

Romania Ntoti

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Analysis

Video games, especially RPG, have evolved to be super detailed in story and content. when it comes to getting them to be playable around the world, they go through the process of localization which involves adjusting the content including the language, to make the experience of playing the game enjoyable and allow the player to immerse themselves. But there are times when it comes to localization that unfortunately can cause the game to not translate well due to a multitude of different (things). When looking at these games all are RPG games that were created at different times, one in 1993, the other in 2006, and for Pokémon series games created between 1996-2024. These games have an extensive and immersive story that involves the player taking on the role of the protagonist and interacting directly with NPCs that have dialogue and talk back to them, cutscenes, and other content that _____. I picked these games because of that reason to find numerous examples of _____ and to show if there is an overall progression of improvement in the localization and translation, or if there is a lack there of.

Native language to The World

To start the analysis, I looked at the language hegemony that is present when making these games and localizing them. These games are all made and developed in Japan. This is important to note because when it comes to these games there is an aspect of language present in

them when going from Japanese to the translated language. To start, these games were limited in what language they could be played in. Seeker of Mana was translated only into first Japanese and Korean, and later was translated into English, and after into French and German which was considered the “European Localization version.” The Pokémon series is an interesting case as originally (NEED TO EXPLORE MORE APPARENTLY GAMES WERE MADE SEPERATLY BUT UNTIL X AND Y IT WASN’T ALL LANGAUAGES ON ONE CARTIDGES TRANSLATORS FEEDBACK AVAILBLE). Mother 3 contradicts all the other games and is one of many examples of video games that do not make it out of their home country so is only technically available in one language: Japanese. The ways people got to play it outside of Japan was because it was made into a fan translation through a ROM image (EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS) by Reid Young (Explain who Reid Young is and the fan project to localize Mother 3 because Nintendo was not going to do it).

When it comes to video games and most media they start in their native language and proceed to go through the localization process. When it gets to Translation is where the process either fails or stalls preventing the game from being released around the world at the same time compared to now when games are released all at once with the option to just select a language. It is seen that languages chosen to be translated though have a process but at the same time show preference. The languages are generalized a lot despite there being different dialects. For example, there are dialects of Spanish and not just “Spain Spanish”, or that there are dialects of French and not just “French France”. (EXPLAIN THE CONCEPTS OF LANGUAGE HEDGEMENTY AND HOW THIS AFFECTS GAMEPLAY) This affects gameplay especially in the game as some of the original languages are “not respected” or have a “stigma” attached to them. (INSTERT EXAMPLES HERE) (INSERT DISCUSSION OF HOW SOME GAMES

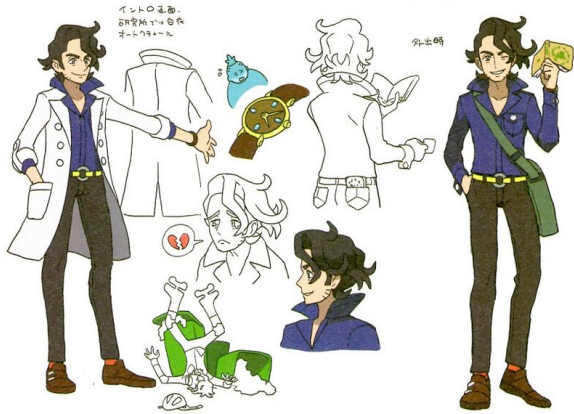
JUST RELEASE THE ENGLISH VERSION GLOBALLY, BECAUSE ENGLISH IS BECOMING THE NORM LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD) The players experiences do show change with (HOW THIS CHANGES THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PLAYER).

Japan and global perception

One may notice all these games are Japanese RPG, or Japan made. This is because like the U.S. Japan is a mass contributor to entertainment media that is viewed around the world. Japan creates a lot of entertainment content making it one of the global leaders of entertainment including dramas and cartoons (aka anime), movies, music, and of course video games. Interestingly enough the games that are produced in Japan are mainly RPG games compared to America who produces shooter games. This alone shows a difference in culture, but amongst this difference comes a cost. These games were selected because they don't take place in a setting of Japan. By not taking place in a setting of Japan, Japanese creators create a disconnect from the game that allows them to be able to create a narrative of an area (something about they change the Japanese to match the language or something on that line). In these selected games, the story doesn't take place in "Japan" even in a fantasy setting except for in a couple of cases. Mother 3 being part of a series actually takes place in a distant future United states as stated in the first game of the series, despite not being a connected game series, they always reiterate in the game that this is taking place in a future united states (late 20th century). (INSERT SECRET OF MANA). Pokémon is the main example of this, as per its series, the main games are always based on a real region in the world. The first four main games (LIST THE GAMES?) take place in a fantasy version of different locations in Japan but after that the next regions (name the regions) are based off respectively, New York City in the U.S. , The region of France, The Hawaii islands in the U.S., The United Kingdom, and the Iberian Peninsula especially Spain and

Portugal. This impacts how the game is translated from their Japanese origin to the other languages. (INSERT KEY EXAMPLES IN EACH ONE OF THE GAMES OF THE TRASLATION OF SHOWING THAT THIS IS IN THE GAMES)

When players are taken to these fantasy worlds and realize that their based off real location they start doing things that make the games fun to play. For example, these game lack voice acting so players when realize where its located they make the accents and create voices for the characters that mirror where they are from (EXAMPLES OF THIS SEEN IN THE GAME COMMUNITY: MOTHER GIVES SOME CHARECTERS TEXAN ACCENTS BECAUSE THEY WEAR CERTAIN CLOSE, POKEMON CREATE ACCENTS, SEEKER OF MANA BLAH BLAH BLAH) Player then get the agency not only to create a way to interact with the game, but add to their experience as they feel like they're exploring a different variation of a place they know, or have never visited. On top of that it creates an interesting story as when it comes to games like Mother 3 and Pokémon main series games, they include lore and cultural references that are either translated or left alone to insiguate that the game is taking place in that fantasy world that they have created for the player to explore. They even include it in the dialogue THAT THEY LEAVE UNTRANSLATED ON PURPOSE. When first playing Pokémon X and Y, the player is greeted with Professor Sycamore (play on Pokémon professors) who talks with the player in whatever language they have selected the game to be in (is made post black and white the first games that allowed 1 cartridge multiple language function) uses French phrases but also behaves like a stereotypical French guy that is perceived around the world. (INSERT SCREEN SHOTS OR SHOULD I DO QUOTES: IM PUTTING QUOTES FOR NOW)



like you cant tell me this man isn't French (explain

why his dialogue makes you think French and look attach blah blah blah, this is his official art)

(When naming yourself at the beginning of the game)

"Oho, I see. Would you tell me your name?"

"So, it's <player>, then? Did I get that right?"

Yes: "<player>... *Très bien!* What a fantastic name!"

Uses the line depending on how many Pokémon have been seen in the Central Kalos Pokédex.

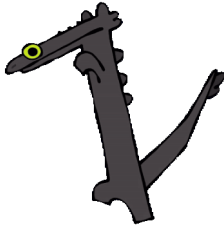
"Well now, you *DO* have a **certain je ne sais quoi!** I have a good feeling about you! At first, I was thinking of choosing only one child from a town when I was deciding who to give a Pokémon to. In Vaniville Town, it was going to be the child of a Veteran Trainer I know. About then, I learned that the [Rhyhorn](#) racer [Grace](#) and her son/daughter were moving here. Here in the Kalos region, you're far away from everything you used to know... That really hit me right here... Then it hit me--I should give you a Pokémon and have you travel around Kalos!"

Problems with Translation during Localization

Translation is one, if not, the most crucial step when it comes to localization. The task of translation is multifaceted and includes adapting not just the content of the game but any cultural references in dialogue, titles, text, cutscenes, and other aspects of the game. Poor translation ruins the game's interaction with the play and that can be seen within these games and their process of translation.

Example in each game that show flaws in translation how it affects the game original.

Remake, Remake, Remakes.



IM WORKING ON THIS BOTH IN ANALYSIS AND LITERATURE REVIEW ENJOY
DANCING TOOTHLESS INSTEAD

Fan Translation and Game Culture

Mother 3 as said was never released outside of Japan, thus the only ways to play and experience the game was to either sit there with a dictionary and translate as you play or learn Japanese. Two tedious tasks for many, though beneficial to their skills, tedious things like this are not ideal when it comes to video games that are supposed to easy access. If there are no Professional Localization efforts made by the big companies, such as Nintendo or Square Enix, fans take it upon themselves to create translations. Mother 3, Secret of Mana, and Pokémon have all experienced the such. Fan translations are actually more common than what many think due to ROM imaging. (Take definition from ROM PAPER I REALLY DON'T WANT TO TYPE THIS) ROM is an acronym for Read Only Memory, which is the part of the chip that video games are stored on. through a rom burner or a reading device, digital copies of hardware games can copied and made free to download online. This allows people to emulate games. Video game Emulators are software programs that run ROM images on phones and computers. They imitate the functionality of a console and allow people to play the games for free. There are emulators available for every system there is, and all original Pokémon games are accessible online for free

through multiple sources from ROM websites to Google file downloads. On top of these images, the fan hacks are available for download as well. They can be found on game forums, google files, Reddit, original websites, and third-party sellers. People who get these ROMS then can access the information on them including the text and dialogue, and translate them themselves. Before using these to play games without buying them, fans got ROMS to translate games into languages that they weren't available in.

Attitudes toward the game

(COUNTER???)

(I have no idea what I am doing I am going to a game jam instead lol)