

# The Analysis of Video Game Title Translation: A Case Study of Iranian Darinoos Publishing

Sepehr Golmakani<sup>1,\*</sup>, Masoud Amirinejad<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M.A. in Translation Studies, Khayyam University, Mashhad, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English Literature and Translation, Islamic Azad University of Mashhad, Iran

Received: 15.05.2024 • Accepted: 10.08.2024 • Published: 20.09.2024 • Final Version: 02.12.2024

**Abstract:** With video games gaining popularity worldwide and becoming one of the most common forms of entertainment in the digital age, the game's title holds both commercial and entertainment value. This study aims to analyze foreign video game titles that have been translated into Persian by the Iranian *Darinoos* publishing. The practical analysis in the research study is based on Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques. Those models were applied to compare the translation techniques used by the *Darinoos* with the translation techniques used by participant translators and to identify the most commonly used translation techniques by both groups. The overall results showed that literal translation remained the most widely used translation procedure in title translation. The *Darinoos* team used new translation, partial translation, and modulation to translate video game titles into Persian in a more creative way than the other participants. In some instances, participants didn't consider titles to be translatable and used the original title in the target language. These obtained results will be beneficial to journalists, video game publishers, content writers, and game localizers.

**Keywords:** Darinoos, literal translation, new translation, Title translation, Video game

## 1. Introduction

As an emerging industry, the video game industry has grown significantly in attracting audiences in recent years. According to Gitnux (2024), an estimated 2.8 billion video gamers were worldwide. Moreover, it is predicted that there will be more than 3 billion gamers worldwide by 2025. The popularity of video games is also increasing in developing countries such as Iran. Iran Computer and Video Games Foundation (2023) reported that this country has 34 million gamers, the average age of Iranian gamers is 23 years, and 4 million professional players play more than 21 hours a week. This report interpreted that video games are important to Iranian people's lives. Today, translators examine and work on essential elements of major video games in the field of translation. Each element has its own requirements that must be considered in its translation. Some studies focused on the approaches or strategies in video game localization (VGL). For instance, Mangiron and O'Hagan (2006) examined the freedom of translators and transcreation in the localization of the famous Japanese title *Final Fantasy* into English. Costales (2012) researched on the relationship between genres and translation strategies in video game cases. Khoshsaligeh and Ameri (2017) worked on the translator's agency and features of non-professional translation of the critically-acclaimed 2016

\* Corresponding Author: [sepehrgolmakani@gmail.com](mailto:sepehrgolmakani@gmail.com)

release *Uncharted 4: A Thief's End*. Hosseini et al. (2019) conducted research on the psychometric properties of the Persian translation of the video gaming addiction test. Ho (2020) investigated the trends in the localization of mobile educational games.

Despite the increasing activity of translators in video game localization, unfortunately, few works have been done on translating the titles of these products. The names of brands and products are crucial components of marketing campaigns. When there is little difference between the quality of the products available on the market, strategically naming a product can make a big difference in the consumers' attitude. The linguistic and cultural aspects of product titling are challenging, and the translation of product or brand titles should comply with the target culture's norms, social conventions, moral values, and religious beliefs. Moreover, the market structure is also an important factor in product titling. Titles of existing products in the target market can also affect the success of the product. The translation of video game titles is similar to product naming in that it involves strategic decisions and cultural adaptation. The translation of the title should comply with the norms, social conventions, moral values, and religious beliefs of the target culture. In Iran, long-established and well-known publishers such as *Asre Bazi*, *Darinoos*, *HI-VU*, and *NewTech* worked to some extent on Persian translation and selection of attractive equivalents for foreign video games. However, in general, many critics, journalists, and translators in the field of video games usually prefer to use literal translation, transliteration, and no-translation in game titling. The current study aims to analyze and compare the translations of foreign video game titles of the *Darinoos* with those of the selected participants, based on Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation procedures and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques. This study also sees which translation techniques were used most frequently in translating video game titles from English to Persian. The research questions of this study can be stated as follows:

Q1. Based on Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation procedures and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques (2020), what techniques are used more frequently by the *Darinoos* and participant translators in the Persian translation of foreign video game titles?

Q2. Based on Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation procedures and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques, what are the differences between techniques used by the participant translators and those used by the *Darinoos*?

## 2. Literature Review

The information of the literature review section is divided into three parts: 1) the studies refer to the basic notion of video game localization; 2) the studies refer to knowledge of the title; and 3) the previous works that have been examined in the audiovisual products title translation. Firstly, discussing the relation between localization and translation is recommended. Although the terms localization and translation are used in this article interchangeably, it is imperative to mention that the relation between these processes is, in fact, much more complicated (Pym, 2008). According to the Localization Industry Standard Association, localization is "the process of modifying products or services to account for differences in distinct markets" (Fry, 2003). From this point of view, translation seems to fall into the scope of localization, which itself constitutes a substantially broader endeavour. Thus, Czech (2013) stated that localizing a video game may involve making technically or culturally motivated changes that go beyond its technical structure, such as modifying the game code to accommodate the graphical discrepancies between the source language (SL) and target language (TL) or even adjusting the game's

marketing strategies. In addition, Li and Jiang (2021) said game localization refers to the preparation of video games before they are released in new regions or countries, including modifying the game process, changes to the game content, new physical packaging, manuals, recording new audio, and modifying good content according to the censorship requirements, and most importantly, the translation of the game text. Moreover, they notified that game translation does not mean translating the text literally but translating the culture of the source language into the target language. In this understanding, localization focuses only on the final product. Many researchers and workers in developing countries complained that there is no objective model to show how the video game industry operates, disregarding the fact that due to simultaneous shipment, the localization process frequently has to run parallel to game development and that the localizers rarely have access to the game itself. Therefore, Dietz (2007) observed that despite the broader scope of localization, the entire video game localizing process is usually limited to translating of linguistic material, and even it may “come as an afterthought”. On the other hand, Chandler (2005) singled out localization would be identified with translation and understood in most general terms as an adaptation of the game to the linguistic and cultural reality of the target customer. Mangiron and O’Hagan (2006) believed that creativity is one of the greatest challenges in video game localization. Video game localizers should enjoy a level of liberty uncommon to any other medium, as interactive software is strongly focused on remaking a similar game experience for all players, allowing for other levels of equivalence to be downplayed solely for this goal. Thus, the game localizer is given creative license to: “include new cultural references, humors, or any other element they deem necessary to preserve the game experience and to produce a fresh and engaging translation” (Mangiron and O’Hagan 2006, 15).

The studies of professors, researchers, and translators on the subject of naming and titling have often been conducted in the fields of books, novels, plays, and films. Therefore, so far, two studies have been conducted on the translation of video game titles, which were from China and Turkey. Newmark (1988) categorized titles into two groups: descriptive titles and allusive titles. Descriptive titles, as the name implies, describe the topic of the text, and allusive titles have a figurative relation to the topic. He suggested literal translation for descriptive titles, while allusive titles could be kept literally or imaginatively. Sawyer (1993) stated that titles can serve a variety of functions. A title can clarify the format or genre, introduce the theme or symbol that plays a significant role in understanding the addressed audience, and refer to a particular place or character. In addition, Nord (1995) mentioned that titles are shaped by factors indirectly related to situational conditions such as literary traditions or intertextual relationships. Thus, marketing concerns are a factor which is closely related to both of the above. They are bound by the function of the titles, which is to appeal to the audience. Following with that function, the translation of the titles has to conform to the factors which rule over the target context. Viezzi (2011) defined *titles* as names and proper names of cultural products such as books, films, and operas that provide information about these cultural products and give them identity. Shi (2014) noted that a film title is a brand which informs the audience about the plot of the film. Titles provide a summary, reveal the theme, or offer some clues about the plot. He classified film titles into five categories: 1) use of people’s name as a title; 2) use of plot or clue as a title; 3) use of location as a title; 4) use of time as a title; and 5) use of theme as a title. By observing Shi’s (2014) categorization of how to choose movie titles, one can understand that there is no apparent difference between naming movies and video games. For instance, games such as *Max Payne*, *Alekhine's Gun*, *Silent Hill*, *Back to the Future*, and *The Last of Us* represent notable examples in different categories.

The Chinese researchers’ Li and Jiang (2021) studied the translation of Chinese single-player video game titles from the perspective of Skopos theory. Firstly, they suggested that importance of video game titles is mirrored in its entertainment value and commercial value. The entertainment value is to attract the target players and show them the mechanics and the culture of the game. The latter is to stimulate their desire to buy and gain commercial profit. The Chinese researchers noted that both

values are vital and challenging to translate the game title well, as an acceptable translation boosts the game financially, while an insufficient and incorrect translation would prevent the players from buying it. Based on Skopos theory, they translated the game titles by Domestication and Foreignization. According to Munday (2008), Domestication is a target-oriented approach in which the foreign expressions unfamiliar to the target audience are changed to some expressions easily comprehended in the target language. In this type of translation, the foreign elements have vanished, and the target text seems to be an original text rather than a translation. Foreignization is a source-oriented approach that deals with a translation that keeps the foreignness and brings the source culture to the target without adapting to the target culture. In this type of translation, the final product is far from the target cultural conventions (Munday, 2008). In another article, Koçak (2023) focused on the translation of mobile game titles. This study examined the titles from Turkish mobile game publishers, based on Ross's (2013) and Chaume's (2020) translation strategies used in film title translation. His study found that the dominant strategy among the mobile game developers was no translation, followed by partial translation and no translation plus a catchy explanation. In addition, the article proved that cooperation with another publisher and publishing year are major factors connected to the translation strategy employed.

The researchers who did studies in this field of film and TV series were Golmakani et al. (2023), who reviewed the titles of 50 American TV series from English to Persian. Shokri (2014) reviewed the titles of 64 Persian films translated into English. The first research used Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques, and the latter used Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation model and concluded that literal translation is the most common method used by translators to translate titles. In addition, Mazaheb et al. (2021) analyzed the translation of Agatha Christie's novel title from English into Persian. They used Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation model. Based on a review of 70 titles, it was found that the literal translation is the most commonly used procedure by translators, adopted by 35 titles and 50% of data.

### 3. Methodology

The current study is a qualitative research using a participant-oriented and analytical approach. For the purpose of the study, a combination of Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation procedures and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques are adopted as the theoretical framework. This study aims to compare and scrutinize the Persian translations of the foreign video game titles by the *Darinoos* publishing with the translations selected by the participants.

#### 3.1. Corpus of the study and participants

As a case study, the study uses the web pages of *Darinoos.ir* to extract Persian translations of foreign video game titles. *Darinoos* is the oldest and most credible video game publisher in Iran. This company started its career in 1379 and dubbed, subtitled, and localized over 100 PC games into Persian. The corpus contains 29 foreign video game titles with Persian translations used in *Darinoos* from all genres. These 29 titles are selected from the well-known video games of the sixth generation (1998-2009), seventh generation (2005-2013), and eighth generation (2012-2020) of gaming history. These 29 video game titles are popular among Iranian gamers and the Iranian e-sports community.

This study intends to compare the Persian translations of *Darinoos* video game publishing with the participants' translations to reach an "acceptable" title translation. Twelve participants were selected for the current study. These participants include video game journalists, video game critics, video game translators and localizers, and game developers. Each participant has a history of working

for various Iranian publications related to video games, such as *Donyaye Bazi*, *Bazirayaneh*, and *Bazinama*.

### 3.2. Data Collection

The following steps determined the delivery and the sequence of the study: Foremost, this research started by reviewing web pages of *Darinoos.ir* to find the Persian translation of the titles of foreign video game titles from the 2000s to 2010s. In the next step, an MS document with the original title and Persian translation of the selected foreign video games is created. In the third step, a multiple-choice questionnaire with Google Forms was designed and emailed to the participants. In the fourth step, the demo versions of any selected foreign video game titles were found, and link was sent to participants to play or download. In the fifth step, video game titles were removed due to the lack of accessible links to download and play.

### 3.3. Data Analysis

After collecting data, Persian translations of foreign video game titles were analyzed in different tables. First, the translations of *Darinoos* publishing and their translation techniques were listed. then, the participants' translations and the techniques they used were mentioned. Both tables consist of three columns, containing the English title of the video games, the Persian translation, the release year of each video game. The translations were then analyzed and checked with a combination of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques. The obtained results were entered into Maxqda software and extracted as a graph. The graph showed the most and least frequent translation techniques in analyzing the Persian translation of foreign video game titles.

### 3.4. Theoretical Framework

The selected theoretical framework for this study is a combination of Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques, which have been used before by researchers in translating titles in the field of film and novel and never used in fresh subject of video game title translation. In video game title translation, the use of two translation techniques (the former is old, and the latter is new) is determined by the cases used. The translation of video game titles is a relatively new topic in Iran. Many titles have not yet been translated, and some of them are untranslatable for cultural reasons. In addition, some video games have been retitled to Iranian gamers by Iranian publishers. It's worth noting that Chaume's (2020) new techniques, which include new translation, no translation, and partial translation, have played a pivotal role in examining title translation.

Vinay and Darbelnet used the term *procedures* to describe their translation perspective. Vinay and Darbelnet's translation model is followed by seven procedures, which are classified into two groups: Direct translation and Oblique translation (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). Direct translation consists of three procedures:

- Borrowing: The SL word is transefered directly to the TL text. Example (in film): *Pari* = پری
- Calque: This is special kind of borrowing that the SL expression or strcutre is transeferred in a literal translation. Example (in novel): *The Crooked House* = خانه وارونه
- Literal translation: It is word-for-word translation between the languages of the same culture and family. Example (in TV series): *Band of Brothers* = دسته برادران

The oblique translation consists of four procedures:

- Transposition: This is a change of one part of speech for another without changing the sense. Example (in TV series): *Prison Break* = فرار از زندان
- Modulation: It a term of translation theory and practice which means a translation technique to develop word meaning and senses through the adequate change or transformation of the original word with the translated one so that the meaning be derived based on the original word. Example (in film): *The Pastry girl* = دختر شیرینی فروش (The girl selling sweets)
- Equivalence: It refers to cases where languages describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural means. Example (in film): *Certified Copy* = کپی برابر اصل
- Adaptation: According to Munday (2016), this involves changing the cultural reference when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture. Example (in TV series): *House of Cards* = خانه پوشالی (Fake House)

The second translation techniques are provided by Frederic Chaume, who dedicated his works to the audiovisual translation. In his seminal work, he mentioned the importance of film titles and their translations concerning with merchandising and copyright issues. Chaume (202) proposed five techniques for the translation of audiovisual titles:

- Direct translation: to make a direct translation of the original film title: *Lorenzo's Oil* was translated into Italian as *L'olio di Lorenzo*; *Home Alone* was translated into Spanish as *Solo en casa*; *The virgin suicides* as *Virgens Suicidas* in Brazil, etc.
- Partial translation: To make a partial translation of the original film title: *Lorenzo's Oil* was translated into Spanish as *El aceite de la vida* [The oil of life], retaining the word "oil", but not Lorenzo, and also adding a new concept, life, that was not in the original title. *The virgin suicides* was rendered in Italian Translation Issues 131 as *Il giardino delle vergini suicide* [The garden of the virgin suicides], thus adding new information to the title.
- New translation: to produce a catchy new translation of the original film title: in Spanish, the teen pic *The Frighteners* was translated as *Agárrame esos fantasmas* [Grab those ghosts for me], for some a funny – or an irritating – title that has nothing to do with the original. In France the final title was *Fantômes contre fantômes*, in Canada (Quebec) *Chasseurs de fantômes*. *Home alone* was translated into Italian as *Mamma, ho perso l'aereo* [Mummy, I've missed my plane], a title which has nothing to do with the original (but maybe it follows the client's instructions). *Lorenzo's Oil* was translated as *Acto de amor* [An act of love] in Portugal.
- No translation: To keep the film title in the original language, *Pulp Fiction* or *Inception* have been left in English in many dubbing countries (although not in many others, such as Brazil, Slovakia, Hungary, etc.).
- No translation plus a catchy explanation: and finally, to keep the film title in the original language, followed by a new explanatory title, i.e. no translation plus a catchy explanation: *Snatch* was translated into Spanish as *Snatch, cerdos y diamantes* [Snatch, pigs and diamonds]; Italian examples include *Snatch. Lo strap po*; *Lost in translation* as *Lost in translation*. *L'amore tradotto* or *Die Hard*, translated as *Die Hard*. *Trappola di cristallo*

#### 4. Results

The Perisan translation of each title were compared and examined with its original English title to find out which approach of Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques are the most used by the *Darinoos* publishing and participants.

**Table 1.** Examples of Adaptation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Release Year
Black and White 2	/xeyr o šare 2/2 خیر و شر (Good and Evil 2)	2005

In the adaptation translation *procedure*, a translator encounters cultural elements in the source text that do not exist in the target language, he or she uses this technique to translate them. However, the translators need to do this translation very cleverly and creatively so that their translation would not hamper the meaning of the text. Among the 29 titles studied in this study, only one title was translated into Persian in terms of adaptation by *Darinoos*.

**Table 2.** Examples of Equivalence in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participant)	Release Year
Still Life	/tabiate bijàn/ طبیعت بی جان (Inanimate Nature)	/tabiate bijàn/ طبیعت جان	2005

Equivalence is a technique for using a term or expression recognized (by dictionaries or language in use) as an equivalent in the TL. For instance, *Still Life* is a work of art that shows inanimate objects from the natural or man-made world, such as fruit, flowers, dead game, and/or vessels like baskets or bowls. So the *Darinoos* and Participants have chosen *طبیعت بی جان* as the Persian equivalent of the original title. According to the story of the game, the reference of *Still Life* has to do with an artist who liked to paint prostitutes back the 1920s, the same ones who would eventually be found murdered. In this case, Only one title of foreign video game was translated from English to Persian using the equivalence *procedure*, which can be seen in the table above.

**Table 3.** Examples of Literal Translation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participants)	Release Year
Alekhine's Gun	-	/aslahe alekxin/ اسلحه الکخین	2016
Alone in the Dark: A New Nightmare	-	/tanhà dar tàriki: caboose تنها در تاریکی: کابوس جدید	2001
Black and White 2	-	/siàh va sefid 2/ سیاه و سفید 2	2005
Call of Duty 2	/nedàye vazife 2/ ندای وظیفه 2	/nedàye vazife 2/ ندای وظیفه 2	2005
Condemned: Criminal Origins	-	/mahkom: sarçešme محکوم: سرچشمه جنایت	2005
Doom 3	/rastàxiz 3/ رستاخیز 3	-	2005
Dungeon Siege	/obur az siyàhcal/ عبور از سیاهچال	/obur az siyàhcal/ عبور از سیاهچال	2002
Enter the Matrix	/vorod be màtrix/ ورود به ماتریکس	/vorod be matrix/ ورود به ماتریکس	2003
F.E.A.R	/haràs/ هراس	/haràs/ هراس	2005
Half-Life 2	/nime-jàne 2/ نیمه جان 2	/nime-jàne 2/ نیمه جان 2	2004
Harry Potter and the Order of Phoeinx	/hary pater va mahfel gognos/ هری پاتر و محفل ققنوس	/hary pàter va mahfel gognos/ هری پاتر و محفل ققنوس	2007
Infernal	/ahriman/ اهریمن	-	2007

No One Lives Forever 2: A Spy in H.A.R.M.'s Ways	-	/hiç kas baràye hamishe zendegi nemikonad 2: yek jàsus dar masirhàye ?àzàrdahande/ هیچ کس برای همیشه زنده نمی ماند 2: یک جاسوس در مسیرهای آزاردهنده	2002
Post Mortem	-	/pasà marg/ پسامرگ	2002
Resident Evil 6	/ahrimane šeytàn 6/ اهریمن 6 شیطان	/egàmatgàhe šeytàn/ اقامتگاه شیطان 6	2012
Serious Sam: The First Encounter	-	/sàme xašen: avalin hamle/ سام خشن: اولین حمله	2001
The Sum of All Fear	-	/majmue hameye tarshà/ مجموع همه ترس ها	2002

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) believe that literal translation is the most common procedure of translation when the source and the target languages are close to each other and almost came from the same culture and family. While Persian and English are completely different languages, it can be observed that in this research and based on this study's findings, the highest percentage is allocated to literal translation and it is obvious that translators have used this procedure more than any other *procedures*. Among 29 titles, 15 titles were translated by the participants as literal translation, while *Darinoos* translated only 9 titles as the mentioned *procedure*.

**Table 4.** Examples of Modulation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participants)	Release Year
Alekhine's Gun	/mamuriate alekxin/ ماموریت الکخین (Alekhine's Mission)	-	2016
Clive Barker's Undying	-	/dastanhaye kliv barker: namira/ داستان های کلیو بارکر: نامیرا	2001
Deadly Dozen	/davazdah komando/ دوازده کماندو (Tweleve Commandos)	/davazdah marde koshande/ دوازده مرد کشنده (Twelve Deadly Men)	2001
Mob Enforcer	-	/sardaste mafià/ سردسته مافیا	2003
Neighbours from Hell	/dardesarhàye hamsàye/ دردسرهای همسایه (Neighbour Troubles)	/hamsàye jahanami/ همسایه جهنمی (Hellish Neighbour)	2003
Shogun 2: Total War	/janghàye šogane 2/2 جنگ های شوگان 2 (Shogun Wars 2)	-	2011

In modulation, the translator intends to change the point of view of the text or the words while conveying the same meaning to the reader of the target language. According to Shi (2014), the name of genre, place, theme, and time play a significant role in recognizing the title of an audiovisual work. In the case of the *Deadly Dozen* title translation. The *Darinoos* was aware of the military-war environment and showed the story of World War II in the game and translated it as دوازده کماندو (Twelve Commandos). The results of this study indicated that the *Darinoos* translated 4 out of 29 titles as modulation. At the same time, the participants translated the same number as the above technique.

**Table 5.** Examples of New Translation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Titles (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Titles (Participants)	Release Year
Alone in the Dark: A New Nightmare	/jazire sayeha/جزیره سایه‌ها (Shadows of Island)	-	2001
Bioshock	/entexabe geyr momken/ انتخاب غیرممکن (Impossible Decision)	-	2007
Chrome	/maadene valkeriya/معادن والکریا (Valkeriya Minings)	-	2003
Jericho	/seytan dar gozare zaman/ شیطان در گذر زمان (Evil in the Passage of Time)	-	2007
No One Lives Forever 2: A Spy in H.A.R.M.'s Ways	/mamore maxfi 2: kayt ?arçer/ مامور مخفی 2: کیت آرچر (Secret Agent 2: Kate Archer)	-	2002
Post Mortem	/jenâyate hotel orafâ/ جنایت هتل اورفا (Murder in Orefa Hotel)	-	2002
The Sum of All Fear	/aslahe margbar/اسلحه مرگبار (Deadly Weapon)	-	2002

In new translation *technique*, a translator intends to use the new name which has nothing to do with the original. The results indicated that the *Darinoos* used this technique for translating 7 video game titles out of 29 titles.

**Table 6.** Examples of No Translation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participants)	Release Year
Bioshock	-	/bâyošak/بایوشاک	2007
Chrome	-	/korom/کروم	2003
Doom 3	-	/doom/دوم 3	2004
Infernal	-	/infernâl/اینفرنال	2007
Jericho	-	/jeriko/جریکو	2007
Shogun 2: Total War	-	/šogan 2: total vâ/شوگان 2: توتال وار	2011
Syberia 3	-	/sibriyâ 3/سیبرییا 3	2017

Sometimes, a translator decides to keep the original title for the target language. Participants of this study mostly preferred to keep the original title for the subject of video game titles translations. They believe that some titles are untranslatable due to cultural and technical limitations. Among 29 titles, 7 titles were untranslatable from participants' perspective.

**Table 7.** Examples of Partial Translation in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participants)	Release Year
Clive Barker's Undying	/ruyin tan/روئین تن (Invulnerable)	-	2001

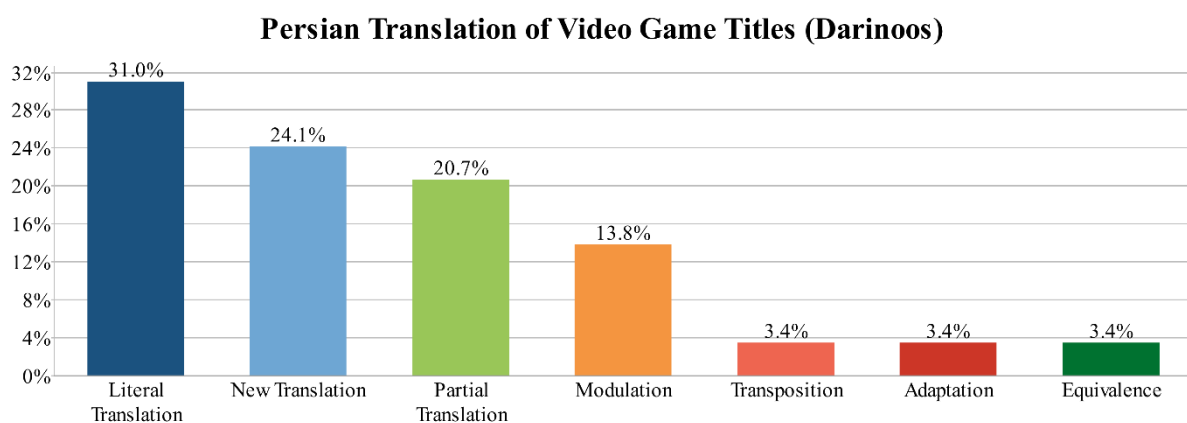
Condemned: Criminal Origins	/mahkom: raze gathaye zanjirei/ محکوم: راز قتل‌های زنجیره‌ای (Condemnd: The Secret of Serial Murders)	-	2005
Mob Enforcer	/obàše 'àlcàpon/ اوباش آلکاپون (Capone Gang)	-	2003
Serious Sam: The First Ecounter	/same majarajo: mamoriyat dar mesr/ سام ماجراجو: ماموریت در مصر (Adventrous Sam: Mission in the Egypt)	-	2001
Silent Hill: Homecoming	/silent hill: bàzgast be xàne/ سایلنت هیل: بازگشت به خانه	/silent hill: bàzgast be xàne/ سایلنت هیل: بازگشت به خانه	2008
Sybria 3	/sifar be sibry/ سفر به سیبری 3 (Journey to Sybria 3)	-	2017

In order to make a partial translation of the original video game title, a translator will retain some world of the original title and also adds new concept/information for the translation of the title. For instance, *Sybria* was rendered in Persian سفر به سیبری (Journey to Sybria), thus adding a new information to the title. Among the 29 titles studied in this study, six were translated into Persian regarding a partial translation by *Darinoos*, while only one was translated into Persian regarding this technique by the selected participants.

**Table 8.** Examples of Transposition in the Translation of Foreign Video Game Titles

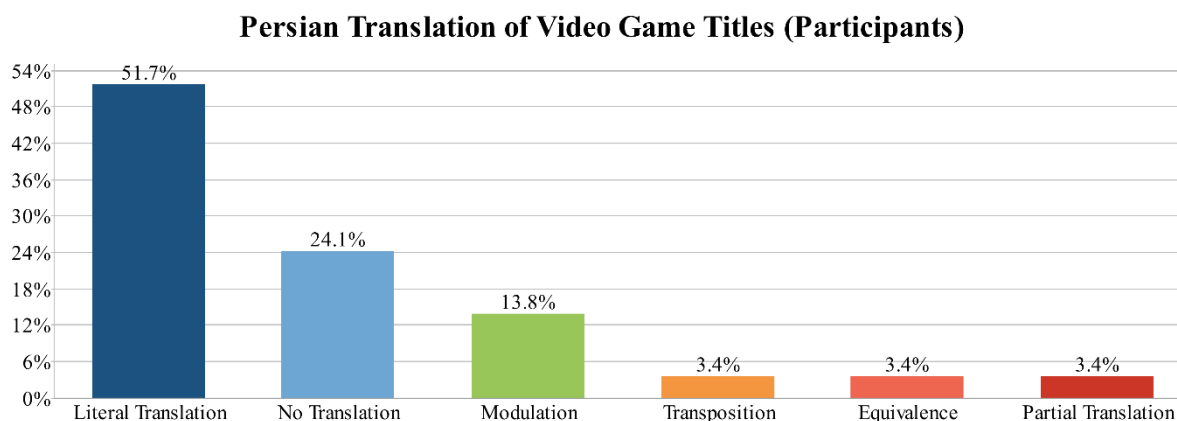
Original Title	Persian-Translated Title (Darinoos)	Persian-Translated Title (Participants)	Release Year
Prison Break	/farar az zendàn/ فرار از زندان (Escape From Prison)	/farar az zendàn/ فرار از زندان (Escape From Prison)	2010

When translators make some changes in a text by shifting parts of speech without changing the meaning, it shows that they are using transposition in translating their text. Only one title of analyzed samples have been translated using the transposition technique.



**Figure 4.1** The percentage of techniques used in Persian translation of foreign video game titles (by The *Darinoos*)

As illustrated in Figure 4.1, literal translation was the favourite procedure of the *Darinoos* publishing with 31%. The complete order of the most to the least translation techniques used in the Persian translation of foreign video game titles is as follows: literal translation (31%) > new translation (24.1%) > partial translation (20.7%) > modulation (13.8%) > transposition (3.4%), equivalence (3.4%), and adaptaion (3.4%).



**Figure 4.2.** The percentage of techniques used in Persian translation of foreign video game titles (by selected participants)

As can be observed in Figure 4.2, literal translation was the favourite translation procedure of the selected participants, with 51.7%. The complete order of the most to the least translation techniques used in the Persian translation of foreign video game titles is as follows: literal translation (51.7%) > no translation (24.1%) > modulation (13.8%) > transposition (3.4%), equivalence, and partial translation (3.4%).

## 5. Discussion

The current research study aims to examine and compare Persian translations of *Darinoos* publishing and selected participants' translations in the subject of video game title translating. From the total procedures/techniques of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and Chaume (2020), eight translation techniques were used in the Persian translation of foreign video game titles. These techniques have been used before in book, film, and novel title translation, but they have never been used in video game title translation. The translation of video game titles is a complex and challenging task in Iran. Many titles are yet to be translated, and some are considered untranslatable. The introduction of retitling by a few distributors has not been widely accepted, indicating the need for innovative strategies. Vinay and Darblenet's (1995) procedures, while a good starting point, were not sufficient for all cases. As part of the solution, Chaume's (2020) translation techniques were also employed to suit specific cases.

Koçak (2023) indicated that there is no apparent difference between the translation of the title of a movie, book, or novel and the translation of the title of a mobile game. The obtained results corresponded to Shokri (2014), Koçak (2023), and Golmakani et al. (2023) studies. The results showed that literal translation was the favourite procedure for translating video game titles. The literal translation of video game titles into Persian was used by 31% of *Darinoos* and 51.7% of participants. Moreover, it can be seen that *Darinoos* used more creativity than the participants' translators when translating video game titles. The Iranian publishing used seven different techniques for translating

titles, while the selected participants used only six techniques for this study. *Darinoos*' second most used technique is new translation. According to Shi (2014), by knowing the narrative and structural contents of the work, the translator can create a new title far from the source language. About 24.1% of the new translation technique was used by *Darinoos*.

On the other hand, the selected participants considered some video game titles untranslatable and avoided translating them; Therefore, the no translation technique is in the second place as the most used technique by them with 24.1%. *Darinoos* sometimes prefer to utilize the partial translation technique. For this purpose, one element of the source language title is translated, and another element is removed and replaced with new information. For instance, in the case of *Condemnd: Criminal Origin*, the Iranian publishing has abandoned the exact translation of *Criminal Origin* and added new information about the existence of serial murders to it in the target language - محکوم: راز قتل‌های (Condemned: The Secret of Serial Murders).

Both groups of translators used modulation procedure in the area of video game titles. In modulation, the translator changes the word or the point of view to transfer the concept to the target language. For instance, *Darinoos* used the Persian equivalent of دوازده کماندو (twelve commandos) to translate the title *Deadly Dozen*. The translators of *Darinoos* were familiar with the theme and environment of the game and chose the equivalent of *Twelve Commandos*. Furthermore, after viewing the original title of *Clive Barker's Undying*, the participants realized the name of the creator and author of the work and used داستان‌های کلیو بارکر: نامیرا (*Clive Barker's stories: Namira*) as the Persian equivalent. Both groups used about 13.1% of the modulation procedure to translate the titles of the games. The least used procedures in the mentioned research were transposition, equivalence and adaptation, which all accounted for 3.4 per cent. Only one time the participants' translators used partial translation technique for the title *Silent Hill: Homecoming* (سایلنت هیل: بازگشت به خانه).

## 6. Conclusion

Video game localization in Iran has received attention in recent years. Iranian publishers and websites such as dl-fox, Parsi Games, Novin Pendar, and Asr Bazi have done significant work in localizing of foreign video games; however, the most prominent and oldest Iranian publishing in this field is *Darinoos*. This publication/online store has worked in the localization department of well-known foreign games for about 24 years. The translation of video game titles has not yet received the attention of translators. This research study has investigated the Persian translations of *Darinoos* and selected participants in the field of video game titles. For this research, 29 titles from three generations of video games have been selected. The reason for choosing *Darinoos* as the main case study is that this publisher/online store has been creative in naming and translating the video game title. The techniques used in this research study were a combination of Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) and Chaume's (2020) translation techniques. Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) translation procedures were previously used in the field of movie title translation by Iranian researchers such as Lotfollah and Monizade (2012), Shokri (2014), and Mazaheb et al. (2022). As expected, the most frequent procedure in video game title translation was the literal translation. Of course, more selected participants than the *Darinoos* translation team have used the mentioned procedure. The selected participants are journalists, content writers, translators and video game reviewers. The results indicated that participants usually believe in some way that game titles cannot be translated due to cultural and technical limitations, and they do not convey the concept and world of the game to the Iranian audience. For this reason, they prefer to use no translation or literal translation.

On the other hand, *Darinoos* has used new translation or partial translation techniques in translation of some titles. For instance, in order to avoid the literal translation of the long title *No One Lives Forever 2: A Spy in the H.A.R.M Way*, based on knowledge of the plot and the name of the protagonist,

the team chose the title of *Secret Agent 2: Kate Archer* (مامور مخفی 2: کیت آرچر) for the mentioned product. In the partial translation case, *Darinoos'* team has used the additional word *journey* (سفر) in the translation of *Syberia 3* to add new information as well as convey the concept of the game world to the audience. Research in the field of video game title translation still needs progress, and this article has examined only a minor part of the issue. This research can be advantageous for translators, content writers, journalists, and video game critics.

#### Declaration of Conflicting

Interests The author declares that he has no conflicts of interest.

#### Funding

The author received no financial support for the research and publication of this article.

#### References

- [1]Chandler, H. (2005). *The Game Localization Handbook*. Massachusetts: Charles River Media.
- [2]Chaume, F. (2020). *Audiovisual Translation: Dubbing*. Manchester: Routledge.  
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781003161660>
- [3]Costales, A. F. (2012). Exploring translation strategies in video game localization. *MonTI. Monografías De Traducción E Interpretación*, 358-408.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.6035/MonTI.2012.4.16>
- [4]Czech, D. (2013). Challenges in video game localization: An integrated perspective. *Explorations: A Journal of Language and Literature*, 3-25.
- [5]Dietz, F. (2007). How Difficult Can That Be? – The Work of Computer and Video Game Localization. *Tradumática 5*. <http://www.fti.uab.cat/tradumatica/revista/num5/articles/04/04.pdf>
- [6]Fry, D. (2003). *The Localization Industry Primer*. Fechy: SMP Marketing and the Localization Industry Standard Association [www.lisa.org/interact/LISAprimer.pdf](http://www.lisa.org/interact/LISAprimer.pdf)
- [7]Golmakani, S., Amirinejad, M., & Rastegarmoghaddam, M. (2023). Translating TV Series Titles: A Case Study of Iranian Film Monthly Magazine. *Jornal of Translation and Language Studies*, 4(3), 1-14
- [8]Ho, V. (2020). *Localization in educational mobile games: Multiple case studies of educational*. [Master's Thesis, Aalto University]. <https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/items/e3ac99a0-8c87-4604-80bc-5750bc4952fc>
- [9]Iran Computer and Video Games Foundation (2023, November 19). Increase in the average age of PC players / 40% of PC players spend in 1400 to play. *IRCG*. <https://www.ircg.ir/fa/news/5637>
- [10]Khoshsaligeh, M., & America, S. (2017). Translator's Agency and Features of Non-professional Translation of Video Games (A Case Study of Uncharted 4: A Thief's End). *Tarbiat Modares University Journals System*, 8(5), 181-204.
- [11]Koçak, S. (2023). Translation of Mobile Game Titles: Trends and Implications. *Journal of Translation Studies*, 66-82. doi:10.37599/ceviri.1361144

- [12]Li, Z., & Jiang, Z. (2021). A Study on Chinese Single-Player Video Game Title Translation from the Prespective of Skopos Theory. *Communication across Borders: Translation & Interpreting*, 1(1), 1-8.
- [13]Lindner, J. (2023, December 20). *Global Gaming Industry Statistics [Fresh Research]*. Retrieved from Gitnux: <https://gitnux.org/global-gaming-industry-statistics/>
- [14]Lotfollahi, B., & Moinzadeh, A. (2012). Translation of Movie Titles from English into Persian: Strategies and Effects. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(3), 511–516.
- [15]Mozaheb, M., Ghajarieh, A., & Tamizi, Z. (2021). Analysis of Novel Title: A Case Study of Agatha Christie’s Works Translated from English into Persian. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 12(2), 177-190. doi:10.30495/TTLT.2022.690769
- [16]Munday, J. (2008). *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge
- [17]Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice-Hall International.
- [18]O’Hagan, M., & Mangiron, C. (2004). Games localization: When Arigato gets lost in translation. *New Zealand Game Developers Conference Proceedings*, 57-62.
- [19]Hosseini, Z., Delpazirian, R., Mohajer, H., & Abharian, P. (2019). Psychometric Properties of the Persian Translation of Video Gaming Addiction Test. *Basic and Clinical Neuroscience*, 10(5), 469-474.
- [20]Pym, A. (2008). Localization from the Perspective of Translation Studies: Overlaps in the Digital Divide? *In ELDA* [online]
- [21] Ross, J. (2013). No Revolutionary Roads please, we’re Turkish: The translation of film titles as an object of translation research. *Across Languages and Cultures*, 14(2), 245–266.
- [22]Sawyer, R. (1993). “What’s Your Title?”-’the Turn of the Screw.’. *Studies in Short Fiction*, 30(1), 53– 62.
- [23]Shi, X. (2014). Film Title Translation Methods From the Cultural Difference Aspects. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 8(2), 77-81.
- [24]Shokri, S. (2014). Translating Movie Titles: Strategies Applied on Persian to English Cases. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20), 2568.
- [25]Vinay, J., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). *Comparative stylistics of French and English: A methodology for translation*. Amsterdam: PA: John Benjamins.
- [26]Viezzi, M. (2011). The Translation of Book Titles: Theoretical and Practical Aspects. *In Beyond Borders: Translation Moving Languages, Literatures and Cultures*, 183–195.