AGENTS OF THE GAME LOCALIZATION SECTOR IN TURKEY

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INTRODUCTION

This project focuses on the challenges of game localization and three agents majorly involved in the game localization: game providers, translators (localizers) and gamers. Despite acknowledging the multi-dimensionality of game localization, we aim to look from the agents' perspectives. By conducting online questionnaire among the gamers, we opt for understanding the role of three main agents (translator, game provider, gamer) from the point of view of the gamers. Additionally by conducting an online interview with a gamer and two localizers, we look into the perspectives of translators as well. Thus, our main aim is to search for the common and different encounters and demands of first the gamers and then the other agents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We have seen that the research in this field were mostly in Japanese-English or Spanish-English language pairs (Salmerón, 2018). The sources in Turkey mostly illustrate the translator's side of the issue, while the effect of the developers, governmental policies and gamers' expectations are usually overlooked. It is obvious that game localization aims to make the gamers feel like they are playing with the original language. Though it is not considered as an issue in this field, the economic state of the country is also crucial. Yet, we wanted to focus on the common issues that every actor encounter and demands of gamers.

METHODOLOGY

To understand the agents' expectations, we have interviewed a gamer and two localizers. In addition, we conducted an online survey for the gamers and we had 152 participants. We asked their opinions on the localization of games, what can be improved and the biggest challenge in the game localization. The results create a clear idea on the audience's expectations and demonstrate realities about the sector.

AGENTS

• Translators/Localizers

The interviews we conducted with a gamer and two localizers have shown that the localizers face many challenges during localization such as terminology, cultural/linguistic differences and time constraints. One of the biggest problems is lacking of information about games, whether a localizer is interested in games, experienced or not. Sometimes they work without an actual game or glossary, leave aside playing the game. They play an important role in

• Gamers

We have surveyed the consumers to see their expectations and complaints. Despite not being familiar with the burdens on the translators, majority prefers a localization strategy that preserves cultural elements to an extent where they can understand the game. Yet, 70.4% of the participants play the game in the original language, so further data is needed.

• Game Providers

According to Mr. Ali who is the CEO of Lockpick, "Following up the translation and quality process, working with the game producers and knowing your target auidence are crucial. Sometimes, the game providers see that volunteer translations are already being done, so they do not want to invest in." Economy and expected sells of a game in a country play a big role in this process. In Turkey, economic incabilities combined with the lack of competent game localizers and reliable companies deter the producers from investing in the localization.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

This survey presents gamers' expectations and opinions. According to the answers collected from 152 participants, 82.2% of them have been playing games for more than five years. In order to connect their opinions with a genre, we asked their favorite ones:

| Genre	%
MMORP	70.4%
Simulation	57.9%
Sports	36.2%
Action-adventure	67.8%
Horror/Thriller	20%
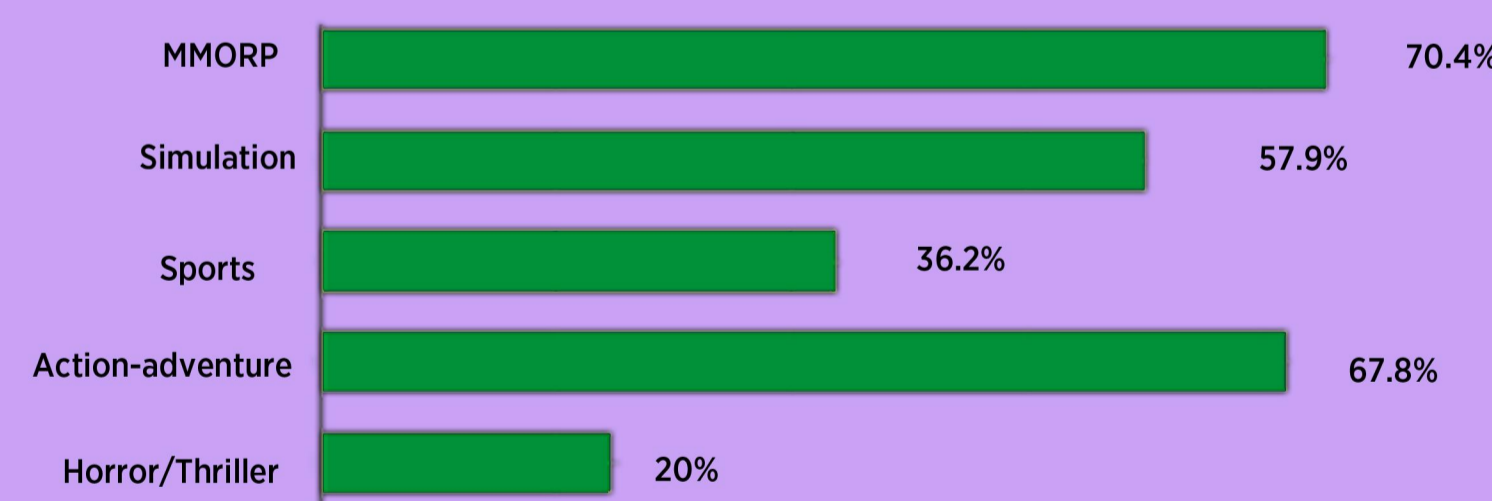
70.4% of the participants said that they do not use translation, 11.8% said that they use bootleg translations (we believe further study is needed to understand gamers' expectations better) and 17.8% said they use official translations.
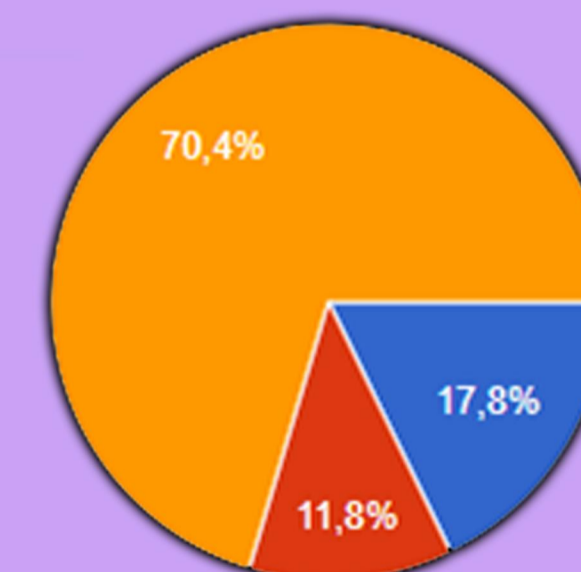

According to our "Are you satisfied with the Turkish localizations of foreign games?" question, 73.7% of the gamers are unsatisfied and 26.3% are satisfied with the adaptations.
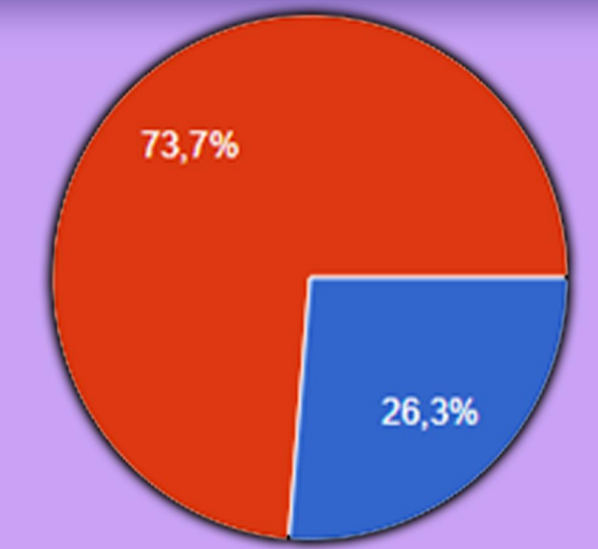
Upon asking the biggest problem of the game localization, 48% of the participants said "due to emerging recently, Turkey is not well-known in the market". Interestingly, only 10.5% opted for "restrictions on the translators". This shows that the gamers are not familiar with the restrictions on translators. Also, 25.7% said "approach of the game producers" and lastly, 15.8% said "bootleg translations and lack of regulations".
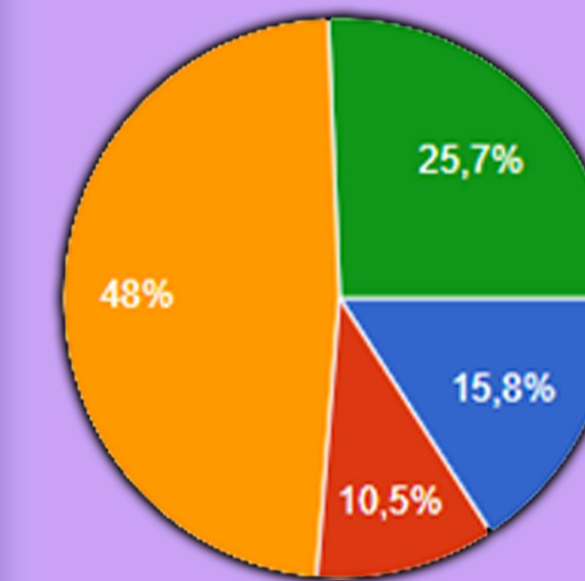
Regarding what to improve in the translations, 53.9% said "the expressions and idioms used in daily language", 18.4% said "descriptions of quests", 13.2% said "adaptation of culture and special names". Other suggestions included: working with experienced translators, improving texts and dialogues and improving all of the above mentioned issues.
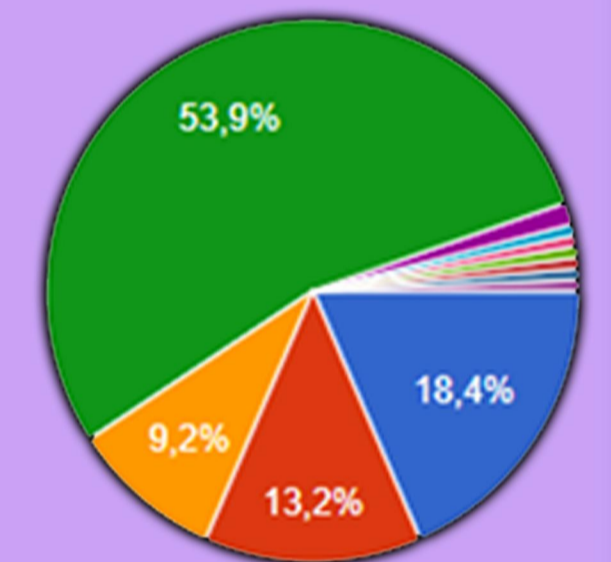
CONCLUSION

Our research has revealed that localizers, gamers and providers have different demands and needs. Translators struggle with the restrictions while the consumers prefer experienced localizers and a localization that preserves cultural elements to an extent where they can understand the game. On the other hand, the providers set their policies depending on the market, their budget and consumers, who struggle to afford games in Turkey. Our study has further shown that communication between the groups of agents needs to be strengthened. It seems that more study needs to be done to understand the exclusive demands of each group of agents.

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