Student Thesis
Level: Bachelor

*Otome Game localization*

A case study of the character Toma from *Amnesia*

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Subject/main field of study: Japanese, translation
Course code: GJP23Y
Credits: 15
Date of examination: 15.01.2021

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Abstract: Using the Otome game Amnesia and its localized version Amnesia: Memories as a case study, the phenomenon of Otome games was explored from a translation- and Japanese studies' perspective. This paper investigated how translation choices shape character personality, and, as such, Western views. Toma, the most popular character from the Amnesia franchise according to Japanese popularity rankings, was received differently by the Western audience. This study aimed at exploring how translation choices might be related to this difference in reception. As such, it posed the questions: In what respect could changes that occurred during the localization process have led to an alteration of Toma's personality? How could these changes explain the discrepancy between player reception in Japan and the West? Upon analyzing the scripts, a connection between the effect created by certain translation strategies and Western player reception became apparent. Effects identified included the erasure of entry points for "self-inserting" players, the creation of a distorted first impression and the infringement of the players' spaces in ways not present in the original. The connection between character personality and the creation of an "equivalent gameplay experience" was explored. It resulted in the confirmation of the hypothesis surrounding their overall inseparability in an Otome game context, with the exception of a minority of justifiable cases where personality alterations were conducted in favor of a culturally equivalent gameplay experience. The impact of pre-filled gaps in the text led to decreased opportunities for players to contribute to the creation of meaning, while the presence of mistranslations sparked feelings of confusion regarding the character's sanity. Taking the role of the translator, the player and the virtual love interest into consideration, this paper suggests an approach derived from acting as a tool for future character personality preservation in Otome game translation.

Keywords: Otome game, game localization, Japanese studies, virtual love, character personality, iyashi, player reception, emotional attachment
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my beloved husband who always patiently listened to my anecdotes about this study. Thank you for being my muse and turning my sleepless nights into sources of creativity. Your support was a turning point for me on this academic journey. My deep gratitude also goes to my grandparents who taught me about the fascination of languages and literature from an early age on. Without you who have enriched my life like nobody else, I doubt that I would have come this far in love and in life. Finally, I would like to thank my parents and my sister, who spent hours reading through my thesis, for their input and encouragement.
# Table of contents

1. Introduction  
   1.1 Introduction and research questions  
   1.2 Outline of thesis and thesis sections  
2. Background  
3. Relevant Theories  
4. Previous Studies  
5. Material and Methodology  
   5.1 Material  
   5.2 Methodology  
6. Results  
7. Analysis and Discussion  
   7.1 Distorted first impression  
   7.2 The second person perspective and sexual assault  
   7.3 Toma as a confused and paranoid individual  
   7.4 Orion's influential power in his function as a guide  
   7.5 Toma through the eyes of other characters  
   7.6 Toma, emotional attachment and childhood memories  
   7.7 "Self-insertion" and childhood memory connection  
   7.8 Pre-filled gaps in the text  
   7.9 Toma and target audience identification  
   7.10 Empowerment of the heroine  
   7.11 Toma as a misogynist  
   7.12 The closed gap  
   7.13 Replayability fuubutsushi, iyashi and an approach derived from acting  
   7.14 Creating a distance between Toma and the player  
   7.15 "Equivalent gameplay experience" and its connection with character personality  
8. A new approach to *Otome* game translation  
9. Conclusion  
References  
Appendix
1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and research questions

Using the Otome game Amnesia (2011), and its localized version, Amnesia: Memories (2015), as a case study, this project will investigate how translation choices shape character personality and, as such, Western views. As has been pointed out by Cosmos (2018), the most popular character from the Amnesia franchise according to Japanese popularity rankings was received differently in the West.

This paper revolves around the questions:

In what respect could changes that occurred during the localization process have led to an alteration of Toma's personality? How could these changes explain the discrepancy between player reception in Japan and the West?

Personality aspects that were lost in translation will be identified, and it will be explored which translation choices contributed to the creation of an "equivalent gameplay experience", as discussed by Mangiron and O'Hagan (2013). In the context of Otome games, creating an "equivalent gameplay experience" is closely tied to letting the target audience meet the same character as the original audience. Otome game characters are not, like most characters found in Western style games, mere narrative devices, but love interests creating emotional attachment that is to persist throughout the player's everyday life. Given this function of the characters, providing translators with means of understanding each character's objective in regards to the player, while overcoming the boundaries of space constraints and the obstacles created by having to work out of context, will be of crucial importance for the future of Otome games in the Western market.

1.2 Outline of thesis and thesis sections

Following the Introduction, the Background section offers a brief overview of the Otome game genres' characteristics and provides information on both game mechanics and plot of the game Amnesia.
Up-to-date research on Otome games, some of which will be picked up in the Previous studies section, includes findings centering around the correlation between character personality and image color and the concept of Otome games as safe spaces. Otome game players have been studied and divided into two distinct groups: Those perceiving themselves to be enacting a role similar to that of the reader of a novel and those who "self-insert", connecting with the heroine in a special way. The fact that a study on Western Otome game players and their preferences found the latter type to be prominent among Western players will be of significance in this research, as will be a study on the role of fan blogs in promoting Otome games outside of Japan.

With the characters being core elements of the game, the achievement of an "equivalent gameplay experience" seems to be closely tied to the ability of the translator to recreate or preserve their personality traits. This paper seeks to explain the difference in Toma's player reception by looking at Amnesia and Amnesia: Memories from a translation and Japanese studies perspective. The investigation places its focus on the effect Otome game characters need to have on the target audience and the manifold ways in which it might be modified by the use of certain translation techniques, impacting player reception.

Taking into consideration that Amnesia and Amnesia: Memories are, despite being mainly text-based, comprised of a variety of multimedia elements, a thorough analysis calls for a multitude of theories, which will be introduced in detail in the Relevant theories section, to be applied as a tool. Furthermore, with Otome games at the center of this investigation, only the application of a weighted balance between findings of recent scholars and established theories could possibly help to grasp the essence of all factors involved:

This paper will rely on Iser's reception theory (1978), since the translator, when starting to work on the text, is in the first place a reader, and every rereading of the text will change the way they perceive what is to be translated. It will be investigated in which cases translation choices might stem from the presence of knowledge the translator as a re-reader has, that the player, whose experience is that of a first-time reader, does not have, and what such choices might lead to.
As readers in Iser's (1978) sense, *Otome* game players are involved in the creation of meaning. Thus, the study will try to define what the character the script of the localized version produces together with its players could be regarded as. Are players of the localized version dealing with a flatter (as in lacking multidimensionality) reflection of the original character? Perhaps the translators let their own values influence the outcome of the translation. Taken the extent to which the translators' values might be in line with Western values, a character created through such a lens could even be regarded as, according to Western perceptions, a suitable version of the original character. However, while translators as "creative agents" in Mangiron and O'Hagan’s (2013) sense are empowered to conduct alterations, it remains questionable whether these choices were made with the aim of providing the target audience with an "*equivalent gameplay experience*" in mind.

The chapter on Material and Methodology provides an insight on the process of retrieving and categorizing the cases found.

The Results section ties together the projects' findings, which will subsequently be interpreted and their possible effect on the target audience analyzed in the Analysis and Discussion chapter. It will be demonstrated how a combination of a distorted first impression, pre-filled gaps in the text, a decrease in opportunities for becoming emotionally attached to Toma, a decrease in entry points for "*self-inserting*" players and the experience of misogyny and sexual assault from a second person perspective might have contributed to the erasure of the gap between the loving big brother figure and the *yandere* character (who takes extreme actions out of overprotectiveness), bereaving Toma of his multidimensionality and his route of its moments of surprise.

Shedding light onto the roles of the translator, the player and the virtual love interest, the Conclusion chapter will suggest an application of a variation of Hagen's (1978) questions, originally meant for actors' character construction, as a novelty tool for character personality preservation in *Otome* game translation.
2. Background

*Otome* games are visual novels targeted at a predominantly female audience with an interest in dating male virtual characters embedded in a narrative setting that the player can influence with their choices. They typically consist of a so-called main route, that, dictated by the choices the player makes, eventually splits into character routes focused on one of the love interests. These offer multiple endings, often called "good end", "normal end" and "bad end". There may be exceptions to this rule, as some games present the player with a greater or lesser variety of endings, and some, like *Amnesia*, even may not feature a main route at all, but let the player enjoy dating one of the love interests upon starting the game.

*Otome* game characters are designed to take care of the player in ways conforming to the stereotype they represent. Since the player in this way enters a highly personal relationship, it is of great importance to keep character personality intact throughout the game.

Killham et al. (2018) state that emotional attachment to video game characters persists throughout the players' everyday life, making them likely to engage in fandom related to the game. They find emotional attachment to characters to be associated with the characters' responsiveness and their genuine reactions. In *Otome* games, these are represented by the way the characters interact with the players: *Otome* games offer a unique play style in that the characters address the players directly, turning the dialogue into a form of conversation, and, as such, try to achieve the kind of emotional attachment mentioned by Killham et al. (2018). This strategy is directly linked to the practice of "media mix", as Steinberg (2012) defines it: "(...) the development of a particular media franchise across multiple media types, over a particular period of time." (p. 135). As such, it is related to the publisher's making a profit from elements that connect the game world with the player's reality, such as character specific merchandise or live events featuring the characters' *seiyuu* (voice actors).

With the characters typically being voice acted by popular *seiyuu* in Japanese versions, their lines can be listened to while simultaneously reading the Japanese subtitles. Localized versions, in contrast, tend to lack English dubbing and only
feature translated subtitles which the players have to rely on to understand what the characters are saying in Japanese.

*Amnesia* follows a visual novel style, with its non-linear paths, text, and story-based content adorned with beautiful artwork and unique character design for both the heroine and the dateable characters. The player can either choose to identify with the heroine ("*self-insert*"), by entering their own name as the heroine's name at the start of the game, which results in the characters calling the player by their entered name throughout the game, or choose to be a spectator that reads a love story between the heroine and her love interest. What sets *Amnesia*’s heroine apart from typical *Otome* game heroines is the absence of her memories. As director Higashinaka (2011) points out, this step was taken with the purpose of easing "*self-insertion*" for the player.

*Amnesia*’s heroine suffers from a memory loss caused by a collision with an otherworldly spirit called Orion that is stuck within her, just where her memories used to be. To drive this however helpful and benevolent spirit out, she has no choice but to start searching for her lost memories, being at times guided by the spirit boy.

The game starts out with the spirit and the heroine in a space between worlds, and the spirit motivates her to choose between one of several worlds, each of which represents a love interest. By selecting one of the worlds, the player determines which love interest they want to pursue. *Otome* games are non-linear in that the player's choices at peak points can give the story a direction that leads to one of multiple endings. In case of *Amnesia*, while the route initially can be chosen, the outcome depends on multiple selectable choices that pop up in forms of answers to questions posed by the characters, or in forms of questions the player can ask the characters. Furthermore, *Amnesia* features parameters that are affected by the player's choices. It also includes elements that link the narrative to the player's reality, that, in addition to its non-linear structure, classify it as a piece of ergodic literature (literature that requires the reader to perform a non-trivial action in order to progress). It features phone calls the player has to answer, popping up emails on a notebook screen, and text messages on a smartphone as a text the player "cannot traverse" unless they reply manually. Thus, drawing onto Aarseth’s (1997)
cybertext theory, one could argue that the decisions the player has to make to progress, in addition to the multiple endings, routes, and elements that link fiction and reality that cannot simply be surpassed, are what classifies this game's textual content as a piece of ergodic art.

Nishimura (2014) gives an insight into techniques used by Otome game scenario writers and explains how they work towards surprising the player once in every scene. He underlines that these surprises often are manifested in nuances added to a character's personality. In addition, he claims that in order to make reading unvoiced parts a pleasurable experience for the player, it is preferable to have characters perform actions. Given this fact, it can be assumed that altering actions performed by characters towards the heroine could greatly impact player reception.

The act of classifying changes that could lead to an altered perception of the character's personality calls for a definition of the elements it is constructed of. Toma, the character this study will focus on, is one of the five love interests available in Amnesia. Representing the big brother stereotype, the essence of Toma's personality is that of a caring, loving, constantly worried, overprotective person. These tendencies shine through in his dialogue and actions. Toma's voice actor Hino (2011) states that he was directed to never let the image of Toma as the loving big brother crumble in whatever he was doing, even if he was doing scary things (p. 97).

What also constructs a significant part of Toma's personality is linked to his past: Character designer Hanamura (2011) mentions how Toma's CGS (Computer Graphics) feature a lot of shared childhood memories to underline he has always cared for the heroine. Finally, Toma's yandere tendencies, that take over towards the end of his route, were commented on by Hino (2011) as being rooted in suppressing his feelings for too long, almost as if he and the heroine had been related by blood and entering a relationship therefore would not have been a possibility (p. 98). This last element is being visually underlined in the game, since Toma's sprite¹ will have dark circles under his eyes once Toma enters yandere mode.

¹ A type of computer graphic, which, in the case of Otome games, can be described as an image of the character facing the player, typically frozen in a static pose. There usually are multiple sprites for each character, in different poses and showing various facial expressions. In some rare cases eyes and mouth are animated for these images.
3. Relevant Theories

Due to Hasegawa's (2012) practical approach to problems encountered in Japanese English translation, her ways of classifying translation strategies are considered to be the most suitable to utilize for this study. A detailed list of her categories of translation techniques can be found in section 5.2.3.

While acknowledging the necessity to tone down on stylistic devices in Japanese English translation, Wakabayashi (1990) argues how this is not to be done without reflecting on the meaning they help to convey. Her guidelines to translators will be relevant when covering the topic of "over-translation" (expressing more than the original) as well as that of nuance changes caused by omissions, a phenomenon she calls "under-translation".

Exploring the role of the translator as a "creative agent", Mangiron and O'Hagan (2013) argue that various factors linked to the game localization process should be considered during the pre-production phase to produce inclusive localized versions that create an "equivalent gameplay experience" for players of all nations. They describe the creation of an "equivalent gameplay experience" as "transmitting the essence of the gameplay experience from one culture to another" (p. 241). Their book provides translators with checklists and discusses the value of having them make informed decisions, working closely with the developers. Their concepts will be of importance when investigating the ways in which an "equivalent gameplay experience" and character personality are intertwined.

Iser's literary theories prove useful upon analyzing translations and their effect on the reader. Iser (1978) sees the process of reading as a cooperative action between author and reader. Upon refining his work (1993), he elaborates on the reader's identification with fictional characters, and underlines fiction's function as a means of providing the reader with "anxiety-free access to the inaccessible".

Connecting literary theory to the field of game studies, Schweighauser (2009) discusses how an application of Iser's later works (1989, 1993) to games could lead to a rethinking of important concepts in the field.
Aarseth’s (1997) cybertext theory and his concept around ergodicity establishes a basis for research on text-based games. He defines ergodic literature as literature that challenges the reader to perform a non-trivial action (opposed to e.g., the turning of pages) to traverse the text.

Drawing onto both Aarseth's and Iser's concepts, Turley (2018) explores the value video games hold when treated as narratives utilized in literature classrooms. He discusses player agency through choice making and the creation of player generated narratives.

Cope and Kalantzis (2009) describe a shift from passiveness to activeness in everyday life as being central for multiliteracies, which they underline by the example of narratives of gaming. Their notion of today's player identity being closer to that of actors than spectators is a valuable concept for this investigation.

Hagen's (1978) work provides exercises that touch the subject of character construction from various angles. She presents actors with questions that aim at moving them away from being an audience (as any actor is upon initial contact with a script) and that serve as a path towards organic identification with a character. While "Respect for acting" is primarily directed at actors, considering the role of both the virtual love interest and player, the author of the present study suggests an application of a variation of Hagen’s questions as a tool for character personality preservation during the localization process.
4. Previous Studies

In recent years, researchers have started to investigate the phenomenon of male dateable characters in video games. The relationship between virtual characters and players is studied by Killham et al. (2018), whose research underlines the importance of emotional attachment. Shibuya et al. (2019) discuss gap moe (finding hidden and unusual aspects of characters that makes the player start loving those characters) as an important aspect to look into when constructing characters. Since this investigation involves a relationship with a virtual character, both findings will act as a blueprint for determining whether vital aspects of character personality were kept intact.

The topic of Otome games is dealt with by Tanikawa and Asahi (2013), who identify two distinct types of players: The "self-inserting" type that will use the custom name input to blend in with the heroine and the type that sees the heroine as a third person, who is comparable to the reader of a novel. These findings will be of significance in combination with the preferences of Western Otome game players, as pointed out by Celianna (2018), since her study suggests the "self-inserting" player type to be prominent with Western players. These studies can act as a base when investigating how Toma's actions directed at the player can be interpreted differently in the original and localized version.

Koide and Obana (2018) delve into the topic focusing on character personality and its correlation with image color, explaining how its usage extends into merchandising. Ganzon (2019) picks up the concept of interpretative communities upon investigating the role fan blogs play in promoting Otome games outside of Japan. Her work will assist to underline how individual responses to texts can become powerful means of shaping public opinion and, as such, might have influenced Toma's player reception in the West.

Cosmos (2018) remarks in her article that Toma is not received positively in the West, explaining how he is perceived as a paranoid individual, that, while frequently sparking initial curiosity, fails to capture the majority's hearts. While she places her focus on applying the concept of a sandbox for exploration of fantasies and fears to Otome games, the author of the present study has come
across cases of translation strategies leading to an alteration of Toma's personality that could explain these differences in player reception.

While *Otome* games appear to have been dealt with from a broad variety of backgrounds, in-depth research from within the academic field of translation- and Japanese studies remains yet to be conducted. Since *Otome* game characters directly address the player, almost like a conversation partner would, and, as such, might in extreme cases even influence their thinking, the significance of their dialogue is not to be underestimated. Hence, this research will attempt at closing a gap between the fields of translation studies and game studies in investigating the alterations *Otome* game character Toma and his dialogue undergo during the localization process.
5. Material and Methodology

5.1 Material

Amnesia, the subject of this study, was developed by Idea factory Japan and initially released in 2011 for PSP and later ported to PS Vita/PS Vita TV and Nintendo Switch. It was directed by Higashinaka Rumie and the characters designed by Hanamura Mai. Toma was voice acted by Hino Satoshi. *Amnesia: Memories* was released by Idea factory international in 2015, and the translators involved in the project were Justina Lange, Allison Juan and Michael McNamara. The games offer approximately 20 hours of gameplay respectively.

For this research, the games were played on PS Vita and PS Vita TV. The transcripts were analyzed utilizing a multitude of studies and theories.

In Toma's route, most changes were expected to be relevant to this study, qualifying it as the main source for data collection. Additionally, Toma's short story, as well as the other four characters' routes (Shin, Ikki, Kento, Ukyo) were checked for scenes that involve Toma, or characters talking about Toma. The text analyzed can be found in the Appendix.

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 Procedure

Both versions were played simultaneously on PS Vita and PS Vita TV, entering the same routes and choosing equivalent choices in order to progress. Whenever a change in the script was detected, notes were taken. Parts of the script that involved changes were transcribed, categorized and analyzed. The routes were abbreviated as follows: Toma: T, Shin: S, Ikki: I, Kento: K, Ukyo: U and Toma's short story: TSS. In addition, each of the cases were given a number in chronological order, starting with the first change found in the script in each route. S1, for example, stands for the first case found in Shin's route.

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2 For this text, Japanese names will be written in the order commonly used in Japan, i.e. Surname followed by the given name.
5.2.2 Criteria

From the transcribed scenes, changes at sentence or scene level that might be of significance when taking Toma's personality, his stereotype, and player reception into consideration, were extracted and interpreted. What was included in the data are changes that occurred in:

(1) dialogue spoken by Toma, actions he takes, messages he writes, and (2) other characters talking or writing about him.

5.2.3 Categorization

This paper utilized Hasegawa's (2012) categories of translation techniques (pp. 168-180) for categorization.

*Table 1: Hasegawa's categories of translation techniques*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borrowing</th>
<th>Borrowing loan words to deal with the lack of a close equivalent in the TL (Target Language).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calque</td>
<td>A special kind of borrowing whereby elements of an expression in the SL (Source Language) are translated literally into the TL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal translation</td>
<td>Word for word replacement of words, closely following the SL syntactic structure in the TL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transposition</td>
<td>Rendering of an SL element using TL elements which are semantically but not formally equivalent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modulation</td>
<td>A variation of the form of the message accomplished by changing its point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalence</td>
<td>Creates equivalent texts by using different structural or stylistic methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>Used when the type of situation in the ST (Source Text) is totally unknown in the TL culture. The translator must create a similar but different situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>Omitting some part of the ST may be feasible if the ST is exceedingly repetitious or if the information being conveyed is judged not vital, but, rather, distracting to the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offsetting</td>
<td>When some information is lost in one place in translation, it can be compensated for at some other place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two additional categories, "Slight nuance change" and "Nuance change", were added to ensure every relevant change could be covered. The characteristics of the information presented in each sentence or scene rendered the simultaneous presence of multiple of the above categories within a single case possible.
6. Results

Upon investigating the changes made to the script during the translation process, 159 cases relevant to this project were found. These result in a total of 274 anomalies that can be broken down as follows:

Table 2: Anomalies grouped by translation strategies in each route:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Add</th>
<th>Om</th>
<th>Nc</th>
<th>Snc</th>
<th>Adapt</th>
<th>Mis</th>
<th>Eq</th>
<th>Off</th>
<th>Transp</th>
<th>Mod</th>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add = Addition, Om = Omission, Nc = Nuance change, Snc = Slight nuance change, Adapt = Adaptation, Mis = Mistranslation, Eq = Equivalence, Off = Offsetting, Transp = Transposition, Mod = Modulation, Lit = Literal

The above anomalies' detailed examination led to the detection of 15 different ways in which Toma's Western player reception might have been affected. These, as will be analyzed in detail in the following section, range from the creation of a distorted first impression to attributing traits like confusion and misogyny to the character.

When taking the player preferences mentioned by Celianna (2018) into consideration, it becomes clear that some translation strategies lead to Toma fulfilling criteria disliked by Western players. Several cases, especially those that address the player directly, hint at infringement of the players' space in anti-feminist or sadistic ways at points in the game where no such content was present in the Japanese version. While Toma does have yandere traits, and some of the things he does once this side of him takes over, could be classified as abusive, he has no misogynist or sadistic traits in the original.
7. Analysis and Discussion

In this part findings will be analyzed in detail and their correlation with previous studies explained. Cases will be interpreted and their possible effect on the player and their perception of Toma discussed. The utilization of not only previous studies but also player reviews will demonstrate how the connection manifests.

The results suggest a tendency for changes to parts of the text that directly involve the player to have a lasting effect on the way the character will be perceived. These alterations could stem from translators making uninformed decisions due to not having received character profiles or not having had a chance to play through the game before translating. On the other hand, the presence of knowledge that a first time reader does not have might have shaped the translators' view of Toma in a certain way. To avoid both extremes, this study suggests an application of a variation of Hagen's (1978) questions to the text that is to be translated.

The fact that Toma was not received well in the West could partly be explained by cultural preferences regarding personality traits also present in the original, and partly be attributed to translation choices that again stroke a perhaps cultural nerve:

Celianna (2018), in her study involving Western Otome game players, states that:

(...)-what players hate the most, is an LI [love interest] that hates women (70%) and belittles the MC’s [main character’s] appearance (65%). Followed very closely by attempted sexual assault/rape (63%) and incest (60%). (...) Players also tend to dislike it when the LI treats the MC like a child. ("The Love Interest", para. 12)

Looking at her study, it becomes clear that the localized version suggests Toma to carry within him a multitude of traits disliked by Western players:

While the last point mentioned seems to be a cultural preference and is part of Toma's personality even in the original, many of the others could have been avoided by utilizing different translation strategies or preparing for the translation by posing Hagen's (1978) questions. Particularly problematic are scenes that confront the player with the threat of sexual assault from a second person
perspective. Furthermore, due to Toma frequently being turned into a biological brother in parts of the translation, some players even might feel as if his route is depicting incest.

A tendency for the translators to choose wording that made it seem as though Toma was a misogynist, sadist or belittling the heroine could be observed. One of the limitations of this study is the lack of a way to differentiate whether or not making Toma regard the heroine as a baby rather than as a child had a major impact on the player base. While Celianna (2018) found that being viewed as a child in general was not received well with Western players, the author of the present study argues that the players might not have access to memories of their babyhood and therefore might not be able to connect to the scenes. This, however, cannot be proven without further investigation.

Several cases of nuanced first impressions, opposed to neutral ones in the original, contributed to a distorted perception of the character. Furthermore, certain parts of Toma's personality were unveiled at points too early, so that no emotional attachment could have been built up before. Finally, a tendency to empower the heroine throughout the routes stretched out into making Toma's objective useless and rendering almost his entire existence unimportant. One of the most surprising findings was the fact that the achievement of an "equivalent gameplay experience" is not always necessarily tied to Toma's personality: In some cases, the use of cultural equivalents can provide the player with an "equivalent gameplay experience", even if it results in Toma's taste being altered, and therefore can be justified.

Continuing, this section will analyze and discuss various different effects one by one.

7.1 Distorted first impression

Hagen (1978) advises actors to test the ways an entrance changes through variations before settling on one that will serve the character. Essentially, making an entrance in a play could be compared to a character's first appearance within a route. In the beginning of Shin's route, the player is greeted with "He acted awfully
close" upon first meeting Toma. While the Japanese 「すごく」 is neutral, only reinforcing the word that comes after it, "awfully" has a negative connotation, giving the English-speaking player a nuanced first impression of Toma. Being linked to what Hasegawa (2012) refers to as expressive meaning (used to express attitudes, beliefs and emotions, nuanced differently depending on the circumstances) (p. 50), this case is of significance since players confronted with Otome games for the first time are inclined to choose the first route available to them. Since in Amnesia: Memories, this is Shin's route, their first impression of Toma becomes distorted.

Example 1: (S1)

| Orion: 「...知り合いだったのかな。すごく親しげだったね」 |
| Translation: Orion: Maybe you know him? He acted awfully close. (S1) |

The problem regarding a distorted perception also manifests in the addition of swear words accompanying Toma's name. Upon introducing Toma's name in Ikki's route, it is presented alongside a swear word not present in the original. If the player was to play Amnesia: Memories chronologically (Shin, Ikki, Kento, Toma, Ukyo), they might have a negative impression of Toma by the time they enter his route. While the use of swear words could be regarded as a cultural equivalent if one considers how common it is to hear swear words in English media in general, it also takes away from Toma's calming personality.
Example 2 (I1):

_Ukyo_: 「ところで、君は今誰かと付き合ってるの？」「シン？ イッキ？ トーマ？それともケントかな？」

_Orion_: 「え、何、この人シンやイッキとも知り合いなの？ っていうかトーマって誰」

*Translation:*

_Ukyo_: By the way, are you going out with anyone right now? Shin? Ikki? Toma? Or maybe even Kent?

_Orion_: Wait, does this guy know people like Shin and Ikki, too? And who the heck is Toma?

(11)

7.2 The second person perspective and sexual assault

One of the most drastic changes to Toma's personality seems to stem from the translators' choice to change the sentence structure in an unfortunate way, that lead to an alteration of the sentences' subject. This particular scene in Toma's route might to a great extent negatively affect the way the character is being perceived by the player.

The scene starts out when the player chooses to offer Toma, who had, out of consideration for her, been sleeping on the floor for days, to share the bed.

Example 3 (T17):

*Heroine*: 「一緒にベッドで寝ればいいのに」

_Toma_: 「一緒に？ 俺と？ おまえが？同じベッドで？ ......何言ってんの？ 別に嫌じゃないよ。そりゃ全然嫌じゃないけど......それ、他のヤツに言うんじゃないよ。誘われたって思うから。ベッド入ってから違うっつても遅いよ。完全に合意発言だぞ、今の」

*Translation:*

_Heroine_: Why don't we share the bed?

_Toma_: Together? You? With me?... What are you implying? I don't dislike the idea. I don't dislike it at all, but..... Shouldn't you say that to another guy? I might get the wrong idea that you're trying to tempt me. It'll be too late to say that's not what you intended once we're in bed. You basically just consented. (T17)
The issue here can be identified within the part 「……それ、他のヤツに言うんじゃないかよ。誘われたって思うから。ベッド入ってから違うっつても遅いよ。完全に合意発言だぞ、今の」, which was translated as "Shouldn't you say that to another guy? I might get the wrong idea that you're trying to tempt me. It'll be too late to say that's not what you intended once we're in bed. You basically just consented." Whereas in the ST, the subject is 「他の奴」, distinctly separating Toma from the notion 「誘われたって思うから」, the subject of the sentence was changed to 「俺」/Toma in the TT (Target Text), perhaps due to a mistranslation.

It is worth mentioning that this scene occurs at an early point in the game upon entering Toma's world, on day 9 in his route. According to Amnesia's director Higashinaka (2011), every character was built around his wish, which functions as a driving force. In this scene, however, Toma's wish to protect the heroine, which is easily graspable in the original, does not shine through, but he rather gives off the impression that he is very dangerous from the beginning, which bereaves the character of his multidimensionality, and takes away some of the moments of surprise Toma offers later on in his route. As such, it can be said that this scene does not correspond to the concept of providing the target audience with an "equivalent gameplay experience" that Mangiron and O'Hagan (2013) refer to. Having to work out of context or struggling with a grammatical relation could have resulted in this mistranslation. Or perhaps the translators worked on the small scene in which Orion jokes about how the heroine must have been seeing two men at once, right before translating the scene in question, which could have led to such a decision. The option that the translators wanted to warn the players about the character after having translated Shin's route, in which Toma turns out to be a villain in the end, and therefore were biased about him, also is possible. As such, the choices the translators opted for could be tied to what Iser (1978) describes as meanings that develop along the time axis and that influence each other when texts are being reread, due to the presence of knowledge the reader has not had before.

Hagen (1978) argues that:

Finding identification with the antagonist of the piece seems to present greater problems (...). The actor often falls into the trap of evaluating the “villain” and pitting him against the “hero” rather than revealing the
human being he must play. You must justify your character, not judge him, (...) you have to know more about your own needs and less about the needs of the others. Otherwise, (...) you will fail in making your relationship to the protagonist through your own character’s eyes. (p. 168)

Similarly, the kind of bias that might have happened due to Toma being a villain in Shin's route, could perhaps be avoided if the translator were to concentrate on Toma's needs and, to some extent, put themselves into his shoes while translating his route.

While Killham et al. (2018) found that drastic personality traits in video game characters add tension and excitement to their relationship with the player, a study involving Western Otome game players by Celianna (2018) found that anything related to sexual assault contradicts the wishes of Western Otome game players. The same study also finds the "self-inserting" player type identified by Tanikawa and Asahi (2013) to be common in Western players. It is this player type that is being catered to not only when there is the option of custom name input but also whenever characters directly address the player. As can be seen in the scene cited above, Toma addresses the player directly, even in the problematic aspects of the translation. When looking at the findings by Celianna (2018) in combination, one will notice that this translation choice confronts the Western player with the topic of sexual assault from a second person perspective. This is even more so, since it was the player's decision to offer to share the bed that led to this scene, which may result in players regretting their choice despite it being a key element to unlocking the "good end". While in the Japanese version Toma's actions can be read as that of a good friend or family member warning her to be careful around men who could take advantage of her naivete, the way this was interpreted in the localized version could contribute to making the player feel unsafe around a character they are to spend the rest of the route with. This could make players, especially those confronted with Otome games for the first time, stop playing Toma's route before it has even started. This is in line with Cosmos' (2018) statement that:

*Based on reading contemporary perspective from the Western lens, Toma is extremely not popular. Women who play Amnesia Memories express being*
curious about him because they quickly figure out something is off about the way he acts toward the heroine, but once Toma reveals his true nature, they back out of any endearment real quick. (pp. 247-248)

If Toma was to be regarded as a wolf in sheep's clothing, the disguise would seemingly be uncovered at a point of the route that is too early to build up the excitement and tension mentioned by Killham et al. (2018). Iser (1978) talks about how during the process of reading, which is essentially what *Otome* game players are doing while pressing buttons, the reader continuously overwrites his own views and projections by new ones and, as such, creates a shape for the situation. One could argue that the translators' choices overwrote the views Western players had of Toma at an early point of the game, whereas the views of Japanese players at this point remained unchanged since Toma's personality stayed consistent.

Ganzon (2019) points out that outside of Japan, *Otome* games widely rely on propaganda created by fans, which she underlines by excerpts from interviews with *Otome* game bloggers. One of them highlights the way in which they put filters on characters, looking for specific traits that they warn other players about:

(...) there's most likely going to be a guy who's going to push you off the wall. And oh, pay attention to the parts that are rapey, so others can just pass that (...) she also posts content warnings on her blog to alert readers to content some may want to avoid. (...) (p. 354)

This powerfully underlines how gaps in the text filled by a single player can extend into almost common sense among the community, discouraging individuals who do not share the same point of view to speak up about their feelings. It might furthermore reinforce cultural norms and taboos that make it hard for players to sympathize with characters associated with a certain image.

The most common reaction to Toma's route among Western *Otome* game bloggers is something along the lines of the following:

On the blog blerdy *Otome*, pokeninja90 writes: "There is nothing more that I can say about Toma (...) I DO NOT RECOMMEND THIS ROUTE...I found myself treating this route as a joke just so I could get through the whole thing!" (para. 14).
Players in favor of Toma might, given this popular perception of him, keep to themselves so as not to be hated by their own community. The author of the present study has come across a statement that, while being in favor of Toma, also adds a nuance that almost could be read as an obligation to justify the controversy surrounding characters like Toma, so as not to be excluded from the community:

On the blog *Otome* kitten, Kitty-chlo writes:

(...) *I know Toma gets a lot of hate from fans (esp. in the West). But not from me. (...) but, I can also understand how his route got some people uncomfortable. (...) To put it simply, his romance is not for everyone. Regardless, I love Toma, (...) That’s just how his character shows his undying love. It may be a little too over the edge for some though.* (para. 13)

Based on Ganzon's (2019) findings, one could argue that the effect of reader response becomes amplified since each individual perception and opinion will influence many players reading a particular blog. The presence of mistranslations like the one mentioned above, coupled with content warnings, could therefore explain the difference in player reception between Japan and the West.
7.3 Toma as a confused and paranoid individual

Cosmos (2018), upon pointing out how differently Toma is being received by Western audiences, cites a reviewer who describes Toma as "a deeply paranoid individual" (p. 248). One example of a decision made by the translators that might contribute to such a perception and add a nuance of incoherent thinking and confusion to Toma's personality is the following:

In this particular scene, Toma is hiding the fact that the heroine has been sleeping at his place for the past few days from Shin. The Western player might, when being confronted with Shin announcing that Toma invited him over, get the impression that not the heroine, but Toma is the one suffering from amnesia.

Example 4 (T48):

| Toma:  「え？おまえ、いきなりどうしたの」 |
| Shin:  「いきなりつったって、そっちが電話出なかったから直接来たんだろ。邪魔する」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: What? Why are you here all of a sudden? |
| Shin: What do you mean, all of a sudden? You're the one who called me, so I came over. I'm coming in. (T48) |

The transition from one branch of the route to another has to be given thought when translating Otome games as pieces of ergodic literature, as can be demonstrated by looking at Example 5 (U22): This branch of the route ends by Shin asking "How serious are you?". While in the original, Toma never reacts to Shin's line, the translator possibly mistook Toma's first line in Example 6 (U23) (the other branch of the route) for an answer to Shin's question, rather than recognizing it as a reaction to the heroine:
Example 5 (U22) and Example 6 (U23):

Example 5 (U22):

Toma: 「あっ、2人とも、恋人できたなら教えろよ。特に」 「おまえの結婚式でおまえの手を引いてバージンロード歩くのが今の俺の夢なんだから」

Shin: 「こいつの父親の立場がねえだろ！」

Toma: 「......じゃあいいよ、シンの時で」

Shin: 「......どこまで本気なんだよ」

Translation:

Toma: Oh, both of you. Be sure to tell me when you get a significant other, alright? Especially you, __. It's my dream to take your hand and walk you down the aisle on your wedding day.

Shin: What is her dad going to do then?!

Toma:: Jia, I guess I'll have to settle with yours.

Shin: How serious are you? (U22)

Example 6 (U23):

Heroine: 「常連って、ウキョウ？」

Toma: 「......あのね」

Shin: 「どういうポケだよ。そうじゃなくてちょっとガキっぽい女の子」「あれ、高校生かな。へたすれば中学生じゃないの」

Translation:

Heroine: Our regular? You mean Ukyo?

Toma: You know how serious.

Shin: What kind of joke is that.. You can be pretty childish. Girl I wonder if she's a high school student. Worst case, a junior high student. (U23)

An explanation for this mistake might lie within the nature of code for interactive parts of the game (such as the heroine's line in Example 6 (U23)) to be placed separately from the other parts of the dialogue, perhaps even in an entirely different document, forcing the translator to work out of context. Without the heroine's line in the same document as the rest of the text, and given the possibility that the scenes in question directly followed after one another in the documents the translators received, Toma's 「あのね」 indeed could be interpretable as a reaction to Shin. Thus, when the heroine in Example 6 (U23) asks "Our regular? You mean Ukyo?", Toma replies "You know how serious".
Turley (2018) argues that:

*In most narrative games, the narrative exists as a conversation between the game and the player, (...) always in communication with the narrative yet to be revealed and in conflict with the narrative paths not chosen by the player. As players navigate a game and make choices (...), their agency can generate the narrative path with which they interact, revealing one narrative possibility among many alternatives.* (p. 3)

In this case, not only have branches of the route that should be separated and lead to different outcomes been tied together, but also has Toma's reaction to the heroine been rendered illogical. On a side note, Shin's accusing the heroine of being childish also is the result of a mistranslation, coupled with a misplacement of the period, that might hint at an unfinished draft of the translation having made it into the game. In addition to this scene, several other findings of this study also strengthen the theory that all interactive parts of the game, and, as such, also the heroine's choices, were translated separately from the main script, and underline how the use of some translation strategies makes the logic behind Toma's dialogue and actions hard to understand.

While being worried is part of his personality, the original writer's intention with 「どきどき」 in Example 7 (T9) might lie within the nature of the word to have a positive connotation. As such, the Japanese player can associate 「どきどき」 with both excitement and love at the same time. While it is crucial for any player (and, as such, also for the translator) to fill gaps and to create their version of the narrative, what has to be borne in mind is the fact that this is a statement by Toma about himself that reveals more in the original than in the localized version, bereaving Toma of the nuance of having feelings for her underneath the surface of the "worried" big brother. Furthermore, 「前者なら」 originally implied that if she did not like him, he would understand if she cut contact with him, which lets shine through a hidden need for reassurance on Toma's side. At the same time, assuring her that she does not need to hold back with him could be regarded as mirroring for her the same amount of comfort that he would also like to receive. In *Amnesia: Memories*, however, he seems to put his own needs above hers:
Example 7 (T9):

```
Toma: 『そう、良かった。俺は夜中に電話が鳴るんじゃないかって、どこどこしてたよ！』[..]だから連絡してくればよかったのに」「遅くになんだか俺が嫌なんだか知らないけど、前著なら気にせずかけてきていから」

Translation:

Toma: I see, that's good. I was worried all night that my phone would ring any minute. (...)You should have called me then. I don't know if you're holding back or don't like me, but you're free to call me anytime. (T9)
```

7.4 Orion's influential power in his function as a guide

The process of investigating the alterations Toma's personality underwent can benefit from examining lines spoken by characters that perceive Toma in a certain way, since these give away information of yet another quality than do the lines spoken by Toma himself. As Hagen (1978) puts it: "(...) I should not only begin to weigh what "I [the character]" say and do (and why), but also what others say about "me," (...) and what these things reveal about "my" main drives as a human being, (...)" (p. 153). One such example can be found in a few scenes where Orion, the benevolent spirit that accidentally caused the heroine to lose her memories and accompanies her from that day on, talks about how being with Toma helps her regain her memories.

Example 8 (T18) and 9 (T24):

```
Orion: 「だけどさ、トーマといえばは間違いないんだね。ほら、こうして記憶に刺激があったし。さすが彼氏だって感じ？」

Translation:

Orion: But there’s no mistake that Toma was there. He’s the one who activated this memory. Did he seem like your boyfriend? (T18)
```

```
Orion: 「まぁ何にしても、トーマの近くにいるのは間違いないよね。少しずつだけど、そんな記憶がよみがえてきてるしさ」

Translation:

Orion: I mean, you have to be near Toma all the time now. And it’s just a little at a time, but a lot of memories are coming back. (T24)
```
While both choices could have stemmed from working out of context, in the first example a confusion regarding the particle used could have caused the issue in the translation. This leads to the Japanese player grasping the information that being close to Toma is the right decision, proven by the impact he has on the heroine's memories, while the player of the localized version is being left unclear about him. Without moments that strengthen the player's belief in Toma early on in the route, there is no possible imagined sweet future to be shattered once Toma's *yandere* traits are revealed. Cosmos (2018) compared *Otome* games to horror movies (p. 248). Taking on this notion, the author of the present study argues that horror movies without moments of rest and shelter would not provide room for the development of anxiety and excitement. They would rather be comparable to a flat chain of horror events following after one another, and might even bore the audience. Similarly, the level of trust that only a connection from childhood on brings with it is crucial to Toma's route to unleash the power of his *yandere* traits later on without him turning into a monster, but with him remaining human and lovable despite these traits. In the second example, the reason for the choice made by the translators is less obvious, since in the original Orion does not say that the heroine is forced to be near Toma.

What has to be noted is that Orion, who is trapped within the heroine, typically reflects over happenings and decisions together with the player. In many cases, listening to Orion's tips can change the outcome of the game dramatically, which is why, once the player has identified Orion as a key element, they are likely to let him guide them to some extent. Given this fact, letting Orion unconsciously dictate how to feel might greatly influence the way Toma is perceived. In Example 10 (T58) it seems as if the translator was connecting with the player through Orion, telling them to change their opinion of Toma.

Example 10 (T58):

```
Orion: 「……以前のトーマってどんなだったんだよ〜」「どんなだったにせよ、
こういうことする奴って知っちゃうと思わっっちゃうよね」

Translation:

*Orion: I wonder what Toma was like before. Regardless of what he was like, now that you know he's capable of this, it should change your opinion of him.* (T58)
```
7.5 Toma through the eyes of other characters

One example that changes the dynamic between characters in the game is linked to the omission of a rhetorical device. This choice seemingly erases Ikki's perception of Toma as a potential rival in Amnesia: Memories. Whereas in the Japanese version Ikki seeks confirmation (「よね」) from the heroine, he seems rather confident that Toma is not someone he needs to be worried about in English. While it could be argued that the confirmation seeking Japanese version gives the heroine more agency by implying that she could either affirm Ikki or make him feel jealous of Toma, the translator decided against giving her this kind of agency, by omitting the confirmation seeking device「よね」. Wakabayashi (1990) states that "Rhetorical devices do play a role in signaling meaning. (...) the only justification for altering or omitting such devices is that doing so contributes to (...) naturalness in the English text." (p. 67).

Example 11 (I11):

Ikki: 「あー……トーマ君を見た時は本気で焦ったけどね。おかげで恥の上塗りをしてたよ。でも、トーマ君とは何でもないんだよね。気にする必要ないよね」

Translation:

Ikki: Oh... Although I seriously did panic when I saw Toma. That embarrassed me even more. But it sounds like there isn't anything going on between you and Toma. I don't need to be worried. (I11)
7.6 Toma, emotional attachment and childhood memories

One of the purposes of Toma's route is to make the player feel desired through making them feel like a child, so precious that it needs to be protected at all costs. An example of this warmth in the way Toma chooses his words that was carried over into the translation can be found in Example 12 (TSS9):

However, this childhood memory evoking warmth is frequently shattered. The nuance change in Example 13 (T40) might, rather than evoking memories of primary school tests decorated with flower symbols in case one did well, remind the player of SM play. This could almost be regarded as changing Toma's stereotype into that of a sadistic character, despite him clearly stating that he has no such tastes during his route. While, as Killham et al. (2018) argue, extreme personality traits represent a way of attracting the player, it is to be questioned whether the creation of an "equivalent gameplay experience" was kept in mind when this translation choice was made.

Example 13 (T40):
7.7 "Self-insertion" and childhood memory connection

Thoughts and feelings linked to the childhood Toma and the heroine spent together are key elements to getting emotionally attached to Toma.

A tendency that can be drawn from the way Toma seems to perceive the heroine in the localized version is some inconsistency between being completely unattracted to her, and seeing her as a baby (in very literal cases such as in Example 15 (S2)), as opposed to seeing her as an adult as in Example 14 (T32). In Example 14 (T32), the term "affectionate" might lead to the Western player thinking that Toma does see her as an adult, whereas the Japanese 「甘える」 either implies that he still sees her as a child (or makes himself believe he does to suppress his feelings for her), or aims at triggering childhood memories and feelings of comfort in the player.

Example 14 (T32):

| Toma: 「……驚いたな。そんな風に素直に甘えてくるなんて何年ぶり？」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: This is a surprise. How many years has it been since you’ve been so honest and affectionate with me? (T32) |

Turning the heroine into a baby (rather than a younger sister or someone who is spoiled) also indicates that Shin looks down on the way Toma treats the heroine.

Example 15 (S2):

| Shin: 「甘やかすなよ、トーマ」 |
| Translation: |
| Shin: Don’t baby her, Toma. (S2) |

Being seen as a baby is not expected to give players as much access to childhood memories, as being regarded as a preschool or school girl would have. The ambivalence between him seeing her as a child and an adult was preserved to some extent, but the part about childhood was toned down so that it is harder for the player, who possibly does not have any memories of their time as a baby, to emotionally connect and blend their own memories in with the ones provided in the world of Amnesia: Memories.
In Example 16 (T46), the omission of 「昼間」, as well as turning 「昼寝」 into a "a lot of naps", supposedly taken "all the time" rather than 「毎日」 could be interpreted as moving her closer toward a baby, who would sleep any time, as opposed to a child that only needs to sleep after eating.

Example 16 (T46):

| Toma: おまえ、もしかして自分ちでは毎日昼寝してたの？ここでは無理して起きても？昼寝眠いなら、いくらでも寝ていてよなら |
| Translation: |
| Toma: Did you take a lot of naps all the time at home, too? Are you forcing yourself awake here? If you're sleepy, you can nap as much as you want. (T46) |

The above cases indicate that the translator might have thought of Toma's behavior towards the heroine as similar to that of a grown up toward a baby rather than a younger sibling.

Schweighauser (2009) states that:

(... by inserting ourselves into fictional worlds, we can imagine ourselves as different from who we are in our everyday lives. Reading literature, (...) allows us (...) to explore alternative ways of living our lives, which (...) is an activity that invites us to reflect on the lives we really live. (...) In Iser's words, "literature [...] allows us 'anxiety-free access to the inaccessible.'” (... what is most important, both in reading literary texts and in playing computer games, is not what appears on the page or on the screen but what happens in our minds. (pp. 120-122)

Ultimately, this applies to Otome games in such a sense that players could take the experience gained with virtual love interests out into the world when they date real men. In fact, the author of the present study argues that they might even train players in communication skills and in carefully weighing their options before responding to a conversation partner in situations where a lot is at stake. If parts of the text where the players' childhood memories could merge with the memories from within the game world, are preoccupied by unknown feelings from babyhood, however, an entrance point for "self-inserting" players is lost.
7.8 Pre-filled gaps in the text

According to Iser (1978) gaps in texts provide the reader with ways of being involved in the creation of meaning. In case of Example 17 (T41), however, one could argue that the translators went too far by filling the gap themselves and bereaving the player of this opportunity. Wakabayashi (1990) would classify this case as an "over-translation".

Example 17 (T41):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toma:</th>
<th>「......俺は何を言っても、おまえは俺より......」</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Translation:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Toma:</strong> No matter what I say, you'd trust someone else over me. (T41)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, in Example 18 (TSS22), the vagueness in the original version might be suitable for creating a moment of tension in the player, perhaps anticipating the heroine to confess her love to Toma. This is due to the sentence 「トーマがいい」 in Japanese being interpretable as "Toma would be a good partner". The dynamic of her being on the verge of a confession and him trying to calm himself by using words like 「甘えん坊」, that show childlike closeness, is interrupted due to the addition of "also" in her and the omission of 「甘えん坊」 in his part of the dialogue. The translation of 「彼女は俺にそんなことを求めてはいない」 as "She doesn't think of you like that", however, reflects his personality, by shedding light on the way he feels deep within:

Example 18 (TSS22):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toma:</th>
<th>「おまえも彼氏欲しいの？」</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toma (thoughts):</strong></td>
<td>顔をあげた彼女は、目を見開いていた。そんなに驚かせることを言ったかな。ごく普通の会話を Algeria していたんだけ。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heroine:</strong></td>
<td>「......欲しい、けど、トーマがいい」</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toma (thoughts):</strong></td>
<td>そう言って、彼女は俺の腕にもたれてきた。甘さ重さに一瞬だけクラっとする。ああ、もう、やっぱ喫茶店かどっかにすればよかった。このまま抱き寄せていても欲求は、半端じゃない。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toma:</strong></td>
<td>「まったく、こんな大きくなっても甘えん坊だな、おまえ」</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Example 19 (S11) an imaginative choice has been taken away from the player since 「せめてお前が俺に。。。」 was not left as an unfinished indication, but turned into the definite "come to me". While the Japanese player could insert whatever verb they might imagine to fit, this translation choice takes away the freedom the Western player as a reader in Iser's (1978) sense has to create a reality suitable for the world they imagined.

Example 19 (S11):
7.9 Toma and target audience identification

Realizing how much one can identify with a specific character could lead to a more self-reflecting playership. In such a sense, *Otome* games might not only aid players mature in terms of relationships but also in terms of self-awareness. Perhaps the choice to change Toma from going to university into going to school in several scenes (Example 20, 21 and 22 (U14, T26, T42)) was made to make the character more graspable for the predicted target audience, which seems to be teenagers in the West, rather than university students. This would be in line with Mangiron and O’Hagan (2013), who stress the importance of having translators make informed decisions, with the target audience in mind. While this pattern seems to be consistent throughout the first half of Toma's route, the localized version contradicts itself when it is suddenly turned into college in Example 23 (T54):

Example 20-23 (U14, T26, T42, T54):

1. **Orion:** 「トーマだ。もしかしてご近所さんがなのか?」
   **Toma:** 「俺も今日は休みなんだ。たまには大学に顔を出さないとさ」
   **Translation:**
   Orion: It's Toma. I wonder if he lives around here.
   Toma: I have today off, too. It's good to stop by school sometimes. (U14)

2. **Orion:** 「あのね、トーマ。明け方までずっとレポート書いてたみたいなんだ。多分大学の課題だよね。なんだか大変そうだったね。」
   **Translation:**
   Orion: It looked like Toma was up until dawn writing a report. It's probably an assignment from his school. (T26)

3. **Orion:** 「...... トーマって大学でどういう勉強してるんだろうね。随分忙しそうだけど......」
   **Translation:**
   Orion: I wonder what Toma's studying at school? He seems really busy. (T42)

4. **Orion:** 「大学のレポートなのか。なんなんだろ？」
   **Translation:**
   Orion: Maybe he has a report for college? What could it be? (T54)
Example 24 (T31) sheds light onto an aspect of Toma's personality that led to an unexpected pun in the Japanese version. Not only was the player confronted with a gamer inside a game, but Toma was even indicated to play *Otome* games, unconscious of the fact that he himself is trapped inside such a system. Killham et al. (2018) find that being able to relate to a character's feelings is a crucial aspect, as well as having similar values. As such, this scene could have opened up a path for identification with Toma, while making the development team visible to some extent. The translators, however, opted not to utilize it as an entrance point for visibility. Perhaps they deemed a joke regarding *Otome* games unacceptable due to the relatively fresh player base or did not want to exclude players of visual novels of all kinds by further classifying *Amnesia: Memories*.

Example 24 (T31):

```
Toma: ああ、DK2？そのシューティング版の『DK3』もあるけどやる？」
[あとは探偵モノの『DK4』、恐怖ホラーの『DK5』、乙女ゲームの......]

Translation:
Toma: Ah, DK2? I have the FPS version of it too, "DK3": Want to try it? I also have the mystery version "DK4", the horror version "DK5", the visual novel version... (T31)
```

### 7.10 Empowerment of the heroine

Various changes to Toma's personality stem from an attempt to empower the heroine. As was pointed out by Celianna (2018), Western players have a preference for their heroines to have a strong character. She states that they dislike the idea of identifying with a heroine that has no agency, and that traits meant for "self-insertion", such as being blank and generic, are not what Western players are looking for in their heroines. Ganzon (2019) even describes the phenomenon of rewriting parts of the game to alleviate the heroine's weaknesses, and give her more agency, a practice common among fan bloggers. With *Amnesia's* heroine, who was created without memories to ease "self-insertion" for the player, as stated by Higashinaka (2011), it is questionable whether the decision to give her more agency provides the players with an "equivalent gameplay experience". When looking at the above findings, however, the value of putting emphasis on shaping
the heroine into someone Western players will be comfortable connecting with becomes apparent. Nevertheless, it remains debatable whether making decisions that lead to a more active heroine can be justified even if parts of the love interests' personalities are affected by them.

In Example 25 (I8), taking the attribute 「寝込んでいる」 from the heroine is suspected to have happened so as to empower her. This, however, results in Toma's wish to protect her to be toned down, and with it parts of his personality. Perhaps the translators felt that Western players would not like to see a frail depiction of the heroine.

Example 25 (I8):

```
Toma... THAT'S RIGHT! I'M... *s older brother. So who exactly are you? Are you planning to play some kind of joke on my little sister? (18)
```

In addition, Toma was turned into an assumably real older brother in this case, despite being her stepbrother in the original, crossing another taboo: Celianna (2018) finds that Western players dislike the idea of the love interest and heroine being in a relationship that involves incest. In Example 25, the Japanese author opted for utilizing a technique that provides the player with more information than Ikki, whom the lines are directed at, building up a special kind of intimacy between Toma and the player: The player of the Japanese version gets to hear the original voice while simultaneously reading the Japanese text, which, in this particular scene, almost fulfills a function comparable to that of subtitles. Only Toma and the player know that Toma is her step brother in Ikki's route, revealed by the Kanji used for writing the word 「義兄」, which clearly differentiate it from the phonetically identical Japanese word for biological brother. The fact that the ST player and Toma share this knowledge, with Ikki being excluded from their inner circle (and thus being unaware of Toma being her step brother at this point), while the TT the player does not seem to be part of Toma's inner circle either,
creates an information gap possibly leading to the player of the English version perceiving Toma as the heroine's biological brother.

The attempt to empower the heroine also shines through in Example 26 (I15), with the word "need" hinting at reversed roles, with the heroine being a caretaker figure for Toma. When looking at the context of this scene, however, it becomes clear that he is trying to give something (e.g., the food he brought) rather than take something from her.

Example 26 (I15):

```
Orion: 「あれっ、トーマだ。看病してもらったあの日以来だね。どうしたんだろう......?」

Translation:
Orion: Oh, it's Toma. You haven't seen him since the day he helped take care of you. What could he need? (I15)
```

Example 27 (TSS14) demonstrates how the relationship with the player changes due to a mistranslation. Although the original had Toma, not the heroine, make a remark about how she had better stop relying on him too much, the translator chose the heroine to be the one to make this remark, perhaps to present it as her conscious decision rather than as something "forced upon her", by exchanging an originally passive verb with an active one. This points to a tendency for the translator to make the heroine more active, presumably to better correspond to the target audiences' preferences:

Example 27 (TSS14):

```
Heroine: 「ほんと、私ってトーマを頼りすぎるな、指摘されるまでもなかったんだ。ごめんなさい」

Translation:
Heroine: I really can't get out of the habit of relying on you, can I? I didn't even need to point it out. (TSS14)
```
7.11 Toma as a misogynist

Some translation choices might lead to the impression that Toma carries within himself quite some misogyny. In Example 28 (T36), the expression "so readily" could be deemed problematic since it takes the focus away from his self-blaming for his lack of control, highlighting her behavior as that of a "cheap woman", while in Example 29 (T47), the addition of "silly" implies that Toma is looking down on the heroine.

Example 28 (T36):

| Toma: おまえなぁ、俺たち今一緒に生活してんだよね？ 否応にも２人きりなんだよね！？そういう男の前で気恥に脱ぐな！(…)  |
| Translation: |
| Toma: You realize we're living together now, right? We're alone together at home! Don't get undressed like that in front of a man so readily! (…) (T36) |

Example 29 (T47):

| Toma: おまえが目の届く所にいてくれたほうが、俺も安心できるしな」「いつのしたこと、ずっと眠って欲しいくらいだよ」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: I feel a lot better when you're somewhere in sight, too. I almost wish you would just keep sleeping here forever. You always push yourself when you're awake, you silly princess. (T47) |

Furthermore, in Example 30 (T16), Toma's words could be interpreted as expecting her to enact a certain type of femininity, precisely one that only exists to please men. In the original, 「おまえでも」 implies that Toma usually does not perceive her as sexy due to their relationship being similar to that of siblings, but that he had imagined "even someone like her" to come across as attractive upon stepping out of the bathtub. A mistranslation affecting the word order, however, turned this scene into something entirely different. The mistranslated part of the sentence ("you might even") could give the player the impression that Toma is on the verge of asking her to perform a strip tease or some other questionable action.
While nuanced along the lines of "She is still a child after all" in Japanese, reinforcing his stereotype (and possibly triggering an image of the heroine in childish pajamas for the player of the original), the player of the English version is being confronted with a presumably sexist macho in this scene.

Example 30 (T16):

| Toma: 「おいおい、なんだそのパジャマ。色気の欠片もないな」「おまえでも湯上がりなら多少はイイ感じになるかと思ったのに、期待して損した」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: Hey what's with those pajamas? They aren't sexy in the slightest. *I figured you might even put on a sexy vibe after a bath like that. I guess I just set myself up for disappointment.* |

As previously stated, Nishimura (2014) underlines that surprises for the player often are manifested in nuances added to a character's personality. The author of the present study argues that if these are translated with the wrong nuance applied, the character will lose depth and the target audience might be turned off by him.

7.12 The closed gap

While the gap between *yandere* Toma and normal Toma is big looking at the Japanese version, the fact that it barely seems to exist in the localized version might lead to the player being unable to build up any loving feeling for him in the first place. This results in nothing to be put at stake later by his behavior as a *yandere*. Killham et al. (2018) state that relationships with obstacles to overcome are more memorable to the player. The Western player of Toma's route, however, might be fully unable to understand how the heroine could possibly forgive Toma. Example 31 (T53) demonstrates the lacking gap between the loving brother and the *yandere* character. What was mistakenly added to the English route very early (him threatening to assault her) actually does, while not as drastically as in the mistranslated scene on day 9, occur in Japanese to some extent, now that he is in *yandere* mode. While the translation in general was spot on with *yandere* Toma, almost as if he had been in *yandere* mode from the beginning, this part was toned down by translating 「襲われる」 as "take advantage of", perhaps to avoid a higher age rating. The confusion of 「厳しい」 with 「寂しい」 further contributes to
softening the situation. With Toma fresh in *yandere* mode, the translators could have opted for driving the players' anxiety level up deliberately, but rather chose to have it remain at the level of a constant uncertainty since the start of the route, with the first peak of the curve occurring much earlier so that the shock the Japanese player experienced at this point could not be recreated.

Example 31 (T53):  

| Toma: [.....本音で言うと、そろそろ俺も崩しくなってきたからさ。一緒に暮らすとやっぱキツいね」「でもケージの中ならそうそう俺にも手を出せないし、だから大人しくしててよ」「好きでもない男に襲われるのも嫌だろ？」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: ...To tell the truth, I was starting to get lonely. But us living together would have been an issue. But if you're in that cage, I can't do anything to you. That's why you can relax. You wouldn't want a man you don't love to take advantage of you, right? (T53) |

7.13 Replayability *fuubutsushi, iyashi* and an approach derived from acting

Looking at the way Toma speaks and acts in various routes helps to include an important aspect of the game *Amnesia* not only as a piece of ergodic literature in Aarseth's (1997) sense, but also as an approach to a problem identified by Killham et al. (2018), in this research. The problem they address is that of games that feature dateable characters offering limited ways in which the player can interact with their love interest, to which *Otome* games like *Amnesia* offer a partial solution: Replayability in the form of being able to encounter new aspects of one's love interest's personality in other characters' routes. In Shin's route, Toma at one point reassures the heroine in her actions, which is followed by the interjection 「よしよし」.

Example 32 (S4):  

| Toma: 「よしよし、ぴっくりした？まああんまり気になしないで。店長は取って食べたりしないから」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: Did the manager say anything unusual to you? Don't worry about it too much. He doesn't bite or anything. (S4) |
「よしよし」 is a word used for comforting, and often associated with comforting gestures, the action perhaps most commonly associated with it being stroking someone's head. In Japan, this stroking of the head is often done by adults to children. As such, the most possible point to this scene is showing Toma's brotherly attitude towards the heroine. This attitude is crucial to his personality since it is built around the big brother stereotype. Therefore, one could argue that by omitting details such as the comforting word 「よしよし」, and with it, possibly also a comforting gesture such as the action of stroking the heroine's head, the translators slowly strip Toma of aspects of his personality. In this particular case, the translators might not have been able to come up with a cultural equivalent for the interjection.

Mangiron and O’Hagan (2013) already used a framework derived from skopos theory when analyzing the script of various Square Enix games. Due to the non-linear nature of Otome games and given the fact that game translation often means working out of context and at sentence level, one could argue that game translators could benefit from the application of the skopos theory not only to the entire game, but, if necessary, also at micro level, asking themselves about the purpose of the dialogue spoken or action performed by the character. Apart from being able to make informed decisions, and, as such, receiving character profiles from the development team, the application of questions derived from acting and character construction, perhaps in particular, a variation of Hagen's (1978) questions, such as "What does the character want, and what does the character do to get what he wants (in this particular sentence)?", could be beneficial for the creation of a suitable target text. With many of Toma's actions, as is the case with the one stated above, one could say that, given the stereotype Toma represents, their purpose is to give the player the feeling of being cared for in a brotherly way. Otome game characters are designed in a way that makes the player feel emotionally attached to them. Emotional attachment to a video game character is, as was found by Killham et al. (2018), stable in the player's everyday life and makes them turn to fandom related to the game. As such, Otome game developers try to shape the player's buying behavior by offering them character goods as elements that connect the game world and reality. These character goods, Koide and Obana (2013) state, give the player the illusion of always having the character by their side. One of the
main strategies the characters in Otome games use to create emotional attachment, is that of performing iyashi (comforting) in various ways. What characters do as part of iyashi is, for example, bringing the player to bed, telling them not to overwork or preparing food for them and, as such, they take care of the player. Toma does this in an especially loving and caring way, just like a brother would care for his sister. These elements connect the game world and the player's reality in a special way. The player even could opt to play game sequences that occur in the morning, where, in the case of Toma, the player is served breakfast by him, integrated in his own breakfast ritual, or choose to play a scene where the heroine is brought to bed by Toma in the evening. As such, Amnesia offers the player means of letting the character participate in their everyday life. Apart from the daytime playing a role in Otome games, so do fuubutsushi (objects, traditions or phenomena that remind of a specific season), which give off the feeling of living through a full year beside one's virtual love interest. One could argue that Toma's route even goes beyond this, since it is so full of childhood memories that it makes the player feel as if they had spent a lot of time with Toma. In the original, this feeling is constantly reassured by scenes such as the following.

Example 33 (T34):

| Toma: 『なんだかなんだで色々買ったな。...ってか、シャンプーも？俺のじゃ駄目だった？髪は女の命っていうけど、そういうのもこだわるんだな」「昔は魔法少女変身シャンプーとか使っていたのに」 |
| Translation: |
| Toma: We sure did buy a lot of stuff... Shampoo, too? Was mine no good? They say that hair can be a girl's life, but I guess it matters more than I thought. The one you were using before had a picture of a magical girl on it. | (T34) |

This scene's purpose is to underline his brotherly personality by making it obvious that he has been watching her preferences ever since childhood and still remembers every detail—this shows just how important the heroine is to him and how much he cares. By translating 「昔」 as "before", however, the scene no longer fulfills its purpose in the localized version.
7.14 Creating a distance between Toma and the player

Upon bearing in mind that it is one of Toma's objectives to care for the player in a brotherly way, the utilization of translation strategies that create a distance between Toma and the player could be deemed problematic. In *Amnesia: Memories*, Toma seems to consider her new furniture to be almost equally comforting as her smell, which differs from the way he feels in the original, where the two are almost polar opposites, and while he feels estranged by the new furniture, her smell is what makes him feel at home.

Example 34 (TSS17):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toma (thoughts):</th>
<th>まだ新しい調度品に溢れた部屋だけど、それでもどこかあたたかな感じがするのは、きっと彼女の匂いのせいなんだろう。</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation:</td>
<td>Toma (thoughts): The room was full of new furniture, but the reason it felt so warm and familiar was most likely from her smell. (TSS17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 35 (TSS18) further emphasizes the distance by suggesting that he does not feel comfortable close to her. Whereas he originally thinks that she decided to sit down next to him so that she could lean against the bed, which she presumably considered more comfortable, in English it is implied that he himself first believed it to be more comfortable but now that she is close to him, it is not. This is coupled with the mistranslation of 「狭い」. While arguing that the typical room in the US is not small, and that therefore it could be counted as a cultural equivalent might explain the choice, it changes the outer surroundings, and with them, the circumstances. A spacy room would bereave the situation of its tension since there would be plenty of places either of them could "flee" to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toma (thoughts):</th>
<th>正面に座ったと思ったのに、どういうつもりか彼女は俺の隣に腰を下ろした。ベッドにもたれた方が楽だからだとは思うんだけど、狭い部屋の中、近すぎて少し困る。</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation:</td>
<td>Toma (thoughts): I thought that she'd sit across from me, but for some inexplicable reason she sat herself right next to me. <em>Though I thought at first that leaning against the bed would be more comfortable, our close proximity in this large room made me nervous.</em> (TSS18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.15 "Equivalent gameplay experience" and its connection with character personality

While a lot of cases change Toma's personality, some, despite doing so, at the same time create an "equivalent gameplay experience". One translation choice is exceptional in that it is likely to trigger a similar memory of a seasonal feeling for the player of the localized version to the one the original image provided for the Japanese player. Turning 「麦茶」 into "iced tea" gives the English speaking player the same feeling of spending summer together with Toma, despite altering Toma's tastes. Hasegawa (2012) states that: "Every culture has entities that have some symbolic meaning, or symbolic value." (p. 68). Perhaps the translator associated summer with iced tea and deemed it a more appropriate word for recreating the effect of triggering a summerly feeling within the player, despite the word barley tea existing.

Example 36 (T25):

```
Toma: 「ん～……先にコーヒーでも入れようかなぁ。いや待って、夏らしく麦茶か(…)麦茶……いや、やっぱ寒いか……？」

Translation:

Toma: Hm. Maybe I'll make some coffee first. Wait, some iced tea would be better for summer. (…) iced tea. Or is it a bit too cold for that...? (T25)
```

The above case underlines the fact that while there are a lot of cases where Toma's personality is a key element for creating an "equivalent gameplay experience", the existence of cases where cultural differences make it a valid choice to opt for changes that serve the same purpose better in the localized version (such as in Example 36 (T25)) cannot be denied. Thus, while the gameplay experience is not solely tied to Toma's personality, it remains a crucial aspect for the translator to consider.
8. A new approach to *Otome* game translation

While Hagen's (1978) "*Respect for acting*" is considered an essential piece of literature for any aspiring actor, the author of the present study has found within it aspects that might, when applied to *Otome* game translation, enrich thought processes in a way that could make it easier to pinpoint a feeling and, by doing so, find the most appropriate wording the character in question might use in order to express it.

Hagen (1978) writes: "Let us assume you are cast as Horatio in Hamlet. (...) I doubt that it is a Horatio who has ever eaten, slept, washed, or gone to the bathroom. (...) he should be considered as a human being (...)." (p. 23). The author of the present study argues that the translator, too, should think of the characters as actual humans someone was about to date, with all their virtues and flaws and bring out in them what it means to be human rather than simplistically sticking them inside a box of a single stereotype. As can be seen in the way Toma was translated, the translators may have been comfortable with the idea of Toma as a *yandere* character, but perhaps their idea of a *yandere* somehow clashed with the type of closeness that is associated with family (e.g., Toma as the big brother) so only one stereotype made it to the translation's surface. In order to produce the gap characters like Toma need, however, at least two stereotypes would have to be enacted. Ideally, the translators would, by aid of Hagen's questions, be able to see many more aspects of Toma's personality and carefully weave them into the translation as they choose the words to convey what is being said in Japanese.

It is to be borne in mind that *Otome* game players, especially "*self-inserting*" type players, are likely to think of themselves not only as readers of a text but as part of the game world while playing. As Cope and Kalantzis (2009) put it: "(...) children of the Nintendo, PlayStation and Xbox generation (...) are content with being no less than actors rather than audiences, players rather than spectators, agents rather than voyeurs and users rather than readers." (p. 8). Given the fact that the ("*self-inserting*") *Otome* game player could be regarded as an actor, providing translators with knowledge connected to the field could provide a key to keeping the gameplay experience intact. It is indeed possible that the player, when trying to figure out which actions or responses will bring them closer to a character, might,
consciously or unconsciously, pose themselves questions similar to the ones Hagen (1978) suggested for character construction (pp. 82-85). While they might most consciously employ Hagen's question *"What do I do to get what I want?"*, upon making choices at key points in order to progress in the game, the process of playing an *Otome* game involves actions such as trying to read one's love interest's mind to figure out which response might lead to the good ending and trying to avoid potential dangers that either hinder the romance's development or lead to a bad ending. As such, the player could be considered to also employ the question *"What is in my way?"*. When looking at the way most *Otome* games, and *Amnesia* in particular, are constructed, one will notice that the majority of Hagen's other questions will be answered for the player upon progressing in the game. In *Amnesia*'s case this becomes apparent in the beginning, since Orion talks about each aspect of the questions *"Who am I?", "What time is it?", "Where am I?"* and *"What surrounds me?"*, while making the objective ("*What do I want?*") of regaining one's memories clear. As the narrative unfolds, the player will be able to answer questions such as *"What are the given circumstances?"* and *"What are my relationships?"* in more detail. The gaps in the narrative could be regarded as an equivalent to the question *"What do I do to get what I want?"*, to which the game asks the player to provide answers upon making choices.

For the translator, on the other hand, ideally some of Hagen's (1978) questions ("*Who am I?", "What time is it?", "Where am I?", "What surrounds me?", *"What are the given circumstances?"* and *"What are my relationships?"* (pp. 82-85). ) could be answered by receiving character profiles from the development team. To some extent, these might also state an initial idea about the question *"What do I want?"*. It is to be assumed, however, that it will mostly be up to the translator to work on the questions *"What is in my way?"* and *"What do I do to get what I want?"*, since they are directly related to the context of specific scenes. While constantly employing the question *"What do I want?"* in the back of their minds, these would have to be answered during the translation process.

Hagen (1978) also states that *"If a (...) character has, to me, elements of light blue, a field of clover, (...) a piece of cut crystal—these essences may be of value to (...) my particularizations for my character."* (p. 43). Similarly, Koide and Obana
(2018) demonstrate how image colors serve as a base for character personality construction in *Otome* games. As is revealed by Hanamura (2013), Amnesia's characters were not only assigned image colors, but also were created based on card symbols. She explains how this strategy aids in making the characters recognizable to the player. Upon receiving character profiles, translators will know that for example, Toma's symbol is a yellow diamond. The translator can put this information to use, while bearing in mind the cultural aspects these things behold. Yellow might stand for jealousy in the West, but the translator will have to do research on whether the same is true for Japan. They might have to do the same to find out what diamonds symbolize in Japan and find a way to culturally convey these symbols. However, Hagen (1978) also warns that "Substitution is not an end in itself; (...) substitution (...) strengthens your faith (...) in each stage of the total work on character." (p. 44). Similarly, working with symbols could be a preparatory task for translators, in order to get into a certain mindset before devoting themselves to translating a specific character's lines.

The author of the present study is well aware that the act of applying Hagen's (1978) questions to the ST before translating could add a not to be underestimated workload to the process. Ultimately, it might even lead to a new profession that builds a bridge between ST and TT and paves the way for the translator, so that they can work optimally.
9. Conclusion

The investigation confirmed the hypothesis that a change to Toma's personality occurred during the localization process. Based on the above conducted analysis, this section will provide answers to the research questions presented in the introduction.

In what respect could changes that occurred during the localization process have led to an alteration of Toma's personality? How could these changes explain the discrepancy between player reception in Japan and the West?

The results suggest his personality to have been altered in a way that contradicts Western player preferences, with the effects created by some translation strategies leading to a distorted impression, coupled with anti-feminist infringements of the player's space. It could be argued that the localized version bereaves the player of the opportunity to make an initial positive connection with Toma, since his first appearances in Shin's and Ikki's route are connected to negative connotations. Furthermore, the player of the original version has the entire first half of his route to admire the caring and loving brother figure that would do anything to protect the heroine and fall in love with him, so that once the gap between the big brother and his yandere traits manifests, they are likely to look at his actions with forgiveness. The player of the English version, however, possibly did not find any lovable traits about Toma from the beginning, so that major attraction points of this route such as gap moe never get to unfold. This could be explained by the multidirectional nature of some changes: Toma frequently seems to act disrespectfully towards the heroine despite not being in yandere mode, whereas once he enters yandere mode, it is softened down, making the player constantly feel uncomfortable rather than providing them with peak moments of excitement embedded in a relationship with obstacles to overcome. Translation strategies resulting in making the logic behind his actions hard to understand might have deepened the player's feelings of confusion towards the character.

In addition, some choices rendered means of getting emotionally attached to Toma inaccessible by pre-filling gaps in the text. Finally, creating a distance between the character and the player, besides altering the player's curve of anticipation and
excitement through shifting or completely eliminating moments of surprise might have affected the player-character relationships' dynamics.

While this research demonstrates that overall, Toma's Western reception can be explained by the way his personality was altered during the localization process, further investigation is needed to clarify whether or not limitations in childhood memory connection had an impact on the Western player base.

To avoid both bias due to knowledge that a first time reader does not have and errors caused by working out of context, this study suggests an application of a variation of Hagen's (1978) questions when translating Otome games: As far as scenes where the player is being addressed directly are concerned, and taking into account that dateable characters are written in order to perform iyashi on the player, posing questions like "What does the character do to please the heroine?", "Which need of the player is he trying to cater to?" and "What ideal response would the character like to see from the heroine?" could prove useful when translating Otome game characters and their dialogue.

Perhaps this research might lead to rethinking current approaches when localizing Otome games, letting translators focus on the effect characters need to have on the target audience in order to provide them with an "equivalent gameplay experience".

When games are localized into English nowadays, choices translators make will continue to shape Western views, since direct translation from Japanese to European languages other than English has become the exception rather than the norm. Therefore, looking into alternate strategies for making responsible translation choices will be of crucial importance in the future.
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Appendix

Attached PDF file:

List of cases
Appendix

List of cases:

Shin Cases:


Orion: 「...知り合いだったのかな。すごく親しげだったね」

Translation:

Orion: Maybe you know him? He acted awfully close.


Shin: 「甘やかすなよ、トーマ」

Translation:

Shin: Don't baby her, Toma.


Shin: 「なんでトーマがそんなこと知ってんの」

Translation:

Shin: How the hell would you, of all people, know that?


Toma: 「よしよし、びっくりした？まああんまり気にしないで。店長は取って食ったりしないから」

Translation:

Toma: Did the manager say anything unusual to you? Don't worry about it too much. He doesn't bite or anything.

Shin:「昔トーマとよく行った公園とか…小学校とか……そのくらいしか思い付かなかったんだけど」

Translation:

Shin: Before, we’d go to the park or to the school with Toma. That’s about all I could think of.


Owner:「ですが、彼女は昔トーマくんにプロポーズしたそうじゃないですか。茶飲み話に聞きましたよ」

Orion:「ティータイムになんてことを聞くんだ、このオーナーは！」

Translation:

Owner: But I heard that she had proposed to you in the past, Toma.

Orion: What kind of questions does this guy ask over tea??


Toma:「別に用ってわけじゃないんだけど。昨日通したから体調見に来ただけ。彼氏が来たなら、帰るよ」

Translation:

Toma: No real reason. She had a long shift yesterday so I just came to see how she’s doing. I’ll get going now.


Toma:「弁当買ってきたんで、こんなんでよければ」

Translation:

Toma: I bought something, if you're okay with this kind of food.

Heroine (choice): 「トーマと一緒にいたい」

Translation:

Heroine (choice): *If it's alright, I would like to walk with Toma.*


Toma: 「俺もシンも、おまえを守りたいんだと思う。だけど、やり方が決定的に違う」
「それがあの時、わかってしまってわけ……」

Translation:

Toma: *Shin and I both want to look after you and protect you. But our ways of doing it are completely different. The event after your performance just made us fully realize that fact...*


Toma: 「もう寝ろ。おまえが寝るまでずっと手握っててやるから」「あーあ。あの頃のままでいられなかったもんなあ……」「それが無理なら……せめておまえが俺に……」

Translation:

Toma: *Just try to get some rest. I'll hold your hand until you fall asleep. Ahh I wonder if it really is impossible to stay the way we were before. And if it is impossible, you can still come to me at least...*


Shin: 「あ、そ。で、2 人とも何の話してたの」

Toma: 「おまえの可愛いーい子供時代の話」

Shin: 「うわ最悪。懐古趣味のじいさんみたいになとやめろよトーマ」

Toma: 「人聞き悪いこと言うなよ。こいつの記憶を戻すために話して聞くせてやったなんだろ？」

Translation:

Shin: *So what were you two talking about?*
Toma: A cute story about when you were little.

Shin: You really should try not acting like a grandpa for a day.

Toma: **Don't talk to your grandpa like that.** You realize I was telling it to help her remember, right?


Shin:「おまえら 2人して見たくないものには見ないふりするのか？それでいいのかよ！？」「それじゃ、前に進めないだろ！そんなに今の関係が大事かよ。壊したくないのかよ！」

Translation:

Shin: Do you really intend to just turn a blind eye to something you don't want to see? Is that really okay?! You won't be able to move on! Is your relationship right now so important? You can't destroy that?!


Toma (bad end Shin route):「おやすみ。永遠に覚めない夢を」

Translation:

Toma: **Good night, may you dream in peace, forever**


Shin:「いつまでも罪を抱えまた生きていかせるつもりかよ」

Translation:

Shin: Do you really intend to let those responsible carry this sin for the rest of their lives?


Toma:「っつーかね、_。どうしておまえは今まで気付かなかったのかな」

(..)
Shin:「......どうせいつもの調子で軽く言ったんだろ」

Toma:「まあね。だって怖いだろ」「こいつに避けられるようになったりしたら俺はどうやって生きていけばいいかわからないよ」

Translation:

Toma: Also **how** did you not realize any of this until now?

Shin: You probably said it really lightheartedly like you usually do.

Toma: Pretty much. I was scared. if she started avoiding me, I didn't know how I would **continue to** live my life.
Ikki Cases

Case I1. Ikki Route Day 11. Change Type: Addition.

Ukyo: 「ところで、君は今誰かと付き合ってるの？」「シン？ イッキ？ トーマ？それともケントかな？」

Orion: 「え、何、この人シンやイッキとも知り合いなの？ っていうかトーマって誰」

Translation:

Ukyo: By the way, are you going out with anyone right now? Shin? Ikki? Toma? Or maybe even Kent?

Orion: Wait, does this guy know people like Shin and Ikki, too? And who the heck is Toma?


Toma:「大丈夫？ まだ、苦ししい？かなり熱があるから、そのまま動かずに寝てるんだぞ」

「......覚えてる？おまえはね、1晚眠り続けてたんだ。雨に打たれて熱を出したようだな」

Translation:

Toma: How do you feel? You've got a high fever, so you shouldn't move... Do you remember? You slept for the entire night. Looks like you got a fever after being caught in the rain.

Case I3. Ikki Route Day 13. Change Type: Slight nuance change.

Orion:「うん。あの男の正体はね、なんと......！......ってごめん、実はボクにもよくわからないんだ。でも、少なくともキミの味方だってことは確かだと思うよ」「あのね、アイツゆうべからずっとキミの世話をしてくれてるんだ。ここに泊まり込んでね。あ、着替え以外ね。パジャマに着替えさせたのはサワちゃんだから安心して」

Translation:

Orion: That man is...! ... Actually, sorry. To be honest, I don't really know. But at the very least, he seems to be a friend of yours. Just so you know, he's been taking care of you the whole time, since last night! He even stayed over. Oh, except for changing your clothes. Don't worry, Sawa was the one who helped you put on your pajamas.
Case I4. Ikki Route Day 13. Change Type: Slight nuance change.

Orion: 「それで、困ったサワちゃんが誰かに電話かけて助けを求めてね。その後駆けつけてきたのがさっきの男ってわけ」

Translation:

Orion: Sawa was really worried and called someone and the person who showed up was the man you just saw.


Toma: 「..........ん？ 客か......はい、どちらさまですか」「ああ、それはどうも。どうぞ上がって下さい...」「わざわざありがとうございました。あいつはまだ寝ていますが................君は、一体......」

Ikki: 「それを聞きたいのは、僕の方だ。君は、一体誰だい？」

Toma: 「俺？俺はただの......」

Ikki: 「ただの、なんだい？どうして僕の彼女の家に若い男がいるのか、納得のいく理由を聞かせてもらおうかな」「とりあえず上がらせてもらっていいかな」

Translation:

Toma: ...Hm? A guest? Yes, who is it? Ah, thank you. Please, come right in. (...

Thanks for coming by. She's still asleep, though...Who are you, anyway...?

Ikki: I'd like to ask you the same thing. Who exactly are you?

Toma: Me? I'm just...

Ikki: Just what? I'm trying to ask why a young guy is staying over at my girlfriend's place. Anyway, could you just let me in?


Orion: 「彼氏がお見舞いに来たその時、応対に出てきたのは若い男......。これは......しゅ、しゅ、修羅場ラバババッ！ヤバい、やましいことは何にもないけどとにかく起きてる。何とか弁解しよう！」
Translation:

Orion: Your boyfriend came to check up on you and was greeted by another guy... This is... Th-This could end up getting really messy...! Uh-oh. I know you haven't done anything, but you need to get up. Guys, give us a break here!


Heroine: 「彼は幼なじみです！」

Toma: 「え？ 僕がいつおまえの幼なじみになったんだ？ ああいうことにはなったが、俺は今もおまえを妹だと思っている。おまえはそうじゃないのか？いや、そんなことより、彼は一体何なんだ？」

Translation:

Heroine: He's a friend!

Toma: Since when am I just your friend? I know we've drifted over the years, but I still think of you as my younger sister. You don't feel the same way? And more importantly, who is this?


Toma: 「……そういうこと。俺は _さんの義兄だ。それで、君は何者なんだ? 寝込んでいる妹に対して何かのジョークのつもり？」

Translation:

Toma: ...That's right. I'm _'s older brother. So who exactly are you? Are you planning to play some kind of joke on my little sister?


Ikki: 「は？ こいつ、変質者なの？あのさ、君。怪我をする前に出て行きなよ」「こう見えても喧嘩には慣れている方なんだ。何度も修羅場をくぐってきたんでね」「痛い思いをしたい？ それなら出て行け！ 変質者！」

Translation:

Ikki: What? He's a pervert? You'd better leave, before you get hurt. I might look like this, but I'm pretty used to fighting. I've had to fight my way through a lot of situations. You want to get hurt? Now get out! You damn pervert!
3. Omission 4. Omission

Toma:「……ちょっと待って、少し話をまとめてもいいかい？要するに、覆面の彼は不審者ではなく、_の彼氏なんだな(.)」

Kento:「(.)よって現在の2人は血縁的にも戸籍的にも赤の他人だが、義兄君は今も彼女を義妹だと考えている(.)」

Toma:「え？ああ……丁寧にどうも」「義妹が世話になっています。あ、でもそんなに改まらないでください。多分、俺の方が年下ですから(.)」

Ikki:「(.).義妹の看病をしてたお義兄さんに何て失礼なことを言うんだってなじってくれてもいい」

Ikki:「(.).トーマ君、失礼なことを言ってごめん。決して君が不埒なことをすると思ってるわけではないんだ」

Toma:「……気持ちはわからないでもないです。こっちも少し、配慮に欠けてました」「じゃ、俺は帰るかな。_、無理するんじゃないぞ」

Translation:

Toma:...Could you hold on a minute and set things straight here? So you're saying the guy in the mask wasn't a degenerate, and is actually_’s boyfriend?

(.) Kento: At present, both are total strangers with no familial or blood relation, but the stepbrother here still thinks of her as a younger sister. (.).

Toma: Oh... Thanks for the formal introduction. I'm sure my younger sister has been in good hands. Ah, but there's no need to be so formal. I'm probably younger than you are. (.).

Ikki: I realize you’re like an older brother helping his younger sister get better, and this might seem kind of rude. (.).

Ikki: Toma, I'm sorry for saying something so rude just now. It's not that I'm thinking you'd do anything funny to her. (.).

Toma:...I kind of know how you feel. I don't think I was considerate enough, either. I'll get going. _, don't push yourself too hard.


Ikki:「あー……トーマ君を見た時は本気で焦ったけどね。おかげで恥の上塗りをしたよでも、トーマ君とは何でもないんだよね。気にする必要ないよね」
Ikki: Oh... Although I seriously did panic when I saw Toma. That embarrassed me even more. But it sounds like there isn't anything going on between you and Toma. I don't need to be worried.

Translation:

Ikki: I've got something to do this evening, so I won't be able to come by, but give me a call if anything happens. Not Toma, me. Anyway, see you at work next time.

Orion: I think you could trust Toma and Sawa quite a bit, but.. If you go to them, I feel like Ikki would get mad and ask, why didn't you come to me?

Orion: Your dad shows up now, of all times!? Uh, since he's your dad, then he must be the man Toma was saying was a huge cheater, right...? .. and you weren't going to rely on your family anyway.. why is he here now?
Case I15. Ikki Route Day 27. Change Type: Nuance change.

**Orion:**「あれっ、トーマだ。看病してもらったあの日以来だね。どうしたんだろう……？」

*Translation:*

**Orion:** Oh, it's Toma. You haven't seen him since the day he helped take care of you. *What could he need?*

Case I16. Ikki Route Day 27. Change Type: Nuance change.

**Toma:**「母親から体にいい料理ってのを預かってきた。上がっていいか？それで？悪いのは体調か？それとも気分のほうか？」

*Translation:*

**Toma:** My mom gave me *some food that might help*. Mind if I come in? So what's wrong? Are you sick? Or is it more emotional?


**Toma:**「……うちの親から聞いたよ。おまえの父親、また別の女と結婚したみたいだな。しかも、今度は遠方らしいじゃないか」「おまえも来月には向こうに行くけど、そうなると、イッキ君とは遠距離になるね」「彼は嫌がるだろうな。どうするか、もう決めたのか？」

*Translation:*

**Toma:** ... I heard from my *parents*... It sounds like your dad got married to yet another woman. Not only that, but she lives pretty far away. I heard you'll be moving over there next month. But you'd end up being *separated* from Ikki in that case. I'm sure he wouldn't like it. Have you decided yet what to do?


**Toma:**「うちによくって言ってやりたいところだけど……」「うちの親もいつ同じことになるかわからないからな……。あまりお勧めはできない」

*Translation:*

**Toma:** I'd ask my parents if they could let you stay over at their place, but...I don't know when my parents will be moving, either... I wouldn't recommend that option.
Case I19. Ikki Route Day 27. Change Type: Nuance change.

Toma: 「おまえは昔から、1人で何でも抱え込もうとする奴だったよな」「昔はさ、俺を頼れて何度も言ったけど......今のおまえには頼れる相手がいる。それを忘れちゃ駄目だ」

Translation:

Toma: From a long time ago, you've always tried to carry your burdens by yourself. In the past, I asked you a number of times to rely on me more... But you have someone you can rely on now. Don't forget that.
**Kento Cases:**


*Toma:* 「そっか……それは気の毒にね。ワカさんに怒られると、俺でも肝が冷えるよ」

*Translation:* 

*Toma:* I see.. Now I'm worried. Even I get chills when Waka gets angry.


*Toma:*「_、わからないことがあったら、ワカさんに見つかる前に俺に聞くんまだよ？それから、怒られてもあまり気にしないように」

*Translation:* 

*Toma:* If there's anything you don't understand, let me know before Waka finds out. Also, try not to take it to heart if he gets mad at you.


*Mine:* 「はあ、トーマさんってばほんと優しいですよねー。私がわからない時もどうぞよろしくお願いします」

*Toma:*「もちろん構わない気持ちはわかるけど」

*Mine:*「あ、バレてしまった？」

*Toma:*「ワカさんに聞きづらい気持ちはわかるけど」

*Translation:* 

*Mine:* Haah, Toma, you really are a nice guy. I hope you take care of me if I need help, too.

*Toma:* Of course, I don't mind. But I feel like you're just a little over-reliant on me, Mine.

*Mine:* Oh you noticed?

*Toma:* Although I completely understand why it would be hard to ask Waka.

Orion:「……えっと。こっちの男って、前ケントと会うためにここ来た時声かけてきたヤツだよね」「名前、トーマっていうんだ。 何だか優しい感じのヤツだね」

Translation:

Orion: ..Let's see. This man is the guy who talked to you when you came here before to meet Kent. So his name's Toma, huh? He seems really nice.


Toma:「気にしなくていいよ。君も着替えてきな」

Orion:「トーマは優しいなぁ。この職場のうるおいだよ」

Translation:

Toma: Don't worry about her. You should get changed, too.

Orion: Toma sure is nice. He really warms up the workplace.


Mine:「どうしてですか!! どうしてよりによってあの人なんですか！他にもいい男なんていっぱいいるじゃないですか！よりどりみどりじゃないですか！トーマさんはいい人だし、シンだってちょっとキツいけど格好いいし……時々お店に来るウキョウさんも先輩目当てだって話じゃないですか！あの人もめちゃくちゃ美形だし！」

Orion:「え、ちょっと待って。トーマはともかく他の人たち誰……？」

Translation:

Mine:..But why?! Why did it have to be him, of all people?! There are so many other good men out there! You've got so many to choose from! Toma's a really nice guy, Shin might be a bit harsh, but he's also really attractive.. That ukyo guy who comes to the Cafe sometimes was here for you, to! That guy is super hot!

Orion: Huh? W-wait a minute. We know Toma, but who are the others...?

Mine:「ほんとに今狙ってる相手いないんですか？格好いい男、周りにいっぱいいるじゃないですか」

Sawa:「うーん、でもコレってのがいないんだよね〜」「店長とシンは性格がアレだし、ケントさんはくっついちゃったり、トーマも本音見えないところあるしー。ミネの友達っていうイッキさんとやらはなあんかうさんくさいしー」

Translation:

Mine: Is there really nobody you're interested in right now? There' re plenty of attractive men around you.

Sawa: Hmm, but there's nobody who feels like the right one. The manager and Shin act the way they do, Kent's already taken, and I feel like Toma's hiding something. And that friend of yours. Ikki...He seems kind of questionable, too.

Case K8. Kento route Day 15. Change Type: Nuance change

Sawa:「店はトーマに任せておけば切り盛りしてくれるからいいとして。後はシンを誘えばOKかな」

Translation:

Sawa: We can leave the cafe to Toma. He'll manage it just fine. All that's left to do is invite Shin.


Sawa:「うん、連絡した通り冥土の羊の親睦会だよ？」

Shin:「だったらどうしてトーマがいないんだよ。1番働いてるだろ」

Sawa:「だって、トーマがこっちに来たら誰が店番するわけ？」

Translation:

Sawa: Yeah, it's an informal gathering for Meido no Hitsuji, just like I told you.

Shin: Then why isn't Toma here? He's the one who works the most.

Sawa: If Toma came, who would look after the cafe?

Mine:「トーマさんはもう店長の顔色完璧に読めるから、いいんです」

Translation:

Mine: Toma already understands the manager perfectly, so he's fine.


Orion:「あ、お客さんだ。はいはーい」「あ、シンとトーマの兄弟だ！わざわざ来てくれたみたいだよ！」

Translation:

Orion: Oh, you have a visitor. Be right there! Ah, it's Shin and Toma! Looks like they came to see you!


Shin:「ていうか、元気そうだな。1人暮らしの部屋に上がるのもなんだろう、外行かない？」

Toma:「こら、アホか。見舞いに来たのに外へ連れ出してどうすんだよ。休ませてあげなきゃダメだろ」

Shin:「アホはトーマだろ。いちいち心配しすぎなんだよ」

Translation:

Shin: You seem to be doing fine. Want to go outside? It doesn't feel right to enter the room of a girl living alone.

Toma: Are you stupid? We're here to visit, we can't take her outside. She needs to rest.

Shin: You're the idiot, Toma. You worry way too much.


Toma:「そうかもな。わりといつも彼女に注文頼んでたし(...)悪い人には見えなかったんだけど。どうしたんだろうな」
Translation:

Toma: That might be the case. And he was always asking for her to take his orders. (.) he
didn't seem like a bad person, though... I wonder what he was doing?


Toma:「見つめながら、嬉しそうっていうか哀しそうっていうか……なんだろな。複雑な顔してたよ」「思い出話してる時みたいな表情だったな。」「理由はわかんないけどさまぁ」「どっちみち惚れてんだろうなって俺は思ってたけど」

Translation:

Toma: He'd kind of gaze at her, and have this happy, yet sad look in his face.. I wonder what
it was? It was a complicated expression. It was almost like a look you'd have when talking
with someone about old memories. Although I don't know why. Well, regardless. I seriously
do think that he was in love.


Shin (answering the heroine’s question if it is unusual to start liking someone one didn't like
before - they are talking about why she disliked Kento before):「普通にあるだろ、ようほど心の
狭い奴じゃなければ」

Toma:「シンにはずいぶん長い間嫌われてたよ、俺」

Shin:「だってうるさいんだもん」

Toma:「ほらね。大丈夫、嫌いだった人を好きになることくらい普通にあるよ」

Translation:

Shin: That's normal. As long as you're not overly narrow-minded.

Toma: Shin actually disliked me for the longest time.

Shin: Because you're annoying.

Toma: It's fine, it's pretty normal to start liking someone you disliked once before.
Ukyo Cases:

Case U1. Ukyo route. Day 2. Change Type: Nuance change
Toma:「おはよう、三人とも。今日は誰も遅刻しなかったんだな」
Translation:
Toma: Morning you three. I'm surprised you aren't tardy today.

Toma:「そう言われればそうだな。どうした？　なんか困り事でもあるの？」
Translation:
Toma: Come to think of it, you're right. What's the matter? You stressed about something?

店長:「それからトーマ君。丁寧な給仕でお若い方からご年配の方まで満遍なく評判がいいですよ」
Toma:「ありがとうございます」
Translation:
Manager: Next is Toma. Your prompt service has received stellar reviews from people all ages. They are very consistent.
Toma: Thank you.

Toma:「おはよう。頑張ってるね」
Orion:「えっ。なんでこの2人!?」
Heroine (choice1):「おかえりなさいませ、ご主人様」
Heroine (choice2):「おはよう」
Shin:「……へえ、ちゃんとやってんだな」
Toma: 「いつも見てるのに、やっぱり自分が言われると変な感じだな」
Shin: 「......オレ、他の奴に言ってんの見ても相当違和感あるけど」
Toma: 「それ違和感じゃなくてイラっと来てんじゃない？」
Shin: 「......あのさ、おはようじゃないだろ。こっちは客で来てるんだから」
Toma: 「まぁいいだろう。相手が俺たちじゃ態度も砕ける」

Translation:
Toma: Morning. You seem to be up and at 'em.
Orion: What? Why are they here?
Heroine(choice1): Welcome home, masters.
Heroine (choice2): Good morning
(Choice 1->)
Shin:..Whoa. Guess you really are.
Toma:..I always see you do this, but the fact that you're saying it to me makes me feel weird.
Shin:..Actually I feel pretty weird watching her say it to other customers, too.
Toma: I think that's not you feeling weird but more annoyed.
(Choice 2->)
Shin:..Hey, it's not good morning. We're here as guests today.
Toma: Whatever, if we're the customers she's not gonna be in character.

Case U5. Ukyo route. Day 6. Change Type: Modulation
(After Shin and Toma come in as customers and Mine leads them to their seat):
Orion: 「ミネがいてくれて助かったね。シンとトーマって、よくここに食事に来るんだあ」

Translation:
Orion: Thank God Mine was with us. I didn't know Shin and Toma are here a lot.

Ukyo:「それだから——あの２人とは距離を置いた方がいい」
Orion:「……え？」
Ukyo:「どちらかに肩入れすると駄目だ。いいね」
Orion:「……今って、昨日言ってた忠告？」「それに、あの２人って……」

Translation:
Ukyo: And also. You should keep your distance from them.
Orion:..what?
Ukyo: If you take one's side, it won't be good. Do you hear me?
Orion: Was that.. the warning similar to yesterday? And the two he's talking about are...


Shin:「だから、その説教口調やめろよ。
なんでいつも上から目線なんだ」
Toma:「こっちだって好きでそうしてる
わけじゃないんだけどな。」「おまえ、手がかかるんだよ」
Shin:「手がかかって、あのな」
Toma:「シン、今コーヒー入れようと
してるの砂糖じゃなくて塩」
Shin:「……。嘆してるから間違ったんだ」
Toma:「うん、そうだね。普段なら間違わないよね」
Shin:「くっそやっぱムカつく……！」
Toma:「だったら俺を誘わなきゃいいのにね。」「そういうとこ可愛いよねあ」
Shin:「可愛いとか言われると殺意わくんだけど」
Toma:「あれ、そう？誉めてんだけんけど……」
Shin: Hey, stop with the lecturing. Why are you always treating me like a kid? Toma: Well obviously I don’t like doing that either, but you’re a real handful.

Shin: Hey what do you mean by that?
Toma: Shin, what you’re about to put into your coffee isn't sugar, it's salt.
Shin: I got it wrong because you were talking.
Toma: Yeah you're right. Normally I wouldn't make a mistake.
Shin: Ugh you ARE annoying.
Toma: Then don't invite me then. But that you do is what makes you adorable.
Shin: Dude, when you say I'm adorable or cute it makes me want to punch you.
Toma: Oh yeah? It's a compliment, though...


Toma: 「なんだ、シンが先に誘ったのか。ちょっと残念」「その日、俺もヒマでさ。映画にでも誘おうかと思ってたんだ」「その日で上映最終日のやつだからギリギリで間に合ったなって言ってた」「けど、シンが先ならそっちに譲るよ。俺は遠慮しとく」

Translation:

Toma: Oh, you invited her first, Shin? That's a bummer. You see, I thought I'd be bored that day, too. I was about to invite you to a movie. It's the last showing on that day, so I was just thinking I barely made it by coming here to ask you. But if Shin was first, I'll let you go to that. I'll pass.


Toma: 「……あー、ごめん。なら、俺の方の話は聞かなかったことにしといて」
Shin: 「……おい。やめろよそういう気の遣い方」
Translation:

Toma:...Ah, sorry. Then why don't we pretend I never invited you.

Shin:...Hey. Don't try to act all noble.


Orion:「ちょっと冷静になるね。ちょうど今日はバイトも休みだしのんびりしながら......あっ！」「昨日のトーマのメール、返信してないんじゃない？」「リカみたいに心配させても悪いし」「返信しちょうよ」「しかし、キミって色んな人に心配されるね。......そんなドジっ子には見えないけどな」

Translation:

Orion: I need to cool down a little. You don't have work today, so we should just relax and... Oh! I don't think you replied to Toma's message from yesterday. It's not good to worry him like Rika. Let's respond. But man, so many different people are worried about you... You don't seem to be that clumsy to me, though.


Toma:「なにそれ......！ 何があったの！？」

Orion:「あ。トーマだ」

Translation:

Toma: What the hell...? What happened?

Orion: Oh it's Toma.


Toma:「この件は俺に預けてくれないかな。カタをつけてくる。これ以上おまえに危害を加えさせたりしない」

Orion:「なんとかしてくれるなら助かるけど......ねぇ？」「......大丈夫なのかな」
Translation:

Toma: Can you leave this to me? I'll take care of it. I won't let them hurt you anymore.

Orion: Well, if he's going to resolve it, that'll be good, right? I wonder if he's okay..


Toma:「わかった。じゃあ、そういうことにしておく」「けどまたこういうことがあったらちゃんと話を聞くからな。」「誤魔化されないから、そのつもりで」

Translation:

Toma: I guess we'll leave it at that. But if something like that happens again, you need to tell me. You can't trick me. So be prepared.


(They meet him when going for a walk)

Orion:「トーマだ。もしかしてご近所さんなのかな？」

Toma:「俺も今日は休みなんだ。
たまには大学にも顔を出さないとさ」

Translation:

Orion: It's Toma. I wonder if he lives around here.

Toma: I have today off, too. It's good to stop by school sometimes.


Toma:「おまえもバイトに精を出すのは
いいけど、本分を忘れないようにね」

Translation:

Toma: And I'm glad you're busting your butt at work, but don't forget about your real job.

Toma:「言い忘れてた。おはよう。
昨日のことで少し心配してたけど、元気そうで良かった」

Orion:「......トーマっていいヤツだよね。ホントのお兄さんみたい」

Translation:

Toma: I forgot to say so.. Good morning. I was a little worried about you yesterday. But I'm glad to see you're doing fine.

Orion:..Toma is a good guy. He's like a big brother.

Case U17. Ukyo route. Day 15. Change Type:


Toma:「それで---ああ、ウチに来たことなかったっけ? 俺んこのマンションなんだ」「おいで、」

Orion:「えっ!?何、この、床の赤いの!?」

Toma:「それ、インクだから。気にしないで。あの子達のところから証拠品として回収したんだけど、零しちゃってさ」

......「まぁ、見ればびっくりするよな。一見血みたいなし」「うん......でも、血じゃないよ。少なくとも俺やおまえのじゃないから
安心して」

Translation:

Toma: So--oh, have you never been over to my place? I live here. Come here,_.

Orion: What?! What's all this red on the floor??

Toma: Oh, that's ink. Don't worry about it. I grabbed their things as evidence, but I guess I spilled it. Well, I suppose looking at it now, it does look like blood at first glance. Yeah.. But it's not blood. At the very least, it's not yours or mine, so don't worry.

Orion: 「え……あの……なんか……様子、おかしくない？」

Toma: 「だからさ…………あんな奴らがいるなら、おまえは当分、外に出ないほうがいいと思うんだ。」「ごめんな。」「けど、約束は守るよ」「おまえは、誰にも傷つけさせない。必ず——俺が守るから」「おまえが死ぬまで——この場所で——ずっとずっと、一緒だよ……」

Translation:

Orion: What..? Um.. Isn't he.. acting weird?

Toma: So.. As long as they exist, I feel like you shouldn't go outside for a while. Sorry. But I will keep my promise. I won't let anyone hurt you. I promise to protect you. Until the day you die... I will protect you here. Forever. We'll be together forever...

Case U19. Ukyo route. Day 19. Change Type:


Toma: 「気にしないでいいよ。おまえが茗荷に来たら俺も嬉しいし」「どうせなら俺と同じゼミどう? 忙しいけど面白いよ」

Shin: 「冗談やめろ。おまえと一緒って将来弁護士とかだろ。やだ」

Toma: 「弁護士には限らないけどまぁそっちの方向だね」

Translation:

Toma: Don't worry about it. I'd be happy if you came to myouga. Why don't you take the same seminars as me? They're tough, but pretty interesting.

Shin: Haha, real funny. Taking the same courses as you would mean I'd be a future lawyer or something, right? How about no?

Toma: Well it wouldn't be limited to just law, but something in that direction.


Shin: 「大体、大学入ってまでトーマや〜とるんでたくないっての」
Toma: 「えーつまんないなー。とはいえ、実際の所俺も忙しいしお前達ばかり構ってらんないないけど」

Shin: 「おまえ、いい加減幼馴染離れしろよ」

Toma: 「それなりに離れてきてるつもりだけどな。遠くに住んでる兄弟程度の付き合い方じゃないか？最近はさ」

Shin: 「......ま、言われてみればそっか。子供の頃は毎日3人で遊んでたけど——」

Translation:

Shin: And, besides, I don't want to still be hanging out with you and when I'm in college, you know.

Toma: Whaaat.. You're a killjoy, you know that? But then again, I'm actually pretty busy, so I wouldn't always be able to see you, anyway.

Shin: You seriously need to grow out of that" big brother" stuff.

Toma: Well I think I'm growing out of it in my own way. You're more like a brother that lives far away from us now. Lately, at least.

Shin:..Well come to think of it.. Yeah, huh? When we were kids, we hung out every day. The three of us.


Shin:「今時手紙って珍しいよな。メアド教えてやればよかったのに」

Toma:「だから……いや、それはだな」

Shin:「別にいいんじゃないの？なんで隠すんだよ」

Toma:「隠すとか隠さないとかって問題じゃないの！俺は——」

Shin:「あ、だ」

Toma:「っ！」

Shin:「あのさ、聞いてよ。トーマ、この店の常連さんにラブレター貰ってたんだぜ」

Toma:「シン！」

(..)
Shin:「さっき見たら携帯のメモ里女の名前びっしり」
Toma:「……人の携帯横から見るんじゃないの！」
Shin:「見ようと思ったんじゃなくて見えちまったんだよ」
Toma:「そういうんじゃなくて、俺は人当たりいいから声かけられやすいだけ」
Shin:「性格悪いのにな」
Toma:「まったくよ。何勘違いしてんだか」
Shin:「勘違いするようにしてんのそっちだろ？」
Toma:「否定はしないけど。だからって古い付き合いのおまえらが妙な誤解するなよ」
Shin:「誤解とか言うけど、彼女くらい作ればいいじゃん」
Toma:「まーそのうちね。今は勉強忙しいてそういうこと考えてらんないんだよ」

Translation:
Shin: Man, a letter these days? That's rare. Why didn't you just give her your email address?
Toma: Well.. No, you see..
Shin: Who cares? Why hide it?
Toma: It's not about hiding. That's not the issue here! I..
Shin: Hey it's _
Toma: !
Toma: Shin!
(..)
Shin: I just looked through his phone and his contacts are FILLED with girls'numbers.
Toma:..hey! Don't look at my phone while I'm using it!
Shin: I wasn't trying to snoop or anything. I just happened to see it. But man, it's extensive. I thought he was ikki for a second.
Toma: It's not like that. I'm just good with people, so I'm easy to talk to.
Shin: But your personality is terrible.

Toma: Seriously. I wonder what they see.

Shin: Well it's your fault for making them see that side of you.

Toma: Well I'm not going to deny that. But that doesn't mean that people who've known me for a long time like you should misunderstand me.

Shin: Misunderstand? Well, why don't you just get a girlfriend?

Toma: Well, yeah, eventually.. I'm just too busy with studying, so I can't really get in that mindset.

Translation:

Toma: Oh, both of you. Be sure to tell me when you get a significant other, alright? Especially you, _. It's my dream to take your hand and walk you down the aisle on your wedding day.

Shin: What is her dad going to do then?!

Toma:..fine, I guess I'll have to settle with yours.

Shin: How serious are you?


(This is where the route branches from U22 on, as the heroine asks if the letter is from Ukyo, and Toma and Shin react to her :)

Heroine:「常連って、ウキョウ？」
Toma:「……あのね」

Shin:「どういうボケだよ。そっしゃなくてちょっとガキっぽい女の子」「あれ、高校生かな。へたすれば中学生じゃないの」

Toma:「……なんか俺年下ウケするんだよね。年上にもウケるけど」

Shin:「あーなんとなくわかる、それ。トーマ、兄弟いないのにな」

Toma:「おまえたちがそんな感じだろ。
無駄に兄貴オーラでてんのかな」

Shin:「嬉しそうに言ってんじゃねえよ」

Orion:「2人とも仲がいいね。文句言い合いながらも楽しそうだ」

Translation:

Heroine: Our regular? You mean Ukyo?

Toma: You know how serious.

Shin: What kind of joke is that.. You can be pretty childish. Girl I wonder if she's a high school student. Worst case, a junior high student.

Toma: Yeah, younger girls are pretty into me for some reason. Well, older women, too.

Shin: Ah, I can see that. Toma, you don't even have siblings.

Toma: Well, you guys are my siblings. Maybe I have that older brother vibe.

Shin: Why are you saying it all happy...

Orion: They're really close.. Even though they're bickering, they still seem to be having fun.

Case U24. Ukyo route. Day: No day specified. (she woke up after being in coma in this end and ever since she wakes up there's no date) . Change Type: 1.Addition. 2.Nuance change.

Toma:「おい、シン！女の子泣かすんじゃないよ！」

Shin:「……おまえ何見てんだよ。オレ何もしてないだろうが」

Heroine:「あ……うん。シンは関係ないの。大丈夫だから……」
Translation:

Toma: Hey, Shin! Watch it. Don't make a girl cry!

Shin: Who do you think you're talking to? I didn't do anything.

Heroine: No it's not shins fault. I'm fine.
Toma short story cases:

Day = No day.


Child Heroine: 「トーマおにいちゃん、ただいまー！」

Child Toma (thoughts): 小さな声が僕の後ろからきこえてくる。足を止めてふり返ると、保育園から帰ってきたばかりのあの子が公園にやってきたところだった。

Child Toma: 「おかえり。早かったね」

Child Heroine: 「はやくきたらトーマおにいちゃんがいるでしょ。がんばったよ！」

Child Toma (thoughts): よしよし、と頭をなでてあげると、うれしそうに笑った。

Translation:

Child Heroine: I'm back, Big Brother!

Child Toma (thoughts): I heard a small voice coming up from behind. When I stopped to turn around, I saw a little girl arriving at the park, having just returned from kindergarten.


Child Heroine: When I come early, I get to see you here, right? I tried my best!

Child Toma (thoughts): I patted her head in approval, and she smiled happily.


Child Toma (thoughts): 本当は今日は学校の友だちの家に行こうかと思って思っていたけど、小さな笑顔があまりにうれしそうで、友だちの家に行くのはやめにした。

Translation:

Child Toma (thoughts): I had actually planned on going to a friend's house after school, but her small face was so excited that I decided to call it off.
Case TSS3. Toma short story. Change Type: Nuance change.

Child Toma (thoughts): 僕もなんだからうれしくなって、こんどはシンの頭をなだた。

Translation:

Child Toma (thoughts): It was my turn to feel happy, so I patted Shins head as well.


Toma (thoughts): そこでは今、彼女がワカさんにこの店のアルバイト採用面接を受けているところだ。

Translation:

Toma (thoughts): At that moment, the girl in question was interviewing with Mr. Waka for a part time job at the cafe.

Case TSS5 Toma short story. Change Type: 1.Mistranslation. 2.Mistranslation

Toma (thoughts): ミネは俺を見つめた後、心底残念そうに深く息を吐いた。

Mine: 「私がトーマさんにイマイチ惹かれないのは そういうとこなんですよね～」「嘘しにくいっていうか厳しいっていうか。見た目悪いし話しやすいのにそのせいで対象外です。残念」

Toma: 「......それはどうも」

Translation:

Toma (thoughts): After staring at me for a moment, mine gave a disappointed sigh.

Mine: That must be the reason why I'm not really all that attracted to you.. Like, you're hard to get a rinse out of, and you're kinda strict. But you've got good looks and you're easy to talk to so you're kind of both things. It's such a disappointment.

Case TSS6 Toma short story. Change Type: Slight nuance change.

Toma (thoughts): サワちゃんとはもともと友人だから、俺がいなくなったあともアルバイトの女子3人、うまくやってくれることを期待しよう。
Translation:

Toma (thoughts): She was already friends with Sawa, so I hoped that even after I left this job, the three of them would do well together.

Case TSS7 Toma short story . Change Type: Slight nuance change.

Toma (thoughts): 「俺の言葉に、ようやく安心したように彼女はふわっと笑った。」

Translation:

Toma (thoughts): As if finally relieved, she gave a small laugh.

Case TSS8 Toma short story . Change Type: 1.Slight nuance change. 2 Slight nuance change.

Toma (thoughts, thinking about her pouting): こういうことが最近よくある。昔は彼女が何を考えているかすぐわかったのに、子供時代から抜け出すにつれて、考えていることがわかりにくくなった。昔のままで困るんだろうけど、少し寂しい。

Translation:

Toma (thoughts): This had been happening a lot lately. I used to be able to tell exactly what she was thinking, but as we grew out of childhood, it became harder and harder to read her thoughts. She probably didn't want things to stay as they were, but it made me feel slightly lonely.

Case TSS9 Toma short story . Change Type: Equivalence.

Toma (thoughts, after she tells him that they only called him Niichan until elementary school): なら、俺が彼女やシンの兄扱いされていたのは、本当の短い間だったんだ。

だけど幼児期のすりこみというのは恐ろしいほど強烈で、俺は今も、その優しい呪縛の中にいる。

Translation:

Toma (thoughts): The time I was treated as an older brother by her and Shin seemed now to be very short. But the impact of childhood is terrifyingly intense, and even now I was caught up in its friendly spell.

Toma (thoughts): 誰でも初めてのバイトは緊張する。そこに知り合いがいれば、心強い。現に同じような理由で、シンもあの店で時々働いている。

Toma: 「でも、おまえも独り立ちしないとさ。いつまでも俺に甘えてたら困るだろ」

Translation: Everyone was nervous at their first job. It would be reassuring to have a friend there. Shin worked once in a while at that Cafe for the same reason.

Toma: But you have to stand on your own. You'll be in trouble later if you just keep relying on me.


Toma (thoughts): 俺はほっとして胸をなでおろした。俺はこの気持ちは甘い自覚があるけれど、この気持ちは俺にはかなり甘い。

Translation: I felt relieved and pushed my heart down out of my throat. I may be a pushover when it comes to her but she's even more of a pushover when it comes to me.


Toma (thoughts): うちに来て。

違う意味で言われてるんだろう、嬉しいんだけれどな。......なんて、そんなことをったらもっと考えて、すぐに頭の中からそんな考えを消去する。そういうことを思ったら、そういうことを思っているそぶりを見せたらきっともうコイツとは一緒にいられない。少なくともこんな風に気軽に家になんか呼んでは貰えない。だから、俺は最大限の努力をして、この気持ちを押し殺す。

Translation: "Come over to my place". I'd be happy if she meant that in a different way. But I quickly shook the thought that had popped into my mind. If I thought those things... If I showed her I thought those things, I probably wouldn't be able to be with her like this anymore. At the very least, she wouldn't be asking me over so lightly. So I tried my hardest to crush those feelings as they came up.

Toma (thoughts): ほんの少しだけ甘えを滲ませた彼女の口調が、とても愛しい。

Translation:
Toma (thoughts): The way her tone had a light sweetness around it was very dear to me.

Case TSS14. Toma short story. Change Type: Mistranslation

Heroine: 「ほんと、私ってトーマを頼るクセが抜けないね。指摘されるまでもなかった。ごめんなさい」

Translation:
Heroine: I really can't get out of the habit of relying on you, can I? I didn't even need to point it out.

Case TSS15. Toma short story. Change Type: (Cultural) equivalence.

Toma (thoughts): コンビニの袋から苺のケーキとエクレアを取り出して、テーブルに並べる。

Translation:
Toma (thoughts): I pulled out the cake and eclairs from the shopping bag and placed them on the table.


Toma (thoughts): 彼女はずっと両親と暮らしていたけれど、この春から一人暮らしだった。

Translation:
Toma (thoughts): She had been living with her parents all the time, but starting this summer, she would be living alone.

_Toma (thoughts):_ まだ新しい調度品に溢れた部屋だけど、それでもどこかあたたかな感じがするのは、きっと彼女の匂いのせいなんだろう。

_Translation:_

_Toma (thoughts):_ The room was full of new furniture, but the reason it felt so warm and familiar was most likely from her smell.


_Toma (thoughts):_ 正面に座ると思ったのに、
どういうつもりか彼女は俺の隣に腰を下ろした。ベッドにもたれた方が楽だからだとは思うんだけど、狭い部屋の中、近すぎて少し困る。

_Translation:_

_Toma (thoughts):_ I thought that she'd sit across from me, but for some inexplicable reason she sat herself right next to me. _Though I thought at first that leaning against the bed would be more comfortable, our close proximity in this large room made me nervous._

Case TSS19 Toma short story. Change Type:


_Toma (thoughts):_ こういう時こそいつもの調子で喋って欲しいのに、その気はないらしい。.......どういうつもりなんだか。

_Translation:_

_Toma (thoughts):_ I wanted her to talk like she always did, but it seemed she didn't feel like it. _What was she doing?_

Case TSS20 Toma short story. Change Type: Nuance change.

_Toma:_ 「おまえ、紅茶好きだね。っていうか女の子は紅茶が好きだよね」

_Translation:_

_Toma:_ You really like tea, huh? _I've noticed most girls do._
Case TSS21. Toma short story. Change Type:


Toma:「……一番好きな相手は多分絶対ムリで、諦めなきゃいけないんだけど、忘れるために別の子と付き合ったわけ。言っとくけど、それは相手にもちゃんと最初に言ったよ。俺本当は他に好きなヤツいるけど、君と付き合っている間に君が一番になるように努力するって」

Toma (thoughts): でも、やっぱり無理だった。どうしたって、俺にはコイツが一番大事で。

Translation:

Toma: I don't stand a chance with the person I love the most, but I can't give up on her, even though I need to, so in order to forget, I went out with another girl. I told her this at the beginning, though. I said that there's actually someone else that I like, but that I'd work hard so that while we were dating, she'd become who I liked most.

Toma (thoughts): But it was impossible. The person I liked never changed.

Case TSS22 Toma short story. Change Type:


Toma:「……ヤなやつだよね、俺。軽蔑した？」

Heroine:「ううん、しない。なんか、ちょっとほっとした」

Toma:「？」

Heroine:「……でも、怖いな。ハードル高そう」

Toma:「何の話？」

Heroine:「……なんでもないよ。頑張ろうって、そう思っただけ」

Toma:「おまえも彼氏欲しいの？」

Toma (thoughts): 顔をあげた彼女は、目を聞いていた。そんなに驚かせることを言ったかな。ごく普通の会話を装って聞いたんだけど。

Heroine:「……欲しい。けど、トーマが高い」

Toma (thoughts): そう言って、彼女は俺の腕にもたれてきた。甘い重さに一瞬だけクラっとする。ああ、もう、やっぱ喫茶店とかピンすれはよかった。このまま抱き寄せてしまいたい欲求は、半端じゃない。

Toma:「まったく、こんな大きくなっても甘えん坊だな、おまえ」
Toma (thoughts): 呆れたフリで笑って、買ってきたケーキに手を伸ばした。こんなことで動じては駄目だ。錯覚するな。彼女は俺にそんなことを求めてはいない。

Translation:
Toma: I'm terrible, aren't I. Do you hate me?
Heroine: No, I don't. I feel kinda relieved. but I'm a little scared. The hurdles seem high.
Toma: What are you talking about?
Heroine:...Nothing. I was just thinking that I need to try harder.
Toma: Do you want a boyfriend, too?
Toma (thoughts): Her eyes went wide as she looked up. Was what I asked that surprising? I had asked her under the pretense of normal conversation, too.
Heroine:...I do. But I also like being with you, Toma.
Toma (thoughts): With this, she leaned onto my arm. I felt a momentary lightheadedness from her soft weight. We really should have gone to a Cafe instead. The desire to embrace her was utterly overwhelming.
Toma: Geez, still, at this age?
Toma (thoughts): I laughed as if disbelieving her, and reached towards the cake I bought. I couldn't let myself be fazed by this. Don't deceive yourself. She doesn't think of you like that.

Case TSS23 Toma short story Change Type: Omission.
Toma (thoughts): 彼女が離れていくまでに、俺は強くならなくてはいけない。いつか他の男と結ばれる彼女を見ても、心が砕けてしまわないように。
Translation:
Toma (thoughts): I would have to get stronger before she drifted away. So that when I saw her with another man, my heart wouldn't break.
Toma Cases:


*Toma:* 「ぼーっとしてるな……たの貧血って感じでもないし」「頭打ってるみたいだから病院行くよ、いいね？」

*Translation:* 
*Toma:* You seem really dazed.. and I don’t think you have anemia.. you probably hit your head. I'm taking you to a hospital, got it?


*Doctor:* 「大学生、と……。持病の類は？」

*Toma:* 「特になかったはずです。 昨日も元気に喫茶店でバイトをしてたようなので、風邪とかもないですね」

*Translation:* 
*Doctor:* Okay, university student. Any pre-existing conditions?

*Toma:* None that I know of.

Case T3: Toma route. Day 2. Change type: Mistranslation

*Toma:* 「……だもんで、その看護師さんに
まだ安静にしてあげてくださいって
言われちゃったよ」「変に刺激したり
お見舞いで長居するなってさ」

*Translation:* 
*Toma:* She also asked that I let you get more rest. She said if I kept coming by, it’d be too much excitement and you’d have to stay longer.


*Toma:* 「そういうわけだから、家に帰ろう。 俺は部屋を出てるから、 身支度したら廊下において」
Translation:

Toma: Anyway let's go home. I'll give you some time to get dressed. Just come out into the hallway when you're ready.


Toma: Her memories are kind of cloudy right now because of it and she hasn't been acting normal since we left hospital. So try not to call her for a while until she gets better... yeah, okay. Yeah, they did tests. No they were all negative.


Toma: Mind if I have some coffee? I'll get some from the kitchen. You want some too, right?

Orion: Huh it looks like Toma knows his way around your house.


Shin: You're the one who told me this last minute.


Toma: Why are you the one who told me this last minute? I didn't know this would happen. I'm not sure if I should be in touch now or not.
Toma: そう、良かった。俺は夜中に電話が鳴るんじゃないかって、どきどきしてたよ。「(..)だったら連絡くれればよかったのに」「遠慮してんだか俺が嫌なんだか知らないけど、前者なら気にせずかけてきていいから」

Translation:
Toma: I see, that's good. I was worried all night that my phone would ring any minute. (...) You should have called me then. I don't know if you're holding back or don't like me, but you're free to call me anytime.

Toma: And I guess that's how I turned out this way..a big brother with no actual siblings.

Toma: 「店で料理でも運んでいる最中に倒れたりしたら、この店にも損害を出すしコイツも怪我をする」「なんで、当面......今月中くらいは様子を見たいんです」

Translation:
Toma: If she were to collapse while carrying food or drinks it would cause damage to the cafe and she could be injured as well. That's why for now, maybe until around the middle of the month, I'd like to watch over her while she recovers.
Orion:「……トーマは犯人探してるけど、もしただの事故なら犯人なんていないんだし、仕方ないよね」

Translation:

Toma: Sorry. I looked around but I couldn't find anyone up there. (...) But I couldn't find out who the person who dropped it was.

Orion: Toma thinks there's a culprit but if it was just an accident, there wouldn't be one.


Toma:「俺だからいいけど、他の男の家でこんなに爆睡したら何されても知らないよ」

Translation:

Toma: You're safe because it's me, but if you sleep this deeply at another man's house, you have no idea what he might do to you.


Toma:「あ、バレただろ。おまえの寝顔見てたら、子供の頃思い出して、ついね」

Translation:

Toma: Oh, you knew after all. I was looking at your sleeping face, and I started remembering when we were kids.


Toma:「ハラ減ったら適当に冷蔵庫の中身漁って。俺の隠し食料奪うの、慣れてるだろう、おまえ」

Translation:

Toma: If you get hungry, you can eat whatever you want in the refrigerator. I'm already used to you stealing my food, anyway.

Case T16 Toma route Day 9 Change type: Nuance change

Toma:「おいおい、なんだそのパジャマ。」
色気の欠片もないな」「おまえでも湯上りなら多少はイイ感じになるかと思ったのに、期待して損した」

Translation:

Toma: Hey what's with those pajamas? They aren't sexy in the slightest. I figured you might even put on a sexy vibe after a bath like that. I guess I just set myself up for disappointment.

Case T17 Toma Route. Day 9. Change Type: Mistranslation, change of sentence structure, perhaps due to contrastive rhetoric (Hasegawa, 2012, p.181)

Heroine:「一緒にベッドで寝ればいいのに」

Toma:「一緒に？俺と？おまえが？同じベッドで？……何言ってんの？別に嫌じゃないよ。そりゃ全然嫌じゃないけど……それ、他のヤツに言うんじゃないよ。誘われたって思うから。ベッド入ってから違うっても遅いよ。完全に合意発言だぞ、今の」

Translation:

Heroine: Why don't we share the bed?

Toma: Together? You? With me?... What are you implying? I don't dislike the idea. I don't dislike it at all, but...... Shouldn't you say that to another guy? I might get the wrong idea that you're trying to tempt me. It'll be too late to say that's not what you intended once we're in bed. You basically just consented.


Orion:「だけどさ、トーマといることは間違いじゃないみたいだね。ほら、こうして記憶に刺激があっただし。さすが彼氏って感じ？」

Translation:

Orion: But there's no mistake that Toma was there. He's the one who activated this memory. Did he seem like your boyfriend?


Orion:「あのね、トーマがね出掛けにキミの顔を撫でてたよ。名残惜しみにキミを見てた」「トーマ、キミのこと好きなんだな。心配性過ぎるところもあるけど、基本的にいいヤツだよね」
Translation:

Orion: You know, Toma was stroking your hair before he left. It looked like he was reluctant to leave you. Toma must really like you. He worries too much about things, but he seems to be a good guy.

Case T20. Toma route day 10 change type: 1. Nuance change 2. Nuance change

Ukyo: 「オマエが今一緒にいる男は、オマエの恋人じゃない」「ああ、嘘じゃねえ。嘘をついてるのはオレ以外の誰かだ」「どうだ？信じるか？ま、どっちに転んだところで結果に影響はねえけどな」「どのみち、オマエはヤツに殺される」

Translation:

Ukyo: The man who's with you. He's not your boyfriend. The man who's with you now isn't your boyfriend. I'm not lying. The liar is the other guy, not me. Well, that doesn't matter, it won't change anything. Regardless of what you do, they're going to kill you.


Preschool teacher:「あら、やさしいおにいちゃんね。」「トーマおにいちゃん来てくれた。良かったね。ほら、おいで」

Translation:

Preschool teacher: You're a very kind older brother. Your brother came to see you.

Case T22 Toma route. Day 11. Change type: Nuance change

Toma (child):「ねむれないの、_？ボクがてをつないでてあげるから、そうしたらねむれる？」

(..)「おいで、」「ぼくがいっしょにねてあげるから、もうさみしくないよ」

Translation:

Toma (child): You can't sleep, _? I'll hold your hand. Can you sleep if I do that?

( ..)Come over here. I'll sleep here with you, don't be lonely.

**Toma:** 「俺が戻るまでにちゃんと服に着替えといて。パジャマ1枚じゃ色々ヤバいから」

*Translation:*

**Toma:** Be sure to put on some clothes by the time I get back. It's dangerous for you to be in pajamas, for a lot of reasons.


**Orion:** 「まぁ何にしても、トーマの近くにいるのは間違いじゃないよね。少しずつだけど、色んな記憶がよみがえてきてるしね」

*Translation:*

**Orion:** I mean, you have to be near Toma all the time now. And it's just a little at a time, but a lot of memories are coming back.

Case T25 Toma route Day 11 Change type: 1.Equivalence.2. Equivalence

**Toma:** 「んー…先にコーヒーでも入れようかなぁ。いや待て、夏らしく麦茶か(…)麦茶……いや、やっぱ寒いか……？」

*Translation:*

**Toma:** Hm.. Maybe I'll make some coffee first. Wait, some iced tea would be better for summer. (…) iced tea.. Or is it a bit too cold for that…?

Case T26 Toma Route. Day 12. Change Type: Equivalence in order to adjust to different age of target audience.

**Orion:** 「あのね、トーマ、明け方までずっとレポート書いてたみたいなん。多分大学の課題だよね。なんだか大変そうだったよ。」

*Translation:*

**Orion:** It looked like Toma was up until dawn writing a report. It's probably an assignment from his school.
Case T27 Toma route Day 12 Change type: Omission.

Orion:「何らかの理由でこのメールを知ったトーマは、毎日この家に来て自分に都合の悪いメールを削除してたんだ」

Translation:

Orion: Toma knows something about these emails and he's been coming here every day to erase something inconvenient to him.

Case T28 Toma route Day 12 Change type: Nuance change.

Toma:「いくら俺んちでも、おまえにとっちゃ知らない家だもんな。目が覚めて1人はさすがに嫌だよね」

Translation:

Toma: *I know it's my house*, but it's still unfamiliar to you. I'm sure you don't want to be alone here when you wake up.

Case T29 Toma route. Day 12 Change type: Nuance change.

Toma:「……心配で死にそうになる」

Translation:

Toma:...I get so worried, I feel like I could die.


Toma:「店長は信頼できるけど、あの店でおまえが働いているの微妙だから」

Translation:

Toma: I can trust the manager, but that cafe is just weird.

Case T31 Toma route Day 12 Change type: Adaptation.

Toma:「ああ、D K 2？それのシューティング版の『D K 3』もあるけどやる？」「あとは探偵モノの『D K 4』、惨殺ホラーの『D K 5』乙女ゲームの……」
Translation:

Toma: Ah, DK2? I have the FPS version of it too, "DK3". Want to try it? I also have the mystery version "DK4", the horror version "DK5", the visual novel version…

Case T32 Toma route Day 12 Change type: Nuance change.

Toma: 「……驚いたな。そんな風に素直に甘えてくるなんて何年ぶり？……寂しいなんて言われちゃ駄目とは言えないな。今日はここにいるよ」「やっぱ怖い？最近妙なことが多かったから」「……大丈夫だよ。昔、約束しただろ。どんな怖いことからも、おまえは俺が守る」「必ず守ってみせるから」

Translation:

Toma: This is a surprise. How many years has it been since you've been so honest and affectionate with me? If you say you'll be lonely, I can't refuse.. I'll stay here today. You're scared, right? A lot of strange things have happened lately. It's okay. I made a promise long ago. I said that I'd protect you from anything scary. I'll protect you, I swear on it.

Case T33 Toma route Day 13 Change type: Omission.

Toma:「それにお泊りセットだったら色々使い切る頃だろ? 実際、ボディミルクとか終わってるっぽいし」

Translation:

Toma: Since you packed lightly, you're starting to run out.. It seemed like you were out of lotion, too.

Case T34 Toma Route. Day 13. Change Type: Nuance change.

Toma:「なんだかんだで色々買ったな。……ってか、シャンプーも？俺のじゃ駄目だった？髪は女の命っていうけど、そういうのもこだわるなんだ昔は魔法少女変身シャンプーとか使ってたのに」

Translation:

Toma: We sure did buy a lot of stuff... Shampoo, too? Was mine no good? They say that hair can be a girl's life, but I guess it matters more than I thought. The one you were using before had a picture of a magical girl on it.
Case T35 Toma route. Day 13 Change type: Mistranslation.

Toma: 「さて、それじゃ行きますか。
まず、どの店にする？」

Heroine (choice): 「ランジェリーショップ」

Toma: 「あー、わかった。そりゃ必要だよね。んじゃ俺は店の前で待ってるよ。ショッピングは向こうだったかな……」

Translation:

Toma: Well then, let's go. Which store do you want to go to first?

Heroine (choice): The lingerie shop

Toma: Okay, I got it. You do need that, after all. I'll just wait in front of the store. I think the cafe was over there…


Toma: 「おまえなぁ、俺たち今一緒に生活してんだよ？ 否が応にも2人きりなんだよ！？ そういう男の前で気軽に脱ぐな！下着姿見せんな！一緒に住んでるんじゃなきゃいくら選んでやるけど！まったく誘ってるって勘違いされてからじゃ遅いっての」「わかれよ、そのくらい」「俺んちに逃げ込んできたオマエに俺が手ー出したなんて、笑話にもならないだろーが」「今夜は警戒しとけよ。さっきの、思い切り頭に残ってるからヘタしたら襲うよ。自制はするけど」

Translation:

Toma: You realize we're living together now, right? We're alone together at home! Don't get undressed like that in front of a man so readily! Don't show me your underwear! I'd be more than happy to help you choose if we weren't living together..! Sheesh.. It'll be it if I start thinking you're just trying to tempt me. You should realize that. It wouldn't be funny if I did something to you when you came to my place to escape danger from outside in the first place. Watch yourself tonight. If I remember all of that from just now, it wouldn't be a surprise if I tried something. But I'll try to control myself.


Toma: 「……つ、ああ、いや、違う！優先は犯人じゃない……！……いや、無事とは言えないか。ハサミで髪を切るなんて……あの女……！」
Toma: No, I shouldn't! *My priority shouldn't be her...! No I can't say you're okay. She cut your hair... That bitch...!*

Case T38 Toma route Day 13 Change type: Nuance change.

Toma:「正直、これが兄離れかー、ショックだなー、とか、思ったよ。……今もちょっと思ってる」

Translation:

Toma: To be honest, I thought you were *distancing yourself from me*, and I was shocked... I still feel that way now, a little.

Case T 39 Toma route Day 13 Change Type: Addition.

Toma:「俺は おまえを 俺はね、。おまえを 傷つけるような 真似だけは絶対にしない」「そして他の何者にも、おまえを 傷つけさせない」「今までも。そしてこれからも」

Translation:

Toma: *I want you to know that* I would never do anything to hurt you. And I won't let anyone else hurt you, either. Up until now. And from now on, too.


Toma:「はい、花マルのお返事ありがとう。できるだけ早く帰ってくるからな」「くれくれも外に出るんじゃないよ。いいね」

Translation:

Toma: *Thanks for the obedient response. I'll try to be back quickly. And don't go outside. Got that?*


Toma:「……俺が何を言ってても、おまえは俺より……」
Translation:
Toma: ...No matter what I say, you'd trust someone else over me..


Orion: 「......トーマって大学でどういう勉強してるんだろうね。随分忙しそうだけど......」
Translation:
Orion: I wonder what Toma’s studying at school? He seems really busy.

Case T43 Toma route Day 14 Change type: Literal translation.

Toma: 「おまえには笑っていて欲しいし、笑わせてやりたい」
Translation:
Toma: I want you to smile, and I want to let you smile.


Orion: 「なんだか、哀しそうだったよね。キミを抱きしめてるのに、すごく寂しそうな顔してた」「誰かに怒ってるんじゃなくて、どっちかっていうと......自己嫌悪、みたいな」
Translation:
Orion: He seemed sad, I think. He was hugging you, but he had this really sad look on his face. It didn't look like he was mad at anyone, but.. It was almost like he was mad at himself..

Case T45 Toma route Day 15 Change type: Equivalence.

Toma: まぁ、おまえが寝てってくれたおかげで俺もレポートがはかどったりし、眠り姫も悪くないけどねぇ
Translation:
Toma: Well, thanks to that I guess, I was able to make a lot of progress on my report. Having a sleeping beauty around isn't so bad.

Toma:「おまえ、もしかして自分ちでは毎日昼寝してたの？ ここでは無理して起きてた？昼間眠いなら、いくらでも寝てていいからなむ」

Translation:

Toma: Did you take a lot of naps all the time at home, too? Are you forcing yourself awake here? If you're sleepy, you can nap as much as you want.

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Toma:「おまえが目の届く所にいてくれたほうが、俺も安心できるし」「いつのこと、ずっと眠ってて欲しいくらいだよ」

「起きても無茶ばかりするからな、このお姫様は」

Translation:

Toma: I feel a lot better when you're somewhere in sight, too. I almost wish you would just keep sleeping here forever. You always push yourself when you're awake, you silly princess.

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Toma:「え？ おまえ、いきなりどうしたの」

Shin:「いきなりつったって、そっちが電話出なかったから直接来たんだろ。邪魔する」

Translation:

Toma: What? Why are you here all of a sudden?

Shin: What do you mean, all of a sudden? You're the one who called me, so I came over. I'm coming in.

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Case T49 Toma route Day 17. Change type: 1 Addition. 2.Nuance change. 3.Mistranslation

Shin:「だよね。コイツが自主的におまえんちに来るわけない」「強引に連れてきたんじゃなきゃコイツが大人しくおまえの家にいるはずないよ」

Translation:
Shin: Lies. I knew it. There's no way she would stay at your place on her own. And if you forced her to come here, there's no way she would just sit by and stay like this peacefully.


Toma: 「シン、おまえは何もしないでくれる？この件は俺に一任して」

Shin:「はあ！？ なんでだよ！」

Toma: 「言ったろ。俺は誰も信用してない。それだけの話だよ」

Shin:「デメェ、トーマ！」

Translation:

Toma: Shin, would you mind just doing nothing? Leave this matter to me.

Shin: What?! Why?!

Toma: I told you. I don't trust anyone. That's all there is to it.

Shin: Toma, you son of a...!


Toma:「それに、怖がられて憎まれてた方が、まだ気が楽だ」

「おまえに嫌われたくないって思う俺自身が、俺にとっては最大の敵だから」

Translation:

Toma: And I'd feel better if you were afraid of me and hated me. My greatest enemy is the side of myself that doesn't want to be disliked by you.


Toma:「……ごめんな、……俺はさ、何もかも遅かったのかな」「それとも、我慢しすぎたのかな…...おまえを泣かせたくないだけなのに、たったひとつのその願いすら、叶えることができない」「俺は、どうして——」

Translation:

Toma: I'm sorry... Maybe I was just too late... Or maybe I've been through too much...I just didn't want to see you cry, but even that one wish can't be fulfilled. Why did I...

Toma: 「……本音で言うと、そろそろ俺も厳しくなってきたからさ。一緒に暮らすとやっぱりキツイね」がでもケージの中ならそうそう俺にも手出せないし、だから大人しくしててよ」「好きでもない男に襲われるのでも嫌だろう？」

Translation:

Toma:...To tell the truth, I was starting to get lonely. But us living together would have been an issue. But if you're in that cage, I can't do anything to you. That's why you can relax. You wouldn't want a man you don't love to take advantage of you, right?


Orion: 「それで、さっきまでずっとパソコンに向かってたよ。なんか変なの調べてたなら」「マツリ」がどーのこーの……検索してヒット件数を見るだけで、中身は見てなかったみたいだけど」「大학のレポートなのかな。なんなんだろう」

Translation:

Orion: He's been staring at the computer the entire time since then. He was checking something.. Something online.. He just did a search and looked through the hits, so I didn't see the content. Maybe he has a report for college? What could it be?


Toma: 「暴れるくらいの方がおまえらしいっていえばそうだけど」「大人しくしてなかったって、素直に言いわなくてもいいだろうに……」「怒りのあまり、俺を誤魔化そうとか思わなくてんの？」「……俺が本格的にアレな奴だったら怒った顔もイイよねとか言うんだろうけど、俺そういう趣味ないし」「ガキの頃からのクセでおまえに怒られると身が竦むよ」

Translation:

Toma: It would be a lot more like you to struggle, though. You don't have to say you weren't behaving, either... Are you so mad that you're trying to play tricks on me now? .. If I was someone who was into it, I'm sure I wouldn't mind seeing you mad, but that's not my taste. I start to cower when you get mad, it's a habit from when we were kids.

Ikki:「異性として見てもらえない？」
ヘえ、君をねえ。ずいぶんと根性のある相手だね」「どうすればいいか、ねえ……んー……君の最終的な目標って何？異性として見てもらう、で終わり？ちゃんと付き合いたいんだよね？」「相手にガツリ忘れさせて、24時間いちゃいちゃしてたい」「はいはい、照れないの。事実は認めないとね」「でもどうしようかな。魅力がない子ならまずはそこから改善なんだけど、そんなことないし」

Translation:
Ikki: You want him to see you as a woman? Hmm, you, huh? You've got some spirit, at least. What should you do... Hm.. What's your final goal? You just want to be seen as a woman? You want to go out with him, right? Or do you want him to be madly in love, and be all over you 24 hours a day? Don't get so embarrassed. You need to admit the truth. But what could you do? If you didn't have any charm, that would be the first thing to improve, but that's not the case for you.


Orion:「トーマはもっとうまく立ち回るタイプだ。性格悪いし」「じゃあこれって、逆撫ですると理解しつつ、本気でキミのヒマ潰しのために差し入れてるってこと？」

Translation:
Orion: Toma conducts himself better than this. But something about his character...! Maybe he doesn't realize that this is just irritating, and he's seriously just trying to help relieve you of your boredom?


Orion:「……以前のトーマってどんなんだったんだよね」「どんなんだったにせよ、こういうことする奴って知っとちゃうと見る目変わっちゃうよね」

Translation:
Orion: I wonder what Toma was like before. Regardless of what he was like, now that you know he's capable of this, it should change your opinion of him.

Toma:「好きな人？へぇ、おまえもそんなこと言い出すようになったか」「って、もう大学生だもんな。色気づくにじゅうしゅうくらいか」「入学早々そんな話つッてるなんてこの大学にいい男でもた？」

Translation:

Toma: Someone you like? Huh, I see you’ve grown up enough to say things like that. Well, you are in college already. Pretty late to start getting interested in men, if you ask me. You just entered college and you're already talking about this. So, did you find a guy you liked at this university?


Toma:「あー変な夢………………え？え？あれ？何!?夢!?俺起きてる！…………おまえ、何で俺んちで檻の中入ってんの？」

Orion:「……何でって言われてもな」

Toma:「いや、それ、おかし……———ん？あと…………あと、そうだった。俺がやったんだっ…」

Translation:

Toma: Ah... What a weird dream...... Huh? Wait? What?! A dream?! Am I awake?! Why are you in my house?.. And in a cage?

Orion: We’d like to ask that ourselves.

Toma: Huh, wait, this is strange...Oh..... Aah, that's right. I did this...


Orion:「……あんな奴だけど。一応、キミに対して優しくはあるんだよねえ……たぶん」

Translation:

Orion: He might do bizarre things, but he's also trying to treat you kindly.. I think.


Toma:「……幸せにしてやりたかったんだ。おまえも、シンも、2人とも俺の大切な兄妹だから」「…なのに……ほんと、ダメだな俺は」「ああ、まったく。……こんなな、シンにバレたら殴られるくらいじゃ
すまないな」「そうしたら俺はどうしようか。シンに散々殴られて……そのあと」「……おまえ達に2度と会わないよう、どこか遠い場所にでも行くな……」

Translation:

Toma: I wanted you to be happy. You, and Shin, you're both like family, and I treasure you. But.. I really am the worst. Yeah, I am... If Shin found out about this, I doubt I'd get away with just a punch to the face. What would I do? After Shin beats the hell out of me.. What then?... Maybe I'd move somewhere far away, so you'd never see me again...