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**PROOFREADING AND ANALYSIS OF THE ITALIAN LOCALIZATION OF
THE FIRST 5 CHAPTERS OF THE VIDEOGAME *THE LAST OF US***

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Secondo Appello

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1 – Introduction

The Last of us is an action-adventure survival horror game, set in a post-apocalyptic world and initially published in 2013 for the console PlayStation 3. The game received critical acclaim and won various Game of the Year awards. As of June 2018, more than 17 million copies were sold worldwide.

The story takes place in the post-apocalyptic U.S. territory. Twenty years have passed since the fungal infection eliminated most of the country's population. One of the protagonist's name is Joel, a man in his late forties, who has lost his daughter Sarah on the first day of the outbreak. He and his friend Tess are tasked with escorting the second protagonist of the videogame Ellie, an immune teenage girl, to the rebel group that is called the Fireflies in attempts of finding a cure. The other two important characters that participate in the first five chapters are Tommy, Joel's brother, and Marlene, "Queen Firefly", the leader of the rebel group.

The paper consists of five chapters, each of them represents a category of the revised translation: done badly, omitted translations, done well, could be improved, wrong register or wrong swear words translations. We will observe and analyze the Italian localization of the first five chapters of the videogame and propose the alternatives in the cases of errors and ambiguities, as well as highlight well done translations that reflect the differences between English and Italian grammar, syntax and semantics. The revised parts of the localization primarily include the translation of the subtitles and the artifacts (written documents, not voiced) within the game. The dubbing and the lip sync will not be analyzed, unless they influence the translation in one way or another. The orthography and punctuation of the subtitles are kept the same in the thesis as they are in the game. The swear words will be fully spelled for transparency. In the conclusion we will close with the state of the Italian localization of videogames in general and of this one in particular.

The original English version and the Italian translation are in bold, *the highlighted problems of the translation* are in bold and italic. *Our proposed version* is in italic. *The possible solutions to the problems* are in italic and underlined.

2 – Translations that were done badly, heavily misinterpreted

The first character the audience plays as is Joel's daughter Sarah. She wakes up from the telephone call of her uncle Tommy who sounds very agitated. When he hangs up Sarah asks out loud: "***What was that all about?***" Meaning why he would call at such a late hour being so agitated. Italian translation: "***Cosa voleva dire?***" (What did he mean/want to say?) The phrase in English implies that the reason of the call at such a late hour with such an erratic behavior was unknown. The context of what he wanted to say before the call was interrupted is less significant. However, the context is what the phrase in Italian is focused on. Therefore, the more correct translation would be as follows: "*Di cosa si è trattato/cos'è successo?*" or even "*Ma che gli è preso?*"

At the end of the prologue, during the news broadcast we hear the Fireflies leader's voice saying: "**You can still rise with us.**", meaning "Join us." The Italian translator(s) interpreted it differently: "**Potete ancora ribellarvi con noi.**" As we find out later in the game, this is not what she meant, she did not ask to fight back or to rebel, but to join the troops and look for a cure, as the Fireflies do not see themselves as aggressive rebels, even if they are the opposition to the quarantine and the martial law. Therefore, this seemingly small detail in the translation gives the audience the wrong first impression and perception of the group and their intentions or at least of what they want people to think of them. "*Potete ancora unirvi a noi.*" would fit much better.

The leader goes on: "**Remember, when you're lost in the darkness... Look for the light. Believe in the Fireflies.**" Italian: "**Ricordate: se vi perdetevi nel buio... Cercate le Luci. Credete nelle Luci**" First and foremost, the name of the group is the Fireflies and not the Lights, while it is not too far off, such interpretation was uncalled for, considering that Italian has an appropriate word for it, that even has the word lights in the root of the word – luciole. Probably the translators decided that calling people fireflies in Italian might be perceived as a little strange, especially considering that "luciole" in Italian is a slang term for female prostitutes. However, it is only one of the meanings of the word, and if the

fireflies are introduced in the game as a military group, they would be perceived as such by Italians. After all, it is not the most common slang for prostitutes and is not automatically associated with them. *Lucciole* is used in Italian, for instance, for the theater workers that accompany people to their seats. Therefore, even if the name might seem strange at the beginning to an average Italian person, this word is used and explained so many times during the game, that the Italian public would get used to it. Moreover, as witnessed, later in the game the translators' decision to call the Fireflies *Luci* causes many difficulties, even if it is justified. For instance, as in the case, where the light and the Fireflies are used in the same sentence. An incorrect translation of the name of the group causes unnecessary problems for the translators while they go forward. "**Look for the light**" is a slogan of the group as is seen on many posters with a huge firefly in the background, as well as in this broadcast. Fireflies are a symbol of light, light is an indication that the fireflies are close, the hope is close, that is the meaning that Marlene wanted to communicate. Second, she did not blatantly say: "Look for us." The meaning is much subtler: "*Cercate la luce. Credete in noi, le Lucciole.*" The Italian translation, however and unfortunately, is confusing since the translators decided to call the Fireflies *le Luci*. Therefore, they must be inventive to keep in line with the chosen Italian name of the group. For consistency's sake from here on out the Fireflies will be called *Lucciole* in Italian and all the isolated instances of them being called *le Luci* will be ignored if they are not present in a sentence highlighted for other reasons.

Joel is mad that Tess went to work without him, to which she responded: "**You wanted to be left alone, remember?**" that for some reason turned into "**Beh, volevi che ti lasciassimo in pace, ricordi?**" Tess and Joel always work alone (make drops and smuggle merchandise in and out of the quarantine zone) and often break the rules, established by martial law. So, certainly what Tess meant was "*Volevi essere lasciato/che ti lasciassi solo/in pace, ricordi?*"

Tess expresses her concern about more people getting infected. To which Joel responds: "**That just means more people are sneakin' out.**" Italian: "**Questo significa che la gente può uscire.**" Here is an instance of the wrong interpretation. Sneak out is not simply to leave, it is to leave stealthily, unseen and

without a permission. Moreover, the translation of “*more*” is missing. “*Questo semplicemente significa che più gente esce di soppiatto/sgattaiola fuori.*”

On the other side of the quarantine zone Joel warns Tess: “**Be careful**”, to which she responds playfully: “**When am I not?**” Italian: “*Fa’ attenzione.*” Italian: “*Come sempre.*” The translation of Tess’ response could have been closer to the original if the first phrase were translated differently. J: “*Stai attenta.*” T: “*Quando non lo sono?*” This translators’ decision led to a very serious and confusing mistake. Joel chuckles and asks: “**Is that a trick question?**” which was translated well: “**È una domanda trabocchetto?**” What the translators did not take into account is that in their translation Tess did not ask any question, she simply said “*Come sempre.*” (as always). This mistake could have been easily avoided if the dialogue in Italian had been constructed differently, but still close to the original, as proposed above.

Next to a ladder Joel says, jokingly: “**Ladies first.**” Italian: “**Prima le signore.**” Tess: “**Lady? You must be thinking of someone else.**” The translation: “**Signora? Mi confondi con un’altra persona.**” Joel: (chuckles) “**It’s all relative.**” Italian: “*Si fa per dire.*” The only problem with this dialogue is with the last Joel’s cue. “It’s a figure of speech” (*si fa per dire*) and “**It’s all relative**” are not the same thing. In the Italian version he basically takes his words back, saying that he did not really mean to call her a lady and just used a figure of speech. Instead, in the original he does not agree with Tess, she is a lady to him, even if it depends on how you look at her. She is not the type of a damsel in distress, but he is attracted to her as a woman, so whether she is a lady or not depends on which angle you look at her from. That is what “**It’s all relative**” means. “*È tutto relativo*” would have worked perfectly fine in this case.

Joel is ahead of Tess and is stopped by a man who asks threateningly: “**Where do you think you’re going?**” Italian: “**Dove pensate di andare?**” The man’s question was directed only at Joel, the man did not even notice Tess yet, which is proved one second later, when Tess tells him: “Malick. Sit back down.” And Malick says: “Oh, sorry, Tess. Didn’t realize you two were together. Go ahead.” Therefore, the translation should have been: “*Dove pensi/credi di andare?*” However, the original translation might have implied *pensate* as the formal Voi

directed only at Joel. But it is misleading as well, since there are two characters he might be talking to and is not appropriate, since the character is aggressive towards Joel and is almost pushing him with his chest, therefore, courtesy does not fit here.

One of the thugs mentions, that his brother believes in the Fireflies' cause and joined them, thinking he would save the world. And adds, rightfully so, considering that the soldiers hunt down the group ferociously: "**Hope he's alright.**", meaning free, alive and well. Italian: "**Speriamo abbia ragione.**", meaning that he will manage to save the world with the Fireflies, which is the wrong understanding of the context. The man does not believe in the Fireflies' cause, he even calls his brother an idiot for joining, but does not want him to die, therefore, the translation should have been: "Spero che stia bene/sia al sicuro/vivo/sano e salvo/vivo e vegeto." There are many ways to translate it closer to the original, conveying the right intentions, but not the way it was translated.

One of the thugs is talking about an informant that works for them: "**That rat better be good for it.**" The translation: "**Quel ratto dovrà stare attento.**" Here we are in front of a complete misinterpretation of the meaning of the context and the phrase. Rat here means an informant/a spy, therefore, the most appropriate Italian word for it is *talpa* and not *ratto*. "**Better be good for it**" sounds almost like a threat, meaning "They better be worth it, otherwise..." There was probably some confusion or the lack of attention when the translation of this piece took place. "È meglio che ne valga la pena/sia utile/faccia la brava quella talpa." Some other goons are talking about going outside the wall, because the supplies will run out eventually. One of them responds: "**I'd still take my chances in here.**" Italian: "**Io preferisco cavarmela qui.**" *To take one's chances* means to accept the risks with no guarantees of success. "*Preferisco correre (i miei) rischi qui.*" is a more accurate alternative.

The companions stumble upon a group of soldiers patrolling the bridge, Marlene says that the way out is under the bridge. Joel responds: "**Ain't a big fan of these odds.**" Italian: "**Non sono un fan di queste amenità.**" *Amenità* in English usually means amenities, pleasantries, niceties or foolishness (ironically). This is not what Joel was talking about. Joel did not like the chances of surviving the risk that

Marlene wanted to take. “Non voglio neanche calcolare le nostre probabilità di sopravvivere.” or “Non penso/Non sono convinto che abbiamo grandi possibilità di sopravvivere.” These options reflect his feelings better than the original translation.

Marlene stumbles upon the corpse of her friend Firefly and says: “**Goddamit! They got Warren.**” Italian: “**Hanno preso Warren.**” First, “*goddamit*” is missing in the translation. Second, in English the verb “to get” is used in countless occasions with different meanings. This is an optional conversation in the game, so probably the translators overlooked the circumstances of the dialogue of Marlene and Joel and translated “*they got*” in one of its most common meaning “*prendere*”, as they have done many times. However, Marlene means that the soldiers got to her friend and eliminated him, therefore, the translation should have been: “Porca vacca / Dannazione / Diavolo / Diamine / Cazzo! Hanno ucciso/eliminato/ammazzato/fatto fuori Warren.”

Marlene briefs Joel: “**There’s a crew of Fireflies that’ll meet you at the Capitol building.**” The translation: “**Un gruppo di Luci vi aspetta al palazzo del governo.**” “*Palazzo del governo*” is not necessarily the Capitol Building, it could be any government building. Here Marlene is talking about il Campidoglio, where the Congress used to preside. Moreover, a *crew* in this case is not simply any group, the Fireflies are an organized opposition group, that has a military hierarchy, so one of the Fireflies’ troops, to be precise, are expecting Ellie at the Capitol building. Therefore, the translation should have been: “Una squadra/truppa di Lucciole vi aspetta al Campidoglio.”

Joel has to babysit Ellie, while Marlene and Tess go to the camp to check out the guns Marlene promised. Ellie and Joel are resistant, so Ellie asks Marlene how she knows them. Marlene responds: “**I was close with his brother, Tommy. Said if I was ever in a jam I could rely on him <Joel>.**” (pointing at Joel with her head) Italian version: “**Tenevo molto a suo fratello, Tommy. Se ero in difficoltà, potevo contare su di lui.**” There are a couple of mistakes in this translation. First, by being close, she means that they were good friends, besides the fact that Tommy was a member of the Fireflies, therefore, her soldier. The Italian translation, however, is a little ambiguous, “*tenere a*” means to care about

someone/feel affection, and since we do not have much context here, we should not insinuate that they could have been more than friends, even if they were. Second mistake was made due to the lack of the understanding of the second phrase. Tommy told Marlene that she could count on Joel, if she was ever in trouble. From the Italian translation it is not clear. It is most likely to be interpreted as that she could always count on Tommy when he was her soldier, not on Joel. Therefore, more correct and accurate translation would be as follows: *“Eravamo buoni amici con/io e suo fratello, Tommy. Mi ha detto che se mai fossi nei guai/in un pasticcio/in difficoltà potrei contare su di lui/Joel.”*

Joel and Ellie have reached the tunnel and Ellie inquires: **“This tunnel. You use it to smuggle things?”** J: **“Yep.”** E: (curious) **“Like illegal things?”** J: **“Sometimes.”** E: **“You ever smuggle a kid before?”** J: **“No. That’s a first.”**

Italian version: E: **“Questo tunnel. Lo usi per il contrabbando?”** J: **“Sì.”** E: **“Merce illegale?”** J: **“A volte.”** E: **“Mai fatto uscire una ragazzina?”** J: **“No. È la prima volta.”** There is a small problem with this translation. Il *contrabbando* in Italian means “Attività illecita consistene nell’importare o esportare merci in violazione delle leggi.” according to the Treccani dictionary. So, it already implies that the merchandise they smuggle is illegal, not only the activity itself, therefore, it does not make sense for the Italian Ellie to ask if the things Joel and Tess smuggle are illegal. In the original, Ellie wonders whether they use the tunnel to smuggle (export/import against the rules, established by the military) things, and then she wonders whether the smuggled things are illegal, like drugs, guns etc., and not only food and clothes. We do not see this in the Italian translation. Moreover, Joel’s answer **“A volte.”** in the Italian translation makes no sense. Then she asks if he had ever smuggled a child before, not simply helped her/him leave. However, this one is not that big of a mistake as the previous incoherencies. After all, *contrabbandare* is not usually used with people, but with things. Therefore, it is hard to convey the same meaning in Italian. A slightly more coherent version would be as follows:

E: *“Questo tunnel. Lo usi per contrabbandare/fare passare merce/roba/cose?”* J: **“Sì.”** E: *“Merce/Roba/Cose illegale/i?”* J: **“A volte.”** E: *“Mai fatto scappare/passare di nascosto un(a) ragazzina/o?”* J: **“No. È la prima volta.”**

Tess comes back after having seen Marlene's merchandise, which there was a lot of, and asks Joel: "***Wanna do this?***", meaning if he is still up to smuggling Ellie into the Capitol building. Italian: "***Siete sicuri?***" sounds wrong and confusing. Firstly, because Tess does not address this question to Ellie, and without the context, it is hard to understand, what Joel is supposed to be sure of. Since Tess turned slightly towards Ellie, the translators might have thought that she is asking Ellie's opinion. However, she turned to Ellie, because she is ***this***, the smuggling job that Tess wonders, if Joel wants to do or not. "*Lo facciamo? /Ce ne occupiamo?*" or at the very least the literal translation would work better than the original one: "*Vuoi farlo?*"

3 – Skipped or omitted translations and small mistakes

When Sarah gets up to find her Dad she notices the card on her desk that she forgot to give Joel. The happy birthday card (bigliettino) is not translated for some reason. "***Congratulations! You're not a fossil (yet) (Happy Birthday.)***" The possible translation: "*Non sei un fossile (ancora) (Buon compleanno.)*" The reason could be the lack of space on the image, making the overlapping impossible. However, no subtitles were present. Therefore, it might have been perceived as a picture or a poster and not a piece of text to translate. Posters and logos on the images that are not clickable were not translated in The Last of Us, as it usually happens in the videogames, due to the higher prices of the localization in such cases.

The broadcast that Sarah is watching is interrupted and she wonders: "***Uh... What was that?***" Then she hears an explosion nearby and adds: "***Oh God!***" Italian: "***Mmm... Cos'è stato?***", not followed by anything else. First thing that is important to mention is that interjections and some fillers are tough to translate due to many reasons, one of them being that even the reactions, emotions and their expressions differ from country to country due to culture differences, such as sighs, exclamations etc. In the original version the confused "***uh***" was just a sigh with an open mouth, almost as an "*ah*" in Italian or at least an "*uf*", but not a closed-mouth "***mmm***", that we witness in the Italian version. However, "***mmm***"

does not affect either the atmosphere, or the accuracy. Second, “**Oh God**”, for some reason, was omitted or overlooked in the Italian version which could have been easily translated as “Oddio” or “Oh Dio”. Sarah’s mouth was still moving and there was no sound coming out in the Italian localization. Therefore, the mistake most likely happened due to the lack of attention to detail,

Tommy says to Joel and Sarah what he heard about the infection: “**Some sort of parasite or something.**” Italian: “**È una specie di parassita.**” The Italian translation omits “**or something**”. However, we cannot see Tommy’s lips, so it would not hurt either the immersion or the lip-synch if they had added “o qualcosa del genere”. After all, Tommy does not know for sure if it is a parasite, since the people are kept in the dark about what the disease is.

The family gets into a car crash and Sarah is hurt, so Joel is carrying her, and they had to leave Tommy behind, so there is a mini-dialogue that occurred while father and daughter are getting closer to the highway that was not translated. S: “**Daddy, we can’t leave him.**” J: “**He’s gonna be fine.**” The possible translation: S: “Papà, non possiamo lasciarlo.” J: “Se la caverà.” This probably has happened due to the same reason as before – the lack of attention. Considering that most of the small details were translated in the game, there was no other reason for the whole dialogue to be omitted. Especially, considering that it is about an important character and his destiny.

Over the opening credits we are listening to the pieces of some news reports recorded after the outbreak and one of them states: “**Panic spread worldwide after a leaked report from the World Health Organization showed that the latest vaccination tests have failed.**” Italian: “**Il panico si è diffuso dopo che un rapporto trapelato dall’Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità ha mostrato che i vaccini testati sono inefficaci.**” Globalmente/a livello mondiale is missing after è diffuso.

Tess informs Joel: “**Our backpacks are still here from the last time.**” Italian: “**I nostri zaini sono rimasti qui.**” “**From the last time**” and “**still**” are omitted in the translation. This detail is not of a great importance, but it does not hurt and it is safe to mention that it is not the first time they are using the tunnel and that is why

their backpacks are here. Hence, a more correct and complete translation would be “*I nostri zaini sono rimasti qui dall’ultima/dall’altra volta.*”

The following optional dialogue is very important for us to have a peek into the friends’ past. Unfortunately, because of the way it was translated and dubbed the situation might seem confusing to most.

J: “**Ain’t been out here in a while.**”

J: “**Era da un po’ che non venivo qui.**”

T: (slightly smiling) “**It’s like we’re on a date.**”

T: (solemn) “**Sembra un appuntamento.**”

J: (playfully) “**Well, I am the romantic type.**”

J: (ironic) “**Beh, sono un tipo romantico.**”

T: (grinning) “**You got your ways.**”

T: (indifferent) “**Già, a modo tuo.**”

We do not analyze the dubbing in this paper. Still, the translation could have been a little clearer both to the players and to the dubbing actors that Joel and Tess had a thing/were romantically involved or even still are. This fact is important in order to get to know the characters since it is the only mention of their romance in the game. Italian translation and dubbing, however, made it seem like they were only friends, joking around. If they had at least said in the translation “*Sembra il nostro appuntamento*” it would have left people less confused as to the intention of the inclusion of this optional dialogue.

Joel finds a drafting notice that notifies a recipient that they were selected to participate in Armed Forces’ duties. The only apparent mistake there is in the translation of this document is that “**at 6:30 a.m.**” was translated as “**alle ore 6:30 AM**” instead of “*alle ore 6:30 di mattina*”. Since the document is official and was written as well as translated in a higher register, these types of mistakes should not be present. Moreover, the document, being official, should not even contain such words as a.m. in the American version. Hence, it is a double error.

The next thing Joel sees is a wanted poster with Marlene’s (Fireflies’ leader) photo printed on it. It says: “**Wanted for Firefly Affiliation.**” Italian: “**Ricercato**”

per affiliazione alle Luci.” Since Marlene is a woman, it should have said: *“Ricercata per affiliazione/appartenenza alle Lucciole.”*

We see some thugs that are talking about Robert and asking who will stay with him tonight and then clarify: **“Guy’s too paranoid to stay here by himself.”** Italian: **“È troppo paranoico per restare solo.”** Everyone will be heading out soon, and Robert remains in the warehouse to spend the night. This information is missing in the translation. *“Il tizio è troppo paranoico per rimanere qui da solo.”* or they could have even taken a liberty and said *“...passare la notte qui da solo.”* The meaning would not change drastically, however, it is important to mention that he will stay here and not go somewhere with the others.

Someone responds: **“Fuck if I know. We’ll check in with the others and come up with something.”** Italian: **“Ci faremo venire in mente qualcosa con gli altri.”** The translation is too concise, and the first sentence is missing. *“Che cazzo ne so (io)?”* Or even: *“A chi lo dici, cazzo.”* The second sentence could have been translated as follows: *“Ci aggiorniamo/Parliamo con gli altri e ci inventiamo/ci faremo venire in mente qualcosa.”*, which is a little more specific. The translation and the omission of swear words is revised in detail in the Chapter 6 – Wrong register, wrong use or omission of swear words. In this case, it might have been seen by the translators as unnecessary, since it does not add any new information. However, it is important for the atmosphere and in order to establish the right register not to omit anything that is said by the characters.

Joel and Tess are chasing after Robert, and Tess screams: **“We almost got him! C’mon! C’mon!”**. Italian: **“L’avevamo quasi preso! Dai! Dai!”** Tess does not mean that they almost got him and then he escaped, she means that they are getting closer to catching him. *“Ci siamo quasi! Dai! Forza!”* could have been used alternatively as to avoid a slight confusion.

Joel stealthily takes out the soldiers and Tess comments: **“Nice and quiet, Texas.”** Italian: **“Bene.”** The translators simply decided to skip this phrase as insignificant. Even if *“Calmo/Bello e tranquillo, Texas.”* might seem silly to some, they could have simply said: *“Bravo, Texas.”* After all, this is not the first time Tess calls Joel Texas, even in Italian, therefore, the audience would not be confused as to what she was talking about.

Marlene warns Ellie that she will go to the outside with Tess and Joel, but without her. “**But I can’t come with you.**” Italian: “**Ma io non posso venire.**” Venire is not the best choice in this case, partially due to its widespread reference to sex. The translation could have been, instead: “*Ma io non posso unirmi a te(voi)/andare con te(voi).*”

Joel and Ellie are headed to the *north tunnel*, which is translated differently each time throughout the scenes – *passaggio/galleria/tunnel nord*. The translations are not wrong, but the consistency is missing. The better choice would be to stick with only one option, since *the north tunnel* is the given name that never changes in the original. Therefore, the ever changing translation creates the sensation that the translators did not pay much attention to the way this place was translated before and after.

Ellie has never been on the outside, so she wonders: “**Can’t be any worse out there. Can it?**” Italian: “**Là fuori non può essere peggio. Non credi?**” Joel has been on the outside many times, therefore, he knows if it is better or worse, and does not suppose or believe, his opinion on the topic is the truth for Ellie. Since he is the only one she knows who has been out there. “*Vero?*” would be a more accurate translation of “**Can it?**” in this case. Even though it is just a small undertone and not a mistake per se.

4 – Translations done well and good creative solutions

Sarah enters her Dad’s room and hears the news broadcast about the pandemic. The news reporter mentions **FDA** (Food and Drug Administration). The abbreviation is not translated in Italian and is left as **FDA** in Italian. *Agenzia per gli Alimenti e i Medicinali* would be the literal translation. However, to translate the abbreviation appropriately, the corresponding abbreviation should be found, which would be the European organization - *l’EFSA (L’Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare)* and *l’EMA (Agenzia Europea per i Medicinali)*. However, the story takes place in the USA, and the European organization is not the same as the one in the USA, and it has Europe in the name. Therefore, FDA, not being a

familiar abbreviation to an average Italian, still makes perfect sense to be preserved the way it is in the Italian localization - *FDA*.

When Sarah picks up her father's phone she sees a message from her uncle that says: "***On my way***" which was translated as "***Sto arrivando***". While it does not carry the same meaning, which is "I left the place where I was and I am going to where you are", and it does not necessarily mean "I'm coming/almost there", it is probably the best concise way to put it, considering that there is no simple and short phrase in Italian that would reflect the same meaning and would fit in a short line on the cell phone shown in the gameplay.

With Sarah's death the prologue is over, and we see the name of the game, ***The Last of Us***, which was not translated in any shape or form, which was probably the right choice, due to the ambiguity of the meaning of the title, that is left to the interpretation as to who are or is the last of us.

The phrase "**Los Angeles is now the latest city to be placed under martial law.**" is a perfect example of how the structure of a phrase in English changes when translated in Italian. "**Los Angeles è ora l'ultima città in cui è stata dichiarata la legge marziale.**" **La legge marziale** is now a subject and not a complement, thanks to ***in cui*** (a preposition and a pronoun) that separate and unite two clauses within the same complex sentence.

20 years have passed since Joel's tragic loss of his daughter and the start of the pandemic. We see him in his room, when someone knocks on his door, which wakes him up. Apparently, it is either late in the morning or early in the afternoon, because Tess, the woman that enters the room, asks him: "***How was your morning?***", emphasizing ***your*** with her voice. Italian translation is not literal, but conveys the meaning, since she probably sees that Joel is sleepy. "***Sveglio da molto?***" Even though "***E la tua mattinata, com'è andata? /Com'è andata la tua mattinata?***" are all valid options. However, we should consider the length of the sentence, which is quite short in the American version, for the sake of the lip-synching. Therefore, the original choice for the translation is a great one, even if the perception of the situation slightly shifts.

Then Joel makes an assumption on how the deal with Tess and the dealer went down: "**The whole deal went south, and the Client made off with *our* pills.**"

Italian: “**L’affare è andato a monte e il cliente è scappato con le pillole.**” The translation is good; however, the ownership of the pills should have been established, they bought the pills, but the vendor/dealer escaped. “*L’affare è andato a rotoli/a monte e il cliente è scappato con le nostre pillole.*” The deal, however, “**went without a hitch**” and Tess got a lot of *ration cards*, that were translated as *schede-razione*. There is a word for ration cards in the Italian language, which was widely used in the ‘40s and it is *carte/tessere annonarie*. The translators were probably trying to create a new concept. Since there is no mention of this word in any official dictionary. An average Italian, especially someone who belongs to the demographic field, that plays videogames would likely not be very familiar with the concept of *tessere annonarie*. However, *schede-razione* is extremely understandable. Another reason for this invention could be that the translators did not want to equate the concept of ration cards during the war time with the ration cards during the post-apocalyptic era, since the circumstances and the goods (the content of what you get for these ration cards) might differ. Therefore, the invention is completely justified and appreciated. However, later in the game we see some other instances where the ration cards are referred to as *tessere annonarie*, which could be confusing and might make people think that they talk about something else, a different concept. Therefore, the consistency is missing for this concept, but the invention is still creative and sits well with what the concept of the ration cards represents.

Supposedly, the Fireflies attack the quarantine zone just as Joel and Tess are passing the checkpoint, so they have to run in a different direction. When the partners are safe Tess sighs and makes an ironic remark: “**Fuck... So much for the easy route.**” The Italian translation is pretty accurate, inventive and sounds natural at the same time. “**Merda... Tanti saluti alla strada facile.**” Even though there are other ways to translate and interpret this phrase, such as, for example, “*Merda/Cazzo... Al diavolo la via/la strada più facile.*” But the original translation is quite good and accurate.

Chapter III: Outside starts when Joel and Tess enter a secret passage. Tess orders: “**Let’s grab our gear**” Italian: “**Prendiamo l’attrezzatura.**” It is important to establish that the translation is not wrong, since they take their backpacks with guns, ammo, materials, med kits etc. However, we have to remember that in an

informal language *gear* means things, possessions, which could have been translated as such and still be correct. This is one of the instances where both meanings of the same word coincide. “*Prendiamo le nostre cose/la nostra roba.*” would have been acceptable as well.

Joe laments the scarceness of ammo (le munizioni), to which Tess responds: “**Well, make your shots count.**” Italian: “**Beh, usiamole bene.**” “*Facciamole bastare/valere.*” is an alternative, but the original translation is good enough and clear.

Tess and Joel have to clear out the dock and she says: “**Let’s be smart about this. There’s a lot of ‘em** <enemies/Robert’s thugs>.” “*Usiamo la testa. Sono in tanti.*” is a good translation, however, *to be smart* in this case is more about being safe and sly, staying out of trouble. Therefore, “*Cerchiamo di essere furbi. Sono in tanti.*” could have been used instead, but the original translation works very well. Especially, since *furbi* might imply dishonesty, even though Joel, Marlene and Tess are far from honest people.

Marlene says to Joel and Tess: “**We can sneak by them. Even though I know that’s not your style.**” Italian: “**Possiamo passare in silenzio, anche se non è il vostro stile.**” The translation is correct, however, instead of focusing on silence, the translation could have mentioned the fact that sneaking means also to stay unnoticed, even if in this case both meanings apply. “*Possiamo passare inosservati in silenzio/passargli accanto senza farci vedere.*” is a more precise translation that helps to focus on the idea of getting away unseen.

The next piece of translation is done very well, a perfect example of how it would not make sense if translated literally, but the translators understood the meaning and conveyed it in Italian appropriately, using a similar expression. Tess is worried about Marlene’s wound and wonders if she is okay. To which Marlene responds: “**I’m running on fumes... But I’ll make it.**” Italian: “**Vado avanti per inerzia... Ma ce la farò.**” “*Ce la farò.*” or “*Vivrò/Sopravvivrò*”, as was translated earlier, both are good options as well. The metaphor used in Italian is different and does not mention fumes, but it has the same meaning, that is why it fits perfectly without being a calque.

5 – Valid translations that could be improved, possible alternatives

The news reporter informs: “It appears what we initially reported as *riots* seem to be somehow connected to the nationwide *pandemic*.” The line is translated as follows: “Sembra che i *disordini* riportati in precedenza siano, in qualche modo, legati all’*epidemia* che ha colpito la nazione.” While *disordine* could mean a riot, the word is too general and *sommossa* or *rivolta* would fit better in the context we are presented. In addition, pandemic should have been translated as *pandemia*, instead of *epidemia*, to emphasize how widespread the disease is.

The journalist goes on: “We’ve received reports that victims afflicted with the infection show signs of increased aggression and...” Italian: “Secondo le segnalazioni, le vittime dell’infezione mostrerebbero segni di crescente aggressività e...” Even though “secondo le segnalazioni” is an appropriate translation, “secondo quanto riportato” has the same meaning and is more common in the Italian journalistic language. The verb *mostrare* is in the wrong tense, it should not be in the conditional tense, since the victims already show the signs of increased aggression. Therefore, the meaning of the phrase in Italian slightly shifts from descriptive to prescriptive, not how the real victims behave at this moment but how people who would potentially become infected would be expected to behave/ what to expect from the infected people. Therefore, “le vittime dell’infezione mostrano segni...” fits better.

Suddenly, the reporter exclaims: “There’s some *commotion* coming from beh-” Italian: “A quanto pare alle nostre spalle sta accad...” This is pretty early in the game and from here on out the translators started to take some liberties with the translation of the videogame. We can assume that they did that because the news reporter was interrupted, and they wanted to make her sound as natural as possible. However, the *commotion* still could have been translated. *Agitazione/confusione/trambusto* – any of these would be appropriate. “Sentiamo il trambusto alle nostre spa...” is a valid alternative that includes the word “*commotion*” and it would still fit the timing and the lip sync.

A couple instances later we see Sarah’s dad Joel enter the house and behave erratically, which scares Sarah, so he explains that their neighbors, the Coopers,

are behaving in a strange manner. He says: “**Somethin’ ain’t right with’em. I think they are sick**”. Italian: “**C’è qualcosa di strano. Forse sono malati.**” The same meaning is there. However, the translators could have added this colloquial note, that Joel has in the way he expresses himself. “*Hanno qualcosa di strano/che non va. /C’è qualcosa che non torna. Penso che siano malati/infetti.*” To which Sarah replies: “**What kinda sick?**” Italian translation: “**Come malati?**” “*Che tipo/genere di malattia?*” would have been more accurate. She did not express her surprise regarding their sickness, but curiosity and worry about their condition.

Joel’s brother Tommy has arrived to pick them up and Joel tells him: “**Let’s just get outta here.**” Italian: “**Dobbiamo andarcene.**” It could have been simply left in the imperative mood. “*Andiamocene da qui.*” Tommy proceeds: “**They’re saying that half the people in the city have lost their minds**”. To which Joel, not wanting to worry Sarah, responds “**Can we just please go?**” Italian: T: “**Metà della gente della città ha perso la testa.**” J: “**Possiamo andare via?**” A little more accurate would be: T: “*Dicono che metà della gente in città ha perso la testa/è impazzita.*” J: “*Possiamo andare/andarcene, per favore?*” Since what Tommy heard is a gossip, he does not know for sure, so the Italian translation is slightly misleading.

Tommy is worried about Sarah, so he asks her: “**Hey, Sarah. How you holdin’ up, honey?**” Italian: “**Ehi, Sarah. Come va, piccolina?**” While “*come va?*” works in most cases as a translation to “*how are you holding up?*”, right here we know that Sarah is in shock after witnessing her dad killing a neighbor, that was sick, and stressed out about abruptly leaving her home. “*Come te la cavi, tesoro/piccolina?*” could fit much better the given context, but the original translation still works.

The family arrives at the highway and it is blocked by a huge number of cars, Tommy comments: “**Everyone and their mother had the same damn idea.**” Italian: “**Hanno avuto tutti la stessa cazzo di idea**”. The translation is accurate but the emphasis “*and their mother*” is absent, even though there is a great collocation in Italian that means the same thing: “*Tutti, cani e porci, hanno avuto la stessa cazzo di idea*”.

At the very end of the first chapter Sarah is shot by a soldier, Joel tries to comfort her and says: “*You’re gonna be okay, baby. Stay with me.*” Italian: “*Andrà tutto bene, piccola. Stai con me.*” What Joel wanted to say is that she will recover. Therefore, “*Ti riprenderai/Starai bene, piccola. Sta’/Resta con me.*” seems like a more precise choice of words.

“**A group calling themselves the *Fireflies* have claimed responsibility for both attacks.**” Italian: “**Un Gruppo che si fa chiamare le “*Luci*” ha rivendicato la paternità di entrambi gli attacchi.**” First, here we face the same argument from before, The Fireflies that are translated as The Lights. Second, while *rivendicare la paternità* is grammatically and semantically correct, it might be too pompous for the context and of a higher register that needs to be. *Rivendicare/assumersi la responsabilità* is another good option.

“**Demonstrations broke out following the execution of six more alleged *Fireflies*.**” Italian: “**Nuove manifestazioni sono esplose dopo l’esecuzione di altri sei presunti membri delle *Luci*.**” First, here is another instance of how the incorrect translation of the name of the group poses a problem. The translators could not have called people Lights, since Light is not countable one by one, so they had to say “six members”, this inconsistency could have been avoided, if they had decided to stick with the literal translation of the name of the group – *Lucciole*, so they could simply have translated **six more alleged Fireflies** as *altre sei presunte Lucciole*. Second, *proteste* could have been a slightly more accurate and precise alternative to *manifestazioni*.

Joel wonders if the thugs that jumped Tess after the deal are still alive: “**Are they still with us?**” The translation: “***Sono ancora con noi?***” “***Sono ancora in gioco?***” sounds a little more natural and less than a calque. However, the original translation is clear and semantically correct as well.

As Tess was badly beaten up, Joel asked her: “**Did you at least find out who they were?**” Italian: “**Almeno hai capito chi fossero?**” *Hai capito* (understood) implies that she recognized or guessed who the people who attacked her were and did not *investigate* or ask someone, which is what Joel was asking, so *scoprire (hai scoperto)* would be a more precise word for this occasion. “**To figure/find**

out” is closer to “to determine” even if it is a synonym of “to understand”, the undertone is different.

Joel and Tess leave the apartment building, and Tess informs Joel that “**the checkpoint’s still open**”. Italian translation was: “**Il punto 5 è ancora aperto.**” First, the facts were mixed up, during the previous dialogue they talked about where Richard was, which was a warehouse in Area 5, but they were going to the only checkpoint in the area, and even if it is number 5, it was not specified in the original text. Second, checkpoint should have been more specific in the translation, because it is not simply “*punto*”, but *posto/punto di controllo*, where the documents and identities are verified to pass.

The friends witness a dialogue on the street, where one woman complains: “**I got served the damn papers this morning.**” Italian: “**Ho ricevuto le carte stamattina.**” Firstly, the translation of *damn* (*dannati/maledetti*) is missing and “*documenti*” would be more appropriate and official than “*carte*”. And the man responds with: “**It’s such crap! Soldiers are supposed to handle the outside.**” which was translated as: “**Che schifo! Dell’esterno dovrebbero occuparsene i soldati.**” The man did not mean that the duty was gross or disgusting, but that it was wrong and/or unfair – “*una cavolata/stronzata/che merda!*” is a better solution.

Later, in the quarantine zone Tess says: “**Look at that. Ration line hasn’t opened yet. Must be running low again.**” Italian: “**Guarda. La fila per il cibo è ancora ferma. Non dev’esserci molto da mangiare, di nuovo.**” Ration does not always mean food, it could be water, clothes, wood, medicine, even guns in these circumstances. However, the decision for this translation is understandable; the second phrase flows better if the food is mentioned in the first phrase. The alternative could be as follows: “*Guarda (li). La fila per le razioni è ancora ferma/non si muove. Devono esserne a corto (di viveri)/I viveri devono scarseggiare. Di nuovo.*”

Tess and Joel are sneaking out and are asked by a friend where they are going. To which Tess responds: “**Gonna pay Robert a visit.**” “**A trovare Robert.**” was an Italian translation. While it is not wrong, it has a different connotation. Tess shows us a little of her ironic and satiric personality with this phrase in the

original version, and that is what is missing in the translation. Robert betrayed her and tried to get her killed, of course she is not going over there to chat with him, but that is how she makes it sound, with the undertone of mockery. “A fare una visita a Robert.” would fit slightly better with an ironic intonation, and not as serious as it sounded in the Italian version of the game.

The following dialogue occurs between Tess and her friend: T: “**Who else is looking for him?**” F: “**Uh, Marlene. She’s been asking around, trying to find him.**” Italian: T: “**Qualcun altro lo cerca?**” F: “**Mmm, Marlene. Chiedeva di lui in giro, lo cercava.**” The only reason why this short dialogue is stressed, is because of a tiny inconsistency that makes it sound a little unnatural. *Chiedeva di lui in giro* already means that she is looking for him, because that is the answer to Tess’ question, there is no need to repeat twice that Marlene is looking for him. Instead of “*lo cercava*” they could have simply said: “Voleva trovarlo/localizzarlo.”

Tess goes on: “**Marlene lookin’ for Robert? What do you make of that?**” Italian: “**Marlene sta cercando Robert? Che significa?**”. The Italian translation makes us think that the question was rhetorical, that Tess was thinking out loud. However, the question was directed at Joel, she wanted to hear his opinion, what he deduces from the situation. “Cosa ne pensi/Che te ne pare/Che ne dici?” conveys this meaning better. Especially because Joel’s answer to this question is: “**I don’t like it.**” Italian: “**Non mi piace.**”

Next to a wall, Tess asks: “**Alright, Texas. Boost me up.**” Italian: “**Bene, Texas. Sollevami.**” *Sollevere* is not completely wrong, however, it usually means to lift something or someone from the ground and not to give it/them a push, so “Dammi una spinta.” would fit slightly better.

Joel finds someone’s note addressed to “brother”, that explained how the author of the note got infected. “**In our panic, we ducked into this building in hopes of hiding from them <soldiers>**” The translation: “**Impauriti, ci siamo nascosti in questo edificio sperando di evitarli.**” The translation is good, but the important details are missing. Panic is stronger than fear, “Nel panico” would have worked as well and there are many ways to translate “*duck*” in this context and leave “hide” for later, like in the original. “Nel panico, ci siamo

rifugiati/infilati/buttati/siamo entrati in questo edificio sperando di nasconderci da loro.”

Later, when the friends are entering the slums, Tess asks a boy, who she knew already: “**Hey, little man. Make sure the coast is clear.**” Italian: “**Ehi, piccoletto. Il campo dev’essere libero.**” *Little man* is descriptive as well as a term of affection. However, in this case, it also means that she considers this boy to be a grown-up, that is why she can trust him. *Piccoletto* does not reflect that. According to Dizionario De Mauro *ometto* would fit much better. “Ometto – bambino giudizioso, assennato e con atteggiamenti da adulto”. “*Ehi, ometto. Assicurati che la via/il campo sia libera/o.*” would be a more precise translation.

Tess and Joel bump into Robert’s mob and try to convince them not to fight. Tess says: “**You don’t want to do this.**”, by *this* she meant fighting. “*Nessuno vi constringe*” was the translation. However, even if correct, “*Non vi conviene farlo/Non volete farlo davvero.*” would sit slightly better. The mob’s leader proceeds by calling her “*bitch*”, which was translated as “*stronzetta*”, even though, “*stronza*” would work perfectly fine as well, because there really is no reason a mob leader would soften an insult.

After dealing with the mob Joel asks: “**How the hell did he <Robert> get all these guys?**”, meaning where he found them, how he pays them etc. “**Come ha fatto a mettere insieme tutti questi tizi?**”, which is not completely the same thing and does not mix too well with Tess’ answer, which implies that Robert is a charismatic liar: “**If Robert’s good at one thing, it’s writing blank checks.**” This phrase was translated accurately in Italian: “**Robert è bravissimo a scrivere assegni in bianco.**” Therefore, the previous phrase should have been translated as “*Come ha fatto a trovare/assumere/convincere tutti questi tizi?*” However, it is up to the interpretation of the audience, and not really a mistake on the translators’ part.

Tess and Joel are eavesdropping on some of the Robert’s men: “**Two of our guys died trying to take Tess out. I guarantee that she and Joel are on their way here right now to get Robert.**” The translation: “**Due dei nostri sono morti cercando di far fuori Tess. E ora lei e Joel stanno venendo a prendere Robert.**” First, the Italian translation makes us think that the Robert’s people are aware of

the fact that Joel and Tess are coming. However, it is only a hypothesis on their part. Therefore, the omission of the word “*guarantee*” was a wrong choice. Second, “*to get Robert*” does not mean to fetch him, but to find him or reach him. Therefore, the appropriate translation would be: “*Ti garantisco che ora lei e Joel stanno venendo per/a trovare/raggiungere Robert.*”

We see that Joel is listening in on a dialogue of a couple of thugs about how soldiers deal with the Fireflies (prison and execution). One of them says: “*They’re cracking down on ‘em hard.*” “*Li stanno mettendo sotto.*” Italian translation is a little vague. If they had said in English that soldiers give the Fireflies a hard time or are on top of them, or something else of a similar undertone, then “*mettendo sotto*” would work better. However, “*crack down on <sb>*” means to punish, not tolerate. Which is also understandable from the context, since the soldiers execute the Fireflies. “*Gli danno un giro di vite.*” would be more exact.

When the friends finally find Robert, Tess says from afar: “**Here’s our boy.**” Italian translation: “**Ecco il nostro uomo.**” The translators could have used *ragazzo* or at least *amico*, instead of “*uomo*” to keep the same tone that Tess had in the original. Then she adds: “*That cocky son of a bitch.*” Italian: “**Borioso figlio di puttana!**” It works well, even if, they could have used more common words. After all, *borioso* means “to be full of oneself”, while *presuntuoso* – “too confident/arrogant”, the words are synonyms, but there are slightly different undertones. The alternatives to the original translation: “*Presuntuoso/sporco figlio di puttana.*” or “*Bastardo arrogante.*” or even “*Presuntuoso rompicoglioni.*”

Tess kills Robert and the chapter V starts. The friends decide to go find a Firefly (uno delle Luci). But Marlene, Queen Firefly (la regina delle Luci), as Joel refers to her, is already nearby. Tess demands their guns back, to which Marlene responds: “*Doesn’t work like that, Tess.*” Italian: “**Non è così semplice.**” The Italian translation is good, but not entirely accurate, since it could mean that she does not have them or anything else of the sort, while the problem is that she “paid for those guns and does not want to give them up for free.” Therefore, “*Non funziona così, Tess.*” fits perfectly.

Marlene continues: “**I need something smuggled out of the city.**” The Italian: “**Devo portare una cosa fuori città.**” is not wrong. However, we need to make

clear that she is not the one to carry out this task. “Ho bisogno che portiate una cosa/qualcosa fuori città.”. Marlene is interrupted, since the company hears how the soldiers are searching the area and Marlene tells the companions to follow her and informs them: “**I know a way around this. C’mon.**”. The translation: “**So come evitarli. Vieni.**” is good, but not entirely the same thing. She knows how to avoid them, but because she knows where to go, not because she knows their patrol patterns. “So come muovermi qui. Vieni/Forza.” or “Conosco bene questo posto. Vieni.”

Then Marlene tells the partners about what the Fireflies had to endure: “**We’ve been quiet. Been planning on leaving the city, but they need a scapegoat. They’ve been trying to rile us up.**” Italian: “**Ce ne stavamo tranquilli. Progettavamo di abbandonare la città, ma serviva un capro espiatorio. Ci provocavano.**” First, Marlene says that the Fireflies have been laying low, keeping low profile for some time: “Abbiamo mantenuto un basso profilo/Siamo nascosti da un po’.” Then she adds that “**They need a scapegoat.**” “They” are the military, not the Fireflies, as might be perceived from the translation: “**Ma serviva un capro espiatorio**”. Since there are no pronouns in the Italian translation, it is left unclear and open to the interpretation of the audience. The chosen past tense adds to the confusion as well, since the military still need a scapegoat, and that is why they have been eliminating the Fireflies. The optimal choice would be: “Ma gli/ai militari serve un capro espiatorio.” The register in the game in general is very informal, sometimes vulgar. Therefore, *gli* instead of *loro* is more than accepted. “**They’ve been trying to rile us up.**” The Italian translation was “**Ci provocavano.**” Their only problem with the translation of this sentence is that it should have been in the present tense, since the Present Perfect Continuous is used to refer to the events that are connected to the present but started in the past. And the military are still trying to rile the Fireflies up. “Stanno cercando di provocarci/farci arrabbiare (da un bel po’).”

A bit later Joel and Ellie are running towards the tunnel to hide out and wait for Marlene and Tess. Joel orders Ellie: “**C’mon, keep up!**” To which annoyed Ellie replies: “**I am!**” the Italian translation: J: “**Muoviti!**” E: (sarcastically) “**Davvero.**” More accurate translation would be: J: “*Dai, sta’ al passo/muoviti!*” E: “Lo so/Lo”

faccio/Sì!” Sarcasm and annoyance are distinct expressions, and it should be reflected in the translation.

Later Ellie tells Joel: “**Look. I’m not supposed to tell you why you’re smuggling me if that’s what you’re getting at.**” Italian: “**Senti. Non ti dirò perché mi stai facendo scappare, se è ciò che vuoi sapere.**”. This line is well translated, however, some things can be modified. For instance, the verb to smuggle is translated again as to simply leave/escape, while it could be closer to the original meaning of being smuggled. “*Senti/Guarda. Non posso/dovrei dirti perché mi porti via/fuori (di nascosto), se è questo che vuoi sapere/qui che vuoi arrivare.*”

The companions finally arrive to the hideout and Joel decides to take a nap. When he wakes up, Ellie lets him know: “**You mumble in your sleep.**” Italian: “**Ti lamenti nel sonno.**” *Lamentarsi* is not the same as *to mumble*. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, to mumble means “to speak quietly and in a way that is not clear so that the words are difficult to understand.” While *lamentarsi* is usually translated in English as complain/moan/report, and none of these meanings imply mumbling. “*Borbotti nel sonno/mentre dormi.*” is a better option.

Joel is suspicious of why Marlen would let them do this, and not someone who she can trust more. Tess answered: “**She’s lost a lot of men. Beggars can’t be choosers.**” Italian: “**Ha perso molti uomini. Non aveva scelta.**” The translation is correct. Not having a choice is the meaning of the idiom Tess used. However, the translators could have been a little more creative and could have used an idiom as well. Moreover, it might be better to say *soldati* than *uomini*, since men means people in English and soldiers in this context, and the audience knows that many of Marlene’s soldiers are women. “*Ha perso molti uomini/soldati. Bisogna prendere quello che passa il convento. /O mangiar questa minestra o saltar dalla finestra.*”

Joel finds Tess’ list of all the smuggled things, some of them have comments in brackets. The first such thing is: “**8 bottles of pills [Bill never sorts these bottles, gonna be up all night divvying them up...]**” Italian: “**8 bottiglie di pillole [Bill non mette mai in ordine queste bottiglie, mi toccherà passare la notte in piedi a dividerle...]**”. To be up all night doing something is synonymous to pulling an all-nighter and not to stay on one’s feet. Therefore, “... *mi toccherà passare la*

notte in bianco/sveglia a dividerle/sistamarle.” would be more accurate. The next one is “**3 cans sardines [No matter how much I starve, don’t ever make me eat these.]**” Italian: “**3 scatole di sardine [Non importa quanta fame abbia, non le mangerò mai.]**” *Non le mangerò mai* (I won’t eat these) works, but is not the same as *don’t ever make me eat these* like in the original. “*Non farmele mangiare mai.*” conveys this meaning better.

Later Tess says that the Fireflies that will be expecting Ellie at the drop off had arrived all the way from another city, and then adds: “***Girl must be important. What is the deal with you? You some big-wig’s daughter or something?***” Italian: “**Deve essere importante. Chi sei tu eh? La figlia di uno che conta, roba così?**” *Girl* is missing in the translation for some reason, even though it might be clear from the context that the girl or the drop off are important, but there is no reason to omit it. *Big-wig* has a better and more accurate, closer in the meaning translation in Italian. “*La ragazza/bambina deve essere importante. Chi sei tu? /Cosa hai tu? (Sei) la figlia di un pezzo grosso, roba così/o cosa?*”

6 – Wrong register, wrong use or omission of swear words

The journalist is approached by the worker: “***Lady, get the hell outta here right-***” “***Signora non può stare lì deve andare...***” The translated phrase is far too polite and enunciated too calmly compared to the original. However, the dubbing is not discussed in this paper. The translation is the only thing to be considered. *Signor(in)a* sits well or even *Fanciulla* could have fitted in here to show a little disregard and annoyance towards her on the worker’s part, even though it is a bit of a stretch. However, the rest should have been translated in a harsher manner, such as: “*Vattene via da qui*” or “*Vattene in fretta da qui*”.

Tommy, Joel and Sarah pass a farm on fire and Tommy comments: “**That’s Louis’ farm. I hope that son of a bitch made it out**”. Italian: “**Quella è la fattoria di Louis. Spero sia riuscito a scappare.**” There was no reason for “**that son of a bitch**” not to be translated as “*quello stronzo/quel bastardo*” other than the censorship that is not present in the game, as can be easily noticed during the

course of the game, where a lot of swear words are translated or even added in the Italian version. Nevertheless, the censorship still should not affect the localization in order to maintain the same atmosphere as in the original. Often the swear words are not easy to translate due to the reasons mentioned earlier in the thesis when talking about the interjections: each country has their own and sometimes they do not coincide in the way they are used.

Tess says to Joel: “**What matters is that Robert *fucking sent them* <thugs>.”** Italian: “**Quello che conta è che è Robert ad averli mandati.**” The swear words in Italian are not used the same way in this situation, meaning one swear word after **Robert** and before “**sent them**”. What they could have done is to say: “*il fottuto Robert/il cazzo di Robert/Robert di merda.*” All of these Italian swear words were used before and after in this localization, so this omission is unnecessary, and even if the translators would have been forced not to use too strong swear words, *merda* is not as vulgar and could have been used in this instance. Alternatively, the translation could have been: “... è che è stato Robert a mandarli, *cazzo.*”

Then Tess informs Joel: “**He figures he’s gonna get us first.**” Italian: “**E crede di poterci *fottere per primo.***” It looks like the translators decided to postpone the use of a swear word from before to the next phrase where it is more convenient for Italian and where it carries a meaning and does not serve only as a filler, which is quite an inventive choice that works in favor of the situation in the game. The very next phrase is also vulgar and is translated exceptionally well. “**That son of bitch. He’s smart.**” Italian: “**È sveglio il pezzo di merda.**” Tess tells Joel she knows where Robert is hiding, and he responds: “**Like hell you do!**” that was translated as “**Si, certo, come no.**” The Italian actor also sounded ironic, while in the original Joel sounds angry and surprised. Angry, because Tess might have put herself in danger to find out where Robert was hiding and surprised and incredulous that she actually managed to get this information. Moreover, “**like hell you do**”, according to the Collins dictionary, is used when one is opposed to what has been said and/or strongly disagrees. The respondent may also feel that the person had a lot of “nerve” to say what they did. So here we are facing the misunderstanding of the phrase in English and the wrong interpretation of the situation, therefore, wrongfully transmitted in Italian. The optimal translation

would be “Non ci credo, (cazzo)!/ “(Che) cazzo dici!?” or even “Ma stai scherzando, (cazzo)!?””

When Joel and Tess are out of the building, Tess comments on how good the air is outside of the quarantine zone and adds: “**Fucking hate the smell of the city.**” Italian: “**Odio la puzza che c’è in città.**” If Tess hates the smell of the city, it does not necessarily make it a *stink/stench* (puzza), it might be simply something she dislikes because of the associations the city’s smell brings to her mind. Even if a smell is often synonymous with a stink, it is not totally safe to suppose so, since we cannot feel the smell, Tess is talking about. The swear word that adds emotion is missing in the Italian translation as well. “Mi sta sul cazzo l’odore che c’è in città.” However, the first is not a very serious mistake, and might not be a mistake at all, unlike the omission of a swear word.

Tess calls Joel for him to reach her: “**Get your ass up here. Let’s move.**” The translation: “**Sali, culo pesante. Muoviti.**” Here is one of a few instances when the Italian version is too rude and has a different connotation, and not the other way around. In the original Tess asks Joel to hurry up and in Italian she calls him lazy. Then, “**Let’s move**” means “We have to go”, rather than “Hurry up.” In Italian there are many more accurate ways/options to translate the first phrase. “Porta qui/su il (tuo) culo/ le chiappe.” or “Sposta le tue chiappe davanti.”/ “Muovi il culo e vieni su/qui.” And “**Let’s move**” is better translated as “Andiamo (avanti)/Muoviamoci/Avanti.”, depending on the previous choice of words. Joel responds: “**Bossy today.**” The Italian version: “**Sei autoritaria.**” We do not know Tess as well as Joel does, and whether Tess is always bossy or not, Joel specifies that she is constantly giving orders today, and that is what is missing in the translation. “Oggi sei proprio prepotente.” We can afford to make this phrase longer in Italian, since it is not a cut scene and there is no strict lip-synching that could disrupt the immersion.

On the other side of the slums there is a man asking for the merchandise and Tess tells him firmly: “Not right now, Terrence.” He is afraid of her and respects her and his cue ends with: “**Don’t get all huffy-puffy about it.**” Italian: “**Non c’è bisogno di incazzarsi.**” Italian translators used too strong of a word. The character tried to make the situation as light as possible, so that Tess would not get angry,

that is why he used “*huffy-puffy*” and not “pissed (off)”, as they interpreted it in Italian. “*Non ti arrabbiare/offenderti/non te la prendere.*” would make the register closer to the original.

Tess and Joel caught up to Robert and their dialogue with him, during which the friends find out that he sold their guns to the Fireflies, was translated very well. The only mistake there was is that sometimes Tess addressed Robert in the 3rd person in Italian (*Lei*), while it was supposed to be exclusively in the 2nd person (*tu*), since they are equals. There is also some confusion between **tu** and **voi**, since it is hard to understand from the context, when there are so many people involved, and the pronoun used in English is constantly you singular, except for the extremely high register that would not sit well in the game.

The following scene is when we meet the second protagonist of the game, Ellie, a 14-year-old immune teenager; the “contraband” Marlene wants Joel and Tess to smuggle. The first thing Ellie does is yell and jump at Joel with a knife: “**Get the fuck away from her!**”, referring to Marlene that fell to the ground due to her wounds right after entering the door. Italian: “**Stai lontano da lei!**” The f-word is missing, the girl has quite a potty mouth, as the audience will witness, following the plot. And omitting the swear word here means changing her character and her personality, so it is important not to skip them or soften them. “*Sta’ lontano da lei/Lasciala, cazzo!*” fits the situation better and introduces Ellie’s personality correctly.

Joel and Ellie finally meet and start their adventure that will take much longer than was initially anticipated, and is full of unexpected discoveries, sacrifices, revenge, new friends and old foes. This is the point where the story is actually starting to get interesting and heated. However, this is where we must conclude the analysis of the Italian localization of this masterpiece of a game that is called The Last of Us.

7 – Conclusion

Even though we have analyzed the localization of only the first five chapters of the game, we have managed to find many examples to work with that demonstrate

at which level the development of the localization of videogames in Italy is, which is not as high as could be, considering the well-developed economy of the country and numerous professional translators that are present in Italy.

There are many reasons why the Italian videogame localization is not up to par. One of them being is that such localization is still not taken seriously enough to spend much money on, even though the videogames is the most profitable and popular piece of media today. For instance, the famous videogame GTA 5 has made more money than any film, book or game in history (\$6 billion in revenue), selling more than 85 million copies, as of April 2018.

Another problem is that of lip sync in the cut scenes. Oftentimes the translation needs to be cut short, because of the original dubbing and the choice of words and the translation ends up being not as accurate as it would be if timing were not an issue. One more important issue is the creative liberties sometimes taken by the translators that disrupt the immersion. The intention of creating a distinct work of art more than often backfires, since translation and localization are supposed to transmit the atmosphere as close as possible to the original.

Regarding the localization of *The Last of Us*, a few examples were enough to demonstrate to what aspects the translators paid the most and the least attention, since those persist throughout the entire game, such as the misunderstanding of the context, the lack of such given to the translators, the misleading workarounds for the swearwords and even the misreading of a register – all are already present in the prologue, and they continue on throughout the videogame. Although it is apparent that the translators worked hard on the localization, even if the translators are usually not given enough time and/or tools to work with to guarantee a high-quality translation of such piece of media as a videogame. The translation overall is good, but the details and the register, as well as the atmosphere are often misinterpreted and transmitted badly. Moreover, the misinterpretation of the atmosphere, of the characters and the circumstances led to the majority of the mistakes of the Italian version of the game.

Another negative aspect that was evident and that heavily influenced the quality of the localization is the lack of attention to detail, but most importantly – of a proofreader. Their efforts are usually overseen in Italy not only in the videogame

localization industry, but in the movies, TV shows and even literature as well. Therefore, the needed revision is often missing. We face many such instances in the Italian version of the game. Some mistakes could have been easily avoided if the proofreader had been present and the translators had had enough time and collaboration with each other. The following mistakes let us make such assumptions: the confusion of tu and lei, the same concept translated differently each time (tunnel north – tunnel/galleria/passaggio nord).

Censorship, or better said the cultural differences regarding the swear words, caused many mistakes and inaccuracies as well. Swear words are used widely in movies, videogames and songs in the USA, with very few and rare limitations. In Italy the situation is similar, even if not to such an extent. However, the problem persists. The use of swear words in two languages is different in many ways. One of them is the use in English of many variations of an f-word, that undeniably makes the dialogues and monologues much more expressive, as well as often vulgar. The swear words in Italian are not used the same way. On one hand, the reasons of not wanting to include many swear words in the translation are understandable, on the other hand, the immersion is not the same in such cases, and a censored character we are getting to know is not the same either. For instance, Tess in the Italian version is different from the American one, she is more serious and swears much less in the Italian localization, and this should not happen in the localization of any piece of media, because the goal of translators and dubbing actors should be that of letting the audience know how the characters are and what world they inhabit in the original circumstances, and not the one interpreted and censored by the translators, actors and directors in order to appeal to the culture of the target language.

Even though, the mission of transmitting impeccably the atmosphere through the translation is near to impossible, it is greatly appreciated by the audience when the necessary steps are taken towards the achievement of this unattainable goal. When the goal is almost achieved, people from all over the world, who watched the same movie or played the same videogame but in different languages can connect to each other, because they had similar experiences and were not hindered by the wall of inaccurate and wrongly interpreted translation. And this is the world we should strive to live in.

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Appendix

ENGLISH (original)	ITALIAN (proposed translation)
What was that all about?	Di cosa si è trattato/cos'è successo?/ Ma che gli è preso?
You can still rise with us.	Potete ancora unirvi a noi.
Look for the light. Believe in the Fireflies.	Cercate la luce. Credete in noi, le Lucciole.
You wanted to be left alone, remember?	Volevi essere lasciato/che ti lasciassi solo/in pace, ricordi?
That just means more people are sneakin' out.	Questo semplicemente significa che più gente esce di soppiatto/sgattaiola fuori.

Be careful	Stai attenta.
When am I not?	Quando non lo sono?
It's all relative	È tutto relativo
Where do you think you're going?	Dove pensi/credi di andare?
Hope he's alright	Spero che stia bene/sia al sicuro/vivo/sano e salvo/vivo e vegeto.
That rat better be good for it. Better be good for it	È meglio che ne valga la pena/sia utile/faccia la brava quella talpa.
I'd still take my chances in here.	Preferisco correre (i miei) rischi qui.
Ain't a big fan of these odds.	Non voglio neanche calcolare le nostre probabilità di sopravvivere./ Non penso/Non sono convinto che abbiamo grandi possibilità di sopravvivere
Goddamit! They got Warren.	Porca vacca/ Dannazione/Diavolo/Diamine/Cazzo! Hanno ucciso/eliminato/ammazzato/fatto fuori Warren.
There's a crew of Fireflies that'll meet you at the Capitol building.	Una squadra/truppa di Lucciole vi aspetta al Campidoglio.
I was close with his brother, Tommy. Said if I was ever in a jam I could rely on him <Joel>.	Eravamo buoni amici con/io e suo fratello, Tommy. Mi ha detto che se mai fossi nei guai/in un pasticcio/in difficoltà potrei contare su di lui/Joel.
This tunnel. You use it to smuggle things?	Questo tunnel. Lo usi per contrabbandare/fare passare merce/roba/cose?
Like illegal thing?	Merce/Roba/Cose illegale/i?"
You ever smuggle a kid before?	Mai fatto scappare/passare di nascosto un(a) ragazzina/o?
No. That's a first.	No. È la prima volta.
Wanna do this?	Lo facciamo? / Ce ne occupiamo? / Vuoi farlo?
Congratulations! You're not a fossil (yet) (Happy Birthday.)	Non sei un fossile (ancora) (Buon compleanno.)
Uh... What was that? ... Oh God	Mmm... Cos'è stato? Oddio
Some sort of parasite or something.	È una specie di parassita o qualcosa del genere.
Daddy, we can't leave him.	Papà, non possiamo lasciarlo.
He's gonna be fine.	Se la caverà.
Panic spread worldwide after a leaked report from the World Health Organization showed that the latest vaccination tests have failed.	Il panico si è diffuso globalmente dopo che un rapporto trapelato dall'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità ha mostrato che i vaccini testati sono inefficaci.
Our backpacks are still here from the last time.	I nostri zaini sono rimasti qui dall'ultima/dall'altra volta.
It's like we're on a date.	Sembra il nostro appuntamento
at 6:30 a.m.	alle ore 6:30 di mattina
Wanted for Firefly Affiliation.	Ricerca per affiliazione/appartenenza alle Lucciole.
Guy's too paranoid to stay here by himself.	Il tizio è troppo paranoico per rimanere qui da solo/per passare la notte qui da solo.

Fuck if I know. We'll check in with the others and come up with something.	Che cazzo ne so (io)?/ A chi lo dici, cazzo. Ci aggiorniamo/Parliamo con gli altri e ci inventiamo/ci faremo venire in mente qualcosa.
We almost got him! C'mon! C'mon!	Ci siamo quasi! Dai! Forza!
Nice and quiet, Texas.	Calmo/Bello e tranquillo, Texas. / Bravo, Texas.
But I can't come with you.	Ma io non posso unirmi a te(voi)/ andare con te(voi).
Can't be any worse out there. Can it?	Là fuori non può essere peggio. Vero?
How was your morning?	E la tua mattinata, com'è andata? / Com'è andata la tua mattinata?
The whole deal went south, and the Client made off with our pills.	L'affare è andato a rotoli/a monte e il cliente è scappato con le nostre pillole.
Fuck... So much for the easy route.	Merda/Cazzo... Al diavolo la via/la strada più facile.
Let's grab our gear	Prendiamo le nostre cose/la nostra roba.
Well, make your shots count.	Facciamole bastare/valere.
Let's be smart about this. There's a lot of 'em <enemies/Robert's thugs>.	Cerchiamo di essere furbi. Sono in tanti.
We can sneak by them.	Possiamo passare inosservati in silenzio/ passargli accanto senza farci vedere.
I'm running on fumes... But I'll make it.	Vado avanti per inerzia... Vivrò/Sopravvivrò
It appears what we initially reported as riots seem to be somehow connected to the nationwide pandemic.	Sembra che le rivolte riportate in precedenza siano, in qualche modo, legate alla pandemia che ha colpito la nazione.
We've received reports that victims afflicted with the infection show signs of increased aggression and...	Secondo quanto riportato, le vittime dell'infezione mostrano segni di crescente aggressività e...
There's some commotion coming from beh...	Sentiamo il trambusto alle nostre spa...
Somethin' ain't right with'em. I think they are sick	Hanno qualcosa di strano/che non va. /C'è qualcosa che non torna. Penso che siano malati/infetti.
What kinda sick?	Che tipo/genere di malattia?
Let's just get outta here.	Andiamocene da qui.
They're saying that half the people in the city have lost their minds	Dicono che metà della gente in città ha perso la testa/è impazzita.
Can we just please go?	Possiamo andare/andarcene, per favore?
Hey, Sarah. How you holdin' up, honey?	Ehi, Sarah. Come te la cavi, tesoro/piccolina?
Everyone and their mother had the same damn idea.	Tutti, cani e porci, hanno avuto la stessa cazzo di idea
You're gonna be okay, baby. Stay with me.	Ti riprenderai/Starai bene, piccola. Sta'/Resta con me.
A group calling themselves the Fireflies have claimed responsibility for both attacks.	Un Gruppo che si fa chiamare le "Lucciole" ha rivendicato la responsabilità di entrambi gli attacchi.
Demonstrations broke out following the execution of six more alleged Fireflies.	Nuove manifestazioni/protoste sono esplose dopo l'esecuzione di altre sei presunte Lucciole.

Are they still with us?	Sono ancora in gioco?
Did you at least find out who they were?	Almeno hai scoperto chi fossero/erano?
The checkpoint's still open	Il posto/punto di controllo è ancora aperto.
I got served the damn papers this morning.	Ho ricevuto i maledetti documenti stamattina.
It's such crap! Soldiers are supposed to handle the outside.	Che stronzata! Dell'esterno dovrebbero occuparsene i soldati.
Look at that. Ration line hasn't opened yet. Must be running low again.	Guarda lì. La fila per le razioni è ancora ferma/non si muove. Devono esserne a corto (di viveri). /I viveri devono scarseggiare. Di nuovo.
Gonna pay Robert a visit.	A fare una visita a Robert.
Uh, Marlene. She's been asking around, trying to find him.	Mmm, Marlene. Chiedeva di lui in giro, voleva trovarlo/localizzarlo.
Marlene lookin' for Robert? What do you make of that?	Marlene sta cercando Robert? Cosa ne pensi/Che te ne pare/Che ne dici?
Alright, Texas. Boost me up.	Bene, Texas. Dammi una spinta.
In our panic, we ducked into this building in hopes of hiding from them <soldiers>	Nel panico, ci siamo rifugiati/infilati/buttati/siamo entrati in questo edificio sperando di nasconderci da loro.
Hey, little man. Make sure the coast is clear.	Ehi, ometto. Assicurati che la via/il campo sia libera/o.
You don't want to do this.	Non vi conviene farlo/ Non volete farlo davvero.
Bitch	Stronza
How the hell did he <Robert> get all these guys?	Come ha fatto a trovare/assumere/convincere tutti questi tizi?
Two of our guys died trying to take Tess out. I guarantee that she and Joel are on their way here right now to get Robert.	Due dei nostri sono morti cercando di far fuori Tess. Ti garantisco che ora lei e Joel stanno venendo per/a trovare/raggiungere Robert.
They're cracking down on 'em hard.	Gli danno un giro di vite.
Here's our boy.	Ecco il nostro ragazzo.
That cocky son of a bitch.	Presuntuoso/sporco figlio di puttana./ Bastardo arrogante./ Presuntuoso rompicoglioni.
Doesn't work like that, Tess.	Non funziona così, Tess.
I need something smuggled out of the city.	Ho bisogno che portiate una cosa/qualcosa fuori città.
I know a way around this. C'mon.	So come muovermi qui. Vieni/Forza. Conosco bene questo posto. Vieni.
We've been quiet. Been planning on leaving the city, but they need a scapegoat. They've been trying to rile us up.	Abbiamo mantenuto un basso profilo/Siamo nascosti da un po'. Progettavamo di abbandonare la città, ma gli/ai militari serve un capro espiatorio. Stanno cercando di provocarci/farci arrabbiare (da un bel po').
C'mon, keep up! - I am!	Dai, sta' al passo/muoviti! - Lo so/Lo

	faccio/Sì!
Look. I'm not supposed to tell you why you're smuggling me if that's what you're getting at.	Senti/Guarda. Non posso/dovrei dirti perché mi porti via/fuori (di nascosto), se è questo che vuoi sapere/qui che vuoi arrivare.
You mumble in your sleep.	Borbotti nel sonno/mentre dormi.
She's lost a lot of men. Beggars can't be choosers.	Ha perso molti uomini/soldati. Bisogna prendere quello che passa il convento. / O mangiar questa minestra o saltar dalla finestra.
8 bottles of pills [Bill never sorts these bottles, gonna be up all night divvying them up...]	8 bottiglie di pillole [Bill non mette mai in ordine queste bottiglie, mi toccherà passare la notte in bianco/sveglia a dividerle/sistemarle...]
3 cans sardines [No matter how much I starve, don't ever make me eat these.]	3 scatole di sardine [Non importa quanta fame abbia, non farmele mangiare mai.]
Girl must be important. What is the deal with you? You some big-wig's daughter or something?	La ragazza/bambina deve essere importante. Chi sei tu? /Cosa hai tu? (Sei) la figlia di un pezzo grosso, roba così/o cosa?
Lady, get the hell outta here right-	Signor(in)a, vattene via da qui
That's Louis' farm. I hope that son of a bitch made it out	Quella è la fattoria di Louis. Spero che quel bastardo sia riuscito a scappare
What matters is that Robert fucking sent them <thugs>.	Quello che conta è che è il fottuto Robert/il cazzo di Robert/Robert di merda ad averli mandati/ è stato Robert a mandarli, cazzo.
Like hell you do!	Non ci credo, (cazzo)!/ Ma stai scherzando, (cazzo)!?/ (Che) cazzo dici!?
Fucking hate the smell of the city.	Mi sta sul cazzo l'odore che c'è in città.
Get your ass up here. Let's move.	Porta qui/su il (tuo) culo/ le chiappe./ Sposta le tu chiappe davanti./ Muovi il culo e vieni qui/su. Andiamo (avanti)/Muoviamoci/ Avanti.
Bossy today.	Oggi sei proprio prepotente.
Don't get all huffy-puffy about it.	Non ti arrabbiare/offenderti/non te la prendere.
Get the fuck away from her!	Sta' lontano da lei/Lasciala, cazzo!"