

# Translation as a Game: What is “at play”?

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Empowered by the rapid development of information technology, media consumers have been collaboratively translating the contents of audiovisual products in the digital social space, primarily for leisure. The phenomenon of “translating fun for fun” over the last two decades has made translation itself develop into a form of entertainment in the context of entertainment translation (O’Hagan, 2012). Translation becomes entertaining through the gamification in the communication among collaborators in a fansubbing group and the interaction between fansubbing groups and their audience (Wang & Zhang, 2017). The playfulness in the online collaborative translation activities reflects the concept of “play” in a game. Huizinga (1955, p.446) considers play a human nature and a significant function, as “in play, there is something ‘at play’ which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the action”. Drawing concepts from Game Studies, this paper further argues that translation can be viewed as a game in this context. The fansubbing network resembles the game system, as it consists of all the key components of a game, namely goals, rules, challenges, and interaction. In addition, to partake in such collaboration, fansubbers accept the rules of the fansubbing network for the pleasure of translating, which reflects the lusory attitude adopted by players when participating in games (Salen & Zimmerman, 2003). Play generates meaning, so does translation. By conducting interdisciplinary analysis, this paper explores the meaning that is deeper “at play” in the game of the fansubbing translaboration.

## **References**

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