FUN FOR ALL

7th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIDEO GAME TRANSLATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Faculty of Translation and Interpreting
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
30th and 31st January, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFERENCE ORGANISER:

- TransMedia Catalonia Research Group (2021SGR00077)

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- Catalonia's Department of Research and Universities

- UAB's Department of Translation, Interpreting and East Asian Studies

- UAB's Faculty of Translation and Interpreting

- Sub-ti subtitling company

FOREWORD

The video game industry has become a worldwide phenomenon, generating millions in revenue every year. Video games are increasingly becoming more elaborate and sophisticated, with advanced graphics and intricate story lines, and developers and publishers need to reach the widest possible audience in order to maximise their return on investment. Translating games into other languages and designing games that can be played for a wide spectrum of players, regardless of their (dis)ability, are two obvious ways to contribute to increasing the audience for the game industry. In addition, games are increasingly being used for "serious" purposes beyond entertainment, such as education, and such games should also be designed inclusively, to facilitate access to them by all types of players.

Research and industry practices on game translation/localisation and accessibility have been gaining momentum in recent years. We have recently seen sign language and audio description implemented in AAA games and *The Last of Us II* was considered the most accessible game ever. However, there is still a long way to go until video games can truly provide fun for all.

In addition, recently artificial intelligence has entered the scene, with many supporters and many detractors and posing many challenges to the theory and practice of translation and localisation.

The *Fun for All: 7th International Conference on Game Translation and Accessibility* aims to bring together professionals, scholars, practitioners and other interested parties to explore the future challenges that lay ahead in the fields of game localisation and accessibility in theory and practice. We hope to discuss the linguistic and cultural dimensions of game localisation, to investigate the relevance and application of translation theory for this very specific and rapidly expanding translational genre, to analyse the impact machine translation and artificial intelligence are having in the field, and to analyse the challenges that game accessibility and game localisation pose to the industry and how to overcome them.

The successful previous editions of the *Fun for All: International Conference on Translation and Accessibility in Video Games*, held in 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2023 have become a meeting point for academic and professionals working in the game industry and the game localisation industry, as well as students and translators interested in this field.

The seventh edition of the *Fun for All* Conference aims to continue fostering the interdisciplinary debate in these fields, to consolidate them as academic areas of research and to contribute to the development of best practices.

For this F4ALL we have teamed up with the WEL project (*From written to oral texts in Easy Language: easy audios in cultural visits and video games*,), led by TransMedia Catalonia, to study how easy language could improve accessibility for new audiences, including users with learning difficulties and neurodiverse users.

THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

TransMedia Catalonia Research Group

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

January, 2025

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – Day 1

THURSDAY, 30th JANUARY 2025 – Room 4

08:45 – 09:15	Registration – Welcome desk at the hall
09:15 – 09:30	Opening Proceedings by **Olga Torres, Dean of the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting**
09:30 – 10:30	**KEYNOTE LECTURE** **Xiaochun Zhang, University College London.** *Advancing Game Accessibility for Visually Impaired Players through Audio Description*
10:30 – 11:30	**PANEL 1: Game accessibility I – Chair: Anna Matamala** — **Jared Téllez Quirós, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.** *Accessibility Options in PC Point-and-Click Games* — **Yunke Deng, University College London.** *Understanding the Accessible Game Experience of Chinese Visually Impaired Gamers in "Dou Dizhu for All"* — **María Eugenia Larreina-Morales & Carme Mangiron, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.** *Present and Future of Game Accessibility: Interviewing Players with Visual Disabilities*
	Coffee Break - Japanese Garden (11:30 - 12:00)
12:00 – 13:20	**PANEL 2: Game accessibility II – Chair: Ester Torres** — **Miguel Ángel Oliva-Zamora, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.** *Coding Recommendations for Cognitive Accessibility in Video Games* — **Pedro Fernandes & Cátia Casimiro, Lusófona University, HEI-Lab.** *Building an accessible game around Augmentative and Alternative Communication to promote the inclusion of neurodivergent individuals* — **Marco Pirrone, eCampus University, Italy.** *Localization, accessibility and inclusivity in racing games: the case of Mario Kart 8* — **Will Noonan, Université de Bourgogne**. *From parody to accessibility? The case of Joe Richardson's* The Procession to Calvary
	Lunch Break (13:20 - 14:30)
14:30 – 15:30	**PANEL 3: Game accessibility and game localisation training – Chair: Pablo Muñoz** — **Estel·la Oncins, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.** *InclusiVRity: Accessible VR social storytelling in learning environments* — **Hakim Boussejra, Université de Bourgogne.** *Video Game Accessibility in the Elementary School Classroom* — **Dominik Kudła, University of Warsaw.** *Training Video Game Localizers in Poland – An Overview and Look Forward*

15:30 – 16:30	**PANEL 4: Game localisation: Reception Studies – Chair: Sarah McDonagh** — **Krzysztof W. Hejduk & Mikołaj Deckert, University of Łódź.** *"Those are rarely translated, I don't recall much" – a reception study on diegetic text translation* — **Jemma Louise Stafford, University of Leeds.** *Do words matter? The influence of translated text in Chinese videogames on player reception* — **Haiting Lang, Macquarie University.** *Subtitle Processing in Video Games: A Case Study in a Desert Herding Game*
	Coffee Break – Japanese Garden (16:30 - 17:00)
17:00 – 18:00	**PANEL 5: Game localisation: Case studies – Chair: Miquel Pujol** — **Melik Ahmet Erol, Istanbul University.** *Reinterpreting mythological stories through game localization: a case study of the game:* God of War *(2018)* — **Alice Ray, Université d'Orléans.** *Localising Pop Culture References: The Case of* Starcraft II — **Paolo D'Indinosante, Sapienza University of Rome & University of Silesia in Katowice.** '*By Toutatis, I didn't know they said that in Hibernia!': The Representation and Localisation of Otherness in Asterix Video Games*
18:00 – 18:30	— **Book presentation: *User-Centric Studies in Game Translation and Accessibility*** by Krzysztof W. Hejduk & Mikołaj Deckert. **Room 4**
	Conference Dinner in Les quinze nits (Barcelona) (20:00)

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME – Day 2

FRIDAY, 31st JANUARY 2025 – Room 4

09:30 – 10:30	**PANEL 1: Game localisation: AI and Machine Translation – Chair: Estel·la Oncins** — **Mariazell Eugènia Bosch Fábregas, University of Lleida.** *Going bananas! AI Spanish translation proposal for Donkey Kong Country's level map names: a comparison between the SNES and GBA version of the game* — **Pierre-Yves Houlmont, Haute École Albert Jacquard, & Damien Hansen, Université libre de Bruxelles – Liège Game Lab.** *A Snapshot into the Limits and Risks of Video Game Machine Translation* — **Judith Brenner, University of Eastern Finland – Cologne University of Applied Sciences.** *Effects of machine translation post-editing in video games on the translator, the translation process and the translation*
10:30 – 11:30	**PANEL 2: Game localisation: LLMs and Crowdsourcing – Chair: Marta Brescia** — **Marián Kabát, Comenius University, Bratislava, & Mária Koscelníková, Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra.** *Use cases of LLM usage during video game localization*

	— **Loïc de Faria Pires, Université de Mons.** *NMT and LLM Post-Editing Process in Videogame Localization: How Can Students' Productions Help Us Become Better* Localisation Lecturers? — **María Isabel Rivas Ginel, Dublin City University, Pierre Voué, Textgain, Pierre-Yves Houlmont, Haute École Albert Jacquard, Damien Hansen, Université libre de Bruxelles & Université de Liège.** *A Game for the Crowds: Neutral Mode on!*
	Coffee Break – Japanese Garden (11:30 – 12:00)
12:00 – 13:10	**PANEL 3: Dubbing and Subtitling in Video Games – Chair: María Eugenia Larreina** — **Laura Mejías-Climent, Universitat Jaume I.** *Experimenting with Voices: How Technology is Redefining Dubbing in Video Game Localization* — **Mikołaj Deckert & Krzysztof W. Hejduk, University of Łódź.** *Translation, no translation, or worse? – a user-centric perspective on video game subtitling*
	Lunch Break (13:10 – 14:30)
14:30 – 15:30	**PANEL 4: Gender Issues & Immersion and Multimodality in Game Localisation – Chair: Miquel Pujol** — **Çağla Gurbet Erol & Arsun Uras, Istanbul University.** *The role of feminism in video game localization: "*Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice*"* — **Silvia Pettini, Roma Tre University.** *"I didn't decide anything. I've been like this my whole life": Keeping the Trans in Game Translation* — **Guo Yu, University of Nottingham.** *The Square Model as an Analytical Tool – Videogame Localisation from a Multimodal and Interdisciplinary Perspective*
15:30 – 16:10	**PANEL 5: Game localization: Language of Gaming and Transmedia Studies – Chair: Pablo Muñoz** — **Sam Strong, University of Bristol.** *Systems theory, Cultural Adaptation, and Videogame Transcreation: Situating the language of gaming in Translation Studies.* — **Simon Copet, University of Mons.** *Alice in Localisationland: An English-French Translation and Transmedia Study of Disney Character's Speech in Films and Video Games*
	Coffee Break – Japanese Garden (16:10 – 16:40)
16:40 – 18:00	**Game localisation Round Table Discussion – Chair: Carme Mangiron** — **Federico Franzoni, Director at Loki** — **Elena Hernández, Lecturer at UAB & freelance localiser** — **Paula Salguero, Keywords International Barcelona**
18:00	**Closing remarks**

VENUE

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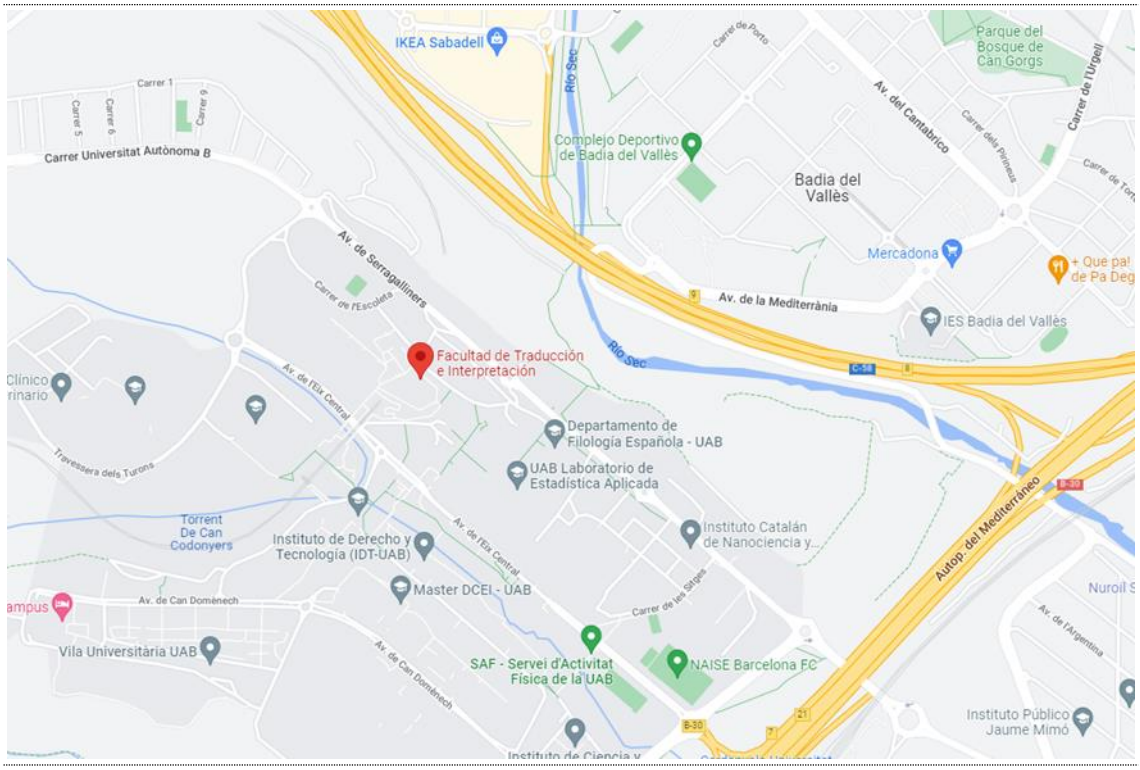

KEYNOTE LECTURE – Day 1

Xiaochun Zhang
University College London

Advancing Game Accessibility for Visually Impaired Players through Audio Description

This keynote talk explores the evolving landscape of game accessibility for visually impaired players, focusing on the application of audio description (AD) in video games. It will begin with an overview of the current challenges and solutions within the gaming industry, setting the stage for a detailed discussion of three projects.

It will first present the research findings of the AD4Games project (2021-2022), which investigated the application of audio description (AD) in video games. Initially, the project focused on integrating AD into game streaming, where professional audio describers provided live descriptions during gameplay. This was followed by testing AD-assisted game playing, where visually impaired players experienced the game with real-time AD from describers, enhancing their gaming experience. Following these experiments, the research team collaborated with game designers to implement AD in the game *Before I Forget*. This involved integrating AD into the game's design and mechanics to ensure a playing experience for visually impaired players. The game was then tested by visually impaired players, who provided valuable feedback on the effectiveness and usability of the AD features. The findings from these studies highlight the potential of AD to make video games more accessible and enjoyable for visually impaired players.

It will then discuss the research findings of *TransAD4games* project (2022-2024), funded by the British Academy and the Brigstow Institute. The project focuses on creating and translating AD for video games to enhance accessibility across different languages and cultures. While current research indicates that translating AD scripts for films and TV is a practical, cost-effective, and time-saving approach, the application of AD in video games remains relatively unexplored, and the translation of AD in games has not been widely researched or practiced in the industry. This section will present the findings of a reception study on players' preferences and opinions regarding AD translated from English into Spanish and created from scratch in Spanish, as well as a study on players' preferences for AD translated from English into Chinese and created from scratch in Chinese. The results will be compared and discussed.

Lastly, it will discuss the results of the AIAD project (2024-2025), funded by Higher Education Innovation UK, which explores the potential of AI-enabled audio description (AD) to make video games accessible on a large scale. The project investigates the integration of Large Language Models (LLMs) with live game data to provide 'Dynamic AI AD'. This innovative approach aims to determine whether Dynamic AI AD can enhance both the playability and enjoyment of games for visually impaired players. The research examines the effectiveness of this technology in delivering real-time, contextually accurate AD that adapts to the dynamic nature of video games. Additionally, the project assesses whether Dynamic AI AD offers a scalable and cost-efficient solution for widespread adoption in the gaming industry. By leveraging AI, the project seeks to create a more inclusive gaming environment, ensuring that visually impaired players can fully engage with and enjoy video games.

Dr Xiaochun Zhang is a Lecturer in Translation Studies at the University College London (UCL), United Kingdom. Her research interests lie primarily in video game localisation and accessibility, fan audiovisual translation, and language technology. She is the principal investigator of the AD4Games and TransAD4Games projects, which investigate the

application of audio description in video games to improve accessibility. She is the co-founder and co-director of the Bristol Digital Game Lab.

Time slot: **Thursday 09:30 - 10:30. Room 4**

ROUND TABLE – Day 2

Federico Franzoni

Director at Loki

Federico Franzoni started his journey in game localisation in 2007, as an Italian Language Tester at Electronic Arts. Since then, he has held various roles in the industry, as testing coordinator, localisation project manager, freelance linguist, vendor manager and product owner. He is co-founder and co-director of Loki, a gameloc boutique agency active since 2015, where he is in charge of recruitment, strategic supplier management and technical development. He still translates, proofreads, tests and plays whenever he has a chance.

Elena Hernández

Lecturer at UAB & freelance localiser

Elena Hernández is a freelance game localiser and interpreter whose working languages are English, Spanish, Catalan and Japanese. She is also a lecturer at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, where she teaches Japanese language and game localisation. She has worked on several titles ranging from small indie games to triple A games.

Paula Salguero Soto

Keywords International Barcelona

Paula Salguero Soto is a video game localisation specialist. She completed the Audiovisual Translation master degree of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in 2022 and, since then, she has been working as an English into Spanish video game localisation professional. At the moment, she is part of the internal team of linguists of Keywords Studios Spain. Her experience includes working on high-profile titles for renowned clients such as Nintendo, CCP Games, and many more.

Time slot: **Friday 16:40 - 18:00. Room 4**

SPEAKERS

Mariazell Eugènia Bosch Fábregas
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University of Lleida

Going bananas! AI Spanish translation proposal for Donkey Kong Country's level map names: a comparison between the SNES and GBA version of the game

The side-scrolling platform and obstacles videogame Donkey Kong Country released by Rare and Nintendo for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) in 1994 is still remembered (and played) today for its groundbreaking 3-D graphics, high-quality animated characters and memorable soundtrack composed by David Wise. In this game, Donkey Kong and his nephew Diddy Kong go over seven different worlds (Kongo Jungle, Monkey Mines, Vine Valley, Gorilla Glacier, Kremkroc Industries, Inc., Chimp Caverns and Gangplank Galleon) and must complete a journey of 40 levels of various themes jungles, underwater reefs, caves, mines, mountains and factories) with the goal of recovering Kong's banana hoard that villain and leader King K. Rool stole with the help of his Kremling Krew.

A recurrent aspect in Donkey Kong Country's level map names is the presence of play on words with characters' names (e.g., Very Gnawty's Lair, Necky Nutmare) and literary devices, such as alliteration (e.g., Ropey Rampage, Bouncy Bonanza, Temple Tempest) and assonance (e.g., Slipslide Ride, Vulture Culture), sometimes combined to form onomatopoeia (e.g., Reptile Rumble). Originally, the 1994 Super Nintendo PAL format of the game did not include Spanish as a playable language, but this situation changed in the 2003 Game Boy Advance (GBA) version of Donkey Kong Country in which Spanish not only appeared in Cranky Kong's tips and tricks, Funky's Flight and Candy's Save Point locations, but also in the worlds (e.g., Jungla Kongo, Minas Mono, Valle Liana) and level map names (e.g., Jungla Hijinxs, Travesuras de Coral, Barriles Semàforo, Callejón de Hielo).

In the Spanish GBA version, some level names reproduce alliteration (e.g., Lio de Lianas, Templo Tempestad) and onomatopoeia (e.g., Estruendo Reptil), thus maintaining the original sound effects. Nevertheless, the Spanish version of the game is exemplary of literal translations that focus on preserving the theme of the level rather than musicality (e.g., Charca Venenosa, Dilema de Antorchas, Viaje con Truco). In addition to this, original names of characters are kept untranslated. As a result, wordplay is not transferred in Spanish (e.g., Guarida de Gnawty, Locura de Necky, Destrozo de Gnawty, Estruendo de Queen B). Compared to the SNES videogame, the Spanish GBA version offers a translation of level names. In most cases, the theme of the level is clear in Spanish, but sound effects and wordplay are not always translated. Since all level names contain similar structures (i.e., repetition of sounds and letters), the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is appropriate in the search for options that follow these patterns. As shown in the AI plausible solutions that combine alliteration and level themes (e.g., Estanque Envenenado, Lfos de Luz, Travesfa Tramposa), AI becomes a helpful tool to reproduce literary devices and wordplay in the Spanish translation of Donkey Kong Country's worlds and level names

Mariazell Eugènia Bosch Fàbregas is a PhD researcher at University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia. She holds a bachelor's degree in English Studies and a master's degree in Translation Studies. Her research areas are gender, literary and audiovisual translation. She is an associate lecturer at University of Lleida, where she teaches translation and English. She is a coeditor of the e-book The Translation Process Series: Volume III (Editions and Publications of the University of Lleida) and active member of the research group TRACTE (Audiovisual Translation, Communication and Territory). She has participated in five

international congresses on gender and translation, and her most recent publications include a chapter on literary translation and gender in The Translation Process Series. New Voices (2023) and an article on audiovisual translation and multilingualism in Languages (2023).

Time slot: **Friday 9:30 – 10:30. Room 4**

Hakim Boussejra
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Université de Bourgogne, Dijon, France

Video Game Accessibility in the Elementary School Classroom

This communication is the direct continuation of the one I gave at Fun For All 2023. For my PhD, I have created video game prototypes based on fairy tales that have been tested in French elementary school classrooms with children aged 6 to 11. The French educational system has been trying to promote the use of games and digital media in classes (Eduscol, 2023). In this presentation, I will explain how to best create an experiment or activity with children in an elementary school setting, which needs to take into account the needs of the children, as well as those of the teacher, and from a professional perspective, the curriculum. Before the experiment took place, we were afraid of teachers and schools being reticent at the idea of using video games in class, because of the public discourse against video game violence (Anderson et al., 2007; Lacko et al., 2024) and more generally about children's use of screens (Laidlaw et at., 2020; Orlando, 2020). To further document their needs and issues, I created a survey that was distributed among French teachers that gathered 280 replies, of which I will show part of the results.

I will then briefly introduce the two video games created for my PhD and the accessibility features that were implemented in both to fit the needs of elementary school children, which were especially designed to improve readability, using suggestions made by Inclusion Europe (2021) and recommendations and design techniques found in other games for children (Fisher, 2015). But the real goal of this presentation will be to discuss how to properly set-up a classroom to optimize the working conditions of the children, which takes into consideration not only the games, but the children as individuals, the teachers' in- class objectives and the equipment of the school, which vary from one to another.

Testing sessions have been organized in two steps. First, over half a day, I discussed fairy tales and video games with children before having them play my final prototypes. The pedagogical objective was to have children discover a new story, and thus acquire cultural knowledge, while at the same time practicing reading through a game. I first measured right after the first session how well they could retell the story, if it was fun and if they had encountered any issues. The second step was to test how well they remembered the story after two or three weeks had elapsed through a writing assessment, which would allow me to establish if the readability and accessibility measures designed in the game and in-class were successful. The results were positive, and the majority of students have shown to remember the story to differing degrees. Drawing from these testing sessions I have organized with several classes and more than 120 elementary school students, I will offer guidelines, that can be applied to similar endeavors related to video game accessibility and education in schools and other organizations that work with children.

Hakim Boussejra is a third year PhD student from the University of Burgundy, France, where he works on using folk tales and children's literature adapted into video games for educational purposes, mainly to practice reading and gain cultural knowledge. He has had the opportunity to present the beginnings of his work at Fun For All 2023, and later presented its developments in other conferences in France and Portugal, which led to a first publication in early 2024. He has organized a conference on video games and serious games in his home university of Dijon in March 2024, which was a great success and will lead to further collaborations with others working on game studies.

Time slot: **Thursday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

Judith Brenner
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University of Eastern Finland / Cologne University of Applied Sciences

Effects of machine translation post-editing in video games on the translator, the translation process and the translation product

In this presentation I will introduce the game localisation community to my doctoral research project that investigates the effects of different machine translation (MT) post-editing workflows on the translator, the translation process and the translation product. Since the commercialisation of neural machine translation (NMT), this type of translation technology has seen widespread use, and academic studies have shown productivity gains when post-editing (PE) the output of an NMT system. However, these studies investigated texts from fields such as banking and finance, or marketing, and cannot be transferred to the field of video games, as the multi-modal features and creative characteristics of game texts make these more complex to translate. In fact, there are hardly any studies investigating the use of NMT in video game translation from the translator's perspective, although its practice happens in the industry. Studies in the partly overlapping field of literary translation suggest that PE of NMT output when translating creative texts may in fact have counter-effects, such as reducing productivity or hindering the creative process. Additionally, prior research on (statistical) MT has found individual differences in PE productivity and personal preferences. These are relevant aspects about PE that should be addressed to understand its usefulness in video game translation. Therefore, this study investigates different PE practices and their effects on temporal and cognitive effort, on the quality of the post-edited translation and on the game translators' user experience. Data elicitation is performed in a semi-realistic workplace setting in the offices of the study participants, who are freelance professional video game translators, and is facilitated and supported by Native Prime, a game localisation service provider. In the study, the translators perform three different translation tasks on three different texts coming from the same game. The three tasks are: 1) translation from scratch without NMT but with a partially filled translation memory (TM); 2) static post-editing of a file pre- translated with NMT and TM high-fuzzy matches; 3) NMT-assisted TM translation of a file with empty target segments, with NMT and TM available as resources on the side. The participants translate from English into French, Italian, German and Spanish. Temporal and cognitive effort as well as translation quality are measured quantitatively and analysed descriptively, and the translators' user experience is measured and analysed qualitatively with a user experience questionnaire. To determine temporal effort, keylogging gives exact edit times for each translation segment. Cognitive effort is inferred through gaze fixations gathered by eye-tracking and by typing pauses. Quality is measured by the number and types of errors in the post-edited translation, based on a Multidimensional Quality Metrics (MQM) framework tailored to the requirements for high- quality, creative game translation. The fourth factor, user experience, is measured with pre-task and post-task questionnaires. The presentation describes the experiments to be carried out in autumn 2024 and includes some first findings that might inform the use of NMT in game translation in the future.

Judith Brenner is a doctoral researcher at the University of Eastern Finland and at Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany, where she investigates different modes of post-editing machine translation output in video game translation. Before turning to research, Judith worked as Localization Editor for German in the localisation department of Blizzard Entertainment, a globally operating game developer. She also has more than ten years of experience as freelance translator and editor for video games, PC hardware and software, and tourism, and holds a first degree in Translation Studies and a master's degree in Terminology and Language Technology. Judith's doctoral research project is funded by the Finnish Kone Foundation and the European Association for Machine Translation (EAMT).

Time slot: **Friday 9:30 – 10:30. Room 4**

Simon Copet
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University of Mons

Alice in Localisationland: An English-French Translation and Transmedia Study of Disney Character's Speech in Films and Video Games

The Disney studio has been known worldwide for its animated works for decades. In the mid-1990s, the studio adopted a transmedia approach to present its products to a diverse audience and has been an integral part of the video game landscape since 1981 (Madej and Lee 2020: 2). At the same time, the video game localisation sector is booming and studios are using it to maximise their return on investment (Mangiron, 2018: 123). It was in these conditions that the Gameloft studio released the game Disney Dreamlight Valley (Gameloft 2023), which was localised in several languages, including French.

This localisation into French is the subject of our communication, which is a transmedia and translation analysis (EN-FR) of Disney Dreamlight Valley (Gameloft, 2023) and the films The Lion King (1994), Frozen (2013) and Moana (2016). The aim of this qualitative and quantitative research is twofold. The first is to analyse the discourse of three character duos (Nala-Scar; Anna-Kristoff; Moana-Maui) in the films and to determine whether certain characteristics are incorporated into the video game. The second aims to highlight localisation strategies to see if the characters' style and references have indeed been rendered. From a methodological point of view, we did not analyse the subtitles, but the audio versions of the films, which we analysed according to a series of criteria partially based on Lakoff (1975). We took several parameters into account: the presence of polite or insulting language, intensification, modality, types of adjective (Dixon, 1982), type-token ratios, sentence type and the presence of an imperative. I also analysed the references to films that were present in the game.

This study revealed that the speech of the characters in the game did not mirror the style of the characters in the film and tended towards homogeneity in that alt the characters used more intensifiers and modal markers. However, the video games did try to incorporate elements specific to the films. These references have often not been translated appropriately, i.e. using the film's dubbing, and show a certain literility on some occasions, suggesting a potential post-editese phenomenon. Because of these untranslated references to the original works, French-speaking gamers may not be able to fully enjoy the videogame experience, which directly raises the question of accessibility.

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Simon Copet holds a Master's degree in Translation with a research focus and is currently engaged in doctoral research on post-editing in the context of video game localisation.

Time slot: **Friday 15:30 – 16:10. Room 4**

Mikołaj Deckert & Krzysztof W. Hejduk
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University of Łódź

Translation, no translation, or worse? — a user-centric perspective on video game subtitling

The paper presents the findings of an experimental reception study of video game subtitling. Our participants played a fragment of a 2D PC adventure game in one of three conditions, with in-game subtitles as the independent variable. The experimental manipulation was to provide no translation, which was accomplished in two ways. Based on what are known to be instances of poor quality localisations, a subset of the subtitles was either left in the original English version or contained a bracketed note in the target language stating explicitly that translation is missing, as follows: (BRAKUJE TŁUMACZENIA). In the moderate condition we planted 15 such deficient subtitles and the extreme condition had 25 of those. The control condition used the official Polish translation where all the subtitles were provided in the target language. After the participants played through the selected fragment of the game, they were instructed to proceed to an online questionnaire to provide input on a range of facets of their experience alongside other demographic and play-pertinent details.

We will present findings obtained with the use of the Player Experience Inventory (PXI) (Abeele et al. 2020), a 30-item self- report scale that covers a total of 10 constructs ranging from ease of control and level of challenge to a sense of meaning and immersion. The PXI data will be additionally viewed against our players' comprehension, operationalised as success rate on multiple-choice questions about the game's story and its characters.

By offering an account of how a specific change in game subtitles influences player experience the paper adds to the growing body of empirically-grounded work in what has been IabeIIed as Game Translation User Research (cf. Deckert et al. 2024), a programme whose key aim is to better understand the role that translation plays in shaping target player experience (cf.

Mangiron 2018: 129).

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Mikołaj Deckert is associate professor at the University of Łódź, Institute of English Studies, in Poland. His research is primarily in interlingual translation, with emphasis on audiovisual translation and media accessibility, but also more broadly deals with language and cognitive processes. He serves as peer-review editor for the Journal of Specialised Translation (JoSTrans), co-edited "The Palgrave Handbook of Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility" (2020, with Łukasz Bogucki) and co-authored "On-Screen Language in Video Games: A Translation Perspective" (CUP, 2022, with Krzysztof W. Hejduk) as well as "Towards Game Translation User Research" (CUP, 2024, with Krzysztof W. Hejduk and Miguel A. Bernal- Merino). Mikołaj is currently the Pl in the following grants funded by the Polish National Science Centre: "On-screen language in video games: a reception perspective on translation", "Placebos and nocebos for translators: a model of anticipatory cognition in translation production" and "Experiencing translated video games: a user-centric model".

Krzysztof W. Hejduk (ORCID.org/0000-0002-9476-4428) is a doctoral student at the University of Łódź. He graduated from his alma mater with distinguished BA and MA theses in linguistics and numerous awards for outstanding academic work. The results of his research into AVT/MA and game localisation were presented at various international and local conferences and in the form of the co-authored "Can video game subtitling shape player satisfaction?" (Perspectives, 2024, with Mikołaj Deckert) and "Videogame localisation, spelling errors and player reception" (Translation, Cognition & Behavior, 2022, with Mikołaj Deckert). He also recently co-edited "User-Centric Studies in Game Translation and Accessibility" (Routledge, 2025, with Mikołaj Deckert). He is currently involved in several linguistic research projects, many of which centre on video game localisation, including one awarded by the National Science Centre of Poland and co-funded by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange.

Time slot: **Friday 12:30 – 13:30. Room 4**

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Understanding the Accessible Game Experience of Chinese Visually Impaired Gamers in "Dou Dizhu for AII"

This study explores the gaming experience of the blind and visually impaired persons (BVIPs) in mainland China by adapting a traditional card game, "Dou Dizhu for All". Despite the rise of accessible gaming in the West, with companies such as Sony and Xbox creating inclusive games and researchers like Kulik et al. (2021), Mangiron and Zhang (2016), Porter (2014), and Yuan et al. (2010) contributing to the field, game accessibility for BVIPs is still a largely uncharted area in mainland China.

This study will involve four phases: first, the design of the accessible version of the game; second, the adaptation of the Immersion Experience Questionnaire (IEQ); third, the usability test for **BVIPs;** and fourth, semi-structured interviews with users.

1. "Dou Dizhu for All": An Accessible Card Game

   The traditional Chinese card game "Dou Dizhu" has been adapted into "Dou Dizhu for All", an accessible version designed for BVIPs and sighted players. This adaptation includes accessibility features such as:

   - Text-to-Speech (TTS) Firstly, the game has developed its customised TTS feature to avoid incompatibility for different platforms.
   - Audio Cues Secondly, audio cues provide information such as the cards the player holds and board status, enabling players to make informed decisions
   - Voice Control with ChatGPT's Language Model Thirdly, voice control converts commands expressed in natural language into actual game commands. It allows users to speak commands, which are then converted to text. The text will be analysed by ChatGPT's language model to identify corresponding game commands. Players will then confirm the execution of the command. Once approved, the command will be executed accordingly. For example, the commands "I want to bid the landlord" and "Let me be the landlord" and other synonyms are processed as command: "Bid the landlord."
   - The user interface (UI) Fourthly, the UI design is optimised for accessibility. For instance, the UI design simplifies the sub- interfaces, which allow players to start the game in just two steps. This simplification guarantees fewer buttons to navigate and buttons with similar functions are positioned consistently, making it more accessible and intuitive for BVIPs.

2. Adaptation of the IEQ Amongst scales to measure gaming experiences, such as PENS (Rigby & Ryan 2007), GEngQ (Brockmyer et al. 2009), and GUESS (Phan et al. 2016), the IEQ was chosen for its comprehensive coverage of cognitive involvement, emotional involvement, real-world dissociation, control, and challenge. This study adapted the IEQ to assess parameters such as audio cues and voice control.
3. Usability Test for BVIPs' Gaming Experience The usability test evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of accessible features for VIPs during gameplay. It focuses on activities like navigating the interface, swapping cards, accessing game options without moderator aid. The assessment will observe how fluently and accurately participants can perform these actions; the scoring system is yet to be decided.
4. Semi-Structured Interviews & Data Analysis

After the gameplay, participants will partake in semi-structured interviews based on the adapted IEQ. The interviews will delve into immersion experiences, game accessibility, and

user's suggestions for improvements. The data will be thematically analysed to identify patterns in BVIPs' gameplay experiences, preferences, and accessibility barriers.

Conclusion & Contribution By combining the results from the usability testing and the semi-structured interviews, this study aims to deliver a comprehensive understanding of Chinese BVIPs' gaming experiences. It is hoped that the interface design and accessibility features of Dou Dizhu for All can serve as guidelines for the development of future accessible games for BVIPs, especially in mainland China. Furthermore, the user's feedback from this study can offer valuable insights for future game accessibility studies and game design. Overall, this project plays as the initial step for accessibility studies in mainland China.

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I am **Yunke Deng**, a PhD candidate at the Centre for Translation Studies, University College London. I am a researcher at the Bristol Digital Game Lab and work as a translator. I completed my MA degree at the University of Bristol. My research focuses on game accessibility, video game UI design, and user experience research, especially for the blind and visually impaired persons.

Recently, I presented an extended abstract of my ongoing research at DiGRA (Digital Games Research Association) 2024 in Guadalajara, Mexico. While I only shared the initial design of my game, this project aligns closely with my academic focus.

I am passionate about the intersection of game design and accessibility. I believe this project will further extend the scope of my research and potentially lead to new insights. Additionally, I sincerely hope this project can truly make a difference for blind and visually impaired individuals in China, advancing the progress of accessible gaming in the country.

Time slot: **Thursday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

Loïc De Faria Pires
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University of Mons

NMT and LLM Post-Editing Process in Videogame Localization: How Can Students' Productions Help Us Become Better Localisation Lecturers?

In recent years, Neural Machine Translation (NMT) quality has steadily improved and post-editing (PE) has become a common professional practice (Cui et al., 2023: 1). Lately, the rise of Large Language Models (LLMs) and the high quality of their raw MT outputs (Peng et at., 2023: 1) have led to a higher relevance of generative AI on the translation market (Silva Loureiro and Ferreira, 2023 : 41) and, therefore, have required translation and localisation lecturers to adapt and optimise their teaching practices. Although PE has potential in the framework of videogame localisation, its practice and the quality of the raw MT provided by various engines on said texts have been scarcely studied. However, some studies, such as the one by Hansen and Houlmont (2022) showed that raw MT quality can vary depending on the MT engine used. Yet, no study has, to the best of our knowledge, compared process in human translation (HT), NMT PE and LLM PE in the field of videogame localisation in academic or professional contexts.

Since localisation classes were introduced two years ago at the University of Mons, and since future professional localisation practices could benefit from MTPE (as it could provide for a higher productivity and enable games for smaller developers to be translated), the objective of the present research paper is to investigate whether one of the abovementioned MT paradigms is more efficient when used in videogame localisation, and to compare them to full human translation. Indeed, an analysis of students' PE process will provide some insight into the best practices to implement when teaching videogame localisation in the Artificial Intelligence era.

Therefore, an excerpt from a visual novel game containing some typical videogame localisation problems (gender, terminology, humour) will be submitted (October 2024) to the students registered in our Masters' post-editing class. These students are already familiarised with videogame localisation from English into French, since they all followed this class during the previous academic year. The students will be divided into three groups: some will post-edit the DeepL raw MT (NMT), others will post-edit the ChatGPT raw MT (LLM) and others will manually translate the excerpt (HT). All will work from English into French (their mother tongue). The three types of productions will then be analysed using the PosEdiOn tool developed by Alvarez-Vidal and Oliver (2023). Automatic metrics such as BLEU score and HTER will be computed to compare raw MT quality for DeepL and ChatGPT, and traditional PE effort metrics will be used to measure temporal effort (PE time), technical effort (keystrokes) and cognitive effort (pauses) and determine whether some localisation modes are more efficient for the given excerpt.

These conclusions will, in spite of their limited scope, provide us with some general trends, thus enabling us to provide some recommendations for more efficient videogame localisation classes. For example, we will determine whether MTPE is more efficient than full HT. We will also be able to identify the best generic MT paradigm to be used on such a videogame excerpt, which will enable lecturers decide which MT tools are the most relevant in videogame localisation.

Loïc de Faria Pires is an Associate Professor in Translation Studies at the University of Mons, Belgium. He is in charge of Translation Technology, Localisation, Post-Editing, Subtitling and Dubbing classes. He obtained his PhD in December 2020; his dissertation was about the influence of professional experience on the quality of texts translated by professional translators at the European Commission's DGT. His current research interests involve NMT and Generative Al (LLMs) and their applications, more concretely the way they can help

translators work on creative contents (such as literary texts, subtitles and videogames) in the framework of post-editing practices. He is as interested in PE process as in PE product.

Time slot: **Friday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

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Sapienza University of Rome & University of Silesia in Katowice

'By Toutatis, I didn't know they said that in Hibernia!': The Representation and Localisation of Otherness in Asterix Video Games

The Asterix multimedia franchise continues to expand across media, as a wide range of new cultural artifacts appear that feature the popular characters from the comic book series created by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo in 1959 and still ongoing after their respective deaths in 1977 and 2020. Only some of these products tend to receive critical attention, however. For example, Asterix video games are rarely discussed in scholarly studies, one notable exception being a contrastive analysis of the English and Italian versions of Asterix at the Olympic Games (Étranges Libellules 2007) (Tarquini 2011). Unlike the latter, which is based on the 1968 comic book and the 2008 live-action film with the same title, more recent games, such as Asterix & Obelix XXL 3: The Crystal Menhir (OSome Studio 2019) and Asterix & Obelix XXXL: The Ram from Hibernia (OSome Studio 2022), introduce entirely new characters and plotlines. Positioning the player as an indomitable Gaul who thwarts Roman expansionist ambitions in a variety of geographical contexts, these games often stage Asterix and Obelix's encounter with characters of different ethnicities. If the comic books rely on national stereotypes for characterisation purposes (Rouviere 2008), Asterix video games similarly deploy various strategies of linguacultural othering, which arguably contain the subversive power of these interactive narratives of anti-colonialism. This paper proposes to analyse the representation and localisation of otherness in the English and Italian versions of XXL3 and XXXL. Cross-pollinating postcolonial game studies with game localisation research, my study will highlight important similarities and differences in terms of linguacultural othering between games and between different versions of the same game.

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Paolo D'lndinosante is completing his PhD in English Literatures, Language and Translation at Sapienza University of Rome, in cotutelle with the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. In 2023, he was a Visiting Research Student at the University of Roehampton, London. In 2024, he was an Occasional Postgraduate Research Student at Newcastle University. His research interests include the intersections of literature and video games (with a particular focus on adaptation, appropriation, and ideology), the Italian reception of the literary works of Rudyard Kipling, and British imperial poetry in the long nineteenth century. He has published and forthcoming essays on these subjects.

Time slot: **Thursday 17:00 – 18:00. Room 4**

Çağla Gurbet Erol & Arsun Uras
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Istanbul University

The role of feminism in Video game Localization: "Hellblade: Senua's sacrifice"

The aim of the study is to examine the role of feminism in the Turkish localization of the video game Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice, which is acclaimed by critics and players and falls into the serious — indie games category. The study aims to observe the effects of feminist principles on the narrative adaptation of the game and its reflections on global players in the light of the phenomenon of "immersion". The game is an important example of not only contradicting conventional game rules but also integrating feminist themes into its main narrative. Representations of gender roles will be interpreted through the main female character, Senua, who challenges traditional gender stereotypes as a strong, resilient woman in both physical and mental battles. In this context, the localization decisions of the game, especially in terms of transferring gender perceptions, cultural attitudes and emotional depth to the Turkish target language, will be developed with a discourse analysis approach through examples. Based on Lefevere's concept of rewriting and O'Hagan and Mangiron's concept of reproduction, the study will address the success of localization in preserving the feminist messages and emotional intensity of the original game. This approach will highlight the critical role that localization plays in sustaining the thematic essence of the game in different cultural contexts. In this context, successful video game localization will require a cognitive approach that encompasses cultural and emotional dimensions rather than purely linguistic translation. Within the framework of the Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice game and its localization into Turkish, it will be attempted to determine whether it effectively preserves feminist themes and allows players with different backgrounds, experiences, and perhaps perceptions to interact with the game's representations of gender roles and psychology. Thanks to this feminist phenomenon imagined by Senua, the main character of the source text, localization, which is a sub-field of translation studies, also offers a message from a sociological perspective, which requires an interdisciplinary perspective. Therefore, the interdisciplinary role of video game localization within the gaming industry and its role in intercultural dialogue will be discussed.

Keywords: Game localization, feminism, psychology, gender roles, serious games.

In 2017, **Çağla Gurbet Erol** graduated from Trakya University Department of English Translation and Interpreting. After graduation, she worked as a translator-interpreter for Fenerbahçe Sports Club/University for one year. After a while after entering academia, she started the Translation Studies Master's Program at Sakarya University and graduated in 2023 with her thesis on video game localization. In the same year, she was accepted to Istanbul University Translation Studies PhD Program. She has been in the translation and localization industry for about 11 years and has been involved in various video game localization projects due to her interest in computer games, which is her biggest passion, as well as technical, marketing and media translation.

Since 2004, Prof. Dr. **Arsun Uras** has been a faculty member at the Department of French Translation and Interpreting at Istanbul University. She graduated from Hacettepe University's French Language and Literature undergraduate program in 1989. She then completed her MA and PhD studies at Université Paris III - Sorbonne Nouvelle. She continues her scientific studies in different subfields of Linguistics, Comparative and Applied Linguistics, French Language and Literature, Turkish, Interpreting and Translation Studies. Prof. Dr. Arsun Uras is the Head of the Department of Translation and Interpreting and the Director of the School of Foreign Languages at Istanbul University.

Time slot: **Friday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

Melik Ahmet Erol
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Istanbul University

Reinterpreting mythological stories through Game Localization: a case study of the game: God of War (2018)

This paper examines the reinterpretation of old stories based on mythological narratives for modern video games through game localisation using the video game God of War (2018) as a case study. Mythological stories are among the oldest traditions of story-telling in the world. There are countless examples of old mythological stories being reinterpreted as fantasy and/or science-fiction narratives in the modern world. Mythologies, as a collection myths of belonging to specific cultural traditions or religious belief systems have had direct influence on the daily lives and ideologies of individuals for centuries.

These mythical stories now mostly act as creative narratives for entertainment purposes through various media, including movies, books and video games. Having positioned itself as a prominent medium of entertainment and story-telling, Video Game industry commonly utilizes mythological elements, structures or narratives as either basis or as inspiration for the creative realities of video game narratives. Although certain types of video games simply rely on game mechanics and visual elements, some of the most successful titles combine ludology and narratology to provide a comprehensive entertainment experience. The narrative elements of such video games are relayed to other cultures and languages through Video Game Localisation. In this context, the paper aims to study the reinterpretation of a mythological narrative in a modern video game, namely the God of War (2018) through game localisation as elements of entertainment, gameplay motivation and player immersion, discussing how established mythological narratives are altered for the video game environment. We also compare how the video game used as a case study deviates from more recent interpretations of the same mythology in different media channels (such as books, TV shows and movies) to establish a contrasting narrative for player motivation and the significant role the game localization process plays in such reinterpretation.

Keywords: Video Game, Game Localization, Mythology, Narratology, Ludology.

Melik Ahmet Erol was born in 1989 in Turkey. He completed his BA in Translation and Interpretation in Trakya University in 2011, MA in Translation in Sakarya University in 2017 and is currently a Ph.D student in Istanbul University. He has worked as a full-time translator and interpreter between 2011 and 2016, focusing on Translation Technologies and Localization. He has been teaching Localization and Computer-Assisted Translation courses at various universities since 2017.

Time slot: **Thursday 17:00 – 18:00. Room 4**

Pedro Fernandes & Cátia Casimiro
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Lusófona University, HEI-Lab

Building an accessible game around Augmentative and Alternative Communication to promote the inclusion of neurodivergent individuals

Neurodivergents, particularly People with Intellectual Disabilities (PwID), are often marginalized by society - including their participation in the social activity of playing games for leisure. Games stand as an activity that can bring people together, with this including PwID.

The GamelN research project aims to create games that are accessible to neurodiverse people (neurodivergent and neurotypical individuals) in a way that they can play together, fostering inclusion for those with intellectual disabilities. To develop these games, the GamelN project is implementing a process of co-creation that includes playtesting sessions at health institutions. The project's final result is set to be a gamekit that features accessible - and adaptable - games, both analog and digital, that can be enjoyed by a neurodiverse group of people.

During one of the sessions where original game prototypes made by the GamelN team were being playtested, the institution's health support workers challenged the research team to create a game that made use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in a way that would facilitate and allow the participation of clients who may have communication needs. From this prompt would arise the game Monster Detective.

It is a board game where a group of players take on the role of detectives in a fantasy setting where they have to discover the current appearance of a shape-shifting monster by interrogating a witness (another player) regarding its appearance. AAC is integrated into the game (played in Portuguese) via the cards that dictate what questions the detectives can ask about the criminal's appearance, specifically regarding their head, torso, and legs. The detectives make their questions while showing the respective cards and the witness must look at their image of the criminal and answer the questions with a Yes or No. Once the detectives are confident that they have uncovered the escapee's appearance, the witness reveals the image to show if they were successful.

In September, 2024, the game was tested by 17 neurodivergents and 5 neurotypicals (N = 22). The positive results gathered from the sessions conducted with an early prototype of the game indicate that it was successful in creating an activity that neurodivergent people could play together and with others; at the same time, the playtesters (both neurodivergent and neurotypical) provided valuable feedback that will help update and improve the game in order for it to be more engaging and as accessible as possible. The creation process and early results from testing Monster Detective demonstrate how a game that was designed from the start to integrate - and resignify - important tools used to facilitate communication between neurodiverse individuals can lead to an activity that is at its core designed to allow for a shared and accessible experience.

Pedro M. A. Fernandes is a PhD Student in Media Art and Communication at Lusófona University. His main research interests include game design, horror games, and independent games. He also works as a researcher on projects related to applied games and game accessibility at Lusófona University's HEI-Lab.

Cátia Casimiro is a PhD student in Communication Sciences and her thesis will focus on written accessibility. Câtia's research interests include communication and social and organizational inclusion of People with Disabilities. Additionally, she's also the editorial manager for the International Journal of Games and Social Impact (IJGSI).

Time slot: **Thursday 12:00 – 13:20. Room 4**

Krzysztof W. Hejduk & Mikołaj Deckert
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"Those are rarely translated, I don't recall much" — a reception study on diegetic text translation

In the context of translation, on-screen language [OSL] is a term proposed to encompass visual-verbal semiotic codes across a virtual linguistic landscape (cf. Shohamy & Gorter 2009: 1) in audiovisual creations, especially video games. A specific kind of OSL (Deckert & Hejduk 2022: 2-5) is "intra-diegetic" (e.g. graffitis or shop banners that are interpretable as part of the gameworld or the mise-en-scéne) as opposed to "extra-diegetic" (e.g. subtitles or menus that are designed to interface between the game machine and users). While the translational status of the latter one is well-established — being a direct communication method with the players that is often unbound by linguacultural constraints — the localisation of intra-diegetic OSL appears underresearched. The present paper aims to partly fill this gap by exploring the opinions of users on this matter (cf. Mangiron 2018).

A sample of Polish respondents were tasked to visit our laboratory and play a Polish localisation of a comedy adventure game under one of two conditions: with the intra-diegetic OSL either in the target (Polish) or source (English) language. The choice of the stimulatory material (a comedic video game) presented an opportunity for the players to have a clear incentive to linguistically access all OSL components due to their humorous nature (Deckert & Hejduk 2022: 44; cf. Mangiron 2010). Each study participant then took part in an one-on-one structured interview which investigated their opinions regarding intra-diegetic OSL. The interview aimed to elicit spontaneous comments about the intra-diegetic OSL by asking indirect questions (e.g. what the user paid attention to regarding the Polish language version they played), but also probed for OSL-related observations using direct questions. These were prompted by viewing illustrations from the game where the intra-diegetic OSL is blurred out so as to not appear in either language. The direct questions included e.g. speculations on the function(s) of such components, whether the user recalls finding those translated in this or any other game, and whether they exhibit preferences for or against localising them. The unique demographic profiles of our participants (e.g. their English proficiency — tested via LexTALE) were also collected to compare with their interview answers and ensure a greater depth of analysis. Our paper showcases the interviewee answers from the two study groups to gain insight into how the translation of intra-diegetic OSL texts can be perceived among Polish players in the context of a comedy adventure game.

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Krzysztof W. Hejduk (ORCID.org/0000-0002-9476-4428) is a doctoral student at the University of Łódź. He graduated from his alma mater with distinguished BA and MA theses in linguistics and numerous awards for outstanding academic work. The results of his research into AVT/MA and game localisation were presented at various international and

local conferences and in the form of a recently co-authored “Videogame localisation, spelling errors and player reception” (Translation, Cognition & Behavior, 2022, with Mikołaj Deckert) and “Can video game subtitling shape player satisfaction?” (Perspectives, 2024, with Mikołaj Deckert). He also recently co-edited “User-Centric Studies in Game Translation and Accessibility” (Routledge, 2025, with Mikołaj Deckert). He is currently involved in several linguistic research projects, many of which centre on video game localisation, including one awarded by the National Science Centre of Poland and co-funded by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange.

Mikołaj Deckert (ORCID.org/0000-0003-1569-2399) is associate professor at the University of Łódź, Institute of English Studies, in Poland. His research is primarily in interlingual translation, with emphasis on audiovisual translation and media accessibility, but also more broadly deals with language and cognitive processes. He serves as peer-review editor for the Journal of Specialised Translation (JoSTrans), co-edited “The Palgrave Handbook of Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility” (2020, with Ł. Bogucki) and co-authored “On-Screen Language in Video Games: A Translation Perspective” (CUP, 2022, with K. W. Hejduk) as well as “Towards Game Translation User Research” (CUP, 2024, with K. W. Hejduk and M.

A. Bernal-Merino). He participated in a number of national and international research projects, recently as PI in the grants “Visual-verbal stimuli in video games: a translation perspective”, “On-screen language in video games: a reception perspective on translation”, “Experiencing translated video games: a user-centric model”, and “Placebos and nocebos for translators: a model of anticipatory cognition in translation production”.

Time slot: **Thursday 15:30 – 16:30. Room 4**

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Haute École Albert Jacquard & Université libre de Bruxelles - Liége Game Lab

A Snapshot into the Limits and Risks of Video Game Machine Translation

In recent years, there has been a growing interest for the uses, applications and adaptation of translation technologies in creative domains. In this context, research on the interplay of machine translation (MT) and video games remains limited to this date (Zhang, 2022, p. 377; Jiménez-Crespo, 2024, p. 248), even though the topic is similarly and slowly gaining attention, both in academia (see, also, Brenner, 2024) and among language service providers (Moorkens, Way & Lankford, 2024, pp.

173—175).

Starting from a study aiming at assessing the possibility of customizing MT systems to this specific domain on a technical level (Hansen & Houlmont, 2022), this contribution sets out to explore in details the translations generated by such systems, based on a human evaluation and error annotation typology specifically devised to reflect in a more tangible way the improvements and limitations of MT in such creative domains. Incidentally, this custom typology will help, on the one hand, to better understand the complexities and translation strategies involved in the translation of video games, and, on the other hand, to illustrate the advantages of the MT adaptation process in those categories where the machine is precisely expected to fail.

Lastly, the contribution will put into context some of the challenges of video game localization that highlight the need to better understand translators current practices, difficulties and workflows, and where inappropriate use of technology could exacerbate these difficulties at best, but might also have a much larger and drastic impact. Although historically seen in the gaming industry as an end-of-chain component of the game development or even a way to cut costs, translation — and, therefore, the use of MT — has a direct and definitive effect on the overall quality of the game (Hansen & Houlmont, 2022, p. 266), on its reception by players and on their engagement (Moorkens, Way & Lankford, 2024, p. 183), or on the brand name as a whole (Jiménez-Crespo 2024, p. 71).

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Pierre-Yves Houlmont is an assistant professor at the Haute École Albert Jacquard in Belgium. He is a member of the CRI1 (Collectif de Recherche pour les Industries et Univers Numériques) as well as a scientific collaborator at the CIRTI (Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche en Traduction et en Interprétation) and the Liège Game Lab at the University of Liège.

Currently about to finish a PhD thesis on video game localization, his doctoral research ties at the intersection of translation and game studies, focusing on the specificities of video game localization in relation to game design strategies. His primary research interests include semiotics, digital game studies, and game design. He also co-founded and currently co-chairs DiGRA Belgium, the national association for research in digital game studies in Belgium.

Damien Hansen is an assistant professor in translation and AI at the ULB, in Belgium. Damien worked broadly on using personalized corpora, CAT tools and machine translation in creative sectors, focusing mainly on literature and video games. His thesis focused on the possibility and limitations of customized MT systems for literary translators, on their ability to learn patterns of style, as well as on the ergonomic and broader social issues surrounding the advances of technology in this field. Recently, his research shifted towards the effects of translation tools on the cognitive processes and socio-economic factors involved in literary translation, but his interests also brought him to the field of game studies, with the recent publication of a book on the meta-languages and social semiotics of video games.

Time slot: **Friday 9:30 – 10:30. Room 4**

Marián Kabát & Mária Koscelníková
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Comenius University in Bratislava & Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra

Use cases of LLM usage during video game localization

Since the rise of AI and large language model technologies at the end of 2022, much has changed in the localization process of a video game. While authors like Siu (2023), Kabât (2024) and Moreno Garcfa and Mangiron (2024) examine the possible use cases of LLMs in translation and localisation, the information is spread across various articles. The purpose of this contribution is to first do a thorough literature review of texts on LLM usage in translation and localisation, then, if needed, add own use cases from the authors' practice, and present a list of prompts together with examples on how LLMs can aid during video game localization.

Marián Kabát is an associate professor at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. He teaches courses on literary and specialized translation. In 2020 he started teaching the first courses focused on localization in Slovakia. His research focuses on localization, machine translation, and technologies used in translation. Mariàn was awarded the GALA Rising Star Scholarship in 2020. Other than that, he is a practising translator and localizer.

Mária Koscelníková studied Translation Studies (English Language and Culture and Spanish Language and Culture) at the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. She later graduated from the Department of Translation Studies of Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra and obtained the academic title PhD. She defended a dissertation focused on Translation Specifics of Video Game Localisation. She mostly researches the theory of video game localisation, general and Slovak, video game criticism of Slovak localisations of video games. She teaches theoretical and practical disciplines. She is a member of the ESIST organisation, the civic association Doslov, a deputy editor of the L10N journal, and a practising translator. She translated many books, dialogue letters, subtitles and video games.

Time slot: **Friday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

Dominik Kudła
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University of Warsaw, Faculty of Applied Linguistics

Training Video Game Localizers in Poland — An Overview and Look Forward

Although there are currently no study programs devoted exclusively to training video game localizers, courses regarding this type of translation activity have been present at Polish universities since 2009. Commercial workshops of a much shorter nature were offered even before, with longer multi-session training forms emerging at the beginning of the current decade at two private companies. At the moment, video game localization could be learnt at nine universities in Poland (SWPS University, University of Silesia, University of Gdańsk, Jagiellonian University in Cracow, University of Warsaw, Maria Curie- Skłodowska University in Lublin, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and WSB Merito University in Chorzów). Even though mostly the courses are offered within applied linguistics and philology programs, one is a part of a game studies program. The presentation will juxtapose these courses with regard to the form of the training (apart from practical workshops and elective lectures, the training may also take the form of translation internships and voluntary extracurricular projects), the skills and abilities focused upon, didactic and verification methods, as well as the materials utilised. The comparison will be based on a series of semi-structures interviews with the coordinators of there classes conducted both in-person and online. The analysis will also include some recommendations regarding potential improvements mentioned by the trainers themselves. Additionally, one of the questions raising various concerns among professionals, namely the wise use of technologies reshaping the market, including generative AI tools, will be addressed.

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Dominik Kudła is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Specialised and Intercultural Communication, Faculty of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw (Poland). He received his PhD in applied linguistics at this faculty in 2020. He conducts classes concerning various aspects of English as well as translation from and into Polish, English and Russian. His current research focuses mostly on video game localization (challenges encountered by the translator, careful approach to cultural elements, translation and technical errors, user reception) and translator training. He is also interested in the topics of translation studies, eye tracking methodology, language of sport, and contact linguistics. As he is also an active translator, he tries to bridge the gaps between the industry and the academia, e.g. by organizing a meeting cycle "Applied Linguistic Students in the Labour Market" since 2018 and the University of

Warsaw Language Career Fair since 2023 where various professional paths for young linguists are shown.

Time slot: **Thursday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

Haiting Lan
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Macquarie University

Subtitle Processing in Video Games: A Case Study in a Desert Herding Game

Research background: Video games are gaining increasing popularity in subtitling research. While these studies largely focus on the user experience of subtitles and subtitling guidelines, little is known about how subtitles are processed in video games.

Research gap: Investigating subtitle processing in video games poses more challenges compared to that in non-interactive multimedia like subtitled videos due to two reasons. First, the features of subtitles are highly contextually dependent on the goals of the video games. Second, the complex interaction of multiple channels in meaning creation — users not only draw on the images and sound from the visual and auditory channels to understand the gaming content but also co-create the gaming content with their manual movements (i.e., the tactile channel). These manual movements affect the way the situation progresses and consequently the timing and appearance of subtitles.

Research goal and method: This eye-tracking study aims to investigate the impact of subtitles on players' cognitive processes and gaming performance in video games. As a case study, we used an action-based desert herding game developed by Macquarie University and recruited 60 participants for the experiment. During the study, we observed and recorded the participants' eye movements to understand how they process subtitles during gameplay and analysed the influence of subtitles on their gaming performance.

Implications: Understanding how subtitles are processed in interactive multimedia (i.e., video games) is important not only for optimising subtitling practices in gaming settings but also for informing the theoretical developments in the broad field of audiovisual translation (AVT).

Haiting Lan is a PhD candidate in the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University. Her research explores how people read in interactive multimedia environments, with a particular focus on subtitle processing in cooperative video games. She completed her MRes at MQ in 2023, where her dissertation investigated reading online text content amid visual distractions. Her research interests include subtitle reading in both non-interactive and interactive multimedia contexts.

Time slot: **Thursday 15:30 – 16:30. Room 4**

María Eugenia Larreina-Morales & Carme Mangiron
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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Present and Future of Game Accessibility: Interviewing Players with Visual Disabilities

Despite recent advancements in game accessibility, notably offset by the release of Naughty Dog's "The Last of Us Part II" in 2020, there is still much to uncover about the experiences and expectations of players with disabilities. In fact, these are key for implementing quality accessibility features for their users, while also ensuring the creative vision of the game developers and the intended gaming experience.

This presentation uncovers the results of a set of interviews with 15 adults with visual disabilities living in Spain about the present and future of game accessibility. They were conducted as part of the Researching Audio Description: Translation, Delivery, and New Scenarios project and analyzed through thematic analysis. The following topics were addressed: the lack of accessibility in current video games, game audio description features, and next steps in game accessibility.

Interview participants consider that the lack of awareness about the needs of players with visual disabilities hinders the implementation of accessibility features, among which they favor the screen reader, sound cues, contrast options, and audio description (AD). AD is an accessibility service that narrates visual elements and that has started to be available in video games. For example, cutscenes in "Marvel's Spiderman 2" (Insomniac Games, 2023) are audio described, and there is AD for characters, settings, and actions in "Stories of Blossom" (Soft Leaf Studios, 2022). Participants are interested in using AD in video games, and they recommend implementing it in non-interactive sections and slow-paced gameplay.

Regarding next steps to create more inclusive games and gaming spaces, participants highlight the importance of involving users in game accessibility development and testing, with the aim of ensuring usability. Moreover, accessibility should be considered in every step of the development process, from game engines to advertisements, including localization. Lastly, drafting legislation and standards at national and international levels could also contribute to increasing the number of accessible games.

In conclusion, this study highlights the need of involving users in the assessment of current game accessibility and the design of the features of the future. Although there are challenges to overcome, particularly the lack of awareness in the game industry, players with visual disabilities appear to be hopeful for a near future where everyone, regarless of their accessibility needs, may join the fun of video games.

Games

Naughty Dog (2020). "The Last of Us Part II".

Insomniac Games (2023). "Marvel's Spiderman 2".

Soft Leaf Studios (2022). "Stories of Blossom".

María Eugenia Larreina-Morales is a researcher and translator specialized on media accessibility. She holds a PhD in Translation, Interpreting, and Intercultural Studies from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her research on audio description in video games was funded by the Catalan Government (2021FI_B1 00049) and linked to the Researching Audio Description: Translation, Delivery and New Scenarios project (PGC2018-096566-B-I00

[MCIU/AEI/FEDER, UE]). She is interested in interactive and immersive media, particularly video games, and user-centered studies.

Carme Mangiron, PhD, is an Assistant Professor, a member of the research group TransMedia Catalonia and a member of the knowledge transference network AccessCat at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). She was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award at UAB in 2022. She has extensive experience as a translator, specialising in software and game localisation. Her main research areas are game localisation, game accessibility, audiovisual translation and accessibility to the media. She has published extensively in international journals and participated in several national and international research projects. She is currently one of the PIs of the WEL project (From written to oral texts in Easy Language: easy audios in cultural visits and video games, PID2022-137058NB-I00). She is co-author of Game Localization: Translating for the Global Digital Entertainment Industry (O'Hagan and Mangiron, 2013), and the main organiser of the Fun for All Conference, about game translation and accessibility, which is held at UAB every two years.

Time slot: **Thursday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

Jiaqi Liu
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University of Manchester

The non-intrusive approach to game localisation: Facilitating passive immersion

This presentation explores a less discussed way of achieving immersive experiences through localisation: the non-intrusive approach. To some extent, this contrasts with the prevailing industry norm of overt and proactive localisation intervention towards immersion. Using the researched localisation company as a case study, I will illustrate how this method unfolds in practice and explain its focus on carefully preserving immersive game experiences rather than proactively constructing immersion by adding/adapting elements.

The analysis focuses on three characteristics and rationales of this non-intrusive approach:

1. Connectivity over expressiveness: Text as a modal route to immersion

Essentially, this approach perceives games as an immersive medium (see also Wolf, 2002) based on their collective nature rather than the narrative features of individual games. Understanding the relationship between text and immersion is based on viewing text as a modality, and identifying how the modality of text needs to be configured with other modalities in localised games to deliver immersion. This contrasts with approaches that focus on the narratives of specific games as it understands immersion as an intrinsic attribute and universal characteristic present in all games, rather than a specific feature of individual titles, and thus allows the non-intrusive approach to become a pervasive localisation strategy rather than a case-specific method.

2. Market trends and player preferences: A text-lite paradigm

In tracing the development of this approach, market trends and player preferences are deeply embedded in the decision- making process and shape a text-lite paradigm. For example, there is a tendency for players to skip large amounts of text, especially when not accompanied by voice acting, and a preference for fractured contentrather than bulk text - in line with the wider industry trend towards breaking up in-game text. These behaviours provide the market background and resources that underpin this immersion strategy. Consumer culture and ideologies, materialised by the Casual Revolution and the rise of mobile gaming (see also Evans, 2016, Juul, 2012), have also subtly mediated this path through certain industry practices.

3. Kinesthetic immersion: Sensory engagement in gaming

This approach prioritises the kinesthetic modality and sees sustained bodily engagement (Keogh, 2018) as a key route to immersion. This is an explicit response to the shift in entertainment culture towards high-speed, attention-grabbing experiences. Specific localisation strategies include enhancing feedback from game mechanics and simplifying information to increase the player's sense of control. By reducing information overload and minimising cognitive load, the approach seeks to prevent dissonance between 'reading' and 'writing' in games.

In summary, this approach highlights an alternative dimension of game localisation to immersion, where the careful preservation of immersion requires a level of practitioner agency comparable to that of actively creating immersion through more overt content manipulation.

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Jiaqi Liu is a PhD student in Translation and Intercultural Studies at the University of Manchester. She holds an MA in Translating and Interpreting from Newcastle University, UK and a BA in English Language and Literature from Zhejiang University, China. Her research focuses on game localisation as a multimodal translation practice in authentic industrial and cultural contexts. Her main research interests include game localisation, multimodal translation, socio-cognitive research on translation, and the mediality and materiality of translation practice.

Time slot: **Friday 15:10 – 15:50. Room 4**

Laura Mejías-Climent
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Universitat Jaume I

Experimenting with Voices: How Technology is Redefining Dubbing in Video Game Localization

As commonly reported, the video game industry has expanded exponentially since its origins, and has continued this growth in recent years, as evidenced by its revenue, which reached $184.0 billion in 2023 with 3.38 billion players worldwide (Wijiman, 2023). Alongside the rising popularity of video games, technological advancements have also surged (de Los Reyes Lozano & Mejías-Climent, 2023), bringing substantial impacts on industries such as audiovisual production and interactive entertainment. This technological progress has led to inevitable changes driven by experimentation and the adoption of new trends, not only in product development and game design but also in localization. In this context, this presentation aims to explore the changes that dubbing has undergone in video game localization and the emerging trends motivated by recent technological breakthroughs.

Video games, initially conceived as innovative and interactive audiovisual products (Mejías-Climent, 2021), form an essential bridge between audiovisual translation (AVT) and the evolving professional field of localization. Their adaptation to different locales involves approaches and procedures where AVT and localization converge (Chaume, 2018; O'Hagan, 2019; O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013). Dubbing, in particular, represented an innovative leap in localization when it was first introduced at the end of the 1990s and into the early 2000s (Mejías-Climent, 2022). While it followed the already established model of film dubbing, it embraced the added complexity of interactivity. Since its experimental beginnings, video game dubbing has become a more integrated part of the broader localization process. Through trial and error, the synchronization techniques used in film

dubbing (Chaume, 2007) evolved into five levels of restriction that address the additional interactive dimension in games (Mejías-Climent, 2019, 2021; Sioli et al., 2007).

However, with the rise of technologies such as AI and deep learning, video game localization has transformed into a fertile ground for further experimentation (Moreno García & Mangiron, 2024) aimed at producing more optimized and profitable products. Projects like Cyberpunk 2077 (CD Projekt, 2020) demonstrate this shift—where traditional video game dubbing techniques were replaced by visual dubbing (Patel et al., 2023). Although examples of visual dubbing are still rare, it is not far- fetched to imagine that this approach could soon become standard, with visuals adapted to match the dubbed dialogue's articulation, rather than the other way around. In order to gather first-hand insights, a brief exploratory survey and a short online interview with professionals in the field were conducted. These aimed to capture their perspectives on the ongoing changes they are observing in video game dubbing, particularly concerning the integration of new technologies and methodologies into the dubbing workflows. This presentation argues that video game dubbing exemplifies how translation processes evolve through experimentation in response to technological advances.

Laura Mejías-Climent is an associate professor and researcher of the Translation and Communication Department at Universitat Jaume I, and a member of the research group TRAMA (Translation for the Media and Accessibility). She holds a Ph.D. in Translation (UJI) and a Bachelor's degree in Translation and Interpreting (Universidad Pablo de Olavide), and completed a Master's Degree in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) (Universidad de Cadiz/ISTRAD), a Master's Degree in Translation and New Technologies (UIMP/ISTRAD) and the Master's Degree in Secondary Education and Languages (Universidad de Sevilla). She has taught video game localization and AVT at numerous institutions, both nationally and internationally, and worked as a translation project manager and professional translator. Her lines of research focus on AVT and localization, in particular, translation for dubbing, video

game localization and, more recently, machine translation applied to AVT. She has published over 25 scientific works including a book with Palgrave focused on game localization.

Time slot: **Friday 12:30 – 13:10. Room 4**

Will Noonan
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Université de Bourgogne

From parody to accessibility? The case of Joe Richardson's The Procession to Calvary

Described on its Steam page as "a Pythonesque adventure game made from Renaissance paintings", Joe Richardson's The Procession to Calvary (2020) offers an irreverent and visually striking reflection on art history, religious violence and adventure gameplay mechanics backed by a classical soundtrack performed by musicians integrated in improbable ways into the game's diegetic frame. Existing localisations present few difficulties with language: the English, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese versions available are presumably able to draw on shared traditions of and vocabulary for art, music and religious history. The game presents several accessibility challenges related to its deliberately clunky interface (point-and-click 'verb coin' requiring pixel hunting), its 'murder' mechanic (puzzles can be bypassed by killing but at the cost of triggering a bad ending) and the elliptical nature of its puzzles (often based on improbable associations requiring the application of 'moon logic' or elimination of possibilities), all of which represent aspects of but also potential challenges to its humorous effect.

In one sense, The Procession to Calvary can be analysed as a parody of point-and-click adventure games and of the difficulties posed by this classic genre (and by low-budget indie remakes of this classic genre) for many players. However, following the definitions offered by Margaret Rose (2011) and Yen-MaT Tran-Gervat ("playful rewriting of a recognisable literary system": 2006), it can also be analysed as a parody of several centuries of canonical European art and, more particularly, of canons of art history and associated cultural capital that have long represented a barrier for non-specialist viewers. Without seeking to make too facile a connection between barriers to access in the visual arts and the barriers to and solutions for accessibility more usually discussed within game accessibility studies, this paper seeks to explore the potential of parody and —more broadly— reflexive humour as a tool for encouraging players to think about possible accessibility issues and, perhaps, for helping to situate some types of content in a manner that is both informative and enjoyable. Just as Stephen Greenblatt's New Historicism aimed to "speak with the dead" (1988: 1) through a process of negotiation between text and reader, the role of humour in general and parody in particular can — while sometimes appearing difficult to grasp —also be highly informative. While Richardson's A Procession to Calvary may be something of an eccentric outlier within gaming and even within the notoriously meta-oriented adventure gaming genre (Bonnello Rutter Giappone: 2015; Boluk and LeMieux: 2017), the examples it provides offer potential food for thought for how the relationship between player and content can be negotiated with respect to individual requirements while preserving both engagement and enjoyment.

Will Noonan is a senior lecturer in English and Translation studies at the University of Burgundy in Dijon, France, where he coordinates the Multimedia Translation and Accessibility (TA2M) MA prgrams. A specialist in humour studies, he is a member of the TIL (Texte-Image-Langage) research centre at his home university.

Time slot: **Thursday 12:00 – 13:20. Room 4**

Miguel Àngel Oliva-Zamora
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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Coding Recommendations for Cognitive Accessibility in Games

Media accessibility has evolved alongside Translation Studies, as subtitling and dubbing function not only as transfer methods, but also as accessibility tools. An audiovisual product becomes accessible when its dialogue is translated for those who do not know the original language. Currently, video games are one of the most significant audiovisual products in the entertainment industry. As they continue to thrive, it is crucial to establish guidelines and standards that ensure an accessible

design. The focus on accessibility in video games is gaining traction, with the development of guidelines and the recognition of best practices within the industry. One of the challenges that players may face involves cognitive barriers, particularly for individuals with cognitive disabilities or learning difficulties, who struggle to respond to in-game expectations. This research explores how these barriers are being addressed in both academic and non-academic settings. Following a qualitative two- cycle coding method, eighteen documents identified in a previous literature review are analysed to map out the current landscape of cognitive accessibility in video games. In the results, recommendations are compiled and compared to determine their frequency of appearance and their presence on game assets. This research paves the way for a future reception study in which these gathered recommendations could be implemented in a video game to evaluate their effectiveness.

Miguel Àngel Oliva Zamora holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting from the Universidad de Granada (UGR) and a MA in Audiovisual Translation from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Thanks to the PhD grant he has been awarded with, he is now able to research video game accessibility and the implementation of easy-to-understand language. He is currently a member of the research group TransMedia Catalonia at the UAB and develops his work as part of the WEL project (From written to oral texts in Easy Language: easy audios in cultural visits and video games, PID2022-137058NB-I00, funded byMCIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and by ERDF, EU).

Time slot: **Thursday 12:00 – 13:20. Room 4**

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InclusiVRity: Accessible VR social storytelling in learning environments

Technological applications like virtual reality (VR) have proved to be a powerful tool in education, entertainment, culture and various other sectors. Yet, little progress has been made in recent years to facilitate easy content creation for VR in teaching and learning environments. If teachers (and learners) are unable to create and access VR content, only a few and selected topics will be made possible with this technology in education.

Neurodiverse students, including those with conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and dyslexia, face significant challenges in traditional educational settings. These challenges include difficulties with sensory processing, social interactions, and communication, and can hinder the learning experience of the students. At the same time, Virtual Reality (VR) has emerged as a powerful tool to address these challenges by offering tailored learning experiences that cater to the specific needs of neurodiverse students (Boyd et al., 2018; Zhang et al. 2022).

Despite its potential, research indicates a gap in the availability and accessibility of VR content (Oncins et al. 2020), also in educational settings, particularly in enabling teachers and learners to create and access such content easily (Creed et al., 2023). This limitation restricts the widespread adoption of VR in education, thereby limiting its benefits to a select few topics.

To bridge this gap, the Erasmus+ InclusiVRity focuses on improving capacity building in learning environments by using VR authoring tools and resources to develop key socio-educational skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving for neurodiverse students.

The presentation will outline the accessibility gaps of the current VR applications that are being used in educational settings, and the needs for future research that will be addressed as part of the InclusiVRity project.

Dr **Estel·la Oncins** holds a PhD in Accessibility and Ambient Intelligence from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). She is also a member of the TransMedia Catalonia research group. She is currently the Coordinator of the MA in Audiovisual Translation. Her research interests are audiovisual translation, media and digital accessibility, also in immersive environments. She is involved in standardization work at (ITU, ISO and UNE). She has participated in conferences on these areas of study and has published extensively in prestigious international journals and with publishers such as Routledge and Peter Lang.

She has a large experience in participating in European founded research and innovation projects and Erasmus+ related to media and digital accessibility, also in immersive environments. She has published extensively in indexed international

Time slot: **Thursday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

Silvia Pettini
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Roma Tre University

"I didn't decide anything. l've been like this my whole life": Keeping the Trans in Game Translation

The history of queer representation in video games "is commonly told as one of absence and linear progress" (Ruberg 2019, 1). From the 1970s to the 2000s LGBTQ characters have been almost non-existent, and the few ones included have primarily been oddities, caricatures, or villains (ibid., 3). From the 2010s, a slow but steady rise in their representation can be observed and from 2013 to 2015 the number of games featuring queer identities has doubled (Cole, Shaw & Zammit 2017). However, their portrayal has not increased at comparable rates, and both scholarly works and popular lists available online clearly show that, if compared to homosexual and bisexual characters, explicitly transgender roles are rare and almost always non-playable (Villagomez 2013, Garcia 2015, Shaw & Friesem 2016, Utsch et al. 2017, Shaw et al. 2019, Queerly Represent Me, LGBTQ Video Game Archive, among others).

In this light, in order to contribute to the debate about (trans)gender issues in game localization, based on relevant interdisciplinary works (Lauteria 2018, Thach 2021), this paper explores the linguacultural representation of transness in Western video games by presenting a case study of the original English version and the Italian and Spanish localizations of Cremisius "Krem" Aclassi from Dragon Age: Inquisition (BioWare 2014), whose narrative defining feature is his openly transman identity (Kosciesza 2023).

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Silvia Pettini, PhD, is a Research Fellow in English Language and Translation Studies at Roma Tre University, Italy. Her main research interests include Game Localization, Audiovisual Translation, Contrastive Linguistics and Online Lexicography.

Among her most recent publications are The Translation of Realia and Irrealia in Game Localization: Culture-Specificity between Realism and Fictionality (Routledge, 2022), papers in international journals such as JoSTrans: The Journal of Specialised Translation, MediAzioni, Lingue e Linguaggi, IJEL: International Journal of English Linguistics, and Status Quaestionis, and book chapters in volumes like Linguistic and Cultural Representation in Audiovisual Translation (Routledge, 2018) and The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender (Routledge, 2020).

Time slot: **Friday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

Marco Pirrone
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eCampus University, Italy/National Research Council (CNR), Italy

Localization, accessibility and inclusivity in racing games: the case of Mario Kart 8

Localization of digital products is constantly evolving and changing. Born as a branch of software engineering, localization is now considered a new form of translation.

In videogames, a common thought to intend localization is to associate it to the narrative aspects and specific in-game texts, such as subtitles and other descriptions. Whether this conception can be related to a large portion of game genres (e.g., action/adventure, role playing games etc..) there are other ones where localization is performed in a different way. This regard, racing games represent a genre with a particular balancing between gameplay and narrative elements. In fact, in racing games the narrative component is often reduced, or even completely absent.

Moreover, other important aspects to consider today in videogames, in general, and in racing games in particular, are accessibility and inclusivity. As in all kinds of racing game subgenres (e.g., arcade, simulation or "simcade") the gameplay experience is considered the primary component of the product. In other words, the skills and abilities of players are relevant to achieve the game objectives.

Whether in story-driven products localization is meant in a specific way, when it comes to racing games, it should represent a meeting point between multiple on-screen/audio information and accessibility features.

The study aims to analyze how localization techniques and accessibility/invlusivity features are integrated in modern racing games, even with the purpose to study the current ways to deal with the main issues and challenges proper of our times, trying also to contribute identifying some new directions for future trends.

The research uses a case study approach, focusing on a specific product. The selected videogame is Mario Kart 8, the last incarnation of Mario Kart saga by Nintendo, released for Nintendo WiiU and Nintendo Switch. This successful game proposes a peculiar approach about how localization techniques and accessibility functions have been implemented, becoming a reference point for modern arcade racing games.

Starting by making an overview about the most common racing game types, the study analyzes how the Mario Kart saga evolved over time until the release of Mario Kart 8 and Mario Kart 8 Deluxe, describing also the main methodologies used by developers and localizers to make the game enjoyable and inclusive for different types of players, such as children and people with disabilities.

From these considerations, new future trends and technical tools are identified and proposed, even in relationship to *more*

recent (and in development) games.

Marco Pirrone, graduated in Technology and language teaching at the University of Palermo, works as research fellow at National Research Council of Italy (CNR) under the area of social computing and technology assessment. He also attends the doctoral course in Medium and mediality at the eCampus University, where he deals with digital storytelling, new media and linguistic-cultural adaptation of application software and video games. He is contract professor of didactic of literary text in english language at eCampus and Link-campus Universities, and have teaching experience in English, Italian as foreign language and computer science in secondary school. Having attended several postgraduate training courses in the area of technologies and methodologies for teaching, he is also an expert in the management of digital platforms for distance learning, and speaker in several national and International conferences.

Time slot: **Thursday 12:00 – 13:20. Room 4**

Alice Ray
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Université d'Orléans, Laboratoire Ligérien de Linguistique

Localising Pop Culture References: The Case of Starcraft II

Popular culture is inherently self-referential, continuously drawing from its own repertoire and evolving through intertextual connections. A significant number of contemporary audiovisual productions embed references to other cultural works or contemporary pop culture items within their dialogue, settings, and mise-en-scéne. This phenomenon is equally prevalent in the realm of video games, where developers may subtly (or not) incorporate allusions to other elements of popular culture, enriching the player's experience through these layered interconnections.

This is typically the case with the video game Starcraft II, which was released in three installments between 2010 and 2015. Widely regarded as one of the most iconic real-time strategy (RTS) video games, Starcraft II allows players to control three different species: the Terran, the Zerg, and the Protoss. The goal is to manage one's colony efficiently while completing various missions (often by eliminating opposing colonies in the process). Each playable unit within the game is characterized by a set of unique dialogue lines, tailored to its specific role and function in the game's mechanics.

In the first installment, Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty, the Terrans are notable for their humorous dialogue, which include a great variety of references to other cultural works, as well as to American popular culture at large. The Marines, in particular, frequently use widely recognized expressions from the U.S. military, as well as iconic lines from popular films to convey their thoughts. This kind of intertextuality, when recognized by the players, adds an additional layer of meaning to the video game.

This brings into focus the issue of localization in other languages: how can expressions deeply rooted in American culture or iconic lines from American films be effectively translated into a different linguistic and cultural context that may not be familiar with these references? The challenge, for the translators, is to preserve the intended meaning and cultural resonance while ensuring that the translated content remains accessible and relevant to the target audience.

During the preliminary observations, for instance, I was able to note that some lines from American films were substituted with lines from French films, thus appealing to a different cultural imagination and aligning with the popular culture of the target audience. The question is: are all pop culture references in the original version of Starcraft II treated uniformly? If not, what strategies are applied in relation to different types of references?

To explore this question, I will focus specifically on the French translation of Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty. By extracting the dialogue lines of all Terran units and creating a typology of the embed references (if they are derived from fictional pop culture productions, widely recognized expressions, political discourses, and so forth.), I will conduct a comparative analyse between the original lines and their localized versions. The aim of this analysis is not only to examine how references to American popular culture were handled in the French version, but also to understand the localisation strategies employed and their potential reception by the target audience.

Alice Ray is a lecturer at the University of Orléans in France and a member of the Laboratoire Ligérien de Linguistique since September 2021. She is interested in the translation of lexical creativity in science fiction (literature, cinema, videogame) and the relationship between pop culture and language. She is also a member of the editorial board of the academic journal, ReS Futurae as well as a translator.

Time slot: **Thursday 17:00 – 18:00. Room 4**

María Isabel Rivas Ginel, Pierre Voué, Pierre-Yves Houlmont & Damien Hansen
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Dublin City University, Textgain, Haute École Albert Jacquard & Université libre de Bruxelles, TRADITAL Université de Liège, Liège Game Lab

A Game for the Crowds: neutral mode on!

Video game localisation presents a medium often divorced from visual context and texts arranged based on technical criteria rather than a narrative flow, operating under a "double-blind process" (Bernal-Merino, 2013). The field's dynamic nature situates it at the intersection of technology, linguistics, and social progress, putting pressure on localisers to create an immersive experience while reflecting the developers' intentions. As such, the increasing inclusion of non-binary characters in video games poses new challenges for localisers dealing with gendered languages that lack established non-binary pronouns. Current translation strategies involve the use of either "direct or indirect non-binary language" (López, 2021; Lardelli & Gromann, 2023), where the former employs neologisms and the latter eliminates all gendered words. The complexity of the task coupled with the well-known crunch times that tend to define the video game industry call for the creation of resources to support localisers and reduce their cognitive load.

Building upon All-inGMT (Rivas Ginel & Theroine, 2022), a specialised Neural Machine Translation (NMT) system for non- binary language in video game localisation, we aim to develop a second tool specialised in neutralisation techniques. Similarly to the Dodiom initiative (Eryigit et al., 2023) and given the substantial data required to train these systems, crowdsourcing and gamification arise as key approaches to compile our corpus. First, crowdsourcing methodologies facilitate the generation of considerable scientific knowledge and integrate citizens into processes with significant societal implications. Second, the gamification of crowdsourcing initiatives has demonstrated high efficacy in sustaining participants' engagement and motivation (Morschheuser et al., 2019).

In this presentation, we will introduce NB: Automata, a gamified crowdsourcing initiative revolving around indirect non-binary translation based on Dodiom (Eryigit et al., 2023). Using telegram to send the competing teams sentences that need to be rephrased to avoid gender markers, the participants will play two roles: neutralisers and reviewers. As a result, we will obtain a ranking of the most idiomatic solutions that will constitute the dataset used to train All-inGMT+. The Fun4AII conference will provide the ideal opportunity to launch our gamified corpus project officially.

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Maria Isabel Rivas Ginel is a postdoctoral researcher at the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies and the ADAPT Centre in Dublin City University (DCU). Her current position involves working on the topics of translation technology, large language models and generative artificial intelligence (genAl), translators' attitudes towards new technologies, and accessibility. Her fields of interest are audiovisual and multimedia translation, translation technology, gender studies, accessibility, and inclusivity.

Pierre Voué is a software developer and data scientist at Textgain, a Belgian company specialized in NLP (Natural Language Processing) and AI (Artificial Intelligence). He is working at the intersection of technology and contemporary societal challenges such as online hate speech and extremism.

Pierre-Yves Houlmont is an assistant professor at the Haute École Albert Jacquard in Belgium. He is a member of the CRI1 (Collectif de Recherche pour les Industries et Univers Numériques) as well as a scientific collaborator at the CIRTI (Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche en Traduction et en Interprétation) and the Liège Game Lab at the University of Liège.

Currently about to finish a PhD thesis on video game localization, his doctoral research ties at the intersection of translatology and game studies, focusing on the specificities of video game localization in relation to game design strategies. His primary research interests include semiotics, digital game studies, and game design. He also co-founded and currently co-chairs DiGRA Belgium, the national association for research in digital game studies in Belgium.

Damien Hansen is an assistant professor in translation and AI at the ULB, in Belgium. Damien worked broadly on using personalized corpora, CAT tools and machine translation in creative sectors, focusing mainly on literature and video games. His thesis focused on the possibility and limitations of customized MT systems for literary translators, their ability to learn patterns of style, and the ergonomic and broader social issues surrounding the advances of technology in this field. Recently, his research shifted towards the effects of translation tools on the cognitive processes and socio-economic factors involved in literary translation, but his interests also brought him to the field of game studies, with the recent publication of a book on the meta-languages and social semiotics of video games.

Time slot: **Friday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

Jemma Louise Stafford
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University of Leeds

Do words matter? The influence of translated text in Chinese videogames on player reception

Players were given three Chinese RPG games to play, all played just the introductory tutorial phase and through a mixture of incidental think-out-loud protocol and semi-structure post-play interviews, players gave their impressions of the experience during and after play. The feedback was taken and coded in NVIVO, emphasising repeated points raised by players and as to which channels, e.g. audio-music, written-speech, embodied-character design - these will explained in the paper.

This paper examines the importance with which players of the games placed upon the in-game text alone, compared to the overall experience afforded through other channels such as audio, imagery and situational context.

Ultimately, are words as fundamental in translation from the player perspective? And why/why not?

Jemma Louise Stafford is a third year PhD candidate at the University of Leeds. Having graduated with specialisms in Chinese language, culture and translation from SOAS University London and University of Bristol, her research focus is the field of translation and localisation within Chinese-developed videogames. Following on from earlier research into translator practices and attitudes, she is currently investigating player reception of Chinese-developed roleplaying games.

Time slot: **Thursday 15:30 – 16:30. Room 4**

Sam Strong
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University of Bristol

Systems theory, Cultural Adaptation, and Videogame Transcreation: Situating the language of gaming in Translation Studies.

Garner-generated language, or "garner-speak" (Strong, 2018) is both crucial to understanding garner culture and revealing of Translation Studies phenomena. The language of gaming has always found itself bridging what Even-Zohar (1978) calls "central" and "peripheral" linguistic activities. That is, their creation takes place in an organic, fluid system of semiotic exchange, then subsequently is shared and adopted by a subculture, and eventually canonized in the central game text. As such, polysystem theory (Even-Zohar, 1978) remains evergreen in the landscape of translation studies literature. Initial steps to analysing garner-speak not only demonstrates this, but further exemplifies the stratification of the garner sub-culture and the "langue of cool" (Ensslin 2012). As a result, adapting garner-speak when localising video games is challenging, mercurial, and integral to delivering the desired game experience. With the fast-evolving gaming technology, the ubiquity of streaming platforms, and the emphasis on artificial intelligence in the translation industry, the importance of primary linguistic systems, organic language creation, and videogame transcreation (Mangiron & O'Hagan 2006) have never been greater.

Sam Strong is a lecturer in Translation Studies at the University of Bristol. He has worked as a linguist in the video games industry at a major publisher, and has taught at the masters level for over a decade on topics including audiovisual translation, video game localisation, and French and Spanish Translation. His research interests are centred around semiotic exchange, the language of subcultures, cultural adaptation, technology in translation, and video game transcreation.

Time slot: **Friday 15:30 – 16:10. Room 4**

Jared Téllez Quirós
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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Accessibility Options in PC Point-and-Click Games

This study presents findings on accessibility features in 25 personal computer (PC) point-and-click games, based on a systematic analysis of auditory, visual, motor, and cognitive accessibility options. A checklist of accessibility features was applied to each game to assess the presence or absence of these features. The analysis reveals gaps in accessibility settings, with important implications for both developers and players. For instance, 96% of games provide music and sound effects volume controls, and 76% offer separate dialogue volume adjustment. However, all surveyed games lack auditory features such as stereo/mono toggle, audio pings, and signing. Moreover, audio description is present in one of the games, and 2 titles have a narrator for in-game text and menus. Additionally, subtitles are available in a large majority of the games (96%), but only 36% offer speaker indicators, 44% use colors to differentiate speakers, and 12% include labels for sounds.

From a motor accessibility perspective, while 72% of the games surveyed support more than one input device, only a small number offer controller customization (one game full and four games partial button remapping). Keyboard and mouse rebinding also showed limitations, with 28% of games supporting full keyboard rebinding, while mouse rebinding was only available in 20% of titles. Also, the option to toggle vibration was available in only 20% of cases.

Regarding color, the examined point-and-click games demonstrate a prevalent absence of support for colorblind options, as none of the games include a colorblind mode and only 4% have adjustable colorblind filters. Color-coded subtitles options (changing the color of the subtitles) are also absent, with limited customization features such as resizing text (32% of games) and changing the font (24%).

Difficulty accessibility settings were also mostly absent, with 24% offering preset difficulty settings. In contrast, options for saving progress are common, with 80% of games offering autosave and 72% manual save. Moreover, since this genre relies on narrative, an important part of the gameplay experience is spent reading texts and listening to dialogues. Given the text-heavy nature of point-and-click games, developers included features to ease the player experience, such as reading settings in eight games (these reading options include: dialogue review, text speed adjustment, and instant language switching). Another important mechanic in point-and-click games is finding and interacting with objects: eleven titles in the investigation offer object highlighting to help players identify which objects are interactable.

Since the analyzed point-and-click games depend much more on texts rather than cinematics to tell the story, developers of these adventures may find the less used accessibility options presented in this study and related to text and reading as potential features for implementation. Priority features include audio description and text customization settings (font, size, background, speed, color), which have the potential to help vision impaired users have access to the product and finish the game experience.

Jared Téllez is a doctoral student at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. His lines of research include video game accessibility and audiovisual translation. He is also a professional video game translator and has worked on video game localization projects that range from small indie productions to AAA franchises such as Call of Duty. His most recent academic work focuses on accessibility in PC action/adventure games published in the Digital Repository of Documents of the UAB. He has also

published articles such as “The perception of Costa Ricans on a connection between video games and mass shootings,” published in Estudios.

Time slot: **Thursday 10:30 – 11:30. Room 4**

Guo Yu
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University of Nottingham

The Square Model as an Analytical Tool - Videogame Localisation from a Multimodal and Interdisciplinary Perspective

As the global market for videogames has grown over the past few decades, many companies have released localised versions of their games to attract more players and increase revenues. Game localisation is becoming better known in practice and has attracted some academic interest in recent years (Bernal-Merino 2015; Pyae 2018; Milton and Cobelo 2023). However, research on game localisation is still developing. Incorporating knowledge and perspectives from other disciplines would be helpful. One of the aims of this presentation is to fill this gap by developing a multimodal model, the Square Model, for analysing a corpus of localised videogame products, and to provide a practical tool for other researchers. Drawing on theories and practices from audiovisual translation, game studies, film studies, and the game industry, the model deconstructs videogame products into five modes: language, visual, audio, culture, and interactivity. The connections between these modes suggest that they work together to produce meaning and remind us of the need to consider videogames within (potentially different) socio-cultural contexts. At a micro level, it is also necessary to focus on the forms or vehicles of meaning generation, the "components" of these modes. The components are broadly categorised according to the modes to which they belong, and open-ended lists are provided for analysing specific examples. The value of the model can be divided into practical and research aspects. Practically, it can be used directly to compare original and localised versions of a videogame, thereby increasing the game industry's understanding of localisation and helping to improve the quality of localised products.

Academically, it can provide structured ideas for researchers in related fields. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the model,

its application is not limited to game localisation, as long as researchers expand or narrow the scope of the model/components according to their own interests.

Guo Yu is a second-year PhD student in Translation Studies at the University of Nottingham. Her research combines the fields of game studies and translation studies, focusing on the cross-cultural process of localising single-player role-playing games (RPGs) from English into Chinese, looking at both the game products and the players to see how localisation changes are represented and interpreted. Her research interests include cross-cultural translation, audiovisual translation, multimodality, game discourse and design, and audience analysis. Guo Yu obtained an MA in Translation and Interpreting Studies from the University of Manchester. She has also worked in localisation management at FunPlus, a Chinese game company.

Time slot: **Friday 14:30 – 15:30. Room 4**

LIST OF SPEAKERS