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**DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSLATION AND LOCALIZATION OF
COMPUTER GAMES (BASED ON THE MATERIAL OF THE GAME
“WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT”)**

***Abstract.** The article discusses the difficulties that a translator may face when translating computer games from English to Russian. The article contains a classification of computer games from the point of view of translation studies, as well as a description of the stylistic features and strategies used by the translator when translating and localizing computer games as exemplified by the “Witcher 3: Wild Hunt” computer game.*

***Keywords:** computer games, translation and localization of computer games, difficulties of computer games’ translation.*

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**ТРУДНОСТИ ПЕРЕВОДА И ЛОКАЛИЗАЦИИ КОМПЬЮТЕРНЫХ
ИГР (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ ИГРЫ «WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT» («ВЕДЬМАК 3:
ДИКАЯ ОХОТА»))**

***Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются трудности, с которыми переводчик может столкнуться при переводе компьютерных игр с английского на русский язык. Статья содержит классификацию компьютерных игр с точки зрения переводоведения, а также описание стилистических особенностей и стратегий, к которым прибегает переводчик при переводе и локализации компьютерных игр, на примере компьютерной игры “Witcher 3: Wild Hunt”.*

***Ключевые слова:** компьютерные игры, перевод и локализация компьютерных игр, трудности перевода компьютерных игр.*

Most people do not think about the fact that computer games are closely connected with the formation of modern computers, as well as with the widespread introduction and development of programming [5].

The term *computer game* is relatively new, but a lot of attention is already being paid to this area. From the point of view of translation studies, the translation of computer games is considered one of the most attractive things, because every year a huge number of new computer games is created. And all these games require localization into other languages and cultures.

Based on this, the **relevance** of this study lies in the huge popularity of computer games that require translation and need to be localized.

Classification of computer games. The first games from this classification belong to the games that are based on a completely new idea, and the entire script of the game is started from scratch. The second type of games, such as the "Witcher 3: Wild Hunt" game, belongs to a group of games that are based on existing sources, such as books or comics. In both cases, the translator has a huge responsibility because they must either masterfully and professionally "create" a new game in a translating language, or must be able to use correspondence to avoid the recipients' dissatisfaction [3].

Stylistic features. One of the features that a translator faces is a mix of styles. One game may contain a lot of language styles within: publicistic style (newspapers or magazines), belles-lettres style (a diary of a character or a book), official style (different

documents) or scientific style (instructions in the game), and, of course, conversational style (dialogues of characters). For example, working with "Witcher 3: Wild Hunt", the translator is faced with belles-lettres, official, and conversational and everyday styles.

Difficulties in translation. When translator works on a game, for example, with a military theme, they may face issues related to the insufficient education in the field of technical translation. Of course, the translator can turn to a specialist in this field for advice or help, but in view of the tight deadlines for the project completion, the translator still has to sit and investigate the unknown topic on their own [1].

Dynamic and concise results. The translator is faced with a task where the text should be arranged in such a way so as to draw the user's attention to the most important points and to convey the text as concisely as possible without losing the equivalence in the finished version. This issue may be come across in the instructions to the game, for example, "Save game" – "Сохранить игру" [2].

Personal names. Not all the names in the localization of the game are always translated by means of transcription. Is it right to keep the name "Johnny" from the point of view of adapting the "Witcher 3: Wild Hunt" game from English language and UK culture into Russian? The translator must clearly understand the culture and features both of the source and the target languages. So, rendering this name by means of transcription would be the wrong decision. In Polish, the character's name is "Janek", which in turn is the equivalent of Russian "Ivan" or English "John". Given the fact that the character looks like a child, rendering the name of this character into Russian as «Ивасик» ("Ivasik") seems the best adaptation solution on the translator's part.

In another case, it can be noted that the translation of the game into Russian goes through the intermediary language, that is, Polish. The name "Ermion" becomes «Мышовур» ("Myshovur") when localized into Russian, since in Polish the name of this character is "Myszowor". The same is true with the name Scorpion, which in Russian translation becomes «Василек» ("Vasilek") from the Polish "Wojsilek".

Jargon and swear-words. In the Russian localization, the translator must adapt the text to transmit expressiveness and emotions, without using seemingly obvious equivalents. But in the game "Witcher 3: Wild Hunt" it is impossible to completely get rid of swear-words; they will in any case occur in the Russian localization, at least for the reason that the actions take place in the Middle Ages and the main character conducts dialogues with commoners, for example, with peasants or merchants.

Let us draw an example of the conversation where the translator decides not to avoid swear-words:

- *Would you tell me to sod off? Go ahead. But then I'll tell you the same. And what'll that make us? Two helpless, empty-handed sods. – Ну че ты хочешь меня н*хер послать? Милости просим, с*ка, давай. Я тебя тогда тоже н*хер пошлю. Ну и че, обнимемся, вместе пойдём, да?*

Despite the fact that the original wording contains a completely literary language, the Russian translator decided to use swear-words. And there is an explanation for this decision. These words belong to the character Phillip Strenger, or commonly known as the "Bloody Baron". He has a bad reputation and he is considered a cruel ruler and a sadist. During the game, it is revealed that he is a drunkard and sometimes beats up his wife. Also, the example is taken from the dialogue with Geralt of Rivia (the Witcher), and people usually do not stand up on ceremony with Witchers. People often hate them because of fear. Therefore, the decision to use swear-words only means that the translator tried to create the appropriate atmosphere and highlighted the temper of the "Bloody Baron".

Strategies in translation. As a rule, various translation strategies involve certain transformation. A *translation strategy* is a certain algorithm of actions that is consciously selected by the translator to translate one specific text, or texts combined into groups. To achieve the best perception in the recipient culture, A. F. Costales distinguishes the following strategies in the case of translating computer games [4]:

- 1) Domestication;
- 2) Foreignization;
- 3) No translation.

Domestication and foreignization are translation strategies that are determined based on the extent to which the translator seeks to bring the translation closer to the norms of the recipient culture.

Foreignization strategy is intended to keep the look and feel of the original game and transfer the atmosphere and the taste of the source culture into the target locale. In this case, the translator may not even translate some parts of the game (e.g. names, places, cues during the battle, terms).

If the translator tries to adapt the translation to the norms of the host culture as much as possible, even at the cost of some aspects of the original translation that had to be discarded, then we are talking about a domesticating translation. So, domestication strategy implies bringing the game closer to the target culture. In this case, the translator may resort to such techniques as *adaptation*, *generalization*, and *omission*. Omission is rarely used, since it involves replacing foreign realia with another similar unit in the language of the host culture.

For example, in the game "Witcher 3: Wild Hunt", you can notice the omission technique, but it casts doubt on the work of the translator, since this omission is unjustified:

***Your Imperial Majesty**... Yennefer... - Император... Йеннифер...*

*As you wish, **Your Majesty**. – Как пожелаешь.*

*Need something from me, **Your Majesty**? – Чего ты хочешь от меня, король?*

This transformation makes the main character in the Russian language is extremely and unnecessarily unceremonious.

No translation in the case of the games' names is due to the fact that the name of the game is a trademark that should be recognized all over the world.

Conclusion. Games are not just worlds; they also create a background where all the events unfold. The main function of the language in the game is to lead the player forward, to give him instructions and hints and to motivate. And if all these functions are fulfilled, the translation will be considered successful. This is a backbreaking work, where it is important to understand the culture of the country, from which the game is translated or localized, as well as the culture of your own.

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