# Rhetorical Retrospect

## Translation Procedures in the Video Game

## *Lufia*


MA Thesis
Christian de Vos
S1299336
c.de.vos4@umail.leidenuniv.nl
christian_de_vos1989@hotmail.com
31 May 2017

Faculty of Humanities
Leiden University Centre for Linguistics
MA Linguistics: Translation in Theory and Practice
Supervisor: Dr. A.G. Dorst
Second reader: Mr. drs. A.A. Foster

Universiteit Leiden

# Table of Contents

# Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore the translation procedures used in the localisation of video games. After reviewing existing literature on video game translation, which reveals that it requires different translation techniques, a new translation model is created and used to analyse *Lufia,* a role-playing game released on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System in 1995. The empirical part of this study is conducted by means of a contrastive analysis between the North American version and the Dutch localisation of *Lufia*. The results show that the literal translation procedure is by far the most predominant technique and they therefore do not support the expectation that the video game was mainly translated creatively, as transcreation was used to a much lesser extent than originally hypothesised. In conclusion, even though video game translation requires translators to demonstrate a certain degree of creativity in their translations, adopting the literal approach remains most predominant.

# Acknowledgement

I would first like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor Dr. A.G. Dorst at *Universiteit Leiden* for her valuable guidance and insightful comments. I would also like to thank Mr. drs. A.A. Foster for being the second reader of this thesis. A special thanks to Drs. K.L. Zeven for her strong support when I was at the point of putting my studies on hold. I am also deeply grateful to R.A. Bloem, MA and L. van Rosenberg, MA for taking the time and effort to scrutinise my thesis and provide me with perceptive comments and practical advice.

It would not have been possible for me to write this thesis and obtain my MA degree in Linguistics: Translation in Theory and Practice without the unwavering support of my parents and my brother. You have stood by me in difficult times and you have always given me the opportunity to blow off some steam whenever I could not find the strength to carry on with this endeavour. I am forever indebted to you.

Finally, I acknowledge that this thesis is written by myself alone. Any information or ideas from other sources have been cited in-text and acknowledged in the reference list accordingly.

Lopik, 31 May 2017

C. de Vos

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Topic Introduction and Research Question

Ever since *Spacewar!* was released in 1962 as one of the very first video games, the public interest in this form of digital entertainment has grown considerably. Newzoo, a global market research company, estimated that the video game industry will see a $108.9 billion dollar revenue in 2017, an 7.8% increase compared to the total revenues in 2016 ("The Global Games Market," 2017). The technology used to play video games has changed drastically, from large consoles or computers that play games through cartridges to the current innovative virtual reality headsets that immerse players in a virtual world. Nevertheless, the demand for video games has always been high. Many companies develop business plans to make their video games accessible to an international audience to increase overall sales. To achieve this goal, video game developers are required to adopt an international approach to the development of their video games, which results in localisation. In this context, Chandler and Deming (2012) make a distinction between internationalisation and localisation, both of which are crucial terms for grasping the details of the complex process of localising a video game for a foreign market. "*Internationalization* means creating a product that can be easily adapted for release in other countries without having to change the design of the product," whereas the subsequent process of *localization* focuses on "translating the language assets in a game into other languages" (p. 4). These language assets do not only entail the in-game texts, they could also refer to, for example, the localisation team opting for different packaging or a different manual in addition to just translating the in-game texts. Moreover, whenever problems arise with regard to the target culture, for instance due to potentially offensive or inappropriate elements in the source version, the localisation team could choose to omit those in the translation or decide to change the visuals of the target version. In short, if the internationalisation process is done adequately enough, the localisation process may proceed more smoothly, since the localisation team will hardly encounter any issues regarding in-game or in-engine assets, such as an unclear user interface or insufficient space for the translated texts.

The analysis of the localisation process that Chandler and Deming provide proves insightful. However, they do not shed much light on the translation procedures used to translate video games. Even though translation plays a pivotal role in the localisation

process, the connection between video game localisation and translation studies has received little attention in the academic world.

Video game translation demands a different approach than, for example, literary translation. In video games, the main aspect is the overall game experience where the player is actively involved in the game and in control of how the game progresses. Novels or digital forms of entertainment such as series or films are different as they usually lack this degree of user involvement. In order to create a similar experience for the target user whilst translating "no oddities should be present to disturb the interactive game experience, and this is the reason why game localisers are granted *quasi* absolute freedom to modify, omit, and even add any elements which they deem necessary to bring the game closer to the players and to convey the original feel of gameplay. And, in so doing, the traditional concept of fidelity to the original is discarded. In game localisation, transcreation, rather than just translation, takes place" (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006, p. 20). Transcreation is a translation model that draws the essential distinction between video game translation and other types of translation. Therefore, this technique is fundamental to defining the research question of this thesis:

To what extent does the video game *Lufia* show the use of transcreation in the Dutch translation and how significant are the differences between the uses of the literal translation procedure and the transcreation model?

In addition to the transcreation model, this thesis will cover several other translation procedures that are applicable to the translation of video games. These translation procedures will be discussed more thoroughly in *Chapter 3: Methodology*, after which they will be put to practice in *Chapter 4: Analysis and Results*.

This thesis aims to research the video game translation field by analysing the Dutch translation of *Lufia*, a role-playing game developed by Neverland and published by Taito. *Lufia*, known as *Estpolis Denki II* in Japan and as *Lufia II: Rise of the Sinistrals* in North America ("Lufia II: Rise of the Sinistrals," Wikipedia, n.d.), was originally released on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System in Japan in 1995 after which it was translated into English and subsequently into Dutch in 1996. It is vital to draw attention to the fact that the North American version of *Lufia* was used as the source text for the Dutch translation,

whereas the English translation used the Japanese original as its source text. This process is called 'relay translation' since it is a "case in which intermediary realisations are primarily intended for consumption in the language which later serves as the source language for subsequent translation" (Dollerup, 2000, p. 19). Nowadays, relay translation is not common practice in the video game localisation field because the majority of the games are developed using English as its source language (Chandler & Deming, 2012). Although this thesis analyses the English translation as the source text and the Dutch translation as the target text, it is crucial to acknowledge that the origins of *Lufia* are Japanese, even though I will not draw directly on the Japanese source text due to my insufficient knowledge of the Japanese language. Relay translation may play a pivotal role, because the analyses of the English and Dutch translations may show, for example, linguistic errors that derive from the fact that *Lufia* has been translated multiple times. One question I will seek to answer is whether the relay translation process makes relay translations liable to contain deviations, omissions, or errors. In addition, I will determine to what degree the Dutch translation still retains traces of the original source text and culture after having been "filtered" through the intermediate English translation.

Despite the fact that *Lufia* is a relatively old video game, I believe that researching this game with regard to the process of relay translation and the translation procedures used in video game localisation still remains of particular relevance. In 1996, it was unique for a role-playing game to be translated into Dutch. Classic role-playing games such as *Secret of Evermore* (1996) and *Final Fantasy VI* (1996), or the renowned adventure game *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (1992)* have not been translated into Dutch. Therefore, localising *Lufia* for the Dutch market was a pioneering initiative.

In *Lufia,* the player goes on an adventure with a group of travellers who meet various companions and who are confronted with daunting challenges in their quest to save the world from the evil grasp of the *sinistrals*, a group of four powerful gods. Since *Lufia* is a role-playing game, it means that the game is heavily text-based. In action games or first-person shooters, the focus lies more on exhilarating gameplay and usually fast-paced action. Role-playing games tend to put the main emphasis on the storyline, as is the case in *Lufia.*

After having researched the translation procedures in *Lufia,* this retrospect might give us valuable insight as to how video games were translated two decades ago in relation to what the contemporary literature claims is common practice. One could also compare the

results of this thesis to the translation procedures applied to present-day video games in order to ascertain whether significant developments have occurred in the video game translation field after two decades. Due to time constraints, however, this contrast will not be investigated in the current thesis, yet it may prove to be an interesting topic for future research.

## 1.2 Thesis Overview

This thesis consists of five chapters including the introduction. Chapter 2 provides background information on video game localisation and its challenges. Relevant areas in the localisation field will be elaborated on so as to provide the reader with a solid basis for the following chapters. Chapter 3 elaborates on the video game *Lufia* and its characteristics, such as a brief outline of the plot, its gameplay mechanics and the different in-game text types. It also discusses several widely used translation procedures, which will be linked to video game localisation. Moreover, the transcreation model by Mangiron & O'Hagan will be highlighted as it is a translation technique specifically developed for the translation of video games, whereas other translation procedures generally apply to different types of translation. Chapter 4 comprises the analysis of the source text and target text of *Lufia* by means of the new model provided in Chapter 3. The discussion of the analysis as well as the conclusion will be provided in Chapter 5.

# Chapter 2: Theoretical Background

Video game localisation is a complex process which, as mentioned in Chapter 1, comprises more than solely the translation of in-game texts. In order to provide the reader with a solid basis of video game localisation, this chapter will discuss the steps of the localisation process. Section 2.1 will examine the start of this complex process, followed by section 2.2, which will address the matter of deciding what to localise. Subsequently, section 2.3 will deal with the advantages and disadvantages of simultaneously releasing a video game on different markets. Section 2.4 will explore the challenges that arise when localising video games. The delicate subject of cultural references in video games will be described in section 2.5. Finally, section 2.6 will highlight numerous translation procedures applicable to the translation of video games.

## 2.1 Initiating the Localisation Process

Before the localisation process commences, it is vital that game developers properly internationalise their video games. If a video game has been internationalised well, the localisation process will proceed more efficiently, as the localisation team is less likely to encounter significant problems with regard to the user interface (UI), text display, the use of accented characters such as the *é* or *ç*, and different alphabets. For example, Chandler and Deming indicate that "translated text is about 20% to 30% larger than source language text, so if the UI is designed strictly for a specific language, the translated text in the UI will either be cut off or overlap in areas" (2012, p.5). When translating from Japanese into English, the size of the translated text might even double (Stevens Heath, 2010). This means that it is essential for game developers to consider the spatial aspects of the UI during the internationalisation process or it may create serious difficulties for the localisers. Specific spatial issues with regard to *Lufia* are mentioned in section 2.4.1.

In addition to preventing practical issues by adopting an international approach at an early stage in development of the game, significant financial problems can also be avoided. In order to minimise additional costs and to facilitate the localisation process, a video game developer should develop games "for the global market from the start to enable subsequent localization" (Edwards, 2008, p. 26). By implementing international features in the game code such as specific alphabetical characters, in-game objects, and sufficient space for

translation, one does not need to modify these aspects after the game has been completed, which is particularly cost-effective. For example, it can be rather time-consuming and expensive if all these aspects are scattered throughout the game code when the game developers decide to alter these in the post-production stage. Furthermore, adding graphic or linguistic assets to the game code is most likely to involve additional engineering and testing time (Chandler & Deming, 2012). Finally, post-production localisation may seriously affect the release date strongly, as it becomes increasingly difficult to simultaneously release the game on various international markets if it still needs revising after the game has been completed.

With regard to *Lufia*, it is clear that the localisation process commenced after the game had been completed. First of all, *Lufia* was not released on various markets at the same time. In fact, it took over a year for *Lufia* to be released on the North American and European markets in December 1996, whereas it was released in Japan in early 1995. Given the fact that this process occurred two decades ago, one should acknowledge that technology was not as advanced as it is now, which is likely to have had considerable influence on the speed and progress of the localisation process. Nevertheless, the gap between the different releases remains relatively large. Secondly, the original game publisher of *Lufia* was Taito, yet it was Nintendo Netherlands that decided to localise the game into Dutch (De Boer, 1996). After the translators had finished translating *Lufia* into Dutch, the files were sent back to Taito, enabling them to produce the Dutch *Lufia* game cartridges. This is another indication that, prior to completing the production of the video game, the developers had most likely not thought about releasing the game on the Dutch market. Finally, there are specific in-game art assets in *Lufia* that were not localised, most likely because the game code could not be modified or because the localisers did not have the expertise nor the permission to do so. For example, when the player walks through rural towns and magnificent castles to buy new equipment and items, the wooden signs outside the shops are in English. Weapon and armour shops have the *shop* sign outside, whereas the signs of the item shops and inns read *item* and *inn* respectively. Dutch gamers would most likely be familiar with the words *shop* and *item,* because those words are frequently used in video games, but *inn* could be unclear for a Dutch audience. German and Spanish gamers, who could also play a localised version of *Lufia* (“Lufia II: Rise of the Sinistrals,” Wikipedia, n.d.), might even experience greater difficulty with these English words, since the Dutch are

considered more proficient in English than German and Spanish people (EF Education First LTD, 2015, p. 7). Nevertheless, once players enter the inn, they find that it resembles a hotel where they can stay overnight and regain health points and magic points. If the game had received an international approach from the early development stage, the issues concerning the unlocalised in-game art assets could have easily been overcome.

In conclusion, the sooner video game developers decide to internationalise their video games, the more efficiently the localisation process will unfold. Once the linguistic features and other in-game assets have been optimised for an international audience, the subsequent translation process can continue more smoothly.

## 2.2 Deciding What to Localise

After having determined whether or not a video game should be localised, the next step can be taken: determining the type of localisation. Chandler and Deming (2012, pp. 8-10) describe four levels of localisation:

1. *No localisation*: small games by game developers that do not have big budgets are released in their original language. Naturally, they can be shipped to international markets to sell some copies, even if the games are not personalised for an international audience. The major advantage of no localisation is that the publisher saves time and resources by hardly making any extra investment. However, one might assume that this approach is only applicable to languages shared by many gamers, such as English. For example, it would not make sense to release an unlocalised Dutch video game on the French or Spanish market, because not many gamers would be able to enjoy the game due to the language barrier. Examples of games that received no localisation are the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) games *Tales of Phantasia* (1995) and *Fire Emblem: Thracia 776* (1999), both of which were released in Japan only.

2. *Packaging and manual localisation*: This is sometimes referred to as “box and docs” localisation, which entails the localisation of the game manual, packaging, and other documents that come with the game. Since the game code remains unaltered, this type of localisation does not cost as much time and resources as localising the entire

game. Therefore, box and docs localisation could be reasonably cost-effective for games that do not include much in-game text, such as some sports games or rhythm games. For other genres, however, gamers may consider it a drawback when only the documents are in their own language, since they might want to actually play the game in their native tongue as well. Examples include the European release of SNES role-playing game *Secret of Evermore* (1996) and *Lightning Returns: Final Fantasy XIII* (2014), released on the Playstation 3 and Xbox 360. Both games have a Dutch box and manual, whilst the in-game text is fully in English.

3. *Partial localisation*: This entails the translation of in-game text, but not the in-game sound effects, voice-overs, or songs. Adopting this method is cost-effective, since time and money are not spent on voice actors, sound engineers, and animators. The latter would have to make sure that the facial expressions and lip-syncing are done accurately in the localisation process. In some contemporary games, subtitling is added to immerse the target audience more deeply into the game, which can be seen in the Dutch and German localisation of the *Uncharted* and *Killzone* series.

4. *Full localisation:* This involves the translation of all the game assets: packaging, manual, in-game text, and voice-overs. It is a very time-consuming and expensive process that is not commonly applied to budget games, but only to some AAA games, which are generally flagship games that have large budgets and which utilise substantial resources for marketing purposes (O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013). Examples of AAA games include the renowned *Final Fantasy* games and several instalments of the Japanese *Tales of* series.

*Lufia* was partially localised, as all the in-game text was translated, but the game code had not been altered, so several in-game assets such as the shop signs remained in the source language. In addition, *Lufia* is a text-only role-playing game (RPG), which means that the localisation team did not have to deal with voice-overs. At the time, it was unique for a SNES game to be localised into Dutch and *Lufia* was the very first RPG to receive that treatment. It was, in fact, one of the very first games ever to be released with Dutch text, as the first localised video game was *Kuifje in Tibet* (*Tintin in Tibet*), which was released in

December 1995 (Minkels, 1996). Dutch game journalist Jurjen Tiersma, one of the translators of *Lufia,* explained in Dutch video game magazine *Club Nintendo Extra* why it was so special for an RPG to be localised into Dutch (1996). He emphasised the unpopularity of RPGs in the Netherlands. Dutch gamers were much more accustomed to platform games such as *Super Mario World* (1990) and *Donkey Kong Country* (1994), which were less story-driven and focused more on fast-paced action. Furthermore, the Dutch video game market was simply too small for a game to be released in Dutch. Publishers would have to take a substantial risk localising a game into Dutch that may not reach the breakeven point in terms of sales. In other words, it would be too expensive to localise a game for the Dutch audience.

Despite the potential risk, Nintendo localised *Lufia* into Dutch, hoping to increase revenue by selling more copies to a new target group. Robert de Boer (1996) illustrates the reasons why Nintendo decided to localise *Lufia* into Dutch as the first RPG ever. Up until that point, all RPGs released on the Dutch market were in English. Since the most distinct feature of an RPG is its storyline, it was imperative that international gamers were able to enjoy the story the same way as native speakers of English. If gamers did not have the linguistic competence to grasp the storyline of an RPG, they would miss out on the core element of the game. Nintendo wanted to avoid this by localising *Lufia* into Dutch. Consequently, all Dutch gamers could enjoy the game and immerse themselves in the compelling story that *Lufia* offers them.

The Super Nintendo Entertainment System, or Super Famicom as it is called in Japan ("Super Nintendo Entertainment System," Wikipedia, n.d.), provided a plethora of games for young gamers. Classic games such as *Super Mario World* (1990)*, Super Mario Kart* (1992) and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turles: Turtles in Time* (1992) gave players of a young age the opportunity to enjoy the SNES immensely, combining exhilarating gameplay with colourful graphics. Moreover, these titles often focused on the cooperative aspect of gaming, which for some gamers was a valuable addition. Some games were therefore regarded as party games, as they allowed players to play the games together with friends or even family. However, fighting games such as *Mortal Kombat* (1992)*, Killer Instinct* (1994), and *Primal Rage* (1995) showed the more mature side of the game console. Many RPGs, though, such as *Final Fantasy VI* (1994)*, Chrono Trigger* (1995)*,* and *Lufia* had a broad target market. Yet, since these games were rather story-driven, it depended on the gamers themselves whether or not the game was suitable for them. Dutch gamers were required to have basic

competence in English in order to enjoy RPGs, and since these were often not localised, they would be more suitable for older gamers, as young gamers are less likely to understand English adequately. In that respect, *Lufia* was a pioneer in the field of Dutch video game localisation, providing the ideal opportunity for every Dutch gamer to play this game. Even though the exact sales figures of the number of copies sold in the Netherlands remain unknown, *Lufia* is still regarded as a classic game on many internet forums and an example of a successful localisation.

## 2.3 Simultaneous Release

Video game localisation has strongly developed in the last few decades, because it used to be regarded as a post-production activity which was liable to contain many errors (Kohler, 2005). Nowadays, the attitude towards localisation has shifted, as most developers and publishers aim to release the localised versions simultaneously with the source language version. The process of shipping games to different markets at the same time, also called "sim-shipping", takes considerable effort. It requires careful planning in the pre-production stage, as the sooner the internationalisation process commences, the more effective the localisation process could be. Nevertheless, sim-shipping a video game can deliver tremendous benefits. For example, the developers only need to spend valuable time and resources once on an international release plan, rather than creating several marketing plans for multiple different countries in the post-production stage. By doing so, the developers also gather and maintain great momentum for the global release of the video game. One can imagine that a video game might lose its appeal and hype if it is released on a foreign market a year after its initial launch. In fact, if a game receives mixed reviews and the media hype has passed, the international audience might lose their interest in the game, whereas this would less likely be the case when the game ships simultaneously to international markets. In addition, developers could move on to focus on different projects once the game has gotten a worldwide release, trying to pursue a new and potentially successful endeavour (Chandler & Deming, 2012). Melnick and Kirin (2008) provide an additional advantage, claiming that releasing the source version and the localised versions simultaneously might actually increase sales revenues by 40 or 50 percent due to the aforementioned reasons. One might therefore conclude that it is vital for developers to

carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of sim-shipping their video game in order to verify the most successful strategy for their company.

From a translator's perspective, sim-shipping may benefit the localisation process as it "sometimes provides the translator with an opportunity to give input on the design and implementation of the game which is still undergoing changes" (O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013, p. 117). Providing input is practically impossible if the game has already been released, since this would entail that the game code has been finalised. Any modifications made in the game code may create additional bugs that need fixing and testing, which would cost the developers precious time and resources. Moreover, adjusting the source code after the game has already been released changes the actual game, which would be undesirable for the developers. If the game requires changes after its launch, this is usually done by means of patches, which are pieces of software created to fix bugs or update final versions of software applications (O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013).

However, localising a game after its release offers some potential advantages as well. The localisation team has the opportunity to work with the final game code and if the code is localisation-friendly, no modifications are necessary for the localised versions (Chandler & Deming, 2012). Subsequently, the localisers can work with a stable and hopefully bug-free version of the video game, which facilitates the localisation process significantly. The process of aiming for a simultaneous release may lead to bugs being discovered, which are then duplicated in all subsequent localised versions. In order to fix the bugs, functionality testers need to write bug reports and test the bug fixes, delaying the localisation plan. Localising a video game after its initial launch may thus save time and resources as well.

## 2.4 Challenges of Localising Video Games

Audiovisual translation is a specialisation in the field of translation studies that has seen a substantial rise in the 21st century. Multimedia such as TV, film, and video games are becoming increasingly important and due to the constant evolvement of technology and the internet, they can easily be accessed and used across the globe for various purposes. In fact, "audiovisual translation has evolved to the point where, as a discipline, it is now one of the most vibrant and vigorous fields within Translation Studies" (Diaz Cintas & Anderman, 2009, p. 8). TV programmes, series, and films are often localised for foreign markets so that the international audience can enjoy the same visual experience as the original intended

audience. Video game localisation is one of the latest additions to the field of audiovisual translation. As described in section 1.1, estimated revenues of the video game industry rise substantially each year, which makes video game localisation an important discipline. Consequently, there is a strong need for specialised translators able to provide quality translated games satisfying the specific requirements of local markets (Granell, 2011).

Video game translation shares certain similarities with other types of translation, such as literary translation. Role-playing games tend to be heavily focused on text, so if one has to translate a fantasy RPG such as *Final Fantasy VII* (1997), the story should be conveyed in an appealing yet faithful manner, similar to novels. The translated story should ideally provide the same experience for the target audience as it does for the original audience, but at the same time offering ample opportunity for translators to be rather free in doing so. The extent to which the translators exercise that freedom remains debatable, as some may prefer to adopt a more literal approach and stay true to the original, whereas others tend to translate the texts more creatively and focus specifically on the exhilarating experience the game should deliver.

Interestingly, video game localisation, which entails more than just the translation of video games, is a specialisation in the field of translation studies with several distinguishing features. Video games often combine passive and active user involvement using a wide variety of assets, such as music, voice overs, narration, text, and gameplay. This substantial level of immersion provides a completely unique experience in comparison to reading books or watching films and series. Different localisation purposes require different translation procedures, which is why this section sets out to illustrate the diversity of challenges one might encounter in video game localisation.

### 2.4.1 Space constraints

As briefly mentioned in section 2.1, space constraints can pose serious problems. In the case of *Lufia*, there are numerous instances where words in the main menu are abbreviated due to spatial issues. For instance, the Dutch players can go through the status screens of the playable characters by selecting *VLG.,* which is the abbreviation of *volgende* (lit: next). The North American version contains the word *NEXT,* which has four characters instead of nine, thus making it possible to display the full word. Another example can be found in the equipment screen, in which players can equip weapons and armour to

strengthen their characters. The player can remove all equipment by selecting *REMOVE ALL* in the source version, whereas Dutch players need to select *VERW. ALLES*, simply because *verwijder alles* would be too long. Despite the use of abbreviations, I believe the translators found a proper solution to overcoming the challenges of space constraints, as these abbreviations should be clear to the Dutch players and do not hinder a satisfying game experience. In an interview in Club Nintendo Extra, one of the translators of *Lufia*, Robert de Boer, discusses the severe space restrictions he and his colleagues encountered and how they dealt with them. In dialogues, only four lines could be displayed on-screen at once, each with a maximum number of twenty-six characters. However, "by making efficient use of the margins and by employing some clever tricks", the localisation team could optimise their translation (De Boer, 1996, p. 7). For example, the shopping menu was slightly enlarged as to enable the translators to use the word *VERKOOP*, which is significantly longer than the English equivalent *SALE.*

Space constraints in SNES games were relatively more severe than in contemporary games, as there were fewer solutions to overcoming them. Nowadays, developers have more space to work with, as the resolution of video games usually reaches up to 1920x1080 pixels, as opposed to the resolution the SNES could produce, which ranged from 256x224 to 512x448 pixels. This is a significant difference, since a developer can put more objects and text boxes on a high-resolution screen than on a low-resolution screen. Rather than creating additional text boxes, or enlarging every existing text box, De Boer and his colleagues had no choice but to use every inch and pixel to overcome the space constraints of the SNES video game. O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) provide several practical tips to use the given space efficiently. Firstly, using icons in menus instead of words, one can replace a word or complete phrase by simply adding an icon or illustration. For example, an image of a sword may well illustrate the weapons menu, whereas a ring icon can imply the accessories menu. Secondly, tooltips can be used, which are usually displayed as question marks; once the user moves the cursor over the tooltip, it provides additional information on an item or other game element.

Although the solutions O'Hagan and Mangiron describe in their influential book on game localisation can be effective, it is unlikely that these can be used in every possible situation, not even in contemporary games. For example, the localisation team needs to have the necessary skills and authority to adapt the in-game menus in order for the solutions

to work. If the localisers want to make use of icons to overcome certain space constraints, some programming knowledge is required as the game code would have to be modified. Experienced video game translators might possess that knowledge, but translators new to the field of video game translation might not. Naturally, the original developers have to give their consent to the localisation team if certain in-game elements are to be changed into icons. Clear communication between the localisers and the development team seems vital regarding any adjustments made to the game.

Furthermore, video games developed for consoles do not commonly make use of cursors, as opposed to PC games. A mouse allows the gamer to move a cursor much more rapidly and accurately in comparison with a controller, which is why there are more cursor-oriented games on the PC, such as real-time strategy and simulation games, of which *Command & Conquer: Red Alert* (1996) and *Rollercoaster Tycoon* (1999) are classic examples. Tooltips are therefore more likely to be implemented in PC games, without necessarily providing a workable solution for console game localisers.

### 2.4.2 The inability to play the game

Not being able to play the game whilst translating might create some tough challenges. Translators are occasionally required to provide translations without the ability to play the game, which would otherwise enable them to visualise the scope of the video game and the world in which it is set. The translators are sometimes only provided with various screens, images, and the translation brief, whereas their task is to produce a translation that maintains the "fun factor" of the original game (Chandler & Deming, 2012, p. 107). If translators can familiarise with the video game by means of one or more playthroughs of the game, this may greatly affect the translation, since they then possess more practical knowledge of the game with which they are more likely to translate adequately. Moreover, they will be able to actually experience the fun factor of the video game which can subsequently become influential in translating the game. Translating the distinguishing characteristics of the game, such as the register of the characters and the narration, and perhaps even idiolects, is easier if the translator is aware of what is happening on the screen. Whereas this may sound logical, the contrary often occurs. Interestingly, specialist in software localisation and video games Frank Dietz (2007) illustrates the possible reasons why the phenomenon of "blind" localisation still occurs frequently. On the one

hand, he blames it on the developers being particularly careful when it comes to software piracy, which results in their refusal to give the translators full access to the game. On the other hand, some translators are reluctant to become entirely familiar with the game and may overlook or neglect the challenges that video game localisation represents. If the translators cannot be given the opportunity to play through the game, the most effective alternative would be to provide them with sufficient background information including design documents and walkthroughs (p. 5).

The translators of *Lufia* were able to play the game several times, which aided them in their quest for an accurate translation (De Boer, 1996). In addition, all the translators were either game aficionados or somehow affiliated with companies in the video gaming industry, which may have benefited the quality of the translation as well. By assigning translators that share a strong affinity for games, one can handle the complexities that arise from translating video games more efficiently. Even without full access to the game, the translators may still be able to create a satisfactory translation based on their gaming background and prior localisation assignments.

### 2.4.3 Specific gaming terminology

Role-playing games are often set in certain periods, such as the Middle Ages or in the future, which can profoundly influence the linguistic characteristics of the game. For example, in the former, the equipment is usually very traditional, ranging from bows and swords to leather apparel and furs. Items used for medicinal purposes will most likely include herbs, meat, and various concoctions. In the latter, cutting-edge technology allows for advanced weaponry, sophisticated armour, and powerful medicine. As pointed out by Dietz (2007, p. 3), “a translator must become thoroughly familiar with the special subject matter of each game, be that medieval alchemy, skateboarding or avionics, as well as with the terminology and conventions of each gaming genre”. These different settings oblige translators to be very meticulous in their lexical choices as the translation should match the source text in terms of semantics whilst maintaining credibility with regard to the setting as well. If a video game contains countless pieces of equipment, the translator ought to conduct extensive research in order to verify the distinctions between them. This may pose serious challenges to the translator, since the majority of the weapons or armour may be unfamiliar or even imaginary, making it a laborious task to provide adequate translations for

all the items. Or, when localising a sports game such as football game *FIFA 17* (2016), it may require a translator to be extremely knowledgeable about the various rules and conventions of the game as well as the correct corresponding terms in the target language. The different scopes of video games pose a key challenge to translators, since they require specific knowledge. If the translator underestimates the semantic distinctions between video game genres, it could deliver poor results (Dietz, 2007).

In *Lufia*, the translators dealt with major issues regarding the myriad pieces of equipment in the game. For example, the source language provided significantly more alternatives for the word *armour* than the target language, which made it hard for the translation team to provide clear distinctions between seemingly identical pieces of armour, such as the chain mail and the chain armour. Thorough preliminary research was required in order to provide the nearest equivalents, which illustrates the stiff challenge video game localisation presents (De Boer, 1996).

Apart from the challenges regarding in-game terminology, video game translators are also required to possess comprehensive knowledge about technical aspects of game localisation. Localising software manuals and installation screens demands specific terminology the translator needs to understand. For example, one may come across technical terms such as “16-bit console” or “D-Pad”, which may be unfamiliar to translators that do not share the same affinity with video games as gamers do. Moreover, video game localisation also comprises complex issues concerning sound card compatibilities or video card details (Dietz, 2007). Possessing basic understanding of video game hardware might thus even be insufficient to overcome the problems that arise when encountering technical items.

### 2.4.4 Translator’s competence

This chapter has listed several key issues that are especially prominent, if not unique, to video game localisation in comparison to other fields of translation. In 1996, when *Lufia* was localised, translation procedures in video games received very little attention in the academic world. Even in the last two decades, the video game localisation field saw only a small number of specialists trying to raise academic interest in this discipline. Scholars such as Carmen Mangiron, Minako O’Hagan, Frank Dietz, and Ximo Granell are pioneers with respect to video game translation, who have hopefully paved the way for other linguists to

become experts in the translation of video games. Granell (2011) published an academic article on teaching video game localisation and comments on the profile of the student taking the video game localisation course at university, which includes some insightful ideas. He distinguishes four different preliminary competences a student should preferably have (pp. 186-187):

1. The student is required to be proficient in the source language, as the translations require usage of correct grammar and lexical items. Since video game localisation is a discipline of audiovisual translation, the proficiency should not only be demonstrated in written and oral skills, but also in listening skills.

2. Similarly, it is mandatory the student has adequate linguistic competence in the target language. Register, grammar, and vocabulary prove particularly important, as the student should be capable of producing correct translations of the various text types that video games comprise.

3. Being familiar with translation procedures is the third characteristic of the student localiser. Using the appropriate translation tools, possessing the competence to provide solid translations, and being capable of finding idiomatic solutions while avoiding word-for-word translations are of paramount importance.

4. Various text types can occur in video games, such as dialogues, narrations, songs, and even technical messages and disclaimers. These text types share similarities with other translation disciplines, such as literary translation, technical translation and legal translation. Consequently, a prospective video game translator should be familiar with the different text types to a certain extent.

While Granell's theory provides a solid basis for students desiring to become video game localisers, one of the limitations is that it overlooks another fundamental prerequisite: gaming experience. Being an avid gamer when taking a video game localisation course might be considered superfluous, yet it is a salient characteristic that should not be disregarded. Prior gaming experience enables the translator to familiarise with the specific terminology

that video games entail, which may play a pivotal role in providing adequate translations. Moreover, it develops the overall gaming skills of the translators, which allows them to more consciously decide if a certain phrase sounds natural from a gamer's perspective. When translating game manuals, for instance, one might come across terminology such as *third-person shooter* or *turn-based RPG*. These are genres that keen gamers are familiar with and would most likely not want to have translated into their native language, as translating them might lead to awkward and unnatural translations in the eyes of the hard-core gamer (Dietz, 2003). Game aficionados have a tendency to be deeply sceptical when it comes to video games being translated into their mother tongue, because mistranslations are considered sacrilege, resulting in the gamers wanting to play the source version instead.

The importance of linguistic competence is exemplified in the work undertaken by Šiaučiūnė and Liubinienė, who state that "an accurate and thoughtful translation can lead to product popularity and increased profit. This is clearly seen in the case of game localization industry" (2011, p. 47). If a video game contains grammatical or lexical errors, gamers are bound to take notice and judge the translators on their mistakes. Throughout the history of video games, some mistakes have become classic examples as to illustrate how not to localise a video game, sometimes creating humorous internet in-jokes or 'memes'. Famous quotes include "I feel asleep!!" from *Metal Gear*, which was released on the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1987, and "All Your Base Are Belong To Us" from the 1989 Sega Mega Drive game *Zero Wing*. Despite the errors, it remains debatable whether these errors have greatly influenced the popularity and sales of both games. One might even argue that these classic slip-ups have benefited the games, as they are more often regarded by many gamers as hilarious rather than game-breaking. Moreover, due to the creation of internet memes based on these quotes, which are still used on game forums even after nearly three decades since the games were released, many gamers know about these games in spite of never having played them at all. Nevertheless, the instances in which faulty localisations are successful are rare and are not normally aimed for.

## 2.5 Cultural References

As was mentioned in section 1.1, Chandler and Deming (2012) attempted to provide a workable definition of "localisation", which focused mainly on the linguistic features of

localisation. However, the main weakness of their definition is that it leaves out the cultural aspects of localisation, even though they address the cultural contexts adequately in subsequent chapters. Creating a concise definition that encompasses every aspect of localisation is a difficult task, yet the Localisation Industry Standards Association (LISA), which existed from 1990 to 2011, provided the following description that includes a key element:

> "Localisation 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" (Esselink, 2000, p.3).

Not only is the localisation team required to transfer all the linguistic elements of the source version appropriately, cultural references are also a delicate matter that need careful scrutiny in order to avoid offensive translations. Video games will often contain culture-specific elements that offer a daunting challenge to the translator, not only with regard to linguistic features, but also to visuals. Cultural references are often part of the visuals of the game, which makes it even more difficult for the translator to adopt a pragmatic approach to localising them, because it might actually involve changing the looks of the game. Some of the references are immensely difficult, or virtually impossible to translate, as they occasionally involve elements strictly applicable to a certain country or culture, such as religious objects and symbols, regional dialects, or other particular customs and habits. Failing to consider the cultural context of the game might result in inappropriate or even offensive localisations. Or, more importantly, a game could get banned in a certain country. For instance, Bethesda's *Fallout 3* (2008) was not released in India because of "cultural insensitivities" (Fahey, 2008). Even though specific reasons for not releasing the game in India were not provided, rumours spread across the Internet, claiming it was the "Brahmin", a mutated two-headed cow, that would be deemed too offensive for the Indian audience (Haas, 2008). Cows are considered sacred in India and the inappropriate display of the Brahmin in *Fallout 3* might have greatly influenced the decision to ban the game. Moreover, the ability to actually kill the animal in the game might have even played a more decisive role. Furthermore, the name "Brahmin" also refers to the Hindu caste system to which teachers, doctors, scholars and other religious people belong ("Brahmin," Wikipedia, n.d.),

whereas the name “Brahman” defines a breed of Indian cattle and a Hindu religious concept (Haas, 2008). The animals appeared in prior instalments of the *Fallout* series, so changing the name might have resulted in *Fallout 3* being released in India, but the game would then lose its fidelity to the previous titles in the series, as the Brahmin are a signature species of animals in the series.

Chandler and Deming (2012) use the term “content culturalization” to refer to the process of designing and adapting video game content in a proactive manner as to avoid and account for culture-specific sensitivities. It goes a step further than localisation because it does not only provide a video game that the players can understand in terms of language, but also a video game that is internationally viable, not containing any offensive content that might disengage players from the game (p. 20). This process helps distinguish the linguistic properties and cultural elements of releasing a video game internationally. Additionally, it allows for video game developers to realise the global scope of their game and ascertain whether their product is suitable for and in harmony with the characteristics of the target culture. So, with regard to *Fallout 3,* if the developers had decided to localise the *Fallout* series accordingly from the start by choosing a different name for the “Brahmin” creatures, they might have prevented this culture-sensitive issue.

In addition to encountering religious symbols and other culture-specific elements that might lead to a ban, localisers would sometimes also face the issue of censorship, which entails the cutting up of a video game and editing its contents due to government regulations. These changes are often very conspicuous and may alter the gameplay considerably (Müller, 2015). Censorship is usually imposed on video games that contain, for example, excessive violence, drug abuse, strong language, scenes of explicit nudity or references to certain religions and ideologies. Some countries adopt a neutral stance towards video games containing cultural sensitivities, based on their legal system. However, others are more rigid, forcing the localisers to remove all offensive content, or even banning the game, as illustrated with *Fallout 3*.

Germany has strict regulations when it comes to video games and censorship, of which *Carmageddon* (1997) is a clear example. *Carmageddon* is a racing game in which the player is encouraged to run over pedestrians to earn extra time and score additional points, while trying to win the race by finishing first or by destroying all the other competitors. The uncensored version included humans being dismembered and losing blood when hit by a

car, yet the German version contained robots that leaked oil instead. The remarkable phenomenon of censorship in German video games was thoroughly researched by Müller (2015), who stated that "Germany consistently expresses a higher sensitivity to violence within the video game medium than the rest of Europe, or rather, than most of the world" (p. 62). A stark contrast between censorship in Germany and other countries is highlighted in the different localisations of *Carmageddon*, since the first UK version used zombies and green blood, which resembled the original version more closely than the radically altered German version. Apparently, the pedestrians were not to resemble humans in any way, even if they were zombies and therefore non-existent creatures. The censorship with regard to the depiction of gore is still a current issue, as is the use of swastikas in video games. Employing Nazi imagery can lead to a direct ban in Germany, as it is forbidden by law (Müller, 2015).

Nintendo of America (NOA) was notorious for altering the contents of video games that opposed their policy, especially in the late 1980s and mid-1990s. Some of the rules mentioned in their guidelines prohibited the use of potentially offensive content, such as excessive violence, drug abuse, strong language, scenes of explicit nudity or references to certain religions and ideologies (McCullough, n.d.). Many games became victims of NOA's strict policy, including Midway Games's *Mortal Kombat*, released on the SNES. The game depicted extreme violence and gore, which resulted in NOA turning blood into sweat and the gruesome finishing moves, called *fatalities*, were made considerably less violent. The main reason why the series was so critically acclaimed was its violence and enabling the player to kill other characters as brutally as possible, yet NOA found it too inappropriate to release it on their system uncensored.

Even though NOA forbade the use of religious items and symbols in their guidelines, it was far from consistent. *The Legend of Zelda* (1986) and *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* (1987) still contained visible crosses throughout the game and the player could even use a cross as a weapon in the latter title (Markley, 2015). In 1994, the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) was founded, which assigns the games an age rating according to its contents, ranging from "Early Childhood" (EC) to "Adults Only" (AO). Over thirty descriptors are provided to account for the rating (Chandler & Deming, 2012, p. 38). Partly due to the establishment of the ESRB, Nintendo became more lenient towards censoring games, since the game had been rated according to its target group. Nevertheless, it did not fully halt

Nintendo enforcing their policy. Nowadays, however, Nintendo shows less interference as it mostly leaves it up to the individual game developers whether or not to censor games (McCullough, n.d.).

Conforming to Nintendo's policy, *Lufia* also showed several regional differences based on cultural sensitivities. For instance, the Japanese version of *Lufia* depicted women dressed in bunny costumes in the casino on Forfeit Island. However, as this was considered sexist by Nintendo, the women wore regular dresses in the North American localisation, not revealing any bare skin (McCullough, n.d.). The player could buy various items only available in the casino, such as the *bunny suit*, *bunny sword*, and the *bunny ears*. Yet, with the omission of the bunny outfits in the localised version, the players are left wondering why all of a sudden they are able to purchase bunny items, since the game does not make any reference to bunnies at all. For Japanese players, the items made perfect sense and dropped humorous references to the scarcely-dressed ladies.

Many items that somehow made allusions to religion, gods, and mythology, were also altered in the localised versions, albeit somewhat inconsistently. Knuckle (2010) provided a practical overview of the regional differences between the Japanese and the North American version, which demonstrated the censorship imposed on games by Nintendo. All the changes made in the North American version were retained in the subsequent European version, so those versions were nearly identical with regard to localising cultural references. For instance, "gaia no soodo", which can be translated literally as "gaia's sword", was translated as *fry sword* in the North American version, and *blakerzwaard* in the Dutch version, because Gaia is the goddess of the Earth in Greek mythology and Nintendo wanted to remove all references to religion as much as possible. Similarly, "kourin tsurugi", which means "halo sword" or "katana", was translated in the North American and Dutch version as *blaze sword* and *luchtzwaard* respectively, because haloes are the rings that float above angels and holy people, thus supposedly containing an inappropriate reference to supernatural beings. Despite these references, equipment that included the word "holy" was allowed to remain unchanged in both localised versions, something which was not allowed in the localisation of *Final Fantasy VI*, in which the *holy* spell was changed to *pearl*. In Lufia, *holy fruit* was translated into Dutch as *heilig fruit* and the *holy shield* was literally translated as *heiligschild*. Interestingly, the Dutch localisers translated *holy wings* as *godenvleugel* and *holy whip* as *godenzweep*, in which they included

references to the gods. Additionally, a monster called *archfiend* was translated as *duivel*, which is actually a literal translation of the word "devil". That name was not allowed in the North American version, but it was apparently approved of by Nintendo of Europe. These references contrast the rules and illustrate the inconsistency of Nintendo's policy, as the translations were still accepted.

In conclusion, the literature identifies the necessity for the video game developers not to underestimate and ignore the impact of culture-sensitive game content. By approaching potentially offensive elements from the start of the internationalisation process, and addressing them throughout the development of the video game, one can avoid major blunders and prevent the game from receiving embarrassing localisations.

## 2.6 Translation Procedures

This thesis has so far drawn fundamental distinctions between the translation of video games and other types of translation, along with challenges unique to video game localisation. Whereas localisation has gradually received much more academic interest since its early days, the translation procedures used in this process remain relatively obscure. One might assume that due to the distinguishing characteristics of video game localisation, the translation of a video game demands a different approach as well. Many of the existing translation procedures and models, though, suffer from the fact that they are universal and often not designed for one specific type of translation. Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006) acknowledged this issue and invented a model directly applicable to video game translation called 'transcreation'. This section will analyse this translation model as well as other translation procedures and theories that might prove useful when translating video games, such as Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy of translation strategies and procedures (1995/2004), and Vermeer's *Skopos* Theory (1989/2004).

### 2.6.1 Skopos theory

Even though the term *skopos* was coined in the 1970s by Hans Vermeer (Vermeer, 1989/2004), it is still relevant with regard to the translation of video games. The term *skopos* refers to "the aim or purpose of a translation", which is of vital importance to establish the target text, or *translatum* (Vermeer, 1989/2004, p. 221). In Vermeer's hierarchical order, the

*skopos* of the source text holds a more dominant position than the fidelity between the source text and the target text (Munday, 2012). This implies that translators are allowed certain freedom and creativity in their translations, provided that the *skopos* is fulfilled. In the field of video game localisation, the *skopos* of the *translatum* is to create a video game that has the same "look and feel" of the original game, creating a similar gaming experience for the target players (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006, p. 20). This distinction is made evident in a study carried out by Di Marco (2007), who claimed that the objective of localisation should not be to provide a "literal equivalence of the original text", but rather a similar gaming experience based on the intention of the source text (p.7). If that leads to the loss of certain elements, they could be compensated for in the target text. This approach is rather target-orientated, as the translator is often required to adapt certain elements of the source text to make them more appropriate to the target text and target culture, ultimately enabling him to be rather free in the way of doing so. As described in sections 2.4 and 2.5, video game localisation has its own inherent challenges that result in the fact that strictly adhering to the principal features of the source text might often be insufficient to provide a quality localisation. It appears that video game localisation is the only genre in the field of translation in which the translator has considerable freedom to alter the source text to the extent of changing images, graphics, or in-game text as to make the game suitable for the target culture (Mangiron, 2006).

A clear example of the *skopos* theory put into practice in *Lufia* is illustrated in a scene in which the warrior Guy wants to defeat Camu, who invaded his hometown Tanbel to kidnap his sister Hilda:

Guy: Hey, you're next!

Camu: Rats in your eyes! I'll be back for you!

Interestingly, Camu's text has two functions: exclaiming disagreement and promising revenge. A literal translation of "rats in your eyes" would not work in Dutch, since *ratten in je ogen* is a non-existent idiom. Furthermore, translating this idiom is made even more difficult as the original itself is rather marked. A different problem arises when trying to

translate the second sentence literally. *I'll be back for you* can be translated as *ik kom voor jullie terug,* which would be grammatically correct and literally equivalent, yet it would lose the original intention of seeking revenge. The localisation team took notice of these issues and translated the two strings as follows:

Guy: Hé, nu ben jij aan de beurt!

Camu: Dat had je gedacht! Ik reken later wel met jullie af!

Camu's intention was to express disagreement with the party's plans to defeat him, which was translated accordingly as *dat had je gedacht,* which comes close to the English phrase *think again*, occasionally used to have someone carefully reconsider their ideas. Whereas the Dutch translation does not have the same markedness as the English idiom, it still serves the function of the original text. *Ik reken later wel met jullie af* is not a literal equivalent of *I'll be back for you*, but it does provide the same intention of the source text. The Dutch idiom is rather similar to the English *I'll deal with you later*, which would have fitted in the source text as well in terms of function. With these translations, the *skopos* has been met, mainly due to the translators' abilities to cope with the marked language in a flexible and creative manner.

### 2.6.2 Transcreation and compensation

In various types of translation, such as legal or medical translation, fidelity to the source text is paramount, for one error in the translation could have dire consequences. The opposite is true to video games as mentioned in the previous section. The language of the source text is subordinate to the function, which allows translators to demonstrate a greater sense of creativity in their translation regarding the target language and culture. To make a video game serve its *skopos*, translators are often "given *carte blanche* to modify, adapt, and remove any cultural references, puns, as well as jokes that would not work in the target language. Localisers are given the liberty of including new cultural references, jokes, or any other element they deem necessary to preserve the game experience and to produce a fresh and engaging translation" (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006, p. 15). As a result, instead of simply

translating, the translator is *transcreating*, which involves recreating source material in order to convey a similar gameplay experience (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006, p. 20).

The words *carte blanche* may imply that the translator can do anything he pleases, yet there are certain boundaries he needs to take into consideration. In certain series, key terminology and recurrent items or names are present. For example, in the *Final Fantasy* series, monsters such as *marlboro, ochu,* and *bomb* have become iconic and fans of the series would feel upset if the names were to change. The translators would have to be familiar with the series as to provide a target version that is consistent to other localisations. Not satisfying the expectations of the fans might result in negative feedback or poor sales (Bernal-Merino, 2007). Therefore, the degree of freedom the translator has in translating these games would be curtailed as opposed to video games that do not have previous instalments.

The term *compensation* works in a similar way to *transcreation*, as it also allows the translator to express his creativity. However, there is a key difference. Whereas *transcreation* refers solely to recreating existing strings of text, compensation entails introducing new strings in the target text because other strings could not be translated (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006). In video game translation, the phenomenon of *translation loss* is common and at the same time widely accepted (Mangiron, 2006). When an element is lost in the translation due to its untranslatability, the translator could choose to compensate for this loss in other strings further on in the text. Di Marco (2007) emphasises the use of compensation, claiming that a translator is actually obliged to compensate for the loss, since losing humour, meaning, characterisation, and fascination, will influence the original intention of the source text immensely. These ideas link closely to the *skopos* theory, which gives the translator a substantial degree of freedom, provided that the purpose of the original source is conveyed in the target text.

A case study by Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006, pp. 17-19) of the Playstation 2 RPG *Final Fantasy X* (2001) highlights the freedom of the translator in video game translation by introducing four procedures that could be regarded as subdivisions of transcreation*:*

1. *Re-naming of key terminology and character names*: The translator has to consider carefully whether to re-name key items and characters or monsters as some names play a pivotal role throughout multiple titles of the same series. On the other hand,

re-naming could enable the translator to creatively solve various issues. Space constraint, for instance, could present a potential problem when translating from Japanese to English. One Japanese character can already signify a word or an entire phrase in English, which would make the translation too long to fit in the provided space. A translator can thus opt to re-name the item as to make it suitable for the target version. Furthermore, when certain names in the source version could be regarded as inappropriate or offensive for the target audience, re-naming might be a practical solution. *Lufia* contains a character called Kim in the source version. Whereas Kim is often considered a boy's name in English, in Dutch it is usually regarded as a girl's name. The localisers therefore decided to change the name Kim into Pim as to avoid any confusion about the character's gender. Another example is provided by Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006), based on the main character of *Final Fantasy IX* (2000), called ジタン (Jitan) in the Japanese version. That character was subsequently localised into Zidane in the American and European versions, although the French and Spanish localisers re-named him as Djidane and Yitán respectively in order to avoid any legal issues with regard to French football player Zinedine Zidane.

2. *Contextualisation by addition:* This procedure can be seen as a combination between *explicitation* and *amplification* (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995/2004), which involves adding elements to provide more context in the target version. The translator could decide to apply this procedure when certain elements in the source text are unclear due to culture-specific properties, semantic characteristics, or other deviant features of the source text.

3. *Re-creation of play on words:* Jokes and puns are often present in video games, as they try to make the player laugh and feel excited about playing the game. Humour is extremely likely to be language-specific, though, as many puns or jokes are restricted to one particular language. Consequently, translating humour is a complicated task that requires a fair degree of creativity to convey properly to the target audience. Simply ignoring the jokes in the source version and omitting them in the target version is unacceptable; the *skopos* of the video game will have been lost in the

localised product when it does not provide a satisfying and exhilarating gameplay experience.

4. *Deliberate use of regional expressions:* Each language has its own expressions and proverbs. Using references unique to the target language will give the video game a more personalised feeling, which allows the players to play the game as if it was originally intended for them. In *Lufia,* this is exemplified in the scene in which Maxim and Selan are getting married:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| The wedding needs some sort of attraction like this, don't you think? | Zullen we maar even wat leven in de trouwerij brengen? |

The translators actually combine word-play with a regional expression. In Dutch, *leven in de brouwerij brengen* means to make the atmosphere in a quiet place more festive, which would have been suitable enough for the target text, as it matches the message in the source version, namely to spice up the wedding. However, the translators added a humorous pun by changing *brouwerij* (lit: brewery) to *trouwerij* (lit: wedding), which would only be possible for a Dutch audience. This shows the sheer creativity of the translators, which amplifies the personalised gameplay experience created for the Dutch player.

### 2.6.3 Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy

The final model relevant to this thesis is Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995/2004) overview of seven translation procedures. Even though the model was not specifically developed for video game localisation purposes, a selection of the procedures are directly applicable to this practice. First, the complete overview will be given below, after which several items will be highlighted and used in the subsequent chapter. Vinay and Darbelnet distinguish two translation strategies: direct translation and oblique translation, the first being synonymous to literal translation (1995/2004). After the translator has confirmed the strategy, he can then apply the following procedures, with the first three belonging to direct translation and the latter four belonging to oblique translation (Munday, 2012, pp. 86-89):

1. Borrowing: A word from the source language (SL) is copied directly into the target language (TL), such as the use of the English words *computer* and *internet* in many languages.

2. Calque: A type of borrowing in which a structure or expression in the SL is transferred in a literal translation, such as the French calque *science-fiction* for the English.

3. Literal translation: A word-for-word translation which occurs frequently in languages from the same family and culture. A literal translation from English to French is illustrated in the following example:

   English source text (ST): I left my spectacles on the table downstairs.
   French target text (TT): J'ai laissé mes lunettes sur la table en bas.

4. Transposition: Transforming one part of speech into another, without changing the sense of the SL. For example, a change from verb to noun:

   English ST: As soon as she got up.
   French TT: Dès son lever (lit: upon her rising).

5. Modulation: Changing the semantics and point of view of the SL. The English *It is not difficult to show* can be modulated into the French *il est facile de démontrer* ['it is easy to show'].

6. Equivalence: Conveying a message from the source text to the target text using different stylistics or structures. This is illustrated by Vinay and Darbelnet by comparing the following proverbs:

   English ST: Like a bull in a china shop.
   French TT: Comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles (lit: like a dog in a game of skittles).

Whereas the structure is completely different, the message is similar, making this a clear example of what the equivalence procedure entails.

7. Adaptation: Changing a cultural reference when an element in the source culture does not exist in the target culture. For instance, when translating a text from English to French containing the popular sport cricket, one could opt to provide an adaptation by changing cricket to cycling, since cricket is very popular in the UK, but to a lesser extent in France. Cycling in France is comparable in popularity to cricket in the UK, so providing an adaptation in the target text can convey the same cultural equivalent.

Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy has a very broad scope, which makes it useful for a myriad of translation types. The key problem with this model in relation to localisation is that not all seven procedures are interesting from a video game translation perspective. For instance, transposition and modulation often heavily focus on grammatical and semantic structures that need to be changed, due to the distinct differences between the two languages. As a result, these two procedures can be regarded as natural phenomena that occur in interlingual translation. Munday (2012) refers to this as "servitude", which involves the obligatory application of the transposition and modulation procedures, leaving the translator no choice (p. 91). Similarly, equivalence also belongs mostly to the *servitude* category from the video game translator's point of view, as equivalence is something that can be expected from video game translators, whose profession is to act as mediators between two cultures (van Oers, 2010). The *skopos* of the source version might oblige the translator to make the video game suitable for a different culture, making the equivalence procedure not entirely optional. This procedure is therefore less relevant to video game translation and will not be used in the new model described in section 3.3.

In addition to the remaining four procedures of Vinay and Darbelnet, I would like to add one procedure, which is that of *omission*. This procedure entails deliberately leaving out a word or phrase, making it an active procedure the translator could apply. Translators may opt for the *omission* procedure when they face space constraints or encounter culture-sensitive elements. Conversely, *translation loss* is sometimes regarded as a procedure as

well, yet it is often unintentional due to the untranslatability of source text features. Therefore, *omission* is a more interesting translation procedure to research in the case study.

To conclude this chapter, the literature identifies the crucial stages of the video game localisation process in conjunction with its fundamental challenges. These challenges are often unique to video game localisation, drawing on a high degree of expertise in this matter. Moreover, it is claimed that translating video games requires additional translation procedures in comparison to other types of translation. The next chapter sets out to verify those claims by providing a new model based on these procedures, which will be put to practice in the subsequent case study.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the materials and method used in the case study. Before *Lufia* can be analysed in terms of the translation procedures that were used, it is important to describe the setting of the game, including the storyline and the gameplay mechanics. This way, the reader becomes more acquainted with the materials and is able to better understand the analysis offered in Chapter 4. Moreover, the reader needs to remember that *Lufia,* along with similar RPGs of the SNES era, is a so-called turn-based RPG that contains only written text. This is different in contemporary role-playing games (with spoken dialogue and voice-over), so it is appropriate to provide some background information on the early days of the RPG.

## 3.1 Materials

### 3.1.1 Introduction to *Lufia*

The events in *Lufia* take place ninety-nine years before the story of *Lufia & The Fortress of Doom* (1993)*,* the first instalment in the *Lufia* series. The opening scene of *Lufia & The Fortress of Doom* shows the ending scene of *Lufia,* in which the *sinistrals* meet their final demise, thus making *Lufia* a prequel in terms of storyline. *Lufia & The Fortress of Doom* was not released in Europe which is why its sequel was simply called *Lufia,* whereas the North American release was called *Lufia II: Rise of the Sinistrals. Lufia* tells the story of a monster hunter called Maxim, who sells his spoils to a shop in his peaceful hometown called Elcid. His childhood friend Tia owns the shop and later accompanies Maxim on his journey. When Maxim goes to the Cave to Sundletan to return a stolen key, he encounters a mysterious woman called Iris. She explains that it is Maxim's destiny to go on a journey to meet new companions and confront a group of powerful gods that is threatening the world of *Lufia*, the *sinistrals.* And so Maxim goes on a treacherous journey, fighting countless monsters and evil-doers, visiting a myriad of villages and kingdoms, and meeting new friends. Maxim even marries one of these friends, the female warrior called Selan, after which Selan gives birth to their child Jeros. Despite Selan's pregnancy and the birth of Jeros, the battle goes on and Maxim and Selan, along with their companions, find the sacred Dual Blade that gives them the ultimate power to defeat the four *sinistrals*. First, the *Sinistral of Destruction* Gades is defeated, after which the *Sinistral of Chaos* Amon is slain. In the grand finale it is revealed

that the mysterious Iris, who had been helping Maxim on his journey on several occasions, is the *Sinistral of Death* called Erim. Maxim and his friends have no choice but to defeat Erim and subsequently take down the *Master of Terror*, the leader of the four *sinistrals*, Daos. The final battles take place on Doom Island, which floats in the sky and is set to destroy the world of *Lufia* after the defeat of Daos. Making the ultimate sacrifice, Maxim and Selan give their lives to prevent Doom Island from crashing on the surface, saving their beloved ones.

The most striking characteristics in *Lufia*'s storytelling are the marriage of Maxim and Selan and the birth of their child Jeros. Moreover, the fact that two protagonists perish in order to save the rest of the world makes *Lufia* a truly memorable game in its genre in that period of time.

*Lufia* does not strictly build on existing literature, so it is basically a game on its own. It does contain some references to ancient mythology, though. Several mythological beasts appear in the game, such as the *basilisk*, the *minotaur*, and the *hydra*. Other mythological references include *Neptune*, Roman god of the sea, and *Hades*, Greek god of the underworld.

### 3.1.2 Gameplay mechanics

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the standards of RPGs have changed radically in the last few decades. Text-only RPGs have evolved into games including voice acting, subtitling, and songs. Furthermore, turn-based combat systems have mostly transformed into action-based combat systems. The turn-based combat system in Lufia, as shown in figure 1, revolves around planning your actions carefully in each round, because the player is required to input his commands for all characters in that particular turn, before they carry them out to defeat their opponents. The opponents can also attack the party members and it is the speed statistic that decides which character in battle can take the initiative by launching an attack first. Action-based combat, on the other hand, involves the player pressing buttons on the controller to perform direct attacks with hardly any interruptions from menus or turns. Some SNES games, such as *Secret of Mana*

*Fig. 1: Turn-based combat in Lufia*

(1993), already used this action-based combat system, which is illustrated in figure 2. As turn-based RPGs are often referred to as obsolete nowadays because of their slow pace and simplicity, many RPGs released today use an action-based combat system, which usually provides more exhilarating gameplay (Burgun, 2013). Even pioneers in the field of role-playing games and turn-based combat, such as Square Enix, use action-based combat systems in their contemporary *Final Fantasy* games as opposed to their classic *Final Fantasy* titles.

*Fig. 2: Action-based combat in Secret of Mana*

The combat system plays a decisive role in an RPG, since the main characters usually encounter countless monsters and villains on their journey. Throughout the story, these battles comprise one of the key elements of an RPG, so it is vital for game developers to make these battles challenging and rewarding whilst also attempting to avoid repetition. In the beginning of *Lufia,* Maxim and his companions face relatively harmless monsters such as red jellies and mosquitoes. In later parts of the game the party encounters more fearsome creatures, such as black dragons and mighty beasts. By slaying monsters, the party earns experience points. This enables them to level up and increase their statistics, such as health points, magic points, strength and intelligence. In addition to human companions, the party also consists of so-called *capsule monsters*. These are friendly animals or monsters that join the party in their quest. The capsule monsters can also obtain experience points to gain levels. Moreover, they can be fed unused pieces of equipment to have them evolve into their next class, changing their appearance and substantially upgrading their statistics and special moves.

New skills can be gained by equipping weapons, armour, and accessories, whereas new spells can be bought in magic shops. The party needs to acquire the best pieces of equipment and train extensively to confront and defeat the *sinistrals* in the grand finale.

## 3.2 Selection of Relevant Text Types

Selecting the appropriate materials for the analysis of the video game translation is a crucial and delicate task, as not every text element is either perfectly evident or particularly relevant. For instance, Prestopnik and Tang (2015) draw a significant distinction between two different types of in-game text, called diegetic and non-diegetic text. Diegetic text belongs to the actual game world and can be seen and experienced by the game characters. Figure 3 illustrates an example of diegetic text, because protagonist Maxim can actually hear and experience the utterance of *sinistral* Daos.


*Fig. 3: Diegetic text*

Another clear example of diegetic text is provided with regard to finding treasure chests. When a character finds a chest on which a message is carved, saying that he is required to find the treasure elsewhere, this is an example of diegetic text, since the in-game character can actually see the message. In contrast, non-diegetic text is used to provide the player with extra information, such as item names or in-game menus. So, if the character opens a chest and a message appears stating which item has been found, this is an example of non-diegetic text, since it does not belong to the game world, but it only has a function to the player in the real world (Prestopnik & Tang, 2015, p. 493). This distinction is put to practice in the analyses of the various text types in *Lufia*, as the game contains much non-diegetic text, such as the names and descriptions of items, monsters and spells. Nonetheless, it also contains diegetic text, which basically comprises the entire script of *Lufia*. It is expected that these two distinct text types greatly affect the translation procedures used in the localisation, because diegetic text usually contains longer sentences, such as character dialogues. Non-diegetic text, on the other hand, commonly consists of individual words or short phrases, as it becomes evident in the names of monsters and special attacks. The translation procedures may differ considerably because the dialogues, for instance, are more likely to contain humorous elements and deliberate use of regional expressions, which is expected to be largely absent in the non-diegetic text categories.


*Fig. 4: Non-diegetic text*

The diegetic text in *Lufia* can be divided into two distinct parts. In order to progress through the story, the player has to engage in specific in-game dialogues. These conversations can be counted and documented, as the player cannot avoid them if he strives to complete the game. Dialogues with random townspeople or other non-playable characters (NPCs) are optional and therefore virtually impossible to identify accurately as a researcher, because one can easily miss such a dialogue. Moreover, dialogues with NPCs tend to change after certain in-game events, making it extraordinarily difficult to record all of them, since it would entail conversing with every NPC each time an important event has occurred. Consequently, only the in-game dialogues in which the player is obligated to take part in order to advance through the main storyline have been selected for the analysis to ensure a text database that is 100% complete.

The North American version of *Lufia* contains 3,166 strings of text, in which 28,356 words have been identified. Fifty sentences include only ellipses, consisting of three-dots (…) or more (……?) and have thus been removed, as they prove irrelevant to the analysis. If a string contains a sentence that ends with an ellipsis, it is retained in the materials, since it still includes words uttered by a character. The localised Dutch version contains the same number of strings with a word count of 28,792, which is only a slight increase compared to the source version. This 1.54% increase in word count contradicts Chandler and Deming's statement that translated text is usually 20% or 30% bigger than the source text (2012, p.5). A logical explanation, though, is the fact that the translators were not granted the opportunity to add more text boxes, whilst at the same time not having the required space to deviate considerably from the original number of words within the existing boxes. It may be interesting to find out how the translators of *Lufia* dealt with this type of constrained translation.

In addition to the 3,166 strings of diegetic text, other non-diegetic text types will be analysed according to the model described in section 3.3. *Lufia* contains 208 unique monsters which will be examined as to how their names have been translated. Any duplicates have been omitted, since fighting a "boss", a powerful being or monster encountered at the end of a dungeon, multiple times does not have any influence on the name of the boss. Thirty-five *capsule monsters* have been identified; Maxim and his companions can find seven monsters, each with five different evolution stages. The 435 items that can be obtained throughout the game have been broken down into separate

sections: 107 weapons, 98 items and collectibles, 65 pieces of armour, 51 helmets, 44 shields, 39 rings, and 31 rocks and jewels. All those pieces of equipment give access to 158 special attacks called that cost Ikari points (IP), also called IP attacks. Finally, an additional 40 spells can be bought from magic shops.

## 3.3 Categorisation of Translation Procedures

So far, numerous translation procedures have been identified by Mangiron & O'Hagan (2006) and Vinay & Darbelnet (1995/2004) that are relevant to the case study in this thesis. Even though Vinay & Darbelnet provide other interesting translation strategies and procedures, they are not particularly relevant to the translation of video games. Therefore, the model provided in this section only consists of translation procedures that are applicable to the case study. Although the introduction of this thesis addressed the research question, I will provide it again and explain why the model will prove helpful in answering the research question:

To what extent does the video game *Lufia* show the use of transcreation in the Dutch translation and how significant are the differences between the uses of the literal translation procedure and the transcreation model?

The translation procedures mentioned in the model are all techniques that are used to overcome a translation problem, but there are key differences between translation strategies and procedures. In general, a translation strategy is the overall strategy that translators adopt before commencing the translation process. For instance, when they notice that a certain source text can easily be translated literally, the direct translation strategy, or sometimes referred to as literal translation, will be the one to use (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995/2004). Other procedures such as borrowing or omission can be used to aid the translator in the subsequent translation process. In other words, translation strategies, or occasionally called methods, are related to the complete text, whereas procedures are used for smaller strings of text or individual sentences (Newmark, 1988). When a text demands a creative approach, the translator can decide to adopt the transcreation model and use, for instance, the compensation procedure or contextualisation by addition to translate the text more freely. It is worth mentioning that transcreation is called a

translation model instead of a translation strategy (Mangiron & O'Hagan, 2006), but the overall applicability remains the same.

*Lufia* will be analysed by means of the following selection of translation procedures:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Definition** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | Recreating the source text freely in order to provide a similar gameplay experience. |
| 2. | Compensation | Introducing new strings of text to compensate for the loss of other strings. |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | Providing new names for key terminology and character names. |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | Adding text to the target version to provide more context. |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | Creating new humorous elements in the target version. |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | Using culture-specific expressions and idioms to personalise the game for the target audience |
| 7. | Borrowing | Directly copying a word from the source language into the target language. |
| 8. | Calque | Literally translating words or expressions non-existent in the target language |
| 9. | Literal translation | Translating word-for-word from the source text into the target text, adjusting them to the specific grammar rules of the target language. |
| 10. | Adaptation | Changing cultural elements of the source text into elements suitable for the target culture |
| 11. | Omission | Intentionally leaving out words or phrases of the source text |

*Table 1: The New Translation Procedures Model*

This is a new model that covers a strict selection of various translation procedures designed by Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1995/2004). The first six are

video game-specific procedures based on Mangiron and O'Hagan's transcreation method (2006) whereas the next four are general procedures developed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995/2004). The final procedure, omission, is an additional procedure not mentioned by the aforementioned linguists, but still believed applicable to the analysis. This model should cover all translational aspects of localising a video game, which is why this particular model is deemed highly relevant to the case study.

Both the diegetic and non-diegetic text will be analysed according to this model. The diegetic text consists of character dialogues and the non-diegetic text will be divided into numerous sections that address different in-game features, such as monster names, weapons, spells etc. They will be divided into separate sections, because each section may propose a different hypothesis and yield different results. I will count how many times a procedure occurs in each category and provide the results in a clear overview that will display the figures in absolute numbers and percentages. Ultimately, they will show which translation procedure is the most predominant in each of the text types, producing detailed insights as to how video game localisation involves using various translation techniques.

Transcreation is likely to occur very often in the diegetic text, because the localisers may not have had enough space to translate every string literally. For example, literature showed that a translated text is usually 20% or 30% bigger than the source text (Chandler & Deming, 2012, p.5). Section 3.2 points out, however, that the Dutch localisation of *Lufia* only sees a 1.54% increase compared to the North American version, which may indicate that the localisers were obligated to transcreate major parts of the game to overcome the spatial issues. Additionally, several experts on video game translation indicate that the translation of video games requires new techniques, so it is possible, considering these factors, to construct the hypothesis that transcreation is expected to be the most predominant translation technique.

Since the diegetic text contains longer and more complex sentences than the non-diegetic texts, it is expected that a wider variety of procedures are used for this text type. For instance, deliberate use of regional expressions and the re-creation of play on words are more likely to occur in character dialogues than they do in monster names or the names of shields. For some non-diegetic text sections, such as the equipment categories, literal translation is expected to be the most predominant translation procedure because many of those items include elements such as *sword*, *blade*, or *armor*, which can be literally

translated into Dutch with great ease. For monster names, however, it is expected that re-naming of key items and character names will be the most predominant translation procedure, because many monster names are specially invented for the game, which means that literal translations of those names are non-existent in the target text. Therefore, it will be interesting to ascertain how the different text types affect the use of the various translation procedures.

The results from this analysis will indicate the relevance of newly-developed game-related translation procedures. Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006) claimed that video game localisation demands different translation techniques. This case study will test that claim and the outcome may support or actually disprove this theory. It is expected that the analysis will yield new insights as to how video games are translated and which procedure is the most predominant in doing so.

This chapter has described the methodology that will be used in the analysis of *Lufia* and explained why this model is particularly relevant. The model covers all the translation procedures applicable to the translation of the video game. In the next chapter, I will present the principal findings of the case study by means of statistical analysis of the translation procedures that have been identified in the Dutch translation of *Lufia.*

# Chapter 4: Analysis and Results

This chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis of the translation procedures used in *Lufia.* As mentioned in the previous chapter, there is a clear distinction between diegetic and non-diegetic text. Accordingly, this chapter will be structured into two sections. Section 4.1 will cover the diegetic text of the game, i.e. the characters' texts, whereas section 4.2 will discuss all non-diegetic text elements, such as the names of monsters and various types of items and equipment. Each section provides a detailed overview of the number of occurrences of the translation procedures in absolute numbers as well as percentages. Subsequently, several examples taken from the game will be provided to clarify the statistics.

## 4.1 Diegetic Text

The diegetic text is comprised of 3,166 strings of text. One string of text equals one text box, which may include multiple sentences. Consequently, for each string of text, it is quite likely that multiple translation procedures can be determined. For instance, in the following string, three different procedures can be identified:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Look, monsters are cheap these days. The city's suffering so I can't pay the top price. | Kijk, de monsters zijn tegenwoordig talrijk en dus goedkoop. Ik kan niet zo'n hoge prijs betalen. |

Firstly, this string contains contextualisation by addition, because the translators added *talrijk en dus* to indicate the reason why the monsters are currently relatively inexpensive. At the same time, the translators omitted the first element of the second sentence of the source text. The target text does not mention the reason why shop owner Tia cannot afford to pay such a high price, which indicates omission. The remainder of the string has mostly been translated literally, so the literal translation procedure was also adopted to translate this string.

In general, when a procedure occurs more than once in an individual string, it counts as one occurrence, because I have performed the analysis on string level rather than

sentence level and a string can contain more than one sentence. The following example illustrates this:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| Didn't you pick up the key a little kid threw at you? We'd like it back, if you don't mind. | Heb jij de sleutel? We zouden hem graag terug willen hebben. |

The omission procedure occurs twice in this string since some text elements have been left out in each of the sentences. The first sentence lacks background information as to how the enemy character found the key, whilst the second sentence is different in Dutch because of the omission of *if you don't mind*, which could express a slight degree of annoyance or a considerable degree of politeness. Nevertheless, they have been counted as one occurrence of the omission procedure. In addition to omission, this string also illustrates the use of transcreation and literal translation. The first sentence has been translated rather freely in addition to the omission that occurred, whereas the second sentence shows the use of literal translation, because *we'd like it back* corresponds closely to *we zouden hem graag terug willen hebben*.

### 4.1.1 Characters' texts

Transcreation was expected to be the most predominant translation procedure in this category based on the reasons mentioned in section 3.3. Owing to space constraints and the restricted type of translation, the translators would most likely have translated *Lufia* creatively to overcome the issues unique to video game translation. Moreover, a wide variety of procedures was expected to be used, because the characters' texts contain long and complex sentences and sometimes specific linguistic features such as regional expressions, idiolects, and jokes.

All the strings of the characters' texts have been examined carefully and the results are provided in the following table:

| | Translation procedure | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 596 | 16.55 |
| 2. | Compensation | 13 | 0.36 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 7 | 0.19 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 59 | 1.64 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 16 | 0.44 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 111 | 3.08 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 70 | 1.94 |
| 8. | Calque | 2 | 0.06 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 2530 | 70.26 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 197 | 5.47 |
| | **Total** | **3601** | **100** |

*Table 2: Translation Procedures Characters' Texts*

Since multiple translation procedures can be found in one string, it has been determined that in the 3,166 strings of text, a total number 3,601 instances of translation procedures have been identified. Clearly noticeable is the use of the literal translation procedure, which is used in 70.26% of all the characters' texts. This is striking considering the fact that the literature claimed that video game localisation requires new translation procedures. The translators of *Lufia* managed to translate the game using mostly literal translation and apparently did not need to transcreate the source text as much as the literature indicated. These results therefore disprove my hypothesis formulated at the beginning of this section.

Literal translation occasionally includes changes with regard to grammar and lexis and they could range from obligatory alterations or optional ones (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995/2004). These changes are called transpositions and modulations and although they involve altering the source text in various ways, it does not always mean that it makes the

translation totally free, and thus a transcreation. The following example shows the use of the literal translation procedure, even though a transposition has taken place:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| The door just closed! | De deur is dicht! |

The translators used the transposition procedure by changing the verb *closed* to the adjective *dicht*, as well as changing the tense of the sentence. However, it still counts as literal translation. The meaning of the target sentence is too similar to identify this as transcreation. In other words, not only does the literal translation procedure involve exact word-for-word translations, it can also entail making slight adjustments in terms of grammar or lexis to provide a more suitable translation for the target language. A similar process takes place in the next string, which contains four sentences:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| What a weird woman. Well, she saved us alright. I should thank her... Where is she? | Wat een vreemde vrouw. Nou ja, ze heeft ons gered. Ik moet haar bedanken… Waar is ze nu? |

Only the literal translation procedure is applied in this string. Since the analysis is carried out on string level, literal translation is counted only once, rather than four individual times. One may argue that the translators left out the word *alright* from the source text and added the word *nu* in the target text, but these changes are not radical enough to define them as omission and contextualisation by addition respectively. In other words, inconsequential omissions or additions are not counted towards the omission and contextualisation by addition procedure. Based on the absolute number of the occurrences of literal translation, 2,530 times in 3,166 strings, it is fair to conclude that the translators maintained great fidelity to the source text. The examples mentioned above are only two of the many instances that illustrate the strong resemblance between the English and Dutch language, which resulted in the fact that many strings could simply be translated literally. Generally, the translators did not drastically change the source text unless they deemed it appropriate or were required to do so.

The transcreation method is used 596 times in *Lufia*'*s* storyline, which constitutes 16.55% of the total number of translation procedures used. Although this procedure is used less than literal translation, it still demonstrates the creativity with which the translators attempted to provide a freer target text to enhance the overall experience for the Dutch players. It is difficult, however, to exactly pinpoint in which scenarios the translators opted for literal translation and which situations were more liable to be translated creatively, so a clear pattern is absent. Nevertheless, this creativity is highlighted in the example below, in which the translators transcreated *I feel like something's missing without it* at Maxim and Selan's wedding into a phrase that includes a different reference:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| You know about that, huh? I feel like something's missing without it. | Je hebt het gezien? Ik voel me een beetje naakt zonder mijn zwaard. |

The target text expresses the message creatively by adding a phrase which means *I feel a bit naked without my sword*, which is not present in the source text. Both texts convey a similar message, yet the target version uses a creative phrase to do so.

A different example shows the use of transcreation across two strings, whilst at the same time creating a humorous effect in the target text:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Dekar: Not to show off or anything, but, besides being great and all, I'm good at making friends! | Dekar: Ik wil niet opscheppen hoor, maar ik ben behoorlijk populair bij de vrouwtjes. |
| Guy: No woman in her right mind would befriend you! | Guy: Ach, schiet toch op! Geen vrouw die jou ziet staan! |

Dekar is a rather conceited swordsman, who emphasises more than once throughout the game that all ladies fancy him. The first string of the source text mainly focuses on making friends, whereas the target text directly refers to ladies by using the word *vrouwtjes*, which includes a diminutive suffix to display Dekar's vanity even more clearly. The second string incorporates an extra sentence in the target text. One might consider this a

contextualisation by addition, yet to convey *in her right mind* properly and to strengthen the emotion of irritation, the translators opted to include an extra sentence, resulting in a transcreation rather than a contextualisation, because it does not add any new elements to the target text to provide more context. The target text does include a regional expression, though. *Geen vrouw die jou ziet staan* (lit: no woman who sees you standing) is a Dutch expression used to say that no woman is interested in you. This expression is essentially similar to the message in the source text, but by transcreating the source text and including a regional expression, the translators have produced a more personalised translation for Dutch players.

Even though the transcreation method was used less than first hypothesised, the examples above show that the translators carefully considered when and where it was appropriate to translate strings creatively. Overall, whenever strings would turn out more natural or more interesting in Dutch by using transcreation, the translated tried to adopt the creative approach. Nevertheless, based on the surprising results compiled in table 2, the literal translation procedure remains by far the most predominant procedure in all diegetic text, meaning that the translators deemed a creative approach unnecessary or unsuitable most of the times.

The omission procedure has been used in 5.47% of all the characters' texts. It sometimes remains debatable as to why the translators decided to leave things out. Space constraints may play an important role in deciding to omit an element from the source text, but in most cases, the rationale behind the omissions is not clearly evident. The following example illustrates the use of omission without an obvious reason:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Maxim: I'll be alright. | Maxim: Maak je geen zorgen. |
| Tia: You always say that. But I always worry. | Tia: Ik maak me altijd zorgen. |

There is evidently enough space to include both sentences in the second string. *Dat zeg je altijd* could have been added to the target text to provide a correct translation for *you always say that*. Although it is not particularly relevant information that is left out, it remains unclear why the translators omitted the first sentence.

In contrast to omissions that do not lead to significant consequences, the translation of *Lufia* also has several instances where the translators kept some valuable information hidden from the players. At one point in the game, the party is given a VIP card as a reward for bringing peace between two countries. The source text clearly indicates that the card can be used in the casino on Forfeit Island, but the target text leaves out this essential element:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| You can go to the VIP room in the basement of the casino on Forfeit Island with this card. | Met deze kaart kun je de VIP-kamer in de kelder van het casino binnen. |

By omitting the exact place where to put the VIP card to use, the player is left wondering where to go to. The player would have to find the casino by accident or by talking to townspeople to hear rumours about a large casino on Forfeit Island, or *Verloren Eiland* as it is called in the target version. It could be possible that the name of the island had not been translated before the translators encountered this string, but otherwise, based on the number of characters in other text boxes that contained more characters than this string, the translators had enough space to include *op het Verloren Eiland*. Leaving out only three words from the source text can thus affect the gameplay experience greatly.

The previous example illustrates that some cases should be translated in meticulous detail. However, this is not always possible. If there is a play on words that only works in the source language, the translators are obliged to find a different solution to the problem. The example below shows a play on words concerning Tia's name, which is absent in the target text:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| My name...Tia, like tear. Because of this, I was always teased and always crying. | Vroeger werd ik vaak geplaagd en dan moest ik altijd huilen. |

The source text links *Tia* to the word *tear,* which can be pronounced in a similar way. There would be no way to pronounce *Tia* like *tear* in Dutch, as the Dutch equivalent of *tear* is

*traan*. Therefore, the translators opted to transcreate the sentence and omit the entire reference.

Deciding what and when to omit a text element is a complex, yet fundamental task. The translator has to take various aspects into consideration, such as space, relevance, and references of both the source and target text in order to provide the most suitable translation.

Deliberate use of regional expressions makes up for 3.08% of the total number of procedures. Whereas this may seem negligible compared to the previously mentioned procedures, it means that 111 expressions have been used especially for the Dutch players. Including regional expressions in translations provides a more personalised feel to the game, as if it has been developed for the specific target audience. Firstly, the translators of *Lufia* occasionally included regional expressions because they were also used in the source text:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Too late, kiddo. I'm not going to buy that! | Te laat, jochie. Daar trap ik niet in. |

The source text expression *I'm not going to buy that* involves not believing what the other person says, which is accurately conveyed in the target text through the expression *daar trap ik niet in* (lit: I am not going to step in that). The translators could have opted for a literal phrase, but it is this idiomatic language that makes the target text particularly appealing for the Dutch audience.

Secondly, there are some regional expressions in cases where the source text does not contain one:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| But don't worry! There is a Reset spell that sets it all up again. | Maar wees gerust! Met de Herstart-spreuk komt alles weer op zijn pootjes terecht. |

The source text provides a normal phrase that explains what happens when you use the *Reset* spell, i.e. all objects that have been moved in the room will return to their original

positions. The target text, however, uses the idiomatic expression *op zijn pootjes terecht komen* (lit: to land on its feet), meaning that everything will be alright once *Reset* has been cast.

Despite the fact that the overall percentage of the deliberate use of regional expressions is relatively low compared to other procedures, the examples above illustrate the enhancement of the Dutch character of the localised version and the creativity with which the translators try to achieve that.

The borrowing procedure has been used in 1.94% of the total and mainly consists of the borrowing of character names, such as the protagonists Maxim, Artea, Selan and Guy, or the names of towns and cities, such as Sundletan and Parcelyte. The latter examples show that the translators opted to borrow the place names, even though they evidently maintain the foreign spelling. Contrarily, the name of a town called Trebble was localised as Trebbel in the target version, which fits the spelling rules of the Dutch language, making it a calque rather than borrowing. Calque, though, only makes up 0.06% of the total in the entire storyline. The borrowing procedure was mainly used while translating names, which makes it fair to conclude that hardly any common lexis in the source text was suitable for borrowing.

Even though this thesis only considers borrowing in general, there are other interesting theories on this translation procedure. For instance, Molina and Albir (2002) have classified two subdivisions of borrowing: *pure borrowing* and *naturalized borrowing* (p. 510). Pure borrowing entails the direct use of a word from the source language in the target language without any spelling changes, whereas naturalized borrowing copies a word into the target language whilst making them fit the spelling rules of the target language. So, for example, if the English word *football* is translated into Indonesian as *futbol*, they would classify that as naturalized borrowing. A serious weakness with this theory, however, is that the line between literal translation, borrowing, and calque, would be too fine in order to categorise them properly. One could claim, for instance, that *futbol* is a literal translation of *football*, according to the descriptions given by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995/2004). One would need to thoroughly research whether some words already existed in the target language, because otherwise it could be an example of literal translation. For instance, in Dutch, *voetbal* would be considered a literal translation of *football*, which emphasises the ambiguity surrounding the borrowing procedure. To avoid any inconsistencies, I will therefore only use the term *borrowing* in the sense of pure borrowing. Calques are often regarded as a

combination between borrowing and literal translation whenever non-existent words are translated into another language. For instance, the non-existent word *sinistral* has been translated as *sinistraal* in the target version, which is a calque, because *sinistral* has been copied and adjusted to the spelling rules of the Dutch language. The literal translation and calque procedure have been applied according to Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy.

Contextualisation by addition was adopted in 1.64% of the total number of procedures. Only 59 cases of contextualisation have been identified in the entire storyline. Adding new elements to the target text can provide extra context in certain scenarios or evoke a greater sense of immersion, as the translators include something that is only present in the target version. This may have the same function as the use of regional expressions to a certain extent, because the players encounter, albeit unknowingly, phrases in character dialogues unique to their version.

Contextualisation is not only used to immerse the players more deeply in the game, it can also be applied to clarify certain actions. When discussing the omission procedure, an example was highlighted in which the translators omitted a valuable piece of information regarding the VIP card. The next example, however, illustrates the opposite:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Excerion's been remodeled. You can submerge by pressing the button at sea. | Excerion is omgebouwd. Als je op zee bent, moet je op "A" drukken om te duiken. |

The source text only tells the player to press a button to submerge with the remodelled ship Excerion, without explaining which particular button to press. The target text explicitly describes which button on the control pad to use to submerge the ship. Even though the player would probably have ascertained which button to push by means of trial and error, it shows the translators' abilities to contextualise the source text in a way that it enhances the overall gameplay experience for the Dutch players.

Even though the number of uses of contextualisation by addition may seem trivial, when combined with the uses of the other creative procedures, one could say that the translators adopted a wide variety of techniques to translate *Lufia* creatively to a certain extent.

There are some translation procedures that occur below the one percent mark, yet it is still worth elaborating on them, because there may be valid reasons why they are barely used. For instance, it is not surprising that re-creation on play of words does not occur very often, because a constant play on words or punning could be regarded as superfluous and may actually impede a satisfying gaming experience rather than improve. Some of the re-creations include figures of speech such as alliteration, whereas others contain clever use of words. The first is shown in the following example, in which the translators used alliteration similar to the source text:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Idura: So, are you the strongest warrior in this castle? The top wimp? | Idura: Zo, dus jij bent de sterkste krijger in dit kasteel? De top-slappeling? |
| Dekar: Not just here, ya big blob. I'm the strongest warrior anywhere! | Dekar: Even dimmen, jij grote griezel. Ik ben de sterkste krijger van waar dan ook! |

*Big blob* demonstrates the use of alliteration as both words start with the same consonant sound. The target text contains the same figure of speech as shown with *grote griezel*, which also maintains the humorous effect of Dekar's idiolect. His way of speaking deviates from all the other characters in the game, which is why it is of paramount importance to retain his idiolect in the target version if Dekar is to resemble the Dekar in the source version.

A similar use of alliteration, which also includes a regional expression, can be found in the example below:

| **Source Text** | **Target Text** |
|---|---|
| Such a stinging tongue! Come, my fiendish friends, TAKE HIM! | Wat een praatjes! Kom mijn vervaarlijke vrienden, GRIJP HEM! |

Firstly, the source text contains an expression which is rather marked, because *stinging tongue* is not regarded as a common expression to exclaim that somebody uses foul language. The Dutch version contains *wat een praatjes*, which is an unmarked expression to indicate that a person is full of himself and talks big. In addition to the use of this regional

expression, the target text also presents an alliteration. *Fiendish friends* and *vervaarlijke vrienden* are nearly identical in terms of appearance as well as semantics.

Another form of re-creation of play on words present in *Lufia* is punning. The translators occasionally included puns, even though they were absent in the source version. Consider the following example:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| It's not only my eyes that are excellent. I am also a good swordsman. My name is Hans. | Niet alleen mijn zicht is scherp. Mijn zwaard ook, en ik weet ermee om te gaan. Mijn naam is Hans. |

The source text solely contains Hans's characteristics without any play on words. The target text, however, presents a clever pun to describe Hans's sight and his sword using the word *scherp* (lit: sharp). *Mijn zicht is scherp* and *mijn zwaard ook* means that Hans has a sharp eye as well as a sharp sword, which, in fact, could have been used in the source text too. Nevertheless, it shows the translator's creativity to optimise the Dutch version by adopting a variety of creative translation procedures.

Again, even though the number of uses of re-creation of play on words may seem inconsequential, it is these subtle techniques that make the translation more creative and more personalised for the target audience, despite the fact that some of the creative procedures are only used to a small extent.

Compensation has been used in only 13 times in the characters' texts, which is not substantial enough to draw any valid conclusions from. The compensation procedure often occurs between multiple strings, where the loss of a text element in one string is compensated for in a different string. The following example sees the loss of a question asked by Dekar, which is compensated in the next string by adding new text to connect seamlessly:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| Dekar: Yeah, I've heard of him. He destroyed Gordovan all by himself, right? Man, is that for real? | Dekar: Ik heb over hem gehoord. Hij heeft heel Gordovan in z'n eentje verwoest, toch? Ongelooflijk! |
| Maxim: Very real, unfortunately. | Maxim: Maar wel de waarheid, vrees ik. |

Maxim answers the question in the source text by repeating the word *real*. This is impossible in the target text due to the absence of the question. *Ongelooflijk* (lit: unbelievable) conveys a similar message to the source text and to connect the next string to the previous string, the translators added *maar wel* (lit: but it is), which emphasises the feeling of disbelief. Although the translators included new elements in the target version, it is an example of compensation rather than contextualisation, since they were required to add extra words because of the omission in the previous string.

A logical reason for the infrequency of the compensation procedure is that fact that the translators hardly had any space to compensate for any omissions. No text boxes could be added and the translators were required to comply to a strict number of characters in a text box. In other words, if an element was lost in one string, the translators would most likely not be able compensate for that loss and add it to the message in the next string, because it would conflict with the maximum number of characters. In conclusion, translating with severe space constraints occasionally limits the opportunity to be creative in the translation process.

Re-naming of key terminology and character names hardly occurs in the character dialogues. Only 7 cases of re-naming were identified, which makes up for 0.19% of the total. As mentioned in section 2.6.2, the translators changed the name of an NPC called Kim to Pim since Kim is normally regarded as a girl's name rather than a boy's name. Additionally, two silly thieves called Berty and Bart were called Bertje and Bart, since Berty is not a common name in the Netherlands. By adding the diminutive suffix *–je* to Bertje, which is normally used to express something little, the degree of clumsiness is also amplified. Interestingly however, it is one of the few names that were changed in the target version. There are various other names that are rare in the Netherlands that were left as is, such as Karyn, Margos, and Milka, the latter of which would remind most Dutch people of a well-known chocolate brand.

Several instances of re-naming key are based on possible errors in the source version. When Maxim is in quest for some gems, the only thing he finds is a green stone, which the source version refers to as a blue stone:

| Source Text | Target Text |
|---|---|
| Yeah. There's only this blue stone and that's all. | Nee, alleen deze groene kei. Verder niets. |

*Fig. 5: The green stone*

Clearly, the game displays a green object as shown in figure 5. Apparently, the original translators of *Lufia* were either not aware of the fact that the Japanese can use the word *ao* to refer to either blue or green ("Blue-green distinction in Language," Wikipedia, n.d.) or they did not have the chance to play the game and see the actual screens. Although the exact reason for the slip-up cannot be confirmed, the Dutch localisation team was able to verify the real colour and thus re-named the stone green instead of blue. It is expected that re-naming occurs more frequently in the non-diegetic text categories, since those often include imaginary names of monsters, items, and equipment, which may require the translators to completely re-name them in the target language.

No adaptations have been identified in the entire game, which may seem striking at first, but readily explicable when digging deeper into the matter. As section 2.5 described, Nintendo of America maintained a strict policy on cultural sensitivities. Accordingly, nearly every reference to mythology, religion, or nudity had to be removed from the game. The omission of all these references occurred in the localisation of the Japanese version of *Lufia* into the North American version. The European version was subsequently localised based on that "filtered" version instead of the original Japanese one, so any possible cultural insensitivities had already been omitted. Therefore, there were hardly any adaptations necessary in the Dutch version. Despite the fact that the Dutch *Lufia* includes a monster called *devil* and equipment that refers to gods, these instances cannot be identified as adaptations, because the translators merely re-named them based on personal preference rather than making them particularly suitable for the Dutch culture.

On the one hand, we can conclude that the translators relied heavily on the literal translation procedure to localise this video game. On the other hand, however, the results from the analysis also show that 22.26% of the entire game was translated with the use of various translation procedures specifically related to video game localisation. Even though it disproves my hypothesis to a great degree that transcreation would be the most predominant procedure in *Lufia*'s diegetic text, this section has illustrated that using creative translation techniques affects the personalised feeling of the target version significantly. In short, while literal translation is by far the most predominant translation procedure in all diegetic text, the translators still managed to often express their creativity and enhance the quality and the Dutch character of their localisation.

## 4.2 Non-diegetic Text

### 4.2.1 Monster names

*Lufia* counts a total 208 monsters, each with a unique name. They range from harmless jellies to the evil *sinistrals*. In contrast to the remarkable diversity in translation procedures used in the diegetic text, only five are present in the analysis of the monster names. There is, however, a plausible reason for this. The monster names only consist of one of two words, which limits the opportunity for compensation, contextualisation by addition, and omission. Re-creation of play on words and the deliberate use of regional expressions are both absent from this analysis as well, because wordplay and idioms occur more often in dialogues rather than in individual monster names. I initially expected re-naming of key terminology and character names to be the most predominant translation procedure in this section, because monsters names are often neologisms, being completely new and made up by the developers. Consequently, if the monster names are new, the translators of the video game would need to find a suitable translation or equivalent for a monster name specially coined for this particular game. Literal translation would not be an option, because a literal translation does not exist, meaning that the translators need to be creative. The results of the analysis of all monster names are presented in the following table:

| | Translation procedure | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 46 | 22.12 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 31 | 14.90 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 38 | 18.27 |
| 8. | Calque | 4 | 1.92 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 89 | 42.79 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **208** | **100** |

*Table 3: Translation Procedures Monster Names*

Evidently, the most prominent translation procedure in this category is literal translation, albeit with a lower percentage than in the characters' texts. Many monster names have a clear Dutch equivalent, which facilitated the translation process, because most of the time the translators could literally translate them. The remarkable similarities between the English and Dutch language are revealed in several examples. For instance, monsters such as *ammonite*, *shadow*, and *red plant* were literally translated as *ammoniet*, *schaduw*, and *rode plant* respectively. Apparently, many monster names had a literal counterpart in the target version, which resulted in the fact that literal translation was used the most, disproving the hypothesis constructed at the beginning of this section.

Transcreation was used in 22.12% of all the monster names. Some of the names were seemingly transcreated due to space constraints. For example, whereas *bat* was simply translated into *vleermuis,* which is a literal translation, *big bat* was transcreated into *bruine*

vleer, probably because *bruine vleermuis* would have been too long. They even changed a defining characteristic of the monster, because *bruine vleer* has the meaning of *brown bat* instead of *big bat*. A similar case is shown in the *silver dragon* monster, which was not literally translated as *zilveren draak*, but transcreated into *zilverdraak*, which saved the translators two letters and an extra space.

In other cases, the translators applied the transcreation method to make the monster names more suitable for the target audience. For instance, *fighter ork*, *rogue flower,* and *warm eye,* were translated as *orksoldaat* (lit: ork soldier), *gruwelbloem* (lit: horror flower), and *brandend oog* (lit: *burning eye*) respectively. *Warm eye* could have been literally translated into *warm oog* but *brandend oog* makes the monster sound more fierce and more vicious and fits the monster better since it is encountered late in the game, meaning that the monster is rather strong.

Furthermore, for neologisms, new monster names specifically invented for this game, transcreations were often used. This process is exemplified in the *ochi warrior*, of which the *ochi* element exists in neither the source language nor the target language. It was translated into Dutch as *ochi krijger*, yet it cannot be identified as a literal translation since the first element *ochi* was not literally translated, but borrowed. On the other hand, it is not borrowing either, because the second element *warrior* was literally translated into *krijger*. Calque is not applicable here as not all elements are non-existent, whereas re-naming does not apply because the translators did not invent a completely new name for this monster. Adaptation, omission, compensation, contextualisation by addition and deliberate use of regional expressions are also inapplicable in this case, meaning that only the transcreation method remains to categorise this hybrid of borrowing and literal translation.

Borrowing makes up for 18.27% of the total number of translation procedures. As mentioned in section 4.1.1, only pure borrowing applies to this category, meaning that any adjustments with regard to spelling or style result in a different procedure. In other words, neologisms such as *brokion, antares,* and *waiban* have been classified as borrowing, because they retained their exact names in the target version without any alterations. Even when the literal translation of a monster name taken from mythology or other sources is the same in the target version as it is in the source version, it is still regarded as a borrowing; pure borrowing to be precise. In other words, monsters in the source version such as *salamander*, *medusa*, and *tank*, which were directly borrowed into the target version, are still considered

borrowing even though their Dutch literal translations are also *salamander*, *medusa*, and *tank* respectively. Conversely, in the case of the *T Rex,* which was translated as *T-rex* in Dutch, a hyphen was added to adjust to the Dutch spelling rules, making it a literal translation rather than a borrowing.

Only four calques were identified in all the monster names, occasionally because the source version contained errors. For example, *minataurus* and *nosferato* should have been named *minotaur,* or *minotauros* in Greek, and *nosferatu* if they were to correctly convey the mythological half-man and half-bull creature and the vampire, thus making the names in the source version non-existent. The localisation included the correct Dutch names *minotaurus* and *nosferatu* by means of the calque procedure.

Thirty-one monsters were re-named in the translation process, which disproves my hypothesis. Generally, when the translators radically changed the name of a monster, it is categorised as re-naming. This is shown in monsters such as *bolt fish*, *asashin*, and *unicorn*, which were re-named as *vechtvis* (lit: fight fish), *terrorist* (lit: terrorist), and *zwaardvis* (lit: swordfish) respectively. The latter illustrates the peculiarity of some monster names in the source version. The party fights the *unicorn* (figure 6) at sea and it resembles a swordfish, which makes the player wonder why the original translators decided to name the monster *unicorn.*


*Fig. 6: The unicorn*

Occasionally, there is a fine line between transcreation and re-naming in the non-diegetic categories, because it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Whenever the name and the characteristics of the monster have been changed significantly, it is considered re-naming. For instance, the source version contains a monster called *red bat* (figure 7), which was translated as *grijze vleer* (lit: grey bat) in Dutch. The difference in colour is striking, because one may assume that the translators would have been aware of the difference between grey and red. A rational explanation could be, though, that the North American localisation team might not have been able to play the game. Similarly, the source version


*Fig. 7: The red bat*

contains the *poison lizard* and the *needle lizard*, both of which resemble hedgehogs rather than lizards. Therefore, the translators re-named them as *gifegel* (lit: poisonous hedgehog) and *steekegel* (lit: stinging hedgehog) to properly match the name to the image of the monster.

*Fig. 8: The poison lizard*

In contrast to re-naming, transcreation occurs when the translators provide the monster with a more suitable name without greatly altering the name and the monster's characteristics. For example, the *dark skull* monster was named *doodshoofd* (lit: skull) in the localised version. The translators omitted the adjective, most likely owing to space constraints, because *duistere schedel* would have been too long. Similarly, the *well genie* was localised as *watergeest* (lit: water genie), maintaining the same characteristics as the monster in the source version. A literal translation would result in the *putgeest*, which sounds awkward and marked. Moreover, it is not considered re-naming, because *well* and *water* both involve the element of water, making *watergeest* not a completely new name for this particular monster. Instead, the translators took the freedom to transcreate this monster by changing one element of the name into a more appropriate word, preserving the original characteristics of the *well genie*. This distinction between transcreation and re-naming will be applied to all subsequent sections.

In conclusion, the majority of the monster names were literally translated, which does not support the expectations formed beforehand. In addition, if the translators did translate monster names creatively, they did so subtly in most cases, resulting in transcreation rather than re-naming. This illustrates that even the names of monsters, which were first thought to be re-named most of the time due to the many neologisms, could just be translated literally because of the close resemblance between the source and target language. However, when combining the scores of all the creative translation techniques, it shows that 37.02% of all monster names have been translated creatively, which is a much higher percentage than determined in the diegetic text category.

### 4.2.2 Capsule monsters

Capsule monsters are friendly monsters encountered throughout the game that aid the party in battle. There are seven different capsule monsters, each with five different forms. The party can feed the monster unwanted or unusable items and equipment to evolve it into

its next stage, allowing it to improve its statistics and gain new special attacks. Similar to the previous section, re-naming of key terminology and character names was expected to be the most predominant procedure, as the capsule monster names include some peculiar names that were thought to require a creative approach.

The results of the analysis of all 35 capsule monsters are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 12 | 34.29 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 5 | 14.29 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 2 | 5.71 |
| 8. | Calque | 1 | 2.86 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 15 | 42.86 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **35** | **100** |

*Table 4: Translation Procedures Capsule Monsters*

Whereas literal translation remains the most predominant translation procedure in this category, the gap between this procedure and transcreation is not as substantial as in other categories, mostly owing to one particular capsule monster. The first capsule monster the party encounters is *Foomy,* which resembles a foamy creature, as shown in figure 9. Its

name might be a creative play on words based on the word *foamy*, since bubbles are clearly visible. The target version transcreated the name *Foomy* into *Pluis* (lit: fluff), which suits the monster perfectly as the bubbles may well be bits of fluff coming off the monster. The evolutionary stages of *Foomy* are called *Foomy S*, *Foomy M, Foomy L*, *Foomy XL*, and *Gold Fox* in the source version, which have subsequently been named *Pluis S*, *Pluis M*, *Pluis L*, *Pluis XL*, and *Goudvos* in the target version. Four instances of transcreation can be identified in the analysis of this monster, which contributes a significant share to the total.

*Fig. 9: Foomy S*

Five capsule monsters were re-named, receiving different characteristics in the target version. For example, *Blue Bird* was re-named as *Roofvogel*, which literally means bird of prey. Another instance of re-naming is the *Sea Giant*, which was called *Neptunus* in the target version, sharing the same name as the Roman god of the sea. This is interesting considering the fact that all mythological references had to be removed in the source version. Apparently, references to gods and mythology were allowed in the Dutch version of *Lufia.*

The literal translation procedure was again the most predominant procedure in this category. It appears that re-naming was not used as frequently as expected, although when combined with transcreation, this section shows a reasonable balance between creative and literal translation.

### 4.2.3 Weapons

Weapons boost the characters' attack power in battle and provide access to special attacks called IP attacks, which will be further explained in section 4.2.10. As with all pieces of equipment, weapons can be bought in shops or found in treasure chests and occasionally, a monster may drop a weapon as well. Literal translation was expected to be the most predominant translation procedure, because many weapons are based on existing weapons either used today or in medieval times. Alternatively, even when some weapons are non-existent, they may still possess characteristics that can be literally translated with consummate ease. The results of the analysis of all the weapons are presented in the table below:

| | Translation procedure | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 19 | 17.76 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 11 | 10.28 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 7 | 6.54 |
| 8. | Calque | 5 | 4.67 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 65 | 60.75 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **107** | **100** |

*Table 5: Translation Procedures Weapons*

The analysis of the localisation of the weapons category yields predictable results and confirms the hypothesis. Similar to the monster names category, literal translation is by far the most used translation procedure. The localisation team was able to provide literal translations for the majority of the weapons. Swords and blades such as the *old sword, freeze sword*, and *lucky blade* were all translated literally to *oud zwaard*, *vrieszwaard*, and *gelukszwaard*. Despite the absence of the distinction between a sword and a blade in the target language, these weapons are still considered examples of literal translation, because their meanings are nearly identical.

Nineteen weapons were transcreated, meaning that either the translators were unable to find a literal translation or they opted for a more suitable name based on the target language or their own preferences. Again, space constraints play a pivotal role in deciding when to transcreate a certain weapon. The *deadly sword*, *bronze sword*, and *bunny*

*sword* were all transcreated into *doodszwaard*, *brons-zwaard*, and *konijnzwaard*, meaning that the translators abridged the adjectives or made compound nouns to maximise the available space. For example, the literal translations of these weapons are *dodelijk zwaard*, *bronzen zwaard*, and *konijnenzwaard*. These translations are considerably longer than their transcreated counterparts and may not have fitted in the game. It is tricks such as these that demonstrate the localisers' creativity to effectively deal with spatial issues.

Re-naming comprises 10.28% of the total number of procedures, which equals 11 occurrences in absolute numbers. Re-naming involves changing the defining characteristics of certain weapons, making the alteration more substantial than transcreation. Weapons such as the *royal whip*, *holy whip*, and *crazy blade* were re-named as *luxe zweep* (lit: luxurious whip), *godenzweep* (lit: divine whip), and *maniemes* (lit: mania knife). As section 2.6.2 described, re-naming could be regarded as a subdivision of transcreation, so when the percentages of the two are combined, one could conclude that over 25% of all the weapons were translated creatively.

Borrowing and calque serve a minor role in the weapon analysis. A total of seven weapons, such as *gladius*, *franshiska,* and *kukri* were copied directly into the target version and five weapons showed delicate adjustments to make them suitable for the Dutch localisation. For instance, the *zirco rod* is made of the silver-grey metal zirconium, but the element is abbreviated, making the *zirco rod* a non-existent weapon. The source version had sufficient space to add the letter *–n* to form *zircon rod*, which would have resulted in a correct translation, because zircon is the official abbreviation for zirconium. The Dutch translation shows *zirko-roede*, which may seem like a literal translation, but when non-existent words are literally translated, but adjusted to the spelling rules of the target language, it is classified as a calque. Therefore, the types of equipment that contain *zirco* are regarded as calques, which will also be present in subsequent sections.

The infrequency of the borrowing procedure illustrates the applicability of this procedure. Whereas borrowing can be applied to character names with relative ease, borrowing names of equipment into the target version is often not possible as shown in the analyses so far.

### 4.2.4 Items and collectibles

*Lufia* contains 98 items and collectibles. The items range from potions that restore your health points and magic points, to scenario items such as specific keys and objects required to advance in the story. Furthermore, this category includes items that can be used to damage enemies in battle. *Lufia* also invites the player to embark on a quest for collectibles such as dragon eggs and so-called *iris treasures*. After having found the eight dragon eggs, the party can to go to the egg dragon to receive valuable items or equipment. The ten different *iris treasures* are collectibles that are only found randomly in an optional dungeon called the Ancient Cave. In this category, literal translation was expected to be the most predominant translation procedure, because many items, such as *fire ball*, *escape*, and *statue* contain elements that can be literally translated easily and we have thus far seen that the translators often do so when there is no need to use transcreation.

The results of the analysis of all the items and collectibles are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 22 | 22.45 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 4 | 4.08 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 2 | 2.04 |
| 8. | Calque | 1 | 1.02 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 69 | 70.41 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **98** | **100** |

*Table 6: Translation Procedures Items and Collectibles*

The analysis performed for this category produces impressive results and they confirm the hypothesis. In fact, literal translation was applied in 70.41% of the total number of items and collectibles, which is the highest in all categories. Many items had a direct equivalent in the target language, so *miracle*, *magic jar*, and *fire ball* could be translated as *wonder*, *magiefles*, and *vuurbal* with great ease, so the remarkable similarities between the English and Dutch language are evident once again. Other items were approached more creatively as evident in *hi magic, awake*, and *mind gourd*. These were transcreated into *mega magie* (lit: mega magic), *wekker* (lit: alarm clock), and *IQ-nectar* (lit: IQ nectar) respectively. In addition to these 22 transcreations, the analysis shows four items that were re-named: *magic guard*, *green tea*, *providence*, and *zap charm* became *blokker* (lit: barrier), *kruidenthee* (lit: herbal tea), *nooduitgang* (lit: emergency exit), and *straalhanger* (lit: beam necklace) in the target version. Borrowing and calque occurred very infrequently, making it difficult to draw any valid conclusions from these procedures.

There is a strong likelihood that the translators saved precious time translating this category, because most of the items and collectibles were translated literally without having to invent many creative translations.

### 4.2.5 Armour

Armour enhances the character's defence, reducing the damage of enemy attacks in battle. In addition, like every other type of equipment, some pieces of armour may provide the party with special attacks that damage the enemy or boost the party's statistics. As mentioned in section 3.3, the hypothesis proposed that literal translation would be the most predominant translation procedure since many pieces of armour contain the word *armor*, *plate*, or *mail*, preceded by a noun or an adjective such as *power*, *iron*, and *silver*, making it seemingly effortless to provide a literal translation.

The results of the analysis of all the pieces of armour are presented in the following table:

| | Translation procedure | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 16 | 24.62 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 13 | 20.00 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 0 | 0.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 1 | 1.54 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 35 | 53.85 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **65** | **100** |

*Table 7: Translation Procedures Armour*

According to the analysis, literal translation is again the most predominant translation procedure in this category, which confirms the expectations. Thirty-five cases were identified, which comprises 53.85% of the total. Armour such as *apron*, *ghostclothes*, and *pearl armor* were literally translated into *schort*, *spookkleding*, and *parelpantser*. However, literal translation is predominant only by a slight majority compared to the creative translation techniques.

Transcreation was used in 24.62% of all armour, which is a rather substantial percentage compared to the diegetic text category. *Light armor, bright cloth,* and *heal armor* were transcreated into *dun pantser* (lit: thin armour)*, glitterstof* (lit: sparkling cloth)*,* and *levenspantser* (lit: life armour) respectively, showing subtle differences between the source version and the target version.

One fifth of all armour was re-named, indicating that the defining characteristics of thirteen pieces of armour were given a different name in the target version. For instance, s*eethru silk*, *cloth*, and *holy wings* were renamed into *dunne zijde* (lit: thin silk), *hemd* (lit: vest), and *godenvleugel* (lit: divine wing). Interestingly, the *holy wings* include a clear reference to gods, which was – as mentioned in section 2.5 – usually prohibited by Nintendo of America, but apparently it was allowed on occasions. The Dutch localisation team was even granted permission to use the word *goden* (lit: gods), which resulted in re-naming several pieces of equipment. One reason why the translators did not literally translate *holy wings* as *heilige vleugels* could be related to space constraints, but otherwise, the overt reference to gods in the target version remains an interesting feature.

### 4.2.6 Headgear

There are 51 pieces of headgear in *Lufia*, which boost the character's defence and sometimes other statistics such as intelligence or agility. As with the other types of equipment, literal translation was expected to be the most predominant translation procedure. Many pieces of headgear contain the word *helmet*, *band*, and *beret* preceded by a noun or an adjective, which is likely to have facilitated the translation process greatly because those elements all have literal equivalents in the target language.

The results of the analysis of all the helmets are presented in the following table:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 14 | 27.45 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 7 | 13.73 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 2 | 3.92 |
| 8. | Calque | 2 | 3.92 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 26 | 50.98 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **51** | **100** |

*Table 8: Translation Procedures Headgear*

The analysis of all headgear in *Lufia* reveals that literal translation is the most predominant translation procedure and thus confirms the hypothesis. Twenty-six occurrences of literal translation were identified and they were provided for headgear such as the *red beret*, *turban*, and *old helmet*, which were literally translated into *rode baret*, *tulband,* and *oude helm* respectively.

Borrowing and calque each occurred twice in this category, both accounting for 3.92% of the total. Since neither procedure was used rather frequently, one may conclude that not many pieces of headgear lent themselves to being borrowed directly or by means of slight adjustments. An obvious explanation for this phenomenon is the fact that much of the headgear end with the word *helmet*, which would be illogical to copy directly into the target text since the exact equivalent in Dutch is *helm*.

More than one fourth of all headgear were transcreated in which their characteristic features were slightly altered. The *tight helmet*, *boom helm*, and *brill helm* were transcreated into *maat-helm* (lit: tailor-made helmet), *donderhelm* (lit: thunder helmet), and *schitterhelm* (lit: glittering helmet) that highlight subtle differences to adjust them appropriately to the target language. A noteworthy feature of some headgear in the source version is the use of marked abbreviations. For example, the *plati helm* is a helmet made of platinum, yet it does not include the full name in the source version. Additionally, the *crysto beret* is described in the game as “a helmet decorated with crystal”, but the motive for using *crysto* instead of *crystal* remains obscure. Neither name was abbreviated in the target version as they were called *platina helm* and *kristalbaret* respectively.

Seven pieces of headgear were re-named, which makes up for 13.73% of the total. A remarkable example of re-naming is the *legend helm*, called *godenhelm* (lit: divine helmet) in the target version. Again, the use of divine reference is present in the target version and based on the description of the *legend helm*, one can only conclude it is a suitable one. The helmet is described as a "helmet handed down from the heavens", which is a direct reference to the gods, but the name itself does not reflect its description in the source version, since *legend* may just refer to the fact that it is old or legendary. The name in the target version matches the description closely by including the reference to gods. When combining transcreation and re-naming, slightly more than 40% of all headgear was translated creatively. Even though it is not sufficient enough to disprove the hypothesis, it does show that the usage of creative translation techniques is far from negligible.

### 4.2.7 Shields

Shields provide extra defence as well as a boost to other statistics on occasion. Since many shields contain the word *shield,* literal translation was predicted to be the most frequent translation procedure, because the translators would most likely use the direct translation *schild* in their translations.

The results of the analysis of all 44 shields are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 12 | 27.27 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 7 | 15.91 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. | Borrowing | 0 | 0.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 4 | 9.09 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 21 | 47.73 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **44** | **100** |

*Table 9: Translation Procedures Shields*

The analysis of the 44 shields in *Lufia* indicates that, once again, literal translation is the translation procedure that is used most. In 47.73% of the instances, the localisers opted for literal translation to provide Dutch names for the shields. The *big shield, slash shield*, and *holy shield* were literally translated as *groot schild*, *hakschild*, and *heiligschild* just as the hypothesis predicted.

No borrowing was used in this category, but four calques were identified. Besides two shields made from zirconium, these calques included the *fayza shield* and the *cryst shield*, which were named *fayzaschild* and *krist.schild* respectively.

Twelve shields were transcreated, which is evident in gloves and shields such as *tough gloves*, *silvo shield*, and *spike shield*. Their translations displayed the use of transcreation, as they were called *werkhandschoenen* (lit: working gloves), *zilveren schild* (lit: silver shield), and *doornschild* (lit: thorn shield). Interestingly, there is a shield called the *brone shield*, which is described as “a shield made of bronze”. This highlights an error in the source version, as it should have been called *bronze shield* instead. A similar mistake occurs in the headgear category, in which one helmet was called the *brone helmet*. The Dutch localisation team solved these inaccuracies by naming them *bronzen schild* and *bronzen helm*, capturing the precise meaning whilst avoiding any unnecessary omissions.

Re-naming occurred in 15.91% of all shields. A notable example of re-naming is the *apron shield*, which is described as a “shield which gives out sun power”. Firstly, one may wonder what an *apron shield* is and secondly, especially regarding its description, the name makes little sense. The target version, however, aptly named this shield *zonneschild* (lit: sun shield) to match its description.

Despite the fact that the many shields were simply translated literally, this section highlights some remarkable examples of odd lexis in the source version. By transcreating or

re-naming those shields, not only does it enable the translators to correct spelling mistakes, but it also allows them to create new names which suit the piece of equipment better.

### 4.2.8 Rings

Rings usually provide the characters with a significant boost in their statistics whilst also giving access to powerful IP attacks. Rings are rare accessories that are hardly ever bought in shops. Instead, they are often found in treasure chests. In contrast to the other pieces of equipment, the majority of the rings were expected to be translated creatively using transcreation, because many rings include abbreviations due to space constraints, which may require the translators to produce practical solutions to overcome that issue.

The results of the analysis of all the rings are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 16 | 41.03 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 0 | 0.00 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 0 | 0.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 1 | 2.56 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 22 | 56.41 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **39** | **100** |

*Table 10: Translation Procedures Rings*

The analysis shows that most of the rings have been translated literally which disproves the hypothesis constructed earlier. This becomes evident in examples such as the *egg ring*, *witch ring*, and *ghost ring*, which were all literally translated into *eierring*, *heksenring*, and *spookring*. In total, 56.41% of the rings were localised using the literal translation procedure. Since many rings end with the word *ring*, it was an uncomplicated task for the translators to translate most of the rings using the literal translation procedure, because the target text uses the same word. Again, because the source language and target language share many characteristics, the translators could adopt the literal translation procedure in most cases.

Sixteen transcreations were identified, which equals 41.03% of all procedures. The *angry ring*, *sonic ring*, and *muscle ring* were each given slightly different names to make them more suitable for the target version. For example, the name of the *angry ring* makes it sound as if the ring is angry, because *angry* is used as an adjective. To avoid such a peculiarity in the target version, the localisers transcreated the ring to *woede ring*, changing the adjective into a noun. The *sonic ring* underwent a similar process in which the adjective *sonic* was changed into a noun, resulting in *tempo-ring* (lit: pace ring), maintaining the same reference to speed. *Muscle ring* was transcreated into *bicepsring* (lit: biceps ring) rather than the literal *spierring* to emphasise the muscles in the arms more strongly. A lot of rings were abbreviated in both versions due to space constraints. For instance, *Lufia* includes rings such as the *s-pro ring* and the *s-thun ring,* in which the prefix *–s* stands for *super*. The Dutch localisation team therefore applied transcreation to change the *s-pro ring* into *s-besch.ring* and the *s-thun ring* into *s-donderring*, because *super* can be used in the target language as well. The first shows the abbreviation of the word *bescherming*, which means *protection* in Dutch, whereas the second uses the full translation of the word *thunder*.

No re-naming was present in the analysis because none of the rings were given a completely different name. It appears that when items and equipment can be translated literally, the translators do so, whereas they only look for creative translation whenever literal translation is not applicable or suitable. This appears to be a logical and natural process, because it saves time and effort to literally translate as many elements as possible before attempting to find creative alternatives.

### 4.2.9 Rocks and jewels

Rocks and jewels are accessories that enhance various statistics whilst also containing powerful special attacks. In total, there are 31 rocks and jewels, which are commonly found in treasure chests in dungeons and towers. Many rocks and jewels contain the words *rock* and *jewel*, so it was expected that literal translation would be the most predominant translation procedure in this category, because the literal translations in target language are *steen* and *juweel*.

The results of the analysis of all the rocks and jewels are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 9 | 29.03 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 2 | 6.45 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 0 | 0.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 4 | 12.90 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 16 | 51.61 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **31** | **100** |

*Table 11: Translation Procedures Rocks and Jewels*

The translators opted to translate 16 rocks and jewels literally, which is exemplified in *snake rock*, *black eye*, and *earth jewel*. These were literally translated to *slangsteen*, *zwart*

*oog*, and *aardjuweel*. The 13 other instances generally illustrated the same process which confirms the hypothesis that most of the rocks and juwels would be translated literally owing to the recurrent elements *rock* and *jewel*.

The analysis of all rocks and jewels reveals that four calques occurred. Jewels such as the *samu jewel, mysto jewel,* and *hidora rock* were turned into *samujuweel*, *mystojuweel*, and *hidorasteen* by means of the calque procedure. These newly-invented words, or neologisms, were translated to an item that contains only one word, making them a calque rather than a transcreation, since they were largely borrowed apart from a small spelling adjustment.

Nine transcreations were identified in this category, which illustrates that some rocks and jewels needed slight adjustments in order to suit the target text. For example, the issue of space constraints plays an important role in this category, as shown in the translations of the *bat rock* and *pumpkin jewel*. The Dutch version contains the *vleersteen* and *pomp.juweel*, most likely because the literal *vleermuissteen* and *pompoenjuweel* would have been too long. In addition to transcreation, two instances of re-naming occurred. The *evil jewel* and *gorgan rock* were translated as *demoonjuweel* (lit: demon jewel) and *orksteen* (lit: orc rock), considerably altering their characteristics in the process. Similar to other categories, it appears that the translators followed a certain pattern. First, they attempted to apply the literal procedure, and if the procedure proves to be inapplicable or impossible to use, they opt for creative alternatives.

### 4.2.10 IP attacks

Much of the equipment mentioned in the previous sections allows the party to use special attacks that cost so-called Ikari Points (Dutch: raaskracht). Ikari means *anger* in Japanese (“Ikari,” Wikipedia, n.d.) and Ikari Points are acquired by taking damage from enemy attacks. Once characters have sustained enough damage, they can launch a potentially powerful IP attack. In addition to dealing massive damage, special moves also need to sound powerful and attractive in order to make the move special. Therefore, it is important for the translators to make the names appealing for an RPG such as *Lufia*. Since many Dutch gamers were not used to playing RPGs in their native tongue, translated IP attacks may have come across as awkward because they might feel that the IP attacks in the target version sound less powerful than the source version. One would thus expect transcreation to be used the

most. However, if the translators maintained the same pattern as with the other categories, literal translation would still be the most predominant translation procedure. A total of 158 unique IP attacks have been identified and the results of the analysis are presented in the table below:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 42 | 26.58 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 5 | 3.16 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 4 | 2.53 |
| 8. | Calque | 0 | 0.00 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 107 | 67.72 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **158** | **100** |

*Table 12: Translation Procedures IP attacks*

Again, the most predominant translation procedure is literal translation, which occurred in slightly more than two thirds of the total number of IP attacks. Special moves such as the *ax attack*, *light guard,* and *vampire* were literally translated to *bijlaanval*, *lichtafweer*, and *vampier* without additional features or alterations. Owing to the close resemblance between the English and Dutch language, the translators simply translated most IP attacks literally as the hypothesis suggested.

Four moves were directly copied into the target language, which became evident in attacks such as *ninja*, *samurai*, and *do-re-mi*. Overall, not many IP attacks could be translated with the borrowing procedure.

Slightly more than twenty-five percent of all IP attacks were translated creatively. Forty-two instances of transcreation were identified in addition to five re-named attacks. The distinction between transcreation and re-naming is based on the individual properties of a name. For instance, the *dark mirror* move was named *zwartspiegel* (lit: black mirror) in Dutch, which contains the same dark element as the source attack. A plausible explanation for this transcreation could be that the literal translation *duistere spiegel* would have been too long. Re-naming, in this category, occurred on rare occasions in which the attack was given highly distinctive characteristics. Like some equipment mentioned in previous sections, three attacks included the word *holy*, such as *holy energy*, which were subsequently translated with the Dutch *goden*, which refers back to the gods. Overall, the translators applied the literal translation procedure whenever it was possible.

### 4.2.11 Spells

Spells can be bought in shops and the further the player advances in the story, the more powerful the spells become. Based on the patterns recognised in the previous categories and owing to the fact that many spells consist of simple words such as *droplet*, *spark*, and *strong*, literal translation was expected to be the most predominant translation procedure. The analysis of the 40 spells reveals the following results:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 4 | 10.00 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 4 | 10.00 |
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 0 | 0.00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 0 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 4 | 10.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 0 | 0.00 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 28 | 70.00 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 0 | 0.00 |
| | **Total** | **40** | **100** |

*Table 13: Translation Procedures Spells*

Literal translation is by far the most predominant translation procedure in this category, which confirms the hypothesis. In 70% of all the spells, the translators provided a literal translation of the English spell. The *mirror*, *shield*, and *confuse* spells illustrate this point clearly, because they were simply literally translated into *spiegel*, *schild*, and *verwar*.

Three other methods or procedures were identified in this analysis, all to the same extent. Transcreation was used once to circumvent space limitations as *blizzard* was changed to *sneeuw* (lit: snow) rather than *sneeuwstorm*. *Waken* was transcreated into *wekker* (lit: alarm clock), which uses a noun and changes the semantics slightly. Whereas this phenomenon is called a modulation by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995/2004), it is also regarded as transcreation because of its creative approach.

Four spells were re-named, giving them a new name whilst the spell itself maintained the same properties. *Perish*, for example, is a spell used to get rid of an enemy instantly. The target version does not use a verb that indicates dying. Instead, it is named *instant*, which emphasis the fact that the enemy dies instantly when using this spell. Another example is the *ice valk* spell, which summons "the Ice Queen to your aid" as the game describes. *Valk,* however, is a non-existent word. The source version may have meant *Valkyrie*, a female figure in Norse mythology, but otherwise, the use of *valk* is unknown. It is in these instances that the translators cannot adopt a literal approach. Therefore, the translators opted for re-naming to provide *ijswalk* as their translation of *ice valk*, also because *valk* in Dutch has the meaning of *falcon*. Interestingly though, the word *walk* does not have any meaning in Dutch.

Finally, four spells in the North American version of *Lufia* were directly copied into the Dutch version. One example of borrowing included a spell that could also be regarded as literal translation since the Dutch equivalent of the *coma* spell would also be *coma*. However, three other spells were directly copied for different reasons. These include *absorb*, *warp*, and *zap*. The *warp* spell allows the player to instantly teleport to any previously visited town or city. The literal translation of *warp* could be the infinitive *teleporteren* or the imperative form *teleporteer*. Interestingly, *warp* is not an existing word in Dutch, but there is a strong likelihood that the word is familiar to the Dutch gamers. This may have been the reason for the translators to borrow the term rather than literally translate it, which also illustrates the benefits of a translation team that is affiliated to the video game industry.

The IP attacks and spells categories overlap to some extent, because 21 spells were also present in the previous section, but the duplicates have not been omitted in these individual categories. The following section, which analyses the game as a whole, does not contain any duplicates as to provide accurate and reliable results.

## 4.3 Game as a Whole

This section provides a clear overview of all the translation procedures used in the diegetic text and the non-diegetic text of the game. All categories have been combined after the removal of any duplicates. For instance, some spells occur in the characters' texts as well as in the spells category, meaning that those occurrences need to be counted only once to avoid any inconsistencies in the results. In total, *Lufia* consists of 4,018 strings in which 4,453 translation procedures have been identified. The results of the analysis of the entire game are presented in the following table:

| | **Translation procedure** | **Number of Occurrences** | **Percentage of Occurrences** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 805 | 18.08 |
| 2. | Compensation | 13 | 0.29 |
| 3. | Re-naming of key terminology and character names | 95 | 2.13 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4. | Contextualisation by addition | 59 | 1.32 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 16 | 0.36 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 111 | 2.49 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 128 | 2.87 |
| 8. | Calque | 24 | 0.54 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 3005 | 67.48 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 197 | 4.42 |
| | **Total** | **4453** | **100** |

*Table 14: Translation Procedures Complete Game*

The table on the next page provides a detailed overview of all the translation procedures per category in percentages. With this overview the reader can easily compare and contrast the results from all the analyses.

In the chapter that follows, I will provide an extensive discussion of these results accompanied by a conclusion that will answer the research question of this thesis.

| | **Translation procedure** | Diegetic text (in %) | Monster names (in %) | Capsule monsters (in %) | Weapons (in %) | Items and collectibles (in %) | Armour (in %) | Headgear (in %) | Shields (in %) | Rings (in %) | Rocks and Jewels (in %) | IP Attacks (in %) | Spells (in %) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Transcreation | 16.55 | 22.16 | 34.29 | 17.76 | 22.45 | 24.62 | 27.45 | 27.27 | 41.03 | 29.03 | 26.58 | 10.00 |
| 2. | Compensation | 0.36 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 3. | Re-naming | 0.19 | 14.90 | 14.29 | 10.28 | 4.08 | 20.00 | 13.73 | 15.91 | 0.00 | 6.45 | 3.16 | 10.00 |
| 4. | Contextualisation | 1.64 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 5. | Re-creation of play on words | 0.44 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 6. | Deliberate use of regional expressions | 3.08 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 7. | Borrowing | 1.94 | 18.27 | 5.71 | 6.54 | 2.04 | 0.00 | 3.92 | 0.00 | 2.56 | 0.00 | 2.53 | 10.00 |
| 8. | Calque | 0.06 | 1.92 | 2.86 | 4.67 | 1.02 | 1.54 | 3.92 | 9.09 | 0.00 | 12.90 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 9. | Literal translation | 70.26 | 42.79 | 42.86 | 60.75 | 70.41 | 53.85 | 50.98 | 47.73 | 56.41 | 51.61 | 67.72 | 70.00 |
| 10. | Adaptation | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 11. | Omission | 5.47 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

*Table 15: Translation Procedures Per Category*

# Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the translation procedures used in the Dutch localisation of *Lufia* in order to verify to what degree video game localisation demands the use of creative translation techniques. This chapter discusses the results presented in Chapter 4 in light of the research question posed in Chapter 1:

To what extent does the video game *Lufia* show the use of transcreation in the Dutch translation and how significant are the differences between the uses of the literal translation procedure and the transcreation model?

Transcreation occurred in 18.08% of the entire game translation. It was used in only 16.55% of all diegetic text, whereas in the non-diegetic text types, transcreation was used more frequently, occasionally up to 25%. The total score of all creative translation techniques is 24.67% when the score of transcreation is combined with the scores of compensation, re-naming of key terminology and character names, contextualisation by addition, re-creation of play on words, and deliberate use of regional expressions. Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, it was assumed that these rates would be much higher since several experts in the video game localisation field (e.g. Mangiron & O'Hagan (2006), Dietz (2007), and Granell (2011), claimed that video game localisation calls for new translation procedures.

The results of the analysis disprove this claim as literal translation is used much more frequently than transcreation. With 67.48%, literal translation is by far the most predominant procedure in the translation of *Lufia*, which disproves the hypothesis proposed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the gap is substantial. In fact, when the literal translation procedure is combined with borrowing and calque – two procedures closely related to literal translation – the total score comes to 70.89%. In spite of the fact that exact figures of the use of literal translation in other types of translation are unknown, the results do indicate that video game translation may not require the use of creative translation procedures as much as the literature claims. However, *Lufia* was one of the first games ever to be translated into Dutch, so the Dutch localisers may not have had much experience with regard to video game localisation. The video game translation practice today may thus be

significantly different than two decades ago. Nowadays, video games have gained immense popularity, the sales figures increase annually ("The Global Games Market," 2017) and video game localisation has gradually attracted more academic interest over the last two decades, which may have resulted in the use of different translation techniques in contemporary video games. Notwithstanding the stark contrast between the use of literal translation and transcreation in *Lufia*, there are some compelling reasons that explain the infrequency of the transcreation method and the other creative translation techniques.

The most reasonable argument in favour of the predominance of the literal translation procedure is the close resemblance between the English and Dutch language. Every section in Chapter 4 highlighted numerous examples in which the translators could provide a literal translation simply because of the strong similarities between the languages. The translators often adopted a literal approach whenever they deemed it possible and appropriate. Moreover, most diegetic text contained ordinary dialogues with hardly any distinguishing characteristics such as idiolects or dialects, so these strings did not need a creative approach in their translations.

Applying literal translation in most of the dialogues yields a considerable benefit. For example, instead of spending precious time on providing creative equivalents for certain elements, the translators can decide to translate literally wherever possible and move on to the next section at a steady pace. *Lufia* was translated in merely five weeks including regular overtime, illustrating the large amount of work to be done in a limited amount of time (De Boer, 1996). Consequently, the use of the literal translation procedure may have saved the translators considerable time in the localisation process.

Finally, several creative translation procedures were not identified in the non-diegetic text categories at all. This affected the overall scores greatly, because only a distinct set of procedures were used each time. Creative procedures such as compensation, contextualisation by addition, re-creation of play on words, and the deliberate use of regional expressions proved more applicable to diegetic text than non-diegetic text. A credible explanation for this phenomenon is that the non-diegetic text categories usually contain strings comprised of one or two words, making them significantly more difficult, or even impossible, to translate with the aforementioned procedures.

The relay translation process, as described in Chapter 1, involves using a translated text as the source text for further translations (Dollerup, 2000). Since the translation – as

source text – may already contain errors and omissions, the relay translations are even more likely to contain errors and there is a strong likelihood of elements being lost while translating the translation. The analysis of the Dutch version of *Lufia* has shown, however, that a relay translation may also prove beneficial to the quality of the target text. The North American version contains various spelling mistakes in the dialogues and equipment, inappropriate monster names, and errors concerning text elements that do not match the visuals. The Dutch localisers have corrected many of these mistakes and ensured that the target version contains a minimal number of slip-ups. In conclusion, any deviations in the Dutch version in most cases only benefit the overall quality of the in-game texts.

With regard to cultural references, it is worth noting that the Dutch target version contains considerably more references to mythology and religion than the English source version. Despite the fact that *Lufia* was developed in Japan, all versions do not contain direct references to the Japanese culture, nor do they include any specific references to the American or European culture, so it remains rather neutral in that respect. Therefore, the localisers were required to focus mainly on mythological and religious references rather than cultural insensitivities. Nintendo of America had a strict policy on references that might be considered inappropriate or offensive, which is why the localisers of the North American version of *Lufia* were obliged to make special adaptations to their version. Interestingly enough, the Dutch version put back some of the references omitted in the North American version as shown in the various weapons, armour, and monster names that include clear mythological or religious references. Although it is difficult to verify why the Dutch localisers decided to do this and why Nintendo of Europe approved of these alterations, it is fair to conclude the Dutch version resembles the original Japanese version more closely than the North American version regarding cultural context.

Despite the interesting findings summarised above, several limitations of the current analyses should of course also be mentioned. The non-diegetic text section contains numerous topics that have been covered, but, it proved impossible to analyse every text element present in *Lufia*. For example, the descriptions of all the items and equipment as well as the special attacks of all the monsters are left to be researched. These often include longer and more complex sentences than the other non-diegetic text categories, so the analyses may reveal different results than the non-diegetic text categories analysed in this thesis. Additionally, some of the translations were difficult to categorise using the existing

models, and having multiple analysts to discuss such examples would greatly benefit the overall quality and reliability of the analysis. And finally, this thesis has addressed the differences in cultural references in all three versions of the game, but was forced to focus on the Dutch translation of the North American version due to a limited knowledge of Japanese. It would be interesting to further investigate the procedures used in the North American localisation in relation to the Japanese original to gather more conclusive results regarding transcreation and literal translation procedures in the relay translation process of *Lufia*, and video games in general.

This retrospective research provides a detailed look into the complex and relatively new field of video game translation. Although *Lufia* is already more than two decades old, the value of this analysis remains relevant today since hardly any academic research has been done on the translation process of video games. Only a handful of researchers have shed light on the translation techniques used in video games. Two decades ago, video games did not have the popularity as they do nowadays, which may also be reflected in the quality of their localisation. Future researchers are suggested to carry out a contrastive analysis between *Lufia* and a contemporary role-playing game to investigate the developments in this academic field. Exploring the complexity of current video games in relation to the relatively simple video games of the 80s and early 90s might yield surprising results as voice-overs, in-game cinematics and subtitling may affect the translatability of the video game significantly. They may, for example, show more use of transcreation than *Lufia* as there are many more aspects that need to be localised than just text to appropriately convey the same game experience. Moreover, whereas this thesis has focused on a role-playing game, other video game genres such as survival-horror games or first-person shooters may require different translation techniques, which would also be an interesting topic for future research. This thesis has hopefully paved the way for other academic researchers to delve deeper into the ever-growing world of video games and further enhance the quality of video game translation.

# References

Bernal-Merino, M. (2007). Challenges in the translation of video games. *Revista Tradumática, 5,* 1-7. Retrieved from http://www.fti.uab.es/tradumatica/revista/num5/articles/02/02art.htm

Blue-green distinction in Language. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved March 25, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue%E2%80%93green_distinction_in_language

Boer de, R. (1996, September). Lufia, the RPG-Story in Dutch. *Club Nintendo Extra, 6*, 6-9.

Brahmin. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia.* Retrieved January 4, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahmin

Burgun, K. (2013). *Game design theory: A new philosophy for understanding games.* Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Chandler, H., & O'Malley Deming, S. (2012). *The game localization handbook.* Sudbury, MA: Jones & Berlett Learning.

Diaz Cintas, J., & Anderman, G. (2009). *Audiovisual translation: Language transfer on screen.* Hampshire & New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dietz, F. (2007) "How difficult can that be?" – The work of computer and video game localization. *Revista Tradumática, 5,* 1-7. Retrieved from http://www.fti.uab.es/tradumatica/revista/num5/articles/04/04art.htm

Di Marco, F. (2007). Cultural localization: Orientation and disorientation in Japanese video games. *Revista Tradumática, 5,* 1-8. Retrieved from http://www.fti.uab.es/tradumatica/revista/num5/articles/06/06art.htm

Dollerup, C. (2000). 'Relay' and 'support' translation. In A. Chesterman, G. Natividad, & Y. Gambier, *Translation in Context: Selected Papers from the EST Congress, Granada 1998*, 17-26. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Edwards, K. (2008). Reaching the global gamer. *Multilingual, 19* (7), 26-27.

EF Education First Ltd. (2015). *EF English proficiency index.* Retrieved from http://media.ef.com/__/~/media/centralefcom/epi/downloads/full-reports/v5/ef-epi-2015-english.pdf

Esselink, B. (2000). *A practical guide to localization*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Fahey, M. (2008, October 22). Fallout 3 not coming to India. Retrieved from http://kotaku.com/5067039/fallout-3-not-coming-to-india

Granell, X. (2011). Teaching video game localisation in audiovisual courses at university. *The Journal of Specialised Translation, 16,* 186-187.

Haas, P. (2008). Are Brahmin the reason for Fallout 3's cancellation in India? Retrieved from http://www.cinemablend.com/games/Are-Brahmin-The-Reason-For-Fallout-3-s-Cancellation-in-India-12947.html

Ikari. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved May 17, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikari

Knuckle, I. (2010). Lufia 2. Retrieved from https://www.gamefaqs.com/snes/588451-lufia-ii-rise-of-the-sinistrals/faqs/11045

Kohler, C. (2005). *Power-up: How Japanese video games gave the world an extra life.* Indianapolis, IN: Brady Games.

Lufia II: Rise of the Sinistrals. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia.* Retrieved October 28, 2016, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lufia_II:_Rise_of_the_Sinistrals

Mangiron, C. (2006). Video game localisation: Posing new challenges to the translator. *Perspectives: Studies on Translatology, 14 (4)*, 306-317.

Mangiron, C., & O'Hagan, M. (2006). Game localisation: Unleashing imagination with 'restricted' translation. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, *6*, 10-21.

Markley, J. (2015, November 23). A look at the religious censorship in Nintendo of America's games. Retrieved from http://www.escapistmagazine.com/articles/view/features/15045-Nintendo-of-America-Used-Religious-Censorship-to-Avoid-Controver

McCullough, J.J. (n.d.). Nintendo's era of censorship. Retrieved from http://www.tanookisite.com/nintendo-censorship/

Melnick, L., & Kirin, D. (2008). Localization: A key element in successful casual games. *Casual Connect Magazine, Winter 2008,* 19-21.

Minkels, M. (1996, March). Xclusief voor Nintendo. *Club Nintendo Extra, 2,* 10.

Molina, L., & Albir, A.H. (2002). Translation technique revisited: A dynamic and functionalist approach. *Meta: Translators' Journal, XLVII (4),* 498-512.

Müller, H. (2015). *The censorship of German video games: The effects of national sensitivity to violence* (Unpublished Bachelor's thesis). Robert D. Clark Honors College, Eugene, Oregon.

Munday, J. (2012). *Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications.* London and New York, NY: Routledge.

Newmark, P. (1988). *Approaches to translation*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall.

Oers van, A.L. (2010). *All your words are belong to us: Translation strategies in the video game Beyond Good and Evil* (Unpublished Master's thesis). Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

O'Hagan, M., & Mangiron, C. (2013). *Game localization: Translating for the global digital entertainment industry.* Amsterdam & Phildelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Prestopnik, N.R., & Tang, J. (2015). Points, stories, worlds, and diegesis: Comparing player experiences in two citizen science games. *Computers in Human Behavior, 52,* 492-506.

Šiaučiūnė, V., & Liubinienė, V. (2011). Video game localization: The analysis of in-game texts. *Studies About Languages, 19*, 46-55.

Stevens Heath, N. (2010). Text-based adventure: The art of translating video games. *The ATA Chronicle, August 2010,* 16-19.

Super Nintendo Entertainment System. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia.* Retrieved December 2, 2016, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Nintendo_Entertainment_System

The Global Games Market Will Reach $108.9 Billion in 2017 With Mobile Taking 42%. (2017, April 20). Retrieved from https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/the-global-games-market-will-reach-108-9-billion-in-2017-with-mobile-taking-42/

Tiersma, J. (1996, March). RPG-ers? Een apart slag mensen. *Club Nintendo Extra, 2,* 35.

Vermeer, H. (1989). Skopos and commission in translational action. In L. Venuti (Ed.) (2004), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 221-232). London and New York, NY: Routledge.

Vinay, J. –P & Darbelnet, J. (1958/1995). A methodology for translation. (J. C. Sager & M. –J Hamel, Trans.). In L. Venuti (Ed.) (2004), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 84-93). London and New York, NY: Routledge.