

**THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF TRANSLATING ENGLISH VIDEO GAME TEXTS INTO UZBEK****Akhtamova Sevinchbonu Qamariddin kizi**

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**Abstract:** The rapid development of the global video game industry has created an increasing demand for high-quality localization, including translation into less-resourced languages such as Uzbek. This study explores both theoretical and practical aspects of translating English video game texts into Uzbek. It examines linguistic, cultural, and technical challenges and proposes effective strategies for overcoming them. Using qualitative analysis of selected game texts and translation examples, the research highlights the importance of cultural adaptation, functional equivalence, and user experience in game localization. The findings suggest that successful translation requires not only linguistic competence but also familiarity with gaming culture and technical constraints.

**Keywords:** video game localization, translation strategies, Uzbek language, audiovisual translation, cultural adaptation.

**Introduction**

The video game industry has become one of the largest sectors of global entertainment, surpassing film and music industries in revenue (Newzoo, 2023). With millions of players worldwide, game developers increasingly aim to localize their products for diverse linguistic and cultural audiences. Localization goes beyond simple translation; it involves adapting content to meet the expectations and norms of the target culture (Esselink, 2000).

In Uzbekistan, the gaming community has grown significantly in recent years, yet the availability of Uzbek-language game content remains limited. Translating English video game texts into Uzbek presents unique challenges due to linguistic differences, cultural nuances, and technical constraints that affect both the process and the final quality of localization. Against this background, the present study seeks to analyze the main theoretical frameworks relevant to game translation, particularly those that address meaning, function, and user experience. In addition, it aims to identify the practical challenges encountered when translating video game texts into Uzbek, including issues related to terminology, structure, and cultural adaptation. Furthermore, the study proposes strategies to improve translation quality and enhance the overall user experience for Uzbek-speaking players. By addressing both theoretical and practical dimensions, the research contributes to the development of more effective localization practices in the Uzbek context.

The translation of video games is commonly examined within the broader fields of audiovisual translation (AVT) and localization studies, where scholars emphasize its multidimensional nature. According to O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), game localization involves not only the translation of dialogue but also menus, instructions, subtitles, and various cultural references embedded in the game environment. Several theoretical frameworks are particularly relevant to this process, including dynamic equivalence (Nida, 1964), which prioritizes conveying meaning over form, and Skopos theory (Vermeer, 1989), which focuses on the purpose and function of the translation. In addition, functionalist approaches highlight the

importance of user experience and the overall functionality of the translated product. These theories are crucial in video game translation, where maintaining player immersion is a primary objective. Furthermore, Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006) describe game localization as a form of "transcreation," combining translation with creative writing, while Bernal-Merino (2015) underscores the significance of cultural adaptation in enhancing player engagement. In the context of Uzbek translation studies, research has largely focused on literary and technical texts, with relatively little attention given to digital media and game localization. This gap highlights the need for further investigation into the translation of video game texts within the Uzbek linguistic and cultural framework.

### **Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research approach, focusing on the analysis of selected English video game texts. The data consists of various types of in-game content, including dialogue lines, user interface (UI) elements, and in-game instructions, all of which play a crucial role in shaping the player's experience. The examples were drawn from popular game genres such as role-playing games (RPGs), action games, and simulation games in order to ensure diversity and representativeness. The data analysis concentrates on several key aspects, including lexical choices, syntactic structures, cultural references, and translation strategies used in the localization process. A comparative analysis was conducted between the original English texts and their Uzbek translations to identify patterns, challenges, and effective solutions. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of both theoretical and practical issues in translating video game content into Uzbek.

### **Results and analysis**

The analysis revealed several key challenges and patterns in translating video game texts into Uzbek, particularly in terms of linguistic differences between the two languages. English and Uzbek differ significantly in their grammatical structures, as English typically follows a relatively fixed subject- verb- object (SVO) word order, whereas Uzbek generally uses a subject-object - verb (SOV) structure with greater flexibility. This structural variation requires translators to reorganize sentence elements to produce natural and grammatically correct Uzbek translations. For example, the English instruction "Press the button to continue" is translated into Uzbek as "Davom etish uchun tugmani bosing," where the purpose clause precedes the verb, reflecting Uzbek syntactic norms. Such differences demonstrate that translation is not a direct word-for-word process but rather an adaptive procedure that ensures clarity, fluency, and usability for the target audience.

Another major challenge in translating video game texts into Uzbek is the lack of direct equivalents for many gaming terms. As a result, translators often need to select approximate lexical matches or adapt existing Uzbek words to convey the intended meaning. For instance, commonly used terms such as "level," "quest," and "achievement" are typically translated as "daraja," "topshiriq," and "yutuq" respectively, although these equivalents may not always capture the full nuance of the original terms. In certain cases, borrowing from English is preferred, especially when the term is widely recognized among players. A good example is the word "boss," which is sometimes used directly in Uzbek or alternatively translated as "asosiy dushman" to provide clearer meaning. These variations highlight the ongoing need for standardization in Uzbek gaming terminology to ensure consistency and better comprehension among users.

Cultural adaptation is an essential aspect of translating video game texts, as cultural references often require modification to be meaningful for the target audience. Idiomatic expressions and humor, in particular, are difficult to translate directly because their meanings are deeply rooted in the source culture. A literal translation may confuse players or fail to convey the intended emotional effect. For example, the English expression "Break a leg!" cannot be translated word-for-word into Uzbek, as it would lose its idiomatic meaning and sound unnatural. Instead, it requires adaptation into an equivalent Uzbek expression that conveys encouragement

or good luck. This process ensures that the translated content remains engaging, culturally appropriate, and easily understood by Uzbek players.

Technical constraints play a significant role in the translation of video game texts and often influence the final form of the translated content. Translators must work within limitations such as character limits, which restrict the length of text that can appear on screen, as well as the need for synchronization with audio, especially in voice-acted games. In addition, interface restrictions, including button sizes, menus, and screen layouts, require translations to fit neatly within predefined spaces. These factors frequently compel translators to shorten, simplify, or restructure sentences while still preserving the original meaning. As a result, the translation process becomes not only a linguistic task but also a technical one that demands precision and adaptability.

### **Discussion**

The findings highlight the importance of combining theoretical knowledge with practical skills. The application of translation theories plays a fundamental role in the effective localization of video game texts. Among these, dynamic equivalence is particularly valuable, as it focuses on preserving the intended meaning rather than the exact wording of the source text. This approach allows translators to produce more natural and engaging Uzbek translations that resonate with players. At the same time, Skopos theory emphasizes the purpose of the translation, ensuring that the final product aligns with the expectations and experiences of the target audience. In video game contexts, this often means prioritizing playability, clarity, and immersion over literal accuracy. Therefore, combining these theoretical approaches enables translators to achieve both functional and culturally appropriate outcomes.

Cultural localization is a key component of successful video game translation, as it directly affects player engagement and immersion. Literal translation often fails to convey humor, idiomatic expressions, or culturally specific references, which can lead to confusion or loss of interest among players. Instead, translators must adapt the content in a way that reflects the cultural norms and expectations of Uzbek audiences. This may involve modifying jokes, references, or even character names to make them more relatable. Effective cultural adaptation ensures that the game feels natural and enjoyable rather than foreign or awkward. Ultimately, localization enhances the emotional connection between the player and the game world.

The competence of the translator is a critical factor in the quality of video game localization. A successful game translator must possess strong linguistic proficiency in both the source and target languages to ensure accuracy and fluency. In addition, cultural awareness is essential for adapting content appropriately and avoiding misunderstandings. Familiarity with gaming terminology also plays a significant role, as it allows translators to use consistent and widely accepted terms. Technical skills are equally important, especially when dealing with software constraints, character limits, and formatting issues. Altogether, these competencies enable translators to produce high-quality, user-friendly translations that enhance the gaming experience.

Translating video game texts into Uzbek presents several unique challenges that affect the localization process. One major issue is the limited availability of standardized gaming terminology, which often leads to inconsistency in translations. As a result, translators may resort to borrowing terms from English or creating new equivalents, which can confuse users. Another challenge is the lack of established localization guidelines tailored specifically to the Uzbek language and cultural context. This absence makes it difficult to maintain uniform quality across different projects. Furthermore, there are insufficient professional training opportunities for translators specializing in game localization. Addressing these challenges is essential for improving the overall quality and accessibility of Uzbek-language video games.

### **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that translating English video game texts into Uzbek is a complex process involving linguistic, cultural, and technical challenges. Effective translation requires more than word-for-word conversion; it demands creativity, cultural sensitivity, and a

solid understanding of game mechanics. The findings of the research suggest the need for developing standardized Uzbek gaming terminology, providing specialized training for translators in localization techniques, and encouraging closer collaboration between linguists and game developers to improve overall translation quality. Furthermore, future research could focus on analyzing user reception of Uzbek-localized games as well as on the development of advanced translation tools tailored specifically for the Uzbek language.

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