



The Study of the Subtitling Analysis of Police Pursuit Terms in a Video Game (Need for Speed: Most Wanted) Xbox 360 Subtitle from English into Arabic

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دراسة تحليل ترجمة مصطلحات مطاردات الشرطة في لعبة الفيديو
(الحاجة الى السرعة: الاخطر) نسخة اكس بوكس ٣٦٠ من الانكليزية الى العربية

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Abstract

Video game localization is one of the subfields of audiovisual translation. It is a worthwhile area to research due to its importance in the lives of millions of youth. The current study is about analyzing the Arabic subtitle of the English video game "Need for Speed: The Most Wanted" on the Xbox 360 version. It is concerned with the police pursuit terms. The study is based on the following subtitling models, which are presented respectively in Pederson (2005), Gottlieb (1992), Tomaszewicz (1993) and Obiorah (2023). The researcher selects particular strategies from each model presented above to build up the eclectic model of his own study. The study raises the following question: does the Arabic subtitle of the English police pursuit terms of the video game mentioned above convey the meaning of the English police pursuit terms clearly? The results of the analysis answered the question raised by the study.

Keywords: Video Game Localization, Need for Speed: The Most Wanted, Police Pursuit Terms, Subtitle.

المستخلص

تعد ترجمة ألعاب الفيديو إحدى المجالات الفرعية للترجمة السمعية والمرئية. إنه مجال جدير بالبحث فيه نظراً لأهميته في حياة الملايين من الشباب. تدور الدراسة الحالية حول تحليل ترجمة الحاشية التلفزيونية العربية للعبة الفيديو الانجليزية "Need for Speed: The Most Wanted" على نسخة Xbox 360. وتعنى بتحليل مصطلحات مطاردات الشرطة. وتعتمد الدراسة على البات الترجمة الآتية المذكورة في ادناه: بيدرسون (٢٠٠٥) وغوتليب (١٩٩٢) وتوماسزكيويتز (١٩٩٣)، اوبياروه (٢٠٢٣). واختار الباحث استراتيجيات معينة من كل البات ذكرت في أعلاه لبناء البية التحليل الانتقائي لتحليل عينات الدراسة الحالية، وتطرح الدراسة السؤال الآتي: هل الحاشية التلفزيونية العربية لمصطلحات مطاردات الشرطة للعبة الفيديو الانجليزية المذكورة في اعلاه نقلت المعنى المناسب لمصطلحات مطاردات الشرطة الانكليزية؟. وقد أجابت نتائج التحليل على السؤال الذي طرحه البحث. الكلمات الرئيسية: ترجمة ألعاب الفيديو ولعبة الحاجة الى السرعة: الاخطر ومصطلحات مطاردات الشرطة والحاشية التلفزيونية.

1. Introduction

Video game localization is one of the most highlighted topics in the area of audiovisual translation, where the younger generation is after catching up with different games used on different consoles. It is worth noting that the vast majority of video games are produced in the United States and Japan, and they are mostly presented to gamers in English. However, there are many video games produced with more than one language option to meet the needs of users from different communities around the world and to maximize profits as well. Bilingual or multilingual video games are worth researching from a localization standpoint to highlight the way they are rendered from SL into TL and how far they are successful in TL on the basis of certain adopted strategies. The study presents the most recently published studies in the literature review to learn more details from previous studies, including the definition of video game localization and the history of video game localization in the Arab World.

As for the methodology, the researcher selects a multilingual video game titled “Need for Speed: The Most Wanted” due to its popularity in the Arab World on one hand. On the other hand, many gamers played this video game online and expressed their vantage points regarding its production. The study is confined to analyzing the Arabic subtitle of English police pursuit terms because it is represented as the focal point of the video game. The study counts on different subtitling models, which are highlighted as follows: Pederson (2005), Gottlieb (1992), and Tomaszewicz (1993) to create the eclectic model of analysis. Then, the researcher applies the eclectic model to the samples selected for analysis to see how successful they are in the TL.

2. Literature review

Video game localization studies are a new field of research affiliated with audiovisual translation studies (AVT). Besides, some research was carried out in this area. Therefore, the researcher selected one of the newly published papers in this regard. It is titled "*Issues in Arabic video game localization: A descriptive study*" by "*Mohammed Al-Batineh*" a faculty member at "*Yarmouk University, Jordan*". It is worth noting that his paper, whose title is mentioned above, was published in 2021 by "*The International Journal for Translation and Interpreting Research*". It attempts to find out an answer for real issues associated with video games localized into Arabic via analyzing the localization of several video games and also highlighting the following issues within the process of analysis: cultural, linguistic, and technical issues. As for technical issues, they are attributed to the Arabic text, video game variables, and subtitling rules, while linguistic issues are concerned with the terms used in Arabic video games, not to mention acronyms and proper names' titles translation into Arabic. Moreover, it discusses cultural challenges that appear within the process of localization. For instance, nudity, profanity, and alcohol problems. Speaking of conclusions, the researcher arrived at the following: more research in the field of Arabic video game localization is needed not only to shed light on the aforementioned problems but also to establish a body of literature that could support practitioners as well as video game developers in providing a reliable gaming experience for Arab gamers (Al-Batineh, 2021).

It is understood that this area is a new field, and the researcher of the current study tries to address the linguistic issues (police pursuit terms) in English-Arabic versions of *Need for Speed: Most Wanted* Xbox 360 version because this topic has not been trodden before. On top of that, he aims to learn about how far localizers are successful in rendering the police pursuit terms into Arabic on the linguistic and technical levels.

3. Background

All video gamers have a crystal-clear view point towards video games currently, though such products are seen in various shapes, not to mention their names. However, describing the aforementioned products when it comes to their semiotic nature as well as from a translation vantage point is not a piece of cake. This is why video games should be defined at the beginning in terms of their nature, which is the product of the combination of television and computing technologies. Besides, the term video game represents spontaneous activity done by gamers during playing different games because the name has two essential parts: video, which means "media" and game, which refers to "human spontaneous intention". It is worth mentioning that the ultimate goal behind the use of video games by children, youngsters, and even adults is entertainment (Bernal-Merino 2015). Moreover, Frasca defines the video game as "any form of computer-based entertainment software, either textual or image-based, using any electronic platform such as personal computers or consoles and involving one or multiple players in a physical or networked environment" (2001, 4). Speaking of "The Localization Industry Standards Association" (*LISA*), the researcher found out the term localization is defined by the association in question as: "Localization involves taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale

(country, region, and language) where it will be used and sold." It is worth mentioning that several publishers refer to the term mentioned above as an important component in the process of developing a product. It means that there are particular cases where special country-specific software product releases are described as *localizations*. Moreover, projects with reference to localization embrace some steps, which are highlighted below:

- "Software management."
- "Translation and engineering of software"
- "Translation, engineering, and testing of online help or web content"
- "Translation and desktop publishing (DTP) of documentation"
- "Translation and assembling of multimedia or computer-based training components"
- "Functionality testing of localized software or web applications" (Esselink, 2000, P.3)

The vast majority of website applications and software programs are developed in the United States of America. This is why nearly 80% of the above-mentioned products are localized from English into other languages. On top of that, software producers based in countries other than the United States either make use of the English language during the process of the development of their own products or have such products localized into the English language at the beginning. Afterward, they employ this version as a foundation for further localization. It is understood that a product that has been perfectly localized helps its users interact with its software application in their mother tongue. Furthermore, they have to be capable of reading all components found in the interface, like screen tips or even error

messages, in their mother tongue and provide the software program in question with all information required via the local keyboard layout (P. 4). Speaking of the history of the video game localization in the Arab world:

“*Sakhr Software Company* ventured into Arabic localization back in the ‘80s. As a result, they developed the current Arabic keyboard and localized many games into Arabic. However, Sakhr's involvement in videogames was sadly discontinued in the mid-90s.”

Captain Tsubasa Vol. II (1990), an RPG-style football (soccer) game on the Famicom, was completely localized to Arabic. The localization was not a mere menu translation; the entire game and its plot were converted for the Arabic audience. *Captain Tsubasa Vol. II* is considered one of the most beloved video games in the region. Despite this success, localization efforts in the region stalled, largely due to soaring piracy. It took another 14 years for a major localization effort to get off the ground. Sony released an Arabic version of *This Is Football 2004*; it featured localized menus, commentary, and even regional clubs. The game was a success in Saudi Arabia, the main region it targeted. However, that success didn't come without some trouble. The game was released in PAL format, even though gaming enthusiasts in the region tended to use unofficially acquired NTSC consoles.

They did this because games were typically released *first* in countries like the US or Japan (which were NTSC regions). However, the success of *This Is Football 2004* prompted companies like EA and Konami to follow suit by localizing their

own football games. There were various other attempts to localize games for the region in subsequent years. For example, THQ published *Wall-E* in 2008; it was based on Pixar's animated film of the same name. It was also the first action-adventure game by a western publisher to be completely localized in Arabic. Sadly, it was commercially unsuccessful. This is partly because it didn't target hardcore gamers and also because it was marketed in Saudi Arabia, a country without *any* movie theaters in 2008. More and more games saw localization after *WALL-E*. *Uncharted 4*, *Detroit: Become Human*, and *Horizon Zero Dawn* are prominent examples. The scope of the regional changes was significant (menus, subtitles, and even voiceovers were all localized). And in the last four years, Ubisoft has released all of their triple-A titles (excluding *South Park* and *Mario + Rabbids*) with some sort of Arabic localization. In fact, Ubisoft is the only western publisher with local offices in the region. *Rainbow Six Siege* was localized in Arabic post-launch, too (a full three years after its original launch) (AO, 2020).

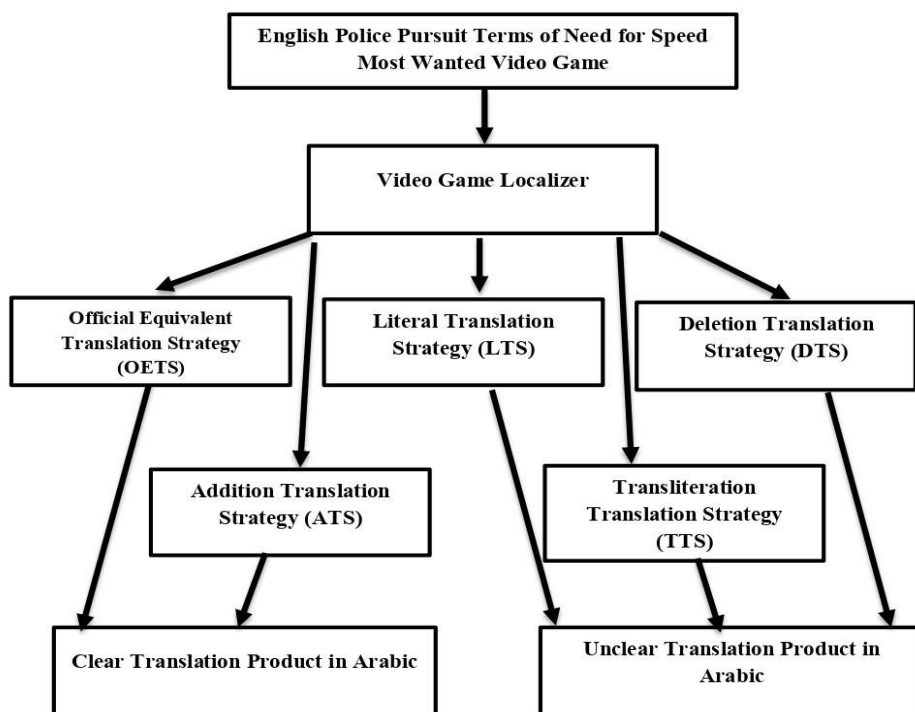
4. Methodology

Five translation strategies are used in building up the eclectic model of analysis. They are taken from the strategies of three different scholars in the field of translation studies (TS). They are presented respectively in Pederson (2005), Gottlieb (1992), and Tomaszewicz (1993). As for the first translation strategy, it is the Official Equivalent Strategy: it is a process of choosing the perfect choice off the SL term into the TL., which is taken from Pederson. The second one is the deletion strategy, which is about removing a particular term from the SL text in the TL version. This is done by the localizer for a number of reasons, including a lack of equivalent terms in the TL, the localizer's

inexperience, or a mistake made by the localizer, which is based on Gottlieb. And the third strategy is the Literal Translation Strategy, which is the process of matching the SL term with the TL equivalent on the linguistic level, as described by Tomaszewicz. Speaking of addition strategy, the researcher made use of strategies proposed by Pederson: it is the process of adding certain terms to the TL product to clarify the translation to the audience. Finally, the transliteration strategy is a way of using the TL letters to describe the SL term (Obiorah, 2023).

These strategies combined are employed to analyze English-Arabic police pursuit terms in the Xbox 360 video game Need for Speed: The Most Wanted. The following figure explains the eclectic model of analysis.

Figure 1: *Eclectic Model of Analysis of English Police Pursuit Terms of Need for Speed: The Most Wanted Video Game into Arabic*



7. Data Collection

The English and Arabic Police Pursuit Terms of the Xbox 360 video game titled (Need for Speed: The Most Wanted) are selected for reasons of analyzing the way the video game localizer renders the abovementioned terms and the type of strategies used. The following table highlights the English as well as the Arabic police pursuit terms of the selected video game.

Table 1: English-Arabic Police Pursuit Terms

No.	Police Pursuit Terms in English Subtitle	Police Pursuit Terms in Arabic Subtitle
1	Dispatch, a hit and run just took out my unit. I am unable to pursue	الى جميع الوحدات. يعلن الضابط انه وحدته خرجت من الخدمة. على جميع الوحدات الاستجابة. حول.
2	Heat level increased	ارتفع مستوى الضغط
3	Shunt takedown	تخطيط بمنورة الدفع
4	Entered Cooldown	دخلت الان منطقة الامان
5	Roadblock	حاجز الطريق
6	T-Bone Takedown	تخطيط بصدمة عرضية
7	Head on Takedown	تخطيط عن طريق الصدم
8	Dispatch, request for Rhinos, over.	ارسال، نحتاج دعما اضافيا، هل توجد وحدات Rhinos متاحة؟
9	Taken Down	تخطمت السيارة
10	Dispatch, escalate, escalate, give us everything you've got	ارسال. انا احتاج الى تعزيزات. مطلوب دعم.
11	Heat Level Decreased	انخفض مستوى الضغط
12	Traffic Take Down	تخطيط سيارة شرطة المرور
13	Dispatch, we're running out of options, we've got to get support to end this.	ارسال، سنتفد كل خياراتنا، يجب الحصول على دعم لانهاء ذلك.
14	Advise on current.	ابلق عن المستجدات.
15	All units, spike strip deployed.	الى جميع الوحدات، يسمح باستخدام اشربة المسامير الثاقبة، حول.
16	Advise on update	ابلق عن التحديثات.

17	All units in the vicinity, begin search of pursuit perimeter, over.	على جميع الوحدات المتواجدة في محيط المطاردة البدء في البحث الدقيق في كل الشوارع. والابلاغ عن اية ملاحظات. حول.
18	Back up required on Code 3. We're not going to get this guy without back up. We require back up.	ارسل الدعم. اكرر. ارسل الدعم
19	I have the suspect, reengaging.	تم تحديد مكان المشتبه به من جديد. سنحتاج الى دعم لنستطيع الامساك به.
20	Interceptor en route.	نطلب وحدات اعتراض، عاجل، عاجل.
21	Dispatch, SUV units requested, we've got to get something that will stop this guy.	ارسال. مطلوب وحدات SUV. يجب امدادنا بوحدات كي نتمكن من ايقاف هذا الشخص
22	All units, Duty is assigning additional backup. All non-priority calls are being cleared to free additional units. Will advise on ETA, over.	حسنا. يتم تعيين كل الوحدات في المهام غير الضرورية. سنبلغ وحدات الاعتراض. حول.

5. Data Analysis

The following is divided into two sub-sections, the strategies and discussion.

5.1. Strategies Used by Localizer

The following highlights types of strategies employed by the localizer in rendering police English pursuit terms into Arabic.

Table 2: Strategies Used by the Localizer

No.	Translation Strategies Used with Each Sample	No.	Translation Strategies Used with Each Sample
1	DTS	12	LTS+ OETS
2	OETS	13	OETS
3	OETS	14	OETS
4	OETS	15	OETS
5	OETS	16	OETS
6	OETS	17	OETS
7	OETS	18	LTS
8	LTS+ DTS+ TTS	19	ATS+ DTS
9	OETS	20	OETS+ LTS
10	LTS+ ATS	21	LTS+ TTS
11	OETS	22	DTS+ LTS

6.2. Discussion

The video game localizer made use of different translation strategies in transferring the meaning of the English police pursuit terms in *Need for Speed: The Most Wanted* video game into Arabic. The localizer rendered all the abovementioned 22 samples in different ways. He applied one translation strategy in many cases, a couplet translation strategy in some cases, and a triplet one in a few cases. As for the first way, he adopted it in translating 15 samples out of 22. He used 68.18%. The study found that 13 out of 15 samples were successfully rendered into Arabic because the localizer resorted to the OETS strategy in the process of subtitling. It is understood that the most commonly employed strategy is OETS. The couplet strategy employed by the video game localizer in the process of subtitling the English police pursuit terms into Arabic is as follows: It is 6 times out of 22. Its rate is 27.27%. Speaking of its function, the study revealed that 3 out of 6 couplet translation strategies failed to convey the suitable meaning of the English police pursuit terms into Arabic in one way or another. It

means that even if the localizer made use of one suitable strategy, the other ones associated with the former led to the failure of the meaning in the target language. While the last approach adopted by the localizer was the triplet translation strategy, it was only employed once. Also, it led to a failure in the target product because all the three translation strategies combined in the triplet approach contributed to making the TL product unclear. DTS was used four times in the single and couplet approaches, and its function produced an unclear product because some fragments of meaning were omitted in the TL. LTS was adopted by the localizer in the single, couplet, and triplet approaches seven times. Speaking of its function, the researcher found out that LTS stands for literal translation. However, it led to an acceptable product with a single approach.

This means the literal translation used in rendering English police pursuit terms into Arabic in the Need for Speed video: The Most Wanted video game was appropriate for the single-strategy approach. TTS was used by the localizer only twice. Its rate is 9%. Speaking of ATS, the researcher found out that it was employed twice in the couplet approach. One of the options was successful, and the other one led to failure because it was associated with a strategy of deletion. Its rate is only 9%.

Conclusions

The study arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The English police pursuit terms meanings in the Arabic subtitle of *The Need for Speed: The Most Wanted* were mostly rendered successfully.
2. The localizer adopted three different translation approaches: single, couplet, and triplet translation strategies.
3. The most commonly employed translation strategy used by the localizer is OETS. It contributed to rendering the meaning of English police pursuit terms into Arabic appropriately.
4. The least-used strategies are ATS and TTS. As for the former, it transferred the meaning of the police pursuit terms in a suitable way. Whereas, the latter failed to convey the terms in Arabic clearly.
5. Some couplet translation approaches were successful, and others were failures because they were associated with translation strategies that made the meaning unclear in the TL.
6. The triplet translation was employed once only, and it led to a failure in the meaning of the terms in the TL.
7. The LTS has a great impact on the process of translating the terms in the TL. because it conveys the meaning clearly into Arabic.

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