

**CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF
SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

TITLE OF PAPER

**Model of Graduate Profile for Translators Aiming to Work in the Video
Game Translation Industry**

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FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this research project was presented by **Yu Cheng Chang** as a partial fulfillment for the requirements for a **Bachelor Degree in English Language with a Minor in Translation**.

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I, Yu Cheng Chang,

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AUTHOR

Yu Cheng Chang

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I would like to thank every person I have met in my life, because each of the experiences I have lived throughout my life has made me become the person I am now and I am proud of it.

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Yu Cheng Chang

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this project to my family because they are the engine that provides me strength and dedication to go forward in life.

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GRADE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1- Introduction.....	1
1.1-Topic and Justification.....	1
2- Problem.....	2
2.1- Statement of the Problem.....	2
2.2- Research Questions.....	3
2.3- General and specific objectives.....	3
2.3.1- General Objective.....	3
2.3.2- Specific Objectives.....	3
2.4- Conceptual Framework.....	4
2.4.1- Model Profiles.....	4
2.4.2- Translation Academic Programs Availability.....	4
2.4.3- Ecuadorian Video Game Development Industry.....	5
2.4.4- Video Games.....	7
2.4.5- Video Game Development Process.....	8
2.4.6- Video Games Translation.....	11
2.4.7- Translators' Language Proficiency.....	14
2.4.8- Different Translation Skills for Different Video Games.....	15
2.4.9- Textual Items to be translated in the Video Game Development Industry.....	18
2.4.10- Localization.....	20
2.4.11- Transcreation.....	21
2.4.12- Subtitling	22
2.4.13- Target text In-Game Captioning.....	23
2.4.14- Dubbing.....	23
2.4.15- Quality assurance.....	24
2.5- Methodological Approach.....	25
2.6- Research Instruments.....	26
2.7- Findings.....	26
2.8- Conclusion and Recommendation.....	27
3- Description of the Product.....	30
4- References.....	34
5- Appendix.....	35

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to design and provide a model of graduate profile for a new branch of specialization in the field of Video Game Translation, available for students that have completed the minor in translation in the school of English Language of the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil.

This graduate profile comprises a detailed description of all the different skills that a translator will be required to work efficiently in this field. It seeks to help the translator get used to the common issues found while working with video games and the processes they need to get familiar with in order to comply with their work.

The School of English Language will be able to create an academic curriculum based on this graduate profile and open a specialization program that covers all the knowledge and training appropriate for a translator that is interested in working in this field.

Keywords: Model of Graduate profile, Video Game translation, Localization, Transcreation, Audiovisual Translation, Quality assurance.

1. Introduction

1.1 Topic and Justification

Video games are one of the most popular entertainments worldwide; this activity can be considered either a hobby or a career. There are more and more people making money by playing games, for example: there are gamers that train to become professional players in competitive games and with the help of sponsors they join tournaments with big amounts of money and other prizes. Other gamers are making money through YouTube, twitch or other media. As the gamer community is expanding, their channels are supported by other gamers that watch their videos for reviews, instructions or in-game mechanics advice. These companies pay the users if they are able to achieve a certain number of viewers per day and reach a high number of followers.

As a result of the global market expansion of the gaming industry, translators are required to make games content (labels, audios and subtitles) available for other cultures. Even though Ecuador has not developed its own gaming industry yet, there is an initiative that started some years ago. The ESPOL University has signed an agreement with “Freaky Creations” so that they can use the premises of ESPOL to develop videogames in exchange of their representation. Freaky Creations has an agreement with Sony that will allow their workers to develop games for their gaming platforms in exchange of royalties paid to Sony for each copy of the game that is sold.

The video game development industry in Ecuador is at a pioneer stage, making it a great opportunity for translators to gain access to training for this field of specialization that offers them a basic-intermediate set of skills in multimedia. It is necessary to design a model profile that will prepare the translators to be able to cope with the different processes within the process of translating a videogame, such as: localization, subtitling, dubbing, and so on.

2. Problem

2.1 Statement of the Problem

There is a lack of training for translators. Currently, in Ecuador there are only few BA programs for translation and they do not offer specializations in specific areas, which is very important since each field will require different skills and knowledge. The Video Game industry is growing and more people are starting to gain interest in working on the development of video games. Even though, there is no strong basis of this industry in Ecuador there is a possibility for translators specialized in this area to work for game developers from other countries by outsourcing areas related to audiovisual translation, localization and quality assurance.

2.2 Research Questions

Is it necessary for a translator to take special training in order to work in the video game translation market?

What roles can a translator play within the video game translation market?

How can multimedia knowledge benefit the translator's performance?

What skills are translators required to be able to work in the video game translation market?

Are there good working opportunities for translators within this specialization?

2.3 General and Specific Objectives

2.3.1 General Objective

Contribute to the development of a model profile for translators in the field of the video game translation industry by analyzing the academic programs available, the market, the set of skills and knowledge that a translator aiming to work in this area must possess to be able to handle processes required so as to boost translation business in the aforementioned field.

2.3.2 Specific Objectives

- Take a closer view of how the Video Game Development industry works
- Provide an insight into the process of Video Game development
- Analyze the needs within the video game translation market
- Design a core set of abilities and skills required by the video game translator
- Analyze advantages and disadvantages for the development of a specialized training program within the current multimedia translation market.
- List the challenges a translator working in this area faces.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

2.4.1 Model of Graduate Profiles

The objective of this research paper is to produce a model of graduate profile for translators aiming to work in the Video Game translation industry. The term profile refers to the set of skills and attributes the student is expected to show by the end of the program. In order to create an academic training program, the graduate profile must be created first and then the theoretical and praxis notions will be defined based on it.

This paper will describe all the aspects to be covered in the training offered through this specialization. It is important to become familiar with the whole process of development of a video game and know what roles translators play and what responsibilities they must bear.

2.4.2 Translation Academic Programs Availability

Among bachelor and academic programs of universities there are only a few for translation and none for specialized training in this field: The English Language School with a Minor in Translation of the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil, and the Minor in Translation of the University San Fransisco de Quito.

There are other bachelor programs but those are specialized in linguistics, for example: Bachelor in English Language – UPSE, Bachelor in English Language and Linguistics – Universidad Guayaquil, Bachelor in English Teaching – Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte, and The English Language School with a Minor in Teaching of the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil.

That is why the implementation of specialized training in different areas will help translators within the Ecuadorian community take another step into improving their techniques and obtaining more knowledge. In this case translators will be offered training in the field of video game translation, which will include audiovisual knowledge, translation techniques commonly used in this field, and

background knowledge about video games and the corresponding translation processes.

2.4.3 Ecuadorian Video Game Development Industry

Even though video games have become a trend within the Ecuadorian community in all types of game consoles, there is still not much progress in the video game development industry.

Most programmers in Ecuador work in the software that can be sold to companies rather than in video games. Most people or companies that may develop video games or advergames (Games advertising a service or brand) usually do not promote these products as their main products but as secondary services.

The provinces with major development of software programming in Ecuador are Pichincha, Guayas and Azuay. According to the Ecuadorian Association of Software (Aesoft) the most produced software is: Banking Finance Software, Administrative Finance Software and Natural Language Processing Software. (Estudio de Mercado Servicio Desarrollo de Videojuegos en Ecuador, 2012)

Among the game developers in Ecuador are: Freaky Creations, Blue Lizard, Ximah and Geeks.

Freaky Creations is the only company that has as an objective: the creation of games that will be sold internationally. Their products are not created under specific requests but they are part of the developer's proposals and projects. Currently, they only have one product in its final stages; it is a video game called "To Leave" that will be available for the consoles Play station 4 and Play station Vita. In an interview they mentioned that they have some other projects ongoing simultaneously.

According to ProChile:

Blue Lizard's sales comprise mostly Video games under requests. They are present in different markets around the world, especially in North America. Most

of the games they develop are for different consoles like: Smart phones, Tablets, Social Networks, etc. Their clients may include a development guide because they want a specific product and they have already thought about it in detail, or they may give the programmers more freedom and flexibility to develop a game that complies with the customer's expectations.

Ximah offers a wide range of digital services such as: Digital Art, Viral Marketing, Online Public Relations, Creation of engagement campaigns, etc. Regarding video game development industries, Ximah offers its services to create Advergames.

Geeks is a company that also offers the creation of Advergames. Their main services are: Digital Marketing, Digital media, Google adwords, Google analytics, etc.

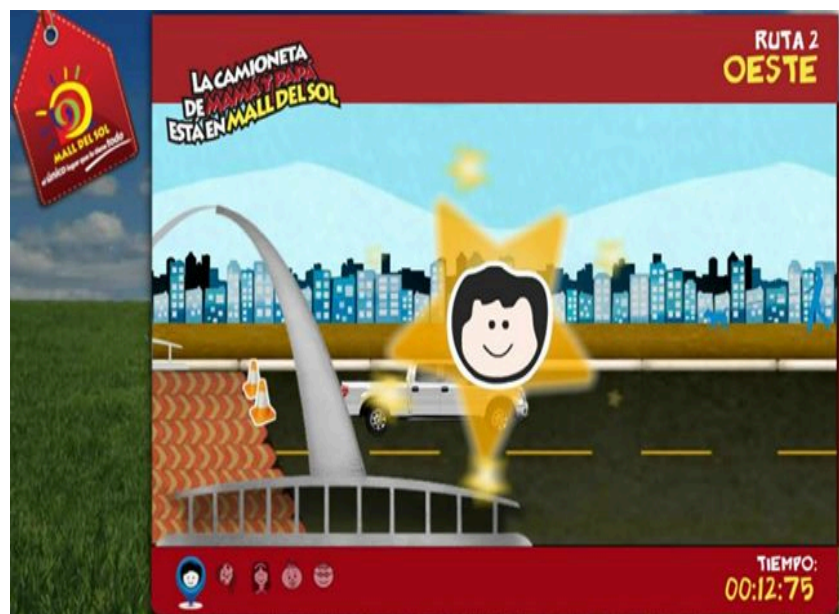


Illustration 1.- Advergame Created by Geeks
Source: (Geeks, 2012)
Retrieved from:<http://blog.geeks.com.ec/vamos-a-mall-del-sol-en-la-camioneta-de-mama-y-papa>

This is an advergame the company Geeks designed for "MALL DEL SOL" to promote sales to participate in the raffle of a truck and for marketing purposes of the shopping center to play this game and participate in the raffle of a cell phone.

The only company that is devoted 100% to the development of video games is Freaky Creations; the other companies mostly offer other digital services, regarding video games they only work in small projects at the request of customers.

In the interview with Juan Perez, a member of Freaky Creations, he commented that their main project "To Leave" -currently designed in English- was going to be translated in many languages (Spanish, French, German and probably Italian and Japanese). He said that the translation of the game was going to be carried out by a company located in The United States and they have an agreement for the translation of their Video Game "To Leave". This type of business is called outsourcing, in this case, the translation is sent to other countries to be rendered. The reasons for outsourcing vary: lower prices, lack of in-house market, better service/product quality in other countries, etc.

2.4.4 Video Games

Video games are electronic games developed through programming, graphic design. It is executed through gaming consoles or computers so that the players can interact with the game interface and produce a visual feedback through a visual medium.

A video game poses different challenges that are set in different game interfaces, these are classified as genres. Each video game will be about different type of challenges and game modes.

Most of the video games are in essence a story where a player or players can feel immersed inside this virtual world and become part of it while playing. For these stories to be told there will be the need of texts to guide the player through the game. The role of a translator during the video game development is to make these texts available in other languages so that the game can reach different markets worldwide.

2.4.5 Video Game Development Process

It is essential for translators aiming to be part of this academic training to know the process of development of video games. As part of the project team, it is important for each of the members to know the goals to be achieved together, to understand how important it is for everyone to work together and to be committed to the completion of the given tasks.

A video game can be created either by an individual or by a large team, and this will depend on how big the project will be. As a result of the analysis of the consulted authors (Moore, 2006), the following set of steps to be followed to develop a video game has been devised:

-Idea: The first step is to think of an idea for a video game. The idea must include the following essential elements so the objectives to be achieved for the final product are clear: Title, Plot Introduction, Background Story, General specifications of the gameplay.

The title must be unique and attractive to catch consumers' attention. The plot introduction is a general summary of what the video game is about. The background story is what all the video game will be based on, from a starting point to a closure. There must also be general specifications of the gameplay like for example: the genre of the game, the theme and the modes it will include.

The idea must be original, the games of the same genre will always share major aspects, but the players will always seek new experiences and that is why games from the same genre will have something that makes it special and different from each other.

-Setting objectives: The idea for the project could be brought and developed by one person only or by a group of people that consider each member as a partner. Either alone or with partners it is important to set objectives to fulfill and develop the details of the idea further.

-Setting project timeline: It is important to set deadlines for the delivery of different parts of the project, this way there will be more organization and

workers will have a guide that will keep the project on track without delays or problems.

-Team: Once the idea is clear and objectives have been set, it is time to gather a team. The size of the team will be defined under the consideration of two aspects: the volume of the project and the timeframe set to deliver the final product. The volume of the project refers to the level of complexity of the video game and the timeframe refers to the time constraints that exist due to a given product delivery deadline. The more complexity the project has or the shorter the deadline is, the team gathered must be bigger so that they can cope with all the work within the timeframe.

The team gathered must include people specialized in different areas needed in the development of a video game. The whole team must be divided into separate subdivisions that will cover different aspects the process:

Project management.- This group sets the standards and the system in which the other groups will work with, manages the budget, designs a timeline for the project development, ensures that all the other groups are working under the timeline set for the completion of the different stages project and approves or denies any requests, proposals or changes suggested for the project.

Marketing.- This group is in charge of promoting the video game to the consumers and gets sponsorship in case it is needed.

Music.- This group creates music themes used in the video game. Usually in video games the music tracks are created for the game purposes, it is not common to use music from other authors.

Audiovisual.- This group creates and edits sound tracks, visual and sound effects, video clips, audio voices and textual captioning that are used in the video game.

Programming.- This group is in charge of all software programming of the video game. They develop and test the codes for correct functioning of the software.

Translation.- This group manages the transfer of all textual content of a videogame from the source language to one or more target languages. Translators also work with the audiovisual group to help in the dubbing and subtitling processes. There will not always be a translation group; it is created only if the product is targeting several markets around the world.

-Project Development: Once the team is gathered each separate group will start to work according to the given schedule and advance according to the previously set timeline for the project.

-Beta Testing: This is a pre-release of the video game where usually only a limited number of consumers are given the opportunity to test the product before it is released. In this period, players that go through the product may find errors in the game.

The objective of Beta testing is to let players help creators of the video game go through all the game testing for errors so that the company can correct them or in case of any complaints or advice the team of developers to revise it and consider all opinions for further modifications of the video game. This process is always started a large period of time before the release date.

-Video Game release: Once the Beta process is closed, the team will go through the game for a final test to search for further errors or necessary changes. Once finished this last test, the video game will be released publicly for sale. In the case of free online video games that are usually for computers, the companies always create a purchasing system for unique items in the game that can only be purchased with physical currency.

2.4.6 Video Games Translation

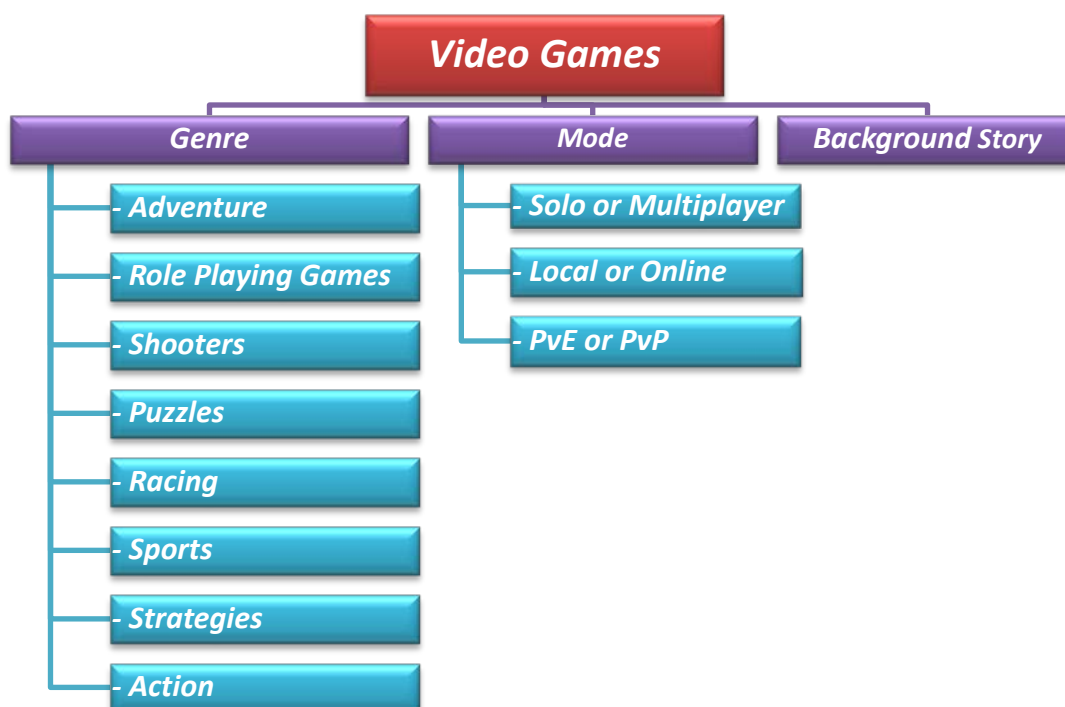


Illustration 2.- Chart of the division of the 3 major aspects that defines language used in a video game. Source: The author

The language used in a Video Game will vary depending on 3 major aspects that are: Genre, Mode and Background story. These aspects will define how the game will be developed and what kind of texts and register will be used.

Starting with Genre, Video games are categorized into genres based on their gameplay interaction rather visual or narrative content. This means that the genre of the video games is defined by the gameplay challenges set for the player. The settings or the game-world content will not play any role when defining the genre of a game. E.g. A shooters game will remain in the same genre regardless of whether the game setting is in the earth or the outer space. The most common genres are: adventure/action, sports/racing, RPG (Role Playing Games), shooters (first/third person), puzzles, racing and strategies. There are genres with more text to be translated like RPGs which have complex storylines, while genres like Sports or Racing will have less text for translation

since it will only comprise system messages, and small amount of captions that will cover a simple and short storyline.

Another language defining aspect is Mode. This comprises the user interaction system where it will vary between Solo player or Multiplayer, Local Connection or Online and PvE or PvP.

The definitions of these terms are:

Solo players refers to Single player games

Multiplayer games will give the choice of 2 or more players to play.

Local Connection means that there will be no need of any network to play the video game. It will only allow player or players to interact if connected to the same LAN server (Local Area Network) or players that are in the same physical space playing a video game through the same console with several controllers.

Online video games require internet connection to play, this is because they need to connect to a server where the game will constantly be updated and there will be interaction with other players without the need of being in the same physical space.

PvE stands for Player versus Environment. This means that the purpose of the game is for the player to go through a game facing the challenges that have already been programmed in the game.

PvP stands for Player versus Player. This means that the players will have to face other players and compete to show their skills to set a winner and a loser in the game.

Solo player system is strictly Local Connection and PvE. All single player games are usually played on Local Connection which means that there is no need of internet to access the Video Game.

On the other hand Multiplayer systems are more dynamic because they can use both Local Connection or Online and PvE or PvP. Multiplayer games that work with local connection can be video games from a console where 2 or more players play together or in case of computer video games they connect to a

local server to play together. If the video game is online, the players will connect to an online server where they will be able to interact with other people from around the world. When a multiplayer is PvE the players cooperate with each other to go through the storyline of a video game and complete all challenges, on the other hand if it is PvP players are able to play and compete against other players.

The third language defining aspect is the background story of the video game. Each video game tells a story, it can be a complex one where the player will enjoy and experience the whole story or it can be a simple story where the player enjoys better the playability of the video game itself. The possibilities of the theme of the background story of a video game are endless. It can go from a Hero versus Villains story to Human versus Aliens story. The background story of a video game will define the vocabulary and language that will be used. For example: the game "Warframe" is a multiplayer-cooperative-online-FPS-PvE video game. This video game has an alien background story; since it is science fiction it will cover a lot of scientific terminology. Also there is a possibility for video game developers to use self-created names to refer to objects, characters, and other interactive items of the game. This means that this game will be coping with unique terms that are from the game, technology and scientific terms, weapons terminology, and so on.

The fact that a translator is specialized in the Video Game translation market, does not imply that they will be able to cope with all the terminology of all games. The terminology used in each game is different and it depends a lot on the genre, mode and background story of the game.

The terminology of a MMORPG game (Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game) will be most of the times different from a shooter game, but if the background storyline of the MMORPG is related to guns and other type of weapons, it may contain similar terminology as the Shooter games. E.g. the games "C9 - Continent of the Ninth Seal" and "Defiance" are both MMORPGs. The user interface will probably be alike: Inventory, Shops, Quests, etc. However, the terminology is quite different. C9 is about a war between heroes of Glenheim (players) and "Nefer", an evil villain trying to open a gate to the

Netherworld and swarm the land with his infernal legion. Players can choose to play as heroes with unique skills like: Mystic, Warrior, Hunter, Witchblade or Shaman. On the other hand, Defiance is a futuristic online open-world shooter game where thousands of players scour a transformed Earth competing for alien technology.

In the aforementioned case, both games are developed in different contexts. Regarding the game content (User interface and credits) they both may contain similar terms, but taking into consideration the background story of the Video game, texts such as descriptions, system messages, dialogues and scripts will comprise totally different terms; while C9 will have magic related skills and some traditional weapons such as: swords, bows, staffs, etc. Defiance has technology enhancing skills for humans, fire weapons, fiction technology and characters.

As a result of the analysis, it is shown how within video games there are still a lot of different fields that a translator should cover, there are different background stories (Futuristic, Apocalyptic, Western, Ancient magic, medieval wars, etc), genres (RPGs, Strategic games, First person shootings, etc.), and age & content rating signs (Everyone, Teen +13, Mature +17 – under adult supervision, Adults +18, etc.) All these factors will define the terminology used in a video game.

2.4.7 Translators' Language Proficiency

Translators that finished the bachelor of English Language with minor in Translation in the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil learned from their academic training that a language is the main tool of a translator, the mastery of languages will define the quality of their product. Usually a person that is trained as a translator and a person that has the ability to communicate in different languages will have a primary language and secondary languages.

This is known as language acquisition, a person acquires the primary language (also known as first language or mother tongue and referred to hereinafter as L1) because they have full contact with one language since early childhood, and

as a result they have higher proficiency in that primary language. On the other hand the acquisition of secondary languages (referred to hereinafter as L2) refers to the process in which an individual learns other languages aside from the primary one and improves proficiency at it.

In the translation industry, Translators work in three different situations when working on the transfer of a text from one language into another. Translators always have mastery of at least two languages, but they may have more languages in their skill set. The first situation is when the translators have to transfer a text from L1 to L2, this process is known as Inverse Translation. Another situation where the process is from L2 to L1, this process is known as “Traducción Directa”. The third situation is when the translator must translate a text from L2 to another L2 a process known generally as Interlingual Translation.

Usually, it is recommended that translators work transferring the texts into their L1 since they have a higher proficiency in that language than the others, but this does not mean that it is impossible for a person to achieve equally good proficiency of the set of languages the translator has.

2.4.8 Different Translation Skills for Different Video Games

Each video game is a whole different world, It can be attached to existing creations, historical events and popular culture or it can be a whole new fictional world filled with fantasy, magic or technology made up by the creators of the background story of the game.

As aforementioned, the language and register used in a video game will vary depending on the mode, genre and background story: this means that on each video game the texts will vary on field and/or register. This means that the translators must have different skills.

There are 2 core skills needed for a translator, which are Creativity and Research. Video games' themes nowadays are far away from conventional ones. While in the old days the video games were a majority about heroes

versus villains, now video games have expanded to a great variety of themes such as: Aliens, Gods, Zombies, Ghosts, Mystical Creatures, Dancing, Racing, Sports, Puzzles, and so on, although there are still some stories that go for the usual themes of heroes Vs villains.

This is why research and imagination are important in the translation process. When a video game uses terminology that is known worldwide, only research will be needed to find the equivalents of the words and phrases used.

By researching translators look for good matches for the text and avoid mistranslations or using ambiguous terms and false friends. False friends refer to the use of a word that at simple sight should be the match for a word but it is not e.g. “The Red Carpet”, at first sight for a Spanish speaker that does not have a good proficiency in English will associate the word “Carpet” with the word “Carpeta” in Spanish instead of “Alfombra” because of the similarity of the words. These errors can also be committed by a translator if they do not do proper research and proofreading.

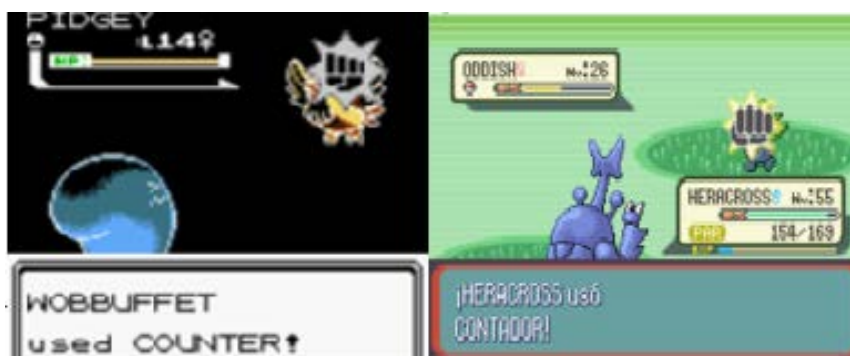


Illustration 3.- Mistranslation of a word in the video game “Pokemon”
Source: Cinegamers - (Clemente, 2013)
Retrieved from: <http://www.cinegamers.es/articulos/top-10-peores-traducciones-de-videojuegos-57692/>

In this illustration of the video game “Pokemon”, the Translator mistranslated the word counter. This is a false friend on his/her mind where the verb “Count” would be in Spanish “Contar”, the translator supposed that by adding the suffix “-er” to the word “Count” it was about the profession known in English “accountant”, consequently the chosen match for the word “Counter” was mistakenly translated as “Contador” instead of translating it into “Contraatacar”.

“Translators are constrained by pre-existing common knowledge and a body of fans with very specific expectations for the game universe and the way its inhabitants express themselves, etc. Betraying those expectations with a translation that disregards the existing translated universe will probably result in discontent fans and poor sales.” (Merino, 2007)

Research is not only about word for word matches or mismatches, but it also covers a very important aspect during translation. If a video game is going to be translated for other cultures, the translators must do proper research of the targeted culture and consider a lot of aspects such as: jargon, language, traditions, and so on. This is important because something created in one culture will not always be acceptable in another culture: each country has different beliefs, manners, and traditions; that is why translators must be responsible for researching to avoid any misunderstanding or offensive message within the text of the final product. In case there are any of these, there will be a need for a censored version.

On the other hand, there is imagination. While research is about information gathering, imagination is about converting and adapting. This is a process where the translator seeks to take the essence of the source text and transfer it to the target text not with the direct match words but with a piece of text that will convey a similar message and achieve a similar reaction from the audience towards the text as meant in the source.

Imagination is a skill often used in translation. When a translator chooses to use this skill during the transfer process, the approach is free because there is the possibility of modifying the text so as to adapt it to other cultures or language conventions. The translator has the freedom to convey the message through different words of the target text but without losing the essence of it and always looking to achieve the same response of the audience, in some cases the rendered target text version works better than the original one.

Imagination is very common in the industry of video games, during the processes of Localization or Transcreation, although imagination is not only about these two translation techniques. While localization is about adapting the

text to the local conventions of the target culture, transcreation seeks to recreate a similar message and response of the audience through a different selection of words of the target culture.

The Video Game Development Industry usually applies Localization because the creators of a game would not like the idea of the modification of their content, nor to say the recreation of the whole game; that is why transcreation is not applied in general terms, but it is still a process used during the transfer of video games. There are some words, mostly names of characters or objects that would not make sense nor sound well in the target language, as a result the best choice in these cases is to create a name in the target culture that can achieve a similar response from the audience and some of the times a similar meaning can be kept.

Essentially, imagination and research are always present during the translation process. There will always be a need to research so as to carry out information gathering, term disambiguation, cross-linguistic matches and background knowledge. Also imagination always appears as the most basic reason that is the need of the translator to be creative with the organization of the target text, up to more complex processes like the use of creativity for localization or transcreation.

2.4.9 Textual Items to be Translated in the Video Game Development Industry

The Textual Items considered while translating a video game into other languages are:

Manual: All video games will include a manual that contains information giving warnings, explaining controls, menus, gameplay system, options, license agreement, and customer support.

Packaging: When a physical version of a video game is bought, the content will be delivered usually in a CD, which will be in a package with a cover and back

cover that will contain text such as: title of the video game, system requirements, connection requirements, and licenses.

“Readme” File: This file is usually included in the installation CDs for computer Video Games. It contains steps to install correctly the software and it will also contain the terms & agreement, software patent and licenses.

Website: Usually the video games will have a website where updates, video game information, events and sales are posted; also the players can join and discuss different topics about the game in a digital community.

Audiovisual dialogues: this includes the subtitles, the transcription of the audio dialogues.

User Interface: It refers to the medium through which the user will interact with the video game (keyboard, mouse or game pad) and game labels, captioning or digital responses that serve as a feedback of the player interaction (inventory screen, map screen, Menu, system messages).

-*System Messages* refers to the messages that are sent by the game automatically or server managers such as: event reminders, notifications, and pop up messages.

-*Descriptions* refer to text boxes assigned to different items of the game.

-*Credits:* the names are kept, but the posts, work or contributions may be translated. E.g. Special Effects = Efectos especiales, Dubbing = Doblaje.

Graphic Art: This includes multilayered graphics, in different layers there will be a graphic art of the video game, and other layers for the title, content age-rating sign and platform requirements sign.

2.4.10 Localization

Localization is a process in which a text is translated and adapted to foreign-language markets. It involves changing words from one language to another and analyzing the semantics of the target language to make sure the right thing is said, as well as making sure the product “works” (functionally and linguistically) in the intended culture. (LionBridge, 2012)

In other words, to localize is to take the source text and transfer the meaning into the target language through vocabulary and content that are proper and suitable for the target culture and language.

The opposite process of localization is globalization. It seeks to translate all textual content into international standardized language. This process is usually applied to text that serves as textual content required to comply with international legal standards. E.g. Manuals, product descriptions and ingredients. On the other hand, Localization is a technique applied to translate the source text into proper local language of the target culture.

In the case of Video Games, the content must be localized and not globalized. This is because games are only successful when their content has an impact on consumers; since video games are sold internationally it means that the way to approach each culture is different. E.g. If a game is in English and is translated into Spanish it may be localized depending on whether the audience is more familiar with Spanish from Spain or Latin America.

The video games are not globalized due to the failure it would represent in the markets. It is not enjoyable to play a game with neutral standardized language that will sometimes make no sense due to the audience’s cultural attachment. This way the video game will cause no impact on their consumers. On the other hand, the video games that have succeeded are the ones that are translated in such a way that the language used in their textual content is familiar to the consumer.

2.4.11 Transcreation

Transcreation is about taking a concept in one language and completely recreating it in another language (Stibbe, 2009). This is a new term that has been used increasingly within the translation field. There is constant argument in which some support the statement to separate transcreation from translation; while others argue that they are the same, since translators are required to use creativity while translating.

But creativity has always been a skill developed by translators to avoid the robotic word-for-word approach (Merino, JoSTrans, 2006). Transcreation uses the process of adaptation as its fundamentals and takes it further with creativity. This can be considered a new technique in translation that is beyond communicative approach and closer to free translation. Transcreation is about recreating a text in another language within the constraints of language and culture of the target audience

Is this really useful within the Video Game translation industry? The answer is yes. Since Video Games are products sold all over the world it would be a great idea to recreate some of the content of a game in another language so that it would have greater impact in the target culture.

It may seem similar to localization, but there is a line that separates localization from transcreation. While Localization is more attached to the source text, Transcreation has a freer approach and cares more about producing the creative and emotional intent of the source text. Localization does not change totally the content; it is bound to the same content while adapting it to local language, while in transcreation the translator has the freedom to recreate the content and adapt it in the ways he/she thinks are best for the game so as to cause major impact on the consumers within the cultural constraints.

2.4.12 Subtitling

Subtitles are an abbreviated written translation of what can be heard on screen and are known as “open” when they are incorporated on the video itself and as “closed” when chosen by the viewer from menu (Chiaro, 2013). This written translation is usually visualized in the bottom part of the screen, presenting in real time what is being said on the video. These texts are always shortened after translation, because the viewer must read it quickly and avoid losing track of the visual content of the video.

Usually the process of subtitling was mostly used in TV programs and films. Over time, this changed and now we can see subtitles in any audiovisual content that needs to be presented to different cultures.

In early Video Games there was no need of subtitles since only captions were used. Nowadays a lot of Video games include short animated films in either 3d or 2d so as to make the game more interesting for the player. All Video games have a background story and it is basically what attracts the consumers. It allows the players to get immersed in the story and get caught by the adventure.

Subtitles have the same characteristics everywhere. They are not a complete translation of the source text; on the contrary they are a partial translation. It means that the target text is a summary of the source text. This is due to space and time constraints. The subtitles cannot be too long or it will take a lot of time to read them, causing the viewer to miss visual content of the video.

The subtitling process involves three basic steps: elimination, rendering, and condensation (Chiaro, 2013). Elimination consists on the reduction of number of words without losing meaning and intention of the source dialogue. Rendering refers to eliminate items such as slang, taboos and dialect. Finally, condensation is about simplifying the syntax so that the subs become more readable.

2.4.13 Target text In-Game Captioning

Captioning refers to the display of text within the Video Game; this will include all kinds of textual content previously mentioned (User interface, descriptions, system messages, dialogues, scripts, subtitles, etc.).

A translator must pay attention to the rendering of the text because it needs to fit in the designated space for each item. Maria Albiach, a translator that has worked in the video game translation industry gave an example that explains the importance of the awareness of the designated space when translating.

“In the menu for a shooting game after the game you see a statistics screen: enemies destroyed, times you were killed, weapons you picked, and so on. If your translation for "weapons picked" is too long two things can happen, either part of it is cut halfway or it goes beyond its assigned space and it is written over the next thing.”

It is very important for the translator to become familiar with the video game, so that they may know how much space they have for each translation and how they should render the target text.

2.4.14 Dubbing

This process involves taking the original script of a video or transcribing the audio in case of not having the scripts. Then translate it and hire actors that speak the target language to record the target audios that will replace the source audios. The aim of dubbing is to make the translated dialogue appear as though it is being uttered by the actors in the target language (Chiaro, 2013).

The target audios must follow the timing and lip movement of the original dialogue. In other words, if the audio does not adjust to the visual content it will be a fail attempt of dubbing.

In video games, dubbing is a common process since games have become more interactive. It is necessary for games in which their players have their own voice interactions or games that includes animated short films.

During the process of translation of the texts used for dubbing, the translators consider a lot the different dialects of the target language. The texts can be translated into a standard regionalized dialect or can either be localized. E.g. If a game is being dubbed into Spanish, the texts can be adapted to a Region such as Latin America which comprises a large number of Spanish speaking countries; the translation will use a standardized Spanish that is understandable to all the region.

For Latin American dubbing, the process is usually performed in Mexico or Argentina where Spanish speaking dubbers have a standardized accent and language register familiar to all Latin American countries. On the other hand, if the targeted market is Spain the Spanish register, dialect, and accent will be the local one, because the only way the video games will succeed in the targeted markets is by making the consumers feel that all the content of a video game is local, specially the language used.

If players feel that the textual content is not very understandable or natural even if it is in their language, they will not enjoy the game at its fullest, causing aversion of the consumers towards the whole video game and the enjoyment of the video game experience will drop.

2.4.15 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is a variable set of measures and procedures performed to ensure that translated text contains no errors and/or to detect and correct existing errors. (Makoushina, 2007).

In the video game translation industry, this process can be performed in two ways, it is either by proof-reading all translated texts delivered or by playing the game and analyzing all the textual content while playing the game.

In case, the game is not ready yet, the translator goes through the target text checking for errors. However, the translators should always be able to play the final product to ensure that all the text fits correctly in their designated space and there are no mistranslations.

2.5 Methodological Approach

The model profile will be developed based on analysis of documents about: Video Games, Video Game Development industry, Video Game Development, Ecuadorian Market, Localization, Quality Assurance, Globalization, Transcreation and Audiovisual processes like dubbing and subbing.

Two interviews were done to people that works in this area. There was a semi-structured interview to a translator, Maria Gomez Albiach, who has worked in the video game translation field; and a structured interview to Juan Andres Perez: a member of the Freaky Creations group, which is the only game developer in Ecuador that is aiming for international markets.

There are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and non-structured. A structured interview is where a set of questions is designed previously and only those questions are asked to the interviewee. A semi-structured interview has a set of questions previously designed to be asked to the interviewee but during the interview there is a possibility that the interviewer comes up with new questions. In a non-structured interview there are no questions designed prior to the interview, in other words it is a free to ask process where the interviewer will ask questions that he or she comes up with as the interview develops.

2.6 Research instruments

The product of this research was achieved through two interviews to a person that has experience working as a translator in this area and another one that has worked as a video game developer. Also there was research done on: Video game industry in Ecuador, Video Games features, the process of video games development, process of translation of video games, audiovisual translation and also translation techniques used commonly in this process.

2.7 Findings

The following facts were discovered through research and the interviews:

- There are few academic programs that promote the training of translators, and these only cover the fundamental processes for translation. There is no specialization of specific fields for translators, so that they can be trained to obtain the set of skills and knowledge necessary to cope with texts of the respective areas.

-In Ecuador the only Video game developer that is working in a wider and international scope is Freaky Creations. The other companies like Ximah, Geeks, Karibu Games and Blue Lizard games that work within the Ecuadorian market only develop Game Apps and Advergames for Platforms such as: Computers or Smart phones under the request and specifications of clients.

-Each Video Game is a whole different world and it will require different approaches, knowledge and skills of the translator to cope with them, and that is why it is important to be aware of the differences and learn all possible terminology of different areas.

-There are other items to be translated, not only the video game itself. This means that the translators play a role in different areas such as for texts from packaging and manuals, websites, video game development process, readme files and graphic arts.

-Translators are not usually required to participate in any of the game production and modification processes of the video game. Their job comprises the translation of the text and some other stylistic changes that are required. They can be part of the testing process so that they can have a closer look and achieve better quality assurance.

-Globalization was considered as one of the skills required, but according to the interviews, globalization is not common at all. The video games are usually localized rather than globalized, so that the video games achieve success in different markets. A globalized game would not have the same impact on gamers from different cultures as the localized video games.

-Transcreation is a process that focuses more on keeping the creativity and emotional intent to produce a similar response of the audience. It does not matter whether the content is modified by the translator; it is useful because to make the product work sometimes it is necessary to perform adaptation of the product by recreating it within the cultural context of the target audience.

- During the translation process, the translators must be aware of the space they have available for each piece of text. This is important because these constraints will affect the word choice of the translator. The space available may give the translator the idea of how short or how long the rendering must be.

-For the Quality assurance translators must make sure they go through all the translated texts and if it is possible test the final product to proofread all textual items to look for mistranslations, disambiguation and other possible mistakes made during the transfer process.

2.8 Conclusion and Recommendation

- In Ecuador, a large percentage of people that claim to be translators have not been trained in this field. They do speak other languages but they have never been trained. That is why companies and people that require translations have no other choice to hire them for two reasons: the lack of academic programs for translators and the lack of people interested in training in this field because

there is a misconception and people think that because they know other languages they are able to work as translators / interpreters. The issue of the misconception is little by little clearing up. Customers are realizing the difference between a person with knowledge of other languages and a translator. The issue of lacking academic programs for translators will be solved with Quality and Training standards set for the employment for translation and interpreting services.

- The translation market in Ecuador is big, but unfortunately companies tend to hire people that speak other languages but had no training on translation. This means that it is already hard for translators to find work in the market. Also, through this research we found out that our Video Game development industry has not flourished yet and it is in its early pioneering stage. Then some people may wonder if there is any need for creating a specialization for such market. The answer to this question is that there is the need and there is the setting. It is because this industry is starting to advance that it is feasible to start a program to train professional translators that can work alongside our future Video Game developers.

-The languages are the main tool for translators it is of great importance that they practice and continuously improve proficiency in the languages they know. No matter how much knowledge has been gathered, there are always new things and new terminology to learn about.

- This profile offers the training in two main techniques commonly used in this field which are Localization and Transcreation. It is important for the translator to know the difference between both processes and be aware of the fine line that divides them. While localization is about adapting the source text into the target text in a communicative approach, the process of transcreation recreates and adapts the essence of the source text into the target language and culture by applying a free approach. The problem arises when a translator must decide which of both techniques will conduct to the success of the product in the target culture. The recommendation is always to discuss the details with the clients, the results relies on them, whether they give the freedom and burden of recreating the content or they want their original content to be localized only. It

also depends partially on the translator, he/she may not want to bear the burden of recreating the whole content of a game, and then they chose to offer only localization services.

- In the video game translation industry, the translator can be required to cope with dubbing and subtitling, and they are not commonly familiarized with these processes. That is why this academic program includes the training on subtitling and dubbing, because, as translators they must be aware of the features and aspects regarding these processes. Their final product's success depends on how the textual content of the audiovisual videos of the Video Game is handled following the standard procedures.

3. Description of the Product

The model profile designed for the specialization for translators aiming to train in the field of Video Game Translation comprises 3 major aspects for the training of new professionals in this area. These aspects are: Translation Skills, Audiovisual Skills and Linguistic Training.

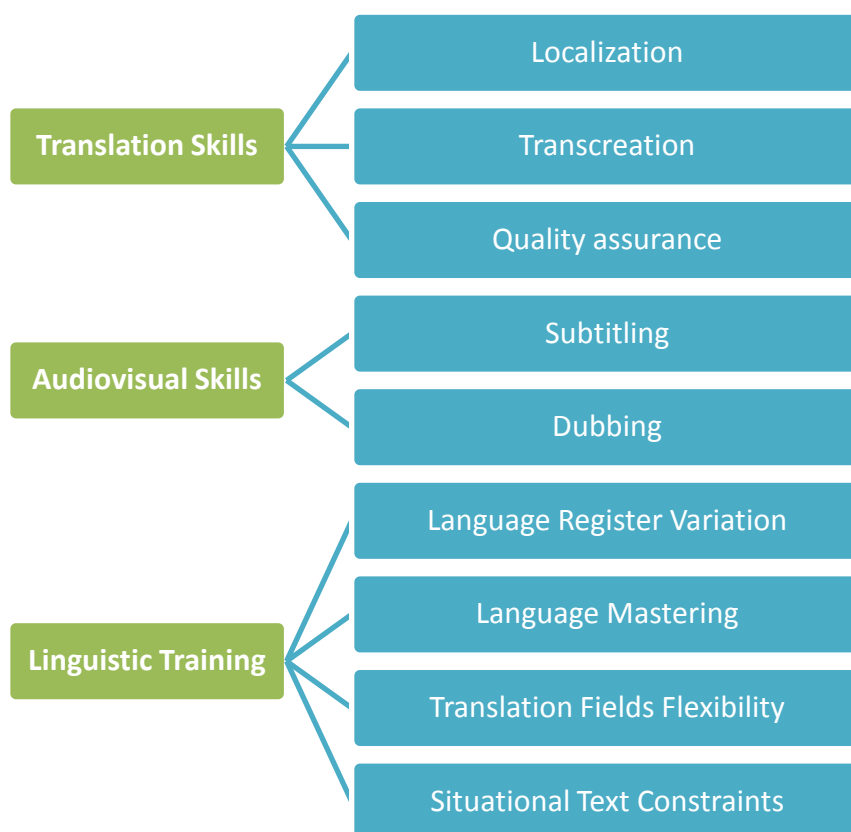


Illustration 4.- Presentation of the Model of Graduate Profile of the academic program “Specialization on Video Game Translation.

A translator that specializes in this academic program will be able to perform different tasks and will possess the following skills and knowledge:

On Translation skills, translators will be trained to develop skills of Localization, Transcreation and Quality assurance.

-Localization: The translators will acquire knowledge on the process of localization like techniques, approaches, theoretical notions and praxis. They are able to localize and adapt texts to/from Ecuadorian Spanish to/from American/British English and vice-versa.

-Transcreation: The translators will be able to recreate the source text into the target language and adapt it to the target culture. Transcreation is taught from the conventional approach which is for marketing purposes. It gives a better idea to the translators of how it works. During praxis hours of this academic program, the translators will train and practice Transcreation with Video Game content. This skill offers opportunities for the translator to work in marketing areas also.

-Quality assurance: The translators develop skills to proofread, detect and correct mistakes made throughout the transfer process such as: grammatical mistakes, mistranslations, misspellings, punctuation errors, ambiguity.

On Audiovisual skills the translators will be trained to develop skills like:
Subtitling and Dubbing

-Subtitling: The translator is aware of the space constraints and knows how to work within them, able to translate the scripts adapting the space given and the language conventions without losing the essence of the scripts.

-Dubbing: The translator is trained to both do the transcription process and dubbing process. The audio items will be turned into textual items and then the texts are translated to be read as spoken so that the dubbing actors can perform

*Translators in this academic program will be trained to perform subtitling and dubbing skills in both technical and translation aspects. The translation aspects are as aforementioned, and the technical aspects are the training of translators so that they can handle the software that are used to modify the audiovisual items like showing the subtitling text as captions in the films and the process of implementation of the recorded dubbing voices.

On Linguistic Training there are several aspects in which translators will be trained in both theoretical notions and praxis:

-Language Mastery: Translators achieved throughout their training to expand their vocabulary on the various fields of video games and improve their proficiency on the languages managed in this academic program (Spanish & English). It is essential for a translator to be constantly working to improve proficiency of all the languages he/she knows because it is their main and essential tool for work. There must be a balance between the proficiencies of the languages that the translator manages, the ideal situation is that translators have equal knowledge on them and are able to translate without any problem or constrain from one language to another.

-Language Register Variation: The translator has the knowledge and the flexibility of language register variation depending on the target audience. The proficiency is important, but at the same time it is essential for translators to develop a good judgment when translating. They must be able to differentiate the various level of language register of both source language and target language.

-Translation Fields Flexibility: Translators develop knowledge on the different existing fields. As aforementioned, each video game is a whole new separate world, each of them contain a whole bunch of terminology of different fields E.g. economics terminology, scientific terminology, military terminology are all contained in a video game based on historical facts of a world war.

-Situational Text Constraints: Translators will develop the capability of translating under different textual constraints. The space in a video game is limited and there will be situations in which a language accepts more compression than others (Compression refers to the possibility of a language being able to express more with fewer words than other languages.) that is why there is no much freedom for the translator when translating a video game and they must be able to translate pieces that fits within the given space without losing meaning.

These are all the skills and knowledge a translator will acquire by the end of the academic program. This specialization is on Video Game translation. However, when analyzing the skills acquired by the translator individually, there are a great variety of opportunities for the translator as listed below:

-Localization skill allows the translators to work in different interlingual adaptations, not only of video games but also of other products.

-Transcreation skill allows the translators to cope with interlingual recreation of marketing related material.

-Dubbing and Subbing are part of the audiovisual skill set that allows the translators to deal with any kind of audiovisual translation.

-Quality Assurance skill allows the translator to be part of revising processes to ensure the quality of products from different translation processes.

-Linguistic knowledge is the mastering of the language conventions and usage which benefits the overall performance of translators allowing them to be more efficient in different translation processes and different fields.

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THE TRANSLATION RESEARCH SUMMER SCHOOL2013

Video Game Translation aspects

5. Appendix

5.1 Interview with Maria Gomez Albiach

Yu Cheng Chang

hello!!! thanks a lot for the comment in the Facebook group... let me introduce myself, My name is Yu Cheng, I am a student in the field of translation, I am currently doing my graduation project about a model professional profile for translators aiming to work in the area of Video game translation, and I need to do some interviews to get a background information. Currently I don't have the set of questions yet, but I guess I can count you in?

María Gómez Albiach

Hi! Nice to meet you! Sure, you can count me in I will try to help as best I may. I am not working in the industry right now because I had to relocate to an area where there aren't many game developers close by, but I have worked on 15+ titles (most of them under Non Disclosure Agreement).

Yu Cheng Chang

That is not a problem at all, I seek experience

Can you help me with some of the titles you worked on?

María Gómez Albiach

That is why I mentioned the Non Disclosure Agreement

Yu Cheng Chang

Did you work with any specific gaming company?

Oh sorry didn't get what it meant, and then is it possible to know the company you worked for?

María Gómez Albiach

it is a common practice for companies employing language specialists to work with such agreements, so unless they explicitly mention the translator's name, one is usually forbidden from mentioning the titles

yes, sure

I worked for Testronic Laboratories and Pole To Win Europe

Yu Cheng Chang

ok

María Gómez Albiach

Testronic Laboratories focuses on localization testing, this means all the text is already translated, and testers review the strings of text in context

Yu Cheng Chang

so, in this area, translators are not commonly given any credits?

María Gómez Albiach

Depends on what the game publisher wants, sometimes they do.

I can check with my colleagues to see which games got their names.

YuCheng Chang

ok

María Gómez Albiach

As for me, I was quite unlucky and none of the ones I worked on as a tester has my name

Yu Cheng Chang

ohh does translators that get credits have royalties?

María Gómez Albiach

I guess it depends on the kind of agreement you have with the company

Yu Cheng Chang

but do you know of any case?

María Gómez Albiach

It is not uncommon to renounce your right to the translations if you are working for a bigger company

Not personally.

Yu Cheng Chang

Because I was sure it was only on books were royalties were common

María Gómez Albiach

At least not for the main companies like Sony, Microsoft, Nintendo...

Yu Cheng Chang

yeah I guess that could be a little bit too much to ask

María Gómez Albiach

I guess if you collaborate on a smaller project, like those you can see on kickstarter, or if you work on a start up, maybe the conditions could be different, but this is my guessing

Yu Cheng Chang

oh ok I see...

So you have only worked as a translator? Or did you have the chance to work on the dubbing and subbing process?

María Gómez Albiach

I worked as a translator only

Yu Cheng Chang

I would like to know if there is any chance a translator works both as the multimedia editor and a translator

María Gómez Albiach

We translated all sorts of things: in game text, promotional texts, websites...

Yu Cheng Chang

I guess scripts were also included right?

María Gómez Albiach

Yes

When i say in-game text I mean user interface, dialogues, descriptions for items and system messages

Yu Cheng Chang

But you translators were only in charge of the translation processes?

María Gómez Albiach

Exactly

Yu Cheng Chang

Oh I see,

María Gómez Albiach

Again, this is my perspective from the point of view of a translator working for a bigger company

Yu Cheng Chang

Yes and it is very important and i would not like to miss any detail

María Gómez Albiach

don't worry if you realize you forgot to ask something you can always ask later

Yu Cheng Chang

Uhm...one more question

María Gómez Albiach

Sure

Yu Cheng Chang

Do you think that a academic specialization/minor for translator that aim to work in this area is a good opportunity?, (this specialization/minor would include training of : globalization, localization, QA, dubbing and subbing processes) do you think the multimedia knowledge will be an advantage for them, or it is not necessary?

María Gómez Albiach

I think having a strong multimedia background is important to work with video games and audiovisual content. When translating games it is usual to have the code around the text you are translating. You need to know what you shouldn't touch, and how tags will affect the final text.

María Gómez Albiach

Maybe a full specialization on how to dub a movie is not necessary for video game localization, but it does help thinking about space constraints

Yu Cheng Chang

Well the dubbing and subbing, is only about basic knowledge

María Gómez Albiach

If you are translating the user interface of a game, you may find your language has very specific space requirements, and you need to find the way to make it fit while keeping it correct. In subbing, for instance, it is also important to think about timing and how to deliver lines

Yu Cheng Chang

I see. So, it is about fitting the text in the space so the content is not ambiguous or cause any misunderstanding right?

María Gómez Albiach

If you need to translate a dialogue in an RPG, you have to consider how to structure the information to deliver it in the set number of lines and so on

Yes

Also, this is a problem Spanish translators face: Spanish tends to need a lot more room than English and Japanese

So we often need to find a way to shorten text in a way that is still understandable for the user

Yu Cheng Chang

Yeah, which means there will be a lot of compensation by merging?

María Gómez Albiach

If you can, then it is good

However... many times the meaning is already so condensed

You have to shorten words... and that is not always elegant from a linguistic point of view

Yu Cheng Chang

Yeah that is one of the challenges with Spanish ... the wide variety of vocabulary in comparison with other languages

María Gómez Albiach

There is one title where my name should appear in the credits for the translation: Dillon's rolling western: The Last Ranger

(Available on the Nintendo eShop, for Nintendo 3DS, i think).

Going back to your question, knowing how the localization process works would be good as well

Knowing how each piece connects with the next, what are the key things the localization testers look at... all this helps in the translation process

You are more aware of possible issues in the user interface: like two strings overlapping, or longer ones not being completed displayed

Yu Cheng Chang

Do you have any academic source on localization, which covers the things you just mentioned?

What do you mean with 2 strings overlapping?

María Gómez Albiach

I'll start on question 2:

In the menu for a shooting game after the game you see a statistics screen: enemies destroyed, times you were killed, weapons you picked, and so on. If your translation for "weapons picked" is too long two things can happen, either part of it is cut halfway or it goes beyond its assigned space and it is written over the next thing.

Yu Cheng Chang

Got it, u mean that the translation choice may affect game caption display right?

María Gómez Albiach

Yes

Yu Cheng Chang

I see... Got it

María Gómez Albiach

So if you know the kind of problems localization testers usually find, as a translator you are more aware of where to be careful

If it is user interface, you want to pick the most concise expressions

Because usually you don't know how it is going to look like until it is too late and you have layout problems everywhere

Yu Cheng Chang

oh but...

Doesn't a translator have peer feedback with the game programmers?

María Gómez Albiach

Not always

I was very fortunate and for Dillon's Rolling Western we got to play the previous game (this was a sequel)

Yu Cheng Chang

So, in that case... it would be great for the translator to know how to manage the software to do some tests?

María Gómez Albiach

So we had a very clear idea of the text distribution

If you are given the choice to play the game before translating it, it's a huge plus

And yes, it is helpful to have some skill with games in order to do this

If you mean a way to generate a preview of the user interface

Yu Cheng Chang

Yes, I meant that

María Gómez Albiach

It would be helpful, but I have never seen that happen

Yu Cheng Chang

The possibility for translators to be able to generate a preview without help of programmers.

yeah that is why I chose to work on this project

María Gómez Albiach

There is probably a lot of coding involved into pulling all the content together and making a build

There is another consideration to this, sometimes while you are translating the game, the game itself is being built

Yu Cheng Chang

Well yeah that is another cons

María Gómez Albiach

And it may happen that they will alter the design and so on. I have seen that happen while we were doing the localization testing and even after completing it, one of the games I worked on was remade almost completely

Yu Cheng Chang

Wow, so you mean you had to translate it over again

María Gómez Albiach

Yes, for that one i was doing the testing only but it was a lot of work. The game was full of puns

Yu Cheng Chang

Ohhh those are very difficult!

María Gómez Albiach

And it was focused on a younger audience, so you had to keep it entertaining, but also suitable for children

Yu Cheng Chang

I see...

María Gómez Albiach

I remember on this case, most of the translations were very literal and the jokes were all lost so we suggested new translations to try and fix that (that's why it was a lot of work)

Yu Cheng Chang

Well that is what I wanted to achieve with this model of professional profile, try to give a basic-intermediate training in multimedia software management so that translators can work without being attached to rely on a programmer or designer

It must have been quite a lot of work, idiomatic translations are quite difficult, Globalized idioms or phrases are uncommon it varies a lot depending on different cultures.

María Gómez Albiach

That would be amazing but it may depend on the complexity of the game itself, and the company publishing it

María Gómez Albiach

Besides the translation aspect of games, it is important to remember the game industry makes a LOT of money, so big publishers tend to be very secretive and are spread around the world on different offices, each one taking charge of different parts

Yu Cheng Chang

Yes now with some of your answers, I think I have to modify a little bit the objectives of my paper

María Gómez Albiach

In my experience, what have worked best are two things

1- Giving access to a preview to the translator or the original game so that they can get a feel of what they are working on

2- Having an open communication with the developers or copywriters, where you can ask any doubts regarding terminology and purpose

Yu Cheng Chang

Which are the copywriters?

María Gómez Albiach

They are the original authors of the master text from which everything is translated would be the copywriters

Yu Cheng Chang

oh ok

So basically the authors/creators of the whole game.

María Gómez Albiach

So if you were to translate say... a Final Fantasy game, the copywriters or original authors would be the guys writing it up in Japanese

Yes, someone who can provide guidance regarding style and meaning Dillon's Rolling Western is full of enemies whose names are word plays so it really helped being able to contact the developers to make sure we got things right

Yu Cheng Chang

Did the developers spoke in the target languages?

María Gómez Albiach

In this case, the contact people did

Yu Cheng Chang

So as to confirm their agreement with your rendering?

María Gómez Albiach

By the way, I left a question unanswered

Yu Cheng Chang

So they did hear and agreed/disagreed on your renderings when you consulted them?

María Gómez Albiach

I don't have any academic source for this information; all of it comes from my personal experience working in the industry

Yes, if we had a doubt because the name was ambiguous, we would ask for clarification, maybe suggest a couple of translations and they would give us their feedback

Yu Cheng Chang

Oh that is nice, that kind of system make the working process easier and faster... some companies/developers/copywriters doesn't even offer any help right?

María Gómez Albiach

Yes, that is right

It also depends on the size of the game company. Some companies are more experienced than others when it comes to game developing and so on

Yu Cheng Chang

I would like to ask a few more questions I have came up with.

-what processes did your work as Q&A and as localization translator include? - which was the target language you worked with?

-how was the target text revision process carried out? Was it done by translators the worked on the text or by a separate team of revisers?

-is game globalization common? Do you know any translator that has worked on the globalization translation of a game?

María Gómez Albiach

Answering your questions

1- As Loc QA it involved reading through the translations and pointing out the bits that needed changing or, if we had the game, play it through checking all the possible strings for correction in context.

-My target language was ES-S -Revision process was never carried out by the translator, always someone different.

-Could you define globalization?

Yu Cheng Chang

Like globalizing the game ... for example one translation for all Spanish speaking countries... not applying localization depending on the dialect but just rendering it in one TT... I mean for example the games you translated must have been translated into American Spanish dialect, which is understandable for people from both north and South America

María Gómez Albiach

Actually, no, I translate into Spanish for Spain

Usually big game companies have different branches. They split between America, Europe, Asia Pacific, etc.

So they will get different localizations for each chunk of the market

In my experience, I have never worked on a game translation intended for all the Spanish speakers in the world

Yu Cheng Chang

Oh in see then I guess it isn't apply since a globalized game would have flaws in some markets and about the revisers the QA localization in this case would be the revising team? As Q&A you just test the product and check for mistakes or changes, right?

María Gómez Albiach

Yes

There are three steps, as far as I know

1-translation 2- proofreading, 3- Loc QA in context

Yu Cheng Chang

Oh, I see ok!! That's all I needed. Thank you so much for your time and for sharing your experience!

5.2 Interview with Juan Andres Perez Langarano

-¿Cómo se comenzó la iniciativa de Freaky Creations?

Freaky Creations trabaja como empresa privada desde hace 2 años y medio en las oficinas del PARCON de la Espol, pero la iniciativa se dio hace aproximadamente 7 años cuando Estefano Palacios y Jorge Blacio cursaban la secundaria en el Colegio Ecomundo, iniciaron haciendo unos pequeños juegos por hobby, y decidieron ponerle de nombre a su pequeño proyecto Freaky Creations, ahora en la universidad aproximadamente unos 5 años después, mientras cursaban las clases de emprendimiento en la Espol se les ocurrió formar una empresa y hacer juegos de verdad para venderlos y vivir de eso, casi años más tarde la empresa se ha formado y cuenta con 14 personas (9 desarrolladores, 3 músicos, una contadora y una social manager) están en rumbo a terminar su primer videojuego y lanzarse al mercado el siguiente año.

-¿Cómo consiguieron el convenio con Sony y en qué consiste?

El convenio con Sony fue conseguido con esfuerzo y suerte. La verdad es que no podríamos decirle a una persona en particular como contactarse con esa empresa y hacer un convenio de inmediato, en nuestro caso fue, muy oportuno y también gracias al trabajo duro.

El trabajo con Sony no es más que un acuerdo de Desarrollador/ Publisher, lo que esto significa es que, nosotros hacemos el juego que queremos, somos dueños del mismo, y Sony nos deja vender nuestro juego en su plataforma (PS4, PS Vita) a cambio de un porcentaje de regalías por la venta de cada unidad del juego, es así como se manejan la mayoría de acuerdos en este negocio, en nuestro caso, somos una empresa independiente, por lo tanto nos manejamos y pagamos nosotros mismos, Sony tiene programas para empresas pequeñas y nos ayudan con ciertos equipos para desarrollo que nos serían imposibles de conseguir a cambio de que hagamos bien el juego y que ayudemos a promocionar la idea de Sony de desarrolladores latinoamericanos, que no hay muchos.

-¿El ingreso a este grupo es limitado, restringido o abierto?

Por ahora solo se conseguiría a alguien si es necesario, o para algo muy en particular. El grupo se maneja bajo ciertas perspectivas y filosofías de trabajo, que nos ha costado como grupo mucho tiempo trabajar, contratar a alguien nos tomaría mucho tiempo entrenar, así que por ahora nosotros llamamos cuando necesitamos a alguien para alguna tarea en particular.

-¿Cuáles son los requisitos para una persona para ingresar a Freaky Creations?

Por la respuesta anterior no hay requisitos “Oficiales”, dependen de que se necesite, pero mayormente la empresa exige trabajo duro y mucha concentración , ya que la mayoría de tiempo es trabajo creativo, también se exige conocimientos muy avanzados en la rama a emprender, puesto que el desarrollo de videojuegos es casi inexistente en el país hemos tenido que aprender por nuestra cuenta por muchos años, la persona que ingrese tiene que saber y haber leído mucho más de lo que dan en las universidades de aquí.

-¿Cómo dividen sus proyectos entre los miembros dentro de Freaky Creations?

Por ahora solo estamos trabajando en un proyecto, el videojuego “To Leave”

-Aparte del juego “To Leave” ¿Cuántos proyectos más tienen por concretarse próximamente?

Hay varios proyectos en nuestra agenda, algunos medio empezados, otros solo son ideas, pero es seguro, To Leave es solo nuestro primer juego.

No estoy seguro pero creo que hay alrededor de 5 o 6 proyectos en muy tempranas fases de pre-producción

-¿Su juego “To Leave” está en ingles, tienen una versión en español?

Se traducirá al español, francés, alemán (italiano—posiblemente). Y también se traducirá al Japonés siempre y cuando un pequeño acuerdo con un distribuidor en Japón se dé (hemos estado en contacto y está en aun por concretar).

-¿Tienen traductores para sus juegos, o los encargados de diseñar los juegos son aquellos que crean el contenido en ingles y otros idiomas en las que el juego estará disponible?

Estamos en contacto con una empresa de EE.UU que realiza este tipo de traducciones para juegos pequeños como el nuestro, ya que las empresas traductoras cobran por palabra, encontrar la empresa correcta y que tenga experiencia es un poco difícil, en Estados Unidos hay algunas.

-¿Creen que sería una ventaja que haya un convenio entre universidades para que estudiantes traductores de otras universidades puedan trabajar en conjunto con sus programadores en el desarrollo de video juegos?

No estoy muy seguro acerca de eso, depende del juego creo, nuestro juego como por ejemplo tiene mucho texto, ya que quiere contar una historia muy compleja, pero hay juegos que no tienen nada de texto, y el trabajo de un traductor sería casi nulo (El juego Journey de Playstation es un buen ejemplo).

-¿Qué les parece la idea de capacitar traductores en procesos de multimedia, en este caso los traductores serían capaces de aportar en procesos básicos como convertir texto o audio en formatos de archivos compatibles para los juegos? Así de esta manera aportaría quitando cargas para los programadores y mejorar el flujo de trabajo dentro de la empresa.

Eso se da en empresas que realizan este tipo de trabajos, nunca había pensado en eso dentro de una empresa. Podría resultar, pero como me referí anteriormente depende de la empresa y el juego en particular, el videojuego es una experiencia particularmente diferente una de otra, pero si, juegos del tipo "RPG" o "Visual Novel", se beneficiarían fuertemente de este tipo de capacitación ya que son el tipo de juego en que la historia y la lectura son mucho más fuertes, y se conocen muchos casos de juegos con muy mala traducción (se le dice Localización en el medio), un ejemplo un poco famoso es el juego Final Fantasy 7, que tenía líneas que parecían traducidas por Google, y otras bien escritas y ejemplos de lo contrario como Chrono Cross donde uno de los traductores del equipo de localización escribió un pequeño programa para ponerle un acento idiomático a cada personaje sin importar que diga.

-¿Aparte de ustedes, hay alguna otra empresa que se dedique a la industria de video juegos en Ecuador?

Si, conocemos de otras 3: Karibugames, Blue Lizard... ciertamente no recuerdo la tercera pero esas dos son las empresas que conocemos, sin embargo, estas empresas se dedican a hacer mayormente adver-games, que son juegos hechos para clientes con el claro propósito de vender algún producto, para nosotros los juegos son arte, para ellos son productos (no nos parece malo, solo son distintos modelos de negocio).



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