

## **Guidelines for future localization of educational materials**

**Localization is the process of adapting a piece of content's full meaning for a new region, including translation, associated imagery, and cultural elements that influence how the content will be perceived. What we have learned from various experiences, including the localization of Fake kNOw more project materials is that the process is a particularly complex one and needs attention.**

**The process of translation and localization included both the manual with lesson scenarios 'Understand Emotions. Become Resilient to Disinformation', the educational game 'Octogram' and video content. Below we collected useful guidelines and tips for future localizations that come directly from our experience. They will be helpful for organizations localizing these specific materials, as well as other educational materials. We hope that project leaders will find them valuable and they will contribute to supporting and improving the localization process in partner organizations from other countries.**

Already at the stage of conceptual work, certain issues can be taken care of. That will make translation and localization go more smoothly and quicker. A clear, structured layout of the main material and supplementary materials is helpful for translators and localizers. Numerous repetitions make the work more demanding, but this can be prevented by using CAT (Computer Assisted Translation) tools. It will contribute to making terminology more consistent, as well as ensuring that the same passages in various materials have identical wording. It is worth considering including the expectation of using CAT tools (such as Trados Studio, Wordfast, memoQ or others) to the requirements for a translator.

The project leader should consider the possibility of additional consultations with the localizing partner and provide availability and time for this. It is advisable for the leader to be flexible and open to the proposed translation and localization strategies – it may happen that certain solutions are far from the original, but closer to the audience in each market. It is worth considering consulting with partners and drawing on the experience of other organizations already at the stage of developing the material. The expectations of teachers/educators who will ultimately work with the material are also important – it may turn out that they are different in different markets and the potential of each type of material is

not always realized (for instance, in some countries the teachers/educators don't find the presentations useful, while in others – they can't imagine doing without).

In the process, when questions or concerns arise, it is important to ensure a smooth flow of information between all parties. The simplest solutions are the best, this can be ensured by creating a draft version of the document where everyone can ask questions while seeing the concerns of others and the answers / suggestions of the leader.

It takes a lot of work to locate footnotes, images, literature references and links to articles or reports. Sometimes finding the same or similar data in studies from a given market is difficult and time- and resource-consuming, if not impossible. What will certainly be helpful and streamline the work is to use literature and links in English already at the stage of creating the material – it will be easier to check whether the source text has been translated into a foreign language or it will make it easier for those working on the text to understand in depth what to look for. Where possible, it is best to make the context as close to the audience as possible – such as references to specific national laws or descriptions of cases. If perfect reproduction in the target language is not possible, for versions from culturally similar countries, the solution may be to leave the original content in place.

Whether the material is translated internally by the organization, or its translation is outsourced to external specialists – the process takes much more time than one might expect. The experience of partner organizations shows that the time required for translation and localization of currently available (as of June 2024) materials is at least 3 months. One of the lessons learned is that cooperation with teachers/educators is invaluable and they should be included in the process. Experts with pedagogical experience are a source of valuable comments, they test materials with their students and provide input after the test work. It seems ideal to outsource translations to professionals with pedagogical experience/background, to have a broader view from the beginning of the process and save time for corrections at later stages. At the same time, the competence of professional translators and the tools they use cannot be overestimated, it is worth looking very carefully in the market for a translator who meets these conditions to save yourself time and additional work later.

Alternatively, if finding a translator who meets the above conditions is a challenge, a person who works with this type of material on a daily basis should be involved in the proofreading process.

For game localization, the process should be supported by testing with the target group. It is highly likely that instructions will need to be simplified.

As for any video content, the best solution is to record it in the language of the country with subtitles. Due to various constraints, this is not always possible, and it is necessary to record a single language version, in which case the most sensible solution is to record in English and prepare subtitles in the target languages, although this is still a solution that excludes some vulnerable groups.

Recording in Polish and subtitling in the target languages is difficult to receive and gives the impression of artificiality.

Last, but not least - the leader should provide guidelines for translating partner organizations' own names. It should be checked whether the organizations use the name in their own language and in English, or only the first one, to avoid literal translation into the target languages, which gives the impression that a completely different entity is involved.

**To sum up:**

1. The process is a complex and time-consuming one.
2. The structure of the material is of key importance.
3. It is highly recommended to use CAT tools for translation and the translator should be selected wisely, taking into consideration not only his or her language skills, but also area of specialization.
4. The project leader not only should provide time and resources for consultation, but also ensure smooth communication and provide a list of translations of the organization's names.
5. Teachers are a valuable source of inestimable input.
6. Whenever possible references, literature and video content should be provided in English.



Guidelines was developed as part of FAKE kNOw MORE led by the School with Class Foundation in collaboration with the Demagog Association (Poland), Fakescape (Czech Republic), Smilemundo (Spain), and Adfaber (Romania) with the support of the EMIF managed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

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