

## Translation Strategies in the Localization of Instagram, X, and YouTube User Interfaces

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### Abstract

The difference between a common translation and user interface localization for a technology product has raised big questions regarding the implementation of its translation strategy. This research attempts to answer this inquiry by analyzing the tendency of translation strategies used in the localization process for social media Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Youtube from English to Indonesian. The method used in this translation is qualitative descriptive, focusing on the text elements in the user interfaces from all three social media. The data were collected through a direct exploration of all three social media user interfaces in both English and Indonesian versions. The data from this research are in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences presented in each user interface. From the data analysis, it is concluded that the most dominant translation procedure in the localization process of all three social media is naturalization. Meanwhile, the method and ideology applied are semantic translation and foreignization. This finding provides insight into the importance of translation strategies in localization for social media applications and how this process affects Indonesian users' experience. The results of this research also provide that every localization process does not have to be dominated by a domestic translation strategy as the name suggests. In fact, most technology product localization is translated with a foreignization approach to maintain consistency across platforms.

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## INTRODUCTION

Localization of social media applications is a complex process. It involves linguistic and cultural adaptation for the digital product to be well accepted by every user in various regions, including Indonesia. Localization is one of the key elements in the modern translation process, especially in the technological globalization era. Social media applications such as Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Youtube have a wide and multinational user base. Therefore, the technology companies that developed them have to ensure their contents are accessible and understandable for everyone with different cultural backgrounds.

This is where the important role of translation in localization comes into play. Localization does not only involve the act of translating the text word-for-word, but also includes adjusting every aspect, including features, communication styles, visual elements, local cultural contexts, language styles, and user preferences so that they will be relevant and acceptable to local audiences. Many people think that a translation process does not require much creativity because most translators only need to convey what is already contained in the source text (Halim, 2020). However, the translator's duty in localization is more crucial and challenging as he/she needs to convey the translation with more complex aspects, namely linguistic, cultural, and technical factors to make the localization results well received by the community of the target market (Satyaningrum & Alfarisy, 2024). The success of a translation project is tied to the ability and understanding of the translator to convey the message in another language (Halim, 2014). The purpose of translation (*skopos*) is another crucial aspect that needs to be considered in the translation process (Nasution & Ningsih, 2023). Research by Nababan (2012) emphasizes the importance of considering cultural nuances in translating social-relevant content, such as social media applications. Jiménez-Crespo (2024) also emphasized that differences in language construction and other linguistic aspects as well as audiovisual forms of localization materials are

challenges that are mostly faced in the localization process. In other words, localization requires not only competent translation skills but also technical knowledge of computers and software, as well as high creativity to bridge cultural and language differences.

One of the main problems in the localization process is the selection of translation strategies. There are two common approaches mostly used, namely domestication and foreignization. Domestication involves making the translated text feel more familiar to the local users by adjusting the terms and foreign concepts to make it more understandable. On the contrary, foreignization maintains the source text nuance; thus, the result still reflects a global aspect of the application. Both have their own strengths and weaknesses, but clearly, the selection for the translation strategy will greatly affect the way Indonesian users interact with the social media application.

The authors took several past relevant research to discuss localization, translation, and translation technology. The first research was taken from Sandrini (2005). Broadly speaking, this article discussed the website localization process including the discussions on the main concepts and the translation applications implemented in the website localization domain. Coming from the same author, the second reference was also taken from Sandrini (2008). This article published in an international journal thoroughly discussed the process, procedure, and tools used in the process of website and mobile localization. Further, the discussion for localization came from De la Cova (2016). This article discussed a series of challenges commonly faced by translators while localizing website applications, starting from the software technology, translation strategy applied in the user interface, internationalization aspects, and content, to problems with translation tools. Similarly, Mangiron (2017) in her article also discussed the localization process very broadly. This article gave comprehensive guidance about the localization process and its relevance in the modern digital industry, specifically in application game localization. Lastly, the

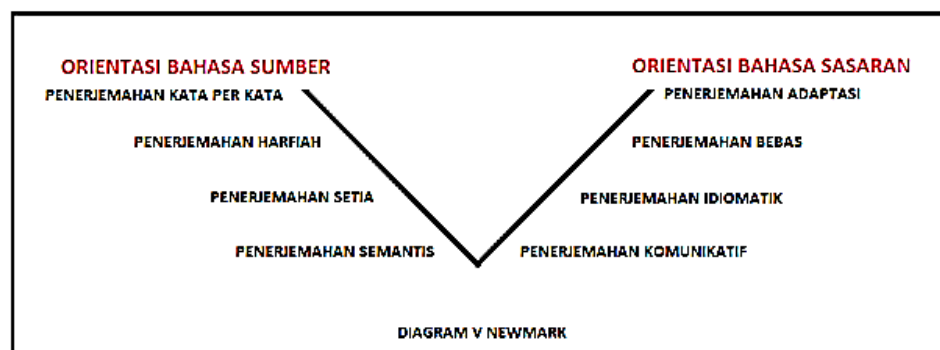
reference for this research came from Jiménez-Crespo (2019), in which the book outlined the role of collaboration in application translation and how it was done with user participation. In general, localization has become a common practice and a popular phenomenon to be studied globally. However, the practice of localization is rarely highlighted and rarely used as a research topic in Indonesia, even though the instances are often found in technology and social media. Therefore, the authors aimed to fill the gap in this literature by conducting research regarding localization practice in the context of English and Indonesian language pair, especially on social media interfaces by examining the aspects of translation strategies.

According to Munday (2016), localization refers to the adjustment process of a product or content to fit the user's language, culture, and preference in a specific region. The globalization of digital technology has brought multinational companies to a broader market, including social media applications such as Instagram, YouTube, and X. Localization for social media applications has become a common practice that ensures all messages from the application are understandable and acceptable by the user from various cultural backgrounds. The research conducted by Esselink (2000) showed that in localization, a translator has to consider technical aspects, such as user interface, warning message, and language used for daily conversation in online communication. According to Esselink (2003), localization involves product adjustment to fit the target cultural and language context. This includes text translation, user interface adjustment, and consideration for cultural elements, such as chosen symbols, colors, features, and pictures. These adjustments

includes the consideration for a certain usage of translation strategy in each language's element.

Loescher (1991) explained translation strategy as a procedure that is consciously done by a translator to overcome a problem when translating a text or a part of that text. In this case, translation strategy contains three parts, which are translation procedure, translation method, and translation ideology. According to Newmark (1988), the translation procedure connects to the whole text and is used for a sentence or a smaller unit of a language. Several experts proposed several different procedures, but in this research, the authors will use a selection of translation procedures that have been adapted for English and Indonesian language pairs summarized and developed in Dewi dan Wijaya (2021). The translation procedures used are also justified based on the needs of this research, which only contain shifts in the meaning level and not in the structural or form level. The translation procedures are: modulation (modulation of scope of meaning and modulation of point of view), contextual conditioning, cultural equivalent, substitution, descriptive term, functional term, couplets and triplets, metaphor translation, idiom translation, explicitation, implicitation, addition, deletion, calque, naturalization, and borrowing.

Besides procedures, other element in translation strategy is translation method. Newmark (1988) explained that a translation method is the way in which a text is translated. In his book, Newmark (1988) produced eight types of translation methods generally used by translators until now. The methods are word-for-word, literal, faithful, semantic, communicative, idiomatic, free, and adaptation. The eight methods are shown in this V diagram below:



Gambar 1. Diagram V Newmark

The last element in translation strategy is translation ideology. In short, translation ideology can be analogized to the direction or the orientation, in which the translator is given the choice to adopt a view that focuses on the SL reader or TL reader for translating a text. In his book, Venuti (1995) developed two types of translation ideology previously proposed by Schleiermacher (1992). The translation ideologies are domestication and foreignization. According to Venuti (1995), domestication is a translation ideology that brings the text message closer to the targeted language and culture so the TT reader does not feel like reading a translation and feels like reading the text in their own language. Meanwhile, foreignization is the opposite of domestication, where translation is done with the principle of retaining the message of the source language so that the result feels 'foreign' and the reader understands that the text carries the culture and terms of the source language.

The difference in language structure, cultural context, and communication habits between two languages often entails the need for a more specific and sensitive translation strategy. Therefore, this research aims to explore how translation strategies are used in the localization process from English to Indonesian for Instagram, X, and Youtube applications. Specifically, the analysis of the translation strategy will identify its ideology, method, and procedure shown in all three social media user interface views. From this background, the following research questions were obtained:

1. Which translation procedures, methods, and ideologies are used and the most dominant in localizing the user interface for Instagram, X, and Youtube from English to Indonesian?

What is the tendency in localizing the user interface of Instagram, X, and Youtube from English to Indonesian in terms of the translation strategy?

## METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the translation strategy used in localization for the user interfaces of the three social media applications. This research was divided into three steps, including identification, analysis, and data interpretation. Identification of the data included collecting primary data from text elements used in Instagram, X, and Youtube applications. The second step was to analyze the translation which was conducted to identify the translation procedure, method, and ideology used in localizing the user interfaces of the three social media using the theory from Dewi dan Wijaya (2021), Newmark (1988), and Venuti (1995). The last step was to interpret the data, where the collected and analyzed data will be interpreted to narrow down the results and draw conclusions of this research.

The data collection method used in this research was documentation, where the primary data in the forms of text elements from Instagram, YouTube, and X were taken from direct documentation from the application in the English and Indonesian versions. Those elements were then analyzed in terms of the content and

translation strategy. The data collection process included direct exploration by using the web and non-premium versions of Instagram, X, and Youtube. The data used in this research were collected from user interface (UI) translation, including notifications, warning messages, labels for buttons, feature descriptions, instruction dialogues, automatic contents, and other text elements in all three social media. The data in this research are in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The data collection process in this research was conducted by opening every feature, button, and hypertext inside all three social media to pop the text elements as many as possible in the application. There was no specific criteria validation and data verification process in this stage because the authors took all the language expressions that appeared on the user interface of the Instagram, X, and Youtube applications.

After the data were collected, an analysis was conducted with a qualitative descriptive approach. The authors copied and compiled all the data into a table with three columns to make the analysis easier. The first column is the source text from English version of the applications; the second column is the translated text in the Indonesian version; and the third column is the implemented translation procedure. The identification and analysis of user interface localization data on each type of social media was no longer done on identical words, phrases, clauses, or sentences that have been identified previously. Therefore, there was no double data with the same translation formation. This was done so that the calculation of the percentage of the use of translation procedures in the localization of each social media is accurate and not based on how much a word, phrase, clause, or sentence is used or repeated in a social media user interface.

From the data analysis table, the authors could see what types of translation procedures were used to localize all three social media. In addition, the authors could calculate the percentage of the most dominant translation procedure in the process of localization for each social media. Next, from the collected

percentage, the authors concluded what translation method and ideology were applied in localizing those social media. The conclusion is based on the theory of domestication and foreignization translation (Venuti, 1995) to determine whether the translation leaned more toward domestication ideology (adapted to local cultural context) or foreignization (maintained the source language's original cultural element). This can be seen, for example, from the translator's decision to apply the borrowing procedures or paraphrase certain terminology contained in the social media application (Taufik, 2018). The research result was presented in descriptive forms that come with samples of the translation from the three analyzed application. Every identified translation strategy was explained in details along with its practical implication for user experience. The depth of the understanding of the applied translation strategy will be used to measure the success of this research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 346 data were identified. This total was an accumulation of data taken from the three social media applications, i.e., Instagram, X, and Youtube. The data were words, phrases, clauses, and sentences taken from the user interface of all three social media. The results from the data analysis revealed several findings.

There are seven types of translation procedures used in the user interface localization for Instagram, X, and Youtube. The seven procedures are the borrowing, naturalization, modulation, addition, deletion, couplet, and semantic translation of metaphor. From all the seven procedures, it was found that naturalization dominated the localization for all three social media. The authors also found that the user interface in Youtube uses the most translation procedures. The localized version of Youtube user interface has a total of 136 words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which have been translated using specific translation procedures. This number is followed by X with 128 data and finally, Instagram with 82 data.

In the identification process, the authors divided the data into three groups. The first is for data that used the borrowing procedure, the second is data that used the naturalization procedure, and the third is data that used other procedures other than borrowing and naturalization. This grouping and division were done by the authors to facilitate the data identification according to the types of procedure. Data that used the borrowing and naturalization procedure were identified separately because the

data are dominant, which means they need meticulous identification, therefore were identified specifically.

### **The Borrowing Procedure in Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization**

The borrowing procedure occurred for 9 times on Instagram, 17 times on X, and 45 times on Youtube. Table 1 showcases 5 randomly-picked data samples from each social media.

**Table 1.** Data Using the Borrowing Procedure on Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization

No.	Social Media	ST (Source Text)	TT (Target Text)
1	Instagram	Bio	Bio
		Live	Live
		Online	Online
		Login	Login
		Family Center	Family Center
2	X	Engagement	Engagement
		Game	Game
		Boost	Boost
		\$2,500 USD	\$2,500 USD
		Powered by AI	Powered by AI
3	Youtube	Subtitle/CC	Subtitle/CC
		Channel	Channel
		Playlist	Playlist
		Subscriptions	Subscriptions
		Thumbnail	Thumbnail

From these findings, it was found that the data that used the borrowing procedure in the user interface localization from the three social media are English words or phrases that are already familiar to Indonesian people, especially for social media users. Indonesian people who follow the development of technology and communication tools are not foreign to the terms such as online, live, log in, etc. that appear in the Instagram application. Although some of these terms already have equivalent meanings in Indonesian such as 'daring' and 'siaran langsung', in fact, the English versions are much better known and familiar to Instagram users in Indonesia. Another example is the translation for the word engagement in social media X.

Engagement is a word that is considered familiar and accepted to social media user in Indonesia. A social media user mostly understands that engagement in social media refers to how often someone interact with an account or campaign. This situation could lead to unacceptable translation if the word engagement is translated into 'ketertarikan' or 'keterlibatan'. This situation also applied to the term subtitle and thumbnail for Youtube application. Both terms will become foreign and hard to understand for user from Indonesian if it is translated into 'takarir' and 'keluku' or 'sampul muka'. The decision for using the borrowing procedure must be for a reason, considering that the localization process for a massive social media application must have gone

through a process of careful consideration. Therefore, the decision to use the borrowing procedure for maintaining these terms are considered appropriate to create a natural, efficient, and familiar localization result for social media user in Indonesia.

### **The Naturalization Procedure in Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization**

The naturalization procedure occurred for 56 times on Instagram, 84 times on X, and 65 times on Youtube. Table 2 showcases 5 randomly-picked data samples from each social media.

**Table 2.** Data Using the Naturalization Procedure on Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization

No.	Social Media	ST	TT
1	Instagram	Notifications	Notifikasi
		Accessibility	Aksesibilitas
		Private account	Akun privat
		Sensitive content	Konten sensitive
		Features	Fitur
2	X	Trends	Tren
		Active session	Sesi aktif
		Post analytics	Analitik postingan
		Monetization	Monetisasi
		Two-factor authentication	Autentikasi dua faktor
3	Youtube	History	Histori
		Visibility Public	Visibilitas Publik
		Verification	Verifikasi
		Profile photo	Foto profil
		Stable volume	Volume stabil

Findings in Table 2 shows the data that implemented the naturalization procedure were only words or phrases. These words and phrases are also language derived from terms in technological field taken and adapted to Indonesian; therefore, the absorbed words are commonly used. Herniti (2006) stated that Indonesian is indeed a language that absorbs many terms from other languages. The absorption process of terms is usually done by adjusting the terms to the Indonesian spelling through adjustment of phonemes and affixes. If the term is still unfamiliar, the translator would usually choose to keep using the foreign language or by implementing the borrowing procedure. However, if the term already has an equivalent meaning or adaptation, it would usually be translated using the naturalization procedure as the data presented in Table 2. The amount of naturalization for words and phrases from

English makes it easier for Indonesian users to get closer to the technology.

### **Other Procedures in Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization**

In localization for Instagram's user interface, 10 data were found to use modulation of scope of meaning, 4 data used modulation of point of view, 2 data used addition procedure, and 1 data used couplet procedure (a combination for modulation of point of view and addition procedure). Next, in the localization for X's user interface, 15 data were found to use modulation of scope of meaning, 4 data used modulation of point of view, 5 data used addition procedure, 1 data used the deletion procedure, 1 data used semantic translation of metaphor, and 1 data used the couplet procedure (a combination for modulation of point of view and addition procedure). Last, in localization for Youtube's

user interface, 10 data were found to use modulation of scope of meaning, 8 data that used modulation of point of view, 5 data used addition procedure, and 3 data used the deletion procedure. Table 3 showcases 5 randomly-picked data samples from each social media.

**Table 3.** Data Using Other Procedures on Instagram, X, and Youtube User Interface Localization

No.	Social Media	ST	TT	Procedure
1	Instagram	Send a message to start a chat.	Kirim foto dan pesan pribadi ke teman atau grup.	Modulation of scope of meaning & addition (couplet)
		Visit the Instagram app	Buka aplikasi Instagram	Modulation of scope of meaning
		When anyone else sends you a message, you can receive it as a message request.	Selain orang-orang itu, pesan akan masuk dalam permintaan pesan.	Modulation of point of view
		... topics some people may not want to see.	... topik yang mungkin tidak ingin dilihat oleh beberapa orang.	Modulation of point of view
		Content lowered in feed	Konten ditampilkan di bagian lebih bawah di beranda.	Addition
2	X	Introducing Grok 2	Sambutlah Grok 2	Modulation different scope
		Learn more	Pelajari lebih lanjut untuk masuk ke X.	Addition
		Manage which languages are used to personalize your X experience.	Kelola bahasa yang digunakan untuk mempersonalisasi pengalaman Anda di X.	Deletion
		Choose from your existing conversations, start a new one, or just keep swimming.	Pilih dari percakapan yang sudah ada, buat baru, atau cari yang sesuai.	Semantic translation of metaphor
		It won't affect your current active session.	Sesi aktif saat ini tidak akan terpengaruh.	Modulation of point of view
3	Youtube	Search with your voice	Telusuri dengan suara	Deletion
		Show more	Lihat semua	Modulation of scope of meaning
		Anyone can search for and view	Dapat ditemukan dan dilihat siapa pun	Modulation of point of view
		Your list shows up right here.	Daftar klip yang Anda buat akan muncul di sini.	Addition
		Sort by	Urutkan	Deletion

This data from other procedures category showed a significant difference. The data using the borrowing and naturalization procedures were in the form of words and phrases, while the



analysed data in this category were clauses and sentences. This shows that in translating short terms, a translator tends to keep the foreign nuance by applying the borrowing and naturalization procedure. Meanwhile, longer terms are usually translated by adding or shifting the semantic meaning and point-of-view by a small fraction in translating the source text. Clearly, this was done by the translator to make the translation more natural, acceptable, and easily understood by Indonesian users.

For this particular category, it was found that modulation procedure is a procedure that dominate, especially modulation of scope of meaning. This can be seen from the data in Table 3, in which some verbs underwent shifts of meaning in Indonesian to make the translation more natural and acceptable. Larson (1984) stated that the modulation is one of the procedures that a translator can use to make the

translation result more accurate, clear, and natural when translating to the target language. In addition, many modulation procedures arise due to differences in language context between Indonesian and English. English is a language that has more forward context, so it uses active voice sentences more with short and concise sentences. This was very different from the Indonesian language which has a high cultural context and, therefore uses a more passive voice with a more complex sentence composition. Passive voice in Indonesian is often used because it is considered more polite and formal.

From the accumulation of the analyzed data, there are seven types of translation procedures used in the localization for Instagram, X, and Youtube user interface from English to Indonesian. Table 4 compiles the localization procedures and the frequency.

**Table 4.** Summary of Localization Procedures and the Frequency

No.	Procedures	Instagram	X	Youtube	Total
	Borrowing	9	17	45	71
	Modulation	14	19	18	51
	Addition	2	5	5	12
	Deletion	-	1	3	4
	Naturalization	56	84	65	205
	Couplet (Modulation and Addition)	1	1	-	2
	Semantic Translation of Metaphor	-	1	-	1
	Total	82	128	136	346

Overall, it can be seen that naturalization is the most used procedure in localizing Instagram, X, and Youtube application. Between these three applications, X used the naturalization procedure the most. This finding is aligned with a result of research done by Noverdi (2018) on the translation strategy for BBC.com website. Noverdi (2018) found that the naturalization procedure was most frequently used. On top of that, it was also found that implementing the naturalization procedure gives a more accurate, acceptable, and easier readability level. The reason why localization for

Instagram, X, and Youtube application tends to use the naturalization procedure is unknown because this discussion is beyond the scope of the present research. However, one of the possibilities is because the applications want to keep the modern nuance in the user interface but do not want the users to feel uncomfortable in understanding the language construction. Lack of space in social media user interface can also become a factor affecting the translator decision for choosing this procedure. Therefore, to achieve all of these aims, the naturalization procedure is

considered an appropriate choice for localizing the Instagram, X, and Youtube user interface.

Next, borrowing is the second most used procedure. From all three applications, Youtube used the borrowing procedure the most in localizing its user interface compared to the other two social media. Other than naturalization and borrowing procedure, all three social media also applied other procedures, such as modulation, addition, deletion, etc., even though these procedures were not used as often as naturalization and borrowing procedure.

These findings show that around 80% of the data in localizing three user interface used procedures that keep the foreign nuance in the translation, i.e., the naturalization and borrowing procedures. The last 20% of the data applied procedures that are TL-oriented. Thus, it can be concluded that the translation method used in the process of localizing user interface for Instagram, X, and Youtube is the semantic method. This is due to the tendency of the translation procedures applied to most translations. Although 80% of the translated terms still maintain their foreign nuance, the overall translation could still convey the semantic meaning.

Meanwhile, the tendency of using procedures that maintain the foreign nuance in localization means that the translation used foreignization ideology. As stated in the background section, the use of different procedures may represent different ideologies. In the end, different ideology can also give a different localization nuance for the users of the applications. According to Venuti (1995), domestication gives a nuance that the result of localization is originally created in target language and culture so the result does not feel like a localization. On the other hand, foreignization gives a nuance that the result of localization still maintains the source language and culture. In the case of Instagram, X, and Youtube applications, it was found that the localization is more oriented to foreignization. Even though the three applications has gone through the process of localization, they still maintain the source language and culture in their user interface. The reason for this is unknown

since this is beyond this research scope, but one of the possible reasons is because these applications wants to keep the consistency between the original user interface and localized user interface in different languages.

When connecting these findings to multiple references regarding localization, some factors can be produced and the reason for these findings could hypothesized. First, localization is different with the common translation that has no restriction for words or characters in text translation. In localization, the translator has to take into account the given character space limit so the letter size displayed on the application can be adjusted. Second, the globalization causes people to become more familiar with the usage of certain English words, causing the users in the target language to understand the borrowed terms rather than the translated word in Indonesian. Therefore, these factors can influence the translator's decision in the localization process.

This research focuses on the technology-based translation studies. This research does not only focus on the translation final result, but also attempts to study the process of adapting cultures via the assistance of technology. Therefore, this research offers a new perspective in integrating translation technology with local and cultural sensitivity. This research is oriented towards a proof-of-concept that different translation strategies can influence the perception and experience of social media application users in Indonesia. From the collected data in this research, we can predict the factors that could influence the decision to use a certain translation ideology, method, and procedure. In the end, this research results can justify that the so-called localization does not always implement domestication ideology to localize a certain technology, as the term 'localization' suggests.

This research is expected to provide a deeper knowledge on how domestication and foreignization are implemented in the localization of social media application. Moreover, the authors hoped that these research results can be used as a reference for the technology companies that aim to do the localization process. It is hoped that these

research results can give guidance and information regarding the best practice in localization process to increase their product appeal in the international market.

## CONCLUSION

Research that explores the translation strategy in localization is interesting to pursue. This research focuses on the identification of translation strategy (procedure, method, and translation ideology) in localization for Instagram, X, and Youtube applications. The result shows that borrowing and naturalization are the most dominant procedures used in the localization of these applications (amounting to 80% of the data). Since both of these procedures emphasized on the source language and culture, it can be concluded that all three social media used semantic method and oriented towards the ideology of foreignization. The reason behind the decision on the translation strategy is unknown as it is not within the scope of this study. Therefore, for future research, the authors recommend interviewing the key figures involved in the localization process of these applications to discover their perceptions and reasons behind such choices of localization.

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