

Player Reception and User Experience of Casual Language in Video Game Localization: A Case Study of *Genshin Impact* in Indonesian

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ABSTRACT: While the ultimate goal of video game localization is to provide an immersive and engaging experience for players, direct feedback from the players themselves is rarely measured. This study aims to fill that gap by investigating how Indonesian players receive the use of casual language in the localization of *Genshin Impact*, and how this reception impacts their overall user experience. Using the Game Translation User Research (GTUR) framework, the study utilized a quantitative reception survey distributed to Indonesian gamers. By using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the study found that players cognitively process casual language into two distinct factors: Language Variation (everyday slang) and Humour-Wordplay.

The results reveal that the use of casual language is not only highly favored but also deeply impactful, accounting for 33.3% of the variance in players' overall satisfaction. Correlation analysis showed that localized slang and jokes strongly improve players' cognitive comprehension of the game's lore. Furthermore, the demographic analysis uncovered a unique "bilingual paradox", in which players with advanced English proficiency actually gave the highest reception scores, showing a deep appreciation for the translators' creative "transcreation" efforts. Additionally, female players showed a significantly higher appreciation for the emotional nuances in the casual dialogue. Qualitative feedback also revealed that players highly appreciate the integration of local internet memes and socio-

political jokes, provided they are not used inappropriately during serious narrative moments. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that allowing translators the creative freedom to use natural, localized slang rather than stiff, literal translation is a highly effective strategy to enhance player engagement and foster community trust.

Keywords: *Game Localization, Casual Language, Humour, Translation Reception, Genshin Impact*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Video games have evolved from simple entertainment products into complex interactive media that shape culture, communication, and everyday digital practices. Beyond their commercial value, games also function as spaces for storytelling, identity formation, and cross-cultural exchange. Previous research has shown that gaming may support cognitive development, attention, and learning engagement, while the industry itself continues to expand as a major global cultural and economic force. In this context, the way games are translated and localized has become increasingly important, because linguistic and cultural adaptation directly influences how players access and experience game content.

Since video games are meant to be fun, the biggest difference between translating regular software and translating a video game is the "entertainment value" (Esselink, 2000). Because of this, translating a game is not just about changing words from English to Indonesian; it is about keeping the fun and emotional connection intact. A video game relies heavily on the player's belief that the game world is real (*magic circle*) (Sageng, 2019). If a character speaks using stiff, robotic language instead of natural slang, the player's illusion breaks, and their immersion is ruined immediately.

As games circulate across languages and regions, localization is no longer a secondary technical process, but a central part of game distribution and reception. Within the broader framework of globalization, internationalization, localization, and translation (GILT) outlined by O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), localization involves more than transferring words from one language into another. It requires adjusting linguistic choices, humour, cultural references, stylistic registers, and communicative tone so that the game feels natural and meaningful to the target audience. In other words, localization is expected not

only to make the game understandable, but also to make it experientially convincing for local players.

Recent scholarship has increasingly emphasized the importance of user-centered perspectives in game localization research. Deckert et al. (2024) propose the Game Translation User Research (GTUR) framework, which highlights the interplay among facets of translated games, facets of user experience, and facets of game users. This framework is particularly relevant because it shifts attention away from translation as text alone and toward translation as something received, interpreted, and evaluated by players within specific social and cultural contexts. However, despite this growing theoretical interest, empirical studies that quantitatively examine player reception in localized games remain relatively limited, especially in non-Western contexts such as Indonesia. This scarcity of player-centered data is a recurring challenge in developing markets; as Al-Batineh (2024, p. 133) argues in a recent study on Arabic gamers, “understanding players' reception of localization approaches is crucial to evolving localization approaches and maximizing players' gaming experience”.

This gap is especially important in relation to casual language. In localized game dialogue, the use of slang, informal expressions, humour, and playful wording can shape how players perceive character relationships, emotional tone, and narrative naturalness. Casual language may help dialogue sound more relatable, but it may also be risky if it feels forced, culturally inappropriate, or inconsistent with the game world. For Indonesian players, this issue is particularly relevant because local game translations have often been stereotyped as stiff, overly formal, or unnatural. As a result, the question is no longer simply whether a game has been translated into Indonesian, but whether the translated language feels alive, fitting, and enjoyable to the players who use it.

Among recent game titles, *Genshin Impact* provides an especially relevant case for examining this issue. Its Indonesian localization has generated noticeable community discussion, particularly around its use of informal expressions, such as slang-like dialogue and humorous phrasing. Such responses suggest that casual language in localization is not merely a stylistic ornament, but a meaningful component of reception. Nevertheless, community impressions alone are insufficient. What still needed is empirical evidence showing how Indonesian-speaking players receive these casual language features, how

such reception relates to their broader user experience, and whether that reception differs across player groups.

Therefore, this study investigates Indonesian players' reception of casual language in the localization of *Genshin Impact*, specifically focuses on two core dimensions of casual language reception that emerged from the validated instrument: *Language Variation* and *Humour-Wordplay*. These dimensions are treated as the central evaluative features through which players respond to the game's casual localization. The study then examines how this reception is associated with broader dimensions of user experience, namely comprehension, immersion, affective responses, and overall satisfaction. In addition, the study explores whether demographic and user-related factors, such as age, gender, gaming habits, English proficiency, and prior negative translation experiences, shape differences in players' evaluations.

By adopting this design, the present study does not treat immersion, comprehension, and affective responses as part of the same validated reception scale. Instead, it distinguishes between the players' reception of casual language features and the experiential outcomes that may be linked to that reception. This distinction is important both conceptually and methodologically, because it allows the study to remain aligned with the GTUR framework while offering a clearer explanation of how localized textual features relate to players' experiences. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute empirical evidence to game localization research in Indonesia and to provide a more precise account of how casual language operates within the reception of localized games.

As video games continue to expand globally, localization has become essential for making game content accessible and meaningful to diverse audiences. Ideally, a localized game should provide a playing experience that feels clear, natural, and culturally resonant to its target users. However, this ideal remains difficult to achieve in the Indonesian context, where localized versions of global games have often been criticized for sounding excessively formal, rigid, or disconnected from the communicative habits of actual players. Such translation choices may weaken character voice, emotional nuance, and humorous effect, ultimately shaping the perception that Indonesian localization is less engaging than the original version. Despite its importance, direct player feedback is rarely measured. Mangiron (2018) notes that 'reception studies', which gather the audience's direct

evaluation, are still exceptionally rare in the field of game localization, as most research focuses solely on textual analysis. Most studies only focus on the text itself, not the people playing it. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by finding out how Indonesian gamers actually perceive translated casual language and humor, and how it affects their overall gaming experience.

This issue becomes more significant when the translated language involves casual register. Informal dialogue, slang, humour, and playful wording are not neutral stylistic details; they can influence how players interpret character relationships, process narrative information, and emotionally respond to the game world. When these elements are translated awkwardly, the result is not merely linguistic inconvenience, but a disruption in player reception. In this sense, the problem is not simply whether the language is understandable, but whether it is received as natural, enjoyable, and appropriate within the localized gaming experience. As Lepre (2015) argues, humour is a fundamental, yet incredibly difficult component to localize within the interactive audiovisual modalities of video games, making it highly vulnerable to translation loss if approached too rigidly.

Despite the practical importance of this issue, empirical research on Indonesian players' reception of casual language in game localization remains limited. Existing discussions are often based on anecdotal community reactions or broad assumptions about player preferences. Moreover, previous thinking in this area may easily blur two distinct levels of analysis: first, players' evaluative reception of translated language features, and second, the user-experience dimensions that may be associated with that reception. Maintaining this distinction is essential. In the present study, the primary validated construct concerns players' reception of casual language features, operationalized through *Language Variation* and *Humour-Wordplay*. By contrast, *immersion*, *comprehension*, *affective responses*, and *overall satisfaction* are treated as related user-experience outcomes rather than as part of the same core scale.

Another unresolved issue that remains insufficiently addressed is the variation among users themselves. The player base of contemporary online games is heterogeneous in terms of age, gender, gaming habits, linguistic competence, and prior experiences with localized content. It remains unclear whether positive reception of casual language is broadly shared across these groups or whether it varies according to specific demographic and experiential

factors. Without such evidence, localization decisions risk relying on generalized assumptions rather than on player-based data.

Accordingly, the present study addresses three interrelated issues. First, there is limited empirical evidence on how Indonesian players receive casual language in game localization. Second, the relationship between that reception and broader dimensions of user experience remains underexplored. Third, it is still unclear how user-related factors shape differences in that reception. By addressing these issues through a quantitative design, the study seeks to provide a clearer and more methodologically coherent account of casual language reception in the Indonesian localization of *Genshin Impact*.

While the use of casual language in game localization is a growing trend, there is still a lack of empirical research regarding how players actually receive these stylistic choices, particularly within the Indonesian gaming community. Based on the Game Translation User Research (GTUR) framework by Deckert et al. (2024), understanding the effectiveness of a localization strategy requires examining not only the translated text itself, but also how it impacts the players' cognitive and emotional experience, as well as how demographic characteristics moderate this reception. Therefore, this study attempts to address these gaps. In more depth, this study formulates the following research questions to investigate the impact of casual language localization in *Genshin Impact*:

1. How do Indonesian players receive the casual language features (specifically language variation and humour-wordplay) in *Genshin Impact*'s localization?
2. To what extent does the reception of these casual language features correlate with players' in-game user experience (including comprehension, immersion, affective responses, and overall satisfaction)?
3. How do individual player characteristics—such as gender, age, gaming frequency, and English proficiency—moderate their reception of the casual localization?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Evolution of Game Localization

In the early days of the video game industry, especially during the 1980s and 1990s, translating a game was a very simple process. According to O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013),

early consoles like the 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) had very little memory space, resulting in only a small amount of text could only be stored. As a result, early game translations were usually very literal, stiff, and often omitted just to fit into the screen. At that time, translation was mostly done by non-professionals, which caused many famous mistranslations and awkward dialogue.

However, as video games became a massive global industry, game developers realized that, if a game's translation was bad, players in other countries would not enjoy it, and the game would fail commercially (Bernal-Merino, 2015). This situation forced the industry to change its approach as selling games to foreign markets required more than just literal translation. The process evolved into "localization." In modern game localization, the main goal is not just linguistic accuracy, but adapting the game's culture and feeling so that the product can be sold successfully as an entertainment medium. According to Mangiron (2018), the ultimate goal of game localization today is to make the game feel like it was originally made for the target country, giving the local players the exact same emotional and cognitive experience as the original players.

2.2 Casual Language and Humor in Localization

Because the focus of localization has shifted toward user experience, translators are now given more freedom to adapt the text. To make the game world believable, translators must use the everyday language of the target audience.

This freedom is especially important when dealing with humor. Translating humor and wordplay is considered one of the hardest challenges in localization (Delabastita, 1996). Humor in video games serves as a vital tool to build character identity, relieve player stress, and make the gameplay more fun (Lepre, 2015). However, humor is rarely universal. Davis (2013) explains that every culture has its own "humor codes," meaning a joke that is funny in English might be very confusing in Indonesian. Gil Puerto (2016) and Checa López (2025) agree that a literal translation almost always fails when dealing with jokes or puns. To fix this, translators often have to substitute the original joke with a local equivalent so that the local players can still laugh and understand the dialogue.

2.3 Measuring Player Reception

Consequently, user-centric research in video game translation now focuses heavily on how players themselves experience and evaluate these localized elements. When casual language and humor are translated well, they heavily support the player's immersion. Carrigy et al. (2010) describe immersion as a "magic circle"—a state where players are so focused they forget the real world. Hammami (2025) proved that a smooth immersive experience directly creates user engagement, which then leads to overall user satisfaction. This proves that, if a translation is stiff or awkward, the magic circle breaks, and the player gets distracted.

To measure this immersion and satisfaction, reception-based work has increasingly used surveys to examine how players evaluate localized content. A key development in this direction is Costales (2016)'s Game Users Translation Survey (GUTSY), which showed that players' expectations are heavily shaped by their English proficiency. Recent experimental work by Deckert and Hejduk (2024) also showed that even surface-level translation errors can lower scores on usability. Taken together, these studies highlight the importance of asking the players directly. As Mangiron (2018) notes, game localization aspires to offer an engaging experience, yet systematic empirical validation of this goal remains limited, especially in emerging markets like Indonesia. This study aims to fill that exact gap.

3.0 METHODS

This study adopts the User-Centered Translation (UCT) approach, as recommended by Su et al. (2023), meaning the translation process must prioritize the gamers themselves. To systematically measure this, the research uses the Game Translation User Research (GTUR) framework by Deckert et al. (2024). This framework maps player reception into three interrelated areas: the facets of translated games, the facets of user experience, and the facets of users. By mapping the study onto this framework, the research effectively isolates how translated casual language influences player reception among the Indonesian player base.

Within the context of this study, the facets of translated games serve as the main focus. Specifically, it looks at the use of casual language in the Indonesian localization of

Genshin Impact. The study groups these textual features into two central constructs: Language Variation (slang and everyday words) and Humour-Wordplay. Although sometimes treated separately, factor analysis consistently showed that players view humor and wordplay as one single experiential dimension, which aligns with Lepre's (2015) theory that wordplay is the main tool for creating humor in translated games.

To capture how players cognitively and emotionally react to these textual features, data were collected using a self-report questionnaire. This method follows the reception study models previously used by Mangiron (2018), Alshahrani (2024), and Ellefsen & Bernal-Merino (2018). The questionnaire was divided into three main sections. The first section collected demographic data and player profiles (facets of users), such as age, gender, English proficiency, and gaming frequency, which act as moderating variables.

The second section measured Player Reception towards the translated game. Based on an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), this scale consisted of 10 items grouped into Language Variation (5 items) and Humour-Wordplay (5 items). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale. Both factors demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.814 for Language Variation and 0.860 for Humour-Wordplay. The final section explored specific facets of user experience, including Immersion, Comprehension, Affective Responses, and a single global item to assess overall satisfaction.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Before analyzing the core variables of player reception and user experience, it is essential to establish the demographic landscape of the participants. A total of 488 valid responses were collected from Indonesian *Genshin Impact* players. Understanding the demographic composition, ranging from age and gender to gaming habits and linguistic proficiency, provides critical context, as these factors inherently shape how a localized text is consumed and evaluated.

2. Apa jenis kelaminmu?

488 jawaban

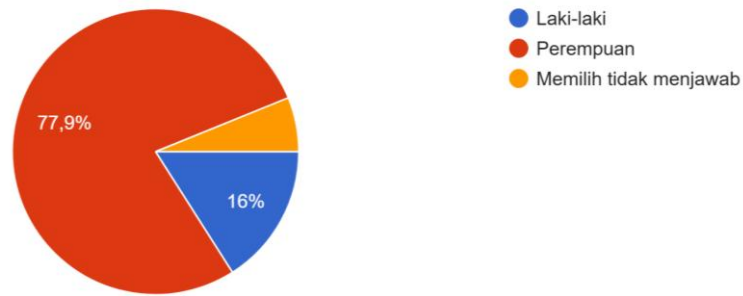


Figure 1. Gender Distribution

Regarding gender distribution, the sample exhibited a prominent imbalance that is quite characteristic of the *Genshin Impact* community in Indonesia. Female players dominated the respondent pool, accounting for 77.9% ($N = 380$), while male players comprised 16.0% ($N = 78$), and the remaining 6.1% ($N = 30$) preferred not to disclose their gender. This heavy female representation is notable, as it reflects the game's success in attracting a diverse demographic beyond the traditional male-dominated gaming stereotype, likely driven by the game's aesthetic appeal, character-driven narratives, and character relationship dynamics.

1. Berapa usiamu?

488 jawaban

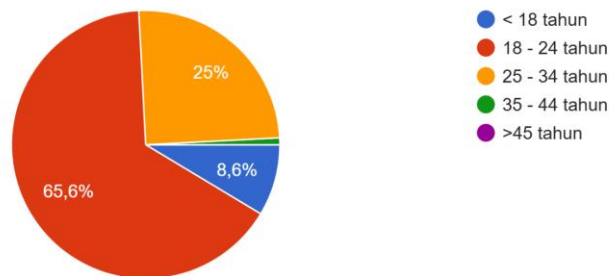


Figure 2. Age Group

In terms of age, the vast majority of respondents belong to the young adult demographic, specifically the 18–24 years old category, which constitutes 65.6% ($N = 320$) of the total sample. This is followed by the 25–34 years old group at 25.0% ($N = 122$), while players under 18 years old and those between 35–44 years old make up the smallest portions ($N = 42$ and $N = 4$, respectively). This indicates that the localized text is primarily consumed by Gen Z and younger Millennials, a generation highly integrated with internet culture and contemporary Indonesian slang.

5. Sampai saat ini, berapa total jam kamu bermain Genshin Impact?

488 jawaban

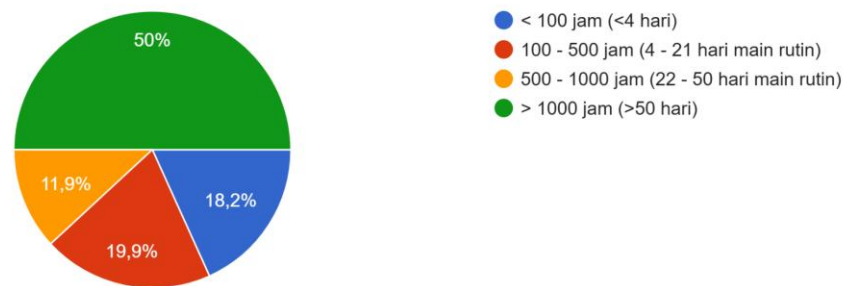


Figure 3. Total playtime

Furthermore, the respondents demonstrated an extraordinarily high level of engagement with the game. An overwhelming 69.9% ($N = 341$) reported playing *Genshin Impact* every single day, and exactly 50% of the total sample ($N = 244$) have accumulated more than 1,000 hours of total playtime. This high frequency and immense playtime solidify the validity of the sample as the data is not derived from casual passersby, but from "hardcore" veteran players who have been continuously exposed to the game's localized text over extended periods.

3. Bagaimana penilaian kamu terhadap kemampuan bahasa Inggrismu?

488 jawaban

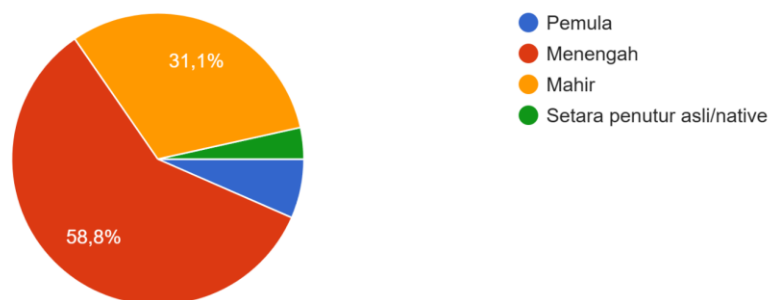


Figure 4. English Proficiency Level

Linguistic competence is another crucial measurement in translation reception studies. When asked to self-evaluate their English proficiency, the respondents varied widely, though leaning towards higher competency. The majority identified as having 'Intermediate' proficiency ($N = 287$), followed closely by 'Advanced' ($N = 152$). A smaller segment identified as 'Beginner' ($N = 32$) and 'Native-like' ($N = 17$). This distribution is particularly important for this study, as it ensures that the evaluation of the Indonesian localization is not merely a result of players not understanding the original/pivot English

text, but rather a conscious preference and reception by a largely bilingual or functionally proficient audience.

6. Apakah kamu pernah berhenti bermain Genshin Impact karena kualitas
488 jawaban

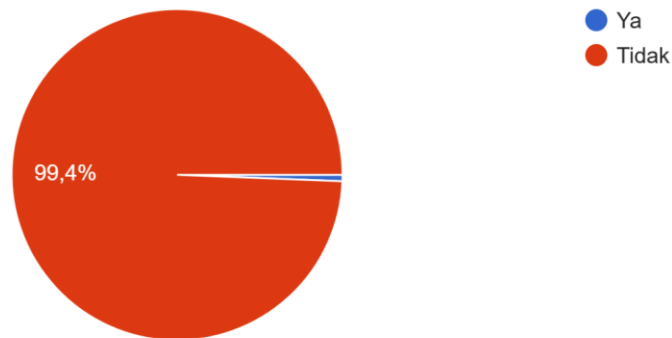


Figure 5. Whether they had ever discontinued playing due to poor translation quality

Finally, when asked whether they had ever discontinued playing a game specifically due to poor translation quality, 99.4% ($N = 485$) answered "No". While this highlights a high tolerance level among the active player base, it also indicates that the survey predominantly captured players who are currently comfortable with the game's localization state. Together, these demographic facets—young, female-dominated, highly engaged, and linguistically proficient—provide the analytical foundation for examining the reception of casual language in *Genshin Impact* in the subsequent sections.

4.2 Instrument Validation and Baseline Reception

Game Translation User Research (GTUR), which maps the parameters of game localization research into interconnected sets of facets (Deckert et al., 2024), serves as the theoretical basis for this study's measurement instrument. However, apart from defining the facets theoretically, evaluating player reception cannot proceed without first ensuring that the measurement scale is reliable and robust. Therefore, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was initially conducted on the questionnaire items. Prior to the extraction, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy with a value of 0.897, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed that the correlations between items were sufficiently large ($p < .001$), justifying the factor analysis.

Arriving at the conclusion of a 10-item primary scale. Starting from there, the analysis identified two distinct subcategories of casual language reception: Language Variation (5 items) and Humour-Wordplay (5 items). From this division, the researcher examined the internal consistency and found both constructs to be highly reliable, with Cronbach's alpha (α) scores of 0.814 for Language Variation and 0.860 for Humour-Wordplay (see Table 1).

In addition, the researcher examined the data distribution before moving to the inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics revealed negatively skewed distributions and elevated kurtosis values across the constructs, particularly for Language Variation (Skewness = -2.10, Kurtosis = 6.99) and Overall Reception (Kurtosis = 5.37). Despite deviating from the strict assumption of normality, the substantial sample size of this study ($N = 488$) ensures that the sampling distribution of the mean approximates normality in accordance with the Central Limit Theorem (Field, 2018). Thus, proceeding with parametric statistical testing is methodologically doable.

From the validation and descriptive data above, the analysis moved to answer the question regarding how Indonesian players receive the casual language features in Genshin Impact Indonesian localization. The players' mean scores were tested against a neutral midpoint of 3.0 using a one-sample t-test. This study recorded a very high overall reception score of $M = 4.56$ ($SD = 0.47$). A closer look reveals that Language Variation scored $M = 4.61$ ($SD = 0.49$), while Humour-Wordplay scored $M = 4.50$ ($SD = 0.56$). In addition to reception, players also reported a remarkably high level of overall satisfaction with the localization, as measured by a single global item ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.61$). These findings establish a solid baseline that the strategic use of casual registers is highly well-received (see Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, and Reception Scores ($N = 488$)

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>α</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
<i>Overall Reception</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>.89</i>	<i>4.56</i>	<i>0.47</i>	<i>-1.77</i>	<i>5.37</i>
<i>Language Variation</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>.81</i>	<i>4.61</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>-2.10</i>	<i>6.99</i>
<i>Humour-Wordplay</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>.86</i>	<i>4.50</i>	<i>0.56</i>	<i>-1.40</i>	<i>2.32</i>
<i>Overall Satisfaction</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>4.60</i>	<i>0.61</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>

*Note. All mean scores are significantly higher than the neutral midpoint of 3.0 at $p < .001$ based on one-sample t-tests.

4.3 The Impact of Casual Language on User Experience

Having established that the players hold a highly favorable view of the casual language features, the analysis proceeds to address the second question: To what extent does the reception of these features correlate with players' in-game user experience? Therefore, a bivariate Pearson correlation analysis was first conducted to examine the relationship between the reception of casual language and three specific user experience dimensions: Comprehension, Immersion, and Affective Responses (measured specifically as stress reduction).

From the correlation data presented in Table 2, Language Variation demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with Comprehension ($r = 0.549$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, it showed a moderate positive relationship with Immersion ($r = 0.470$, $p < 0.001$) and a slightly lower correlation with Affective Responses ($r = 0.397$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, Humour-Wordplay exhibited the strongest association with Comprehension ($r = 0.448$, $p < 0.001$), followed by Immersion ($r = 0.380$, $p < 0.001$) and Affective Responses ($r = 0.250$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 2 Pearson Correlations Between Casual Language Features and User Experience

User Experience Dimension	Language Variation (r)	Humour-Wordplay (r)
Comprehension	.549**	.448**
Immersion	.470**	.380**
Affective Responses (Stress Reduction)	.397**	.250**

**Note. * $p < .001$ (2-tailed).

Beyond these specific experiential dimensions, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed using the previously measured Overall Satisfaction ($M = 4.60$) as the dependent variable and the two casual language constructs as predictors. Prior to interpreting the model, a multicollinearity check yielded a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of 1.61 and a Tolerance value of 0.622, successfully meeting the assumption of non-multicollinearity.

The omnibus F-test revealed a highly significant overall model, $F(2, 485) = 85.20$, $p < 0.001$. The model produced an R^2 value of 0.333. When examining the individual predictor

effects, both variables emerged as statistically significant contributors. The results showed that Humour-Wordplay is a significant positive predictor ($\beta = .322$, $t = 6.85$, $p < .001$), as is Language Variation ($\beta = 0.320$, $t = 6.82$, $p < .001$).

4.4 Demographic Moderation on Localization Reception

To answer the third question, whether individual player characteristics moderate their reception of the casual localization or not, the researcher conducted a series of comparative analyses to determine whether overall reception differs significantly across demographic groups. Given the unequal sample sizes across the demographic categories (e.g., disproportionate gender and English proficiency distributions), Welch's ANOVA was uniformly utilized as it does not strictly assume equal variances. The complete statistical summary is presented in Table 3.

The one-way ANOVA indicated no statistically significant difference in reception scores across different age groups ($F = 1.20$, $p = 0.345$), nor across play frequencies ($F = 0.417$, $p = .749$) and total accumulated playtime ($F = 1.02$, $p = 0.387$). Regarding gender, a Welch's ANOVA revealed a significant difference in overall reception scores (Welch's $F = 6.38$, $p = 0.003$). A subsequent Games-Howell post-hoc test demonstrated that female respondents reported significantly higher reception scores ($M = 4.60$) compared to their male counterparts ($M = 4.36$, $p = 0.001$). The 'prefer not to answer' group did not significantly differ from either group. This suggests that female players tend to hold a more positive reception toward the casual and localized elements in the game's dialogue.

Furthermore, a significant difference emerged regarding English proficiency (Welch's $F = 4.18$, $p = 0.010$). A subsequent Games-Howell post-hoc analysis revealed a fascinating 'bilingual paradox'. Players who rated themselves as 'Native-like' in English gave significantly higher reception scores ($M = 4.79$) compared to both the Intermediate ($M = 4.57$, $p = 0.023$) and Advanced ($M = 4.54$, $p = 0.017$) groups. This suggests that players with the highest level of linguistic awareness paradoxically hold the strongest appreciation for the localized adaptation. Finally, a Welch's independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference in reception scores between players who had previously discontinued playing due to poor translation quality and those who had not ($t = -0.508$, $p = 0.662$).

Table 3 Summary of Group Comparisons on Overall Reception (N = 488)

Demographic Variable	Groups	N	M	SD	Test Statistic	p-value	Significance / Finding
Gender	<i>Male</i>	78	4.36	0.54	$F = 6.38$	.003*	Significant (Female > Male)
	<i>Female</i>	380	4.60	0.46			
	<i>Prefer not to say</i>	30	4.56	0.43			
English Proficiency	<i>Beginner</i>	32	4.40	0.76	$F = 4.18$	.010*	Significant (Native > Advanced & Intermediate)
	<i>Intermediate</i>	287	4.57	0.44			
	<i>Advanced</i>	152	4.54	0.47			
	<i>Native-like</i>	17	4.79	0.28			
Age Group	<i>< 18</i>	42	4.55	0.58	$F = 1.20$	.345	Not Significant
	<i>18 - 24</i>	320	4.59	0.44			
	<i>25 - 34</i>	122	4.49	0.51			
	<i>35 - 44</i>	4	4.15	1.13			
Play Frequency	<i>Rare</i>	2	4.65	0.35	$F = 0.417$	.749	Not Significant
	<i>Occasionally</i>	20	4.42	0.54			
	<i>Several times a week</i>	125	4.57	0.50			
	<i>Everyday</i>	341	4.56	0.47			
Total Playtime	<i>< 100 hrs</i>	89	4.53	0.47	$F = 1.02$	.387	Not Significant
	<i>100 - 500 hrs</i>	97	4.62	0.40			
	<i>500 - 1000 hrs</i>	58	4.49	0.62			

	> 1000 hrs	244	4.56	0.47			
Prior Negative Exp.	Yes	3	4.33	0.76	$t = -0.508$	.662	Not Significant
	No	485	4.56	0.48			

*Note. ANOVA results are based on Welch's F to account for unequal sample sizes and variances.

Significant at $p < 0.05$.

DISCUSSION

The current study set out to investigate how Indonesian-speaking players receive the usage of casual language in the localization of *Genshin Impact* and to what extent this reception influences their broader user experience. From the statistical calculations described in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that the casual localization strategy is highly well received and deeply impactful. Below, the nuances of these findings will be described for a brief look at the theoretical implications.

5.1 The Structural Role of Casual Language in User Experience

At first glance, the structural division of Language Variation and Humour-Wordplay during the instrument validation is very natural because, although both are elements of casual localization, players perceive everyday slang differently from comedic timing depending on the context. However, both facets work collectively as powerful drivers of player satisfaction. The regression analysis found that these two facets account for 33.3% of the variance in players' overall satisfaction. In the context of game user research, holistic satisfaction is heavily mediated by multimodal elements such as voice acting, UI design, and gameplay mechanics. Thus, accounting for a third of the variance solely through two textual facets represents a substantial effect. This indicates that the Indonesian player base does not prioritize one linguistic aspect over the other; which means that the presence of localized slang and the successful execution of comedic timing are equally important factors.

This is very natural because the localized text serves as the primary interactive bridge between the player and the game's lore. The blueprint of this dynamic is established in the Game Translation User Research (GTUR) framework by Deckert et al. (2024), who state that "the blueprint captures the three-pronged interplay between the parameters of

localisation-reception research in facets of user experience, facets of translated games, and facets of game users." By using casual language well, the localization team boosted the game's success.

The quantitative regression model is further supported by the descriptive ranking data collected from the players regarding their preferred linguistic register. When asked to rank their preferences among Formal, Casual, and Mixed (Campuran) language styles (Question 29), the data revealed a clear aversion to purely formal translations.

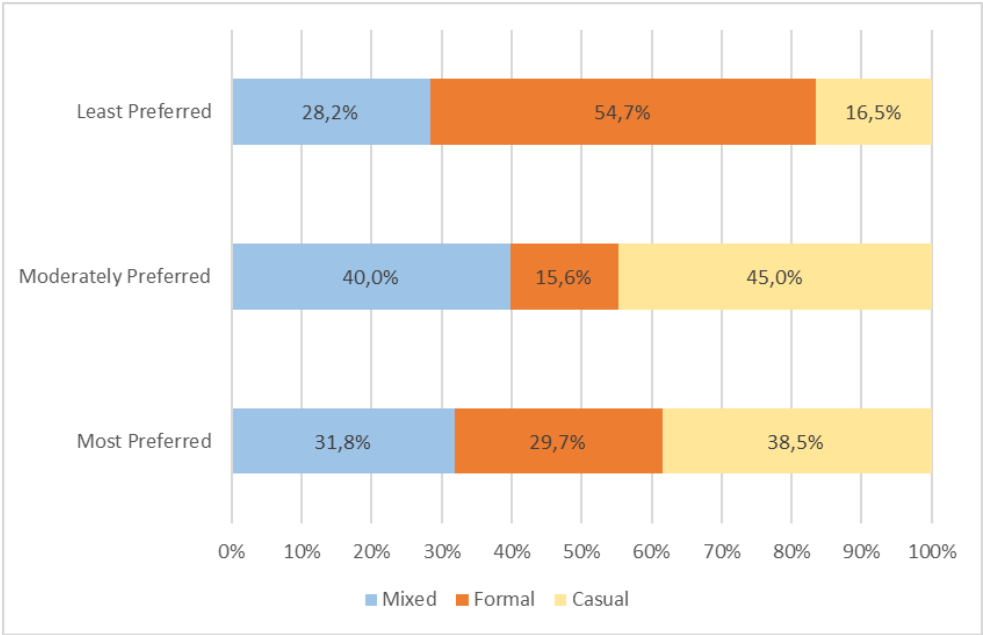


Figure 6. Player Preferences for Translation Styles: Formal, Casual, and Mixed

More than half of the respondents (54.7%, $N = 267$) ranked the "Formal" style as their least preferred option. In contrast, the "Casual" register appeared as the most favored approach with 38.5%, $N = 188$), closely followed by the "Mixed" style (31.8%, $N = 155$).

Furthermore, the "Mixed" and "Casual" styles heavily dominated the first and second-place rankings, indicating that players are highly receptive to dynamic translations. This shows firm rejection to the traditional assumption that game translations must strictly adhere to formal, standard Indonesian (*Bahasa Baku*). Instead, the players clearly desire a more relaxed translation, either purely casual or a mixed register, that utilizes everyday slang for character interactions to maintain the "magic circle" of immersion.

Based on these survey results, it is evident that the respondents prefer translations that use everyday Indonesian slang rather than formal Indonesian. This aligns with Mangiron's

(2018) statement that for players, a good translation is one that is fluent, natural, and feels like an original game, not a translated one. By using familiar words, the game successfully maintains the player's immersion.

To concretely illustrate how this fluency is achieved, an examination of the localized text is required. Although the original source language of Genshin Impact is Mandarin Chinese, this study uses the English text as the baseline Source Text (ST) for comparison. This is because English is frequently used as a 'pivot language', an indirect bridge to translate games into other languages, including Indonesian (Garcia et al., 2024; Zhang & Song, 2023). To further support the survey findings, a brief observation of the actual localized text reveals how this fluency is achieved. Textual evidence within the game strongly indicates that the Indonesian team translated from the English version rather than the original Mandarin. Table 4 provides examples documented from recent in-game quests of how formal English dialogues are creatively transformed into relatable Indonesian slang and humor.

Table 4. Examples of Casual Translation from English Pivot Text to Indonesian

Type	English Pivot Text	Indonesian Target Text	Source
Slang	Paimon: It's the middle of the night — of course it's quiet! You're not getting paranoid , are you?	Paimon: <i>Sekarang kan sudah Tengah malam – ya pasti sepi dong! Kamu parno amat sih?</i>	Archon Quest Chapter III: Act III - Dreams, Emptiness, Deception (2022) source: Genshin Impact Wiki
Humor	Sounds like an "I don't know either" to me.	<i>Kayaknya itu maksudnya "ya enggak tahu, kok tanya saya"</i>	Archon Quest Song of the Welkin Moon: Act V - A Nocturne of the Far North (2025) Voice source: Genshin Impact Wiki
Wordplay	Paimon: Anyway, by your logic, wouldn't that mean that eating... say... Zaytun Peaches — that would make a sick Paimon peachy in no time , or something?	Paimon: <i>Berarti kalau Paimon sakit terus makan Zaytun Peach, Paimon bisa langsung "zyehat" walafiat, gitu?</i>	Windblume's Breath Story Event, A Gathering of Outlanders, (2023) Voice Source: Genshin Impact Wiki

As seen in Table 4, the localization team deliberately shifted away from formal Indonesian grammar (Bahasa Baku) for casual register and internet-era slang. English-specific idioms were not translated literally as those were replaced with cultural equivalents that resonate with the local target audience. These creative and flexible choices explain the high survey scores for reception and immersion.

The quantitative findings are further complemented by the optional qualitative feedback provided by the respondents. When asked to comment on the localization, a recurring theme was the translators' ability to integrate contemporary Indonesian internet culture and socio-political memes into the game's dialogue. Several respondents specifically praised the inclusion of locally trending jokes, such as the politically viral phrase "*Ya enggak tahu, kok tanya saya*" (I don't know, why are you asking me) and references to the recent "*makan siang gratis/makanan bergizi gratis*" (free nutritious lunch) policy discourse (Respondent 1, Respondent 98, Respondent 127). They noted that such transcreation makes the game feel more "*alive*," "*relatable*," and "*highly entertaining during long quests*" (Respondent 4, Respondent 35, Respondent 38). Furthermore, one respondent highlighted that adapting the famously dry 'dad jokes' of a specific character (Cyno) into Indonesian cultural equivalents was highly successful, stating, "*The translator was able to adapt the wordplay... I often laughed out loud because the translation was just as funny as the original*" (Respondent 146). This qualitative comment confirms that, while linguistic accuracy is an important thing in localization, cultural relevance to the target audience is also as significant.

5.2 Cognitive Comprehension versus Affective Stress Reduction

In more depth, an interesting phenomenon emerged when analyzing the bivariate correlations. Both language variation and humour showed the strongest correlations with comprehension, but exhibited the weakest correlations with affective responses (stress reduction). This spread reflects the psychological reality of the gaming experience. The effective use of relatable everyday language it primarily serves a cognitive function, not merely as an aesthetic purpose, and helping players process the in-game lore without feeling alienated from the fantasy world. On the contrary, A player's mood is strongly shaped by overall gameplay challenges. (e.g., combat difficulty or the "gacha" system) rather than just the translation itself.

Despite the weaker correlation with stress relief, this finding is consistent with the foundational goal of localization as outlined by Mangiron (2018) (p. 277), who notes that "the ultimate goal of game localisation is to provide target players with an engaging and immersive gameplay experience, similar to that of the original players." The casual translation successfully fulfills its cognitive role in providing that engaging experience, even if it cannot entirely eliminate overall gameplay stress.

However, the qualitative data also reveals a boundary to this creative freedom: contextual consistency. While players appreciate casual language during everyday interactions, several respondents explicitly criticized its use during serious or emotionally tense narrative moments. One player noted, "*Sometimes the use of casual language doesn't fit the situation... it breaks the immersion during serious discussions*" (Respondent 118). Another respondent echoed this sentiment, arguing that slipping casual jokes into a tense scene makes the atmosphere feel "*inappropriately mixed with unnecessary humor*" (Respondent 98). Furthermore, inconsistencies between the formal tone of the voice acting, specifically Japanese, and the casual Indonesian subtitles were cited as a source of cognitive disconnect (Respondent 49). This suggests that, while casual language effectively reduces cognitive load and enhances affective reception in general, localizers must stay context-aware to preserve the game's dramatic tension.

5.3 Demographic Nuances and The Bilingual Paradox

Drawing on the GTUR framework, it is understood that user experience interacts dynamically with the *facets of users*. This study found that the slang and humor used in the localization possess a broad and universal appeal that transcends generational gaps and gaming frequencies, ensuring that casual players and hardcore veterans enjoy the dialogue equally. However, female players were found to be significantly more appreciative of the stylistic and emotional nuances embedded in the casual dialogue. The data showed that female players gave significantly higher reception scores than male players. The higher reception scores among female players ($M = 4.60$) compared to males ($M = 4.36$) call for further psychological contextualization. This discrepancy can be attributed to the fundamental design of *Genshin Impact* as a character-driven *gacha* game, which relies heavily on establishing parasocial relationships between the players and the fictional characters. Female players often demonstrate a higher tendency to engage with games on

an emotional and affective level, valuing character intimacy and narrative warmth. Using casual language and relatable slang removes the stiffness of formal translation, making characters feel more human and emotionally engaging.. Female players respond strongly to localized dialogue because it builds a parasocial bond, turning a digital avatar into a relatable companion. Female players may appreciate these emotional elements more deeply. However, this finding should be read carefully. The number of female respondents ($N = 380$) was much larger than male respondents ($N = 78$), which is typical for the *Genshin Impact* community but might affect the balance of the comparison.

Furthermore, a particularly interesting paradox emerged regarding English proficiency. At first glance, one might assume that highly proficient English speakers would prefer the original text and be highly critical of the Indonesian adaptation. However, this analysis revealed a fascinating 'bilingual paradox'. As previously established, players identifying as 'Native-like' in English exhibited significantly higher appreciation for the localization compared to both intermediate and advanced speakers. This paradoxically demonstrates that players with the strongest linguistic awareness possess a greater capacity to recognize the creativity and cultural adaptation required to successfully localize complex wordplay into Indonesian. As Mangiron (2018, p. 278) argues, game localisers are often granted a degree of freedom and creativity that is unusual in other types of translation in order to make players feel that the game has been originally developed for them. Bilingual players highly appreciate this creative freedom when it is executed flawlessly. However, while this 'bilingual paradox' offers a fascinating insight into the psychological reception of translated texts, it must be interpreted with caution as the subsample of players identifying as 'Native-like' was relatively small ($N=17$) compared to other proficiency groups. Nevertheless, the statistical significance observed through Welch's ANOVA strongly suggests a valid underlying trend: highly proficient players recognize the creative transcreation efforts involved in adapting complex wordplay.

Finally, although only a negligible fraction of respondents ($N = 3$) reported having previously discontinued playing due to poor localization, analyzing their qualitative feedback provides valuable insights into the limits of player tolerance. When asked to elaborate on what constituted a "poor translation," these highly critical players did not complain about the casual language or slang. Instead, their frustrations centered on

objective technical errors such as “*mistranslations*,” “*frequent typos*,” and “*incomplete sentences with missing words*.” Furthermore, one respondent specifically pointed out inconsistencies in translating in-game terminology, stating that translating certain character titles while leaving others in English created narrative confusion. This qualitative evidence reinforces the premise that players are highly tolerant, and even appreciative, of creative, casual adaptations, but they will immediately reject a localization that disrupts cognitive comprehension through fundamental linguistic errors.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate how Indonesian-speaking players receive the use of casual language in the localization of *Genshin Impact* and its subsequent impact on their overall user experience. Based on the empirical findings, this study concludes that using formal, rigid language is no longer the optimal approach for modern video game localization in Indonesia. The descriptive data revealed a clear aversion to standard, formal Indonesian (*Bahasa Baku*), with more than half of the respondents (54.7%) ranking it as their least preferred style. Instead, Indonesian gamers highly favor dynamic translations that utilize everyday slang and natural humor for character interactions.

Furthermore, this study proves that casual localization is not merely an aesthetic choice, but a functional driver of user experience. The quantitative analysis showed that the reception of casual language features—specifically *Language Variation* and *Humour-Wordplay*—accounts for 33.3% of the variance in players' overall satisfaction. These localized elements strongly correlate with improved narrative comprehension and emotional immersion. By giving translators the creative freedom to use local slang rather than strict, literal translations, the localization team is able to keep players engaged without breaking the “magic circle” of the game world.

Finally, the demographic analysis uncovered two significant moderating factors: gender and linguistic proficiency. Female players exhibited a significantly higher appreciation for the emotional nuances within casual dialogue compared to male players. More importantly, the discovery of the ‘bilingual paradox’ proves that players with native-like English proficiency do not reject the localized Indonesian text; they hold the highest appreciation for the translators' creative efforts in adapting difficult jokes and cultural references into

Indonesian context. Ultimately, this shows that localization is a creative process that builds trust, keeps players engaged, and connects emotionally with the audience.. However, *although this finding points to an intriguing bilingual paradox, it must be interpreted with caution due to the relatively small sample size of the Native-like group (N=17).*

6.1 Limitations and Future Research

Despite the positive findings, this study has several limitations. First, the data relies entirely on self-reported questionnaires, which means the results are based on players' subjective opinions and memories rather than objective gameplay testing. Second, the study focuses only on one specific game, *Genshin Impact*. Because this game is an anime-style RPG with a colorful fantasy setting, casual language and humor fit perfectly. The results might be very different if this strategy is tested on more serious game genres, such as military or survival horror games.

Third, there is a noticeable demographic imbalance in the sample that could introduce bias. The number of female respondents ($N = 380$) heavily outnumbered male respondents ($N = 78$), and the group of 'Native-like' English speakers was very small ($N = 17$). Furthermore, almost all respondents ($N = 485$) reported never having quit a game due to bad localization. This indicates that the survey mostly reached players who are already comfortable and deeply engaged with the game, potentially missing the voices of highly critical players who have entirely abandoned localized games. While the statistical tests used (Welch's ANOVA) can handle unequal groups, future research should aim for a more balanced sample across genders and seek out skeptical player communities. Finally, this study only looked at two textual features (slang and humor-wordplay) in facet of translated games. Future studies could explore other localization elements, such as voice acting or UI design, to see how they impact player reception.

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, several recommendations can be made for both industry practitioners and future researchers:

First, for game developers and localization teams, it is highly recommended to give translators the creative freedom to use "transcreation." Since players heavily favor natural slang and adapted humor over rigid formal language, localization quality guidelines should prioritize natural flow and cultural relevance rather than strict word-for-word accuracy.

Second, for future researchers, this study has proven that reception studies (asking the players directly) provide invaluable insights that text-only analysis cannot offer. Future research should apply this methodology to other game genres, such as competitive multiplayer games or horror games, to see if casual language has the same impact on player satisfaction. Additionally, conducting similar surveys on other local languages or dialects within Indonesia could further expand our understanding of how cultural localization affects the gaming experience.

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