The Problem of Translation of the American and British English Versions of The Witcher in Media and Literature

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Abstract

This study aims to highlight the translation complexities of "the Witcher" into American and British English as far as adapting cultural aspects, idiomatic expressions, and humour. The researcher intends to analyze the translating challenges to develop strategies that enhance cultural resonance and understanding of the Witcher. Because of its Slavic cultural background, adapting "The Witcher" requires attention to differences in syntax, phonetics, and idiomatic expressions that distinguish American and British English. A combination of linguistic, critical, and conceptual analyses is adopted as a research design to reach the study objectives. A comparative analysis focusing on the distinct linguistic features in both translations was conducted, and cultural approaches were applied to assess the effectiveness of various translation strategies. Specific examples were taken from The Witcher novels and games to illustrate how these linguistic and cultural distinctions impact the translation process. Findings revealed significant challenges in translating idioms, cultural expressions, and humour, which are integral to preserving the atmosphere of The Witcher. For example, adapting phrases with deep-rooted cultural meanings often necessitates significant modifications to maintain relevance for American and British audiences. Differences in sentence structure and vocabulary between American and British English also affected readers' engagement and understanding of The Witcher. This study concludes by highlighting the need for culturally aware translation strategies where translators must balance accuracy in language with cultural adaptation. Understanding the cultural backgrounds of both the source and target languages may ensure idioms, humour, and character voices connect with different audiences. The findings of this study are particularly relevant for translators, editors, and cultural studies professionals engaged in intercultural communication, as they offer insights into the nuanced processes required for successful adaptation. This study provides valuable recommendations for improving translations of culturally rich works like The Witcher for a global audience.

Słowa kluczowe:	**Streszczenie**
Adaptacja; strategie tłumaczenia; wyrażenia idiomatyczn; różnice językowe; kontekst kulturowy	*Niniejsze badanie analizuje złożoności związane z tłumaczeniem „Wiedźmina" na amerykański i brytyjski angielski, koncentrując się na adaptacji niuansów kulturowych, idiomatycznych i humorystycznych. Celem jest zbadanie wyzwań tłumaczeniowych oraz opracowanie strategii, które zwiększą kulturową spójność i zrozumienie. „Wiedźmin", wywodzący się ze słowiańskiej kultury, wymaga dostosowania różnic w składni, fonetyce i idiomatyce między wariantami angielskiego. W badaniu przeprowadzono analizę porównawczą, uwzględniającą charakterystyczne cechy obu tłumaczeń, oraz wykorzystano podejścia kulturowe, aby ocenić skuteczność strategii tłumaczeniowych. Analiza konkretnych przykładów z powieści i gier „Wiedźmin" ujawnia wyzwania związane z tłumaczeniem idiomów, odniesień kulturowych i humoru, co jest kluczowe dla zachowania oryginalnej atmosfery. Wnioski podkreślają potrzebę strategii tłumaczeniowych uwzględniających kulturowe różnice oraz równowagę między dokładnością językową a adaptacją kulturową. Badanie dostarcza rekomendacji, które mogą być szczególnie użyteczne dla tłumaczy, redaktorów i specjalistów ds. komunikacji międzykulturowej, oferując wgląd w proces adaptacji dzieł kulturowo złożonych, takich jak „Wiedźmin," na globalny rynek.*

1. Introduction

The Witcher novel series by Sapkowski (2020) is an amazing example to the fantasy tradition it joined, and for the complex world of humans, vampires, wizards and monsters; in which morality and ethics played a role for character actions along with the narratives. The series has not only established a distinct position within the field of Eastern European literature but has also attained a significant global presence through its video game adaptations by CD Project, which commenced in 2007. The mighty stories, with beautiful setting, have grown in power with the ranks of their universe to take the series beyond what one would expect from a mere 80s tv game into a cultural algo-rhythm that The Witcher inflicts. The influence of The Witcher is evident in various forms of media, including literature, digital media, and even television. This ranks The Witcher as a key reference point for examining cultural narratives within the fantasy genre. The enduring popularity of both the novels and video games has transformed The Witcher into a phenomenon, influencing perceptions of the fantasy genre and sparking interest in the interaction between literature and digital media.

Translating The Witcher, particularly into English, presents a series of challenges due to the complex cultural and linguistic landscape that is embedded in Sapkowski's world. In this study, the term "cultural context" is used to describe the combination of Slavic folklore and Central European norms that are characteristic of the series. To illustrate, the Polish idiom "Wilk morski" (literally "sea wolf") is a term used to refer to a seasoned sailor. However, it requires a creative translation in order to convey its cultural richness in English, where it may be translated as "old salt" or "sea dog". Similarly, the

Polish term "wiedźmin" (witcher) is imbued with a role that is deeply rooted in Slavic mythology, encompassing attributes of both a warrior and a sorcerer. This term is typically transliterated as "witcher" in English, thereby preserving the word's unique cultural essence, albeit without a direct English equivalent. Such decisions underscore the necessity for a delicate balance in translating culturally specific terms that may lack clear parallels in English.

Regarding the matter of "linguistic nuances", Sapkowski's employment of Polish diminutives and idiomatic expressions necessitates meticulous adaptation. An illustrative example is the character name "Yennefer", who is frequently addressed with endearing diminutives in Polish that suggest warmth or intimacy. The translation of these terms presents a challenge in retaining the original sentiment and character relationships. Similarly, idioms such as "Kurczę pieczone!" (Literally "roasted chicken!") may be replaced with context-appropriate English exclamations like "Damn!" for American audiences or "Blimey!" for British readers, thus ensuring that the idiom's emotional intensity is tailored to the cultural audience in question.

According to literary studies and linguistics, translation explores the relationship between the text and its translation, identifying the influence of linguistic and cultural features on the process of meaning transmission. Mikhalska (2020) emphasises that the book and game text are full of different intertextual references, allusions, quotations, reminiscences, and parodies. This creates additional challenges in the process of qualitative translation. Mietła (2020) identifies another difficulty: the adaptation and translation of neologisms and mythological elements. The author compares the translation methods and terms used in different language versions. At the same time, the researcher notes that the Polish and English versions of the translation have certain common features in translation strategies due to their common cultural heritage, which has a positive impact on the process of adaptation.

The translation challenges of adapting The Witcher to American and British English can be significant due to the difference in cultural contexts, linguistic nuances, and the use of idioms and speech patterns. One of the key challenges is to convey the authenticity and emotional intensity that is preserved in the original text. In addition, idioms and speech constructions that are native to the Polish text may be untranslatable or ambiguous in English versions. For example, deep cultural associations or shades of meaning of some expressions may be lost in translation. According to Gawroński and Bajorek (2020), another additional problem is the adaptation of dialogues and lexical expressions to the specific cultural context of American and British audiences. Since The Witcher is based on Slavic myths and legends, some terms and expressions may be unfamiliar to Western readers. This situation also requires an in-depth study of cultural peculiarities and the development of new or improved translation strategies to effectively reproduce the context and atmosphere of the original.

As Schmidt (2022) emphasises translation plays a key role in the commercial success of The Witcher, expanding availability for mass consumption in different

countries and language environments. This helps expand the audience and increase profits for both authors and publishers, which stimulates the further development of this literary and gaming phenomenon.

The study thus aims to address the gaps in current research by providing a focused analysis of the translation challenges specific to the American and British English versions of Sapkowski's "*The Witcher*". The objective is to examine how translation strategies can bridge linguistic and cultural divides, preserving the original text's richness while enhancing its accessibility and impact within contemporary culture.

2. Materials and Methods

The principal techniques of scientific cognition employed in this article are linguistic analysis, the cultural approach, critical and conceptual analyses, and synthesis. These methodologies were selected to address the intricate linguistic and cultural challenges inherent to the translation of The Witcher into both American and British English. The primary data sources for this analysis were the Witcher series by Andrzej Sapkowski, augmented by secondary sources such as scholarly articles, translation studies, and cultural analyses. The selection criteria for these sources prioritised sources that were relevant to the theory of translation, cross-cultural adaptation, and the specific translation challenges of idiomatic and cultural expressions rooted in Slavic mythology. To illustrate the diverse translation issues that may arise, specific examples from both the novels and video game adaptations were selected for analysis. This approach ensured a comprehensive evaluation of the translation process across different media forms.

A comprehensive linguistic analysis was conducted on The Witcher, to examine the text's lexical choices, stylistic features, and syntactic structures. To illustrate, Sapkowski's employment of Polish idioms, such as "wilk morski" (literally "sea wolf"), presented a distinctive challenge for an English translation. Equivalent expressions, such as "old salt" or "sea dog", were evaluated for their cultural resonance in both American and British English. Subsequently, an additional analysis was undertaken of character-specific terms of endearment, including Polish diminutives that convey intimacy. English alternatives were selected with great care to preserve the intended warmth and relational nuances, thereby ensuring an authentic adaptation.

A conceptual analysis was conducted to explore the key translation-related terms and concepts and their relationships within theoretical frameworks. This method permitted the consideration of a number of translation aspects, including fidelity and adaptation, in terms of their relevance and meaning within the context of translating culturally rich texts. This approach proved invaluable in examining the intricacies and objectives of the translation strategies employed in the case of The Witcher.

The cultural approach enabled the identification of differences between the Polish source culture and the American and British target cultures, thus accounting for variations in traditions, values, and cultural perceptions. To illustrate, while the Slavic mythical elements are well-understood in Poland, equivalent concepts were developed to resonate

with Western audiences, striking a balance between cultural accuracy and relatability. This approach informed the decision-making process regarding the retention or adaptation of cultural elements, to achieve authenticity and engagement. For instance, the choice was made to use "Bli-mey" for British audiences and "Damn" for American readers.

A critical analysis was conducted to evaluate the efficacy and constraints of existing translation strategies in adapting The Witcher for diverse English-speaking audiences. This analysis assessed a range of approaches to translation in the context of American and British cultural nuances, exploring differences in cultural context, literary traditions, and linguistic features. The analysis identified both advantages and limitations in the current strategies, thereby guiding the direction for further research and development of translation strategies specific to The Witcher.

The synthesis method integrated insights from a range of sources, including primary literary texts and secondary scientific articles, to develop comprehensive conclusions on the translation complexities of The Witcher. This approach unified the challenges and benefits of different translation strategies, thereby providing recommendations for future research and practical applications in translation. The synthesis approach enabled a comprehensive examination of the translation strategies employed, facilitating a holistic view of the processes that could enhance cultural fidelity and reader engagement across different English-speaking regions.

3. Results and Discussion

Translation of literature is an integral part of literary and cultural exchange, which helps to expand access to literary masterpieces and ideas from different cultures. The main goal of translation is to provide access to works for audiences with different levels of knowledge of the original language, thus broadening the horizons of readers and promoting cultural exchange and intercultural understanding.

3.1. Translation Challenges in Idiomatic Expressions

Nevertheless, translating a work such as The Witcher presents distinctive challenges, particularly when cultural expressions, idioms, humour, and folklore lack direct equivalents in English (Dildabekova et al. 2021). For example, the Polish idiom "Kurczę pieczone!" – literally meaning "roasted chicken!" – is an exclamation expressing frustration or surprise. In the American translation, this was adapted to "Damn!" whereas the British version uses "Blimey!" Both expressions aim to convey an emotional tone comparable to the original idiom, preserving its impact on the respective audiences. (Gambier & Doorslaer, 2010; Doszhan, 2023).

Furthermore, culturally specific terms, such as "wiedzmin" (witcher), which lacks a direct English equivalent, are transliterated as "witcher" to retain their cultural specificity. However, certain translation choices are subject to variation in order to align with regional expectations. For example, American English often employs a more direct style of language, whereas British English may substitute with familiar terms like "sorcerer" to fit

the cultural context of British readers. Such adaptations, in conjunction with alterations to syntax and vocabulary, facilitate the translation of the original text in a manner that preserves its essence while ensuring clarity and accessibility for a diverse readership.

The study of the problem of American and British translations of The Witcher by A. Sapkowski in media and literature has revealed several key aspects that contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of linguistic and cultural differences on the translation of this outstanding work. Phonetic and pronunciation adaptations illustrate this: for example, "Geralt" is pronounced as /ˈɡɛrəlt/ in the American version, while the British translation alters it to /ˈdʒɛrəlt/, reflecting distinct regional influences on pronunciation. This minor change impacts the reader's perception of the protagonist, subtly influencing how they imagine the character's cultural background (Strilets, 2023; Denys, 2024). Addressing these aspects is particularly important, as even minor differences and inaccuracies can lead to the loss or alteration of the meaning of the original text, compromising the authenticity and conveyance of the author's intentions.

For instance, the phonetics and pronunciation of different variants of English can affect the reader's perception of the text, as well as the conveyance of atmosphere and intonation in the translation. Lexical differences and idiomatic expressions require special attention from the translator to preserve the semantics and style of the original (Darginavičienė, 2023). At the same time, the syntactic features and grammatical rules considered in the context of the American and British versions contribute to the creation of a grammatically correct and understandable translation. In addition, cultural differences and references embedded in the text require careful analysis and understanding to convey the authentic and emotional content of the original most accurately and effectively.

Thus, awareness of these differences helps translators choose the best translation strategies to ensure maximum comprehensibility and naturalness of the text for a wide audience. Researching and understanding the differences between the American and British English versions becomes a key step in solving the problem of translating The Witcher in media and literature. Examples of differences in the translation into American and British English are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Differences between American and British English in the translation process

Aspect	American English	British English
Phonetics and pronunciation	In this variant, Geralt is pronounced as: /ˈɡɛrəlt/; Ciri (from Polish Ciri): as Keri; Yennefer as: /ˈjɛnɪfər/; Yennefer pronounces "magic" as "majik".	Gerald is pronounced as: /ˈdʒɛrəlt/; Ciri as: Siri; Yennefer as: /ˈjɛnɪfə/; Stair – steps; Scout – pathfinder.

	There is also a difference in some of the more common words, such as "stairs", "scout".	

Variations in phonetics and pronunciation can affect the perception and atmosphere of a text for audiences from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such differences can trigger different associations and emotional reactions in readers and players and reflect subtle differences in perceptions of language and culture.

Vocabulary and idiomatic expressions	The Polish address "pani" in the American translation is "lady", which is more neutral; The Polish word "wkurzać" ("to annoy"), in the American version, is translated as "to piss off", which is a rather rude expression; "Witcher" in Polish "wiedzmin" is translated in the American version as "witcher", which is an example of transliteration; The "Dice" game, which is called "gwent" in the original language, is translated into American as "gwent".	"Pani", in the British translation of "miss", can have an age connotation or a reference to the marital status of the character; "Wkurzać" in the British version is "to annoy", which is a milder version of the expression; The British translation uses the more general term "sorcerer", which does not always correspond exactly to the Polish "wiedzmin". The British translation of the game "gwent" uses the word "dice", which does not describe the specifics of the game.

The American translation uses more loanwords and slang, while the British translation uses more traditional English.

Syntax and grammar	The American translation uses the simple past tense: Polish: "Zabił potwora" – American: "He killed the monster"; American translation employs passive voice: Polish: "Geralt został zaatakowany przez wilka" – American: "Geralt was attacked by a wolf"; British: The American translation uses possessive pronouns before nouns, for example, in the sentence "Wziął miecz i tarczę" (Polish) – "He took his sword and shield";	The British version of the translation uses the perfective form, which emphasises the completeness of the action: "He has killed the monster"; The British translation uses the active voice, which makes the sentence more dynamic: "A wolf attacked Geralt"; The British version uses the definite articles: "He took the sword and the shield"; British English uses "and" to emphasise the sequence of actions – "He went to town, and he came back after an hour";

Syntax and grammar	The American translation uses the conjunction "but" – "He went to the city, but he came back after an hour". The American translation uses the postposition of the adjective, an example of such a sentence is "Black horse" ("Czarny koń").	The English translation uses a preposition instead: "Horse black".

The American translation uses simpler syntax and active voice, while the British translation shows a greater tendency towards the perfective, passive voice, and the use of articles. In addition, there is a difference in the placement of adjectives in the sentences.

Cultural differences and references	When adapting a work for an American audience, local American expressions and words are used in the translation. For example, the Polish phrase "Kurczę pieczone!" in the American translation is represented by the more familiar American curse "Damn!".	In the translation, the curse "Kurczę pieczone!" was replaced with the local British expression "Blimey!".

"Kurczę pieczone!" is a Polish idiom used to express surprise, disappointment, or anger. A direct translation of "Roasted chicken!" is not meaningful and is not understood by an English-speaking audience. The American and British translations are represented by euphemisms that convey the emotional meaning of the original phrase. The difference in cultural differences and references can affect the understanding of the text and its atmosphere for audiences from different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, when translating, American and British analogues for Polish idioms and slang expressions are used. Humour is subject to the same adaptation.

Source: compiled by the author based on A. Sapkowski (2020), P. Drewniak (2020), M. Mietła (2020), D. Katan (2021), J. Nowak et al. (2022).

The process of translating The Witcher into American and British English necessitates the adaptation of cultural nuances and linguistic differences. Table 1 illustrates the key distinctions between the American and British English versions of the text, including phonetic shifts (e.g., "Geralt" as /ˈgɛrəlt/ in American and /ˈdʒɛrəlt/ in British English) and varying vocabulary tones. For instance, the term "wkurzać" is translated as "piss off" in American English but "annoy" in British English. Additionally,

there are notable differences in syntax. American translations tend to favour simpler structures, such as "He killed the monster", whereas British versions often employ a more elaborate construction, as exemplified by "He has killed the monster" (Đorđević, 2021). The translation of cultural references, such as the rendering of the Polish "Kurczę pieczone!" as "Damn!" for American audiences and "Blimey!" for British readers, reflects the translator's endeavour to maintain the original meaning and emotional impact. These modifications guarantee that The Witcher will resonate with readers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, maintaining its originality while adapting it for regional comprehension (Garda, 2010).

Thus, phonetics and pronunciation, along with vocabulary and idioms, are important aspects of translating The Witcher books and games into American and British English. Understanding the differences in phonetic systems and pronunciation between these variants of the English language is important to accurately convey the voices of the characters and preserve the atmosphere of the original. For example, the American and British pronunciations of certain sounds, such as "r" and "t", can differ significantly (Fitria, 2023), which requires careful consideration when translating.

Vocabulary and idiomatic expressions are also important aspects that affect the quality and authenticity of a translation (Baker, 2018). Differences in the use of words and phrases between the American and British versions can cause ambiguities or misunderstandings. For example, some words may have different meanings or be regional variants, which requires additional careful analysis and adaptation to better convey the meaning. Thus, as mentioned earlier, a successful translation of The Witcher into American and British English requires not only an understanding of the lexical features but also the context in which certain words and expressions are used. For example, certain specific Polish terms or idioms may need to be explained or adapted for the audience of a particular variant of English. In addition, syntax and grammar should be considered to preserve the structural and grammatical integrity of the original text (Kenny, 2014; Brait et al. 2023).

Sapkowski's (2020) writing style is characterised by the sophisticated use of syntactic structures and grammatical devices, which requires translators not only to translate words accurately but also to carefully reproduce the linguistic style and sentence structure. Preserving the author's style and manner of expression during translation is important, as it allows for preserving and conveying not only the meaning of individual words but also their emotional and aesthetic essence. In this process, translators should avoid the mechanical transfer of grammatical structures and instead focus on finding expressive analogues in the target language that would preserve the atmosphere and structure of the original (Kulyk, 2023; Patriak, 2024).

3.2. Adapting Folkloric and Mythological References

It is also worth noting that The Witcher is based on Slavic myths and folklore, which may be unfamiliar to American and British audiences. Another important aspect is the

reference to American history and culture. The Witcher may use artefacts or references that are familiar to Polish history and culture but may not be familiar to an American reader or player. For example, Polish rituals, legends, and historical events may require additional explanation or adaptation for an American audience. Translators also need to understand these cultural features to effectively convey them in the target language without losing the authenticity and emotional content of the original (Gawroński & Bajorek, 2020). In addition, Polish folklore features various creatures such as witches, spirits, and other magical creatures. For example, in Polish mythology, there is the concept of a "złoto bird" – a magical bird that brings happiness. In the English-language context, the analogue is the phoenix, which also symbolises rebirth and hope. Customs and traditions in the work are described by various rituals and holidays that may be unfamiliar to English-speaking audiences, both American and British. A striking example is the feast of St John, which is common in Polish culture and can be translated as "St John's Day" for English-speaking readers, with the obligatory explanation of its meaning in the text for better understanding.

Ræstad and Worm (2022) identified certain strategies for adapting fantasy images and descriptions of mythological creatures in translation. The authors emphasised three main methods of preserving the unique characteristics and features of fantasy creatures during their translation, such as transliteration, transcription, and equivalence. As noted earlier, these methods are common and often used in the translation of The Witcher (as well as games and films) into variants of English. Bulibașa (2023) insisted that myths, legends, and other aspects of mythology transformed and expanded through various media forms, such as books, films, and video games, contribute to the creation of new forms of narratives that are perceived as modern myths. The author also considered the aesthetics, ethics, and cultural impact of transmedia mythmaking on contemporary society and its perception of mythology, emphasising the importance of this issue.

The translation of idioms and slang expressions from Polish into English can be difficult due to cultural differences and the different usage of language expressions. For instance, in The Witcher, there are often idiomatic expressions that have their roots in Polish culture and mythology, such as "wilk morski" (sea wolf) or "szukajcie, a znajdziecie" (seek and ye shall find), which can be represented by adapted versions of "sea wolf" or "ocean predator" and "seek and ye shall find" respectively. When translating them into English, translators have to find equivalent expressions or even change the context to ensure clarity. However, some idiomatic expressions and slang terms may be unique to Polish culture and language, which makes them difficult to translate into English. For example, the term "karkołomny" (complicated) may be used to describe difficult situations or decisions in the context of a work and has no direct translation or obvious synonym. In this case, if the translator is unable to find appropriate analogues, the translation will require additional explanation. For greater clarity of possible translations, a few examples are provided in Table 2.

Table 2.

Differences between American and British translations of Polish idioms and slang expressions

Polish	American English	British English
Yennefer rzuciła czar	Yennefer cast a spell	Yennefer cast a hex
"Spell" is a common American term for any magical act, while "hex" is the British version of the term used to describe a sinister spell.		
Złoty Smok	The Golden Dragon	The Golden Dragon Inn
"Inn" is a British word used to describe a hotel with a pub (inn). In the American translation, the word "Inn" is missing, which may confuse English-speaking readers from America, so this word is not used.		
Jaskier grał na lutni	Jaskier played the lute	Jaskier played the guitar
"Lute" is an ancient stringed instrument that is not popular in Britain, which is why the translation uses the more familiar word "guitar".		
Geralt napił się łyka piwa	Geralt took a sip of beer	Geralt took a swig of beer
"Sip" is an American word that means "a small sip", its British substitute is the word "swig", which is more emotional and better conveys the atmosphere of the scene.		

(Source: compiled by the author).

Thus, the translation of idioms and slang expressions in The Witcher for American and British audiences requires careful analysis of each expression and selection of the most appropriate or contextually understandable translation.

According to Tursunovic (2022), translation of literary texts is a complex task that requires a wide range of skills and understanding of both language and cultural contexts. However, the author did not provide specific strategies for the adaptation and translation of literary works, focusing on general aspects of translation: accuracy, clarity, and aesthetics. Thus, the author believed that the translation should be as accurate as possible and correspond to the original, and it should be clear, aesthetically pleasing, and pleasant for the reader. This situation highlights the significance of the cultural peculiarities of the regions for which translation and adaptation are done.

3.3. Adaptation Across Media: Books, Games, and Films

Moreover, not only book editions need to be translated, but texts for games and films should also be translated and adapted. Researchers believe that the dissemination of works through their reflection in the media, such as films, TV series, and games, is important in the processes of popularisation and monetisation. For example, a study by Enăşoiu (2021) states that transmedia storytelling can enrich and expand a story, attract a wider audience,

create a deeper connection with the content consumer, and contribute to the formation and development of cult cultures. Such research adds to the understanding and general context of adaptation, highlighting the importance of working with a work in all its manifestations. It becomes important not only to find additional tools for popularisation but also to find optimal strategies for translation (in terms of linguistic and cultural aspects), localisation and adaptation. Hence, a careful approach to translation is required to convey not only the content but also the atmosphere and style of the original. High-quality adaptation is especially important for games where the player is immersed in the virtual world of created reality. At the same time, such adaptation should include not only the transfer of the plot, but also the careful elaboration of all aspects of the fictional world, including locations, characters, and mythology (Janski, 2016).

In general, digital forms of adaptation provide new opportunities for recreating the world and history of work, and they may require different approaches to translation and adaptation compared to book formats (Winiecka, 2017; Hurko et al. 2024). Reproducing a text in a different media space can lead to changes in dialogues, narrative structure, and even characterisation, which also indicates the need to adapt the text to the format and context (Stam, 2000; Haladzhun et al. 2021). Thus, in the context of further consideration of possible strategies for solving translation problems, translation and editing in the process of adapting texts for various media formats, including games and films, is essential. When translating literary or other works, translators and editors face numerous challenges, such as preserving authenticity, reproducing the specifics of the author's language, and adapting the text to the requirements of another media format. In this context, it is worth considering possible improvements to the process.

Improving the professional skills of translators and editors in the context of adapting texts for different media formats is a primary step in ensuring high-quality translation. Translators need to have a deep understanding of both the source and target languages (Donii, 2023). Their knowledge should cover the specifics of vocabulary, grammar, style, and cultural features of both languages. Translators must accurately convey the ideas, mood and intentions of the original author while considering the requirements of the new media format (Haladzhun et al. 2023). The next step is to analyse different translation strategies, which is also an important step in improving translators' professional skills. They need to be familiar with different translation methods and be able to choose the best approach for each case. It is also important not to neglect the development of translators' technical skills in working with media formats (text editing, working with specialised translation software, adapting the text to the specifics of a particular medium, such as graphics, and sound effects).

Consultation with the authors of the original text in the process of translation and adaptation can be effective in helping to achieve the best possible translation. Often, the adaptation can significantly alter the meaning, which increases the deviation from the original plot, which affects the issue of authorship (Günal, 2021). Therefore, such communication opens up additional opportunities for understanding and conveying the

author's intention in translation or adaptation and allows translators and editors to get a direct idea of the specifics of the language and ideas behind the text, avoiding misunderstandings and ambiguities that often arise when working with a text without direct contact with the author.

As noted above, texts may contain specific terms and descriptions of local events with no corresponding equivalents in the target language. In such situations, using footnotes and additional explanations is an effective tool to ensure the quality and authenticity of the translation. This element becomes key not only for the translation process itself, where it helps translators and editors better understand the context and specifics of the original text but also for the end user – the reader or player who is exposed to the adapted text. Footnotes and explanations help avoid loss of meaning and nuances that may be important for the correct perception of content in a new media format. This approach helps preserve the authenticity and accuracy of the translation, making it accessible and understandable to an audience that may not be familiar with the specifics of the original cultural background or professional terms.

3.4. Enhancing Immersion Through Localisation

Localisation of fiction in computer games and the film industry is the process of adapting content to the cultural, linguistic, and other specifics of a particular region or audience (Xinyan and Jianguo, 2019; Vickery and Wyeth, 2022; Choczaj, 2011). In the case of The Witcher, localisation means adapting the texts, dialogues, graphical elements, and interface of a game or film to the requirements and expectations of the local audience, which includes translating text, changing the architecture of cities, replacing or adding local information and adapting cultural aspects to make the content more understandable and appealing to a particular region (Abilkaiyr, 2023).

Cesário et al. (2023) addressed the role of various aspects of the game experience, including narration, localisation, and immersion, and did not limit themselves to linguistic aspects, but also explored a wider range of factors that affect the player's perception. The authors are convinced that localisation is a deep process (from translation to voice acting) that has a significant impact on the story and immersion of players in the game. Ribeiro (2022) also emphasised the importance of creating maximum immersion for the player in The Witcher universe. According to the author, localisation can increase the effectiveness of storytelling in the game environment, making it more accessible and appealing to different cultural audiences.

In general, the importance of localisation is in the ability to attract and satisfy a wide audience and increase sales and popularity of work in different countries and cultural environments. In the case of The Witcher, a properly performed localisation allows players from different countries and cultural backgrounds to enjoy the game or film while retaining the original mood and meaning of the work. Without localisation, a game or film may lose its appeal to the audience due to incomprehensibility or lack of relevant local elements, which can lead to market failure and negative user feedback.

A careful approach to all elements of a piece of work is essential in localisation and adaptation. The first step in localising a computer game is to translate the text and dialogues, which are the main means of communication with the player. This process requires not only an accurate translation of the language material but also consideration of cultural differences to preserve the atmosphere and meaning of the original game. For example, the use of expressions or allusions that may be unknown or unacceptable to the local audience requires special attention from translators. In addition to the text, localisation includes adapting the game interface to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of different countries. Finally, localisation may also involve adapting the game's graphics and soundtrack, which may require replacing or modifying elements that are culturally or linguistically specific to meet the needs of the local audience.

After translation and adaptation of the work into American and British English, acceptance by readers and players should be assessed next. This stage is crucial in determining the success of the translation and its impact on the audience. Further reactions shape the impression of a work among a wide audience and determine its status in the literary, film or gaming world.

The process of translating The Witcher for English-speaking audiences necessitates a sensitivity to both linguistic and cultural nuances. Polish idioms and expressions, such as "Kurczę pieczone!", frequently lack direct English equivalents. Consequently, culturally resonant adaptations are often necessary, such as "Damn!" for American audiences or "Blimey!" for British readers. The creation of glossaries accompanied by contextual notes can assist in maintaining consistency and cultural depth.

The pronunciation of characters' names, such as "Geralt" and "Yennefer", can influence reader perception and should reflect each audience's phonetic preferences, particularly in voice-acted adaptations. In the case of Slavic folklore and mythology, translators may utilise familiar symbols such as the phoenix for the term "złoto bird", accompanied by brief explanations in order to retain the cultural essence. In the context of video games, the localisation teams can work together to guarantee that the adapted dialogue and idioms serve to enhance the player's sense of immersion, thereby maintaining the consistency of the world and tone of The Witcher across different regions.

One of the primary limitations encountered in this study is the challenge of preserving the cultural essence of The Witcher without resorting to overly literal translations that might prove confusing for English-speaking audiences. To illustrate, certain Polish folkloric elements, such as references to mythical creatures like the "złoto bird" (a symbol of happiness in Polish culture), lack a direct English equivalent, thereby presenting challenges in maintaining the story's original mythical appeal (Gawroński & Bajorek, 2020). Translators frequently encounter the dilemma of either elucidating these terms, which can disrupt the narrative continuity or substituting them with culturally analogous but not analogous terms, which may diminish the initial cultural impact (Ræstad & Worm, 2022).

Another significant challenge is the adaptation of The Witcher's narrative, rooted in Slavic traditions, to resonate with Western audiences while avoiding misinterpretation or oversimplification of the culturally nuanced content. For example, the adaptation of idioms and slang rooted in Polish culture necessitates not only linguistic adjustments but also a comprehensive grasp of both cultures. In the absence of cultural sensitivity, translators may unwittingly oversimplify or even alter the intended meaning, which could have an adverse effect on reader engagement and comprehension (Tursunovic, 2022).

3.5. Reception and Reader Engagement

The reception of the target audience is of great consequence in the process of refining translation strategies. Readers and players provide valuable insights into elements that resonate or require adjustment, particularly idioms and cultural references. The incorporation of feedback facilitates the development of future adaptations, enabling translators to select idioms and pronunciations that enhance immersion while respecting the narrative's original context. The utilisation of structured feedback mechanisms, such as surveys, furnishes translation teams with the capacity to ascertain evolving audience preferences, thereby facilitating adaptations that ensure the preservation of The Witcher's cultural essence for diverse English-speaking audiences.

The reaction of readers and players to the translation of The Witcher can be quite diverse. Criticism and controversy over a translation can arise for a variety of reasons. Some members of the audience may comment on the lack of accuracy or the lack of reproduction of the authentic mood of the original, pointing out flaws or imperfections in the translation. Others may question the choice of a particular linguistic form by comparing it to other alternatives. In this context, a comparative analysis of the current version with other translations (including translations into other languages) becomes effective, which can also have a significant impact on the perception and evaluation of the proposed translation options.

4. Conclusion

This study analyses the translation and adaptation of The Witcher into American and British English, identifying significant challenges and proposing effective translation strategies. The findings emphasise the necessity of comprehending and addressing the cultural and linguistic divergences between these English variants in order to achieve translations that are both au-thentic and engaging. For example, idiomatic expressions such as "Kurczę pieczone!" – trans-lated as "Damn!" for American audiences and "Blimey!" for British – demonstrate the necessi-ty for culturally resonant adaptations that maintain emotional impact. It is recommended that future translators adopt a holistic approach to enhance their translation practices, which should include the construction of comprehensive glossaries of terminology, idioms, and culturally significant references. For instance, glossaries could include explanations of mythological creatures such as the "złoto bird" (a magical bird in Polish mythology), which could be equat-ed with a

"phoenix" for English-speaking audiences. Furthermore, translators should consider utilising translation management software, which facilitates collaboration and ensures con-sistency across multiple iterations.

The practical applications of these findings indicate that translators should prioritise active engagement with the original author in order to ensure clarity and fidelity to the source mate-rial. In instances of culturally dense content, the incorporation of footnotes and supplementary explanations is recommended to assist readers who may be unfamiliar with Slavic mythology and Polish cultural contexts, thereby enhancing their understanding and appreciation of the text. The study emphasises the necessity for an in-depth examination of the intricate interrela-tionship between linguistic and cultural contexts in the process of translation. A case in point is the adaptation of syntactic structures, as exemplified by the use of the past simple tense in American English ("He killed the monster") in contrast to the present perfect in British English ("He has killed the monster"). This has an impact on how audiences perceive narrative flow and character actions.

It would be beneficial for future research to focus on investigating the potential of technology to facilitate improvements in the processes of localisation and translation. Furthermore, studies could develop adaptation techniques that are specific to particular media formats, such as vid-eo games, television, and interactive platforms. The investigation of the efficacy of these pro-posed tools and strategies in the retention of cultural and linguistic richness will contribute further to the evolving field of translation studies and provide actionable insights for practi-tioners.

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Acknowledgments

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