The descriptive qualitative method is suitable for use in this study as it fits the research topic to analyze the various elements involved in localization for consumable and inconsumable items found in *Swordash*.

The research utilizes visual data consisting of item icons, while textual data contains item descriptions. In this research, digetic and non-diegetic in consumable and inconsumable items (Purnomo & Purnama, 2019) and quality assessment in translation (Purnomo, 2018). The source data of this research is taken from the online game *Swordash* published by Fattoy which was released in 2023. The source of data taken from the game *Swordash*. There are several steps to analyze the data, (1) prepare the data to be analyzed. The researcher will collect screenshots of items from the online game *Swordash* as data; (2) Reading all the data, the researcher makes simple notes that describe the results of the study; (3) Approaches can include strategies and assessments of items; (4) The final step is to analyze the data.

3.   FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In the results and discussion section, the localization strategy used and the quality of localization on items in the *Swordash* game will be explained. Therefore, it will be seen that each item in the game is divided into two types, namely consumable and inconsumable, which are derived from visual data (item icon) and textual data (item description). The following are the results and discussion:
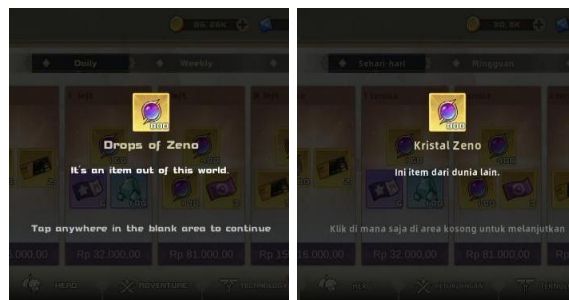

Figure 1. D*rops of Zeno (Items consummable)*

In this analysis, consummable items are characterized by being consumable, one of which is Drops Of Zeno. These items can be used to buy skins and increase hero levels. Use of localization strategy found in the figure is a non-diegetic typefacing strategy. In this figure, the difference in writing can be seen where the font shape from the source language to the target language is different. In the localization, it also uses a short translation language so that the target text player can understand. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the translation in Figure 1, the following is the assessment table :

Diegetic Symbiosis	Struktur Mekanis-Naratif	Localization Level	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Diegetic Symbiosis

Hegemon ik	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Nir	Meta-Ana (Cryptic)	Hegemon ik
Equivocal shift =2x3 Diegetic Symbiosis not shifted = 3x2 Nir localization = 1x1 6+6+1= 13 13/6= 2.16				

Tabel 1. *Assessment (figure 1)*

In the table, it shows the quality of translation in the *Swordash* item. The equivocal can be seen in the shifted equivocal because the target language uses cryptic in the mechanical-narrative structure. Therefore, it can be seen that the diegetic symbiosis also does not experience a shift. The symbiosis and structure are fairly good. In the localization level in *Swordash*, however, the localization level is nir (bad) because the localization to the target language is more noticeable because it does not follow the correct rules in localizing.
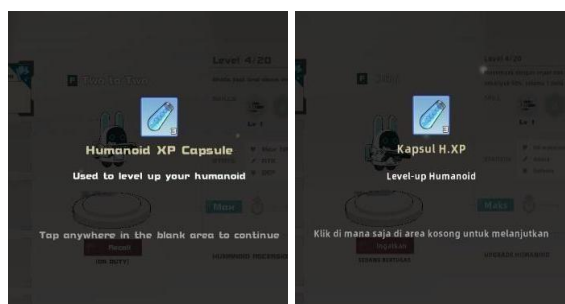

Figure 2. *Humanoid XP capsule (Items consummable)*

In this analysis, consummable items are characterized by being able to be consumed, one of which is the Humanoid XP capsule. These items can be used to increase the ability of humanoids in battle. The use of localization strategy found in the picture is a diegetic symbolization strategy. Diegetic symbolization is clearly visible where the use of the letter H in the target text as a substitute for the word 'humanoid' in the source language. Furthermore, there is also a non-diegetic Lettering strategy. In figure 2, you can see the difference in font size where in the source language the font size is larger than the target language which is smaller. Therefore, in the target language, the translation does not take up much space on the panel. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the translation in Figure 2, the following is the assessment table :

Diegetic Symbiosis	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Localization Level	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Diegetic Symbiosis
Hegemon ik	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Nir	Meta-Ana (Cryptic)	Hegemon ik

Equivocal bergeser =2x3
Simbiosis Diegetis tidak bergeser = 3x2
Pelokalan Nir = 1x1
6+6+1= 13
13/6= 2.16

Tabel 2. *Assessment (figure 2)*

In the table, it shows the quality of translation in the *swordash* item. The equivocal can be seen in the shifted equivocal because the target language uses cryptic in the mechanical-narrative structure. Therefore, it can be seen that the diegetic symbiosis also does not experience a shift. The symbiosis and structure are fairly good. In the localization level in *Swordash* however, the localization level is zero (bad) because the localization to the target language is more noticeable because it does not follow the correct rules in localizing.

Figure 3. *P.D Coupon (Items consummable)*

In this analysis, consummable items are characterized by being consumable, one of which is *P.D Coupon*. These items can be used to buy skins and increase hero levels. Use of localization strategy found in the figure is a non-diegetic typefacing strategy. In this figure, the difference in writing can be seen where the font shape from the source language to the target language is different. In the localization, it also uses a short translation language so that the target text player can understand. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the translation in Figure 3, the following is the assessment table :

Diegetic Symbiosis	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Localization Level	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Diegetic Symbiosis
Hegemonik	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Nir	Meta-Ana (Cryptic)	Hegemonik

Equivocal shift =2x3
Diegetic Symbiosis not shifted = 3x2
Nir localization = 1x1
6+6+1= 13
13/6= 2.16

Tabel 3. *Assessment* (*figure 3*)

In the table, it shows the quality of translation in the *Swordash* item. The equivocal can be seen in the shifted equivocal because the target language uses cryptic in the mechanical-narrative structure. Therefore, the diegetic symbiosis also does not experience a shift. The symbiosis and structure are fairly good. In the localization level in *Swordash*, however, the localization level is zero (bad) because the localization to the target language is more noticeable because it does not follow the correct rules in localizing.

Figure 4. *ULT Disk No.225 (Items Inconsummable)*

In this analysis, inconsumable items are characterized by being able to be used without being consumed, one of which is ULT Disk No.225. These items can be used to restore energy in battle. The use of localization strategy found in the picture is the strategy of diegetic Violation. Diegetic Violation is clearly visible where in the description writing there is a violation of grammar and writing grammar to save the use of spaces in panels such as figure 4. Furthermore, there is also a non-diegetic Lettering strategy. In figure 4, it can be seen the difference in font size where in the source language the font size is larger than the target language which is smaller. Therefore, in the target language, the translation does not take up much space. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the translation in Figure 4, the following is the assessment table :

Diegetic Symbiosis	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Localization Level	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Diegetic Symbiosis
Hegemonik	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Nir	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Hegemonik

Equivocal shift =3x3
Diegetic Symbiosis not shifted = 3x2
Nir localization = 1x1
9+6+1= 16
16/6= 2.6

Tabel 4. *Assessment* (*figure 4*)

In the table, it shows the quality of translation in the *Swordash* item. The equivocal is not shifted because the target language and the source language have the same narrative-mechanical structure. Therefore, the diegetic symbiosis also does not experience a shift. So the symbiosis and structure are fairly good. In addition, the level of localization in *Swordash* is poor because the localization to the target language does not follow the correct localization rules.

Figure 5 . *Baret a (Items Inconsummable)*

In this analysis, inconsumable items have special characteristics where they can only be used cannot be consumed, one of which is the Beret *a*. These items can be used to increase crit when activating ultimate skills in the game. the use of localization strategy found in the figure is a non-diegetic typefacing strategy. In the figure, the difference in writing can be seen where the font shape from the source language to the target language is different. Furthermore, there is also a non-diegetic lettering strategy. In figure 5, the difference in font size can be seen where in the source language the font size is larger than the target language which is smaller. Therefore, in the target language, the translation does not take up much space in the place. Furthermore, there is an assessment of the translation in Figure 5, the following is the assessment table :

Diegetic Symbiosis	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Localization Level	Mechanical-Narrative Structure	Diegetic Symbiosis
Hegemonik	Ana-Ana (Equivocal)	Nir	Meta-Ana (Cryptic)	Hegemonik

Equivocal shift =2x3
Diegetic Symbiosis not shifted = 3x2
Nir localization = 1x1
 6+6+1= 13
 13/6= 2.16

Tabel 5. *Assessment (figure 5)*

In the table, it shows the quality of translation in the *Swordash* item. The equivocal can be seen in the shifted equivocal because the target language uses cryptic in the mechanical-narrative structure. Therefore, it can be seen that the diegetic symbiosis also does not experience a shift. The symbiosis and structure are fairly good. In the localization level in *Swordash*, however, the localization level is zero (bad) because the localization to the target language is more noticeable because it does not follow the correct rules in localizing.

4.   CONCLUSION

In this research has the result that the items in the *Swordash* game include diegetic and non-diegetic. In *Swordash* items are divided into two namely consummabel and inconsumable where in Role Playing Game (RPG) games items are very inherent elements. The results of this study show that most items have diegetic strategies, namely abbreviation, condensation, omissions, symbolization, retention, mediation, and violation. Furthermore, non-diegetic strategies are iconization, typefacing, lettering, ballooning, and windowing. Where in these findings there are clear differences.

Moreover, the assessment using ludification for the *Swordash* game found results that tended to be unfavorable because it gave a score of 2.2 where the translation needed a larger scale of improvement. Therefore, this provides a more complete picture of the player's ability to understand and adapt game strategies. In addition, the use of diegetic items can also increase player retention. These results can have important implications for game developers in designing games that not only attract but also retain a loyal player base. These findings can be utilized in the development of more effective *Swordash* game translations.

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