



INSTITUTIONEN FÖR  
SPRÅK OCH LITTERATURER

# TRANSLATION OF TIME:

A translation analysis of *Chrono Trigger*

Filip Antonijevic

---

Uppsats/Examensarbete:	15 hp
Program och/eller kurs:	JP1520
Nivå:	Grundnivå
Termin/år:	HT/2017
Handledare:	Martin Nordeborg
Examinator:	Lars Larm
Rapport nr:	xx (ifylles ej av studenten/studenterna)

# Abstract

Uppsats/Examensarbete:	15 hp
Program och/eller kurs:	JP1520
Nivå:	Grundnivå
Termin/år:	HT/2017
Handledare:	Martin Nordeborg
Examinator:	Lars Larm
Rapport nr:	xx (ifylles ej av studenten/studenterna)
Nyckelord:	Japanese, translation, localization, male/female speech, Chrono Trigger, skopos, foreignization, domestication, video games

---

- Purpose:** The purpose or aim of this study is to analyze and discuss how the personality of the character Frog was changed during the translation and localization of the game *Chrono Trigger*, with focus on how the use of male speech and sentence-final particles were translated.
- Theory:** The theoretical framework for analyzing of how Frog's dialogue was changed during localization will be skopos theory, Venuti's concept of foreignization and domestication and video game localization.
- Method:** The analysis will be conducted by looking at specific examples in both the Japanese and English script of the video game *Chrono Trigger* while focusing on analyzing the translation of male speech and the usage of sentence-final particles. Only half of the script of both versions will be used during the analysis.
- Result:** The result of this analysis shows that the personality of Frog was changed from a tough stereotypical warrior in the Japanese version to a pseudo-Shakespearean speaking knight in the English version. As a result, Frog style of speech became very grandiose, formal, indirect and avoids profanities, in contrast to the Japanese version where he is very informal, rude, direct and uses profanities. In conclusion, this study shows that while this was a poor attempt to portray Frog as a medieval European-style knight, the core message of the character's dialogue has not been altered and remains equally coherent in both the English and Japanese version. The changes made to the way Frog is portrayed in the English version can be justified with the purpose of making the character coherent and easily recognizable by its targeted audience. Coherence to the player of a video game's characters, themes and story is the most important goal of video game localization.

# Foreword

I give my thanks to my supervisor Martin Nordeborg, who has given me a great amount of help and support during the writing of this bachelor thesis.

Göteborg, December 2017

Filip Antonijevic

# Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Aim.....	5
2.1 Question.....	6
3. Previous research.....	7
4. Theoretical framework.....	8
4.1 Skopos theory.....	8
4.2 Foreignization and domestication.....	8
4.3 Video Game Localization.....	9
5. Method.....	9
6. Material.....	10
6.1 Chrono Trigger.....	10
7. Analysis and Discussion.....	10
7.1 Male speech and female speech.....	11
7.1.1 Pronouns.....	12
7.1.2 Sentence-final particle <i>zo</i> .....	18
7.1.3 Sentence-final particle <i>ze</i> .....	21
7.1.4 Use of derogatory expressions.....	24
8. Summary and conclusion.....	27
9. Reference List.....	29

# 1. Introduction

Square Enix is a Japanese company and is one of the most well known video game development companies in the world, known for the creation of many beloved role-playing video game franchises such as Dragon Quest, Kingdom Hearts and Final Fantasy. In 1995, the company then known as Squaresoft, developed a game for *Super Nintendo Entertainment System* called *Chrono Trigger*, a role-playing game about traveling across time in order to save the world from destruction of an alien parasite. The game featured characters from across different eras, from a strong cave woman of a prehistoric age, to a robot with artificial consciousness from the desolate wasteland of the future, all with a unique way of speech and personality of their time. The original release of the game was only localized and translated into English for a North America audience, and did not see a release to the European market until much later. The North American translation of the game was done by Ted Woolsey, who was responsible for the translation of Squaresoft's SNES 16-bit games from 1991 to 1996 (Cifaldi 2005). During his role as the translator of *Chrono Trigger* he was given only thirty days to work on the translation on the game (Player One Podcast 2007), and as a result certain aspects of the game were inevitably changed so that it could be localized for its targeted North American audience.

This study is going to examine and analyze the translation of the critically acclaimed, Japanese role-playing game *Chrono Trigger* by comparing the original Japanese version to the original North American translation. The main focus of the analysis will be on how the personality of one of the main characters changed during the translation of the game.

## 2. Aim

The aim of this study is to examine, by analyzing the translation of Japanese gendered speech or male speech and sentence-final particles, how the localization and translation of *Chrono Trigger* changed the personality of one of the game's seven main characters, Frog, and how these changes were justified. This can be understood by examining the difficulties that arise in translation and localization of Japanese video games. In order to reach this conclusion, a

comparison between the 1995 translated North American version and the original Japanese version will be conducted.

The importance of this research regarding games translation studies is reflected by how few these kind of studies have been conducted in contrast to how video games have become an ever growing market in recent years. As a result, the increasing interest of Japanese games have also become widespread. This means that the importance of conveying the world of a video game through language also affects how its audience perceives it. A game with the intent of having a narrative experience, with characters and story to follow must be communicated via language and context that will be understood by its targeted audience. This could be cultural, social norms and even expressions that might only be coherent in the targeted audience's language, reflecting both culture and history. These are the points in translation that are reoccurring problems that arise with translation: the difficulties of how much of the source text is changed for the sake of adaptation. Ultimately, it can create an issue where aspects of a game intended by its developers, such as themes and character traits, become altered or completely removed when translated into English.

However, a translation can be done with a certain purpose for the target audience. This means that the initiator, or the translator, in contrast to the original writer, can have a completely different purpose depending on what the particular function is meant to accomplish when translated into the language of the targeted audience (Hasegawa 2012, p 204). This is also how the analysis will examine how and to what degree has the translated English version of *Chrono Trigger* been adapted and localized, ultimately leading to a conclusive discussion if these changes, for the sake of adaptation and understanding, could have been confronted with a different method.

## **2.1 Question**

The analysis will primarily focus on the following question:

- How has the personality of one of the main characters, Frog, changed in the English translated version of the game, with focus on the translation of male speech and sentence-final particles?

### 3. Previous research

As mentioned previously, research done on game translation are few in comparison to the number of games that have been developed over the years. However, this is not to say that the number of studies on game translation themselves are scarce.

Carmen Mangiron and Minako O'Hagan, have conducted and written several studies and articles in the field of game translation and localization. Both Mangiron and O'Hagan have conducted studies in collaboration and independently. In their collaborated research, in a case study they examine the challenges of game translation and demonstrating the unique aspects and elements of game localization of Japanese games (Mangiron & O'Hagan 2006). Mangiron in his independent research analyses and underlines the difficulties of adapting Japanese games for both Japan and international release and explores the main strategies applied to localization of Japanese games (Mangiron 2012). In a different article written by O'Hagan independently, she describes the evolution and the phenomenon of fan-based subbing, also known as fansubbing, of Japanese media, including video games, made by untrained translators and addresses how user generated translation has a great impact on the profession of translation (O'Hagan 2009).

Very few studies have been conducted regarding the game *Chrono Trigger*. A book titled *Chrono Trigger*, the second book in the *Boss Fight Books* series, written by former Japanese research specialist Michael P. Williams who conducted a broad study on the game. The books examines many aspects in the game, such as the difficulties of translation, the connection of history of the game world with our own, cultural and ethnicity and even interviews with the original translator and the re-translator of the game, Ted Woosley respective Tom Slattery. While this study does compare both the English translation and the original Japanese version in the style of a translation analysis, Williams main focus of the study is not on how the game was translated but more on how the narrative aspect of the game's world is conveyed by its Japanese cultural context (Hemmann 2016, pp. 98-99).

## **4. Theoretical framework**

Hans J. Vermeer's skopos theory and the concepts of foreignization and domestication by Lawrence Venuti are going to serve as the theoretical framework for this study. The reason for this is how different the core concept are of both theories and yet both argue about similar ideas regarding the important usage of a translation strategy of making it comprehensible to its audience while attempting to keep the essence of the source text.

### **4.1 Skopos theory**

The skopos theory describes how the translation of a source text, is viewed as to adhere to be read and understood by its targeted audience with a certain purpose by its translator or initiator, rather than offering a faithful translation of the source text. In other words, the function of the source text does not set the purpose for the translation, meaning the purpose set by an initiator or translator for the translation of the source text could be significantly different. However this does not encourage free translation (Hasegawa 2012, pp. 203-204). There are two important rules of this theory:

- The coherence rule, which states that its purpose has to be based on culture aspects and the targeted audience's circumstances and knowledge so it is translated to be both coherent and intelligible for its targeted audience.
- The fidelity rule, explaining the importance of consistency between the source text and the translation of the source text (Munday 2012, p. 123).

### **4.2 Foreignization and domestication**

Lawrence Venuti explains with disdain the concept of domestication, a translation method that diminishes the foreign elements, both culture and linguistic aspects of a source text, ultimately presenting the translation with an ethnocentric purpose and focus on fluency to the point of being unable to recognize the source text's foreign origin.

In contrast, Venuti strongly encourages the opposite method known as foreignization, which is a translation strategy that preserves the foreign elements as much as possible by



presenting the characteristics of the foreign source text with different and contrary translation styles (Munday 2012, pp. 218-219).

### **4.3 Video Game Localization**

Video game localization is a target-oriented translation of a video game, a type of software preparation conducted by translators and writers, for the sake of the distribution of software products for an international market. It is common for software localization to be done by an outsourced translation company rather than being done by in-house translation departments, for economical and work effective reasons. The process of game localization is very broad and does not solely refer to text translation and can include many changes to a game's design. This could include changes of story, difficulty, character names or personality, graphic changes such as censorship, voices and sound effects and much more for the sake of making the product appropriate for its targeted audience. This shows that the difficulty of game localization is mostly because video games are multimedia product, a combination of previous media making them multi-channel and multi-textual creations. In other words, the importance of video game localization can be understood by how the player is exposed to a game's virtual world while also being able to understand the context of the game's story and world given to the player (Bernal-Merino 2017, pp. 84-98).

## **5. Method**

The method that will be used to answer the question stated above, is analyzing and comparing both Japanese and English script of the video game *Chrono Trigger*, focusing on analyzing the translation of male speech and the usage of sentence-final particles. Gameplay is excluded from any analysis purpose as it would take too long to transcribe dialogue from the game, since this study is under a short time frame. However, for the sake of context of the dialogue that will be analyzed, portions of the game will be played and later described in detail when analyzing and comparing the dialogue of the character Frog. The entire script contains over 120,000 words, meaning that only half of the script, about 60,000 words, will be examined during the analysis as there is not enough time for a more thorough and deeper research.

## 6. Material

### 6.1 Chrono Trigger

*Chrono Trigger* is a role-playing fantasy game developed by *Squaresoft* originally released for the *Super Nintendo Entertainment System* in 1995. The game is about a group of characters saving the world from the alien parasite, Lavos, bringing forth the end of the world by traveling and changing world events across time. As mentioned several times, the focus of this analysis will be on the character Frog, a swordsman whom once was a human knight of Kingdom of Guardia in 600 A.D. turned into a frog after being wounded in a battle (Squaresoft 1995).

*Chrono Trigger* was chosen for this study as it is a game with a narrative story, involving characters with unique and developed personalities and a well thought-out story. It is also quite an old game, released when console games did not use voice acting, limiting the study to only analyzing the dialogue in text. With this, it provides more than enough material for conducting this kind of translation analysis.

## 7. Analysis and Discussion

As previously mentioned, the purpose of this study is to examine how the personality of the character Frog changed during the localization process by analyzing and comparing selected dialogue and conversation from both the English and Japanese scripts to see what elements that affected the changes. Context will be given to each example presented so that the analysis will be fully understood. When examples are given, the following abbreviations will be used to refer what type of text it is. The first one is source text (ST) which is directly taken from the script of the Japanese version. The second one is Romanized text (RT), which is the same as the source text written with Hepburn Romanization. The third one is target text (TT) is the text from the English localization of the script. The last is author's translation (AT), which is the author's own translation of the source text.

## 7.1 Male speech and female speech

When it comes to gendered speech in English, Xia (2003, pp. 1485-1489) writes in his article how the usage of the English language differs between men and women such as usage of vocabulary, expressions, pronouns and many other things. Xia explains that in contrast to male's usage of language, women usage tend to use vocabulary that describe and show their feeling regarding the situation or discussion, displaying as being docile and gentle. Women tend also to use more adjectives than men, expressing their emotions, most likely show that they are more sensitive to the environment. However, men tend to use more swear words than women as this might make them seem uncivilized and make others in their social situation uncomfortable. This could also mean that women pay more attention and evaluate their use of language, but also that being polite is equally important. Even with limited pronouns compared to the plethora in Japanese, the difference between men's and women's usage of pronouns is that men prefer to use first person singular pronouns while women use first person plural pronouns.

In Japanese, the difference between male and female speech can be understood from observing grammatical components, such as the usage of gender-specific pronouns and sentence-final particles. However, the difference between gender distinction can also be generalized by examining Japanese speech styles, formal and informal spoken language. Formal spoken language is mostly gender neutral and are used by both men and women with non-group members, customers and superiors et cetera. When it comes to informal spoken language, female speech tend to be respectful and softer towards the receiver while male speech is the opposite, being rougher, sounding harsh, more direct and usually addressing the receiver as inferior while the speaker self-portrayed as superior. Age also plays a role in spoken language, the style being different between young and old men and vice versa. Other decisive parts of speech style is the usage of pronouns, which can differ from being formal to informal. The pronouns *ore* and *boku* are normally associated with men's speech, the latter being boyish sounding while the first being somewhat vulgar or too informal. *Watashi* is usually used by women in informal speech, but it would be considered effeminate if men used it in informal speech. In formal speech, it is used by both (Schonfeld 1999).

In informal conversations or situations, the speaker can express nonpropositional modal attitude through the use of sentence-final particles. There are gender-specific particles exclusively used by men or women as these particles characterize male and female speech. The particles have linguistic features that, depending on the context, measures the various cognitive and emotional assessments of the speaker. Ide and Yoshida refer to McGloin's explanation, that the particles *zo*, *ze* and *sa* express the insistence of the speaker. These particles are used mostly by men and they have different degrees of meaning and emphasis. She goes on further to explain that the particle *zo* has stronger emphasis than *ze* although both add a strong emphasis to a speaker's statement and expresses determination, but also a sense of responsibility from the speaker. The usage of the particle *sa* is the speaker's proposition as an objective description, is less insistence and lacks the features that of *zo* and *ze*. The speaker displays their identity by the sentence-final particles the speaker uses at the end of a sentence (Ide & Yoshida 1999, pp. 463 – 466). Furthermore, the use of vulgar expressions or profanities are seldom used by women as it indexes the speaker as lack of demeanor. In contrast, it displays masculinity when men use these expressions or profanities as this has the positive value of acquiring prestige. The reason for this is that these expressions are considered to be part of men's communicative competence (Ide & Yoshida 1999, pp. 471-472).

As stated previously, Frog was originally a human knight before being turned into an anthropomorphic frog. Despite this, his occupation as a knight remained and his use of language reflects his tough personality as a warrior or a Japanese version of a knight through his use of *zo*, *ze* and *sa* in his dialogue. He mostly uses *zo* and *ze* throughout the entire game. *Zo* occurs 14 times, *ze* occurs 19 times and *sa* only once in the entire game, so for a more thorough analysis only *zo* and *ze* will be analyzed. Moreover, this analysis will also cover the usage of vulgar expressions.

### **7.1.1 Pronouns**

According to Ide & Yoshida (1999, pp. 455-471) both male and female speakers are expected to realize and judge their own position in both social and situational context in a Japanese society. Depending upon if it is a male or female speaker, the usage of personal pronouns can

have different levels of formality. It is also important to underline pronouns that are more habitually used in formal forms by one gender than the other. For example, *watashi*, the first person pronoun, is used by men limited to informal speech while women use this pronoun in most informal situations, because it is assessed to be higher in level of formality by men. Women's speech has no pronouns on a deprecatory level which in contrast to male's speech, where the first person pronoun *ore* and the second person pronoun *omae* are pronouns on a deprecatory level and are habitually used by men from an early age. The lack of deprecatory pronouns and the higher frequency usage of more polite first person pronouns in formal situations could reflect women's polite linguistic behavior in society, and in this way display their own good demeanor and femininity.

In the game, The character Frog uses a variety of pronouns both in the English and Japanese version. In the Japanese version, the following first person pronouns are the ones he uses throughout the game. He uses the first person pronoun 俺 (*ore*) the most out of all first person pronouns. He uses this pronoun in the majority of settings, most of which are informal situations. He uses 私 (*watashi*) in a few situations, most of which are in formal situations where he also uses honorific language or keigo. 我が (*waga*) is very formal first person pronoun which he uses only once throughout the game. Next, the second person pronouns he uses are お前 (*omae*) or お前達 (*omaetachi*) and あんた (*anta*). Both of these are considered to be informal and the latter is considered to be very rude and expressing contempt. When he refers to his enemies, he uses the informal pronouns ヤツ (*yatsu*) which means "guy", こいつ (*koitsu*) and アイツ (*aitsu*), both which mean he/she, expresses contempt and are very informal. The last pronouns are 私達 (*watashitachi*), which he uses only once and 俺達 (*oretachi*), which he uses several times and refers to his in-group (the party of heroes you play) and once he uses it to refer to the entire population of the planet. The number of time these pronouns occur throughout the game is presented in Table 1 below.

<b>Pronouns</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>
俺 ( <i>ore</i> )	24
ヤツ ( <i>yatsu</i> )	12
こいつ ( <i>koitsu</i> )	9
俺達 ( <i>oretachi</i> )	7
お前 ( <i>omae</i> )	6
アイツ ( <i>aitsu</i> )	5
お前達 ( <i>omaetachi</i> )	5
私 ( <i>watashi</i> )	5
あんた ( <i>anta</i> )	1
我が ( <i>waga</i> )	1
私達 ( <i>watashitachi</i> )	1

Table 1

In the English version, he uses a higher frequency of possessive pronouns. He uses the first person pronoun *I* and is the only equivalent in the English language to the first person pronouns used in Japanese. He also uses the possessive pronouns, *my* and *mine*, and a few archaic forms such as *thine*, *thy*, and the modern forms of *your* and *our*. He also use *us* and *we*. The second person pronouns he uses are both *you*, *thee* and *thou*. *Thee* and *thou* are archaic form of *you*. None of the above pronouns are considered rude nor express contempt by themselves, compared to the Japanese equivalent, because contextual and social usage is how the intention of its usage is determined. It is important to highlight that the existence of pronouns will be present in parts of dialogue where in the original Japanese version is completely absent. This however is more due to grammatical reasons and how one naturally expresses themselves in their language. The number of time these pronouns occur throughout the game is presented in Table 2 below.

<b>Pronouns</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>
I	37
We	25
Thee	19
Thou	16
You	16
Us	16
Our	10
Thy	9
My	7
Mine	6
Your	5

Table 2

In the following scene, Crono and Lucca travel back in time to 600 A.D during a war between humans and Mystics, in order to find their new friend Marle who was sent back in time during a demonstration of Lucca's teleportation machine at the Millennial Fair. The queen of this era, Queen Leene, was kidnapped by the Mystics and during the search for her, the royal guards find and mistakes Marle for the queen, causing a time paradox. Crono and Lucca must save the real queen so that the timeline can be corrected. They go to a mysterious cathedral, a secret hide-out for the Mystics. Here they meet the character Frog during a battle with snake monsters disguised as nuns.

**ST:** 「最後まで気をぬくな。勝利によいしれた時こそスキが生じる。」

**RT:** “Saigo made ki wo nuku na. Shouri ni yoishireta toki koso SUKI ga shoujiru.”

**TT:** “Lower thine guard and thou'rt allowing the enemy in.”

**AT:** “Don't lose your focus until the end. You'll be wide open when you're drunk with victory.”

From the first moment he appears, in the English translation he says directly to Crono and Lucca in a grandiose way the result of letting their guard down. In the Japanese version, he says it like a warning to not let their guard down when when they have become victorious, rather than telling them what will happen if they let their guard down. Frog's style of speech in the English translation is recognized by his obvious usage of Middle English or archaic words and unusual way of speaking. His speech becomes a form of pseudo-Shakespearean way which gives his speech the style of what a knight from Medieval Europe would sound like to an English speaking targeted audience. He uses Middle English pronouns such as "thine" and "thou", (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2003, p.61) and also uses "art" in "thou'rt", which is "are" in Modern English (Lexiconic, unknown date). In the Japanese version, his speech is the equivalent of a well-disciplined warrior, being quite tough, direct and a bit rude in his speech. The English translation of Frog's speech can be seen as Venuti's concept of domestication of the source text as it tries to localize it to the point where his identity is more likely to be recognized as a Shakespearean speaking medieval knight by its targeted audience, rather than by its foreign features of a tough warrior. The skopos theory argues that this kind of localization was done with the purpose of making Frog recognized as a knight which would be normally thought as speaking in such manner, rather than a tough warrior speaking in a rude or direct way as he does in the Japanese version of the game.

This kind of speech is continuous throughout the game as seen in the next scene, where after rescuing the Queen and returning to the castle, Frog blames himself being the reason she was kidnapped.

**ST:** 「俺が近くにいたため王妃様を危険にさらしたのだ……。俺は城を出る。」

**RT:** "Ore ga chikaku ni ita tame ouhisama wo kiken ni sarashita no da..... Ore wa shiro wo deru."



**TT:** "Twas a fault of mine, which endangered the Queen. I shall depart for good."

**AT:** "Because I was close, the Queen was exposed to danger..... I'm leaving the castle."

As just mentioned, the English version continues Frog's pseudo-Shakespearean English style of speech, with the use of "'twas", an archaic contraction of "it was", the possessive pronoun "mine" in "fault of mine" and first person singular pronoun "I" in "I shall" and the use of stilted sentence structures, which has the effect of making him sound archaic or formal, alluding to his origin from the Medieval period. Note that "mine" or "...of mine" is not archaic and is still routinely used in modern English. His formality displays a certain high poise, giving the impression of wanting to protect his honour even if he has failed his duty to protect the Queen from danger. In the Japanese version, Frog addresses his honesty very informally and directly in front of the King and Queen why the Queen was put to danger. His informality is defined by his usage of the informal first person singular pronoun 俺 (*ore*) and his lack of honorific language or politeness. Unlike the English version where Frog says he will leave the castle for good as if he was an active part of the royal guards or knights of Gaurdia Kingdom, in the Japanese version he only says he will leave the castle, perhaps suggesting he is not part of the royal guards. More likely, this could also suggest that Frog feels he has dishonoured his duty as a knight for endangering the Queen, expressing himself informally and indirectly that he has accepted failure and simply says he will leave the castle. The importance of informality in this situation is that it highlights Frog's feeling of guilt and perhaps the separation from serving under the King and thus no need of showing formality.

The translation of Frog's statement from Japanese to English is interesting as the essence of Frog's honesty as a personality trait has not been lost in translation. In both version, Frog displays his honesty quite clearly, but the difference is the tone in the delivery of his statement to the addressee. The Japanese version of Frog uses the pronoun 俺 (*ore*), perhaps somewhat inappropriate or rude, to display a sense of masculinity and informality towards the King and Queen, while the English version of Frog uses simply "mine" and "I", stilted sentence structures and the archaic contraction "'twas" to make him sound formal. Linguistically speaking, it is extremely difficult or near impossible to do a word-for-word translation of 俺 (*ore*) as there are no pronouns other than "I" that will match its Japanese

equivalent in English, even if certain nuances are lost during localization. This means the translation of the entire sentence must try to as much as possible to preserve the nuances of the pronoun, but not to lose the original tone of the sentence as well.

From the perspective of the skopos theory, Frog's way of speaking matches what the targeted audience's image of an archetype knight, but still keeps the essence of his personality trait of honesty in this scene. However, this scene is also another good example of Venuti's concept of domestication; it diminishes the foreign elements of the Japanese version of Frog that does not act or is portrayed as an archetype knight but more the equivalent of warrior archetypes in Japanese culture. The use of 俺 (*ore*) and lack of honorifics or polite language, while not necessary the speech style of a warrior it gives the impression of one, because it reflects the elements of masculinity and toughness of a warrior. Conversely, this also is an example of foreignization, as Frog's usage of pseudo-Shakespearean English can be seen as a different and contrary translation style to preserve the foreign elements as much as possible, i.e. the personality trait of honesty, as in both version, Frog is directly honest about his failure to protect the Queen.

### 7.1.2 Sentence-final particle *zo*

After rescuing Queen Leene and the chancellor from the Cathedral, they return to the castle and reunite the Queen with King Gaurdia. Meanwhile, the Chancellor is ready to introduce a new, but harsh justice system in the Guardia Kingdom, which will effect Crono later in the game. Before Frog leaves the castle, he gives his farewell to Crono and Lucca.

**ST:** 「クロノ、お前の太刀すじはなかなか見込みがあったぞ。」

**RT:** “Kuronon, omae no tachi suji wa naka naka mikomi ga atta zo.”

**TT:** “Crono, you hath potential to be a good swordsman!”

**AT:** “Chrono, your swordmanship had quite the promise.”

Even though Frog will return later in the game, in this scene it is portrayed as if he says farewell to Crono and Lucca. His final words being a compliment on Crono's ability to use his katana sword before departing from the castle. Here, the style of archaic English continues with the verb "hath" which is an archaic third person singular present form of "have". However, the style has been mixed with modern English with the inclusion of a modern form of "you" where one would think that it would be more appropriate, more accurate to use "thou" the archaic form of "you". It is important to note that this could be an intentional decision since you and thou had different uses in Old English. Before sixteenth century, *you* was used to address multiple people. Later the usage changed and became related to social context, where *you* was considered more respectful or chillier and *thou* was more used for expressing condescension or intimacy (Nordquist 2017). This would mean that Frog wishes to express respect towards Crono when he uses *you*, displaying a certain friendly formality in his praise to his fellow swordsman.

While the English translation is very accurate and correct in comparison to the original Japanese version despite using archaic forms, the tense are different. In the Japanese version, the verb ある (*aru*) is written in a perfective aspect, adding a nuance to his statement that is not present in the English version. In the Japanese version, Frog refers directly to the battles they had before and Crono's promising skill with the sword, while in the English version he refers directly to Crono becoming a great swordsman. The use of the particle *zo* here, according to the reference done by Ida and Yoshida of McGloin's explanation, Frog shows strong emphasis with his statement directed to his fellow swordsman, Crono (Ide and Yoshida 1999, pp. 463 – 466). The emphasis and masculinity in Frog's statement is not expressed directly in his words in the English version as he expresses himself quite formal in contrast to the Japanese version, and instead an exclamation mark was added at the end of the sentence. Although this is a good attempt to reproduce the emphasis as it is in Japanese, it lacks the force and masculinity that the particle produces in Japanese. *Zo* as a particle is well-defined in its usage and meaning, while an exclamation mark can have more than one meaning and many interpretations can be made depending upon the person reading the text.

In another scene, after Crono and the party return to Frog's home in the Cursed Woods and have fixed a powerful sword called Masamune (*Grandlion* or グランドリオン in Japanese) that will be used against Magus (or 魔王 lit. *Demon King* in Japanese). This character killed

Frog's closest friend Cyrus and is also portrayed as being the creator of Lavos, who is later revealed later did not create Lavos but only wanted to summon it. After given time to think, Frog decides to go to Magus's castle and slay him with the sword, but asks the party something before they leave.

**ST:** 「ヤツは強いぞ……。かくごはいいか……？」

**RT:** "Yatsu wa tsuyoi zo..... Kakugo wa ii ka.....?"

**TT:** "Thou knowest his power?"

**AT:** "The bastard's strong..... Are you prepared.....?"

The Japanese Frog shows his concern for Crono and friends as he knows the power and strength of Magus and the destruction he is capable of unleashing. He shows his insistence that they are heading into a battle from which they may not return home and hopes that everyone is well prepared for the most dangerous encounter so far. Frog himself is not hesitant to face Magus in the slightest, but hopes everyone else following with him is prepared and are aware of the dangers to come.

In the English translation, the question about if they are prepared to face Magus is missing, only alluding to the need of preparation by only highlighting his power in form of a formal, rhetorical question. The point of interest in this dialogue is the usage of "thou", as it could be argued that this functions as the sentence-final particle *zo* in the English translation. As mentioned in the previous example, Nordquist (2017) writes in his article the social difference in the usage of "thou" and "you" after the sixteenth century. If one uses "thou" the meaning can become condescension or intimacy depending upon the social context. In this scenario, it is highly likely that Frog is expressing a sense of intimacy rather than condescension to Crono and company. Because he expresses intimacy, as in familiarity or friendship, it also adds the strong emphasis, and a sense of responsibility to his dialogue. The verb "knowest", which is the archaic second-person singular form of "know", indirectly gives the effect behind the usage of "thou", as these words frequently appear symbiotically in classical works of Shakespeare and the King James Bible. The reason for this is that the conjugation of verbs when used with "thou" is always with the verb-ending "-est" such as for

example "thou goest" (Shakespeare's Words 2008), meaning that the usage of "knowest" in this sentence is grammatically correct to the style of speech Frog uses. In other words, While the translation is neither completely wrong nor completely accurate, it nonetheless succeeds in converting the function of particle *zo* in the English translation by the usage of archaic pronouns and verb forms.

This small change is not significant in the sense of the overall plot of the game as it does not change any story elements, however, the portrayal of Frog has become slightly altered in the English translation. In this scene he is being more formal and somewhat indirect in his statement compared to the Japanese version, where he is being direct and informal. Here Venuti's concept of domestication becomes relevant once again as the localization continues to present Frog as formal in his speech even in situations where it might appear out of place. As already mentioned, it changes the foreign features only present in the original Japanese version of Frog where he is very direct and speaks his mind without worrying about formality. Despite this, Frog's style of speech in the English version as a pseudo-Shakespearean speaking knight was already established in the first moment he was introduced, so continuity is important to not break the role he was giving during localization. If it was broken, the targeted audience might become confused as to what kind of character Frog is supposed to portray. In contrast to this, the *skopos* theory would argue that this change is important for the sake of portraying him as the classical knight archetype, or at least how the targeted audience would imagine an archetypal knight, for the sake of being understood by the targeted audience.

### **7.1.3 Sentence-final particle *ze***

Just like the particle *zo*, the function and usage of adding force to a sentence with *ze* is exactly the same, but it is less emphatic when it overlaps with the particle *zo* (Chino 1991, p. 143). Frog uses this particle more frequently than *zo*, which could suggest that being a tough warrior, he more frequently wishes to express his statements with force, emphasis and determination.

Close to the end of the first act of the game, after Frog used the legendary sword Masamune to cut a mountain in half, he and Crono find the secret passage to Magus's Castle.

They fight their way through Magus's generals Slash, Flea and Ozzie and their armies, finally reaching Magus during an eerie ritual to create Lavos, which later turns out be that he was only trying to summon him.

**ST:** 魔王「いつかのカエルか……。 どうだ、その後の人生は？」

カエル「かんしゃしているぜ。 こんな姿だからこそ……」

カエル「手に入れた物もある！」

**RT:** Maou: "Itsuka no KAERU ka..... dou da, sono ato no jinsei wa?"

Kaeru: "Kansha shiteiru ze. Konna sugata da kara koso....."

Kaeru: "Te ni ireta mono mo aru!"

**TT:** Magus: I...it's that stupid frog! Kissed any princesses lately?!

Frog: "I rather enjoy this form. And I oweth it all to you!"

Frog: "I have something for you!"

**AT:** Demon King: "The frog from that other time.....? How's your life been after that?"

Frog: "I'm grateful. It's because of this form....."

Frog: "That I have the thing I procured!"

Magus was the one whom had killed Glenn's closest friend Cyrus and the one who turned Glenn into the anthropomorphic frog-man who is now known as the aforementioned Frog. This scene is quite important as it has given Frog the opportunity to revenge his friend Cyrus and hopefully end the war between Humans and Mystics. The Japanese version portrays Magus as calm and mysterious and asks frog how live has been after have being turned into a frog, to which Frog answers with that he is grateful for becoming a frog as he was able to obtain the Masamune this way. In the English, this part has been either ignored or

mistranslated as Magus seems annoyed that Frog has arrived and insults him, as well as the important nuance as to why Frog is grateful for being turned into a frog is missing. This is important to highlight as Frog's usage of *ze* here is contextualized with the next statement and would lose its true meaning if the connection is absent. *Ze* is used here in an almost ironic tone, adding the force and insistence to his gratitude of being given the "curse" of becoming a frog-man by Magus and as a result has ironically helped Frog obtaining the weapon that will defeat him. This nuance is missing in the English version which portrays Frog being grateful of becoming a frog-man for no particular reason as the reason is never made explicit. It could be argued that this is an attempt during the localization to keep Frog's tough personality by weakening the effect of being turned into a frog by showing his strength of being unaffected by telling directly to Magus that he enjoys being a frog. Inadvertently this attempt removed the very reason why becoming a frog was to his advantage, making the conversation somewhat pointless other than trying to establish he likes to be a frog to Magus's dislike, while the sentence afterwards becomes unrelated. The style of speech Frog uses in the English version becomes the reason this attempt collapses on itself as it uses archaic grammar incorrectly, as the verb ending "-eth" in the word "oweth" is conjugated only when one uses third person singular pronouns and never used together with first person or second person singular pronouns (Cooney 1999). This makes Frog speak in an unnatural way and gives less of an impression of Frog being tough knight but rather that of an unintentional buffoon for the sake of speaking in Shakespearean English. In other words, This dialogue is significant as it reflects Frog's personality and how it reflects in interaction with other characters. In the Japanese version, his usage of *ze* shows the personality traits of confidence and toughness, while the English version attempts to keep these personality traits while struggling with localized changes and not breaking continuity with his speech style, the end result becomes somewhat unsuccessful.

The next scene continues with this mistake, when the party reaches the Kingdom of Zeal, an ancient kingdom in the sky. They reach Enhasa, the City of Dreams, where they meet the mysterious character Janus (or Jyaki in Japanese). He creepily foreshadows that one of the main characters will shortly perish and then he leaves afterwards. Frog will say the following:

**ST:** 「なんだか知らんが気に入らないガキだぜ……。」

**RT:** "Nandaka shiran ga ki ni iranai GAKI da ze....."

**TT:** "I knoweth not what this portends. What an unpleasant lad."

**AT:** "I don't know but somehow I don't like that brat."

The grammatical mistake of using the verb ending "-eth" together with first person singular pronoun is occurs again in order to make Frog sound formal and archaic. He also uses the word "lad", which means boy or a young man (Cambridge Dictionary, Unknown date). In the Japanese version, he uses the word ガキ (*gaki*), which means "brat" or "little devil". Using the word "brat" in this scene is very appropriate as the mysterious character just foreshadowed the death one of them, so it shown very clearly by his use of *ze* here to add the force and insistence that Frog, although not surprisingly, dislikes or shows contempt to this character and his unknown intention of foreshadowing the death of one of them. In the English translation Frog keeps himself much more formal, only indirectly stating that he dislikes this new character by calling him "what an unpleasant lad". Expressing contempt to this new character does partly succeed in translating the particle *ze*, as the function of adding force and insistence does exist within the second sentence. Frog's formality works against this as it makes it never clear whether he truly dislikes Janus or simply stating that he is an unpleasant character. Another difference in the English version, he first states he does not know what this means, while this part is absent in the source text. This could be the case of mistranslation as Frog in the Japanese version only speaks of not knowing the exact reason why he does not like Janus. In spite of this, as could be argued for the previous example, this works very well as the skopos theory argues that this does fit the archetypical knight for its targeted audience. On the other hand, it could be argued that this is an example of Venuti's concept of foreignization, as it does present the characteristics of the source text quite well while using a contrary translation style of psuedo-Shakespearean English.

#### **7.1.4 Use of derogatory expressions**

Throughout the Japanese version of Chrono Trigger, Frog uses quite an amount of derogatory expressions and swear words or profanities. Whether the expressions he uses in the following analysis are swear words or not, such as ヲロチ (yarou) is a discussion in of itself as most



people will have different views on this, nonetheless it is no doubt that these are derogatory expressions.

At this point in the game, Crono and Frog (and the third party member) have fought Magus and won the battle thinking that the creation of Lavos was stopped, when in fact it was a summoning of Lavos. As a consequence, a huge time Gate opens and they all get sucked into it. Crono and company get send back to 65, 000 000 B.C, where they had previously been to and meet Ayla again. This is the first time Ayla encounters Frog, and she thinks that Frog is food to which he responds with the following sentence.

**ST:** 「バ、バカヤロー！それより、あお白いつラしたマントのヤローは、いなかったか！？」

**RT:** "BA, BAKA YAROU! Sore yori, aoshiroi TSURA shita MANTO no YAROU wa, inakatta ka!?"

**TT:** "P, perish the thought, lass! By the way, whither the blue-haired one?"

**AT:** "Y, YOU IDIOT! More importantly, Wasn't the pale-faced cloaked BASTARD here!?"

In the Japanese version, Frog is clearly offended as being seen as food for a cave woman, and as a result replies with condescension and disdain towards her statement by calling her an idiot, a fool. Frog is very vulgar when speaking about Magus, calling him a "pale-faced" and "bastard" and yet this fits Japanese male speech as using profanities is part of male's normal communicative competence (Ide & Yoshida 1999, p. 472). In the English translation, these profanities and vulgar expressions are completely absent. They have been replaced with the word "lass", meaning girl or young woman (Cambridge Dictionary, unknown date) and the somewhat odd expression "the blue-haired one". He also uses the archaic English verb "whither" and according to Cambridge Dictionary (Unknown date) it means meaning "To where", which means that Frog said "To where the blue-haired one?" This sounds extremely unnatural as the word "whither" is an interrogative adverb while the usage of "whither" can vary depending upon the context. In this case a verb, such as "go", has to be present at the end of the sentence, otherwise it becomes grammatically incorrect.

This would be a type of video game localization that is not uncommon to resort to censorship. As can be seen in the source text, The Japanese version of Frog is using vulgar expressions quite a lot and the English uses none at all, or tries to replace them with milder, Old English-sounding insults. This removes the personality aspect of rudeness and the rough edges of Frog, and instead present him acting like a grandiose speaking character the likeness to characters out of a Shakespeare play. The skopos theory would argue that the translation must adhere to be understood by its targeted audience with a certain purpose, which in this case is to make Frog appear like knight speaking in a pseudo-Shakespearean English. Indeed, the characteristics of his speech style is very relatable and recognizable as the archetypical knight, but the foreign characteristics of the original version have been changed and are not present in the English version. For this reason, it could be argued this is Venuti's concept of domestication, because the changes were motivated for the sake of fluency and perhaps even an ethnocentric purpose of making him a archetypical knight and remove elements or traces of a Japanese warrior.

It becomes even more apparent the presence of censorship of vulgar expressions in the next scene where the minor antagonist Dalton, whom was the former assistant to Queen Zeal, steals the party's time machine and also captures them on the Blackbird, the last remaining aircraft of the Antiquity. The party successfully escapes to the outer left-wing of the aircraft and see Dalton flying around in the time machine displaying his arrogance as the king of this new world to the party, to which Frog replies the following:

**ST:** 「この野郎ーッ！」

**RT:** "Kono yarou-!"

**TT:** "Cheerio...!"

**AT:** "You bastard!"

Here is another good example of censorship. Instead of directly translating the meaning of 此の野郎 (*kono yarou*), it has been substituted with an expression which has unrelated meaning

in comparison to the original expression used in the source text. "Cheerio" is in fact an informal British greeting or parting (Merriam Webster, Unknown Date). Usually, it is mostly used in a humorous or informal situation. There are few problems with this localization. The first is that it creates a strange contrast where Frog is using an informal greeting towards a character that is malicious, megalomaniac and ill-willed. The second is that it breaks the two important rules in the skopos theory: the coherence rule and the fidelity rule. The usage of this expression seems to serve the purpose of making Frog sound Shakespearean but without understanding what it actually means and as a result it loses meaning. As a result it makes this scene not very coherent nor does it have any consistency with the source text making it intentionally or unintentionally free translation, which the skopos theory does not encourage.

## 8. Summary and conclusion

It has become very evident while analyzing *Chrono Trigger*, and in particular the character Frog, how his characteristics and nuances were overlooked during the localization process. In general terms of video game translation, there are many difficulties and issues that can arise when translating a Japanese video game and how much should be changed for the sake of adaptation. Japanese as a language is linguistically rich in detail and variety to how the speaker can express themselves based on their identity through the many features of male and female speech. While the English language also has defined male and female language to a certain degree it is never as clearly outlined as Japanese that has culturally as well as socially well-defined these linguistic features that the distinction never causes confusion whether the speaker's identity by looking purely at the use of language.

Moreover, because of these difficulties in translation and localization, it is difficult to completely answer if the unusual yet creative translation method done by Ted Woosley may have been an attempt to keep certain aspect and characteristics of the original version. In the case of Frog in the Japanese version, although a Medieval European-style knight, by his use of language he can be defined as a tough stereotypical warrior whom speaks directly his mind with strong emphasis by his use of sentence-final particle *zo* and *ze*. He is not concerned with formality but rather is quite informal with almost everyone as he addresses himself with the pronoun *ore* and can be quite rude in some situations with the use of profanities and vulgar

expressions. These traits of his personality were never entirely conveyed in the English translation as his style of speech was morphed into the likes of Shakespearean acting in order to portray him as knight. He is quite formal and speaks in an unnatural and grandiose way with archaic vocabulary and consistently avoids being rude by not using profanities or vulgar expressions even towards his greatest enemy and replaces these with words that have no semantic connection.

However, even if Frog's characteristics were changed to the extreme of practically becoming a case of Venuti's concept of domestication, as the foreign elements of Frog's personality became absent during localization, completely replaced by elements of a poor attempt to adapt a form of Shakespearean-style of speech, the core message of Frog's dialogue was coherent with all its faults, as the actual translation of the game is not at fault either. The game's narrative of the story, the world it presents and its elements and themes are very coherent and it would be utmost unlikely for the player not to be able to understand the game world the player is exposed to from the very start. This very reasoning would make the translation and localization of Frog's personality justifiable, as it is an attempt to adapt or convey his original characteristics with the usage of newer, more familiar elements of the character that would prove a more approachable and easily understood character type by its targeted audience. The most important goal of video game localization can be realized when a player's exposure to a video game's world also brings understanding and coherence of its characters, themes and story to the player.

## 9. Reference List

### Printed sources

- Bernal-Merino, MA. 2017. *Translation and Localisation in Video Games: Making Entertainment Software Global*. 1st edition. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chino, N. 1991. *All About Particles: A Handbook of Japanese Function Words*. 1st edition. Tokyo: Kodansha International.
- Hasegawa, Y. 2012. *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Ide, S. & Yoshida, M. 1999. Sociolinguistics: Honorifics and Gender Differences. Tsujimura, N (editor). *The Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell. pp. 444-481.
- Mangiron, C. 2012. *The Localisation of Japanese Video Games: Striking the Right Balance*. *The Journal of Internationalization and Localization*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1-20.
- Munday, J. 2012. *Introducing Translation Studies Theories and Applications*. 3rd edition. Abingdon: Routledge.
- O'Hagan, M. 2009. *Evolution of User-generated Translation: Fansubs, Translation Hacking and Crowdsourcing*. *The Journal of Internationalization and Localization*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 94-121.
- Taavitsainen, Irma. Jucker, Andreas H. 2003. *Diachronic Perspectives on Address Term Systems*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Williams, Michael P. 2014. *Chrono Trigger*. Los Angeles: Boss Fight Books.

### Internet sources

- Airnet.Takasugi, S. 2004. *8.1. Pronouns*. Available at: <http://www.sf.airnet.ne.jp/ts/japanese/pronoun.html> (2017-11-29)
- Cambridge Dictionary. Unknown Date. *Lad*. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lad> (2017-12-19)
- Cambridge Dictionary. Unknown Date. *Lass*. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/lass> (2017-12-19)
- Cambridge Dictionary. Unknown Date. *Whither*. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/whither> (2017-12-19)

Chrono Compendium. 2007. *Chrono Trigger Comprehensive Script: Script Perfection Project*. Available at: <https://static.chronocompendium.com/Black/Publications/ChronoTriggerComprehensiveScript.txt> (2017-10-12)

Cifaldi, F. 2005. *Playing Catch-Up: Ted Woolsey*. Available at: [https://www.gamasutra.com/php-bin/news\\_index.php?story=6361](https://www.gamasutra.com/php-bin/news_index.php?story=6361) (2017-10-16)

Cooney, S. 1999. *A Note on Shakespeare's Grammar*. Available at: <https://homepages.wmich.edu/~cooneys/tchg/lit/adv/shak.gram.html> (2017-12-17)

Hemann, K. 2016. Book Reviews. *Asianscape: Digital Asia*, No volume given, no. 3, pp. 97-105. Available at: [https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/41752601/Hemann\\_Review\\_of\\_Boss\\_Fight\\_Books\\_Series.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1508243174&Signature=fKtkr%2FfJlBCStbt1trsHqet%2B6Eo%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DReview\\_of\\_the\\_Boss\\_Fight\\_Books\\_Series.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/41752601/Hemann_Review_of_Boss_Fight_Books_Series.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1508243174&Signature=fKtkr%2FfJlBCStbt1trsHqet%2B6Eo%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DReview_of_the_Boss_Fight_Books_Series.pdf) (2017-10-17)

Mangiron, C & O'Hagan, M. 2006. *Game Localisation: Unleashing Imagination with 'Restricted' Translation*. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, No volume given, no. 2, pp. 10-21. Available at: [http://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art\\_ohagan.php](http://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art_ohagan.php) (2017-10-17)

Merriam-Webster. Unknown Date. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cheerio> (2017-12-19)

Nordquist, R. 2017 (Updated). *Second-Person Pronouns Glossary of Grammatical and Rhetorical Terms - Definitions and Examples*. Available at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/second-person-pronouns-1691931> (2017-12-04)

Lexiconic. Unknown date. *Common Words & Phrases in Shakespeare's World*. Available at: <http://learn.lexiconic.net/shakewords.htm> (2017-11-10)

Player One Podcast. 2007. *Interview with Ted Woolsey*. Available at: <http://www.playeronepodcast.com/forum/index.php?/topic/145-transcript-of-ted-woolsey-interview/> (2017-12-27)

Schonfeld, A. 1999. *Manifestations of Gender Distinction in the Japanese Language*. Archived 2010 and Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20100922054815/http://www.postmeta.com/jpjm.htm> (2017-12-07)

Shakespeare's Words. 2008. *Verb Forms*. Available at: <http://www.shakespeareswords.com/Verb-forms> (2017-12-12)

Xia, X. 2013. *Gender Differences in Using Language*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Volume 3, No 8, pp. 1485-1489. Available at: <http://www.academypublication.com/issues/past/tp/s/vol03/08/28.pdf> (2017-12-06)

### Other sources

Squaresoft (today Square Enix Holdings Co., Ltd.). 1995. Chrono Trigger Instruction Booklet. pp. 5-8.