



The euphemism translation technique used in English-Indonesian translation of RPG video game (A case study of Hoyoverse's Honkai Star Rail)

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Abstract

Euphemisms serve as essential linguistic tools for navigating social norms and cultural sensitivities. Nonetheless, their use in the realm of video game localization is still a largely unexplored topic, especially regarding the English-Indonesian context. This research examines the translation techniques used for euphemistic phrases in HoYoverse's Honkai Star Rail, emphasizing both understatement and overstatement euphemisms. A qualitative descriptive method was utilized to gather corresponding English-Indonesian text pairs from the dialogues in the Penacony Trailblaze Mission of the game. These pairs were subsequently examined using the framework of the translation technique proposed by Molina and Hurtado Albir. The examination produced 19 euphemistic phrases, comprising 16 understatements and 3 overstatements. Three translation techniques were identified in total: literal translation (84.2%), amplification (10.5%), and modulation (5.3%). The common use of literal translation indicates that euphemistic techniques used in English and Indonesian in the realm of fantasy RPGs show cross-cultural alignment. The strategic use of modulation, illustrated by translating "crime scene" to "TKP" (Tempat Kejadian Perkara), shows a refined cultural adjustment. The results suggest that significant cultural adaptation might not be essential for successful euphemism translation in gaming situations when the source and target cultures have comparable norms for indirect communication. This study substantially enhances video game localization theory by offering a framework for examining euphemistic elements in interactive narratives. Moreover, it provides useful advice for localization experts dealing with English-Indonesian language pairs.

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INTRODUCTION

Language serves not just as a medium of communication but also as a mechanism for managing social norms, cultural sensitivities, and interpersonal relationships (Jackson, 2023). A particularly effective linguistic technique used for this purpose is euphemism, a linguistic phenomenon where indirect or milder terms substitute harsh, taboo, offensive, or socially awkward words or phrases (Islam, 2025). It serves multiple communicative purposes, such as maintaining politeness, preventing conflict, and incorporating humor or irony (Yang, 2023).

Understanding euphemism requires exploring its various forms, particularly understatement and overstatement, which illustrate two separate but interconnected approaches used for managing linguistic sensitivity. Allan & Burridge (2006) classify euphemisms into various categories according to their linguistic mechanisms and social functions, with understatement and overstatement being particularly relevant for interactive media contexts.

Understatement involves the intentionally reducing the seriousness, significance, or emotional impact of a circumstance to soften its perceived effect. According to Leech (2014), understatement is a figure of speech used by writers or speakers to deliberately make a situation seem significant than it actually is. This euphemistic strategy is often used to convey irony, modesty, or social diplomacy (Vlasova, 2023).

Classic examples of understatement are found in phrases like, “It’s a little heavy” when talking about carrying a piano upstairs, or “It took a little while to finish” after finishing a cross-country walk (Leech, 2014, p. 143). In more sensitive contexts, understatement euphemisms may involve expressions like “he’s no longer with us” to signify death, or “we had some disagreements” to indicate a serious conflict (Huang, 2014, p. 58). These phrases serve as euphemistic devices by describing “someone’s views ‘controversial’” as a strategy to mitigate the potential implications of such views, which might otherwise be perceived as “insulting or backwards” opinions (Allan & Burridge, 2006).

On the other hand, overstatement utilizes hyperbolic language or exaggerated rhetoric to highlight a point while simultaneously softening its impact through obvious exaggeration. Overstatement is characterized as the contrary of understatement, employing intentional exaggeration to highlight a viewpoint or evoke emotion (Norrick, 2009, p. 89), as illustrated by the phrase “I told you a million times!” or characterizing “a marginal win in an election as a ‘huge victory’” (Mccarthy & Carter, 2014, p. 74). While seemingly contradictory, the use of overstatement serves a euphemistic purpose by creating emotional distance through its apparent absurdity.

This euphemistic form is illustrated by expressions like “This is literally the end of the universe!” when reacting to a relatively minor setback, or “You’re killing me with that joke!” to convey amusement (Norrick, 2009, p. 91). The exaggerated nature of these statements indicates their non-literal purpose, thereby creating a buffer between the speaker and potentially awkward directness (Allan & Burridge, 2006; Newmark, 2009).

Euphemisms play a vital role to discuss sensitive subjects in numerous cultural settings. Allan & Burridge (2006) observe that euphemisms have existed throughout recorded history; they are used even by preliterate peoples and have probably been around since recognizably human languages first developed. He (2018) suggested that the careful use of euphemisms can highlight their essential worth and thus help prevent inflicting emotional pain on others during interpersonal dialogue. These tools allow people to have conversations about sensitive issues, like death, bodily functions, and conflicts, without creating discomfort or offense (Gresiwari & Refnaldi, 2025).

However, the effectiveness of euphemistic approaches relies on common cultural understanding and linguistic conventions. Research by Burridge (2012) shows that euphemism and its opposite, dysphemism, are influential elements that significantly impact the study of language change, suggesting that these language techniques constantly develop within particular cultural environments. The use of euphemisms allows people to express ideas or feelings linked to unpleasantness or discomfort in a way that is more acceptable and less upsetting, thus promoting friendly interactions and maintaining personal relationships within a community (Semiun, 2020).

In the field of translation studies, euphemisms pose particular challenges. These linguistic tools can be interpreted and received differently due to the intricate interaction of cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts between the original and target languages (Tovmasyan & Papoyan, 2024). An effective euphemism in English may not have an equivalent in Indonesian, requiring the use of particular translational strategies like substitution (replacing the original phrase with a culturally suitable term), modulation (adjusting the viewpoint to express the intended idea), or compensation

(introducing euphemistic elements in another section of the translation to preserve the desired tone) to ensure translations are delivered naturally and cohesively (Anita & Julianti, 2023).

Translation should be viewed as more than just a simple transfer of words between languages. It is a process deeply rooted in social and cultural frameworks that entails the negotiation of meanings within various linguistic and sociocultural settings (Baker, 2018). This complexity is particularly notable in the field of video game localization, where translators must guarantee lexical precision and the preservation of non-linguistic aspects like tone, humor, and character voice to sustain player immersion (Bernal-Merino, 2014). This phenomenon is illustrated through euphemisms, especially through forms of understatement and overstatement. The practical impacts of euphemisms, like sarcasm and politeness, rely significantly on mutual cultural understanding (Allan & Burridge, 2006). Therefore, game localization is a process that takes place at the intersection of linguistic accuracy and creative adaptation (Cintas & Remael, 2014).

Video game localization is a specialized field of translation that entails more than merely translating text from one language to another. In contrast to traditional literary or audiovisual translation, game localization demands meticulous consideration of linguistic and cultural relevance, transcreation, and different technical constraints (Czech, 2013). In the realm of modern video games, especially in story-focused genres such as role-playing games (RPGs), there is a vast amount of dialogue, user interface (UI) text, and narrative elements that require careful localization to preserve cultural and linguistic relevance for players from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

One of the key aspects of game localization is cultural adaptation, which is important for making sure that the game's context and content align with the local culture, encompassing specific customs, traditions, and beliefs (Pyae, 2018). However, adapting a game to a particular cultural context is often seen as one of the most challenging elements of game localization, due to the fact that some cultural meanings are frequently diminished during the translation of the game's content to maintain its immersive gaming experience (Hsu, 2020). It is important to recognize that aspects like idioms, humor, historical references, and even character names may have different interpretations in various cultural settings.

As a multimedia interactive medium, video game localization needs to consider technical constraints, such as limitations on text length and synchronization of voice-overs (O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013). These linguistic intricacies highlight the importance of careful translation of euphemisms to maintain the original tone and stylistic aspects of the game in various languages.

The choice of Honkai Star Rail for the case study is based on its linguistic complexity and the vibrant interaction between global and localized features. As a critically acclaimed RPG by HoYoverse, the game features intricate character dialogues, humor, and culturally rich expressions that necessitate adaptable and flexible translation strategies. Unlike static textual media, video games rely on dynamic localization to sustain player immersion, making them a notably interesting topic for euphemism analysis (O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013).

The official Indonesian localization of Honkai Star Rail presents scholars with a well-organized parallel corpus, allowing for a systematic analysis of English euphemisms alongside their Indonesian translations. The diverse audience of the game, along with HoYoverse's strong record of providing excellent localization, makes it an ideal subject for examining the adaptation of understatement and overstatement in different languages. The incorporation of science fiction terminology, casual interactions, and distinct characteristics for each character presents difficulties in preserving consistency of tone, especially given the reliance on euphemisms that vary significantly with cultural context.

While euphemism has been thoroughly examined in general translation and sociolinguistics (Allan & Burridge, 2006; O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013), its application in video game localization has received relatively less attention, especially regarding non-European languages like Indonesian. Previous studies have predominantly centered within the domain of literary or audiovisual contexts (Cintas & Remael, 2014), but RPGs pose distinctive challenges due to their inherently interactive nature. Although understatement and overstatement are frequently employed euphemistic techniques in English-language games, there are only few studies that investigate how these strategies are modified in translations for languages with varying pragmatic norms, such as Indonesian. This research intends to fill this gap by performing a comprehensive examination of the English-Indonesian localization of Honkai Star Rail. By analyzing the rendering process of euphemisms in this context, the research aims to provide insights into the techniques used to sustain player immersion and ensure cultural relevance.

The objective of this study is to analyze the translation strategies employed in conveying understatement and overstatement euphemisms from English to Indonesian in the realm of video game localization, using *Honkai Star Rail* as a case study. It seeks to determine how translators tackle the difficulties of preserving rhetorical impact, cultural suitability, and player engagement while adapting euphemistic phrases across different languages and cultures. Specifically, this study focuses on identifying the strategies used in translating euphemisms of understatement and overstatement, aiming to describe how these strategies affect the final translation.

This study provides substantial contributions to multiple academic domains. From an academic standpoint, it investigates the relatively under-explored area of euphemism translation within video game localization, emphasizing the nuances of understatement and overstatement in RPG (role-playing game) genres. Through the analysis of *Honkai Star Rail* as a case study, the research establishes a framework to explore the role of linguistic tools in interactive narratives, which contributes to the development of euphemism typology within digital media environments. From a pragmatic viewpoint, the results of this study provide valuable insights for localization professionals, highlighting efficient methods to maintain aspects like humor, sarcasm, and character complexity during the process of translating between English and Indonesian.

The research also highlights the importance of cultural relevance by addressing the specific challenges encountered during the process of Indonesian localization, where linguistic and social norms can greatly differ from those of the original content. Additionally, the insightful findings offered by this study hold substantial industry value for game developers such as HoYoverse, as they present opportunities to improve player experience by incorporating culturally appropriate translations. The research acts as a useful tool for both teachers and learners, providing an extensive resource that aids in examining innovative translation techniques in modern digital entertainment. This study attempts to address the increasing need for high-quality game localization in Indonesia's expanding gaming industry by establishing both a theoretical and practical framework for game localization.

The current research focuses on analyzing the application of understatement and overstatement as euphemistic tools in the English-Indonesian localization of *Honkai: Star Rail*, a role-playing game developed by HoYoverse. The focus of this study is restricted to examining in-game dialogues, item descriptions, and narrative texts that include these particular euphemistic phrases. The evaluation will entail a comparison between the original English content and its official Indonesian translation. The study prioritizes understatement and overstatement, intentionally excluding other forms of euphemism, such as metaphors, slang, or religious alternatives. The examination highlights the translation methods employed and evaluates their success in maintaining stylistic tone, humor, and courtesy. Although elements like player engagement and cultural relevance in the Indonesian context are part of the study, technical aspects of game localization, such as user interface modifications and voice-over alignment, fall outside the scope of this research.

METHODS

This research utilizes a qualitative descriptive method to examine the strategies for translating euphemisms in the English-Indonesian localization of *Honkai Star Rail*. The qualitative method facilitates an in-depth analysis of translation decisions and their cultural effects, whereas the descriptive approach permits organized classification of translation methods without enforcing predetermined theoretical constraints. This research design is particularly suitable exploring linguistic aspects in translation studies, as it allows for a comprehensive analysis of contextual elements that affect translation decisions.

The study employs a single case study framework, concentrating on HoYoverse's *Honkai Star Rail* to facilitate a thorough examination of translation methods within a consistent cultural and narrative environment. This approach allows for a detailed examination of how translation choices influence distinct game mechanics, character progression, and narrative requirements that are particular to this RPG experience. The case study approach facilitates a comprehensive investigation of euphemistic expressions within an authentic gaming environment, thereby providing authentic data that represents actual localization practices in the video game industry.

The primary data source comprises aligned English-Indonesian text pairs taken from the dialogues of *Honkai Star Rail*'s Penacony Trailblaze Mission. This specific choice of content presents a diverse range of euphemistic elements due to Penacony's storytelling themes, which include complex social situations, intricate character conflicts, and morally ambiguous scenarios that naturally generate to euphemistic phrases. The Penacony narrative was chosen for its inclusion of complex character

dynamics and polished dialogue, marked by the regular employment of understatement and overstatement as euphemistic tools, making it an ideal corpus for the current study.

The data collection process involved the organized recording of gameplay in both the English and Indonesian versions of the game. The researcher carried out the chosen missions in each language, recording dialogue sequences via screenshots and detailed transcriptions. Verification protocols were established to guarantee the precision of transcription and to aid in appropriate contextual understanding. These processes involved comparing various gameplay sessions and reviewing official game materials. The parallel text creation process ensured a close alignment between English source texts and Indonesian target texts, allowing for accurate examination of translation decisions and their impact on euphemistic meanings.

The research instruments consist of a data collection template intended to methodically document euphemistic expressions, their contexts, and pairs of translations. This template aims to gather crucial details, such as but not restricted to character identity, situational context, type of euphemism (understatement or overstatement), source text, target text, and initial identification of translation technique. Additionally, the use of contextual analysis sheets helps capture the narrative contexts associated with each euphemistic expression, thus ensuring comprehensive understanding of their communicative functions.

The data analysis entails a methodical three-step approach that includes categorization, identification of techniques, and evaluation. The primary classification stage distinguishes between understatement and overstatement euphemisms according to the semantic and pragmatic criteria established by Allan & Burridge (2006). Understatement euphemisms refer to phrases that lessen or diminish the seriousness, significance, or effect of a circumstance, whereas overstatement euphemisms are marked by exaggerated or exaggerated language employed for rhetorical purposes. For instance, when analyzing an example of dialogue like “no viable peace process” (Setyawan & Khuzaini, 2025, p. 32), the researcher utilized Allan & Burridge (2006) model for identifying understatement markers. The expression includes the minimizing qualifier “no viable,” which serves to maintain a formal tone while conveying the seriousness of the issue.

The technique identification phase applies Molina & Hurtado Albir’s (2004) framework for translation procedures to categorize particular translation strategies used for each euphemistic expression. This framework offers extensive classification, integrating various methods such as literal translation, modulation, amplification, reduction, substitution, and other relevant techniques. Every recognized euphemism undergoes an in-depth examination to determine the main translation method used and any additional strategies that might be utilized. For example, Fitriani et al. (2019) analyzed the phrase “collateral damage” → “kerusakan tambahan.” By employing their systematic approach, each lexical elements were systematically mapped: “collateral” → “tambahan,” “damage” → “kerusakan.” According to Molina & Hurtado Albir (2004) criteria, this method represents a literal translation, as it retains the original syntactic structure and upholds word-for-word correspondence.

The evaluation stage includes assessing how well translation decisions maintain euphemistic functions while ensuring cultural relevance for Indonesian audiences. This evaluation is based on a complex method, including various elements including semantic accuracy, cultural awareness, rhetorical effectiveness, and enhancement of overall character voice and narrative consistency. The assessment process entails a comprehensive analysis of whether the target text successfully maintains the euphemistic impact intended in the source text and whether the translation decision contributes to strengthening or weakening the communicative intent within the Indonesian cultural setting. This occurrence is illustrated by Fitriani et al., p. (2019, p. 97) who rendered “died” as “passed away,” a technique used to maintain the euphemistic purpose while conforming to Indonesian cultural standards.

Data validity is ensured by triangulating various sources and applying verification methods. The researcher performs multiple analysis sessions to ensure consistency in categorization and seeks peer confirmation for difficult cases. The organized recording of analysis methods and decision-making standards guarantees reproducibility and clarity in the research process, enhancing the overall trustworthiness of results and conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The analysis of euphemistic language in HoYoverse's Honkai Star Rail reveals noticeable trends in the translation methods used for understatement and overstatement euphemisms. An extensive analysis of the Penacony Trailblaze Mission conversations uncovered a total of 19 euphemistic expressions, comprising 16 understatement euphemisms and 3 overstatement euphemisms. This distribution reflects the narrative traits of the game, where nuanced character exchanges and diplomatic conversations prevalent over overtly dramatic expressions.

Understatement Euphemisms

The identification and classification of understatement euphemisms in the corpus relied on their semantic role in reducing or minimizing the seriousness, intensity, or significance of situations, emotions, or events. These phrases serve as language tools to uphold politeness, prevent direct conflict, or produce ironic effects within the context of the game's narrative.

Table 1 presents a detailed examination of understatement euphemisms identified in the game dialogues, displaying the original text, translated version, and the translation method used.

Table 1. Translation Techniques for Understatement Euphemisms

No	Translation Technique	Frequency	Example (English → Indonesian)
1	Literal Translation	13	"My expression wasn't much better than yours..." → "Ekspresiku juga tidak lebih baik darimu..."
2	Modulation	1	"This is not where the crime happened." → "Di sini bukan TKP."
3	Amplification	1	"That's just one side of the story." → "Hal ini baru satu sisi saja dari keseluruhan ceritanya."

The data categorized as understatement euphemisms reveal noticeable trends of semantic reduction. For example, phrases like "My expression wasn't much better than yours..." (Data 1) and "I'm just an unlucky bystander here" (Data 2) utilize minimizing tactics that lessen the speaker's emotional involvement or accountability in the circumstance. The use of qualifiers like "just," "little," and "wasn't much better" helps to establish a linguistic separation from potentially face-threatening circumstances, thus achieving the euphemistic role of preserving social harmony in the game's interpersonal interactions.

Similarly, expressions related to mortality and aggression, like "I don't ask for a peaceful death..." (Data 10) and "This move puts an end to the planet's long and bloody history..." (Data 9), use understatement to lessen the effect of harsh truths. The euphemistic impact is achieved through a straightforward delivery that reduces emotional intensity, enabling players to interact with significant narrative aspects without being inundated by the dramatic heaviness of the material.

Overstatement Euphemisms

The overstatement euphemisms found in the corpus operate through semantic enhancement and hyperbolic expression, generating emphasis, humor, or dramatic impact. These phrases typically use hyperbolic language to create rhetorical effect while keeping a euphemistic distance from direct statement.

Table 2 provides an analysis of euphemisms for overstatement found in the dialogues of the game.

Table 2. Translation Techniques for Overstatement Euphemisms

No	Translation Technique	Frequency	Example (English → Indonesian)
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1	Literal Translation	2	“They really did summon the rain!” → “Mereka benar-benar memanggil hujan!”
2	Amplification	1	“Such a lucky child, such a blessed child...” → “Anak yang sangat beruntung, sungguh anak yang diberkati...”

The classification of overstatement was established based on the use of hyperbolic language in the expressions to generate emphatic or ironic effects. “You promised us a land of honey, yet yoked us beneath a sword of bitterness” (Data 1) uses biblical and metaphorical hyperbole through the opposing imagery of “land of honey” and “sword of bitterness,” offering a euphemistic expression of betrayal and suffering. The phrase “They really did summon the rain!” (Data 2) uses exaggerated attribution of supernatural powers to define seemingly random weather occurrences, creating a euphemistic impact through heightened causation. “Such a lucky child, such a blessed child...” (Data 3) utilizes repetitive, hyperbolic commendation that could possess ironic implications based on context, serving as an overstatement euphemism through excessive positive attribution.

Discussion

Distribution of Translation Techniques

The quantitative analysis of translation techniques used in Honkai Star Rail uncovers reveals distinct patterns in the localization strategy applied to euphemistic language. The distribution indicates a clear hierarchical tendency in translation strategies, with literal translation predominating at 84.2% (16 occurrences), amplification representing 10.5% (2 occurrences), and modulation making up 5.3% (1 occurrences) of the overall corpus.

Table 3. Distribution of Translation Techniques

Translation Technique	Understatement	Overstatement	Total	Percentage
Literal Translation	14	2	16	84.2%
Modulation	1	0	1	5.3%
Amplification	1	1	2	10.5%
Total	16	3	19	100%

This distribution pattern suggests a localization approach that places a higher priority on semantic accuracy and structural consistency over significant cultural adjustments. The widespread application of literal translation suggests that translators acknowledged the cross-cultural alignment of euphemistic techniques between English and Indonesian in the fantasy RPG setting. This finding supports the observation made by Albarakati et al. (2023), who found that 95% of euphemisms in literary translations were translated literally while effectively preserving their original meaning and euphemistic functions.

The strategic employment of amplification and modulation strategies in this context underscores a deliberate approach to intervention, where direct translation might potentially undermine either cultural relevance or communication efficiency. This focused approach reflects modern game localization techniques that balance effectiveness and cultural awareness, as demonstrated in the analysis of Japanese game localization conducted by Mangiron (2021), where cultural adaptation was applied selectively according to specific contextual requirements instead of undergoing a consistent transformation.

Predominance of Literal Translation Strategy

The significant predominance of literal translation (84.2%) in the corpus indicates a strategic localization method that emphasizes semantic accuracy while preserving euphemistic efficiency. This finding aligns with the observations reported by AL Qahtani (2020), who observed that literal translation is the most frequently applied technique employed in translating euphemisms for hardship in the Quran, as it ensures the preservation of the sensitive meanings and context of the text. The high prevalence of literal translation in Honkai Star Rail indicates that numerous euphemisms in English

have direct functional counterparts in Indonesian, especially in fantasy RPG settings where universal narrative themes overcome specific cultural boundaries.

Each example of literal translation illustrates particular reasons for selecting this strategy. Data 1 (“My expression wasn’t much better than yours...” → “Ekspresiku juga tidak lebih baik darimu...”) preserves both semantic content and euphemistic function through a direct relationship between structure and content. The Indonesian version retains the self-deprecating tone of the understatement while keeping the authentic Indonesian syntax. This discovery supports observation by Mangiron (2021) that modern game localization has shifted towards balanced methods that preserve original cultural aspects while promoting linguistic involvement.

Data 2 (“I’m just an unlucky bystander here” → “Aku hanya seorang pengamat yang tidak beruntung di sini”) illustrates how direct translation maintains character voice through consistent euphemistic minimization. The word “just” (hanya) is used by the speaker to mitigate their involvement, while “unlucky” (tidak beruntung) is employed to soften the euphemistic language typically used to mitigate the gravity of potentially more serious circumstances. This approach aligns with the findings from a study by Al-Batineh (2021) on Arabic video game localization. The research revealed language linguistic and cultural challenges, particularly when translating proper names and terminology, along when dealing with sensitive topics like nudity and profanity. These results highlight the significance of preserving character consistency in video game localization.

Data 4 (“It’s fine. Listen to your gut” → “Tidak apa-apa, dengarkan intuisimu”) illustrates the effectiveness of direct translation in preserving reassuring euphemistic functions. The Indonesian expression “tidak apa-apa” translates directly to “it’s fine” in English, as both expressions reduce concern or anxiety. This maintenance of euphemistic reassurance corresponds with the findings shown by Luo (2024) who demonstrated that euphemisms play a role in maintaining social harmony across different cultural backgrounds, such as in China, Korea, and Mongolia.

The literal translations of game-specific terms presented in data 7, 11, 12, and 13 illustrate what Gacek (2019) describes as the role of translators as creators in localization processes, where the translator modifies meanings, generates culturally appropriate alternatives, and guarantees that the final result feels authentic to the audience. The phrases such as “monster in the shadows,” “Family,” “unbreakable defensive line,” and “Memokeeper” function as euphemisms or technical terms within the game’s fictional world. These terms are translated directly, ensuring consistency in the game and remaining understandable for players in Indonesia.

Data 9 and 10, which address violence and death respectively, illustrate the effectiveness of literal translation in maintaining euphemistic softening of sensitive topics. The euphemistic softening effects of “Long and bloody history” (sejarah panjang yang penuh darah) and “peaceful death” (kematian yang damai) are preserved through direct linguistic correspondence, thereby reinforcing the observation by Beizae & Suzani (2019) that Persian versions of euphemisms frequently miss the metaphorical or metonymic characteristics present in their English versions, emphasizing that euphemisms can successfully convey messages across languages when appropriate techniques are used.

Strategic Application of Modulation

The single occurrence of modulation presents in data 3, translating “This is not where the crime happened” to “Di sini bukan TKP,” demonstrates a complex form of cultural adaptation, reflecting a deep understanding of Indonesian linguistic norms. This specific translation method, making up 5.3% of the corpus, illustrates a concept described by Molina & Hurtado Albir (2004) as altering cognitive categories to produce a similar communicative impact.

The effectiveness of this modulation is complex and is shaped by various interrelated factors. First, the acronym “TKP” (Tempat Kejadian Perkara) represents well-accepted legal terminology in Indonesia, which appeals more to local audiences compared to a direct translation. This decision aligns with research results indicating that translators face significant difficulties in maintaining the original meaning while modifying euphemisms to fit the cultural context of the target language (Tovmasyan & Papoyan, 2024). This highlights the function of translators as cultural mediators, who need to find a balance between formal and dynamic equivalence approaches.

Second, the modulation maintains the original euphemistic function while adjusting to the Indonesian cultural setting. Instead of using the direct phrase “crime scene,” the English text uses circumlocutory expression (“where the crime happened”), and the Indonesian translation upholds this indirect method by incorporating institutional terminology. This approach aligns with the findings of

Al-Ahmad & Alharthi (2023), who demonstrated that while literal translation is often used, employing modulation and equivalence promotes clearer understanding of euphemisms for those who do not speak Arabic. This discovery indicates that efficient translation methods improve comprehension of the Quranic text and highlight the significance of cultural context in translation.

Third, this modulation illustrates an awareness described by Helmke (2024) regarding the role of localization in cultural adaptation without fully transforming the original culture. In Helmke's examination of the localization between Japanese and US video game versions, it was observed that there were significant changes in audiovisual features, character portrayals, and story content, where many unique aspects of Japanese culture were removed or altered. The translation preserves a formal and somewhat detached tone suitable for the narrative context, while also guaranteeing immediate understanding for Indonesian players acquainted with legal discourse conventions.

The selective implementation of modulation in this case, rather than its systematic application across the corpus, indicates strategic decision-making influenced by contextual needs. This method affirms the results of Jooyaeian & Khoshsaligheh (2022) research, which translated video games into Persian. The research observed a preference for literal translation, highlighting the lack of creativity and cultural adjustment in the translation process. This observation underscores the need for adaptable and context-aware translation approaches to successfully localize digital content.

Amplification as Enhancement Strategy

Comprising 10.5% of translation methods, amplification shows adaptability in euphemistic categories while fulfills various pragmatic functions. The two occurrences of amplification demonstrate a nuanced comprehension of how euphemistic impacts can be maintained or intensified through strategic expansion instead of straightforward equivalence.

Comprising 10.5% of translation methods, amplification shows adaptability in euphemistic categories while fulfills various pragmatic functions. The two occurrences of amplification demonstrate a nuanced comprehension of how euphemistic impacts can be maintained or intensified through strategic expansion instead of straightforward equivalence.

In data 5, rendering of "That's just one side of the story" as "Hal ini baru satu sisi saja dari keseluruhan ceritanya" demonstrates how amplification can enhance a euphemistic understatement. Incorporating "keseluruhan" (complete/entire) asizes that the information given is lacking, thereby enhancing the initial understatement. This method reflects with the results noted by Crespo-Fernández (2022) where the researcher examined the employment of euphemisms in laxative ads on US television, found 218 mentions concerning constipation and bowel movements. The results suggest that euphemisms function as a form of social control, where understatements help soften potentially confrontational remarks.

The amplification here has several purposes. Initially, it clarifies the euphemistic suggestion for Indonesian viewers, who may not instantly understand the nuanced rejection embedded in the English expression. Second, it preserves the respectful tone suitable for the game's dialogue style while making sure the euphemistic function remains clear. Third, it shows an understanding of Indonesian discourse styles, which frequently use elaboration to enhance emphasis and clarity.

Data 3 in the overstatement category ("Such a lucky child, such a blessed child..." → "Anak yang sangat beruntung, sungguh anak yang diberkati...") demonstrates how amplification intensifies hyperbolic expressions. The addition of "sangat" (very) and "sungguh" (truly) strengthens the hyperbolic praise while preserving the initial text's potential for ironic interpretation. This technique corresponds with an observation by Melsovna & Qizi (2023) in their study, which examined the employment of euphemisms in novels and their translations into Uzbek. Their study showed that euphemisms act as an important instrument to augment the emotional and aesthetic quality of writings. This demonstrates the intricate connection among language, culture, and communication.

The strategic application of amplification in both cases highlights the significance of understanding target language features to attain comparable pragmatic outcomes, as noted by Brezolin & Da Silva Medeiros (2021) in their study of the role of wordplay euphemisms in the subtitling and dubbing of American television shows. The results showed that 89% of the puns in the dubbed version were effectively adapted to preserve their comedic impact, whereas only 35% succeeded in the subtitled version. Therefore, it can be concluded that, instead of just extending the text's length, the enhancements employed in these video games serve as specific euphemisms that elevate their initial communicative intent.

Cultural Adaptation in RPG Context

The translation techniques used in Honkai Star Rail demonstrate a deep understanding of the localization needs for role-playing games, as sustaining player immersion relies on consistent character voices and narrative tones. The primary reliance on literal translation suggests that the fantasy environment creates a neutral cultural landscape where direct translation proves more effective than significant cultural modification.

This finding corresponds with recent studies in game localization research, specifically the observation reported by Mangiron (2021) that suggest localization strategies have shifted toward more balanced methods, preserving original cultural aspects while fostering linguistic involvement. The fantasy RPG setting seems to facilitate this balance by offering universal narrative themes that surpass specific cultural boundaries, while preserving distinctive linguistic styles for each character.

The maintenance of euphemistic functions throughout all occurrences demonstrates the effective adaptation of what Bernal-Merino (2014) refers to as the multidimensional nature of video game texts. Every translation maintains meaning and practical effects, which contribute to both character consistency and narrative coherence. This preservation is especially noticeable in speech patterns unique to characters, where euphemistic choices contribute to the development of characters' personalities and their relationships with others.

The strategic employment of modulation and amplification in certain situations reveals contextual awareness in the choices made during translation process. Instead of implementing the same strategies for every case, translators evaluate each euphemistic expression on its own. This method corresponds with the creative and reflective translation technique highlighted by Nawrocka (2020) in her study of translation strategies used in RPG game narratives. Nawrocka states that the translation process should not only reflect the original intent but also connect with the target audience, making certain that the text appears natural and fits stylistically.

The effective preservation of euphemistic effects, along with cultural suitability for Indonesian viewers, illustrates the balance that Permpoon et al. (2024) highlight as crucial for ensuring content is relatable while preserving cultural essence. The translations indicate that significant cultural adjustments aren't always required for successful communication in gaming settings, particularly when the source and target cultures share similar euphemistic practices.

Implications for English-Indonesian Game Localization

The research findings carry multiple important implications for professional localization practices in the English-Indonesian gaming sector. First, the effectiveness of literal translations in fantasy RPG contexts suggests that localization teams may depend more on literal translation approaches while preserving effectiveness, potentially enhancing efficiency without compromising quality. This result differs from the results found in other areas of translation, as shown by the research carried out by Haider & Hussein (2022) on Arabic series subtitling. Their study indicated the need for significant translation to reduce the occurrence of vulgarities, sexual content expressions, family-related colloquialisms, animal-related phrases, and depictions of drunkenness typical of the Jordanian vernacular. This modification was made to improve the content's appeal to the target audience.

Secondly, the deliberate application of modulation and amplification in particular situations highlights the necessity of contextual awareness in translation choices. The strategic employment of these methods implies that successful game localization demands translators to possess a deep understanding of linguistic and cultural contexts (Yu, 2024), allows them to evaluate each euphemism separately instead of using a consistent approach.

Third, maintaining euphemistic functions in every translation implies that Indonesian gaming audiences can successfully understand euphemistic strategies that closely reflect English patterns. This finding has practical relevance for localization teams, indicating that significant cultural adjustment may not always be essential for efficient communication in gaming settings, especially when the source and target cultures have comparable indirect expression norms.

The research also highlights the importance of targeted translator training for gaming environments, where understanding of narrative purpose, character development, and player involvement is as vital as language skills. The successful preservation of the original character voice through the steady application of euphemistic translation techniques highlights the translator's duty to uphold narrative integrity while catering to international audiences, as noted by Raynaldi & Nirwana (2024).

Moreover, the findings indicate that quality assessment in game localization should encompass evaluation of euphemistic effectiveness along with traditional accuracy measures. The retention of pragmatic effects, as shown in this research, appears crucial for sustaining player immersion and narrative consistency.

Challenges and Solutions in Translation Practice

One of the primary challenges in translating euphemisms in Honkai Star is ensuring character consistency and linguistic style, since modern RPGs depend significantly on narrative and character development through nuanced expressions. Gacek (2019) highlights how an inconsistent tone can break immersion; nonetheless, the translators in this case skillfully combined literal translation with deliberate modulation and amplification. Time limitations and production demands also contribute to this occurrence, with Jooyaeian & Khoshsaligheh (2022) observed that efficiency frequently influences translation strategies in the gaming sector, rendering literal translation a pragmatic option.

Cultural competence poses another obstacle, necessitating profound sociocultural understanding, such as rendering “crime scene” as “TKP” (a common Indonesian legal term), demonstrating successful cultural alignment (Helmke, 2024; Taratuhina et al., 2021). Additionally, coordination of visual and auditory elements requires accurate translations to synchronize with the timing and animations (Abdelaal, 2019). Ultimately, the effectiveness of localization frequently relies on working with native speakers and interdisciplinary teams (Esqueda, 2020), ensuring cultural awareness and pragmatic accuracy, especially when addressing taboo or delicate expressions.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the translation methods used for converting understatement and overstatement euphemisms from English to Indonesian in HoYoverse’s Honkai Star Rail, revealing that literal translation dominated at 84.2% of the 19 euphemistic expressions analyzed, with strategic applications of modulation (5.3%) and amplification (10.5%) methods were applied for specific contextual needs. The results show that numerous euphemisms in English have direct functional counterparts in Indonesian in fantasy RPG settings, questioning the belief that significant cultural adjustments are required in game localization, and indicating that common euphemistic practices in both languages support successful direct translation methods. The dominance of understated euphemisms (16 occurrences) compared to overstatements (3 occurrences) reflects the narrative characteristics of diplomatic character interactions in the game. Moreover, the successful preservation of euphemistic functions in all translated cases suggests that Indonesian gaming audiences can accurately interpret euphemistic strategies that closely resemble English patterns. From a practical perspective, these results provide significant insights for English-Indonesian game localization experts, indicating that efficiency can be improved through the use of literal translation while preserving quality, with selective cultural adaptation being implemented only when contextually necessary. The study makes a significant contribution to the relatively under-explored area of euphemism translation in video game localization. It sets up a framework for analyzing language tools in interactive narratives, though upcoming studies should explore different game genres and assess player responses to confirm the wider applicability of these translation strategies in the context of digital entertainments.

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