When Brazil Enters in the Koprulu Sector: the *Starcraft II* Localized into Brazilian Portuguese

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Figure 1: Starcraft II - Wings of Liberty

Abstract

The original title of *Starcraft* franchise was developed by Blizzard Entertainment and released in 1998. It became one of the most popular real-time strategy *games* over the years. After a twelve-year hiatus, *Starcraft II* was released worldwide in July 2010 and, welcoming surprise, it was localized into various languages, including Brazilian Portuguese. The present paper reports the results of a case study carried out with the second game of the *Starcraft* franchise in order to highlight the complexities of the game localization process.

Keywords: Starcraft 2, Blizzard, game localization, linguistic localization, translation methods.

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1. Introduction

Brazil is the 6th largest economy in the world and one of the largest game markets [ACIGAMES 2012]. Subsequently, during the last years our gaming industry has witnessed a significant rise in localization. Companies such as Sony, Naughty Dog, Ubisoft and Blizzard have increasingly released their games in Brazilian-Portuguese (henceforth BR-PT).

However, despite the localization activities undertaken in the gaming industry, very few researchers in the Brazilian academia have carried out studies about game localization until now. And that is the context that awakened our curiosity in respect to this area of study.

This paper is part of an ongoing postdoctoral research that is being pursued at the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Estudos da Tradução (PGET)[1] at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), in Florianópolis, Brazil. The main aim of this paper is to highlight the complexities of the game localization process. In order to achieve that aim, we are going to report the results of a case study carried out with the real-strategy-game *Starcraft* II, developed by Blizzard Entertainment, and fully localized into BR-PT.

2. Localization

Since United States and Japan played an important role in the game history, most of the games used to be developed in English or in Japanese. However, as the game industry became a worldwide billionaire phenomenon and the current gamers come from different geographic backgrounds, a new field of specialization called "game localization" has emerged.

"Localization" originated from the French noun "local", meaning locale, in the 18th century. In the specialized field of software translation, the term localization was adopted to indicate:

> the process of taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold" [Esselink 2000:3].

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[1] Official website: <http://www.pget.ufsc.br>

Regarding specifically on games, defined as an interactive entertainment software (Merino 2006), the term localization refers to a long list of smaller tasks [Heimburg 2003]. Some definitions of game localization are offered by Edwards et al. [2009]:

> - The organization, creation, and delivery of international versions of the game.
> - A coordinated international effort aimed at producing creative contents for a great local users' experience.
> - Translating all linguistic assets of a game in order to enable its full playability and fun value for foreign locales.
> - Game content that accounts for the diverse cultures of local end users to enhance game play, not detract from it.

The above definitions entail that the game localization is a multi-faceted process that aims at adapting a game both linguistic and culturally into a particular locale or region. According to Chandler and Deming [2011:4],

> international users should feel that the product was made specifically for them, and that they are getting the same gaming experience as the source language users.

To achieve this goal, the game localization deals with all the semiotic elements that games may convey: texts, images, sounds, symbols, icons, colors, currencies, data formats, and so on. To undertake this enterprise, a combined effort of several professionals is needed, such as producers, engineers, artists, translators, editors and testers. Consequently, the game localization field is divided into inter-related subsets: audio localization, linguistic localization (or translation), cultural localization (or culturalization), art asset localization, linguistic testing, quality assessment, etc. [Vidal and Elias 2012].

Concerning the modes of game localization, there are two main modes: sim-ship (simultaneous shipment) or post-gold. In the first mode, the localization process is produced simultaneously along with the game development. In the second, it is produced after the game is completed or even years later after its release as a way to revive an old game [Edwards, 2011]. Each mode can be done in-house or outsourced. The first case describes the situation in which both the localization and the development teams work within the same company and can interact directly with each other. The second case describes the situation in which all the localization assets (multimedia components) are prepared and sent to specialized agencies or freelance translators, who usually work isolated.

Most of the time, it is the budget of each particular game that will define which mode to choose. However, it is important to note that each game requires a different approach to localization that is related with aspects of the game itself and/or aspects of the target

culture. Figure 2 below hypothetically shows how developers have to change parts of the content of the games – such as the depiction of blood – to make them acceptable in different countries. Some games go through a full localization process, when all the assets – text, audio, cinematic and art – and additional materials, such as manuals, packaging and TV commercials, are adapted to the target culture(s). Other games just receive a partial localization – for instance, only subtitles in the target languages.
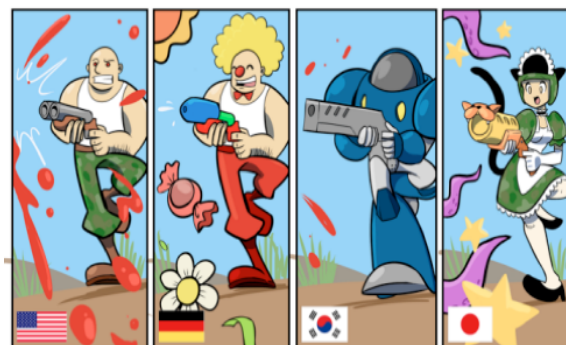

Figure 2: Localizing games into different languages.
(Image source: **www.nerfnow.com**)

According to Edwards [2011], roughly 50% of the global revenue of the game industry comes from games that were localized**.** As for individual companies, that percentage varies between 25 to 70% of their annual revenue. For this reason, the developers have increasingly included localization into the game development cycle. But, most importantly, they are realizing that the localization work needs to be executed appropriately – target-oriented and without geopolitical or cultural gaffes [Edwards, 2008], for instance. Otherwise not only the game sales will drop but the company image will be affected as well.

2.1 Linguistic Localization

Figure 3 – Starcraft II - a linguistic localization sample

Despite some terminological issues [Merino, 2006], translation proper within the localization process is commonly known as linguistic localization or just game translation.

As said above, the translation work can be done in-house or outsourced. While the first type is more expensive to the game developer, it facilitates the translation task. The access to all the game context (game design document, art work, plot, scripts, game itself etc.) and interactions with the development team can result in high-quality translations. If the translator (also called localizer) is working in a sim-ship mode, s/he can even help to promote eventual changes in the original plot [Slattery, 2011].

The outsourced translation is usually cheaper than the in-house translation. However, it has a drawback: due to information security and data protection, most of the agencies or freelance translators must work with little or no context of the game. Certainly, there are exceptions where the translator receives additional material to work on – such as the game design document, annotations and suggestions, images, audio recordings, etc. But the ideal situation would be to familiarize the translators with the game itself before the translation process starts. Some rare (lucky) freelance translators have access to the game but most of them receive Excel files without any context [Figure 4].

Figure 4 - Excel file of a linguistic localization project

2.2 Translation or Transcreation

Mangiron and O'Hagan [2006] prefer the term "transcreation" rather than just translation to describe what takes place during the localization process. Campos [1987:17] defines the translation operation as "'creative transposition': that means, in my own terms, as re-creation, trans-creation".[2] According to Mangiron and O'Hagan [2006:20], who firstly brought the term[3] to the game localization field, the translators:

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[2] Our translation of: "transposição criativa": ou seja, nos meus termos, como "re-criação", como "trans-criação".
[3] It is important to note that Haroldo de Campos used the term 'transcreation' in a broader sense than Mangiron & O'Hagan did. Campos mainly used 'transcreation' regarding

are granted quasi absolute freedom to modify, omit, and even add any elements which they deem necessary to bring the game closer to the players and to convey the original feel of gameplay.

However, this freedom exists within certain boundaries: the challenges demanded by the different types of texts found in games. We can cite: (i) the space constraints of the in-game texts and (ii) issues related to the audio portion of the games. Some examples:

- Some elements of the game interface, such as menu and warning help, may have a predetermined amount of lines allowed or a fixed length of (text) strings;

- The subtitles must compact all the information within a certain number of characters;

- The script for dubbing must accommodate time constraints and/or the lip synchronization.

These factors will require a dose of creativity by the translators and will inevitably influence the choice of the translation method(s) to be employed.

2.2.1 Translation method

Translation method is the overall approach employed by translators when translating a text. There are several classifications, but due to space constraints we are going to concentrate on Peter Newmark's work. Newmark [1988] lists four translation methods which focus on the source language (SL): word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation and semantic translation; and four translation methods which focus on the target language (TL): adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation. Further descriptions of each method can be found in Table 1:

Translation Methods	
Word-for-word translation	The SL word-order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings.
Literal translation	The SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly.
Faithful translation	It attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the TL grammatical structures.

poetry translation: for him 'transcreation' meant the reconfiguration of all the elements of a text – not only the linguistic and socio-cultural context but also all the audiovisual aspects of the words.

Semantic translation	It differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (that is, the beautiful and natural sound) of the SL text, compromising on 'meaning' where appropriate.
Adaptation	It is the 'freest' form of translation. It is used mainly for plays and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten.
Free translation	It reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original.
Idiomatic translation	It reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.
Communicative translation	It attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership.

Table 1 Translation Methods [Newmark 1998]

Due to the unique nature of games not all the methods above can be applied in their translations. Concerning the recreation of the humor effect of the game text, an ingredient that is present in the Starcraft franchise, Mangiron and O'Hagan [2006] say:

> Games are full of jokes whose function is to amuse and entertain the player. Many of these jokes are based in language deviance, mainly puns, which often cannot be translated literally. They have to be adapted to the target language and culture.

All that has been said so far implies that the game translation, or even the overall localization, "might interfere with a game's player understanding or enjoyment of a game" [Consalvo 2009]. It is then pivotal that the games' localized versions provide a gaming experience with target-oriented effects. Bearing that in mind, next we are going to focus on the localization process of Starcraft II into BR-PT. Our central point will rely on the linguistic localization of some textual fragments that will be explored in the next sections.

But firstly, let us briefly list some related work.

3. Related Work

Regarding the related work, we cite those discussed or published in the following events or journals:

- The IGDA (International Game Developers' Association) launched in 2007 a game localization SIG (special interest group)[4].

- The Gamers Developers' conference (GDC) held annually in San Francisco, California, USA, included a localization summit[5] in its sessions in 2009.

- There are some events dedicated to the theme. Some of them: i) International Conference on Translation and Accessibility in Video Games and Virtual Worlds[6]; ii) Localization World[7]; and iii) Localization Summer School[8].

- Journals such as Trans[9], Tradumatica[10], and Jostrans[11] have included some articles or even game localization dossiers in their issues.

The events above include presentations, papers, panels, guides, game postmortems, and other materials dealing with different aspects of the multi-layered process of game localization.

4 Blizzard Entertainment

As stated earlier, this paper is part of an ongoing postdoctoral research that focuses on the games of Blizzard Entertainment[12], an American game developer and publisher based in California, United States. The main reason for our choice of Blizzard's games as our case study was due to the fact that many game online communities and websites consider the Blizzard localization approach very satisfactory [See McCurley 2011; Barnes 2012]. Some comments at BattleNet forums[13] (the official website of the Blizzard's games), that will be presented later, show that some players considered the translation of *Starcraft II* into BR-PT corky and lively.

4.1 Starcraft Franchise

The main storyline of the Starcraft franchise can be summarized as follow:

> Set in the 26th century, Starcraft's plotline revolves around a war between three species, Terrans, Protoss, and Zerg, fighting for dominance in Koprulu, a distant sector of the (Milky Way) galaxy. Terrans are a future version of the humanity; they were initially descendants of human prisoners from Earth. Protoss, a race of religious warriors with psionic powers[14] who speak both

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4 http://wiki.igda.org/Localization_SIG

5 http://www.gdconf.com/conference/gls.html
6 http://jornades.uab.cat/videogamesaccess/content/map
7 http://www.localizationworld.com
8 http://www.localisation.ie/resources/courses/summerschools/2011/
9 http://www.trans.uma.es/trans_15.html
10 http://revistes.uab.cat/tradumatica
11 http://www.jostrans.org/
12 Official website: <www.blizzard.com>.
13 <www.battle.com>
14 Psionic powers (a.k.a. psychic powers) are the ability of using the mind to induce paranormal phenomena. It is present to various degrees in several species. Source: <www.starcraft.wikia.com>.

English and Khalani. Zergs are insectoid species commanded by a hive mind person.

Figure 5 - Starcraft (original title)

Starcraft is both an e-sport and a science fiction RTS game. The original title, Starcraft (henceforth SC), released by Blizzard in 1998, was the best selling game that year [IGN 1999] and the company estimated that more than 11 million copies had been sold worldwide since its release [Graft 2009]. It was received positively by critics and won several awards, including one of the best games of all time [Colayco 2006; IGN 2005]. SC became one of the most important and known RTS game. In South Korea, for instance, it became extremely popular and professional players compete for cash prizes in nationwide, televised competitions [Evers 2006; Rossignol 2006; Cheung and Huang, 2011; Taylor 2012].

Figure 6 – Starcraft II

After a twelve-year hiatus, the first of the three sequels[15] of Starcraft II (henceforth SC II), named Wings of Liberty, was released in 2010. It was a very acclaimed sequel: with an uncomplicated plot, the cinematic and the action-movie dialogue were regarded as excellent, the soundtrack was defined as very evocative, and the (English) voice acting was said to be

top-notch. It received a score of 93 (out of 100) at Metacritic website[16].

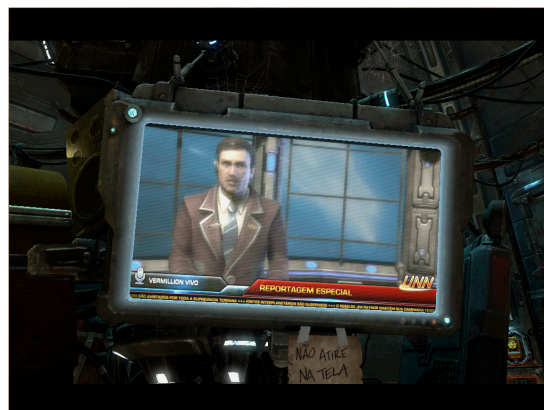## 4.2 Localized versions of the SC franchise

Figure 7 – A scene of SC II localized into BR-PT.[17]

Despite the localization of the SC franchise, the original title only received a non-official translation (a fan translation) into BR-PT. On the other hand, when *Wings of Liberty*, the first sequel of SC II, was released worldwide on July 27, 2010 it had been fully localized into eleven languages [Barnes 2012].

Steve Huot [in: Giglio 2010], the director of operations at Blizzard, explained that the decision to translate SC II aimed at reaching a greater audience, making it accessible to a Brazilian public. Otherwise, Blizzard would only have been able to sell it to devoted fans who would play it in any language, just by the pleasure of doing it.

The Brazilian-Portuguese version was fully localized: it gained voice support, voice-over syncing (with FaceFX software), and had all in-game text – from a simple note to beer bottles to all the game achievements – translated by an in-house localization team of native speakers who were based at the company's office, in Irvine, California, USA.

5. Case Study

As stated in the introduction section, the main objective of this paper is to highlight the complexities of the game localization process. In order to achieve that aim, a case study was carried out with *Starcraft* II.

The case study had three inter-connected phases. Firstly, we investigated the (business) strategies employed by Blizzard to captivate the Brazilian gamers. Then, we analyzed the translation method(s)

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[15] Starcraft II is a trilogy, each concentrating on one of the three species: a) *Wings of Liberty* focuses on *terran* campaign and episode (released in 2010); b) *Heart of the Swarm* focuses on *zerg* campaign and episode (to be released later 2012); c) *Legacy of the Void* focuses on *protoss* campaign and episode (no release date so far).

[16] Data collected on March 17, 2012 at:
 <www.metacritic.com/game/pc/starcraft-ii-wings-of-liberty>.
[17] In this screenshot, the following can be read: "reportagem especial" (Special news) and "Não atire na tela" (Don't shoot at the screen).

adopted by the Brazilian translators. Finally, we (briefly) examined the gamers' reception to the Brazilian Portuguese localization of SC II.

In the first phase, we perused different sections of Blizzard official website, read interviews with Blizzard teams and related information in other websites. In the second phase, we created our corpus of study. Since SC II contains hundreds of thousands of words, we selected a specific part of the game for our analysis purpose: the quotations uttered by some of the units of SC II (more details will be presented below). In the third phase, we collected some data regarding the reception of the Brazilian Portuguese localization of SC II at Blizzard Forums.

5.1 Corpus of study

The gamers can play SC II in a single-player campaign or in multi-player modes. In each mode they can get to know several types of *units* – "a subdivision of a larger military formation".[18] Each unit has a different physical appearance and unique abilities; the combination of various types of units allows the use of different strategies in the game. Similar to what happens in other Blizzard's games, when the players click on the units, they might be rewarded with some witty responses – that are mostly used for humor effects. This clicking activity is also known as click-fest and it is very popular between SC (franchise) players. Due to that we have chosen the quotations uttered by some of the units as our corpus of study.

We will next present how we have created our parallel corpus of study – with English and Brazilian Portuguese versions of the sentences, organized side-by-side. We followed these steps:

- Since *Wings of Liberty* focuses on Terrans' campaign and episode, we only concentrated on that race. Figure 8 shows the three units icons, with *Terrano* (Terran) being selected.

Figure 8 - The three races of SC II

- We focused on the units of the multi-player mode because it is more popular than the single-player. Figure 9 presents all the thirteen Terrans' units of the multi-player mode: VCE,

Soldado, Demolidor, Exterminador, Fantasma, Endiabrado, Tanque de cerco, Thor, Viking, Ambunave, Corvo, Vudu, and Cruzador de batalha[19]. Figure 5 zooms in one of them: Demolidor.

Figure 9 – The Terrans' units

Figure 10 - Terran unit: Demolidor (Marauder in English)

- By clicking on the terrans' units, by watching several *YouTube* videos[20] and also taking into account the long experience of Isaque Matos Elias, the co-author of this paper, as a SC II gamer (and consequently, a fan of the click-fest), we have listened to several units' quotations, both in English and Brazilian Portuguese;

- We compiled and transcribed all the units' quotations of the Terrans.

- Based on Blizzard's terminology, as described by Robert [2010], we have organized the quotations in eight categories: ready, selected, move, attack, annoyed, help, death, or miscellaneous. Further descriptions of each category can be found in Table 2:

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
READY	These quotations are said after the units are created.
SELECTED	They are said when the players click on the units.
MOVE	Used when the players right-click on the units and place on the map of the game.
ATTACK	When the players right-click on an enemy unit or building; or attack any specific object.
ANNOYED	If the players click on a unit several times, without making them perform a task, these quotations will start to be uttered.
HELP	If a unit is being killed from enemy fire, the players may hear a cry for help; as well as a ping in their mini-map.
DEATH	These quotations are said when the units die.
MISCELLANEOUS	They can be said for anything that doesn't fit into the above categories.

Table 2 - The eight quotation categories

- Finally, we used the translation methods of Newmark [1998], that were described in the "Translation or Transcreation" section, to analyze our corpus of study.

It is important to emphasize that we are not going to analyze the dubbing itself, but only its script (or the linguistic translation) that was transcribed by the authors of this paper. The analysis of voice acting and related features are beyond the scope of this paper.

6. Results

The results will be presented in the next sub-sections.

6.1 Blizzard's strategies

Blizzard was one of the pioneering game publishing companies to conduct a very "aggressive" advertising campaign plus special events in Brazil, which included TV ads[21], a midnight launch of their games, interviews, talks, prizes for attendees, etc.

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[21] The following TV ad illustrates this point: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DloMwoZyXUI

In order to captivate Brazilian gamers, Blizzard employed some strategies:

- Despite some abusive taxes on entertainment in Brazil, Blizzard followed local prices and offered subscriptions rates in Brazilian currency, "Real". For instance: the subscriptions rates of the SC II in Brazil and in the USA are similar; and the monthly cost (subscriptions) of World of Warcraft, another Blizzard's game, is cheaper in Brazil than in the USA. Blizzard also offers cheaper plans when a person buys some months in advance;

- It also offered several payment method options, such as both national and international credit cards, various local debit cards, cash payments, bank transfer, and even a very popular Brazilian payment method called *boleto bancário*.

- It launched an official Brazilian version of the BattleNet website with customer support in Brazilian Portuguese.

Below we list some repercussions that the Blizzard's strategies, combined with the release of the localized version of SC II into BR-PT, probably helped to generate:

- The creation a strong Brazilian gaming community (BattleNet forum) that is dedicated to the SC franchise;

- The appearance of *shoutcasters*, the people who narrate SC II competitions to Brazilian audience. The most famous shoutcasters are: Guntar[22], Xuminator[23], and Pedroca[24].

- The organization of some *Barcraft*, popular events that take place in bars where gamers get together to watch SC II tournaments[25].

6.2 The analysis of the translations

It is important to note that the purpose of this analysis was not to judge if the translations were good or bad. We kept in mind that a given text gives room for a number of possible translations, and that the translator

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[22] Guntar's YouTube Channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/supremaciasc>.
[23] Xuminator's YouTube Channel:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSVISpzNqAc&feature=player_embedded.
[24] Pedroca's YouTube Channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/sc2pedroca?feature=results_main>.
[25] http://www.starcraft2brasil.com.br/2012/barcraft-sao-paulo-mlg-summer-arena/

her/himself is a reader, and as such s/he is entitled to her/his own interpretation of the source text.

The table below shows a sample of the parallel corpus that we have created. For sake of space, in the Table 3 we have included just one example of the quotation types:

	Ghost	**Fantasma**
Quotation Type	**English**	**Brazilian-Portuguese**
Ready	"Ghost reporting"	"Fantasma apresentando-se"
Selected	"Give me the sitrep!"	"Me passa o relatório da situação"
Move	"Copy that"	"Entendido"
Attack	"Never know what hit them"	"Nunca saberão o que os atingiu"
Annoyed	"You called down the thunder… now deal with it"	"Você chamou um trovão… agora se vira com ele!"
Help	"It's gettin' too hot"	"Tá ficando quente demais"
Death	"Never say die…"	"Lute até o fim"

Table 3 – Parallel corpus sample

We have collected 582 units' quotations of each language, which means a total of 1164 quotations in English and Portuguese. The chart below shows the number of quotations by each unit [Figure 6]:
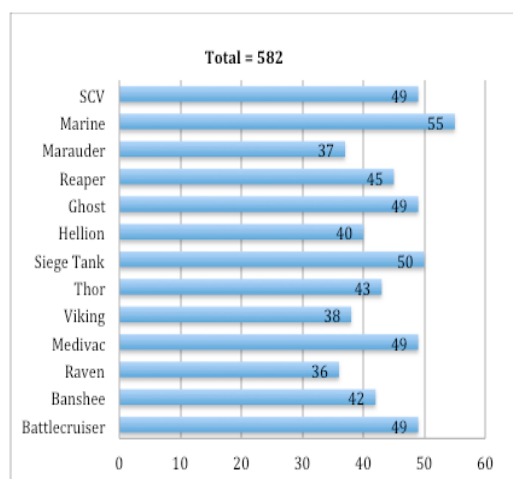

Figure 11 - Total of the quotations by each Terran unit

The chart below [Figure 7] shows the translation methods most frequently used by the translators. (Section 2.2.1 lists and describes all the translation methods used in our analysis).
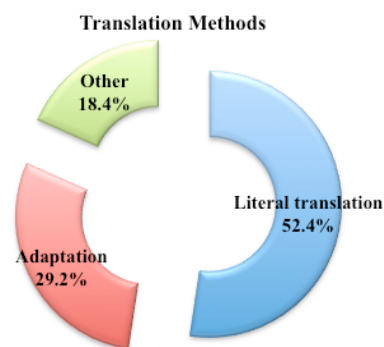

Figure 12 – The translation methods most frequently used

In the selected units' quotations of the Terrans, the most favored translation method was literal translation, followed by adaptation. From a total of 582 quotations analyzed in BR-PT, we have found that 305 (52.4%) were literal translations, 170 (29.2%) were adaptations and 107 (18.4%) were other kinds of translation methods: mixed methods or just few instances of some methods. Some examples are offered below:

Literal translations:

- Marauder: "Yeah. I got all five fingers. Three on this hand, two on the other one".
  Demolidor: "Ainda tenho os meus cinco dedos, três nessa mão e dois na outra".

- Battlecruiser: "Identify yourself."
  Cruzador de batalha: "Identifique-se!"

- SCV: "I can't build it, something's in the way!"
  VCE: "Não posso construir, tem alguma coisa no caminho."

- Hellion: "Daylight's burnin'"
  Endiabrado: "A luz do dia tá queimando."

Adaptations:

- Marauder: "Baby, if I could rearrange the alphabet, I'd put U and I together."
  Demolidor: "Você é o ovo que faltava na minha marmita."

- Ghost: "Never say die…"
  Fantasma: "Lute até o fim."

Others:

- Marine: "By the numbers, boys!"
  Soldado: "Sigam as ordens, galera!"
  [Semantic translation]

- Marauder: "Say the word, baby."
  Demolidor: "Diz aí, gracinha."
  [Idiomatic translation]

- Siege tank: "Speak up"
  Tanque de cerco: "Diga lá"
  [Idiomatic translation]

Additionally, a detailed analysis of the units' quotations in English revealed that they had specific cultural references – mainly songs and movies' references and quotations. Here are some examples, followed by the BR-PT translations:

- Raven: "All your base are belong to us". Reference: Game *Zero Wing* (original title is Japanese). It is the most famous game translation error.[26]
  Corvo: "Toda a sua base nos pertence". [Here the Brazilian translation does not re-create the ungrammatical English sentence].

- Marine: "I came here to kick ass and chew bubble gum". Reference: They live (1988 movie).[27]
  Soldado: "Vim aqui para dar porrada e mascar chiclete".

- Marine: "This one time, at boot camp…" Reference: American Pie.[28]
  Soldado: "E teve aquela vez no campo de treinamento…"

- Reaper: "I like you. That's why I'm going to kill you last". Reference: Commando (1985 movie)[29].
  Exterminador: "Gosto de você, por isso vou te matar por último."

- Ghost: "I see live people [booom]. I see dead people". Reference: Sixth Sense (movie)
  Fantasma: "Vejo pessoas vivas [barulho de tiros]. Vejo pessoas mortas."

- Ghost: "Never say die…"
  Reference: It is the name of the eight album of metal band Black Sabbath (song)
  Fantasma: "Lute até o fim."

- Marauder: "Gotta whole lotta love" Reference: It is the name of a Led Zeppelin's song
  Demolidor: "Vem sentir o meu amor."

Interestingly, most of the specific cultural references, alluded or used in the original text, were translated literally. Since a significant part of Brazilians consume several kinds of American popular

culture, mostly through cinema, paid TV channels and the Internet, they may discover such cultural references by themselves. Either case, the humor seems to have been preserved in the BR-PT translations.

6.2.1 The translations of names

Besides the units' quotations, we have also examined the translations of their names. The Table 4 shows the data:

Stacraft II	
English version	Portuguese version
SCV [space construction vehicle]	VCE [veículo de construção espacial]
Marine	Soldado
Marauder	Demolidor
Reaper	Exterminador
Ghost	Fantasma
Hellion	Endiabrado
Siege Tank	Tanque de cerco
Thor	Thor
Viking	Viking
Medivac	Ambunave
Raven	Corvo
Banshee	Vudu
Battlecruiser	Cruzador de batalha

Table 4 – Terrans' names translated into BR-PT

First of all, it is not surprising that the series title, *Starcraft II,* has been kept unchanged given its importance in the global game community. However, with some few exceptions (highlighted in dark blue above) that were kept unchanged, most of the units' names were translated into BR-PT.

It seems to us that they were translated to look and sound a bit more familiar to the target language audience – or to make them more easily pronounced. However, that decision was very criticized by some gamers. After perusing the BattleNet forums, we found some interesting comments regarding specifically the translations of the units' quotations:[30]

> - "Nomes das unidades:
> O grande erro na minha, e opinião geral dos brasileiros. Eu, como estudante da área, entendo perfeitamente o trabalho de design que foi feito em relação à localização dos nomes. Foi um grande trabalho? Sim, mas e a pesquisa com o público alvo??? Antes de apenas lançarem os nomes e obrigar os jogadores a os engolir, deveriam ter feito pesquisa conosco. Este foi um terrível erro de planejamento e para uma empresa de tal porte, não deveria ter ocorrido. Mas agora é inviável devolver o nome original das units, pois haveria um grande trabalho na redublagem e organização dos textos de

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[26] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_your_base_are_belong_to_us
[27] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wp_K8prLfso
[28] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0163651/quotes?qt0350937
[29] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088944/quotes?qt0402325

[30] To keep the gamers' privacy, their names were not revealed.

campanha que ficam em cartazes, construções, entre outros." (sic) [Gamer 1]

- "Então, agora que jogamos com os americanos, uma coisa que está sendo difícil para mim, além da comunicação, pois não falo inglês. É o nome das unidades. Eu sempre jogo 4 vs. 4, todo mundo já marca uma tática de ínicio. Um exemplo, alguém do jogo pergunta se eu posso fazer "Hellion", no meu StarCraft II, isso chama-se "Endiabrado". É ótima a tradução do jogo para o português, porém nessa parte o jogo está deixando à desejar. Esse dias um cara perguntou se eu podia fazer "BattleCruisers" depois de um tempo, com o meu péssimo inglês percebi que era "Cruzador de Batalha". Minha dica no jogo é: Nome em português (Nome em inglês). Exemplo: Endiabrado (Hellions)." (sic) [Gamer 2]

Other comments also revealed that gamers that had played the original title of SC franchise had strong identification with the English names of characters, of units, etc., which were kept unchanged in the non-official translation(s).

7. Further Steps

The next step of this ongoing postdoctoral research is to further examine the gamers' reactions to the Brazilian-Portuguese localization. So far, we have looked for the terms *localização* (localization) and *tradução* (translation) at BatteNet forums and have founded hundreds of related topics.

Below we are going to (briefly) highlight some interesting data that are still under analysis:

- The dialect chosen [São Paulo's] has not pleased some gamers from other parts of the country.

Concerning this point, we would like to observe that even the English voices, specifically the accents chosen by Blizzard, generated some negative reactions in the United States. Focusing on ethnocentrism issues, Brice [2011] states**:** "accents can be more than flavour for a game's aesthetics". She argues that they "also communicate cultural subtext that adds to the overall meaning of the game."

- The Brazilian gamers do not have the option to play SC II in any other language than Brazilian-Portuguese.

There is a language pack[31] impasse regarding the SC II: gamers are not allowed to choose the language in which they prefer to play. As a result, Brazilian gamers who did not like the Brazilian version or those who prefer to play with the original English texts/voices or even other localized versions are forced to play it in Brazilian-Portuguese.

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[31] http://us.battle.net/sc2/pt/forum/topic/106670857?page=2

- Several misconceptions about the localization work can be found at Blizzard's forums.

Despite the great amount of the complaints regarding the localization of SC II into BR-PT, most of them are vague, for example: "I didn't like the translations" or "The original version is better". And the answers of other gamers to the complaints reveal to be problematic as well: a very typical rebuttal is "be grateful, at least**,** it is in Brazilian-Portuguese.

- At Blizzards' forums, the Brazilian gamers have been expressing a lot of praises as well.

This proves that the Brazilian gamers have an appreciative ability as well. They cannot only criticize but they can also appreciate the localizers/translators' efforts.

8. Final Remarks

Further studies about game localization in Brazil should be carried out. With more research of this – relatively new phenomenon –, we can get (media) (academia) (industry) attention, educate the gaming community about their rights to have satisfying, gamer-oriented translations to their games, and we help to create a culture in which non-bilingual speakers have the opportunity to fully experience different games in their native languages.

Acknowledgements

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