

# **LOSS, GAIN, AND STRATEGIC NON-TRANSLATION IN NARRATIVE MEDIA TRANSLATION: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS**

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## **Abstract:**

*Loss and gain are central concepts in translation studies, yet their theoretical status remains unstable, particularly in the translation of narrative media. In such contexts, linguistic meaning interacts with cultural, aesthetic, ideological, and technological dimensions, making reductive accounts of translational outcome especially problematic.*

*While loss and gain are frequently invoked in both academic and professional discourse, they are often treated as intuitive effects of translation rather than as the result of strategic decision-making embedded in specific translational regimes. This article proposes that loss and gain should not be understood as symmetrical or compensatory phenomena. Instead, they are better conceptualised as asymmetrical effects of translational positioning.*

*Adopting a theory-driven, conceptual–analytical approach, the article examines how loss and gain operate in the translation of narrative media, with particular reference to video game localisation and song translation. Drawing on key debates in translation theory—especially those surrounding equivalence, Skopos, and domestication versus foreignisation—it advances the concept of strategic non-translation as a productive translational strategy. Deliberate non-translation, it is argued, can function as a form of translational gain by preserving alterity, semiotic density, and cultural visibility, particularly in multimodal contexts where extensive domestication risks aesthetic and ideological flattening.*

*Rather than offering empirical generalisations, the article aims to refine the conceptual tools used to analyse translation choices in multimodal narrative environments. By reframing loss and gain as directional and context-dependent effects rather than balanced exchanges, it contributes to ongoing discussions of the ethics, politics, and aesthetics of translation in globalised media cultures.*

**Keywords:** Translation studies; Loss and gain; Non-translation; Narrative media translation; Localisation.