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Topics in
Audiovisual
Translation

edited by
Pilar Orero

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Topics in Audiovisual Translation

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Volume 56

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Audiovisual translation

A new dynamic umbrella

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When I was first editing this book, back in 2001, I was checking the new entries related to Audiovisual Translation (AVT) in the *Bibliography of Translation Studies*. In the entry for Yves Gambier and Henrik Gottlieb's *(Multi) Media Translation* (BTS 2001: 45) it read "that attempts to answer questions such as: Is (multi) media translation a new field of study or an umbrella framework for scholars from various disciplines? Or is it just a buzz word which gives rise to confusion?". This made me realise how little is known and how much is to be done to put Screen Translation, Multimedia Translation or the wider field of Audiovisual Translation on a par with other fields within Translation Studies. A step forward would be to agree on a generic name to define the multiple and different modes of translation when the audio (radio), the audio and the visual (screen), or the written, the audio and the visual (multimedia) channels are the source text. Many might raise an eyebrow to see radio as part of this field, but I have translated voice-over for more than 15 years for the radio, and the process is similar to that of translating voice-over for TV interviews. The unsettled terminology of audiovisual translation is patent from the very denomination of the field, from *Traducción subordinada* or Constrained Translation (Titford 1982: 113, Mayoral 1984: 97 & 1993, Rabadán 1991: 172, Díaz Cintas 1998, Lorenzo & Pereira 2000 & 2001) to Film Translation (Snell-Hornby 1988), Film and TV Translation (Delabastita 1989), Screen Translation (Mason 1989), Media Translation (Eguíluz 1994), Film Communication (Lecuona 1994), *Traducción Fílmica* (Díaz Cintas 1997), Audiovisual Translation (Luyken 1991, Dries 1995, Shuttleworth & Cowie 1997, Baker 1998), or (Multi)Media Translation (Gambier & Gottlieb 2001). The title of the book has clearly opted for Audiovisual Translation since Screen Translation would

leave out for example translations made for theatre or radio, and the term multimedia is widely percieved as related to the field of IT. Audiovisual Translation will encompass all translations — or multisemiotic transfer — for production or postproduction in any media or format, and also the new areas of media accesibility: subtitling for the deaf and the hard or hearing and audiodescription for the blind and the visually impaired.[1]

The idea to propose to Benjamins' editor Isja Conen a new collection of essays on Audiovisual Translation came up after listening to some of the contributions given by AVT scholars and practitioners who were invited to read papers in the newly created postgraduate course in Audiovisual Translation at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. Though much work has been done over the years by scholars such as Yves Gambier and Henrik Gottlieb there is still plenty of scope at both academic levels: teaching and researching. Technological developments which have changed paper oriented society towards media oriented society have also made Audiovisual Translation the most dynamic field of Translation Studies. This is an objective appreciation given the market demand for audiovisual translators and the number of students interested in it — at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It is also shown by the growing number of essays, PhDs, conferences and publications devoted solely to AVT, as well as the number of academic books.

The creation of a postgraduate course to train translators in the many techniques involved in AVT in Spain presented a few challenges to the organisers. First of all, training translators in this specialized field had to simulate working conditions: the software programmes and original audiovisual materials to translate were needed, along with professional translators to teach. Creating two software programmes to simulate subtitling and dubbing/voice-over (Subtitul@m, REVOice) and upgrading an IT room to state of the art technology solved the first problem. Looking for teachers who were experts in these fields was, and still is, a challenge. Since we wanted to recreate actual working conditions we felt that only active professionals could offer the day to day experience, but they had to be prepared to follow a timetable and the never-ending preparation/correction of tasks. Still, we are in the lucky position of being in Barcelona, one of the busiest cities in the world for film production and postproduction, hence we have been able to contact some professionals, although their availability and coordination is somewhat difficult.

Barcelona's status has been achieved thanks to many factors: Spain consumes an ever-growing number of foreign multimedia material for its many TV channels (terrestrial, digital, and satellite) and also for its cinema and radio

stations (cf. Gambier 2003 and Agost in this volume). Barcelona is the capital city of Catalonia, one of the many Spanish communities which has its own official language spoken by over 6,000,000 speakers, sharing the status of bilingualism along with Spanish. Hence Catalan cinemas offer sometimes dubbed and subtitled versions of the same film in both Catalan and Spanish. TV and radio is also broadcast in both Spanish and Catalan and the same applies to all audiovisual and multimedia material. Because of the bilingual nature of Catalan speakers, it seems to make sense to centralize all the production and postproduction of audiovisual material for both Spanish and Catalan in Barcelona. The birth of new TV channels broadcasting in Catalan — City TV, BTV, Flax, etc — has increased the demand for dubbing, subtitling and voice-over in Catalan, and has also opened the possibility of work to any translator — even to those who are not in possession of a certification issued by the official Catalan TV corporation TV-3 (as explained in Rosa Agost's contribution in this book). Barcelona offers an excellent location for gathering data for AVT research and also for teaching AVT in the traditional and the new on-line formats (see Amador, Dorado and Orero's article in this volume). Media accessibility, after the 2003 Athens Declaration on accessibility, will soon mean a thriving field at both academic and professional levels, and Barcelona is also the place where most subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing is broadcast with 56% of the total of hours broadcast in Spain.

The contents of this book reflect not only the "state of the art" research and teaching of AVT, but also the professionals' experiences. I think — as do many of those who have contributed to this book — that research in AVT should take the many variables surrounding audiovisual translations into account. In this sense AVT is an answer to Gambier and Gottlieb's comment which I quoted at the beginning of this introduction "to scholars from various disciplines" .

The book is organised in five parts (1) Professional perspectives; (2) AVT Theory; (3) Ideology and AVT; (4) Teaching AVT and (5) AVT Research. The articles in the first part are put forward by professionals from their experience with Xènia Martínez describing the many stages in the process of dubbing in Spain. And although those working in this process form a team, their work tends to be carried out on an individual basis. Diana Sánchez's contribution brings to our attention the lack of a standardised method or procedure for subtitling. She describes the four strategies used in her company along with the advantages and pitfalls.

The second part of the book is dedicated to theory. Jorge Díaz Cintas analyses the validity and functionality of a series of concepts that have been

articulated within the theoretical framework loosely known as Descriptive Translation Studies and applies them to the field of audiovisual translation setting the framework for future publications. In his article, Frederic Chaume studies synchronisation from all perspectives. It includes a historical account of translation theory approaches, and a translational approach — analysing the characteristics grouped by genres and text types, languages and cultures, professional context, and viewer. It also deals with an educational approach encouraging the inclusion of synchrony when training translators in the field of AVT. Eduard Bartoll presents a comprehensive classification of subtitles taking into account previous studies by Luyken, Ivarsson, Gottlieb and Díaz Cintas. The article establishes new parameters which will encompass the wide range of existing subtitles in today's subtitling industry.

The third part of the book is from distant realities: Rosa Agost gives a general outline of dubbing practice in Spain. She examines the external considerations that condition these translations, the intervening factors, and how, sometimes, models of translation can become models of language. She also considers the diverse positions opted for by translators when facing a particular translation, from the viewpoint of the relevance they attribute to linguistic and cultural aspects of the original language in relation to the target one. Henrik Gottlieb's contribution analyses the political implication of subtitling from both academic and market perspectives concluding with the need to reach a consensus, especially where money is concerned. He presents the vicious circle of TV stations buying U.S., British and Australian productions which are affordable, and cheaper than domestic productions. These remain difficult to export because neighbouring countries keep filling their shelves with anglophone imports. Until this circle is broken, it will be difficult to achieve linguistic and cultural diversity.

The fourth part deals with AVT teaching. Aline Remael's contribution draws attention to the study of film dialogue from the perspective of AVT. She shows how future subtitlers would benefit greatly from spending more time and effort on the analysis of film narrative, and in particular on the study of film dialogue. In her collaboration Josélia Neves describes how students attending subtitling courses gained skills and language awareness that were reflected in their performance in other courses and activities. This is due to the junction of two elements — translation and audiovisuals — that have been accepted as assets to language learning in general; and to the fact that subtitling calls for an enormous variety of skills that can be improved through well staged activities covering the different steps of the subtitling process. Miquel Amador,

Carles Dorado and Pilar Orero present the on-line postgraduate course environment. The new teaching format, against much scepticism, works well and the detailed description of the teaching strategies and functions in this article aims to show its adequacy.

The last part of the book is dedicated to AVT research, Francesca Bartrina analyzes five possible areas of research for Audiovisual Translation which focus on the translated product. These areas have as their starting points, respectively, the study of the screenplay, film adaptation, audience design, pragmatics and Polysystem Theory. Yves Gambier's article describes an area of research which is fascinating; the many shapes and directions which film adaptation can take, and his proposed term: tradaptation. From a case study, the many shifts and changes, transformations and adaptations are analyzed. Eva Espasa's article on the documentary is a much needed contribution in the field of Audiovisual Translation. She analyses the documentary as a hybrid protean genre within Film Studies, and works through the article towards a description which can be taken on board when researching in the field of Audiovisual Translation. This description is worked while focusing on two myths popularly associated with documentaries: a documentary is not a film, and a documentary translation is not specifically audiovisual. Its focus on issues such as the fictional/ non-fictional nature of documentaries, or its translation mode as separate from audiovisual, the documentary mode of discourse, field, translation modes, textual functions and audience, makes this article a blueprint on documentary translation for future research. Vera Santiago's article presents a brief description of the closed subtitling system used in Brazil, concluding that some adjustments are required for it to be tailored to the needs of the country's deaf community.

I hope this book will help to settle a few matters and fix some terminology and parameters valid for Audiovisual Translation. I don't think there is any longer a need to justify the inclusion of Audiovisual Translation within the field of Translation Studies on its own merits — the 2004 London Conference amply proves the point. We are now in a fast shifting technical audiovisual society, which started at the end of the nineteenth-century, and Audiovisual Translation Studies should be the academic field which studies the new reality of a society which is media-oriented.

I would like to express my gratitude to Gideon Toury and Isja Conen, Benjamins' advisor and editor respectively for their encouragement and hard work. To Henrik Gottlieb and Yves Gambier for their interest, advice, and support. To Jorge Díaz Cintas and Diana Sánchez for all their moral and

earthly help. To John Macarthy for his translations. And to all the contributors for their faith and enthusiasm. I must also mention the 2001/2 students of the Postgraduate Course at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona who were the catalyst for this volume.

Pilar Orero, Barcelona, 20th May 2004

Note

1. See Gambier (2003: 171–177) for a detailed classification of audiovisual translation.

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1. Professional perspectives

Film dubbing

Its process and translation

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Film script translation for the purposes of dubbing is one of the most peculiar disciplines within the field of translation. For one thing, the text delivered by the translator is not definitive, indeed it is not even one of the final phases of the overall project. The translator produces a text which will serve as the starting point for a lengthy and complex process during which the text will pass through many hands and operations, which may be more or less respectful of the original translation.

The audiovisual dubbing process comprises several closely linked phases, which must follow an established order and rhythm, something akin to a production line. If one of these phases is delayed or runs into problems the entire line may be affected. Also, so many different people are involved that problems do tend to occur.

Although the main steps of the dubbing process are basically the same everywhere, it may change depending on the country, even depending on the studio. In this text we will analyse the Spanish reality in general and the Catalan in particular, which may, to a greater or lesser extent, differ from that found in other countries.

The dubbing preproduction process starts when the client, usually a television station, programme producer or distributor, sends a copy of the film or programme to the dubbing studio. Normally, this copy, known as the master, comes accompanied by the original script to facilitate translation, and by a set of instructions on such issues as, for example, whether songs are to be dubbed, whether screen inserts are to be subtitled, and whether certain dubbing actors should take certain roles, and so on.

The head of production sends a copy of all the material received to the translator, who is almost always independent of the dubbing studio. The

translator usually works from two originals, the film itself and the written script. Very often however, the written text can be quite different from the actual film; this may be because the script is the preproduction copy as opposed to the definitive, or because it is a less than perfect transcription. In other words, the translator may receive an incomplete script, one which differs from the original or, in some cases, no script at all, in which case he or she will work exclusively from the film.

Once the translation is complete, it is usually, though not always, sent to a proof-reader. Some television stations and distributors have their own readers and language specialists and this revision phase is a sine qua non; others however, may dispense with it entirely.

The next phase is synchronisation of the translated dialogue so that it matches the actors' mouth movements and the other images as closely as possible. Sometimes, it is the translator or proof-reader who carries out the synchronisation, although very often it may fall to an actor or the dubbing director. The synchroniser, like the proof-reader, must try to ensure that the modifications do not stray too far from the meaning of the original text; he may have to eliminate superfluous information or add additional sound effects, such as the background noise for a football match or a hospital emergency ward.

Once synchronised, the text now goes to the production department, where it will be given the final touches before dubbing work per se begins. This phase consists of physical preparation of the translated and synchronised script so as to facilitate dubbing. Depending on the type of product — whether a film, a series or documentary — there may be some variations, but the process is basically the same. The production assistant first divides the text into takes, i.e., segments of up to eight lines when there is more than one participant, and up to five when there is only one, in accordance with agreed procedure. Also, when the scene changes, the take ends no matter how short it is. The TCR (Time Code Record), which appears on the screen, is noted at the start of each take and the takes are numbered. Then a chart is drawn up setting out how many takes each character appears in, the actor who is to dub the character's voice — a decision usually taken by the dubbing director — and how the takes are to be organised into dubbing sessions, i.e., when each actor has to come in and for how long. Organising a dubbing session is a sort of jigsaw puzzle, and calls for a distribution of takes and actors into general sessions so as to complete the dubbing work in the minimum time and at minimum cost. There are many factors conditioning the dubbing session, including whether the recording room is available or not, whether the actors are available or not, the actual difficulty of the takes, etc.

Once all the sessions have been organised, the assistant draws up a schedule, which serves as a guide to the director; setting out the time when each actor will arrive, the character he or she is to dub and the takes to be recorded. On occasion, especially for films, the client asks for voice samples from two or three dubbing actors for given characters in the film, and then choose the one they find most suitable.

On the day of the dubbing session, the director, with all the material now in the recording room, tells the actors the characters they are going to dub and how he wants them to do it. The director's task, in addition to supervising the actors' performance and avoiding all errors, especially errors of pronunciation or content, is to ensure that all the planned takes are dubbed, leaving no loose ends for later. In dubbing into Catalan, before the dubbed product is sent to the Catalan television channel TV-3, it has to receive another language check. If there are any errors, the particular fragment in which they occur has to be re-recorded.

Now the only remaining task is to add in subtitles to the dubbed material, should there be any, and to carry out the final mix, that is, coordination and fine-tuning of the image and sound between the various channels on which the dubbed voices have been recorded.

The dubbing process is highly complex then, and involves a great many factors. It is virtually inevitable that the translation initially delivered by the translator will undergo modifications. Indeed, audiovisual translation is probably the discipline in which the text undergoes most change from start to finish. All the stages of the process involve manipulation to some extent of the text submitted by the translator. As already pointed out, after the translator submits the completed translation, the text may be sent to a proof-reader and then may undergo synchronisation. These two phases involve modifications of the text, which sometimes may be necessary and sometimes not particularly so. It must also be borne in mind that in most cases, neither the proof-reader nor the synchroniser understand the original language. As a result, there is a risk that the changes introduced may differ from the original text. It could be said that form is a priority in both cases, while content receives rather less attention. Examples of the changes that may be made by the proof-reader or synchroniser include such simple changes as replacing "per favor" (please) with "sisplau" so as to have the *p* of "sisplau" coincide with the *p* of the original "please" and eliminating the fricative f of "per favor". Another example is the English phrase "what do you think?", which can be translated in several different ways: "Què en penses?", "Què et sembla?", etc. However, the synchroniser will probably opt for "Què me'n dius?", to make the English *th* coincide with the final *d* and

i of "dius". Similarly, the most natural translation of the English "Don't talk like a fool" would probably be "No diguis bestieses"; however, a version such as "No siguis ridícul" (don't be ridiculous) would echo the last syllable of the original without any significant change in meaning. On occasions, as pointed out earlier, information is lost for the sake of synchronisation, as for example, in translation of the exchange "How did they meet? — They're both commuters." The most appropriate option is probably, "Com es van conèixer? — Viatjant en autobús." [literally, "How did they meet? — travelling by bus."] or De què es coneixen? — D'anar en metro." [literally, "What do they know each other from? — From the metro."] However, whatever solution opted for, the original sense of "commuter" cannot be fully maintained, i.e., a person who travels to work every day, probably on public transport.

When proof-reading and synchronisation is complete, the following step is dividing the text into takes. Of all the stages in the process, this is undoubtedly the one which most respects the text in terms of content, despite the fact that in physical terms it is systematically broken down into segments. In theory, there need not be any modification of the translated text at this phase since the text is accepted and worked on as a complete unit, without analysis of quality or appropriateness. Although, again the person in charge of marking the takes is unlikely to understand the original language of the film, this is the phase in which most formal errors can be detected — omissions by the translator, mismatch between text and image, etc. — and, if the assistant does understand the original, errors of content may also be detected. Any error detected will lead to yet further modification of the text. An example of the kind of error that could be detected at this stage is translation of "I'll go and get the glasses" as "Vaig a buscar les ulleres" (literally, I'll go and get my spectacles), while the image clearly shows that it is drinking glasses that are in question. Such ambiguity in the source language can lead to many translation errors, especially if the translator has not been given a copy of the film or has not paid sufficient attention to it.

The text may also be modified during the final dubbing phase; if synchronisation was not carried out by the director, he may wish to make certain minor changes in keeping with personal taste or because there are errors. In addition, the actors may also change the text, through improvisation or because of difficulties with a given phrase or word, such as for example, the double *l* found in the combination "mòdul lunar", or the repetition of the same *s* sound in "una ascensió sensacional." However, all changes are subject to the director's approval.

In conclusion, audiovisual programme dubbing is a highly complex process comprising many stages. And although those working in this process form a team, their work tends to be carried out on an individual basis. Particularly unusual is the way the product of the translator's work is often not the final product but a sort of draft version which is polished and adjusted to the needs and demands of the medium.

Subtitling methods and team-translation

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1. Introduction

Since 1999 I have worked as a subtitle translator and editor at Imaginables, a small subtitling company based in Barcelona. The bulk of our subtitling is done into Castillian or Catalan from English, though we also work from Spanish into English and to and from various other languages, including French, German, Portuguese and Italian.

Within the subtitling world, methods and procedures vary considerably according to studio and/or client. Standard procedure is not a term which is really applicable to this field and most studios would seem to have developed and honed their own procedures over the years. My own experience of subtitling can be classified into four main methods, which will be outlined below.

In a world where technology is constantly advancing, studios must be flexible enough to adjust their services and their strategies to the needs of the client. Here, I will attempt to analyse the advantages and pitfalls of the four strategies I have identified in the light of problems arising from developments in DVD and satellite broadcasting. As the lack of standardisation in subtitling extends to terminology, I will use the terms we employ in-house to describe what we do.

Pre-translation:	Translation of dialogue list before creation of subtitles.
Adaptation:	Separation and adjustment of pre-translated text into subtitle units.
TC-in / TC-out:	The time code at which a subtitle begins and ends.
Coding or Spotting:	Capturing of TC-in and TC-out for all subtitles.
LTC:	Linear Time Code, carried on an audio channel.
VITC:	Vertical Interval Time Code, carried in the image within the interval between frames.
Simulation:	Screening of film with completed subtitles.

Import: Transformation of adapted text into subtitle format.
Export: Transformation of subtitles into text format.

2.   The four subtitling methods

The four methods I have identified are as follows:

1. Pre-translation – Adaptation – Spotting
2. Pre-translation – Spotting – Adaptation
3. Adaptation – Spotting – Translation
4. Translation/Adaptation – Spotting

Regardless of the method, each project undergoes a two-step verification process.

First, the subtitle file is read by a native speaker without watching the video. This allows for easier identification of incoherence and mistakes in spellings or punctuation in the subtitles. It is preferable that the person carrying out this stage has not seen the video previously, to maximise the identification of incoherent phrases and minimise interference from the original. However, this is not always possible, especially in a small company where the employees usually carry out more than one part of the subtitling process for each project.

The second step in the verification stage is simulation. Here the film or programme is screened with the completed subtitles to check for any errors overlooked during the previous stages. The subtitling programme we use allows the subtitles to be projected on screen, simulating how the completed subtitles will look. Thus, any final adjustments can be made without the need to make a VHS copy. As our workload is increasingly for clients requiring only a subtitle file, or often in the case of DVD, a file in text format, the simulation stage avoids the need to record a copy with subtitles. Other subtitling packages also offer this option, often by means of a video window within the PC monitor.

Opinions vary as to the ideal person to carry out this stage. Some believe it is better for final editing to be carried out by someone with no knowledge of the source language, for similar reasons to those outlined above for step one. Knowledge of the source language can often interfere with the reading and processing of the target language text. The skill of listening and processing one language while reading and processing another takes great concentration. The danger is that understanding of the source text can result in a type of "suggestion" whereby small mistakes can be missed. This is obviously even more of a

problem where the translator performs the simulation. When the final stage is carried out by someone with no knowledge of the source language, this problem is avoided. However, if the first stage of the verification process has been carried out thoroughly, it is arguably better to have this final step performed by someone who does understand the film or programme they are watching, as this way mistakes in translation can be identified.

METHOD 1: Pre-translation – Adaptation – Spotting

In a process akin to that of the dubbing script adjuster, in this method a pre-translated script is adjusted or adapted into subtitle units before being spotted. This strategy is adopted for a variety of reasons. It may be that the client provides the translated script to be used for subtitling, or that time constraints mean the dialogue list must be translated before spotting is carried out. A typical example would be that the client provides a dialogue list but no video-tape for an urgent project which is to be broadcast in a couple of days. Here, the subtitler has two choices: wait for an appropriate tape to arrive before beginning, or attempt to gain time by having the dialogue list translated.

Working within a word-processing package, or directly in a subtitling programme, the subtitle adjuster can then adapt the translation into subtitles, checking meaning and summarising where necessary. If the text has been word-processed, it is then imported into the subtitling programme and the TC-in and TC-out for each subtitle is captured, before verification.

METHOD 2: Pre-translation – Spotting – Adaptation

A variation on the first method is to spot the film or programme before adapting the pre-translated text.

Here, the subtitler first captures the TC-in and TC-out for each subtitle, thus identifying the subtitle units and later adapting the translated text to fit, again either working within subtitling software or in a text document which is later imported.

The advantage of this system is that the subtitler identifies the "real" units of a dialogue, and will not be distracted by the quantity of information conveyed when making the decision as to where a subtitle will begin and end. For this reason, the spotting stage will tend to be much faster when using this method.

Of course, this also has its consequences. When spotting precedes adaptation of text, the subtitler is less likely to search for alternative solutions to avoid

excessive loss of information. Experience has shown that although it is possible to adjust the time codes in the following adaptation stage, subtitlers are less likely to do so than they are to adjust adaptation in the spotting stage when the process is reversed.

In addition to the time gained, the advantage of both these methods is that they allow for the use of freelance translators with no previous subtitling experience. The translator requires only a PC, video and monitor. The adaptation stage also provides for additional checking of the translation. However, this method also has its disadvantages. Firstly, as is also often the case with translations for dubbing, the translator has no real control over the finished product. The constraints of subtitling mean that much of the translation is rewritten and summarised during the adaptation stage.

From the point of view of the subtitler, this method also has its downside. The scripts or dialogue lists provided by clients are notorious. Often they contain text which does not appear in the film or worse, are missing text which does. These discrepancies may have gone unnoticed at the pre-translation stage. In the case of combined continuity and spotting lists which contain suggested subtitle units for translation, often at the spotting stage we find that the text is too short, that more subtitles are not only possible, but necessary.

However, as we shall see, the main issue arising from these first two methods of subtitling occurs in films and programmes which are to contain closed caption subtitles, such as is the case in subtitling for DVD and satellite broadcasting.

3.   Subtitling new media

The advent of DVD and digital and satellite television has meant an increase in subtitled film and television. Moreover, it has also meant that two worlds which have traditionally been separate, those of subtitling and dubbing, find themselves working for the same client. As the dubbed version is invariably produced beforehand, the client will often send the translated script to be used in producing the subtitles. However, the constraints of producing a translation for dubbing are very different to those of subtitling. Whereas in subtitling the original will be at all times available to the audience, leading to a tendency to produce a more "faithful" translation, in dubbing, a "freer" translation is possible, because the restrictions imposed upon the dubbing translator are different. Although the additional problem of lip synchronisation must be

considered, when an actor speaks dialogue off screen, or with his back to the camera, or in the case of a narrator, it is not necessary for the dubbed dialogue to respect the point at which the speaker starts or finishes, or the order. As the original dialogues will not be heard, the dubbing translation can and does stray from the original version considerably.

Until now, this has not been a problem. Each translator uses the tools and tricks available in his or her field. However, recently we are finding our worlds overlapping, and anomalies are coming to light. The option exists within DVD and on many digital and satellite television stations to choose to view dubbed and subtitled versions simultaneously, either in the same language or, in the case of DVD, in any combination of the dubbed and subtitled channels available. Discrepancies therefore become visible. This would not be a great problem, if differences were limited to synonyms and/or the reduction of text required by the subtitling medium. However, in many cases, differences are far more obvious.

Subtitles are spotted to coincide with the precise frame where a speaker begins and finishes talking, with the occasional adjustment of a few frames to respect a film's takes or allow more reading time, take change permitting. This is what the audience expects. Subtitles which enter before we hear the speaker, or which don't appear immediately, are confusing. The audience is reminded that they are reading a translation, and feel that something is missing or wrong, losing confidence in the subtitles. Consequently, if a dubbed version does not respect the in and out cues in the original, the subtitles will not be synchronised with the dubbed dialogue.

In addition to timing discrepancies, dubbed and subtitled versions often contain very different translations of the same phrase. This is of course to be expected in translations by different people done at different times. Often in the dubbing script, the translator has opted for a strategy more akin to adaptation than translation. Within the parameters of the objective of dubbing, this is acceptable. However, subtitles tend wherever possible to be more literal and where the dubbing translation strays considerably from the original, it is not really appropriate for use in the subtitles. Here, the subtitler can either translate the sequence again, or use a translation which is far from ideal, given the fact that the original is available to the audience.

One project where this phenomenon is encountered on a regular basis is the American TV series *Homicide, Life on the Streets*, broadcast in Spain on satellite channel Calle 13. It is broadcast with closed caption subtitles in Spanish and the choice between dubbed or original soundtrack. The series is set in a

police homicide department, and action revolves around the cases and the detectives' personal and work relationships. There follows an example.

In this scene, a particularly arrogant detective, Falsone, is boasting about his talent as a boxer to other detectives in the squad room. Two colleagues enter, Mike, and Ballard.

Mike: Crude.
Ballard: Who, Falsone?
Mike: No, Taylor's signature on the life insurance policy.

The dubbed version chose to translate "crude" as "genial", achieving the desired effect through sarcastic intonation. However, in subtitling , sarcasm is difficult to portray at the best of times, and is not a strategy adopted if an alternative exists. In the subtitled version, "crude" was translated as "vulgar".

Anyone choosing to watch the dubbed version with subtitles would find they did not coincide.

This is just a small example of a problem which arises constantly when subtitling with pre-translations carried out for dubbing purposes. Of course, it can be argued that anyone choosing to watch a dubbed version with subtitles should expect such differences, that the subtitles are designed to be watched with the original version. However, where an option exists, as it does in the case of satellite TV and DVD, surely the matter deserves consideration.

In the case of some cartoons, dubbing translation strategies tend to vary even more according to language, creating yet more problems when it comes to the subtitles. For example, on the DVD of the Catalan cartoon series *Les Tres Bessones* (The Triplets) dubbed and subtitled versions in Spanish, Galician, Basque, French and English are all available. The subtitles were produced, as is usual, using the original Catalan version and translating into the other languages. However, the client returned the subtitles as they did not coincide with the dubbed versions which were very different for each language, often having nothing at all in common with the original Catalan.

In this case it was presumed that the DVD would be used for language learning purposes, and that subtitles should therefore transcribe the dubbed versions, rather than translate the original.

This shows the importance of knowing the target audience of a project. It is essential the subtitler know whether the subtitles are intended to be viewed with the original version, or, as was the case with these cartoons and also with subtitles produced for the hard of hearing, with the dubbed version.

METHOD 3: Adaptation – Spotting – Translation

When subtitling a project into various languages, as in the case of the *Les Tres Bessones* project outlined above, the method employed is somewhat different. Here, the subtitles are created and spotted in the original language, and then translated into each language. There are two main alternatives. The text of the original language subtitles can be reduced to respect reading speed considerations, thus spoon feeding the translator to some extent as to how to summarise the dialogues and what information to omit. Alternatively, the text can be cut into subtitle units containing the entire text spoken, leaving the decision of text reduction to the translator. In the latter case, the translator is given a maximum number of characters for each subtitle in accordance with the time it will be on screen. Some companies allow the translator a 10% or 20% leeway in the maximum number of characters, as long as they don't surpass the fixed number of characters per line.

After the subtitles have been transcribed and/or adapted and spotted, they are exported to a text document containing the TC-in and TC-out, the duration of the subtitle, the text to be translated, and if appropriate, the maximum number of characters.

For example, in the following subtitles the top line contains from left to right the subtitle number, the TC-in, the TC-out, the duration and the maximum number of characters allowed. Below is the transcription of the subtitle requiring translation.

1:      01:00:00.03   01:00:02.06   2:03   25
        Could you please explain why?
2:      01:00:02.19   01:00:04.21   2:02   24
        It was completed a month ago.
3:      01:00:05.19   01:00:07.12   1:18   20
        If we attack them with this...
4:      01:00:07.17   01:00:09.24   2:07   27
        ...we'll eliminate them at their source.

Working within a word processing package, the translator overwrites the subtitles into the file respecting the constraints of maximum characters per line (usually between 35 and 38) and per subtitle and leaving the top line intact.

1:      01:00:00.03   01:00:02.06   2:03   25
        ¿Pueden explicar por qué?

2:	01:00:02.19	01:00:04.21	2:02	24
	Lo acabamos hace un mes.			
3:	01:00:05.19	01:00:07.12	1:18	20
	Si atacamos con esto...			
4:	01:00:07.17	01:00:09.24	2:07	27
	...los eliminamos de raíz.			

A variation of this system is used by some companies who permit the translator to adjust time codes, merging or splitting subtitles where they see fit. This of course depends on the translator's familiarity and experience with the subtitling process.

The advantage of this method is that subtitles can be translated into various languages simultaneously, without the need to spot each language. In the world of subtitling where deadlines are often unreasonably short, especially when subtitling DVDs, this can be done by freelance translators working from home and needing only a PC, video recorder and monitor. The translator also has more say in the finished product, choosing how to summarise information and what to omit.

But this method also has its disadvantages, not least the time which is often lost in transcribing the original text. For example, the directors' commentaries often included in DVDs, where the viewer can choose to watch the film while hearing explanations and anecdotes from the director instead of the original soundtrack, very seldom arrive with a dialogue list. The subtitler therefore has to transcribe the entire text before it can be translated. Of course, the option exists to have the translator work by ear, but this is not an option we consider.

Another disadvantage of this system is that the syntactic constraints of languages differ, and were the translator able to decide the "unit" of each subtitle, they may decide to separate the subtitles differently in a way more appropriate to each language. However, when working to short deadlines and into multiple languages, the ideal situation of each subtitle file being created by a translator/subtitler, is not possible.

METHOD 4: Translation/Adaptation – Spotting

In this method, the job of the translator and the subtitler is combined. Translation and adaptation is performed simultaneously before spotting, or the translator first spots then translates and adapts.

The advantage here is that one person performs all stages of the process

and has the option of finding the best solution within the constraints imposed by the medium.

Unfortunately, the fact is that very few translators combine the skills needed not only to translate and summarise, but to decide on the unit of information and sound to comprise each subtitle. In our own experience, some translators who perform very well when translating pre-spotted subtitles, have been found incapable of learning the technical skills required to identify and spot subtitle units. Deciding when to use dialogue, when to use one long subtitle or two shorter ones, or when to respect or ignore a film's takes is not only complicated but subjective. Although there are some rules in subtitling which cannot be bent, other issues are more flexible and a matter of individual preference.

4.   Conclusions

In my opinion, the last of the four methods outlined above leads to the creation of the highest quality subtitles. However, it would also seem to be the least common method used, mainly due to the lack of subtitling-coherent translators with real technical knowledge of procedures, lateral thinking skills and the ability to find more than just lexical solutions.

Ideally, a team of professional subtitler/translators with combined native knowledge of all target and source languages would be able to eliminate many of the most common errors and problems encountered in subtitling. Subtitling is essentially a team effort. When all members of a team are able to perform all parts of the process, this allows for multiple checks through each stage. In an ideal scenario a translator translates and adapts a film which is then spotted by someone whose first language is the source language to identify translation errors, finally undergoing the two stage check performed by someone without source text knowledge, to pinpoint unclear or incoherent translation.

The lack of trained subtitler/translators is an issue that some universities are now tackling. In Spain, which has traditionally been considered a dubbing country, subtitling is now a growth industry. Within the industry we welcome the interest in subtitling and the concomitant improvements in the skill level of translators that specialised post-graduate courses will produce. It is hoped that in the future greater co-operation between academic institutions and industry will make more subtitling teams of the type outlined above possible, leading to qualitative improvements in all aspects of the subtitling process.

2. AVT theory

In search of a theoretical framework for the study of audiovisual translation

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1.   Historical approach

The main objective of this paper is to analyse the validity and functionality of a series of concepts that have been articulated within the theoretical framework loosely known as Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and apply them to the field of audiovisual translation (AVT).[1] In recent years, these concepts have been highly successful in research terms but could be perceived as somewhat restricted, being as they were conceived with literature and literary translation at their core.

One of the first hurdles in a study of this nature is defining what is understood by the umbrella terms Descriptive Translation Studies and Polysystem Theory. The selection of those scholars that might be included in this "school" is also another highly controversial concept. Although there are some nuances differentiating both currents of thought, the prevailing opinion in this paper is that both are entirely complementary. In fact, the cumulative term Descriptive Translation Studies is understood here as a wider classification that encompasses the Polysystem Theory.

In 1972, Holmes, a pioneer of Descriptive Translation Studies, coined the more general term Translation Studies as a discipline with two main objectives: "(1) to describe the phenomena of translating and translation(s) as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience, and (2) to establish general principles by means of which these phenomena can be explained and predicted" (1994: 71). This conception gives rise to two different branches. An empirical one which he calls descriptive translation studies (DTS) or translation description (TD) and another of a more theoretical nature that he refers to as theoretical translation studies (ThTS) or translation theory (TTh). With these principles in

mind, and aided by several conferences organised in the late 70s,[2] the discipline began to gain momentum and weight. Some of the scholars that in one way or another have subscribed and elaborated on these theoretical postulates are Toury, Even-Zohar, Lefevere, Hermans, Lambert, van den Broeck and Bassnett.

Although, as Hermans (1999: 8) points out, Translation Studies has occasionally being taken to mean the specifically descriptive line of approach, its usage has recently evolved and Holmes's broad term is nowadays commonly used to refer to the entire field of study. In the following pages the term Translation Studies is employed when talking about the whole discipline, whereas Descriptive Translation Studies is a more concrete term and refers to a particular scholarly approach.

2.   Concepts and premises

It is not my intention to offer a detailed analysis of all the axial concepts around which this school of thought revolves, but rather to offer an overview with the aim of foregrounding their potential validity in the field of AVT research.

One of the first obstacles that must be overcome is the need to adapt most of their theoretical premises to the audiovisual world. Despite the fact that in his initial proposal Holmes spoke about translation in general — not only in the literary realm — and that most scholars are aware of the need to open up new research avenues in order to incorporate translation practices that have been traditionally neglected in academic exchanges, the truth is that DTS refers almost exclusively to the literary world. It is only in certain recent works that some references have been made to translation modes such as dubbing and subtitling (Bassnett 1998: 136). However, I would like to underline that these concepts are in essence operative and functional as heuristic tools in researching AVT. In some cases, as we will see, they even offer more possibilities to carry out analyses in new directions.

3.   Polysystem

This is a term coined by Even-Zohar in a series of papers written in the 70s and published in English at the end of the decade (1978a and 1978b). It is used to refer to a group of semiotic systems that co-exist dynamically within a particular cultural sphere. It is characterised by continuous changes and internal

oppositions, whose main aim is to occupy the centre position in the system, and it is regulated by socio-historic norms. The literary polysystem comprises a range of literatures, from the canonical to works and genres traditionally considered minor (children's literature, popular and romantic fiction, thrillers, etc.), as well as translated works. The concept is sufficiently flexible to allow us to also talk of a film polysystem in Spain or in any other country. The film polysystem is made up of the national products and the translated ones — dubbed or subtitled — and deals with the relationships that are established among all of them. This new approach to translation allows for the translated work to be studied as a product in itself that is integrated in the target polysystem. It also dispenses with the traditional perception of the inferior translated copy derived from a superior original to which it barely does justice (Hermans 1985). There is a shift of interest that departs from the study of translation as a process, translating, in order to centre on the analysis of translation as a product, translation. The newborn is thus fully embodied in its adoptive society and its positioning in this new culture requires the scholar to untangle and to interpret.

The advantages of this approach are manifold. Firstly, it blurs the boundaries between high and low culture, allowing the reclamation of social activities that have been traditionally marginalized in the academic exchanges, e.g. thrillers or, in our case, audiovisual translation as opposed to literary or poetry translation. Secondly, it helps to broaden the research horizon since it underlines the need to incorporate the translated works in the study of the cinematography of any country. This is an area of research that does not have to interest all scholars in AVT, but some knowledge of this discipline can help them enormously in their pursuits. This association between national production and translation affects not only the translators but also the academics involved in Film Studies that have usually ignored the role played by translation. Only recently have some scholars started to direct their attention towards translation, as evidenced by the introduction of modules in dubbing and subtitling, not only in translation degrees but also in other degrees such as Film and Television Studies, Journalism and Media Studies. Conferences centred on Film Studies are opening up to allow the inclusion of papers on film translation.[3] Some scholars are actively seeking to bridge the gap between Film and Translation Studies (Chaume 2000, 2003 and Remael 2000). And it is also very telling that some publishing companies are launching books on audiovisual translation as part of their cinema collections rather than their translation series.[4] These trends help translators and researchers to gain in prestige and become more visible in our

society. Within this theoretical framework, translation — and translators to a certain extent — ceases to be a Cinderella of academia, and translated works shake off the mantle of a secondary, deficient product with which they have historically been burdened. The translated product is, in principle, at the same social and cultural level as the national ones.

Pioneering studies on dubbing and subtitling were flawed by approaches that were biased by the linguistic dimension. Socio-cultural, as well as professional factors that also have an impact on the final decision on how to translate an audiovisual product, were ignored or dealt with in a rather superficial manner. In this sense, the dynamics of the polysystem, characterised by the continuous confrontation among the different systems that form it, offer an ideal platform from which to launch an analytical assault at the dubbing versus subtitling debate. It certainly opens new possibilities of study by establishing a direct link between the national system (Spanish films) and the foreign system (translated films). What sort of relationships can be detected between the dialogue of dubbed/subtitled films and the dialogue of films shot originally in Spanish? Are there any other intersemiotic influences? Why are film remakes produced? What are their socio-cultural implications? What kind of hierarchy and power struggle takes place between original audiovisual products and foreign ones?

The analytical guidelines that stem from the polysystem theory allow us to focus the dubbing versus subtitling confrontation from a stronger socio-cultural perspective. Instead of talking about exclusion, the complementarity between both modes of translation is foregrounded. And although the analysis of a translated film continues to be relevant, this approach opens up a new avenue of research with two main objectives. Firstly, to make clear the relationships that exist among all dubbed and subtitled films as a group of film texts structured and functioning as a system. Secondly, to study the associations that can be established between translated films and the national ones. Also, more research ought to be done into the similarities and/or discrepancies that exist between the different translation practices in different polysystems within the same society, e.g. film and literary polysystems.

One of the areas needing revision in the polysystem theory is relative to the concepts primary and secondary. Even-Zohar (1978a) uses these two concepts in a rather ambiguous manner to refer both to the position that products occupy in the polysystem as well as to the artistic power they hold in that polysystem. Primary practices are at the core of the polysystem creating new models and are "by and large an integral part of innovatory forces" (ibid.: 120).

On the other hand, to occupy a secondary position means to be on the margins of the polysystem and not have any influence on other products. It also implies obedience to conservative conventions and to those forces which reinforce existing models. However, films that occupy a secondary position do not have to obey conservative forces and films that are in a primary position are not always innovative. Given the fact that in Spain USA translated films are more numerous than the national ones, attract larger numbers of spectators and generate more revenue, it seems legitimate to say that they occupy a primary position and the Spanish films a secondary position. However, what is not so evident is that the secondary ones, i.e. the Spanish films, have a more conservative character and that the primary ones, i.e. the USA films, an innovative one. This bipolarity without apparent nuances between primary and secondary positions seems to oversimplify a far richer and more complex reality. Consider, for instance, underground films in which many other factors are at play: budget, artistic intentions and equipment, for example. Besides, a film might well be primary and innovative from a formal point of view but secondary as far as the plot is concerned.

Another problem deserving a more detailed analysis is the establishing of the limits of the polysystem that we want to use in our field. The literary polysystem seems to encompass a body of work sufficiently coherent and cohesive, but to talk about a film or cinematographic polysystem is too limited to films and neglects other products of the audiovisual world that are also translated such as TV series, documentaries, cartoons, soap operas, commercials or corporate videos. The ambivalence shown in our field by the use of terms of a more general nature such as "multimedia", "audiovisual" or "screen" translation serves only to place emphasis on the difficulty of solving this terminological conundrum.

4.   Norms

The different norms postulated by Toury (1978, 1980 and 1995), and reworked by Hermans (1999), take on special importance in this theoretical framework. Norms are understood as a central element in the translation process and they account for the relationships that exist between the rules of the abstract and modelling society and the idiosyncrasies of each translator. These norms constitute the theoretical pillars on which the methodological principles rest. As translation scholars, our task consists of elucidating the similarities and

differences between the criteria shared by the collective of users and the instructions that have been implemented by the translator in genuine cases and in a particular historical context. Thus, the study of norms will help to account for the policy that regulates the whole translation project — preliminary norm — as well as the relations that take place in the distribution of the linguistic material when moving from source to target language — operational norms, divided into matricial and textual norms. At a macro-structural level, these norms allow us to determine which are the distinctive characteristics that regulate the delivery of the dubbed or subtitled discourse, bearing in mind the many different constraints imposed by the medium. At a micro-structural level, they help us to observe the translator's behaviour in the linguistic mediation.

Norms are a very successful concept in the study of translation because they provide a clear objective to the research and direct the translation scholar to what needs to be found and analysed. Now the aim is to ascertain the norms that govern the translators' behaviour, bearing in mind that norms change and are not the same throughout history. It marks a departure from previous analytical studies focused on determining the degree of equivalence between source and target products. This new approach accepts translated texts without judging their solutions as correct or incorrect. It seeks to explain why a particular equivalence has been reached and what this means in the historical context in which the translation took place. There is a deliberate emphasis on the need to carry out more descriptive studies focused on the product, the function and the process (Holmes 1994: 71–73) with the intention of coming up with a clear map of the translation practice. Instead of throwing up abstract ideas unsupported by empirical data or making up *ad hoc* examples to illustrate a particular case in point that suits the researcher, what is now suggested is mapping what really happens in translation to avoid falling into absolute theorisation. Only from real examples that already exist can we draw conclusions that will help to further knowledge in translation studies. And these norms are precisely the tools that will help us in this task.

The changing and evolving nature of norms frees the scholar from the prescriptive principles that have characterised the postulates of previous theoretical constructs such as linguistics structuralism. The equivalence between source and target products is not absolute and depends on socio-historical variables. These norms also allow us to foreground aspects that belong to the supralinguistic (presentation of the translation, the author's canonical status, the time and place where the original and the translation were produced) as well as the metalinguistic (formulations that theorise about translation and

translating, critical reviews) dimensions that had been previously ignored or, in the best cases, had received a rather superficial analysis. However productive this perception might be, the changing nature of norms also has a negative slant to it. Since they are forever changing, it is difficult to isolate them in our present day and, therefore, to analyse them. Their study in past periods would seem to be easier and more feasible because the scholar can take a look at them from a distance. In order to avoid an attitude that might lead us to ignore what is now happening, I would propose taking priority away from the historical dimension or, at least, playing it down.

Given that the emphasis tends to be placed on establishing which norms regulate the translator's behaviour in any particular socio-historical moment, it seems that this academic construct is more productive when the scholar carries out the contrastive analysis of several films or novels rather than just one. Some of the works carried out in this perspective tend to suffer from being over-ambitious. They try to cover all the works translated during several decades in a relatively large field of study, which inevitably raises certain problems. On the one hand, it seems to be an overly demanding enterprise, apparently only feasible for researchers with lots of spare time and energy. For those without the time, this research requires a group effort that, although desirable, is not always possible. In any case, it can stifle the initiative of the individual researcher. On the other hand, there is always the risk of having to generalise too much in the drive to determine the norms that have regulated translators' behaviour during a considerable long period of time. The researcher's conclusion may have to be very general so that the findings are encountered in all the products that are representative of that particular period. Even then, it might still be possible to note dissident behaviours that could call some of the findings into question.

A way to overcome this obstacle could be by searching for norms in bodies of data that are less expansive and more homogeneous and manageable. Here, AVT shows itself to be an area with many possibilities. The literary translator usually enjoys a degree of autonomy that is not so clear in the case of the audiovisual translator, whose product goes through different stages and hands before reaching the screen. Norms are on occasions applied by laboratories, production and distribution companies, dubbing actors and directors, technicians, adaptors, linguistic advisers or TV stations, and not so much by individual translators. In principle, then, certain normative behavioural patterns could be observed more easily if the researcher focused on the analysis of products that have been marketed, say, by a given TV channel or distribution company.

The aforementioned deficiencies can be easily overcome and the concept of norm in the study of translation continues to be of paramount importance. To discover norms and to value them in the contexts in which they take and have taken place means to reveal how culture, the symbolic capital in Bourdieu's terminology, has been manipulated in favour of certain vested interests, be they economic, political or of any other kind.

5.   Patronage

This concept helps to consolidate the study of extra-linguistic factors relating to the socio-economic and ideological imperatives that exist in all social inter-actions. Coined by Lefevere (1985), patronage is understood as the group of "powers (persons, institutions) which help or hinder the writing, reading and rewriting of literature" (ibid.: 227), and that "can be exerted by persons […], groups of persons […], a social class, a royal court, publishers […] and, last but not least, the media" (ibid.: 228). Compared to the literary world, audiovisual products are a lot more exposed to commercial forces, a fact that opens up additional opportunities for manipulation and for avenues of research.

Patronage operates on three levels: ideological, economic and social status. In the case of AVT it opens the doors to the study of the state's interference through film censorship or cinema legislation (screen quotas, dubbing and subtitling licences, financial subsidies); the participation of higher bodies and authorities such as the European Union or more localised ones such as the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalan Local Government); the role of the different TV channels and the dubbing and subtitling laboratories; and the importance of the educational centres like universities. It is also highly interesting to include the study of the decisive role played by the international distribution and production companies in any given country or linguistic region; the tension that arises between the needs and tastes of the audience and the commercial interests of the companies; the semi-accepted fallacy that what is translated is what the target spectator wants to consume and not what the companies want to sell. Until now, most of these factors have failed to receive an in-depth analysis. There is no doubt that a more systematic approach would lead to conclusions that could contribute to a better understanding of transla-tion in its widest sense.

6.   Adequacy and acceptability

All translation process implies and reflects tensions between the two poles of a *continuum*. In one of the extremes we find adequacy, when the translated product adheres to the values and referents of the source product, and in the other acceptability, which means that the translation embraces the linguistic and cultural values of the target polysystem. Since no translation is completely adequate or acceptable, one of the researcher's tasks, helped by the norms, consists in discovering the sort of relation that gets established between the original and the translation. That is, to show if the translated product tends more to the pole of adequacy or acceptability. The latter will always imply a greater degree of acculturation and domestication in line with Venuti's postulates (1995) in this area. Domesticating and foreignizing are two concepts at the heart of literary translation theory that, given their emphasis on the linguistic dimension, can function with more or less success in the literary world. However, they are clearly insufficient when dealing with AVT in which the value of the image tends to take precedence over the word. For Venuti's concepts to be functional in our field, their re-elaboration is necessary. And the same is true with the concepts of acceptability and adequacy. Their opposition seems to suggest a bipolar conception that has been successfully argued by Zlateva (1990), when she maintains that the two poles are not necessarily at the extremes of a *continuum*. Using the translation of *Peter Pan* into Bulgarian as an example, she successfully highlights that a translation can be adequate and acceptable at the same time. A more functional definition of these two terms capable of accommodating the concept of error in translation could help to overcome this shortcoming (Díaz Cintas 1997: 53–59).

7.   General evaluation

Descriptive Translation Studies avoids being prescriptive or normative in its postulates, hence the prominent use of the adjective "descriptive" as opposed to "prescriptive". However, if in the struggle to gain the central position in the polysystem, the ultimate objective of subtitling, or any other audiovisual translation mode, is the canonisation of its own discourse, then it seems imperative to formalise as well as harmonise the variables that define it. In our field, the time and spatial constraints in the presentation of subtitles imposed by the medium bring along an inescapable degree of prescriptivism. In order to

entrench a stable and homogeneous discourse, it is imperative to reach a consensus among all parties involved in the polysystem. This would inevitably imply the following of a set of rules and norms that have to be essentially dogmatic. It is symptomatic, for example, that ESIST, European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (www.esist.org), has made one of its priorities the elaboration of a code of good practice in subtitling — this is nothing other than a prescriptive list of rules.

Another point that has been criticised is the aversion DTS has shown to the evaluation and analysis of translation errors. One of the reasons given is that what is important is the target product in itself and its positioning in the target culture. If the translated product has been commercialised in a given society it is therefore a valid product. The aim of the scholar is to study its articulation and positioning in the target polysystem and not its degree of equivalence with the original in terms of good or bad translation outcomes. However, as Malmkjær (2001: 35) points out, in cases in which a particular translation solution "strikes a reader not just as exiting (sic), innovative, unusual or unfortunate, but simply wrong", this target text oriented philosophy makes it difficult to justify any translation norms on theoretical or observational grounds.

Moreover, closing our eyes to this dimension to some extent separates — unnecessarily, I would argue — Descriptive Translation Studies from the educational world. This may be seen as a rather paradoxical occurrence, since academics from the field of DTS are the first *not* to want to create a schism between translation theory and practice. However, they seem to be happy for the creation of one between research and teaching. It also misses the possibility of an in-depth analysis that might examine whether there have been periods in which errors were worse, more numerous or of a different nature to the errors encountered nowadays; whether errors have something to do with the language we translate from; whether in the translation of films originally shot in minority languages, errors are due to a direct translation from the original or they have been transmitted through an English pivot translation; whether errors could be classified as natural or motivated, or whether they end up becoming accepted Anglicisms. Malmkjær's paper (2001) offers a valuable set of criteria that proves very useful as an attempt at incorporating the notion of error within this theoretical project.

However, I believe these are minor limitations that do not call into question the general validity of the whole framework. They simply bring to the fore the fact that there is room for improvement within DTS, just as there may be within other theoretical constructs. On the positive side, it enjoys a high degree

of flexibility that makes it capable of incorporating alterations and new perspectives without jeopardising its essence. The advantages offered by this theoretical framework are without doubt superior to the limitations mentioned.

If we want our area of research to be given the consideration it deserves, more analyses are needed with a more theoretical and less anecdotal approach. I personally believe that DTS offers an ideal platform from which to launch this approach. For translation scholars, this catalogue of concepts is a heuristic tool that opens up new avenues for study, strengthens the theoretical component and allows the researcher to come up with substantial analyses. Scholars then belong to a research community, minimising the risk of coming up with approximations that are too intuitive or too individual and subjective. To speak of polysystems, norms and patronage locates the academic within a theoretical framework that, if shared with other scholars, facilitates the debate and speeds up an exchange of ideas and information. To work within a school — that does not have to be static or rigid — helps to avoid a possible and menacing diaspora of knowledge. In 1996, Fawcett wondered if it was possible "to bring film translation under the sway of translation theories" (ibid.: 70). I firmly believe that DTS presents the scholar with a sufficiently homogeneous and flexible theoretical framework that acts as a very valuable starting point for research in AVT. Works carried out in this field by Ballester Casado (1999, 2001), Díaz Cintas (1997), Gutiérrez Lanza (1999), Karamitroglou (2000), Remael (2000) and Sokoli (2000), among others, are clear examples.

To approach dubbing and subtitling from a mere linguistic perspective is clearly insufficient. By transcending the purely linguistic dimension, the postulates put forward by DTS have the advantage of placing translation researchers on a starting grid that allows them to channel their efforts into the object of study from a plural and interdisciplinary perspective. Translation is viewed as an act of intercultural communication, rather than simply interlinguistic, confirming Simon's prediction (1996: 134) that "it was only a question of time until cultural studies 'discovered' translation". A discovery that has come from the pen of authors sitting on the fence between Descriptive Translation Studies and Cultural Studies, such as Bassnett (1998).

The linguistic and cultural approaches should not be viewed as antagonistic paradigms but, rather, complementary. By focusing on our object of study from several angles we can only gain a better knowledge of translation and translating. It is only a logical development of Holmes's premonition (1994: 73) when in 1972 he stated that:

> The ultimate goal of the translation theorist in the broad sense must undoubtedly be to develop a full, inclusive theory accommodating so many elements that it can serve to explain and predict all phenomena falling within the terrain of translating and translation.

The problem only arises when priority is given to one of the two dimensions at the exclusion of the other. The ideal solution comes by integrating both approaches in what Munday (2001: 181–196) calls an inter-discipline, Translation Studies, which should play a more prominent and important role at universities and in the academic world. As translation scholars, we have a duty to avoid the risk of an irreconcilable split between the two paradigms: linguistic and cultural. One of the most lucid and perceptive observations in this respect comes from Harvey (2000: 466), when he states that "[t]ranslation is not just about texts: nor is it only about cultures and power. It is about the relation of the one to the other".

In an initial approach, it is reasonable to state that translation activity is primarily of a linguistic nature. However, it is no less true that the life of the translated product, as proposed by Benjamin with his concept of *Überleben* (1992 [1955]), does not finish with the translation, but starts with it. The analysis of the manifold relations that develop between the translated product and the recipient society can be as interesting and absorbing as the linguistic analysis. Borrowing Harvey's words (2000: 466), what the translation scholar needs is:

> A methodology that neither prioritizes broad concerns with power, ideology and patronage to the detriment of the need to examine representative examples of text, nor contents itself with detailed text-linguistic analysis while making do with sketchy and generalized notions of context.

Studies that combine the linguistic dimension with feminist (Simon 1996, Flotow 1997), post-colonial (Niranjana 1992, Carbonell i Cortés 1997), gender (Harvey 2000) or power and culture perspectives (Álvarez and Vidal 1996) are highly profitable from the point of view of research and as yet they have not made an appearance in audiovisual translation. I hope, however, that they will form the basis for future papers very soon.

Notes

1. For a debate on the terminology attached to the approach which forms the subject of this chapter, see Hermans (1999: 7–16).

2. The conferences took place in Leuven (1976), Tel Aviv (1978), and Antwerp (1980).

3. *World Cinemas: Identity, Culture, Politics.* Conference held at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom, 25–27 June 2002.

4. Despite having a translation series, the Spanish publishing company Cátedra has a couple of volumes centred on dubbing and subtitling that are commercialised within its cinema collection *Signo e Imagen.* Something similar is happening with a new series of books on audiovisual translation published by the company Ariel in its collection *Ariel Cine* (see Díaz Cintas 2003).

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Synchronization in dubbing

A translational approach

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1. Introduction

Synchronization (or lip-sync) is one of the key factors at stake in audiovisual translation, particularly in the context of dubbing. It is often considered as the differentiating feature of this type of translation, although in fact, it only represents one important area (together with others such as orality or the interaction between image and word) which is gradually losing the support of both dubbing professionals and audiences. In academic circles, it is regarded as an urgent, vital issue, as can be seen from the wide range of publications cited in the bibliography. Synchronization undeniably has a direct impact on the translation process and product, and as such, it should be given due consideration in Translation Studies and, in particular, in the study of audiovisual translation. Synchronization forces the translator to put his or her creative skills to full use. It is precisely in the learning environment, that synchronization can help the translator trainee to move away from literal conceptions in translation and build up confidence in his or her abilities to put forward alternatives that move away from the source text to focus on the function of the text and on the viewer, one of the essential features of audiovisual translation.

2. Synchronization in audiovisual translation theory: translational approaches

Although the study of audiovisual translation is comparatively recent in academic circles, synchronization has always generated a great deal of debate in the field. For this reason, I initially intend to outline the approaches taken

when dealing with the question of synchronization and then go on to define the boundaries of the subject and classify synchronization types. For reasons of space, an analysis of the different translation strategies and techniques available to the translator to face different synchronization problems has been left for future studies.

2.1 Professional approaches (Martín, 1994; Ávila, 1997; Gilabert, Ledesma and Trifol, 2001)

For many years, the study of audiovisual translation was largely restricted to professionals working in that specific area of translation. From the professional point of view, the objective of 'good' synchronization may be said to have been achieved if what the viewer hears on the screen does not sound like a translation, but rather that the utterances in the target language appear to have been spoken by the very actors they are watching. The professional dubbing world prioritizes synchronization above all else, and the quality of a translation is judged in terms of whether or not "it matches the lips", in other words, whether the translation corresponds both to the screen characters' movements of the lips (lip synchrony), and particularly to the duration of the screen character's utterance, from the instant his or her mouth opens to speak to the instant it shuts (isochrony).

The professional viewpoint is thus strictly functional, yet naturally enough, free from theory, since it is essentially concerned with meeting the client's demands, in line with the target culture's conventions of synchronization. These conventions simply consist of ensuring that the dubbed product sounds as though it were original, and that nothing distorts that perception.

Within the professional environment, it is generally accepted that responsibility for synchronization lies with the dialogue writers, and in the final instance, with the dubbing director.

Martín states that the dialogue writer "should modify the words that do not phonetically coincide with the screen actors' lip movements and expediate the synchronizing work of the dubbing actor. Principally, closed or open vowels, bilabials etc. must be noted […] The responsibility for ensuring that the lip movement of the dialogues is as close as possible to that of the original actors therefore lies firmly with the dialogue writer" (Martín, 1994: 326, my translation). Here it can thus be appreciated that the criterion for good synchronization is met when the original actor appears to be actually speaking the translated dialogue, in other words, when the translation is made invisible.

This responsibility, according to the professional view, is shared by the dubbing director, whose role Martín (1994) outlines as follows:

> Of the director's various roles, the most important is to guide the interpretative work of the dubbing actors […] The occasion often arises in which a particular phoneme or word poses problems of pronunciation […] In these circumstances, it is the director's responsibility to replace the word with a synonym, while at the same time logically respecting the original meaning of the utterance. The director may modify the original intention of the translator and the dialogue writer in the course of the dubbing process. Likewise, decisions may be taken to dub written texts on screen (displays and captions), such as posters, newspapers or letters. Martín (1994: 327, my translation).

Thus, the dubbing director may alter the translation to make the final product more natural, more domestic.

To my mind, this type of changes should be carried out by the translator, who should even be working towards eliminating any need for changes from the very outset, and consequently, I consider it essential that translators be given training in this skill. The translator is the sole link in the dubbing chain that is able to make such changes and at the same time take into account both the source and target texts, as he or she, unlike the dialogue writer or the director, is the only person who is familiar with both languages at stake.

Dialogue writers criticize translators on the grounds that the latter are incapable of producing credible, oral text, and defend their position at a time when many scholars are calling for the role of the translator to be placed at the center of the dubbing and subtitling processes. For instance, Gilabert, Ledesma and Trifol (2001) express their grievances as follows:

> The figure of the translator is frequently referred to as though he or she were the only person to handle script dialogues prior to dubbing. Yet dubbing consists of a chain of processes in which no one has ultimate responsibility for the product. The responsibility is a shared one, although in the context of the relationship with the client, it is shouldered by the dubbing director. It must be borne in mind that the figure of the dialogue writer has been in existence since the advent of dubbing, as his or her contribution is a vital stage in the process.
> (Gilabert, Ledesma and Trifol, 2001: 325, my translation)

The translator's errors in creating oral unlabored speech, although indeed undesirable, can be corrected through the right integral training. Furthermore, the fact that a figure or profession might have existed for many years does not necessarily mean that it should last forever, as is the case of numerous professions that have disappeared or been taken over by new professional profiles.

2.2 Functionalist approaches (Fodor, 1976; Mayoral et al., 1988, Kahane, 1990–1991; Zabalbeascoa, 1993)

The functionalist approaches concur with the above in that they regard synchronization as one of the key factors in the completion of the function of the translation: if we accept that the function of a fictional audiovisual text is primarily to entertain the viewer, we will also accept that respect for synchronization is essential if the viewer's attention is not to be distracted from the final product, if he or she is not to be sidetracked from the story he or she is watching and engaged in, in cultures where such a convention (lip synchronization, isochrony, etc.) is operative.

I have deliberately set this approach apart from the previous one in order to highlight the fact that here, the authors have indeed undertaken an academic reflection on synchronization. We are not dealing with a simple list of instructions for professional practice, but rather with a theoretical reflection on the language of cinema, on its role and on the role of translation.

In the area of dubbing, these approaches were first introduced in the work of Fodor (1976), whose pioneering manual established him as the first author to name and describe the various types of synchronization and to develop what became known as visual phonetics, the area of study linking the mouth articulatory movements of the screen actor and the phonemes that the translator should fit to his or her mouth so as to avoid a clash between the translation and the original image, and the consequent communicative noise and loss of the reality effect (González Requena, 1988 and 1989). Fodor even went as far as to propose that sounds in the source and target versions should correspond, according to the different shots or angles, and offered suggestions on techniques to achieve a similar pronunciation for dubbing actors. However, Fodor's standard of perfection is far removed from the situation professionals actually face at work, since the length of time required to carry out the dubbing process would make it financially unfeasible. Besides, in artistic terms, it is redundant, as the reality effect can also be achieved through the right interpretation on the part of the dubbing actor. Neither is it viable for the translator, who would require an excessive amount of time and an almost utopian linguistic proficiency to achieve this degree of harmony. In fact, within the Spanish professional context, lip synchrony is only considered essential in close-up and extreme close-up shots or detailed lip shots.

Authors who regard synchronization as a constraint (Mayoral et al., 1988, and later, Zabalbeascoa, 1993) implicitly regard it as a barrier to the achieve-

ment of a specific aim: to avoid the problem of the translation sounding like a translation, to ensure that the utterances pronounced on screen do not side-track the viewer's attention, and to ensure that the final product complies with the professional conventions demanded by the market for this type of transla-tion. Kahane (1990) puts it clearly:

> good quality dubbing makes all the differences between the character, the screen actor and the dubbing actor disappear. It should aim to confound all boundaries in the eyes of the viewer. The sign of a good dubbing production is when these boundaries become invisible. The ultimate goal is credibility, complete *make believe*. Kahane (1990–91:116, my translation)

Studies such as those by Agost (1999), Chaves (2000) or Chaume (1996, 1997, and 1998) have also followed this vein.

2.3   Polysystemic approaches (Goris, 1993; Karamitroglou, 2000)

Polysystemic approaches take a radically different view of dubbing from the functionalist approaches outlined above. The descriptive studies in this field shift the focus of attention away from the function of the translation to the conventions of the target culture. Synchronization is analyzed as a translational norm for a particular target culture that, for historical, social, political or economic reasons, seeks to domesticate a foreign product and to make both the translator and the translation invisible. This approach is clearly explained in the work of Karamitroglou (2000) or Goris (1993). According to Goris naturaliza-tion (the socio-cultural adaptation of the source text) is one of the basic translational norms in dubbing, and visual synchrony (lip synchrony, kinetic synchrony, isochrony) is the most important aspect of this naturalization:

> Visual synchrony is without doubt the most important aspect of naturalization. It is visual synchronization which is supposed to create the impression that the actors on screen are pronouncing the translated words. This is essential in order to present the film as a *French* one. (Goris, 1993: 177)

Goris analyzes various angles of visual synchrony in five translated films, and concludes that synchronization is more accurate in *On Screen* dialogues, i.e., shots in which the character's mouth is visible and which include labial conso-nants. He also notes that the translation is worded in such a way as to match the syllables from the source dialogue, and each turn taking, by starting and finishing to coincide with the actors on screen (isochrony).

     The descriptive approach does not set out to judge the quality of synchro-nization, or the translation techniques required to overcome particular transla-

tion problems thrown up by synchronization, but rather it describes a reality, the French reality in the case of Goris, and the Greek subtitling reality in the work of Karamitroglou. These approaches explain the status of synchronization in the target polysystem, how complete it is, for what purposes it is used and what brings about its use, when exactly it is employed in the translation and so on. All these questions help us to understand synchronization as a dubbing technique that responds to specific socio-political and economic realities.

2.4 Cinematographic approaches (Chaves, 2000; Bartrina, 2001; Chaume 2003 and 2004, Bravo, 2003)

Although cinematographic approaches are still not considered as a consolidated group as such, I have grouped various authors under this umbrella whose shared outlook is to forge links between film language and translation.

Paradoxically, though there is now an extensive bibliography related to Film Studies, work on sound postsynchronization in either the original language or the second language is extremely scarce. In film theory, postsynchronization is the term given to the process of recording dialogues in a studio, particularly from outside scenes and sequences, once the film has been shot. When the scene is initially filmed, the actors either pronounce the dialogues or simply move their lips, and subsequently visualize the scene once again, in the ideal sound conditions provided by the recording studio, and synchronize the dialogues, matching them to their own articulatory movements. What is being dealt with here is therefore an intralinguistic dubbing process, carried out to ensure that the sound reaches the viewer's ear in optimum conditions, without interference from the background noise associated with outside shots (traffic, building work, people shouting, or any other real life sound). For a variety of reasons, the postsynchronization process is occasionally carried out, not by the actors themselves, but by professional dubbing actors.

Postsynchronization has been heavily criticized by both film makers and directors. In 1968, the Italian directors Antonioni, Bertolucci, Passolini and the Taviani brothers issued a manifesto against dubbing, specifically against intra-linguistic postsynchronization, as in Italy, live sound was not recorded, but rather the entire soundtrack was usually laid down in the dubbing studio. The practice, nowadays widespread, gained a bad reputation as being over cunning, and attempting to 'fool' the viewer. However, it is now standard practice in modern filmmaking, only meeting opposition from a section of the art house cinema minority.

Interlinguistic dubbing, in technical terms, is simply a variation of sound postsynchronization in which the utterances of the screen actors are recorded in a dubbing studio, the only difference being that the utterances are pronounced in another language. Postsynchronization, whether intra or interlinguistic, should follow certain conventions, the flexibility of which depends on the receiving culture, as outlined below. The three generally accepted conventions are:

–   The lip movements in close-up shots and extreme close-ups (detailing the lips or the whole face, for example) must be respected. In other words, the source text (in the case of postsynchronization) or the translated dialogue (in the case of dubbing) must coincide with the screen actor's lip movements — especially in the case of bilabial consonants, labio-dental consonants and open vowels. The task of matching the translation with the screen actor's articulatory movements is called lip-sync or lip synchrony
–   The body movements of the screen actors must also be respected. In other words, the source text (in the case of postsynchronization) or the translated dialogue (in the case of dubbing) must coincide with the head, arm or body movements of the characters on screen (assent, negation, surprise etc.). This kind of adaptation is called kinetic synchrony
–   The timing of the screen characters' utterances must be respected too. In other words, the source text (in the case of postsynchronization) or the translated dialogue (in the case of dubbing) must fit exactly in the time between the instant the screen actor opens his/her mouth to deliver the lines from the source text and the instant in which he/she closes his/her mouth. This kind of synchrony is known as isochrony.

The question lies in respecting two film language codes, the mobility code (mouth articulation, body movements, spatial distance among characters) and the planning code (types of shots, especially close-ups and extreme close-ups), which include both kinetic and proxemic signs. Cinematographic approaches deal with synchronization from this perspective: the phenomenon is analyzed as one of the signs that make up one or more of the codes of meaning of the audiovisual text. The audiovisual text is a verbal-iconic construct that transmits codified information via two channels: acoustic, through sound waves, and visual, through light signals. Cinematic language is not only codified linguistically, but also through numerous codes that contribute to make up the final message. The former consists of linguistic, paralinguistic, musical, special effects and sound arrangement codes, whereas visual codes

include iconographic, photographic, graphic, planning, syntactic or montage, and mobility codes. The signs we are now analyzing, the screen actors' lip movements and body movements fall into this last group.

Seen from this angle, synchronization, like scene sequencing (montage, editing) or the special effects added at various junctures in the plot, is essential to the configuration of the message, a requisite, a sign of a processed, elaborated and multiple message whose presence is vital for its correct (conventional) configuration and transmission. Synchronization must therefore be analyzed as one of a set of elements in the broad network of signs that make up the message, the film and the narration. The issue in question is to forge links between cinematographic language and translation operations.

3.   Translational approach

I now wish to turn specifically to the translational aspects of synchronization. These concern the denominations given to synchronization, its definition, the boundaries of the subject under analysis (varieties of synchronization), relevant factors in its analysis and the translation techniques commonly used by the translator to solve synchronization related problems.

3.1   Denominations

Synchronization is the process of recording a translation in any given target language in a dubbing studio, matching the translation with the screen actors' body movements and articulatory movements. Although synchronization is both the professional and academic term for this process (Fodor, 1976; Mayoral et al. 1988, Whitman, 1992), it is also possible to find other terms for the same operation, like adjustment or adaptation. The term revoicing can also be found used as a synonym, though it is really a synonym for dubbing, which also includes the process of intralingual postsynchronization. When only referred to dubbing or interlingual postsynchronization, revoicing is used in general terms, i.e., in order to include all dubbing types (dubbing properly, partial dubbing, narration, free-commentary, etc.).

3.2   Definition

Luyken (1991: 73), in an extensive definition, explains synchronization (lip-sync dubbing) as "the replacement of the original speech by a voice-track

which is a faithful translation of the original speech and which attempts to reproduce the timing, phrasing and lip movements of the original". Agost (1999: 59) defines synchronization (which she refers to as visual synchrony) as "the harmony between the visible articulatory speech movements and the sounds heard" (my translation). Chaves (2000) also gives his definition as:

> to synchronize the translation with the lip movements. To achieve this, [the dialogue writer] substitutes the words that do not coincide phonetically with the screen actors' lip movements for others that do. Pauses, the start and finish of the utterance, the openness of the vowel sounds and the presence of bilabials are all taken into account. The dialogue writer is also responsible for synchronizing the pace of the dubbing actor, at times through modifications to the text received from the translator. In summary, the dialogue writer is responsible for synchronization. (Chaves 2000: 114, my translation).

Díaz Cintas (2001: 41) indicates that synchronization is carried out by "maintaining synchrony between the sounds of the language of the translation and the actors' lip movements" (my translation).

From this handful of the most recent definitions of synchronization, we can observe how the idea of equivalence between the utterances in the source language and those in the target language is pursued under the *tertium comparationis* of phonetic articulation. Consequently, it is my belief that a thorough definition of the term should cover the following aspects: synchronization between the translated and the source text utterances, synchronization between the translation and the screen actors' body movements and synchronization between the translation and the screen actors' articulatory movements. The following definition may thus be posited: Synchronization is one of the features of translation for dubbing, which consists of matching the target language translation and the articulatory and body movements of the screen actors and actresses, as well as matching the utterances and pauses in the translation and those of the source text.

3.3   Delimitation of the subject under study

The proposed definition leads us to establish the following types of synchronization and reject other typologies that have been included in the literature to date. The definition suggests three types of synchronization:

– phonetic or lip synchrony
– kinetic synchrony or body movement synchrony
– isochrony or synchrony between utterances and pauses

Lip or phonetic synchrony (Agost and Chaume 1996: 208), also referred to as phonetic synchrony by Fodor (1976: 10 and 21–71), but lip-sync by Luyken et al. (1991) and lip synchrony by Whitman, (1992: 20), consists of adapting the translation to the articulatory movements of the on-screen characters, especially in close-ups and extreme close-ups. In order to attain the reality effect (González Requena, 1989) and naturalize the product to make it appear less foreign and more familiar (Goris, 1993), the translation should particularly respect the open vowels and bilabial and labio-dental consonants pronounced on screen. Fodor's (1976) comprehensive study includes much more detailed observations for phonetic synchrony,[1] but, except in the cases of close-ups, extreme close-ups or detailed lip shots, solutions provided in the professional contexts of Spain, Germany, France and Italy, the European countries with excellent dubbing reputations, are generally much more relaxed.

The synchronization of the translation with the actors' body movements is known as kinetic synchrony (Agost and Chaume, 1996: 208). Originally referred to by Fodor (1976: 72) as character synchrony, Whitman (1992: 33) later employed the term kinetic synchrony. The translation must also agree with the movements of the screen characters: a shaking head indicating negation cannot be accompanied by an affirmative "yes", or a character raising his hands to his head must pronounce an interjection to match the gesture.

The synchronization of the duration of the translation with the screen characters' utterances is known as isochrony (Whitman, 1992: 28, Agost and Chaume, 1996: 208), i.e., the translated dialogue must fit exactly in the time between the instant the screen actor opens his/her mouth — to utter the source text dialogues — and the instant in which he/she closes his/her mouth. Most criticisms of a badly dubbed film are grounded in deficiencies of isochrony, as it is here that the viewer is most likely to notice the fault. Situations where the character's lips have closed at the end of an utterance but the viewer still hears the translated speech, or situations where an actor is obviously speaking, while the viewer hears nothing, are frequent grounds for justified criticism (as deviances from the norm) by both critics and the public.

I do not intend to cover two further types of synchronization here, as they do not strictly fall within synchronization as I understand it: so-called character synchrony and content synchrony. The former (Whitman 1992) covers the agreement between the voices of the dubbing actors and the expectations of the on-screen actor's voice: in general, a child on screen cannot be dubbed by an older male voice, a woman's voice must sound feminine, while the "baddie" must sound deep and sinister. I do not intend to enter

into this debate here, which would take us into discussions of what is politically correct or on the criteria for casting, as I consider it to be directly related to the dramatization of dubbing actors, rather than a type of synchronization. As such, it falls outside the range of synchronization to which the translator or dialogue writer has access, and to my mind, it should not be regarded as a type of synchronization as it does not directly affect translation operations or text re-writing. The type of language used by each character in the source text is sufficient an indication of the idiosyncrasies of the character for the translator to work with. The effects of dramatization are totally in the hands of the dubbing actors and the dubbing director.

Neither do I consider content synchrony (Mayoral et al. 1988) or the semantic relation between the translation and what happens on screen (images and music), as a type of synchronization. In my view, here the term synchrony or synchronization is misleading, as we are referring, rather than to synchrony, to the functional-systemic term of coherence. Translation must not only follow the source written text, but also the events on screen. In other words, it must be coherent with the communicative situation established on screen (context of situation). To achieve this, the translator has several cohesive links at his or her disposal (ellipsis, recurrence, substitution, conjunction, collocation, etc.), which help to produce a translation coherent with on-screen action, and which do not fall within the area of synchronization.

3.4   Relevant factors in the analysis of synchrony

The relevant factors that have an effect on the synchronization process are various. The classification put forward here is based on communicative criteria such as the characteristics of the source text, the characteristics of the professional context, the characteristics of synchronization itself, the characteristics of the viewer and those of the target culture.

a.   *Factors related to the source text: genres and text types*
Synchronization is not carried out with the same degree of precision in all audiovisual genres. Hence, synchronization is not a priority in the genre of documentaries, which often uses voice-over, enabling the viewer to hear the original sound, at a lower volume, at the same time. The conventions of isochrony are not strictly followed, with the translation often coming in two or three seconds after the narrator or screen character has started to speak. From a functional viewpoint, the documentary is designed to be an informative text

type, in which the aim of convincing the viewer that the text in question is a target text, or that the actor or narrator is speaking the target language is not as important as getting across certain information or ideas with the greatest possible respect for the source text. Therefore, the only synchrony that tends to be taken into account is isochrony, and even so, only partially, by ensuring that the spoken target text finishes at the same time as the source text, thereby avoiding any overlap with the following section.

The other three audiovisual genres dubbed in Europe are texts with a predominantly expressive function: cartoons, television series and films. If the function of the translation is to convey emotions without the text sounding foreign or strange, and the viewer is to experience the events taking place on screen, then the role of synchronization is certainly much more relevant. However, there is an observable difference in the use of synchronization amongst the three genres.

In cartoons synchronization is applied when the cartoon characters are on field, on screen, although the synchrony demanded is in fact minimal. Because the characters obviously do not speak, but rather move their lips almost randomly without actually pronouncing the words, a precise phonetic adaptation is not necessary, except in the case of extreme close-ups or detailed shots in which the character seemingly pronounces an open vowel. Moreover, a further relevant factor to add to the analysis of this genre is the receptor viewer. Child audiences are not demanding as far as synchronization is concerned, and neither isochrony nor lip synchrony is strictly applied. In contrast, kinetic synchrony is important to children's cartoon programs, as the cartoon characters tend to gesticulate in an exaggerated way to capture the attention of their young viewers. These gestures should be accompanied by a coherent translation.

A thorough application of all synchronization types is required by the television series genre. Although the degree of perfection is not as high as that demanded by the cinema, television series do show the three synchronization types in all their forms. Television series offer a magnificent apprenticeship for those interested in this area of translation, as all types of synchronization should be applied, but the final result allows for a greater margin of perfection than in the dubbing of a film.

Finally, films demand a highly polished synchronization at all levels. Without going into exceptions such as B movies or those destined for home video consumption, the vast majority of films systematically require synchronization of the highest quality. Producers, distributors and exhibitors are fully aware of the fact that the success or failure of a dubbed film depends on its

synchronization. All the above-mentioned synchronization types are to be found in detail in this genre, from labial consonants and open or closed vowels, to pauses and syllables, including even facial movement synchronization with the on-screen characters.

b. *Factors related to the languages and cultures in contact*
Synchrony poses translation problems. But these are not the only problems the translator has to face. When another translation problem arises simultaneously, the translation techniques may vary in fragments requiring synchronization. For instance, the image may not allow the use of a word that would match the actor's lip movements, as in some cases where the icon accompanying the word spoken appears on screen. With no icons on screen the translator is freer to find a word that more or less relates to the situation and fits the on-screen actor's mouth. But with an icon on screen that relates to the word pronounced in a close-up, for example, translation solutions are reduced. This situation forces the translator to resort to all the translation resources at his or her disposal, and employ every last ounce of his or her creative skills. Nonetheless, if the translator cannot come up with a coherent alternative, synchronization can be sacrificed for a more suitable coherent translation.

Synchrony will be more accurate if the word or words to be translated which present a potential synchronization problem, exist in the target language. Thus, the translation from English to Spanish of a extreme close-up of lips pronouncing the word "mummy" presents no problems of lip synchronization as the term "mami" exists in colloquial Spanish. The degree of closeness between languages may help in synchronization problems.

Finally, norms and conventions that control the way synchronization is attained in different target cultures obviously vary. To give just one example, it would seem that isochrony in Spain is carried out with greater attention to detail than in Italy. While in Italy isochrony, or the equivalent duration of the source and target utterances, is regarded as a flexible restriction, in Spain it is considered as one of the major constraints for the translator. The degree of perfection in the application of the various synchronization types depends on the norms of each target culture, the viewer's expectations, the tradition in the use of the different synchronization types and the audiovisual genre in question, etc.

An obvious case is that of Japan and Spain. Japanese cartoons (*anime*) and comics (*manga*) are aimed at different types of consumers. Adult oriented cartoons are not commonly seen in Spain, where the cartoon format is generally

considered as implicitly designed for the children's market. When cartoons designed for teenagers or adults in the source culture are shown in the target culture to a child audience (*Shin-Chan*, for example) synchronization can be more flexible, as it will depend on the target culture's conventions for the genre and the viewer involved, and not on the genre and viewer of the source culture.

c. *Factors related to the professional context (the translating instructions)*
The professional context also conditions the extent of accuracy of synchronization. Firstly, the type of translation chosen determines how accurate the synchronization should be. Dubbing is the type of audiovisual translation that requires the most thorough synchronization. Other subtypes of dubbing, such as partial dubbing or narration do not give synchronization the same priority. As we have already seen, voice-over does not require an exact synchronization, neither in terms of isochrony nor lip synchrony. As far as other types are concerned, simultaneous film interpretation completely bypasses even kinetic synchrony. Clearly, the effort involved in the oral translation of a film is quite sufficient on its own without the interpreter having to consider lip, kinetic and isochronic synchrony into the bargain. While lip synchrony is not taken into account in subtitling, the other two types are: on one hand, kinetic synchrony is largely respected and translations are generally matched to the screen actor's movements. On the other hand, although isochrony does not carry the same weight in subtitling as in dubbing, the subtitles are synchronized with the speech of the on-screen actor who actually pronounces the words. While synchronization might not always demonstrate perfect timing, as it is not essential for the subtitle to appear and disappear on screen at exactly the same moment as the actor begins or finishes speaking, in fact, the subtitle does generally coincide with the spoken utterance it represents.

A further relevant factor in synchronization is the client requesting the translation. The cinema industry demands a more careful attention to synchronization than the television companies, which in turn are more exacting than a company requiring a translation of a promotional video. While the cinema and television industries insist on thorough, careful synchronization, other clients are generally satisfied with a good translation.

The seemingly mundane issue of working conditions also has an influence on the quality of synchronization. A well-paid translator will ensure that synchronization is effected thoroughly and carefully at all stages of the process, whereas a badly paid translator will become demoralized and end up ignoring

the finer restrictions synchronization places on translation. A further relevant factor related to this issue is the amount of time the translator is given to carry out the work: the longer he or she has, the better the result. When hurrying to meet tight deadlines, one of the first areas to suffer from oversights on the part of the translator will be synchronization.

The function of the target text also plays a part in how carefully synchronization is carried out in the translation. If the function of the target text coincides with the function of the source text, the comments made in the source text analysis will be valid (see above, factors related to the characteristics of the source text). Put another way, expressive texts that aim to involve the viewer in the story demand a higher standard of synchronization than informative texts, which aim to inform, whether or not they are synchronized. If the function of the target text is not the same as the function of the source text, the translator will usually synchronize the text according to the conventions laid down by the target culture for that particular function. For example, in a program about advertisements in other languages and from different cultures, whose purpose is to look at behaviors in these languages and cultures, the advertisements may be dubbed using voice-over, which requires practically no synchronization, or through a more relaxed dubbing style (narration or subtitling may even be employed). However, if the same advertisement is introduced into the target culture in order to sell the product, the standard of synchronization required will be higher (for example, the case of Werther's Original candies).

d. *Factors related to the characteristics of the viewer*
As will already have been deduced from the rest of the article, particularly in the section dealing with genres, child audiences are not as exacting as adults where synchronization quality is concerned. For this reason, and in addition to the fact that phonetic synchrony does not have to be as precise since cartoon characters are not real and do not articulate real phonemes, a lower standard of synchronization quality is acceptable in the cartoon genre, both in lip synchrony and isochrony, as child audiences will not notice any delay, nor will they demand higher synchronization quality. By the same token, television series designed for young audiences also accept certain liberties in isochrony, as young audiences, although more aware than child audiences, do not place synchronization quality at the top of their priorities when judging a television series. Adult audiences, however, seemingly demand greater perfection in synchronization quality, and consequently, television series and films designed

for adults in general present a much more polished finish in this respect. Within the adult audience as a whole, I am not aware of any differences in standards demanded by different age groups or between the sexes.

e. *Relevant factors related to characteristics of synchronization*

Not all synchronization types require the same degree of perfection in translation. Contrary to the opinions put forward by Fodor (1976), lip synchrony does not require that a source language bilabial consonant be substituted for a target language bilabial consonant, but rather, any labio-dental consonant will suffice. Open vowels can be replaced by any other open vowel as is evidenced by the numerous shots in which an <a> is substituted for an <e>, and even on occasions, with an <o>, and vice versa. Likewise, kinetic synchrony can also be flexible where rotations between interjections are concerned, except in affirmative or negative head movements, which do require a non-ambiguous solution. In the case of isochrony, one syllable before the screen actor opens his mouth, and even two syllables after he or she has closed are quite acceptable, as the effect will go practically unnoticed by the viewer.

The function performed by synchronization in the source text (postsynchronization, in this case) is also a relevant factor when translation is being considered. If sound postsynchronization has not been carefully respected in the source text, because it is not a priority in the text, then there is no reason why it should be respected in the target text, unless additional reasons prevail (client demands, target culture conventions etc.). Thus, in advertising or publicity texts (advertising features), in which source language postsynchronization has not been given priority, synchronization in the target language is not normally of prime concern.

4. Conclusion

Synchronization is one of the major characteristics of dubbing. In this article, I claim that it is the translator who must take care of synchronization, as it conveys textual operations requiring knowledge of source and target language, and knowledge of translation strategies and techniques, something that no other figure involved in the process of audiovisual translation has. I have offered a review of the different approaches that synchronization has received in the field of Translation Studies. At the same time, I have set the three types of synchrony which to my view can be included under the umbrella of

synchronization: lip-sync, kinetic synchrony and isochrony. Other types of synchrony related in the literature have been discarded since they do not deal with translation operations but rather with dramatization (so-called character synchrony) or with textual coherence (content synchrony). A definition of the three types has been offered, highlighting isochrony as the type of synchrony that is usually practiced in real working conditions, and playing down the importance of lip-sync — extensively dealt with in the literature — , since it is only taken into account in some close-ups and in extreme close-ups nowadays. Finally, I have tried to present a series of relevant translational factors that have to be taken into account in the analysis of synchronization. These factors have to be necessarily analyzed in order to understand the existence of different norms in different audiovisual genres and audiovisual landscapes, as far as synchronization and its incidence on the translation are concerned.

Note

1. Fodor (1976: 54–57) proposes the substitution of bilabial consonants with bilabial consonants, labio-dental consonants with labio-dental consonants, and even labialized vowels with labialized vowels. He also maintains that the dubbing actor should mimic the gestures of the screen actor in order to come as close as possible to the original. Throughout his study, (1976: 32–36) he compares the mouth movements of various languages, inhaling and exhaling, head movements etc.

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Parameters for the classification of subtitles

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1. Introduction

Because of the nature of Audiovisual Translation, research in the field must be in direct contact with the latest developments in technology. The new audiovisual products such as teletext, Internet, videogames or DVDs and the new techniques based on computers have increased new subtitling possibilities, as open and closed subtitles, which can be chosen by the spectator, or electronic subtitles, projected through luminous panels or subtitles for life theatre performances or opera productions.

The rapid technological development in all areas has given rise to new types of subtitles which do not fit in the already existing classifications of subtitles published up to date. In this article I present a comprehensive classification of subtitles taken into account previous studies by Luyken, Ivarsson, Gottlieb and Díaz Cintas. I intend to establish new parameters which will encompass the wide range of existing subtitles in today's subtitling industry. The aim of such a classification is a better description of all existing types of subtitles for scholars and translators. Scholars will be able to be more precise when analyzing the different kinds of subtitles and translators will know better the target of their work.

When offering a classification of the different types of subtitling, the majority of subtitling studies focus on two basic aspects: the linguistic and the technical. Thus, Gottlieb (1997: 71–72) characterizes subtitles from a linguistic and technical perspective:

Linguistically:

1. Intralingual subtitling, within the same language. Both the subtitling of local programmes, subtitled in the same language for the deaf and hard of hearing, and subtitles for people learning languages fall within this group.
2. Interlingual subtitling, between two languages.

Technically:

1. Open subtitles, which go with the original film or the television version. According to Gottlieb, all film subtitling belongs within this category, as "Even today, electronic subtitling is limited to television and video" (Op.cit.:72).
2. Closed subtitles, which can be voluntarily added; both to teletext and satellite channels, which offer various subtitled versions to different frequencies.

Furthermore, for Gottlieb subtitling can be vertical or diagonal. By vertical he means subtitling that transcribes oral discourse, namely, the intralingual; by diagonal he means subtitling that involves two dimensions and crosses, thus, from oral discourse in the original language to the written of the target language, or interlingual. He also calls this type of subtitling oblique.

For his part, Ivarsson (1992: 35) distinguishes, apart from subtitling for cinema and television, between: multilingual subtitling, in which the translation appears in more than one language, as is often done in bilingual states; teletext subtitling, on television, for the hard of hearing; reduced subtitling, similar to teletext, but reduced because it deals with the subtitling of news or live events, such as sports broadcasts; subtitling live or in real time, that could be the same as the former, but is carried out using a special apparatus that allows for faster writing; and the translation of opera, theatrical works, conferences, etc., which, as Ivarsson himself tells us, have "the titles displayed on a special screen." (Op.cit.: 35)

It seems that Ivarsson has focused more on the technical than the linguistic aspects. Luyken (1991: 40), too, distinguishes between, on the one hand, traditional subtitling, where the three subgroups of subtitling in complete, reduced or bilingual sentences are found, and, on the other hand, simultaneous subtitling.

Linde (1999: 2) basically distinguishes between two types: interlingual subtitling and intralingual subtitling for the hard of hearing and television, given that intralingual subtitling is, according to the author, non-existent in cinema.

Díaz Cintas (2001: 24) also offers a classification of subtitles, distinguishing basically between traditional subtitling and simultaneous subtitling; bilingual subtitles; intralinguistic subtitles (for the hard of hearing, language students and karaoke) and interlinguistic subtitles; and open and closed subtitles.

We can observe that between all these classifications there is not one that includes all the possible types of subtitling, so we propose the following

parameters with the aim that, combined, they will cover all the known types of subtitling to date.

Following Gottlieb's proposal, we divide the two parameters into two large groups: technical and linguistic. There are, however, parameters that belong to the two groups and, evidently, we add to each group all the parameters that we have considered.

2.   Technical parameters

The following parameters form part of the general group known as technical. The first parameter we shall consider is that of placing: this parameter refers to whether the subtitles are always found in the same place or not. This parameter basically stresses the fact that, generally, television (and video) subtitles directed at the hard of hearing appear underneath each interlocutor and, therefore, are not centred. In this section, then, we distinguish between centred and non-centred subtitles.

The parameter of the filing of subtitles refers to whether these form an inseparable part of the audiovisual product and are therefore inseparable from it, or if, on the contrary, they do not form a part of it, are independent and can continually alter. Account must be taken of the fact that the appearance of the subtitles joined to the product, whether overprinted or not, is independent of whether they go together at the time of filing them. For example, television subtitles are broadcast separately, but on the other hand, if we record them, they form an inseparable part of the resultant audiovisual product and the viewer can no longer separate them from the programme. The clearest case, however, is that of electronic subtitles, which are filed on a computer format, such as floppy disc, and are completely independent of the audiovisual product. The implication of this is highly relevant, as this fact allows them to be constantly revised, for the original product to be kept in an unaltered state and for them to be applied, in principle, to all audiovisual products, and to subtitle (or rather surtitle) live products such as theatre, operas or conferences.

With the localization in which the subtitles appear we distinguish basically between subtitles, intertitles and surtitles, going underneath, between or above the images respectively. In regards to intertitles, it is worth pointing out that this term cannot be found in most dictionaries and that its meaning is included within the entry subtitle.

Another parameter to consider, despite its not being very operative, is that of mobility, which refers to whether the subtitles move while they appear or are fixed. Mobile subtitles, in the case of western languages, appear from right to left and, in the case of certain eastern languages, from left to right. We nevertheless emphasise that this mode is not very operative, as it belongs more to titling than subtitling. Despite this, we distinguish between mobile and fixed subtitles.

We also have the parameter of optionality; which distinguishes between optional or closed subtitles, and non-optional or open subtitles. Thus, the spectator can decide if he wants the subtitles to appear on the screen — optional or closed — or not — non-optional or open — these latter being always present. We find closed subtitles today in television (through teletext or, in cable or satellite television, through a special function of remote control, in DVD, in Internet (Streaming Video) and in LaserDisc. This is the parameter that Gottlieb refers to as technical.

It is clear that the spectator can also decide not to read the subtitles when they appear on top of the screen — or at the side; but as d'Ydewalle, Praet, Verfaille and van Rensbergen (1991: 660) state, it appears to be difficult not to read the subtitles when these are present: "Reading subtitles is not due to habit formation. When there is a choice between the speech and the text channels, the subjects read the subtitles."

The time within which the subtitles are made and projected is a decisive factor for the subtitler, as we have, on the one side, pre-recorded subtitles, and, on the other, simultaneous subtitles, made practically at the same time as the audiovisual product's projection, and, therefore, also shown at practically the same time.

We must also consider the audiovisual product to be subtitled, as each one allows particular combinations of parameters. Thus, we distinguish between cinema, television, video, DVD, LaserDisc, CDRom, computer games, Internet (Streaming Video), and live performances. In live performances we include performance theatre, opera and conferences. We include them to the list of products because they are subtitled (or rather, surtitled) and we put them in the same section because all three present similar technical characteristics.

Lastly, within the technical parameters, we have to take into account the channel through which the subtitles are broadcast, which is independent of the audiovisual product. Thus, subtitles can be broadcast through an impression upon the audiovisual product itself, by teletext, on a display, projected (on top of the product or on a nearby screen) or by simultaneous broadcasting. In the case of the display, we refer to these subtitles as electronic,

and because of their independence they are used both for cinema and live performances.

There remains one further parameter, colour, to consider within the technical group, though this sometimes changes, depending on the interlocutors or according to whether the film is in black and white or colour, and according to what the products to be subtitled are.

3.   Linguistic parameters

The first linguistic parameter would undoubtedly be language. It is concerned, in fact, with the relationship that is established between source and target languages, whether this is the same or not. Thus, we distinguish, basically, between interlinguistic subtitles, where there is translation, and intralinguistic subtitles, where there is transcription. Within this second case, however, we make a distinction, depending on the addressee, and we find that we have, on the one hand, transcriptions aimed at the hard of hearing and, on the other, complete transcriptions, aimed at language students or amateur singers (as in the case of karaoke).

This parameter is complemented by the purpose the subtitles have for the transmitter. Here we distinguish, basically, between subtitles with the purpose of communicating in the target language, which we will call, following Christiane Nord's terminology, instrumental. Instrumental subtitles, for example, are those that encompass both translation and transcription (fundamentally reduced) of an oral text for people who either do not understand it (because it is in another language that they do not know) or because they cannot hear it (because they have some kind of hearing impairment). Within this parameter we also find documentary subtitles, again following Nord, in which, for example, transcription (fundamentally complete) falls, but for people who want it for learning languages — that is, with a didactic objective — or for singing, as is the case with karaoke.

4.   Technical and linguistic parameters

The addressee is a parameter affecting both the technique and the relationship between the source and target languages. The first addressees to be taken into account when producing subtitles are people with impaired hearing and

people without impaired hearing. The latter are people who do not know (or do not know well) the source language and students. Children are another category of addressee with an influence on the production of subtitles, as they require subtitling adapted to their reading ability and vocabulary.

The relative pertinence of these parameters will depend on whether we consider subtitles as a process or as the end result. Within the first case, we can still distinguish between whether we are dealing with the translation process — according to the transmitter, i.e. the subtitler — or whether we are dealing with the technical process: with questions purely concerned with production. As far as the end result goes, this affects the addressee, or the spectator. This division between process and end result is especially relevant, because, of all the parameters it is possible to take into account, some will affect the process and others the end result, or the transmitter and receiver respectively, and there will also be others which will affect both one and the other.

Thus, for the subtitler, language, purpose, the addressee, time and to a lesser degree the product to be subtitled, are all relevant; the translation (or transcription) will be different according to each combination of these parameters. The other parameters will not, in principle, necessarily have to affect the subtitler's work.

It will also be necessary to comment upon the working conditions of the subtitler, despite the fact that they might not constitute a parameter, as the subtitler might find himself in the position of having to do the subtitles of a film that he doesn't have the dialogue list for, or perhaps has but it is incomplete, or he has the dialogue list but not the film, or he has a very limited time to finish the subtitling, or perhaps has no special programme for subtitling and has to do the spotting using a time code, indicating the entry and exit of each subtitle, etc.

The relevant parameters as far as the technical process is concerned, which do not affect the subtitler, are the means of broadcast, localization, placing, filing, mobility, optionality, the product and the colour, as all of these require special technical resources for each case.

Finally, for the receptor, or according to the end result, the relevant parameters are language, the addressee, purpose, means of broadcast, localization, placing, mobility, filing, optionality and the product.

5.   Types of subtitles

In order to demonstrate how all these parameters are combined to obtain all the actual and possible types of subtitle, we can consider the following examples: the most commonly used cinema subtitles are presented in an imprint in the product itself; they are, therefore, printed matter, so they go underneath (subtitles); they are centred; they are open; they do not move, they are fixed; they are made prior to the projection, or are prior; they are generally in bottomless white; they are translation, that is to say, interlinguistic; they have the purpose of communicating, or are instrumental, and are directed at people without hearing impairments and adults. This is a possible combination with the cinema product, but there are many more, actual and feasible.

In video, for example, there are subtitles that are engraved in the product itself; they are, therefore, printed matter; they are subtitles, because they go underneath; they are not centred; they are open, because one cannot choose whether they appear or not; they are prior, made prior to their appearance, as they are printed matter; they can be of different colours, depending on the principal characters; intralinguistic, or a complete transcription; the purpose is instrumental and not documentary; and aimed at people with hearing impairments and adults.

Finally, the great flexibility offered by electronic subtitles must also be noted, as they can be applied to a large number of products (to all of them, in principle), in all localizations and settings; they can be mobile or fixed; offer all possible linguistic combinations and the two kinds of purpose and, therefore, be aimed at people with and without hearing impairments, both adults and children. They are, however, always independent, can be transmitted both by means of a display and projected simultaneously on top of the images, they are always open and can be made earlier or simultaneously. We mostly find them in live performances, like theatre, opera or cinema at festivals all over the world.

6.   Conclusion

We have presented a new classification of subtitles taken into consideration both technical and translation processes. Technology, undoubtedly, will develop and present new types of subtitles, which it is hoped, will fit into the classification offered since the parameters defined are wide enough to cope with

any new form of subtitle. This classification should allow scholars and professionals — as Diana Sánchez also presents in her collaboration in this volume — to know better the reality of subtitling for both its analysis and creation.

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3. Ideology and AVT

Translation in bilingual contexts

Different norms in dubbing translation*

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1.   Introduction

Despite the efforts made in recent years to reduce and obliterate diversity, Spain is far from being a monolingual country with just one culture (cf. Álvarez 1993). Rather, it represents a mosaic of different, and sometimes complementary, languages and cultures. The arrival of democracy has seen the establishment of politically autonomous regions within the country, and this has allowed the minority languages of Basque, Galician and Catalan to be recognised as co-official with Spanish within their respective historical territories. The process of normalisation and standardisation of these languages, however, has not been free of problems, some of which are still at issue today.

The mass media have also reflected this new social situation. In the particular case of television, on which this study is centred, both autonomous and state public and private channels began to broadcast in the other languages. In some cases, such as that of Catalan, different dialectal variations have even been employed for fundamentally ideological reasons. While the degree of monolingualism or bilingualism in home-produced programmes gives a fair idea of the state of health of these languages, questions arise as to what is to be

done with foreign productions. Are they to be dubbed? Subtitled? In what language? What kind of relationship could be established between the original and the translation? Some studies on audiovisual translation put forward that, in general terms, in the era of audiovisual texts, the most used method is cultural-free (Postigo, 2003), and the enhanced text is the target one. In spite of this, the reality of the situation is complex, and largely responds to the specific language planning policy of each autonomous region. In this study, we intend to give a general outline of dubbing practice in Spain. We shall examine external considerations that condition these translations, the intervening factors, and how, sometimes, models of translation can become models of language. Finally, we will consider the diverse positions opted by the translators in front of a particular translation, from the viewpoint of the relevance they attribute to linguistic and cultural aspects of the original language in relation to the target one.

2.   The complexity of the television panorama

Television experienced a revolutionary change in Spain at the end of the eighties and the beginning of the nineties. Viewers witnessed a great increase in what was on offer to them, leaving behind the days when there had been only two state channels. New autonomic channels, state-wide private channels and a proliferation of local and digital stations all contributed to the broad selection that viewers had at their disposal, offering multiple possibilities of language combinations according to the receptor community and the choice of each individual.

The public channels can be state-wide, autonomic or local. The first of these broadcast in Spanish although they may also offer connections in the various co-official languages in bilingual communities. In these communities the autonomic and local stations show a state of affairs that oscillates between moderate monolingualism in which the vehicular language is Basque, Galician or (the various modalities of) Catalan, to the other extreme of Spanish monolingualism, with all shades of bilingualism in between. The point at which a community is located is directly proportional to the degree of linguistic normalisation that has been achieved. This linguistic complexity can also be seen in state private channels, which broadcast some programmes in Spanish or in the co-official language (especially children's and news programmes) according to the demand and/or degree of acceptability to viewers.

3.   Theoretical basis

We have seen how there is a broad offer available on television. A large number of the programmes that come to us every day on the small screen do so in their translated form (through dubbing, subtitling or voice-overs).

In Spain, as in Italy, Germany and France, dubbing is still predominant, mainly due to the high economic interests behind it, and also to the habits acquired by a large majority of viewers (Ávila 1998, Agost 1999).[1] After confirming the considerable presence of foreign productions on all Spanish television channels, and consulting autonomic and state television companies, we put forward the following hypothesis: translation for dubbing, which is the most common type in Spain, is sometimes conditioned by the cultural and linguistic systems into which it is inserted. In some of these systems there are more or less explicit professional conventions or rules that determine the final product which is to be consumed by the viewer.

In the professional field we can talk about rules, criteria and conventions, for instance, which are created by the institution in order to guide the translator, regardless of the fact that the translator opts for them or not. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of the Polysystem Theory we talk about norms as "the rules of the game which govern each translation" (Izard 1999: 216). However, in contrast to what happens in professional practice, these norms are no more than the explicitation of the regularities observed in real translators' behaviour in a particular time and place. In the case of Spain, the existence of different cultures means that the norms for each linguistic community, the norms of translation, are different in each case. The norms describe the literary, cultural, linguistic or ideological rules that determine each translation (cf. Toury 1980, Hermans 1996b, Baker 1998 and Ballester 2001, among others). Hermans (1999: 80) defines norms in the following terms:

> The term 'norm' refers to both a regularity in behaviour, i.e. a recurring pattern, and to the underlying mechanism which accounts for this regularity. The mechanism is a psychological and social entity. It mediates between the individual and the collective, between the individual's intentions, choices and actions, and collectively held beliefs, values and preferences. Norms bear on the interaction between people, more especially on the degree of coordination required for the continued, more or less harmonious coexistence with others in a group, as the Venson case illustrates. Norms contribute to the stability of interpersonal relations by reducing uncertainty. They make behaviour more predictable by generalizing from past experience and making projections concerning similar types of situation in the future. They have a socially regulatory function.

This characterisation of the concept of norm allows us to describe and gain a better understanding of the very different behaviour observable in different Spanish television stations in terms of the regulatory function of the norms, their contribution to certain stability in the language model to be followed by translators, the most common translation strategies and the viewers' expectations.

We base our work method, then, on the principles of the Polysystem Theory (see Díaz Cintas in this volume), which is a conceptual framework that integrates translation into the study of culture and which holds that texts and translations are conditioned by the cultural systems that they are immersed in. Indeed, the concept of norm is intimately related with the concept of culture as proposed by anthropology, and is very valid for translation studies:

> [...] culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members. [...] It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them (Goodenough 1964: 36).

The reflections made by Even-Zohar (1997) about factors and dependencies in culture, the role of translation and the notions of model and cultureme take as a starting point a similar concept of culture:

> What does a culture repertoire consist of? If we view culture as framework, a sphere, which makes it possible to organize social life, then the repertoire *in* culture, or *of* culture, is where the necessary items for that framework are stored. As Swidler puts in, culture is "a repertoire or 'tool kit' of habits, skills, and styles from which people construct 'strategies' of action" (Swidler 1986 : 273). This is an adequate description of what I labelled above *active repertoire*. To paraphrase Swidler's formulation for the *passive repertoire*, it may then be defined for culture as "a tool kit of skills from which people construct 'conceptual strategies', i.e., those strategies with which they "understand the world".

If the analysis of culture reveals a complex network of ideas and highlights a relationship between the various systems, the intercultural situation that translation represents is an additional difficulty. A descriptive analysis of translation, then, should take into account not only linguistic aspects, but production, consumption and market-related activities, as well as the relationships of negotiation between norms.

Following this line of reasoning, we have undertaken a study of extra-textual and textual sources (Toury, 1980). First, regarding extra-textual sources, we have considered the presence/absence of dubbing criteria for foreign series in the main autonomic and state channels, and we have also

developed a brief state of the art in this respect. Second, in relation to textual sources, we have analyzed a corpus of dubbed texts.

4.   Extra-textual sources: Professional criteria[2]

Let us take first the example of the autonomic channels. In the particular case of TVC (Catalan Public Television), we have been able to confirm that the criteria are fixed and expressed explicitly in various internal documents and publications. In the case of ETB (Basque Public Television), TVG (Galician Public Television) and TVV (Valencian Public Television), these criteria may be more vague than the norms or less explicit (ETB (Larrinaga, 2000) and TVG), or have moved from a central position to a peripheral position (TVV, Mollà 1989, Agost 1997). In the remainder of autonomic television channels, these criteria are practically non-existent. In public state television, TVE, the style manual (Mendieta 1993) makes no explicit reference to translation criteria, only going so far as to compose lists of foreign words and calques to be avoided.

The three autonomic televisions which do orient translators do this in different ways:

a. TVG and ETB have only linguistic consultation before and after the adjustment of the translation. For example, according to the Euskara Saila (Basque Department), their work is basically centred on linguistic aspects, although there is an attempt to unify criteria and augment the interaction between various dubbing studies and ETB (Larrinaga 2000, 2003; Camiña and Sánchez 2000).

b. Televisió de Catalunya (1995 and 1997) has established a series of criteria that are applied during the translation stage (Izard 1999: 217; Bassols *et al.* 1997):
    1. Use of the oral colloquial linguistic variety.
    2. Employment of strictly normative Catalan.
    3. Acceptable translations.
    4. Distancing from Spanish.

We can observe, however, how certain criteria are contradictory. Finding the balance between the characteristics of the oral colloquial language (with grammatical and phonetic errors, anacolutha, interference from Spanish etc.) and the demands of the written norm, situated as it is at the opposite extreme to the spontaneity of spoken language, is at best somewhat difficult. Also, we would like to enhance that, generally speaking, TVC gives more importance to

language, in order to provide the viewers with what they are used to (Agost, forthcoming). Moreover, in TVC and ETB there is also a team of linguistic consultants who are in charge of systematically revising the final product. These consultants sometimes work in the dubbing studios themselves. In this way, the basic translation process for dubbing is comprised of the following stages: commission, translation, adjustment, direction and mixing. This process is modified when criteria are present that are established by the various institutions that act in a culture. The situation is different in each linguistic community, given that the relationships between the various elements that intervene in cultural fact of translation are diverse: the repertoires are different, the power and the implication of the institutions can take many forms and the attitude of the producers varies according to consumers and the market. Consumers also have different attitudes toward the translation (cf. Even-Zohar 1978 and 1997; Toury 1980).

For some television channels belonging to communities which have a language policy that clearly supports the recuperation of the local languages (Catalan, Basque, Galician), the dubbing process is complicated by the apparition of a translation job which must follow certain fixed conventions and in which the presence of language consulting makes the dubbing translation more expensive. In the particular case of translations for series shown on ETB (cf. Larrinaga 2000, 2003), the translation is refined between the television company and the studio. There is a negotiation of the translation criteria which becomes definitive in the elaboration of a report from the studio charged with doing the translation that has to be approved by the client, which in this case is the television company itself. In the initial phase of translation, then, the translator writes a report explaining all the problems observed in the original with regard to a later translation. The language department at ETB answers this report, setting out the criteria that the translator is to follow. Once the translation is done, the language department revises it. Later, the translation will undergo an adjustment (visual synchronism) which will also be controlled, and then it will be recorded in a studio by actors and actresses under the supervision of the dubbing director. When the final product is completed, its language will be revised for one last time. As we can see, this process is considerably more complicated.

The economic aspect is one of the reasons why other state television channels do not have departments for the control of language quality. We believe that in most cases the modifications made by the consultants imply the repetition of the corrected scenes, and this is economically prejudicial to both

the studio and the television company that commission the dubbing.

In the case of TVV the support given by linguistic services is much more ambiguous due to the delicate and difficult sociolinguistic position of the Valencia Autonomous Community. Indeed, at present only the news department receives language consultancy (Agost and García 1997).

By contrast, practically all the television channels that broadcast in the Spanish language have no service of this kind, and as such the responsibilities lie exclusively with the translator. The translator often works in conditions that are less than ideal to guarantee a first-class product. Very often, the span of time allotted to the translation is very short. This situation is paradoxical in that the linguistic quality of the dubbed programmes broadcast in Spanish is often the subject of comment in the press and, more recently, in Internet debates. It must be said that for a time there were consultants at TVE (Public State Television) and Canal+ (Private State Television), but this post no longer exists. Quality control appears to have been relegated to communities with languages that are undergoing normalisation. The efforts made in language quality control have even pushed TVC to arrange exams for translators with the aim of creating specialised translators. They would be the only ones qualified to approach studios and be hired to work with this television company. One very important aspect well worthy of mention is that the work done in recent years by certain television companies (TVG, ETB, TVC and TVV) has, to a greater or lesser degree, made the language of translations into the linguistic model of oral language (Izard 1999, 2000; Agost 2002, for the Catalan situation. Larrinaga 2000, 2003, for the Basque situation. Camiña and Sánchez 2000, for the Galician situation).

5.   Extra-textual sources: Adaptation or acceptability as translation strategies

Once we have described the diverse working situations of audiovisual translators in Spain, we would like to focus on how this diversity of contexts is relevant in order to determine the initial norm of a translation. We should remember that the initial norm decides the basic choice of a translator, that is, whether he or she gives priority to the original language and culture or to the target language and culture.

What happens when a television or cinematographic product in which the cultural references are very different from those of the target culture is to be

translated? This subject has been explored innumerable times in studies carried out on translation for dubbing, yet it is rather difficult to come to a conclusion.

In spite of the fact that in this paper we focus on the situation in Spain, especially regarding the forms of behaviour and regularities observed in dubbing translation in bilingual communities, firstly we offer a selection of studies which deal with the adequacy or acceptability as translation strategies for dubbing translation in Italy and France, countries which also have a long dubbing tradition. After that, we will review some of the few studies carried out in Spain on dubbing in bilingual contexts. All these works have in common a high concern for the final translation result, which mostly consists in developing target-oriented translations (Zaro 2001: 55).

In relation to the dubbing situation in Italy, Kovarski (1996: 251–262) takes as a starting point the idea that when we speak of translating a film, the references to linguistic components are insufficient. He goes on to explain that all references related to the reception and comprehension of the translated text must be dealt with, and he takes up Popovic's concepts of naturalisation and exoticism to explain these relationships. For Kovarski (1996: 256), the very fact of substituting the words of the original for others implies a change in referents and the perception of this reality. He affirms that in the Italian dubbing of *Taxi Blues* (1989) there is

> […] una azione desemantizzante del doppiaggio in lingua italiana. Il doppiaggio *di Taxi Blues*, oltre all'usata, tormentosa e immotivata italianizzazione degli antroponimi e dei loro martoriati accenti, presenta una palese forma di normalizzazione dei dialoghi in cui si tende ad epurare ogni elemento russo (e non linguistico!) con un processo de desemantizzazione delle situazioni.[3]

He makes reference to the constant use of hyperonyms and ambiguous sentences to avoid concrete references to Russian and Hebrew culture. This, for Kovarski, is an unmistakable form of ideological manipulation that modifies the essence of the film, which is based on the confrontation of two different cultures. Kovarski insists on this idea when the Italian dubbing is a means of censure.

In Capanaga *et al.* (1996: 213–230), the authors analyse the Italian dubbing translation of Pedro Almodovar's film *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios* (*Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*) (1988). They concentrate on the linguistic adaptations and comment that "essempi di normalizzazione caratterizzano la traduzione e un senso di corretezza grammaticale s'impadronisce del traduttore…".[4] At the same time, however, they point out that the Italian dubbed version is characterised by constant use of colloquial language

with a lower register than that of the original, where it is precisely the differences of register that produce humorous situation for the viewer (Capanaga *et al.* 1996: 228). The idea of an assumed treason of the original is the dominant aspect in this work. This somewhat negative evaluation of adaptation is also present in La Polla's work (1994: 51–60) on dubbing and cultural context, to which I shall refer later.

In Bovinelli and Gallini's study (1994) we observe, however, a change of attitude. This is the result of a descriptive study made from analysing five films. The authors do not take up any position with regard to the convenience or otherwise of adaptation. After this analysis they go no further than concluding that in the majority of cases, the dubbing translation makes an attempt to bring the text to the target culture. Referring to the results obtained from the study of translation of six main categories (toponymy, units of measurement, food-stuffs and some aspects of popular culture such as games and set expressions) they consider that "la versione doppiata del film tende a tradurre gli elementi contestuali che abbiamo raccolto in queste 6 categorie con altri elementi delle estesse categorie, ma considerati più familiari al pubblico della cultura di arrivo" (1994: 90).[5]

Gaiba (1994) goes a little further when she arrives at the conclusion that the translation of humour must attain a functional equivalence, with the cultural referents of the target culture taking preference.

Taking into account dubbing in France, some works which we cannot overlook are those of Goris (1991 and 1993) on norms and dubbing, in which he speaks of naturalisation (the obtention of a translation close to the viewer), explicitation and linguistic standardisation as solutions to the relationship between translation and culture. There thus appears a conflict between the maintenance or otherwise of the linguistic and cultural characteristics that define an original. In the terms used by the followers of Polysystem Theory, this amounts to a debate between adequacy and acceptability (Baker 1999, Toury 1999).

Toury (1980) defines adequate translation as that which is oriented towards the norms of the source language and culture. It is an equivalent, *mutatis mutandis*, of the dichotomy existing between Venuti's foreignizing translation (1995) or House's overt translation (1981). On the other hand, Toury defines an acceptable translation as that which is oriented toward the norms of the target language and culture. This is equivalent to Venuti's domesticating translation or House's covert translation.

In Spain, the bibliography on adequacy vs. acceptability in dubbing translation is scarce. Most times we find studies which are not systematic. The selection of works we will present here aims at offering a view on almost all the official languages in Spain, only considering studies which could be regarded as representative for this purpose. Therefore, in the first place we enhance the research developed by Izard (1999, 2000) on Catalan dubbing situation. After having analyzed the translation of a French series into Catalan (*Hélène et les garçons*), this author summarizes three main concluding points: first, that a clear intention to adapt the cultural French context is observed; second, that the linguistic adaptation is different on a lexical and morphosyntactical level; and third, that the kind of language that TVC proposes is not a realistic but a didactic model (Izard, 1999: 349–350). An interesting aspect of Izard's results is that they coincide with the analysis that Agost (1995) carried out on the series (*Premiers Baisers*) which was the starting point for the one analyzed by Izard. This means a first step in order to detect regularities on Catalan dubbing of teenagers' series at the beginning of 1990's.

Ferrer (2003) describes the translation into Spanish of the Japanese *anime*, and concludes that there is a range of strategies, though she explains that currently more attention is paid to the function of the original text, the client's expectations and the expectations of the viewers in the target language.

Larrinaga (2000, 2003) describes that in Basque dubbing there is a tendency to be faithful to the original references and situations, not only because of image restrictions, but because it is believed that through audiovisual texts we can gather information about other cultures. Nonetheless, he recognized that it is necessary to adapt when the viewer's comprehension is jeopardized. Moreover he distinguishes between diverse adaptation degrees in relation to the audiovisual dubbing genres (documentaries, cartoons, films, etc.).

Finally, regarding the Galician dubbing context, Camiña and Sánchez (2000: 42) conclude that it is almost always necessary to adapt cultural references, though it is also true that it depends on the genre being dubbed. Thus, for instance, it is not the same to adapt in a sitcom that to do it in a film by Woody Allen, where it is essential to respect the New York atmosphere.

6.   Textual sources: Corpus analysis

In the previous section, we have seen how some works clearly choose one of the possible strategies (adequacy or acceptability). For example, Kovarski (1996)

considers the use of dubbing as conscious manipulation; Capanaga *et al.* (1996: 228) names dubbing as "betrayal to the original"; Gaiba (1994) and Camiña and Sánchez (2000) opt for adaptation. Nevertheless, other studies are only descriptive, such as Bovinelli and Gallini (1994), Goris (1991, 1993), Izard (1999, 2000), Larrinaga (2000, 2003) and Ferrer (2003).

We also locate ourselves in the line of DTS (Descriptive Translation Studies), analyzing a situation that shows different degrees of linguistic and cultural adaptation. A broad descriptive analysis in progress (Agost, forthcoming), that here we just show in part, has enabled us to observe that, indeed, regarding the initial norm, the practice of a translator in front of adaptation is located at a greyscale, and not an all-or-nothing black or white choice. In the context of the Spanish State, these shades of grey have many nuances: From the darkest shade of grey of certain adaptation by TVC and Antena 3, due to norms established by the television company, to the lighter shades of translations of products in which only those referents which are intuitively understood as being incomprehensible to the viewer are adapted.

The first group includes the Catalan dubbing translation of the French series *Premiers Baisers* (1992) (cf. Agost 1995). This is a production conceived for a teenage public in which the protagonists are a group of young middle-class people. A general adaptation strategy planned by the heads of the Programming Department of TVC at the time made it possible for the Catalan translations to differ notably from other translations from the same original material made for other television companies. In the case of *Premiers Baisers*, this strategy affected both the adaptation of linguistic and cultural elements. With regard to the former, we can see that there is greater colloquialism in the Catalan translation than in the Spanish one, as we illustrate in example 1:

Example 1
Premiers baisers

François: *Annette, Jerôme drogué… Mais, enfin, c'est c'est impossible…* tu rigole*!*

Annette: Moi aussi, ça m'étonne, *mais… Justine a l'air de le penser vraiment… Tu sais, elle le connaît bien… Puis c'est vrai qu'en ce moment* il a une sale tête…*Il est bien coiffé, mais il a une sale tête…*

François: Attends, mon meilleur copain serait drogué et je m'en apercevrais même pas?

Annette: Mais écoute*, si tous les copains savaient que leurs copains se droguent… et bein, les* dealers *seraient au chômage.*

Primeros besos

François: Annette…¡Jerôme drogado! ¡Eso es imposible! *¿Bromeas?*

Annette: *A mí también me extrañó,* pero Justine lo piensa en serio. Ya sabes que le conoce bien… Y es verdad que tiene *una cara horrible.* Bien peinado pero con una cara horrible.

François: Espera, ¿qué mi mejor amigo se droga y yo no me he dado cuenta?

Annette: *Oye,* si todos supieran que sus amigos se drogan, los *traficantes* estarían en el paro…

De què vas?

Francesc: Anna, el Josep drogat? No veus que és impossible? *Al·lucines!*

Anna: *Jo també he flipat,* però, la Justina n'està segura del tot, i ja saps que el coneix bé… i és veritat, últimament *fa mala cara…* va ben pentinat, però fa mala cara…

Francesc: Vols dir que el meu millor amic es droga i que jo no me n'he adonat?

Anna: Però *tio…* si aquestes coses fossin tan fàcils de veure, els *camells* estarien a l'atur…

The title in Catalan also makes an attempt to capture the attention of the audience to whom the product is directed *De què vas?* in contrast to the Spanish solution *Primeros Besos,* the Galician *Primeiros bicos* and the Basque *Lehenengo muzuak,* which are all literal. With regard to cultural elements, unlike the Spanish version the Catalan version tends to adapt: the *cafet* becomes the *granja,* the *lycée* becomes the *insti* the *SOS Drogue* becomes the *Servei de Desintoxicació,* and the original music becomes Catalan rock music. This is certainly a rather extreme case because the changes affect not only the dialogues but the soundtrack, which is nearly always that of the original.

A different degree of adaptation is that presented by the translation of the British comedy *Fawlty Towers* (1978), *Hotel Fawlty* in the Catalan version. The series portrays the daily routine in an English hotel run by Mr and Mrs Fawlty, with the help of a maid, and cook and a waiter from Barcelona who knows very little English and who, through his clumsiness and ignorance, gives the hotel owner a constant string of problems. The translation of the series called for an overall strategy which could become a norm for all the episodes: the waiter from Barcelona in the original English version could not continue to have to same identity in the Catalan version for several reasons. Firstly, Manuel, the immigrant waiter is something of a fool and is often humiliated by his employer. This would have been rejected by viewers from Barcelona and by Catalans in general. Secondly, a person from Barcelona has Catalan as their native tongue, and this would have been incoherent from the

perspective of the diversity and difference of the languages used in the original (English *vs* Spanish) which is the cause of much humour. The solution is that which appears in Example 2:

Example 2
Fawlty Towers
Manuel: (Singing) (¡*Que viva España!)*
Polly: (España)
Fawlty: *It's alright!* He's from Barcelona.

Hotel Fawlty
Manuel: (Canta) ¡Oh! ¡*Jalisco no te rajes*!
Polly: ¡No te rajes!
Fawlty: No li facin cas. És de *Jalisco.*

Manuel becomes a Mexican waiter who has difficulties in understanding and speaking Catalan. In other television channels, we have found that his native land was also changed. In Basque television, for example, he was from Madrid. This strategy of adaptation should be maintained throughout the whole series so that a coherent product can be offered from the point of view of contents. Going back to the Catalan version, then, the techniques most used by the translator were those of use of hyperonyms, paraphrasing, substitutions and cultural equivalents. As we shall see in the following examples, any reference to Manuel's origins should be adapted: in example 3 the references to his Spanish origin and to the Spanish Armada disappear through the techniques of use of hyperonyms and paraphrasing. In example 4 the references to the dictator Franco are eliminated through the technique of suppression.

Example 3
Fawlty Towers
Fawlty: *Pronto, pronto, pronto*! That Stupid Spanish *ape, sorry — person —*
              has gone and bungled it again. Dego bird brain! God knows how they
              ever got an armada *together! So, I'll clear all this up. If you'd like to go*
              back to your rooms…
Fawlty: Pronto, pronto, pronto! Disculpin! El mico aquest, la persona, aquest
              foraster és un desastre! Cervell de mosca! *No sé per què vénen a*
              treballar aquí! Bé, això ja ho netejarem i ara si us plau, cadascú a casa
              seva! Gràcies.

Example 4
Fawlty Towers
Fawlty: What is that?

Manuel:	It's my hamster.
Fawlty:	It's a rat.
Manuel:	No, it's a hamster.
Fawlty:	*Well, of course it's a rat. You have rats* in Spain*, don't you? Or did* Franco *have them all shot?*

Hotel Fawlty

Fawlty:	Què és allò?
Manuel:	Es mi hamster. Colom.
Fawlty:	Hamster?
Manuel:	Sí, sí! No, no! Colom.
Fawlty:	És una rata! És una rata!
Manuel:	No, no, hamster!
Fawlty:	Què m'has de dir? Si és una rata! *Una rata mexicana*! Es pot saber d'on l'has treta?

La Polla's analysis (1994: 51–60) sheds some light onto the matter in allowing us to understand the adaptation of *Fawlty Towers*. For La Polla, the decision to sacrifice the original cultural context and substitute it for another that was closer to the viewer in the target culture is a response to the aim, the function of the translation and any translation strategy should be accepted. In the case of the translation of *Fawlty Towers* one of the norms carrying most weight was that of making the translation acceptable to the Catalan viewer. In the case of Antena 3, a state-wide private channel, we have observed how, in some series destined for teenagers, the receptor factor and the aim of offering a product based on humour conditions the translator's strategy with respect to the degree of cultural and linguistic adaptation. For example, in the series *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* (1990–96), *Family Matters* (1992) and *The Teenage Witch* (since 1998), all the specifically North American references (actors, singers, television presenters, etc.) are substituted with Spanish cultural references. This is the case of some of the references that appear in the episode of *The Teenage Witch* broadcast on May 25th 2000: *magdalenas* and *mojicones*, typical sweet deserts, and *manzanilla*, which is an Andalucian sherry wine, José Luis Perales' songs, who is a popular middle of the road singer, and lastly a reference to Rappel, a famous fortune teller and well-known personality from the popular press.

In the adaptations which are in the sliding greyscale we find *The Beakman's world* (1995), an educational programme destined for teenagers in which science is taught in a very humorous manner. The children who write in to the programme are not, in the Catalan version, from the United States, but from places in Catalonia. Adaptation through substitution is also frequently used in

The Teletubbies (since 1996), which is a programme conceived for children in which whole reports have been substituted for others in which matters of Catalan culture are explored. For example, reports have been broadcast about *castellers* (tiered human towers which require great strength and ability on the part of the members) or the Christmas tradition known as the *tió* (a log children hit to get their presents).

There exists another type of series which also imply a global strategy of linguistic and/or cultural adaptation: the translations of *The Flintstones* (1960–66) or *The Snorks* (*The Smurfs*) (1970's). In these cases all the Spanish television companies consulted (ETB, TVC, TVG, TVV and TVE) applied the same translation criteria and all the versions offer similar results: the compound lexical creations in English (stone, flint, fossil, bronto, smurf, etc.) are substituted with similar creations in the respective languages (Basque, Catalan, Galician, Castilian). However, we have intended to show that in some versions the Spanish language version has set down the guidelines, and as such has functioned as an intermediate version which has had great influence on the final solutions. By way of example, *The Smurfs* was translated on TVC as *Els Barrufets*, while on TVV the title was *Els Pitufets*, which is much closer to the Spanish *Los Pitufos*. Another important case is that of the translation of proper names for some of the main characters of *The Flintstones*: Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble. In the Spanish language version they were Pedro Picapiedra and Pablo Mármol. For years, all Spanish viewers knew them as Pedro and Pablo. When the series was translated into some of the co-official languages the problems that arose was that of the viewers' reception, their horizon and expectations. The weight of tradition was so great that in the TVV version they were called Pere Picapedra and Pau Marbre and in ETB they were called Pedro Harriketa and Pablo Atxurdin.

7.   Conclusion

For translation, the problems presented by the originals are not the same in all the Spanish television stations, and the way to resolve them is also different because linguistic and socio-political circumstances are diverse. The different ways of solving the conflicts of translation are often interpreted from the point of view of what we could name as perfect translation. We therefore see that many studies on translation of cultural references criticise the adaptation of these elements to the cultural system of the target language because they consider that

these translations betray the original and are, as such, imperfect. It is a very small step from this idea to that of the impossibility of translation. We consider that the discussion of intranslatability can no longer be held as having any validity and that statements like that made by Shochat and Stam, "Perfect translation is in the best of circumstances a virtual impossibility", (1985: 42), were made in response to an analysis of translation based fundamentally on the linguistic code. Far behind us now are the days when people argued about the limits of translation and adaptation, with the latter seen in a negative light. We agree with Bastin (1997: 18) when he affirms that adaptation can contribute to the theory of translation becoming a theory of relativity and that, with regard to adaptation, we can find very different situations (localised and global adaptations). We believe that an analysis of translation for dubbing that takes as its starting point the intrinsic characteristics of this modality can help us to change the concept of 'perfection' in translation, bearing in mind the elements and factors that intervene in the complex process of dubbing translation and understanding translation as one more system within the cultural system.

Whatever the case, focusing on linguistic and cultural adaptation in dubbing, a descriptive study of translation in this modality permits us to speak of drastic solutions for or against this adaptation. According to Nedergaard-Larsen (1993: 219) we can state that the strategy of adaptation is "a continuum from the complete non-translation at the one end to total adaptation at the other one". This relativism, to which Bastin (1997) subscribes, is one which we also find in the works of Venuti (1998: 243):

> Determining whether a translation project is domesticating or foreignizing clearly depends on a detailed reconstruction of the cultural formation in which the translation is produced and consumed; what is domestic or foreign can be defined only with reference to the changing hierarchy of values in the target-language culture.

The knowledge and analysis of culture appears to be the key to finding the most adequate strategy.

In any case it is true that regarding adaptation, an analysis carried out from the polysystemic concept of the initial norm, allows us to go beyond the false debate on the perfect translation method. Furthermore, it permits to go from a type of research which is mainly prescriptive, with the aim to show a perfect and ideal translation, towards a line of descriptive research, which considers translation as an activity that is affected by a series of conditions. These may range from the most objective ones, such as the presence or absence of conventions, rules, explicit translation assignments, to the most subjective ones, such

as the idiosyncrasy of each translator. Between the objective and the subjective poles, we have the translation norms, which describe the procedures employed in a regular way by the translator. One of the conclusions we reach at, from the analysis carried out in this paper, is that for dubbing translation in Spain the initial norm — though it presents a wide range of possibilities — tends to give priority to the target language and culture. This is especially the case in bilingual communities and in those audiovisual texts addressed to a very particular audience (i.e. children and teenagers). This is due to the fact that in these communities the translation procedure is the result of certain conventions and more defined translation assignments, and moreover its goal is to serve as linguistic model. All in all, the bigger interest there is to influence somehow in the reception of a text, the bigger is the degree of adaptation in dubbing.

Notes

1. For an introductory analysis of the use of dubbing and subtitling in Spain, from a polysystemic viewpoint, see Zaro (2000, 2001).

2. We should like to express our gratitude to Asier Larrrinaga (ETB) (Basque Public Television), Martí Garcia-Ripoll (TVC) (Catalan Public Television), Toni Mollà (TVV) (Valencian Public Television) and Ana Pujalte (who worked for Antena 3, a Private State Television) for the information they provided during the preparation of this article.

3. Translation: "(…) a deprivation of semantic meaning in the dubbing into the Italian language. The Italian dubbing of *Taxi Blues*, far from the usual severe and unmotivated italianization of Christian names and their hammering accent, shows a clear standardization in its dialogs, which tend to be left bare of their Russian (also non-linguistic) traits, leading to a desemanticalization of situations".

4. Translation: "(…) examples of standardization characterize the translation and a sense of grammatical correctness rises in the translator".

5. Translation: "(…) the dubbed version of the film tends to translate the contextual elements which we had gathered under this sixth type by other elements of the same category which are nevertheless considered more familiar to the audience in the target culture".

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Language-political implications of subtitling

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1.   The different subtexts of subtitling

In all former Western European speech communities with less than 25 million speakers, foreign-language films and TV programs are subtitled rather than dubbed. One exception to this rule is Catalonia, a pro-dubbing Spanish region — where the cinematic release of the first *Harry Potter* movie in November 2001 met furious protests, as Warner Bros. presented the film with Catalan subtitles against the local government's pleas that the film be dubbed in Catalan (Zabalbeascoa *et al.* 2001, Møller 2001).

In subtitling countries, reading subtitles while watching the action on screen has become second nature to the literate population, i.e. some 92 percent of all adults and older children (Elbro 1989). Here, neither lip-synch dubbing (Herbst 1997; Denton 2000) nor voice-over — a non-synchronous technique common in Russia, Poland and the Baltic countries (Dries 1994–95; Grigaravičiūtė and Gottlieb 1999) — is acceptable to viewers. In subtitling countries, revoicing is only found in material aimed at very young audiences.

However, in European dubbing countries — i.e. Spain, Italy and all German- and French-speaking regions — there is nothing childish about dubbing. As foreign languages are hardly ever heard on TV or in the cinema in such (major) speech communities, subtitling tends to be seen as something alien. In France, for instance, the term subtitling — or rather *sous-titrage* — has a set of connotations at odds with those found in countries where subtitling is a household word:

> Puisque le sous-titrage en France a servi depuis plus de 60 ans de seul critère objectif dans la classification de film "d'art" [...], le sous-titrage a fini par devenir label de qualité et signifier "cinéma d'art" même dans le cas de films que la plupart des cinéphiles ne jugeraient pas a priori particulièrement "artistiques". (Danan 1995: 277).

The semi-conscious linking of art movies and subtitles mentioned here is not found in countries where subtitling is the prevalent form of screen translation and where most cinema films and television series are imported.

In pro-subtitling speech communities — e.g. Scandinavia and the Dutch-speaking countries — subtitling has established itself as one of the dominant written text types in public life. Already back in 1993, the average Dane spent more than three and a half hours (217 minutes) a week reading TV and video subtitles, while the reading of printed translations only accounted for less than two hours a week (cf. Gottlieb 1994: 149). By 2002, with new, commercial TV channels mainly showing foreign (= US) imports, Danes spent 37 minutes a day reading (interlingual) TV subtitles, against 31 minutes in 1993 (Gottlieb 2003). Adding to this, several — younger — segments of the population are shifting from reading newspapers and books to relying primarily on TV films on DVD and the Internet for news and entertainment.

In a few and 'exotic' cases, British and American moviegoers are presented with subtitles in domestic productions. In a sequence from Woody Allen's *Annie Hall* (1977), subtitles are used to illustrate the unspoken (sexually related) thoughts of the two characters onscreen while they are discussing more high-brow subjects — a genuine problem for any subtitler abroad who has to subtitle the English dialogue and the captions at the same time. In Kevin Costner's *Dances With Wolves* (1990), the (English) subtitles have a totally different function. They allow the Sioux Indians to speak their native Lakota without degrading their dialogue to merely a colorful part of the music and effects track; the American audience are presented with subtitles in English every time Lokota is spoken. Interestingly, while the Danish audience get — identically-designed — subtitles for all spoken lines in this film, the French (video) audience hear Costner *et al.* speaking French, while the spoken Lakota is subtitled into French — a rare example of creative use of both types of screen translation in the same film version. Finally, on the British side of the Atlantic, Danny Boyle's controversial *Trainspotting* (1996), set in Edinburgh, had a few sequences subtitled, partly for humorous effect, partly due to some almost inaudible Scots lines in a noisy environment — a third example contributing to the outlandish subtext of subtitles in the Anglo-Saxon world.

2.   The role of English: From mother tongue to brother tongue

Ever since the infancy of the former British Empire, and especially since the birth of Hollywood-based American media dominance in the early twentieth

Table 1. Native speakers of English – A relative decrease of 21.6 percent in 24 years

1975	1999
310 million of 3.9 billion	380 million of 6.1 billion
7.95 % of world population	6.23 % of world population

century, English has been in a no-lose situation. However, the increasing use of English must be seen against a backdrop of relative stagnation in terms of native speakers. Today, native — or rather, first-language — speakers of English make up a smaller percentage of the world's population than a generation ago.

The figures — based on the *Random House Webster's Concise College Dictionary* (New York, 1999) and *Gyldendals Tibinds Leksikon* (Copenhagen, 1977) — include all inhabitants in the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia and the US, plus the entire non-French-speaking population of Canada and the English (10%) minority in South Africa.

Still, in terms of sheer numbers, the real victory for English lies in its importance as a second language. After the demise of the Soviet Union, and with China's de facto capitalist, non self-reliance policies, the number of nations where English is *not* the first foreign language taught in school, is historically low. Today, the majority of the world's population is — at least — bilingual, and in the industrialized world most people are exposed to English every day — via anglophone lyrics, brand names, ads and commercials, and often through subtitled anglophone TV and film productions.

Adding to this, a growing international elite access English-language websites, read technical documentation, books, and, last but not least, communicate in English — often with other non-native speakers. Thus, English has established itself as a second language — a brother tongue rather than a mother tongue — to the educated masses of the modern world.

All this is a result of the present monolithic new world order; as the US rules, so does English. The facts are, briefly stated:

1. In nearly all the world's countries, English is the supreme (foreign) language.
2. In nearly all countries, anglophone media products carry at least the same weight as national productions, both in terms of penetration and prestige.
3. In nearly all international bodies and companies, English is the favored language, now also in the previously French-dominated EU.[1]
4. In a number of countries, domestic languages are losing domains (such domains ranging from pop lyrics to academic writing).[2]
5. In some non-anglophone countries, English is an associate official language or acts as a lingua franca in various domains (media, courts, etc.).[3]

Having so far outlined some key features of the global language-political backdrop of international communication, including translation, it is now time to set the stage for the translation phenomenon to be investigated in this paper: subtitling.

3.1 The nature of subtitling

Our primary concern here is to look at actual and possible effects of the meeting of languages and cultures on TV and cinema screens. Therefore, the discussion will be limited to interlingual subtitling, as opposed to the intralingual type aimed at deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences. Consequently, we will define subtitling as "the rendering in a different language of verbal messages in filmic media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text, presented on the screen in synch with the original verbal message".

In order to fully appreciate the challenge involved in subtitling, a few terms having to do with its semiotics will be discussed here. As for semiotic texture, films and other multi-channel text types — in the following referred to as polysemiotic — form a basis for translation very different to one-channel types — monosemiotic texts. When translating polysemiotic texts, the content of the non-verbal channels has to be taken into account. What is expressed monosemiotically in a novel, solely through writing, occupies four channels in a film: dialogue, music and effects, picture, and — for a smaller part — writing (displays and captions). A screen adaptation of a 100,000 word novel may keep only 20,000 words for the dialogue, leaving the semantic load of the remaining 80,000 words to the non-verbal semiotic channels — or to deletion.

As far as semiotic fidelity is concerned, 'normal' translation uses the same communicative channel(s) as the original. In such isosemiotic translations, speech is rendered by speech — as in interpreting and dubbing — and writing by writing, as in literary translation. Subtitling, being diasemiotic by nature, shifts this balance by 'crossing over' from speech to writing. Naturally, this changes the working strategies of the translator as well as viewers' strategies of reception, vis-à-vis dubbing.

3.2 Dubbing vs. subtitling

Without entering the often emotionally loaded 'dubbing vs. subtitling' discussion dating back to the introduction of the American talkies in Europe around 1929 (Gottlieb 1997b: 54–57) — but which has by now reached a more peaceful

stage (O'Connell 1998; Díaz-Cintas 1999 and 2003; Koolstra *et al.* 2002; Chaume 2003) — two central and slightly paradoxical facts need mentioning here:

a. Subtitling, although often considered the more authentic of the two methods, constitutes a fundamental break with the semiotic structure of sound film by re-introducing the translation mode of the silent movies, i.e. written signs.
b. Dubbing, a 'natural', isosemiotic type of translation, generates a conglomerate expression in which the voices heard, severed as they are from the faces and gestures seen on screen, will never create a fully natural impression (Koolstra *et al.* 2002: 336). Only total remakes (as described in Wehn 2001) will be able to supplant the original film.

All in all, the two types of screen translation differ in the following respects:

1. In semiotic terms, i.e. with regard to
   a. written vs. spoken language mode, and
   b. supplementary mode (subtitling) vs. substitutional mode (dubbing).
2. In wording, where
   c. unlike dubbing, subtitling tends to condense the original dialogue by 20–40% (Lomheim 1999: 191), partly as a result of point 1 (a) above, partly due to technical and perceptional constraints (Gottlieb 1992 and Gottlieb 2001b: 164–172), in order to provide enough reading time for the audience, and
   d. to a large extent, subtitling is governed by the norms of the written language.

4.   The implications of subtitling

As an integral part of the modern media landscape, interlingual subtitling is bound to have a number of societal and language-political implications. More than anything else, subtitling is intrumental in:

1. Improving reading skills.
2. Boosting foreign language skills.
3. (Ideally) facilitating easy and cheap international program exchange.
4. (In reality) cementing the dominance of English.

In this section, the latter issue will be treated at length — after a brief discussion of the three other points.

4.1   Improving reading skills

In a culture which favors audiovisual media, subtitles in foreign productions constitute an important and effective reading drill for both adults, including immigrants (Nir 1984), and for children (Koolstra *et al.* 1997). Interlingual subtitles tend to be read even by viewers who understand the original language spoken (d'Ydewalle and Gielen 1992). Similarly, intralingual subtitles usually trigger reading behavior in a perfectly hearing audience. This may of course sometimes be due to the 'natural acting' favored in many contemporary film and TV productions, which renders parts of the dialogue semi-inaudible to most people (Spangenberg 2002). But the prime reason for this 'doubled reception' of spoken lines on TV is that most literate people simply cannot avoid reading text on screen. In Denmark, subtitles are now the primary reason that children want to learn how to read,[4] and normally-hearing people who never read the Danish non-optional subtitles are nowadays considered dyslectic (Elbro *et al.* 1991).

4.2   Boosting foreign-language skills

According to Belgian studies, reading domestic-language subtitles while watching a foreign-language production improves foreign-language vocabulary skills, in particular in children (Van de Poel and d'Ydewalle 2001). And in Italy, a promising, interactive and concordance-based method for learning minority languages through subtitled film sequences is presently being developed (Baldry 2001).

But most of all, with anglophone film and TV productions more widely spread than ever, English comprehension is boosted in subtitling communities worldwide. As a case in point, the average Dane listens to English on (Danish) TV and video alone for almost one hour a day (cf. Gottlieb 1994, 153–157 and Gottlieb 1997b, 151–153).

And in all European countries, English is now either the first national — the UK and Ireland — or the first foreign language taught in school. Yet most young people spend more time watching English-language media productions than listening to their English teacher in school. Although we are still in want of reliable data, it is fair to say that people in European subtitling communities — from Slovenia to Flanders — tend to be more fluent in English than the peoples of comparable dubbing countries, *in casu* Serbia and Germany.[5]

However, a side effect of subtitling audiences' command of English is

found in the fact that subtitlers, at least in Germanic speech communities, sometimes prefer English-sounding constructions to domestic syntax that might alienate their expert viewers. In Denmark, where 80% of the adult population claim to be able to speak English (Davidsen-Nielsen 1998), certain all-Danish discourse patterns tend to be avoided in subtitling (Raahauge 2003) — a feature treated in more detail later in this paper. To be fair, following the speech rhythm when subtitling an anglophone production, as recommended in the 'Code of Good Subtitling Practice' (Ivarsson & Carroll 1998: 157–159), is generally a good idea. However, one should not forget that subtitles are meant for viewers who do not fully understand the original dialogue, not those who take great pride in proclaiming 'errors' where the subtitler has simply chosen to use idiomatic translations even when these may represent a minor re-shuffling of the original lines. As a subtitler working 'the easy way', into English, has put it: "subtitles will sometimes have to depart form the original in a way that would be inadmissible in other contexts" (Smith 1998: 148).

Another unexpected result of the increased knowledge of English in non-anglophone speech communities is now found in the printed media. As more people — in Scandinavia, for instance — read British and US authors in the original, publishers that have hitherto prospered on translations from English, an important part of the book market in any minor speech community, are now investing more money and energy in domestic writers, simply to stay in business (Dahl 2001).

4.3   Facilitating international program exchange?

For decades, serious attempts have been made by different European institutions, including the EU and the European Broadcasting Union, to limit the American (and thus, the anglophone) share of the film and television market in Europe. To enhance inter-European program exchange, the 'BABEL' program under the EBU has subsidized a number of multilingual European co-productions and provided the financial means to dub or subtitle several European TV series and films. In this context, subtitling has a major asset: it is more than ten times cheaper than dubbing (Luyken *et al.* 1991: 105).

All the same, although the nineties saw a flourishing of national film and TV industries in some non-anglophone European countries (e.g. Spain and Denmark), no major progress was made regarding cross-border program exchange. The reason is mostly to be found in the seemingly ever-lasting magic of the word *Hollywood.* To European consumers, as well as to commercial and

public-service broadcasters, US films and TV series remain in high demand, and Europeans are often more familiar with the workings of the Los Angeles Police Department, the streets of Manhattan and the sprawl of American suburbia than with their own continent — which leads us on to the ultimate language-political issue related to subtitling: the dominance of Anglo-American language and culture.

4.4   Cementing the dominance of English?

As stated above, Hollywood reigns supreme, and the American media industry is still unchallenged when it comes to export figures and influence worldwide. Back in the 1930s, the major speech communities in Europe faced the American challenge rather by introducing domesticating translation methods (dubbing) than by managing to reverse the current, i.e. exporting as many productions as they imported (Danan 1991).

Subtitling, as opposed to dubbing, can be described as a foreignizing, or overt, type of translation. The ever-present soundtrack makes it possible for the audience to spot 'deviant' translation, especially when the language spoken is English. In that case, subtitlers know that a significant number of their viewers will understand enough of the dialogue to notice their translation errors, and that bloopers are gladly reported to compilers of special Internet sites — in Denmark, the largest one is found at www.titlevision.dk/boeuf.htm. All this may seem innocuous in this context, but some double-guessing viewers are convinced that good translation is formally equivalent translation, an attitude that often forces subtitlers to copy the English dialogue rather than translate it (Baloti 2000; Press 2003).

Whether this was a contributing factor or not remains unanswered, but in a study of the impact of English on Danish via subtitles (Gottlieb 2001a), it turned out that some five per cent of the Danish subtitles in two American feature films contained marked Anglicisms, i.e. English-sounding Danish constructions, established English loanwords not included.

In a following-up study comparing three US family films all available in both subtitled and dubbed versions in Danish (Gottlieb 2001c), this state of affairs was taken from the frying pan into the fire, as it turned out that the dubbed versions of the films studied displayed twice as many marked Anglicisms as the subtitled versions. The key figures are found in Table 2:

Table 2. Anglicisms in Danish video versions of American family films

Anglicisms per minute:	Flubber		Dr Dolittle		Antz	
	DUB	SUB	DUB	SUB	DUB	SUB
All Anglicisms	1.79	1.02	2.75	1.66	2.18	0.91
Marked Anglicisms	1.04	0.50	1.85	0.76	1.77	0.57

As far as the subtitled versions are concerned, the figures fit in nicely with the results found in the earlier (2001a) study. The two films investigated then, *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Falling Down* (1993), contained an average of 0.43 and 0.57 marked Anglicisms per minute, respectively. As revealed in the table, these figures are quite in line with those (ranging from 0.50 to 0.76) found in the subtitled versions of the films investigated in the second (2001c) study.

That (non-idiomatic) Anglicisms are common in both subtitled and dubbed anglophone films and TV programs is, of course, not merely a Danish phenomenon. Such language change — or, to some observers: corruption — has been reported from many different quarters, not least Latin America and Spain (e.g. Televisió de Catalunya 1997). Studies dealing with languages as diverse as Finnish and German (Sajavaara 1991; Herbst 1994 and 1995) testify to the widespread anglification in screen translation, be that subtitling or dubbing.

Even films that are not shot in English may sometimes, when screened abroad, display unwanted Anglicisms and simple errors of English interference. Two recent studies (Hilwerda 2000; Zilberdik 2004) show how the use of English pivot scripts or subtitles lead to anglification — and mistranslation of, for instance, pronouns — of the dialogue in the Danish Dogme film *Festen* (*The Celebration*) (1998, directed by Thomas Vinterberg) in its Dutch and Hebrew versions, respectively. In the media industry, as in the EU, when no minor-language translators are at hand, relay versions act as 'originals' — often with detrimental results, as attested above (see also Grigaravičiūtė and Gottlieb 1999).

Moving from human constraints — *in casu* lack of qualified translators for a specific language combination — to more technical ones, it is interesting to see that faced with the special constraints of subtitling, the subtitler may — in spite of the earlier-mentioned tendency to please audiences with clone-like translations — come up with solutions which are more idiomatic than those found in monosemiotic translation. Gottlieb (1997a) shows that in the translation of English idioms, the imitative strategy of emulation was more widespread in literary translation than in subtitling — possibly due to the limited time and

space available for each subtitle, a factor which forces subtitlers to reconstruct sentences, unlike literary and dubbing translators. Normally, these translators have enough space (on the printed page) or time (on the screen) to cut cognitive corners in the translation process — and come up with English clones or calques in the target language. This means that English language-specific constructions, of which idioms are just one species, are less frequent in subtitled films than in dubbed films or run-of-the-mill back translations.

In closing this discussion of the language-political effects of subtitling anglophone films and TV programs in non-anglophone countries, we will take a brief look at the (all too rare) situation where foreign-language productions are screened or broadcast in English-speaking countries.

In the UK and the United States, the two leading film and TV exporters, even the notion of 'foreign' productions — no matter whether these are subtitled or dubbed — has an exotic ring to large segments of the population. In particular, subtitled films face problems meeting the demands of the mass audience:

> […] subtitles are the sticking point for English-speaking audiences. The more literary style of foreign film is demanding enough, but it is made all the more challenging by the need to read along with the performance. The generation that Hollywood blockbusters are deliberately catering for, the 16- to 24-year-olds, is one that, in one distributor's words, is "growing increasingly lazy and unlikely ever to go back to subtitling". (Finney 1997: 8)

And not only are the few imported films in search of an audience, the dialogue is often mutilated — or, to put it in milder terms, domesticated — to adapt to Anglo-Saxon norms and tastes. As Jorge Díaz-Cintas puts it, after demonstrating the tendency to sanitize sexually explicit language in the English subtitling of Spanish films:

> When people in Britain, and certainly other English speaking countries, watch a foreign film on video, or go to the cinema to watch the 35mm print, one could seriously posit the question: are they really watching Almodóvar the raunchy Spaniard or Almodóvar the prudish American? (Díaz-Cintas 2001: 65).

5.   The new electronic media: Anglification in any case

The mass media have always been instrumental in the introduction and dissemination of neologisms, including Anglicisms. No matter whether they are pro-active in this process (Sørensen 2003) or rather reflect societal and linguistic changes already initiated by language users (Preisler 2003), the

printed and electronic media exert considerable influence on language norms and usage, including the present anglification under scrutiny here. Among the texts of the media, those translated from English — whether literary or technical, journalistic or academic, mono- or polysemiotic — play a key role in the contemporary anglification process (Gottlieb forthcoming).

In these years film, TV and video productions are being digitized, leading to formats much better at accommodating specific translation needs than the traditional one-translation-per-film concept. Films on DVD, the digital succesor to the VHS format, are marketed in multi-language versions, with — in theory — up to 8 dubbed and 32 subtitled versions on one disc. Typically, a film on DVD offers two or three optional dialogue tracks (the original dialogue plus one or more dubbed soundtracks) against more than half a dozen subtitled versions. However, in Denmark — and in other high-profile subtitling countries[6] — the subtitling quality found in American films on DVD is often lacking, especially if the subtitles are commissioned in the USA (Witting Estrup 2002a and 2002b; Nyholm and Kristensen 2002).

With Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB), DVD-like technical standards for TV translation will be set (see also Karamitroglou 1999), making 'personal subtitling' — i.e. remote-control selection of the preferred language version during broadcast (as suggested by Bernbom Jørgensen 1992) — a matter of course to most audiences worldwide.

However, as we have already seen, neither subtitling nor dubbing seems to steer clear of the influence from the anglophone original dialogue — nor is it absolutely certain that film companies, broadcasters, translators and audiences want to avoid this English influence.

Put in a nutshell, whereas dubbing introduces morphosyntactic calques — Trojan horses, so to speak — in the target language, subtitling promotes English loanwords, i.e. Anglicisms of a more transparent nature (Gottlieb 2001c).

For those concerned by these facts, there is little consolation in the alternatives: (1) voice-over, where the original soundtrack is overlayed with impassionate, sometimes English-flavored, narration in the target language (Grigaravičiūtė and Gottlieb 1999), with no way of checking the translation against the original, (2) no translation, where the domestic language is not affected, but the audience is forced to make the best of their knowledge of English — a sink-or-swim strategy used in for instance several countries in Southern Africa, and finally (3) English intralingual subtitles, which may help viewers in their quest to make sense of the spoken English lines, but still offers no interlingual aid.

At the end of the day, increasing the number of domestic productions is the only way to 'minimize the Anglicism problem' — and produce dialogue with only those Anglicisms that are already firmly established in the national languages.[7] And of course, avoiding all imports is as unrealistic as it is undesirable. Rather, more imports from non-anglophone speech communities would be an option.

In the next section, we will have a look at how far different prototypical present and future scenarios are from the goals outlined above.

6. Language politics, programing, and choice of screen translation method

Regarding program exchange and screen translation choices on TV, six scenarios can be outlined, four of which are already existing. The two supplementary ones, 'Utopia' and 'Dystopia', should be seen as opposite extremes establishing the cline on which all future realities are bound to be found.

I will now let the different scenarios speak for themselves, as I think their differences are obvious, and their implications straightforward.

Scenario 1:   **Utopia**
The cosmopolitan situation:
Flourishing international program exchange,
less than 50% English programing,
less than 50% national programing,
a wide range of non-English imports,
standard imports subtitled in all domestic languages,
children's imports dubbed or voiced-over.

Scenario 2:   **Scandinavia** (cf. Gottlieb 1997b)
The monolingual anglophile situation:
Substantial program imports,
around 50% English programing,
almost 50% national programing,
very few non-English imports,
standard imports subtitled in the dominant domestic language,
children's imports subtitled, dubbed or voiced-over.

Scenario 3:   **South Africa** (cf. Kruger and Kruger 2001)
The multilingual anglophile situation:
Massive program imports,
more than 50% English programing,

less than 50% national programing,
very few non-English imports,
standard imports not translated,
children's imports dubbed voiced-over or not translated,
indigenous programs subtitled in English.

Scenario 4:   **France** (cf. Danan 1995)
The monolingual nationalist situation:
Limited program imports,
less than 50% English programing,
more than 50% national programing,
very few non-English imports,
niche imports subtitled,
all other imports dubbed or voiced-over.

Scenario 5:   '**Anglostan**' (the native English-speaking countries)
The anglophone situation:
Very few non-English imports,
almost 100% English programing,
niche imports subtitled,
all other imports dubbed or voiced-over.

Scenario 6:   **Dystopia**
The anglified situation:
Very few non-English imports,
domestic and regional production mainly in English,
standard imports not translated,
programs for the elderly subtitled or dubbed.

Judged from a global perspective, the only sustainable scenario seems to be the Utopian one, in which neither national nor anglophone productions dominate, and where different language groups among the viewers may select different language versions of imported programs (cf. Section 5 above, and also Gottlieb 2001b: 185–187).

If we want to, we have an all-win situation on our hands:

a. Subtitling anglophone imports for reading audiences enhances the learning of English, still unchallenged as a global lingua franca.
b. Importing more programs from non-anglophone countries will boost people's linguistic and cultural awareness and help keep the dominance of English in check.
c. Offering subtitles in indigenous languages will improve the status of so-called lesser used languages and make program production in these languages more viable.

Alas, as with so many other choices in life, consensus is easier to reach than action, especially if money is concerned. Today, American, British and Australian imports are so much more affordable to TV stations than domestic productions — as long as these remain difficult to export because neighboring countries keep filling their shelves with anglophone imports. Vicious or not, this circle needs to be broken, at least for the sake of linguistic and cultural diversity.

Notes

1. In the recent EU enlargement negotiations, "English has been made the key language" (Phillipson 2003: 123), and by the year 2000, English had become the number one drafting language of the EU Commission; in 2000, 55% of the Translation Service's source texts were in English and 33% in French, against 30% English and 49% French originals in 1989 (op. cit.: 130).

2. Recently, this issue has gained increased attention in the Nordic countries (cf. Jarvad 2001, Graedler 2002: 59, Phillipson 2003: 162 ff.).

3. See for instance McArthur (2002: 313 ff.), on the situation in India.

4. The president of *Dansklærerforeningen* (the Union of teachers of Danish), Jens Raahauge, reported at a subtitling seminar that, when asked why they wanted to learn how to read, 72 out of 75 first-graders said they wanted to be able to read the subtitles on TV. Books were not a major motivational factor (Boen and Kure 2000).

5. A recent study comparing the English comprehension skills of high school students in two dubbing countries (Germany and Italy) and two subtitling countries (Denmark and Romania), with one Germanic and one Romance language in each group, found that the subtitling students did better than the dubbing students in understanding (untranslated) video sequences with both British and American actors (Schøller 2003).

6. Personal communication with Tom Bernbom Jørgensen, head of the *Prima Vista International Subtitling House,* December 4, 2003.

7. The present situation regarding English influence in sixteen European speech communities is documented in Görlach (ed.) 2001, 2002a and 2002b. The Danish situation, not dealt by Görlach, is discussed in Gottlieb 2004.

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4. Teaching AVT

A place for film dialogue analysis
in subtitling courses*

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1.   Introduction

Good film dialogue is appreciated by all, but studied by few. In the hierarchy of film signs and the research into their narrative functioning, film dialogue occupies fourth position at best. It comes after the study of editing, after the study of camera angles and after the study of sound in a more general sense. Considering the long-standing tradition in film studies favouring the promotion of film as a visual art, this neglect of film dialogue is understandable (Remael 2000: 41–46).

More surprising is the limited amount of attention the narrative functioning of film dialogue is attracting in the research into and teaching of screen translation, subtitling more in particular. This is not to say that researchers and teachers are not aware of the semiotic complexity of the film text and the need to integrate the subtitles, which are no more than a supporting semiotic sign system, into the film's own semiotic web. However, when surveying the possibilities and limitations of subtitles, we find research, subtitling courses and introductory publications alike, tend to focus on a fixed set of issues, and these do not include a study of film dialogue. Let us consider two recent introductory books by way of example: Ivarsson & Carroll (1998) and Díaz Cintas (2001).

2.   The standard subtitling approach to film dialogue: a few examples

The constrained nature of subtitling is always a major concern in textbooks: the need to render *speech* in two lines of concise and intelligible *writing* with a *minimal loss in informative content.* Both above publications point out that text reduction is inevitable.

> Some people talk nineteen to the dozen with words tumbling out so fast that they manage to say in a few seconds three or four times as much as there is space for in the two subtitle lines below the picture. (Ivarsson & Carroll 1998: 85)

> … la característica principal de los subtítulos reside en la reducción que el contenido oral de la versión original sufre en su metamorfosis en material escrito de la versión subtitulada. (Díaz Cintas 2001: 123)

Awareness of the complexity of the film text speaks from a number of recommendations. Ivarsson & Carroll stress the need for synchrony between sound and subtitle content, between image and subtitle content, and encourage the subtitler to make good use of visually rendered information (1998: 72–75). On the other hand, some form of compromise is unavoidable since respect for the film text must be balanced against the need for lucid and legible subtitles. Respect for the film's "takes" which belong to its visual sign system, must therefore be balanced against respect for the rhythm of the dialogues, the need for syntactically and semantically motivated line and subtitle breaks, and the distribution of the subtitle text over the two available lines (75–78). To promote legibility, the authors also recommend a limited rendering of the hesitations and other particularities of everyday conversation, simplification of syntax, simplification of vocabulary, etc. (87 and 88–89). Díaz Cintas underlines the need for a logical and syntax-based distribution of the subtitle text and adds that the subtitler must first of all eliminate from the sentence whatever is irrelevant for a good understanding of the message. (S)he must then proceed to reformulate what (s)he considers to be most important for the development of the film's argument or story in the most concise possible way. Since film discourse is characterised by a high degree of orality, which in its turn is marked by a high degree of redundancy, it is not always necessary to translate everything in order to ensure the message gets across (2001: 120–121 & 124–5). As a typical example of text reduction, the author offers the following Spanish subtitles from Woody Allen'*s Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993):

> You said she liked – She liked eating high cholesterol desserts. Is that what you said?
> ¿ No has dicho que le gustaban // los postres con mucho colesterol?

> Yeah, but it's a great theory. Have you been paying attention? This is a great theory.
> Sí, pero es una teoría genial. (2001: 123 &124)

The examples also demonstrate what seems to be one of subtitling's weaknesses: dialogue's interpersonal dimensions tend to get lost, as various pieces of research quoted by the author have demonstrated as well. On the other hand, Díaz Cintas writes, semantic concision does not necessarily have to result in a different syntax or style and quantitative reduction does not have to go together with rhetoric simplification (2001: 125 and 127) — even though it often does.

At this point, three issues need to be considered:

1. introductions to subtitling may now be overstressing the need for simple sentences composed of well-organised syntactic and semantic units, and Díaz Cintas' last remark is well taken;
2. genre considerations may have to feature more prominently in subtitling courses, and an interdisciplinary approach that takes into account how the oral sign system works within a specific type of film;
3. fiction film dialogue differs from everyday conversation in a number of key respects.

Kovačič discusses the need to integrate more of conversation's interpersonal moves in the subtitles' abridged written form in various articles, which are also inspired by educational concerns. She states, for instance:

> …in subtitling dramas and films it may be very important to also capture elements of text (dialogue) structuring and interpersonal signals, because these two levels can be very significant elements of characters' personalities or their psychological and social relations. (1996: 297)

Assis Rosa, for her part, notes a slight shift in Portuguese screen translation which she suggests may be due to a change in attitude towards the relative prestige of written language and speech, and is reflected in an increase in oral register and non-standard varieties in subtitles (2001: 220).

I would posit that the lamentable state of subtitling in Europe, say, a decade ago, may have warranted the call for standardization, law, order and clarity that now dominates textbooks, and has resulted in some sort of "subtitling style", but in an extreme form this leads to subtitles which "… convey the impression that the characters speak like a printed page" (Assis Rosa 2001: 216). A greater focus on film genre would help reduce subtitling's homogenizing trend, and a better insight into the narrative functioning of film dialogue would help subtitlers make the right decision when they have to

choose between rendering propositional content or dialogue's oral and inter-
actional features.

Indeed, the redundancy typical of speech that Díaz Cintas comments on, is
also characteristic of film narrative generally and operates on many textual
levels. Character interaction is supported by all of the film's sign systems, and is
designed to communicate something to the viewer, not just to the other
character. In his analysis of a few scenes from the French television drama
Châteauvallon, Mason writes about a scene in which power relations between
two characters are developed:

> There are some visual clues [indicating the power game] — the election agent sits
> on the desk behind which Quentin is sitting, thus reinforcing his dominance; at
> the market, Berg, having made his point, moves off, showing his disinterest in
> prolonging the exchange; at all points, facial expressions constitute important
> paralinguistic evidence in support of our interpretation of what is going on. But,
> as auditors, we rely on the dialogue itself for our primary evidence of the evolution
> of the exchange. (1989: 18)

Mason therefore concludes that crucial aspects of interpersonal interaction are
lost in the subtitled version. However, we are never auditors only, we are
viewers, and we are also narratees: we can fit the present scene within the
context of the characters' previous history, which the film narrative is sure to
have developed extensively. All the same, the preliminary results of a research
project into the influence of narrative norms on subtitling decisions indicate
that there may be two antipodal tendencies at work. On the one hand, the
interactional features of film dialogues that seem to get lost or indeed do get
lost in a particular scene, are so closely interwoven with other aspects of the
film's semiotic functioning, that they will be compensated to a large extent.
Moreover, since subtitles do not merely delete text, but also tend to render
speech more explicit, they do more than render the basic story line. They also
tighten stories that are not so tight or that derive their charm from diversions;
but then again, interactional patterns are only compensated by the film's other
sign systems to the extent that they are story-supporting, which they usually
are in mainstream cinema, but not in more experimental films. Are these
therefore more difficult to subtitle efficiently? It is an issue worth examining.[1]
In any case, a subtitler who is aware of film dialogue's many functions and the
way they are integrated into mainstream cinema's extremely coherent narra-
tive structure, will produce better subtitles.

3.   Some basic features of film dialogue

In teaching, a two-tiered approach is therefore required. Subtitling students must first be introduced to some basic dialogue features,[2] and then to how film narrative appropriates these for its own ends. First of all, film dialogue differs from daily conversation in that it is meant for a third party. Film dialogue is what Bakhtin (1986) has called a *secondary speech genre*, which derives some of its characteristics from the *primary speech genre* of daily conversation, but others from the text or context in which it occurs. A mainstream film story is highly organised and based on the blueprint of the film script, which is in its turn a norm-bound narrative, typified by its character-centred, personal or psychological causality. Mainstream screenplays and films have a tight dramatic structure harking back to that of the well-made play, consisting of an Exposition, Development, Climax and Denouement. In the screenwriting stage, dialogue writing comes in the very last instance, after the story has been laid down, first in the synopsis and then in the treatment. This order of things inevitably shapes the dialogue. Dramatic development is the highest hierarchical norm determining its functions, other norms bound to concerns with realism, genre or theme are subservient to it (Remael 2000). The screenplay's dramatic structure is repeated on sequence and on scene level, where it is to some extent constructed by the dialogue (cf. below). As Vanoye (1985) has pointed out, film dialogue — like theatre dialogue — always functions on two levels.

> Au niveau "horizontal" de la communication des personnages entre eux […] on voit que les maximes conversationnelles (Grice), les modèles d'échanges et d'interventions (Goffman, Roulet), les marqueurs ou connecteurs pragmatiques, ainsi que les composantes non-verbales (regards, postures, mimo-gestualité) et paraverbales (voix, rythmes) de la conversation rendent compte de la complexité des interactions […] mais que la variation des échelles de plan, les cadrages, le montage, le jeux des paroles "in" et "off" ne cessent, simultanément, de structurer ces mêmes interactions. Par ailleurs la conversation filmique est doublement surdéterminée. Dans les films de fiction, elle s'inscrit dans une histoire qu'elle contribue à faire avancer […] D'une manière systématique […] la conversation filmique, comme la conversation théatrale, fonctionne rétroactivement et proactivement, au point précis de la diégèse et de la narration où elle se situe […] C'est alors qu'intervient la seconde surdétermination qui tient au niveau "vertical" de communication, entre film et spectateurs. Tandis qu'une conversation *entre* des gens se tient à l'écran, une histoire est racontée *à* (ou bien un discours est tenu *à*) des spectateurs potentiels. (ibid.: 116)[3]

This means that even the interactional patterns "… les maximes conversation-elles", etc. are designed to communicate the interaction to the viewer, and are therefore overdetermined. Still, film dialogue does resemble daily speech, in spite of its many compositional functions, and can also be analysed as such.

Research into dialogic communication is extensive. Introducing subtitling students to the ins and outs of conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, the findings of the Geneva school, recent German developments in dialogue studies, or even anthropological approaches, etc. is simply not feasible, nor is it necessary. All that is required is some knowledge of a few basics of dialogic communication, within a framework that demonstrates their applicability for film dialogue analysis.

4.   Concepts from dialogue studies

A very useful approach has been developed by a group of scholars with a broad interest in interpersonal and social communication, working within the field of social psychology. It integrates crucial findings and concepts from, e.g. conversation analysis, but its focus is on interpersonal and social relations, not on linguistic analysis *per se*. Their basic premise is that the symbolic nature of human communication is central to the study not only of language and speech, but also to the study of human social phenomena in general. The concepts they have developed are therefore most helpful for an analysis of how character development and interaction propel the film story. The three publications I relied on most for my research into film dialogue (Remael 2000) were Marková and Foppa (1990 and 1991), and Marková, Graumann and Foppa (1995).[4]

The approach is "interactionist", meaning that the authors assume there is a form of interdependence between the agent and his or her socio-historical environment. In film terms this is useful considering the way traditional film stories use a character's environment to typify her, or suggest her *back story*. The group also subscribes to the Bakhtinian concept of the dialogism of all communication, including that between a text and its reader, which can there-fore encompass the double functioning of film dialogue.

Central to its approach to dialogue analysis is the group's interest in dialogue's features of "symmetry" and "asymmetry", which determine its dynamic. For dialogue to work there must be a degree of symmetry or reci-procity between the speakers, but also a degree of asymmetry to provide a

forward movement. This exists on sentence level, for instance, in the dyadic pair of question and answer, but also outside the sequentially built text of the dialogue strictly speaking (Linell 1990). An interactant, or a character, may make use of dialogue-external knowledge that his interlocutor has no access to, or simply rely on social position to steer the talk in a particular direction. Film dialogue makes use of these features, in interaction with its other semiotic systems, to construct its narrative, reveal information gradually and build character relations: a willful disregard for reciprocity may lead to interactional tensions. The following basics therefore need to be taught.

Dialogue works sequentially and is both context-dependent (it builds on previous turns) and context-renewing (it adds something to the previous turn). *Context* here refers to the local dialogue context or *co-text*, but it can also refer to a more comprehensive situational frame. I therefore reserve the term *co-text* for the dialogue in which a particular character's turn is embedded, and *context* to refer to the entire scene. In film too, a dialogue contribution making up one turn builds on and modifies the previous turn(s) and anticipates the next, potentially modifying the entire narrative situation. Dialogue is other-directed and collectively brought forward by the interlocutors' responding to each other and taking new initiatives, i.e., by its initiative-response structure. Meaning is therefore a collective product, generated locally. A particular initiative is to some extent expected to prompt a particular response, and if this is not forthcoming, this may be indicative of a minor or major disruption in communication.[5] It is therefore quite instructive to study how and by whom the dialogue is driven forward in different situations, while keeping in mind that the dialogues are also acted upon by the film's other signs. On a higher level, one turn can build on or modify a turn in a previous scene, it can anticipate a turn that is yet to come, or even acquire thematic value as a "one liner". Generally speaking, the film's basic dramatic structure is repeated on sequence and scene level and partly supported by the dialogue. In order to illuminate this, a few more concepts have to be introduced.

I use the term *dialogue sequence* for the entire dialogue sequence of one scene, irrespective of interruptions by a third character, for instance. Each character intervention within the dialogue constitutes one *turn*. An *exchange* is a series of turns interrupted by dialogue-external factors such as the appearance of a third person, or a camera movement, or the (temporary) departure of one or more of the characters. These types of interruptions are narratively motivated and divide up the dialogue in a way that is not necessarily prompted by the co-text strictly speaking. Sometimes, exchanges can be subdivided into

turn series centred on a particular topic. However, these may be difficult to demarcate, especially if gradual shifts take the dialogue from one topic to another, and this can be significant in itself (cf. below). *Monologue* is also seen as basically dialogic, if only because it addresses the reader. Marková sees dialogue and monologue as transient forms of speech that cannot always be categorised as strictly one or the other. (1990: 10) This happens, for instance, when one speaker appears to follow his own line of thought without minding another's interjacent turns. One could define such talk as "monologic", but — more importantly — it is a sign of disruption in the dialogue interaction, if this is seen to be composed of sequences of initiatives and responses. However, the way a scene is organised in terms of turns, grouped in turn series and exchanges is not entirely dependent on locally generated dialogue: the divisions also reflect the scene's dramatic structure, composed of an *introduction* followed by a *development*. Unlike the film, scenes do not contain a *denouement*. As Bordwell (1996) has noted, in the shorter, exposition phase, place, time and relevant characters are specified. In the development phase the characters try to achieve their goals, enter into conflict, etc. Lines of cause and effect that had previously been left open are developed and closed off, whereas at least one new causal chain is opened that motivates the move to the next scene. The narrative manipulates all the sign systems at its disposal, including the dialogues, to give each and every scene this structure.

At the same time, however, film narrative also uses the asymmetries inherent in any dialogue *per se*, to propel its story. It is on the basis of the strong asymmetric features of dialogue that Linell (1990) has distinguished between four types of interpersonal *dominance* that are very useful for film dialogue analysis, especially since dominance does not only become apparent when one examines long sequences of dialogue. It can also determine exchanges or turn series, and thereby influence the rhythm and development of a scene.

The interactant who speaks the most in a particular dialogue sequence or exchange, has *quantitative dominance*; if one party predominantly introduces and maintains topics and perspectives on topic (s)he has *semantic dominance*; *interactional dominance* is determined by patterns of asymmetry in the dialogue's initiative-response structure (Linell 1990: 158). *Strategic dominance* is acquired by whoever contributes the strategically most important interventions to a communicative situation. This last type differs from the other three categories in that it is more dependent on factors that are exogenous to the dialogue, i.e. "it involves evaluating retrospectively the outcomes of the whole interaction, including some more or less long-term effects" (Linell & Luckmann

1991: 9). Within the context of film it is interesting to investigate whether any one character has strategic dominance in a particular scene, and how this relates to the other forms of dominance within that scene, as well as to the character's position within the screenplay's overall design. Granting a character strategic dominance may contribute to his or her impact on the screenplay's final outcome. More generally, the distribution of dominance may reveal how a character moves the dialogic action within a scene or within the screenplay, or throw light on character development as such: not only through *what* characters say but through *how* they participate in the dialogue.

The concepts of dominance, and especially strategic dominance, however, also imply that dialogue is not generated locally in a mechanistic sense: it is purpose-driven. Purpose also underlies the selection of topics in any type of dialogue. This view is explored by Foppa (1990) and echoed in the research of Weigand, a linguist not directly connected with the "Dynamism" group. She writes, in a reaction to the work of scholars such as Schegloff (1990), who believe it is the sequential nature of dialogue itself that ensures its coherence: coherence of dialogue is "… brought about by the purpose of our dialogic action. This purpose can, for different dialogue types, be derived from the general purpose of coming to an understanding." (Weigand 1992: 60) She adds that in seemingly purposeless small talk, the aim may simply be to be sociable, to keep the conversation going. For film stories driven by purposeful characters, the concept of goal directed dialogue is certainly useful. A film character's goal is always realised through auxiliary goals and a character may therefore be seen to enter a scene with a certain plot-directed purpose, or at least to develop such a purpose or sub-purpose as the scene evolves. The viewer is meant to interpret the topics a character introduces, and his interactional moves in a more general sense, in the light of his or her perceived overall purpose. This is why the issue of topic choice and maintenance is also closely linked to the issue of *perspective*.

As Rommetveit (1991: 207–208) writes, thematic control is to a large extent a matter of individual setting and taking of perspectives and of shifts of perspectives across thematically linked adjacent turns. When one refers to an object, one always does so from a particular point of view. The *object* (or issue) is the topic of the conversation, whereas that which is said about it, is the perspective. This distinction is useful for dialogue analysis since as a speaker or character one does not merely draw the other's attention to an object or issue, one also tries to make the other see it from one's own point of view. The combination of the introduction of new topics with perspective-taking influences the further development

of the dialogue, and implies there may be various degrees of interplay between semantic and interactional dominance.

However, in order to analyse the narrative use of this development, the study of initiative-response dyads may in some instances be too restrictive. Students must be made aware that the local generation of dialogue, which helps the scene move forward, has an impact beyond the intitiative-response pair. Marková (1990: 129–146) finds that although some turns are clearly only a brief response (e.g. "no"), many other turns contain both a retroactive and proactive feature, i.e. an element of response *and* initiative. In some cases, the turn consists of two easily identifiable parts; in others this division is not distinguishable in the formulation. However, even if a turn as a whole appears to be only a response or an initiative, it is meaningful to maintain such a division, because of the logic of internal relations, according to which mutually interacting phenomena give rise to a third. This movement is crucial for the analysis of dialogue as a dynamic phenomenon (Marková 1990: 139–140). In some film scenes single turns consisting of a distinguishable response and initiative are very prominent, and linked to the way in which the screenplay narrative manipulates the dialogues to move on its story. In other cases, what is a response structurally, functions as an initiative (e.g., a question formulated as a statement); and in others still, an initiative within the dialogue of one scene (e.g., an imperative), is responded to by the whole of the action and dialogue depicted in the next.

5.   Initiative-response analysis

Linell, Gustavson and Juvonen (1988) developed a system to categorise units of dialogue on the basis of their initiative-response features, devising a measuring system in terms of which dyads can be placed on a scale of symmetry-asymmetry. The unit of analysis is the turn, and each one is analysed for its response and initiative aspects. Whereas initiatives carry on the dialogue, responses take care of coherence with the discourse that precedes. The initiative-response or IR-system is based on a number of distinctive features.

An initiative can be *strong* or *weak*. A strong initiative is one in which "the speaker explicitly solicits or demands a response from the interlocutor" (ibid.: 439); a weak initiative one in which "the speaker asserts something or submits a proposal for comment without explicitly soliciting or demanding (but often inviting) a response from the interlocutor" (ibid.). If an initiative is *free*, it is a

turn "on a new and independent topic", i.e. it has no retroactive part. Furthermore, a response can be adequate or inadequate, local or non-local, focal or non-focal, alter or self-linked. Each of these features occurs in different combinations, which have been given a rating on an IR-scale going from 6 to 1 (ibid.: 439–440). A strong free initiative is rated (6), a weak free initiative is rated (5). Alternatively, an initiative (strong or weak) can be part of an *expanded response*, in which "the speaker gives something more than is minimally required or requested by the interlocutor's preceding initiative" (ibid.). An expanded response with a proactive part that involves a strong initiative is rated (4), an expanded response with a proactive part that is a weak initiative is rated (3). A *non-locally linked* turn is one in which the response-part is linked to a non-adjacent previous turn. If its initiative part is strong, it is rated (5), if it is weak it gets a (4). A *self-linking* turn is linked to the speaker's own preceding turn, and is "merely a repetition or simple reformulation of the speaker's preceding initiative or a continuation of this preceding turn" and is rated (4) or (3), depending on the strength of its initiative. An initiative becomes *ostentatiously self-linking* when its responsive part is "linked to the speaker's own preceding turn and *clearly ignoring an interjacent initiative* (strong or weak) by the interlocutor" (ibid.). Again this type of turn gets (5) or (4) depending on the strength of its initiative. A *preinitiative* is "a turn lacking substantial content but involving an initiative (such as a proposal) to open a new topic" (ibid.) (rating 3). A *deferring question* is a very weak initiative. A *preinitiative* is "a turn lacking substantial content but involving an initiative (such as a proposal) to open a new topic" (rating 3). A *deferring question* is a very weak initiative "asking for repetition, confirmation, or simple clarification of something contained in the interlocutor's preceding turn" (ibid.) (rating 2). An expanded response (cf. above) can have a *non-focal link*, which "involves remarking on, or challenging, the form and/or function of the interlocutor's preceding turn", like in meta-communicative conversational contributions, and has a rating of (5) or (4). Besides the expanded response, there is the *minimal response*, a turn linked to the interlocutor's adjacent turn and involving no initiating properties. This can be *adequate*, in which case the turn "is treated by the interlocutor as satisfying the demands of (being conditionally relevant to) his own preceding initiative" (ibid.); or *inadequate*, when it is "treated by the interlocutor as NOT satisfying the demands of, or as not even conditionally relevant to, his own preceding initiative" (ibid.). An adequate minimal response gets rating (2), an inadequate minimal response (0). A minimal response can also be *non-local* if it is a turn linked to a nonadjacent initiative, e.g. to a question posed

earlier on in the dialogue, and then gets rating (3). Finally, the authors distinguish *turn closings*, which close or propose to close the current topic, (rating 3). An inadequate turn is comparable to a "dispreferred response" in conversation analysis.

This detailed categorisation has proved useful for the analysis of how characters determine the development of a film story, and for the analysis of shifting dominances, for instance in the transfer of the dialogue from a novel to a filmed adaptation. Subtitlers do not need such an extensive categorisation: all the students therefore need to be taught is the concept of variable interactional dominance as a motor behind dialogue development. If they are aware of broad dominance patterns (interactional and other) they can reckon with these in their subtitles and check whether deletions or reformulations (e.g. of statements as questions) affect the relationship of the characters and their narrative function in a particular scene.

To conclude, two additional issues also have to be pointed out. First there is what Luckmann (1990: 54) calls the *multimodality of dialogue*, i.e. that verbal language is always combined with body-posture, gestures and facial expressions, especially in narrative film. Indeed, like the verbal exchanges themselves, a character's movements address the viewer as much as his or her intradiegetic interlocutor. Secondly, film makes use of dialogue's *local sensitivity* (Bergmann 1990: 206) to connect its verbal and visual signs. Local sensitivity denotes the structural tendency built into every topic talk to "turn to local matters", and therefore possibly to abandon its topic. *Local* in this sense refers to extra-conversational features, i.e. the environment and situational events. A form of local sensitivity is often exploited by film since the characters' words interact with what they see, or with their surroundings. For instances of such visual-verbal interaction I use the term *locally cued* dialogue. There are two types. A dialogue sequence as a whole or a long dialogue exchange can be locally cued on a higher level, when it is determined by the location at which it takes place. On the other hand, a type of locally cued dialogue that more closely resembles Bergmann's concept of local sensitivity occurs within a dialogue exchange, when one of the interactant refers to something (s)he sees. The difference with local sensitivity in daily speech is that the object a character refers to will be narratively relevant and usually focus rather than de-focus his/her talk in terms of the film story, or add symbolic meaning to the interaction.

6.   The narrative functions of film dialogue

I distinguish between three main types of dialogue, corresponding with three dialogue functions: *structuring dialogue*, *narrative-informative dialogue* and *interactional dialogue*; and between two types of scenes: scenes of transition (introductory, linking or closing) and core scenes. Introductory scenes are like dialogue initiatives in that their primary function is to introduce a new phase in the story and propel the narrative. Core scenes develop the action so introduced. Linking scenes can tie up scenes within a longer sequence, or can even connect film sequences. Closing scenes are rare in mainstream cinema, which is characterised by smooth, continuous development.

Structuring dialogue is the type of dialogue that is most subservient to broader narrative needs and a means of providing textual cohesion. Even though, formally, it progresses along initiative-response patterns, such dialogue turns regularly interact with the visuals rather than with other dialogue turns, whereas topics as well as interaction are dictated first and foremost by the need to promote narrative continuity within or across scenes. Structuring dialogue fulfils a function that is comparable to that of transitional scenes, but on a different textual level. Transitional scenes, in fact, contain mostly structuring dialogue. This type of dialogue usually creates the co-textual situation for core *interactional dialogue* and/or *narrative dialogue* to develop, a distinction based on dominant functions. *Interactional* dialogue uses dialogue's interplay of symmetry and asymmetry, its IR patterns, and character-motivated topic shifts, to promote narrative continuity through the interactional development of character relations. The influence of narrative manipulation can still be traced (e.g., in the introduction of turns for informative rather than interactional purposes) but less obviously so than in structuring or narrative dialogue. In some cases interactional exchanges are arranged so as to give the scene a climactic structure. A typical feature of film dialogue is indeed the manner in which it reflects the film's traditional division into sequences and scenes on a lower level, in its structure of exchanges interrupted by events extraneous to the dialogue, and topic-bound turn series. In the last dialogue type, *narrative-informative dialogue*, narrative manipulation dominates the dialogic interaction throughout. The exchanges and turn series are determined by the "factual" information that needs to be conveyed. Obviously, the use of quantitative, semantic and interactional dominance in the film dialogues will sometimes be dictated by the need to supply information efficiently while hiding it in natural-sounding dialogue,

whereas in others, it will effectively serve to develop character relations. In scenes with predominantly informative dialogue one or more characters may become an *intradiegetic narrator,* without ever explicitly being presented as such. This character will have access to narratively important information because of his or her social position, intellectual abilities etc., and whatever (s)he says will be crucial for story development. The narrative information the character conveys, will be spread over one or more dialogue exchanges, whereby the interlocutor serves as a "prompter". Functions can be switched as the need arises. Besides, the interaction will also be plausibly guided by the type of relationship the two characters have in the film. The dialogue's narrative functions are therefore very complex. It hands out information propositionally and interactively, and the interactive moves of the characters reflect, as much as they determine, their position in the film. Moreover, all exchanges are also subjected to the dramatic requirements of scene construction (cf. supra). Structuring dialogue could be regarded as a sub-category of narrative dialogue, but it is useful to maintain the distinction since its function is to structure more than to inform, even if it goes without saying that "pure" instances of any of these forms are rare. It is more usual for the different types to coexist or to mingle within one scene, and the categories can be used to analyse how the different dialogue functions required to constitute a scene eventually determine its composition.

7.   Film dialogue analysis and subtitling

Generally speaking, a better insight into the way film dialogue functions will help students recognize how dialogic exchanges that work only sequentially and locally in real-life situations, are determined and supported by the film's entire sign system.

     More concretely, some insight in "(film) dialogue theory" will help students recognize types of scenes and types of dialogue. Subtitlers with an eye for the way, in which dialogue functions and relations of dominance can change over a scene, will be able to compensate for losses more efficiently. It will allow them to distinguish between dialogues dispensing mainly propositionally versus interactively conveyed information, and help them to make well-founded decisions related to cueing and segmentation. Rather than basing segmentation on the production of neat syntactic and/or semantic units only, a decision relating to segmentation may have to be founded on the structuring function

of an (introductory) exchange or, in another instance, on the initiative-response patterns reflecting a struggle for dominance.

Collaboration between visual and verbal signs is at its strongest in scenes of transition. On the other hand, the interactional patterns of a core scene are often presented in a condensed form in the introductory scene that precedes it. In some cases the subtitler may be able to let the visual signs carry the "message" whereas his/her translation must underscore interactional patterns, in other cases this may be the other way round, if the exchange makes obvious use of dialogue's multimodality.

A basic knowledge of Linell *et al.*'s (1988) initiative-response patterns will make students aware of the danger of simply rewriting dialogue into short and simple syntactic structures. They will be conscious of the role strong and weak interactional moves play in the development of the story, but also of how they are overdetermined by the film's other systems. The concept of local sensitivity and locally cued turns, can be used to draw the students' attention to the continuous collaboration between word and image on different levels. Awareness that IR patterns are generated locally, will also make the future translators recognise which disruptions in these patterns the subtitles must underscore rather than gloss over in a bid to produce legible text. Finally, awareness of the IR features within a turn or their functioning across scenes, can be a help when deciding what to omit: the response part may be redundant, whereas the initive part takes the narrative forward.

In order to make the theory more accessible, a more or less detailed analysis of one scene is required. The time needed to explain the above in class, including the analysis of one brief scene, takes 3 to 4 hours, but a simplified version is quite feasible. Besides, not all concepts need to be covered in the sample analysis in order to give students a working knowledge of how film dialogues work. Below, I look at a sequence from Mike Leigh's *Secrets and Lies* (1996) by way of example. The students would, of course, have to see the subtitled sequence as well.[6]

8.   Analysis of a sequence from *Secrets and Lies* (1996)

As our sequence opens, the protagonist, "… HORTENSE is sitting waiting in a public building. Posters, noticeboards, a man sitting waiting along a corridor. A phone rings. A RECEPTIONIST stands up into view behind a hatch" (Leigh 1997: 19). The whole excerpt is part of the film's exposition and therefore

highly informative. Hortense is seeing a social worker to find out if and how she might be able to trace her birth mother. It is not until this sequence that the viewer actually learns that Hortense was an adopted child. At the same time, director Mike Leigh uses the sequence to paint the portrait of a professionally friendly but rushed social worker, Jenny (Lesley Manville). Hortense, for her part, is insecure and soft-spoken.

The contrast between the two women is set off by the structuring/interactional dialogue of the introductory scene (see EXCERPT 1) in the hall of the "public building", and supported by the film's visual signs. The scene introduces the characters to each other (and Jenny to the viewers) and takes them to the location where the next scene will take place, the social worker's office. At some point in the introductory scene, Jenny comes running down the stairs, whereas Hortense is sitting down as she arrives. Jenny opens the conversation and barely gives Hortense the time to react. In fact, she starts walking towards her office right away, telling Hortense to "come this way". Together, they move away from the camera, which follows them as Jenny keeps running and talking. Her last turn is a complex one. Its response part ("Good.") rounds off her initial turn series with Hortense. She pronounces the word "good" as she is opening the door to the office. The initiative part of her turn (EXCERPT 2) is *locally cued*, i.e. it refers to and complains about her working environment and achieves three things. It connects talk and setting, provides a negative comment on the setting, and "installs" Hortense. The second part of her initiative ("Now…" ibid.) starts off a new phase in the conversation, and a new scene, with a strong initiative (a series of questions). Jenny is obviously in control.

In the subtitles hardly anything remains of the opening turn series (EXCERPT 1). The structuring/realistic dialogue ("Come this way") as well as all the polite formulas have gone, but the visuals still convey that Jenny motions Hortense along and that she barely gives her the time to respond. The viewer/reader is guided by this visually conveyed information which indicates that Jenny's opening lines are formulas, but formulas that Hortense should normally be given the time to respond to, and the whole scene therefore brings out Jenny's haste. By doing this, it also fulfils a structuring function, establishing Jenny's overall dominance for the rest of the conversation. Interactional patterns may seem less important in this scene because it is an introductory one, but, as I have pointed out, film narrative works cumulatively: trends in character relations are often introduced (visually and verbally) in scenes preceding the ones developing a confrontation (Remael 2000). Meanwhile, the surroundings

identify Jenny as some sort of official, and the initiative part of her last turn, which criticises her surroundings *is* rendered in the subtitles (EXCERPT 2) Due to the rather flat translation ("prison cell" has become "the place is cramped"), Jenny's criticism loses some of its bite, but the visual signs help,[7] and her complaint as such is maintained. More importantly, Jenny's abruptness is enhanced as "Have a seat, make yourself at home" becomes "sit down" (EX-CERPT 2).

What do I tell the students? The reduced rendering of the introductory scene's structuring/interactional dialogue works because character and camera movement compensate for the loss. When Hortense tries to say "O hello", the camera focuses on her facial expression as she is broken off. Visual narration is also sufficiently clear to replace the structuring turn "Come this way." On the other hand, a subtitle reading "Goeiemo..(Hell…)" would underline the dispreferred interaction between the two. But then again, the subtitles do not render Jenny's obviously perfunctory attempt at kindness ("How are you, all right?"). All in all, not much is lost, in spite of the cuts.

I do point out, however, that in Flanders subtitlers rely increasingly on the audience's supposed knowledge of English, which — in my opinion — sometimes leads them to cut too much. The idea behind this policy obviously is that one need not obstruct the image with subtitles if this is not absolutely necessary. On the other hand, it reveals the "imperialist" nature of subtitles (cf. Danan 1995, Gottlieb 2001 and in this volume) and goes hand in hand with a growing knowledge of English as a foreign language. If this trend persists worldwide, which it is obviously doing, it will be reflected in subtitling practice, increasing the "supportive" nature of this form of screen translation. However, in subtitling across wider culture gaps, more of the interactional information may get lost if only the essence of the message is subtitled. Students should therefore bring their knowledge of the target language culture and its relations with the source language culture to bear in their translation decisions. In this subtitling behaves like any other form of translation: the greater the cultural divide, the greater the risk of translational shifts, and — possibly — the greater the need to render interactional moves as well as narrative/structuring dialogue.

EXCERPT 3 renders the opening dialogue of the office scene. It should be pointed out that Jenny's expanded response merely underscores the link provided by the change in place. The purely linking or retroactive part can therefore easily be dropped. Looked at from an interactional point of view, these cuts ("Good. Now, before we go any further.") once again enhance Jenny's abruptness, but here too this is compensated by the camera which *shows* the

viewer Hortense's verbal and non-verbal responses (e.g., a smile, indicating she may be slightly amused by Jenny's behaviour).

What is retained? First, Jenny's request to produce some form of identification, because this is an essential part of the procedure. Secondly, Jenny's comment on the "red tape" involved in whatever it is that Hortense is about to undertake. This is suggestive if not explicit narrative information, because it refers to a story line that will not be rounded off in this scene: we do not yet know that Hortense is trying to find her birth mother; moreover, it gives Jenny a human touch. Thirdly, the subtitles retain "… would you like a Rolo?", and Jenny's reference to her lunch break a few lines down are also retained in the translation. This apparently locally cued talk (it is their lunch hour) has a narrative function too: it is small talk, but Jenny would really like to go out to eat. Moreover, in film jargon such an indirect or direct reference to time is called a *deadline*, it keeps the story going and gives the viewer a cue about the time span covered. Here, it also helps to characterise Jenny: it is *she* who introduces the topic and, it is clear she is in a hurry.

So far so good. However, Jenny's references to food and her generally rushed behaviour are signs of her impatience, which is also important for a subsequent scene. This link is lost when the subtitler fails to make the connection with the present talk about food at a later stage in the same scene (EX-CERPT 4). By then Jenny has given Hortense her adoption papers, and is telling her she will give her some time to look at them. The social worker's question "Can I get you anything?" has been translated into Dutch as "Heb je niets nodig?" ("Don't you need anything?"), thereby losing the narratively functional reference to food. On the other hand, the subtitles tighten the narrative when the translator gives in to her urge to clarify, following the norm that subtitles have to be concise, well-structured and clear because the viewer must be able to grasp them at a glance. When Jenny hands over the adoption file to Hortense she says "It's all about you", which is translated as "Je hele geschiedenis" (Your entire history).

If one considers the sequence in its entirety, the cuts underscore the characters' respective positions and functions. Jenny is dominant because she is the official who has all the information, and she functions as the film's intradiegetic narrator. As a result she has quantitative, interactional and possibly also semantic dominance. In the film dialogue she takes care of 79.7% of the words uttered and 51.4 % of all turns. In the subtitles this has become 80.6% and 55.3 % respectively. If we look at what happens with interactional dominance in terms of direct questions, by way of example, we see that Jenny's

dominance again increases, if only slightly. In percentages she goes from 86.2% to 88.5% of the number of direct questions asked.

Even where the subtitler changes two of Hortense's "statements" into questions this does not affect interactional patterns (EXCERPT 5). As Hortense is looking through her adoption file, she comes across the name of her birth mother and says "That's her" and "That's her signature". In the film, her intonation turns the statements into questions. The subtitles render her questions as direct questions, formally as well. This is again the result of the general subtitling norm that advises translators to strive for clarity: if a sentence is a question, make clear it is. In the present case, Hortense's questions remain *deferring questions*, i.e. *weak initiatives*, asking for repetition, or confirmation, or clarification (cf. above). In other words, the target text's formal explicitation simply maintains the source text's interactional pattern and Jenny retains interactional dominance.

All the same, students should be made aware that reformulating a statement that functions as a question in question form, may appear to promote clarity at first sight, but may also have an influence on the interactional patterns of a scene in other cases than the present one, and interactional patterns in their turn have specific narrative functions. Even if the source text statement is turned into a question by the character's intonation, a formal change in the subtitle may imply a shift.[8] Besides, if the source and target languages are close enough, the viewer will be able to recognise the question when (s)he hears it and does not need the structuring help of the subtitler.

9.   Conclusion

I am sometimes surprised by the limited knowledge (language) students have of the mechanics of filmic story-telling and its many semiotic systems. I am therefore convinced that future subtitlers would benefit greatly from spending more time and effort on the analysis of film narrative, and in particular on the study of film dialogue. Above, I have tried to illuminate a number of concepts that can be used to structure such an analysis, since they allow the student to examine dialogue features within a narrative context. The two most immediate gains, would — I believe — be, firstly, an increased insight in the way narrative strands are woven into the dialogues and help structure scenes, and secondly a greater awareness of how interactional patterns are both narrative-supporting and supported by the film's other semiotic systems.

Notes

1. This hypothesis in based on research in progress.

2. This may well be part of the curriculum for some.

3. On the "horizontal" level of communication between characters […] it is obvious that conversational features ("maximes conversationelles", Grice), dialectic models of exchanges and interventions (Goffman, Roulet), and pragmatic markers or markers of cohesion, as well as non-linguistic features (looks, postures, expressions and gestures), and para-verbal features (voice, rhythm) of conversation render the complexity of the interactions […], but variations in camera position, framing, editing and a form of playfulness with voices "off" or "on" are also continually involved in providing the exchanges with structure. What is more, film dialogue is doubly overdetermined in a different sense as well. In fiction film, conversations are embedded in the story they help progress […] Just like conversations on the stage, filmic conversations systematically function retro-actively and pro-actively from the exact point in the diegesis and the narrative where they occur […] At the same time a "vertical" level of communication intervenes between the film and its audience. On screen a conversation *between* people is going on, but meanwhile a story is also being told *to* (or a form of discourse is being addressed *to*) the film's potential spectators. (my rendering)

4. As Marková writes in the first volume: "The authors come from different disciplines within the social and human sciences, and derive their theoretical positions from various traditions including phenomenology, semiotics, pragmatics, the sociology of knowledge, ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism and German expressionism" (1990: 1).

5. At some point conversation analysis' adjacency pair structure needs to be explained. Because: "Once it is recognized that some current or "first" action projects some appropriate "second" it becomes relevant to examine the various ways in which a second speaker may accomplish such a second, or analysably withold its accomplishment, or avoid its accomplishment by undertaking some other activity." (Atkinson and Heritage 1984: 6)

6. *Secrets & Lies* tells the story of a middle-class young black woman, Hortense Cumberbatch (Marianne Jean-Baptiste), whose adoptive mother dies at the beginning of the film, and who goes in search of her birth mother. Her search leads her to white working-class Cynthia Purley (Brenda Blethyn), and her rather dysfunctional family. Mike Leigh's film has a strong story line, driven by Hortense's explorations, and side lines telling the stories of the other characters' problematic lives, all of which come together in a highly emotional climax followed by a denouement. However, Mike Leigh is also interested in character study and social/interpersonal conflict.

7. As the screenplay says: "The room is bare and institutional" (Leigh 1997: 20).

8. This issue warrants further investigation.

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APPENDIX: EXCERPTS FROM *SECRETS & LIES*

EXCERPT 1

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
J: Hortense. Hallo. Jenny Ford. Nice to meet you.	203. Hortense, hallo. Jennie Ford.
H: O hell…	
J: Come this way. How are you, all right?	
H: I'm fine, thank you.	
J: Good. […]	

EXCERPT 2

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
H: Good. Sorry about this prison cell. We've been banging on about it for years, but there you go. Have a seat, make yourself at home. Now, before we go any further, have you got any ID? Passport, driving licence?	204. We zitten wat krap. We zeuren er al jaren over. Ga zitten. [*The place is cramped. We've been nagging about it for years. Sit down.*]

EXCERPT 3

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
J: […] Now, before we go any further. Have you got any ID? Passport, driving licence?	205. Heb je papieren? [*Got any papers?*] Rijbewijs? [*Driver's licence?*]
H: Oh, yeah.	
J: You'll have to get used to all this red tape - would you like a Rolo?	206. Er komen nog meer paperassen. Snoepje? [*There will be more red tape. Candy?*]
H: No, thank you.	
J: Are you sure?	
H: Yeah. There you go.	
J: Mm. Have a shufti. That's fine Hortense. Ta.	207. Even kijken [*Let's have a look*]
H: Thank you.	
J: Are you on your lunch break?	208. Is dit je lunchpauze? [*Is this your lunch break?*]
H: Yeah, an extended one.	Ja, een lange. [*Yes, a long one.*]
J: Have you 'ad any lunch?	209. Heb je al geluncht? [*Have you had lunch?*]
H: No, not yet.	
J: No, me neither. So what d' you do?	210. Ik ook niet. [*Me neither*] En, wat doe je? [*And, what do you do*]

EXCERPT 4

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
J: Okay. Have a look at this.	261. Neem dit even door [*Have a look at this.*]
H: What is it?	
J: It's all about you.	262. Je hele geschiedenis [*Your entire history*]
I'll tell you what. I'll leave it with you and I'll pop back in a few minutes. Can I get you anything?	263. Weet je wat? [*You know what?*] 264. Ik laat je er even alleen mee. [*I'll leave you with it for a while*] 265. Heb je niets nodig? [*Don't you need anything?*]
H: No. Thank you.	

EXCERPT 5

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
J: How're you doing — all right?	266. Hoe gaat het? [*How are you doing?*]
H: Thank you. Cynthia Rose Purley. That's her.	267. Cynthia Rose Purley. 268. Is zij het? [*Is that her?*]
JENNY nods.	
J: Cynthia Rose. It's a nice name, isn't it?	269. Een mooie naam, niet? [*Pretty name, isn't it?*]
H: That's her signature.	270. Is dat haar handtekening? [*Is that her signature?*]
J: Mm. Does that feel strange?	

WORD & SUBTITLE COUNT

FILM DIALOGUE	SUBTITLES
NUMBER OF WORDS (903)	**NUMBER OF WORDS (554)**
JENNY 720 = 79.7% HORTENSE 183 = 20.3%	447 = 80.6% 107 = 19.4%
NUMBER OF TURNS (74)	**NUMBER OF TURNS (38)**
JENNY 38 = 51.4% HORTENSE 36 = 48.6%	21 = 55.3% 17 = 44.7%
NUMBER OF DIRECT QUESTIONS (29)	**NUMBER OF DIRECT QUESTIONS (26)**
JENNY 25 = 86.2% HORTENSE 4 = 13.8%	23 = 88.5% 3 = 11.5%

Language awareness through training in subtitling

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> *All humans learn better, faster, more effectively, more naturally, and more enjoyably through rapid and holistic subliminal channels.*
>
> (Robinson 1997: 2)

1. Introduction

The introduction of audiovisual translation as an independent course in the curricula of translator training degrees is a recent phenomena which is often looked upon as a means to give initial training to future audiovisual translators. In the knowledge that many of the students taking a degree in translation will not become audiovisual translators, one might question the use of such training for those who, for instance, wish to become technical translators or interpreters. The introduction of training in audiovisual translation — particularly in subtitling — in a translation course in Portugal[1] came to prove that, rather than becoming proficient subtitlers, the students attending such courses gained skills and language awareness that reflected itself in their performance in other courses and activities. This we believe to be due to the junction of two elements — translation and audiovisuals — that have been accepted as assets to language learning in general; and to the fact that subtitling calls for an enormous variety of skills that can be improved through well staged activities covering the different steps of the subtitling process.

2.   Language learning through translation

It is common knowledge that the use of language is in the making of human-kind and that language acquisition and usage can take on different forms, each of which plays an important role in one's personal and cultural identity. Specialists of different areas have not, however, come to a consensus as to the ideal approach to language teaching and learning and, in the present eclectic environment, language teachers can fall back on theories and techniques which will support their choices whichever the approach taken. Robert Tuck (1998) in his article "Translation – still taboo?" lists some of the most common approaches teachers have turned to in their practice. They are undoubtedly numerous and varied, covering from the Direct Method, to the Structural/Audio-Lingual Approach, to Communicative Approaches, Humanistic Approaches, the Natural Approach, Chomskian Cognitive Approaches, the Lexical Approach, only to mention a few amongst the most popular.

All tested and tried, these last decades have seen the ebb and flow of different methodologies and teachers have come to return to those which best suit their particular needs. Teachers' approaches to language teaching are quite often dictated by their students' needs and profiles as well as by their working environment and their own experience as language learners. Taking it as a premise that, in normal circumstances, the natural acquisition of the mother tongue comes with no need for formal education — it is part of the overall process of growth — the issue of language learning gains importance when one speaks of the learning of foreign languages. Most people learn these at school, under rather unnatural circumstances and often leave school with formal knowledge of the intricacies of such languages but with little fluency in their real usage. For decades, before the surge of teacher training programmes based on many of the theories and approaches referred by Tuck, most foreign language teaching was done through translation (Malmkjaer 1998). Even though in the last decades of the twentieth century there was an effort to move away from translation as a language learning/teaching strategy and to take language learning/teaching towards functional and communicative approaches, nowadays, teachers are no longer sceptical about using their students' mother tongue as an aid to the teaching of a second language and have come to terms with the fact that translation is, in fact, a "learner-preferred strategy […] an inevitable part of second language acquisition" (Atkinson quoted in Stoddart 2000: 1).

This is true if we take into account the large amount of "translation" people carry out even within their own mother language, whenever there is a need for

the interpretation and clarification of meaning, and mostly, when they are confronted with texts in foreign languages now to be found everywhere, ranging from the goods on supermarket shelves, to news and programmes on television, to Web pages and video games. In these less conventional learning environments, people of all ages are often unconsciously transferring between different linguistic and cultural codes, comparing and decoding, inferring and drawing meanings that are only theirs, because these are the result of personal translation processes. What comes as obvious is that each of these experiences leads to language learning opportunities, all based on translation efforts, far from the traditional classroom setting.

3.   Language learning through audiovisuals

One of the greatest changes in learning scenes was brought about by the advent of television. One may now say that with the mass media, barriers fell and global communication facilities brought about new meanings to the very concepts of language and translation. Whenever the button is turned on, TV viewers are forced to sharpen their senses to adjust to the specificities of different types of texts which call for different interpretation skills. People are often taken on roller coaster rides along images and sounds that come and go at a pace that cannot be altered, often making the greatest of efforts to keep in track with the multitude of signs to be decoded. Understanding comes with multiple translation efforts which are all the more demanding if the verbal component comes in a code that is not fully mastered: a foreign language. Different countries have taken to different language transfer solutions — dubbing or subtitling — in order to make foreign spoken programmes accessible to their audiences and, in so doing, different opportunities are given to viewers to use audiovisual texts as a means for language awareness and acquisition.

Conventional educational systems have found the resourcefulness of audiovisual materials and have gradually brought them into the classroom, most of the times to add "colour" and variety to lessons on different subjects. They have also been used to advantage in language learning situations and have become interesting tools which bring in a touch of realia to classes that would otherwise be more theoretical or less interesting.

One of the main reasons for introducing audiovisual translation for language learning/teaching lies in the fact that students are given the opportunity to think about language within an enjoyable holistic approach. The amusement

element that is often connected to audiovisuals and the novelty in discovering new meaning conveyers proves Robinson's premise right (1997: 3):

> As teaching methods move away from traditional analytical modes, learning speeds up and becomes more enjoyable and more effective; as it approaches a subliminal extreme, students learn enormous quantities of material at up to ten times the speed of traditional methods while hardly even noticing that they're learning anything: to their surprise, however, they can perform complicated tasks much more rapidly and confidently and accurately than they ever believed possible.

The complex make-up of audiovisual texts and the specificity of language transfer between different languages and codes allows for an enormous range of activities that enhance language awareness and increase communicative competence. Exercises can range from the receptive skills to the productive skills, and can take the form of gap filling exercises, gist summaries, note taking, and vocabulary expansion, among many others. In each instance different aspects of language usage is exercised and if, in each case, time is given to the analysis of the changes language undergoes in each instance, greater language awareness is inevitably gained.

4.   Training in subtitling – an excuse for improving language awareness

In Portugal, a traditionally subtitling country, first tentative steps are being taken towards the introduction of audiovisual translation modules at university level. In the particular case of the previously mentioned degree, subtitling was introduced as a fully fledged course under the assumption that students taking a degree in translation should be given the opportunity to try as many forms of translation as possible. Given that subtitling is a national trend, it appeared reasonable to have a 45 hour module, at undergraduate level, to introduce students to the intricacies of the subtitling process.

The course was designed to be highly practical and to mimic, as far as possible, the working environment that is found in most Portuguese subtitling companies. Professional equipment was bought[2] and a true to life project was designed to frame the whole course. Students were invited to subtitle didactic audiovisual materials to be used in the teaching of automotive engineering[3] and, in order to do so, they interacted with their "client", professional engineers and some of the teachers who were to use these materials in their classes. The theoretical standpoint for the course was found in the functionalist Skopos Theorie which was adapted to the specifications of this type of translation.

Falling back on Christiane Nord's (1991: 144) formula:

> *Who* transmits to *whom*, *what for*, by *which medium*, *where*, *when*, and *why*, a text with *what function*? On what subject matter does he/she say *what*, (*what not*), in *what order*, using *what non-verbal elements*, in *which words*, in *what kind of sentences*, in *which tone*, and to *what effect*?

students were led along each step of the translation process. Once students were made aware of the importance of each component in the audiovisual context, they were drawn into the specificities of subtitling through special training in four areas: media text analysis, see Remael's article in this volume; script analysis; translation/editing and spotting/cueing. The experience proved to be highly motivating and involved students and teachers who interacted at various levels. Throughout the project, and at each stage, all those taking part in the project often stopped to reflect upon their work and to monitor progress as well as to find possible solutions for the various problems that appeared at each stage. Right from the beginning of the project something came across as "more than had been bargained for", students were thinking about their working process and were voicing their findings. In so doing they were showing a language awareness that was new to all. They were drawing upon knowledge they had gained in other courses and, as was later found, they were transposing some of the techniques to other activities and other subjects. By the end of the course, not all the tapes had been subtitled, however, both teachers and students were completely aware that in the process of learning how to subtitle they had acquired language awareness and were doubtlessly far more proficient both in the source language (English) and in their mother tongue (See Henrik Gottlieb's article in this volume).

These findings were an invitation to further analysis of how much can be learnt at each step of the way of the subtitling process. It became obvious that through training in subtitling students can improve their language skills and that the various techniques can be used to advantage in the training of translators in general and even in the teaching of languages.

5.   Language awareness every step of the way

Step 1: Media text analysis
To be fully proficient in the field, the audiovisual translator needs to have basic knowledge in the making of media texts and, in order to understand the audiovisual text, he/she needs to acquire the tools for semiotic analysis.

Audiovisual translators must be fully aware that "all media texts are constructed using media language and that the codes which are chosen convey certain cultural information" (Selby and Cowdrey 1995: 13), and so, it is important that teachers make their students aware of the way signs are manipulated to produce meanings. Directors create the illusion of reality through various techniques in view of specific effects. Such construction is achieved through *mise-en-scène* and technical codes. The former overlaps with theatre — settings, props, behaviour of the actors or figures, costumes and make-up; the latter are compositional choices which are made whenever certain camera angles, lighting or shot sizes are chosen. These codes are consciously used to produce the effects which are usually unconsciously taken in by the viewer as a perceptive whole. Even though most codes are used to produce particular effects, these are not to be reduced to single pre-fixed meanings. Different interpretations will rise at every new reading and different audiences will relate to these codes in conformity with their particular cultural background.

When analysing media texts it is also important to understand how the narrative unfolds and to be aware that far from being natural, every narrative is "the result of manipulation and editing information together" (ibid.: 30). The teacher should take it as his/her task to help students break down filmic text into its compositional parts so as to discover overt and covert narratives and meanings.

Narrative analysis is complex and can be time consuming, yet it is worth taking some time to go through three basic levels of analysis with students. Analysis can start at a simple descriptive level, in which you describe what is happening in the story. Then it can go into the interpretation of the explicit meanings offered by the text, and finally it can end at a more complex level, that of discovering implied meanings. This last phase is that in which one is taken to consider "why things are presented in the way they are and how this relates to dominant social values. It is this that makes analysis at this level a more critical and analytical exercise" (ibid.: 34).

Still within media text analysis it is important to be aware of the way each text falls into a particular category. Whenever we watch a film or a TV programme we know what to expect of that particular genre or type. Part of our enjoyment comes from seeing our expectations fulfilled. A solid notion of categorisation is important to establish style and category norms. Each genre will have semiotic codes of its own and these too need to be taught and learnt for a better understanding of meaning. Last but not least, and in order to attain full comprehension of the make up of media text, one must be conscious of

agency issues: broadcasting policies, political bias, financial considerations, etc., and the way in which these have or will influence the final piece.

Up until this point we have not spoken about linguistic codes. These are dealt with in the phases that follow. For novices in the field, the awareness that in media texts meaning is greatly conveyed via non-verbal codes is a magical discovery and even language is accessed under a new light. Words seem to gain new meanings and even when they are purely denotative, they are questioned as if they could all be carrying a hidden sense.

When it comes to language analysis, media text allows for the improvement of receptive skills: predicative skills, extracting specific information, getting the general picture, inferring opinion and attitude, deducing meaning from context, recognising function and discourse patterns and markers (cf. Harmer 1983). Language is given in context, and listening exercises can be fine tuned to syntactic, semantic and pragmatic interpretation.

Step 2: Script analysis

In an ideal world, audiovisual translators would always be supplied with "a post-production dialogue list or a script or montage list. Scripts or montage lists are preferable since they will incorporate additional directorial information. Most useful of all would be an accurate post-production script with glossary" (Luyken *et al.* 1991: 50–52).

Unfortunately, the proposal for an European Broadcasting Union programme standard for TV programme material to be subtitled, which was put forward in 1987, is far from being enforced and, often enough, subtitlers need to work on all but accurate scripts and, in extreme cases, the programme has to be transcribed for lack of any written support. However annoying the situation may be to the professional subtitler, inadequate scripts are excellent tools for translator training or even language learning in general.

On the one hand, incomplete or incorrect scripts make wonderful gap-filling exercises. The transcription of film dialogue, on the other hand, is a wholesome listening comprehension task. This exercise is particularly difficult when the sound track lacks clarity, when the vocabulary is unknown or with different characters' accents. Exploited to its full, a tiresome and minute activity may revert into multiple benefits to the language learner and into profound language awareness to the translator.

But even when the perfect script or dialogue-list is provided, there is work to be done with it. Dialogue analysis is still called for and character "face" (Hatim and Mason 2000) need be understood. Aline Remael (2001: 8 and in this

volume) clearly concludes on the benefits of dialogue analysis when she says:

> The two most immediate gains, would — I believe — be, firstly, an increased insight in the way narrative strands are woven into the dialogues and help structure scenes, and secondly a greater awareness of how interactional patterns are both narrative-supporting and supported by the film's other semiotic systems.

Systematically integrated in the language learning class or translator training syllabus, script analysis proves to be a precious aid to the development of receptive skills and the improvement of foreign language competence. The greater the command of the passive working language the easier the job of translating, for less effort will be needed in the decoding process.

Step 3: Translation/Editing

When talking about subtitling in a country as Portugal, one automatically connects it to translation because very little intra-lingual subtitling is done. However, for academic purposes, it appeared important that students be offered the opportunity to think about the implications of both intra- and inter-lingual subtitling. In both events, particular focus is given to modality transfer: the same or different languages are transferred from the oral to the written mode. If students begin by gaining insight into the modality shifts within their own native language, it will then be easier to include these when subtitling foreign audiovisual materials, transferring from a second language into their mother tongue. Whenever oral text is transferred into a written form, editing is in order and the constraints involved are numerous. Hatim and Mason (2000: 430–431) clearly set out such constraints in four distinct points:

1. The shift in mode from speech to writing.
2. Factors which govern the medium or channel in which meaning is to be conveyed.
3. The reduction of the source text as a consequence of (2) above.
4. The requirement of matching the visual image.

Working through each of these points with students is usually painstaking and one of the main concerns is to avoid the urge to "cut". To many, editing means reduction. It is easier to omit, thus eliminating important prosodic elements, redundancies, and all the colour and flavour of the spoken word. The temptation to produce grammatically correct written language often leads to a completely new message and unfortunate blunders, and the original will always be there to underline inaccuracies. Contrastive analysis between both modes and

languages can be helpful in detecting the elements which should be kept and in deciding which features of each mode are to be respected in the transfer. Once mastered in intra-lingual subtitling, these techniques can be used in inter-lingual transfers and the whole translation process is given a different outlook.

Some people question where and when the translation and the editing begin and end in audiovisual translation. If the subtitler is conscious of the implications of mode transfer, he/she can translate and edit simultaneously; if not, there will be a need for two or three distinct phases: first translation, then editing, and finally, in most cases, subtitle composition. This can be time consuming and aggravating and can be an all-in-one process if systematically trained. Given that the university's main task is to train students for professional life and since time and pressure are in the essence of audiovisual translation, students must be trained to actually produce subtitles, under circumstances resembling those of real life situations.

Various approaches can be taken towards achieving this "condensed package". One that proves to be particularly effective is working on projects that have a practical end. Translation as such should not be new to these students so they should be completely aware that "translation is a highly complicated process requiring rapid multilayered analyses of semantic fields, syntactic structures, the sociology and psychology of reader- or listener-re-sponse, and cultural difference" (Robinson 1997: 50) but yet they need to be reminded of such intricacies which, in the case of translation for subtitling, are further complicated by the constraints inherent to the medium.

In audiovisual translation the problems which arise are somewhat similar to those of literary translation with the extra stress that the fidelity factor is dictated by constraints that lie beyond words or languages. Whereas in written translation fidelity lies in two extreme points, the source-text or the target-text, in audiovisual translation fidelity is particularly due to an audience that, like the receiver of simultaneous interpretation, is in need of communicative effectiveness, rather than in search of artistic effect -as is the case in literary translation- or of exact equivalence -as happens with technical translation. According to Kussmal (1995: 149):

> The function of a translation is dependent on the knowledge, expectations, values and norms of the target readers, who are again influenced by the situation they are in and by their culture. These functions determine whether the function of the source text or passages in the source text can be preserved or have to be modified or even changed.

One can never forget that the main function of media texts is, in the first place, entertainment and subtitles should serve their purpose without imposing too much of an extra effort on the viewer. The audiovisual reader is in a completely different situation from that of the reader of a written text. Time constraints are highly determining for reading time is limited and, in most circumstances, the subtitle continuum does not allow to backtrack and reread a part that was not fully understood.[4]

The above said does not mean that audiovisual translation students do not need to work on their translation skills. What needs to be reinforced is the fact that subtitler's art is that of effective editing so as to make the most of turning the spoken word into written strings that are rich enough to convey a multitude of meanings and yet simultaneously straightforward and clear, and to go as unnoticed as possible.

If in the previous points we concentrated on receptive skills, here we can now dedicate some attention to the productive skills. The end of subtitling is the production of a new text, in a different mode and perhaps in a different language, and, in optimal circumstances, in the subtitler's native language. Often students have greater ease in speaking their mother tongue than in writing it. Writing calls for accuracy and this can only be acquired through training. Translators are, against all odds, writers. In the case of subtitling, the written text is a condensation of multiple interpretation efforts. It will always be a summary, a commentary of its own kind. It will often say what was not conveyed by words, and yet, should add no more than is required for the understanding of a scene. How much can be said, added or omitted can only be known when full understanding of the source text, all codes included, is achieved, and when complete mastery of the target language, in its written form, is guaranteed — perhaps the subtitler's distopia. Once again, the teacher's role should be one of conducting future professionals to greater language awareness and, in this particular case, to the perfecting of the written mode of the target language. Creating coherent and expressive subtitles calls for the mastering of the target language's syntactic structure and semantic wealth. All translators should have a perfect command of their language of production and this is so much more important for subtitlers who often have to manipulate language for technical reasons. Besides correction, from subtitlers we also expect effectiveness, expressivity, concision and economy. When all four attributes are attained we are in face of the best of performances.

Step 4: Spotting/Cueing

Subtitlers in different countries', and often in different companies in the same country, have different approaches to spotting and cueing and carry out these tasks at different points in the subtitling process (See Diana Sánchez's article in this volume). Some people work directly from spotting lists, others spot after the translation/editing has been done. In terms of translator training programmes what appears to be important is that students be trained to work within the time constraints that spotting imposes. This too leads to further perfecting of editing techniques. Often, spotting is done at the time subtitles are inserted in specific subtitling equipment. If that is the case, spotting/ inserting could be the time for checking, correcting and adjusting. In spite of the technical constraints that teachers often find when training students on how to spot and cue — lack of specific equipment or even lack of classroom time —, this part of the subtitling process should not be neglected. However time consuming it may be, working on a one-to-one basis, sitting at the side of each student and going over his/her work consistently may mean crossing the fine line between training the average and the good subtitling professional. At this point, teachers and students can go over all the elements that were covered in their course, systematically checking on concepts and drilling routines which have not yet been fully mastered. The teacher will be taking on the role of a reviser and the student will be broken into the habit of checking his/her work as a natural part of the activity.

5.   Conclusions

In all, I tend to agree with Robinson's "shuttle model" for translator training; when I defend that audiovisual translation can serve didactic purposes. I believe that if students are made to think about text as a multilayered complex that can be systematically taken apart to later be put back together, they will acquire knowledge that will speed up their performance and they will also gain awareness of the difficulties which are inherent to the job. Robinson (1997: 247) concludes:

> And this is the desideratum of professional training: to help students first to learn the analytical procedures, then to sublimate them, make them so unconscious, so automatic, so fast, that translation at professional speeds becomes possible.

As we have seen, language is far more than verbal codes. Language learning cannot be limited to the acquisition of vocabulary and the mastery of grammatical structure. Audiovisual translation, when dealt with in a systematic and yet creative way, can offer innumerable opportunities to improve linguistic competence and technical know how. When using it to develop the efficiency of translation procedures, we are reinforcing subliminal behaviours which will lead future professionals to render services that will reflect, as Gile (1995: 45) puts it: "ideational clarity, linguistic acceptability, terminological accuracy and acceptability, fidelity, and professional behaviour".

Furthermore, the type of exercises here mentioned will inevitably lead to self-awareness. Students will find their strengths and weaknesses and find ways to improve those areas in which they are less proficient. The fact that audiovisual messages are rich in their making and are the result of constraints of all kinds makes it possible for teachers and students to work, in context, on skills which are often drilled in less interesting contexts. Film analysis will enhance interpretative competence in general and will broaden students' knowledge at all levels. Film can be explored to all ends and issues can be raised in all domains: culture, history, sociology, psychology, and philosophy, among so many others. The learning opportunities are such at this level that one might say that all can be taught/learnt through film. Script completion will develop listening skills and can even serve as a lighter version of the tedious dictations which are still in the memory of bygone days of language learning classes. Vocabulary can be learnt in context and idiomatic expressions can be better understood with the aid of the extra informative layers that come with image and sound. Prosodic features of the spoken language such as intonation and inflection can be taken in whilst viewing and listening to dialogue exchanges. Inferential meaning can be exploited with the aid of paralinguistic elements which come with facial expression, mime, kinesis, and vocal quality and tone. Inferring and previewing can also be trained by working through narrative levels. Summarising, rephrasing, paraphrasing can be practised to produce effective subtitles. Clarity of the written text can be aimed at when subtitle readability is consciously addressed.

These are only some of the assets that can be drawn from the use of audiovisual translation, and particularly of subtitling, in the training of future language professionals. The magical enchantment of the moving image, the attraction of working with computers and electronic equipment and, above all, the fun element makes tiresome tasks light and makes language learning pleasurable. Experience has shown that, while learning how to subtitle, students

gain a greater command of language usage, in the broadest of senses, and above all, find pleasure in manipulating text to achieve the best possible results.

If one can work towards making translation an enjoyable endeavour, one will be contributing towards higher quality language rendering and contributing towards the recognition of an often underestimated activity. The best training teachers can give their students will result in the ability to doubt and to question. I truly believe that, in a less stressful way, training through subtitling develops one of the most important characteristics of a highly professional translator the ability to stop and to do it all over again, until the best possible solution is found.

Notes

1. Audiovisual translation was formally introduced, in the academic year of 1999/2000, as a 45 hour course, in the final year of an undergraduate degree in Translation at the Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestão do Instituto Politécnico de Leiria.

2. Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestão do Instituto Politécnico de Leiria bought a full subtitling workstation (Screen — Win2020) and a classroom was equipped with 26 computers as well as with 6 video viewing posts (TV and video player).

3. The materials were tapes that needed to be translated into Portuguese so as to be used in various courses both in-house and in other schools training automotive engineers and technicians. Copyrights were ensured and permission was given for the subtitling of the materials.

4. Shuffling is possible when watching videos or DVDs but even there the natural "reading" process would not include rewinding or going back and forth, unless it were being done for purposes other than entertainment (i.e. film or language analysis).

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e-AVT: A perfect match

Strategies, functions and interactions in an on-line environment for learning audiovisual translation

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1.   Introduction

Both e-learning and AVT (Audiovisual Translation) are in their infancy, though there is no doubt that there is a promising future in their marriage. At the UAB we have created a team of experts from the two learning areas of Translation Studies and Pedagogy in order to tackle both issues at theoretical and practical levels, and so that we can design, create and set up an e-AVT university postgraduate course. While the norm is to study how to incorporate a single technology into teaching, we had to face the incorporation of the technology plus a sound integration of the content which in itself is technological, all within a pedagogical framework. On-line learning is often greeted with scepticism by certain academics. The nature of translation, and moreover audiovisual translation, accentuates the criticism of this new format. This paper presents the pedagogical grounding behind the e-learning AVT course — designed at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, in Spain. It is an answer to the challenge we took when we decided to embark on the implementation of this specialized field of Translation Studies in an on-line format. The article provides some pedagogical reassurance to those who have embarked on on-line courses, and may tempt some sceptics into the new on-line teaching format.

2.   Reasons for its creation

The answer to this question would be long enough to warrant an article of its own. Nevertheless, the main reason for creating this on-line course is to provide access to education which cannot be provided in traditional courses, or to provide access to students who are unable to attend the traditional course.

The teaching of audiovisual translation came about in response to the market: there is a growing need for audiovisual translators while no formal training is generally offered. Barcelona is one of the busiest AV translation and recording cities in the world (Zabalbeascoa, Izard and Santamaria 2001), so the setting up of a traditional AVT course at the Faculty of Translation (Díaz-Cintas & Orero 2003) was only a matter of time. The reasons which made us move from the traditional postgraduate AVT course into the on-line format are manifold: the experience gained after some years of teaching AVT, the successful design and running of the software programmes which allow for individual AVT learning (Toda 2003:274, Bartoll, Mas & Orero forthcoming), the number of students from as far afield as Australia, Japan or South America enquiring about the course, the project to write some AVT manuals with the largest publishing house in Spain,[1] and the lack of funds to increase the student intake — because the University cannot update IT classrooms — are some of the reasons that made us consider the on-line format.

3.   The postgraduate course on AVT on-line course: A short description

The postgraduate course on AVT on-line course started in January 2003, and we are now in its second edition. A major difference between this on-line course and its life version is that it has been designed to be followed by linear development. That is, all students at the same time do a module, once is finished they start another module; rather than following some of them at the same time. Each of the four modules — Theory of AVT, Dubbing, Subtitling and Multimedia Translation — consists of ten units which have a theoretical framework, although the emphasis is predominantly on practical aspects. A unit takes place in one week — Monday to Monday. Students hand in their work on the Monday, the same day when they get the previous week work marked. The linear development also means that all students while working at the same pace can receive general weekly feedback from the teacher; they can

also participate in group discussion either via chats or forums. A further benefit is the possibility of incorporating new intakes who can join the course every 11 weeks, and that teachers are employed for a 12–week period.

Most teaching material is posted in the platform for the duration of the course. Files containing audiovisual material take up considerable memory space and cannot be posted for long periods of time on the server to allow students to download them at their end. This obstacle will no doubt disappear in future as most countries update their communication systems to keep up with the expectations of the market, but at present we have to cater for the lowest downloading facilities in order to be compatible with most students and their equipment and downloading speed. Hence in the meantime, we have opted to sending our students several CDs with clips from the films used as case studies for each unit in each module. Other material is maintained as part of the teaching platform. The platform — an intranet — has an area for curricular content where materials are created in a multimedia format to be exploited individually by each student. Completed exercises are sent weekly to the teacher, who corrects them and returns them with feedback to the students the following week. Comments are made individually though some more general issues that seem to be recurrent in many exercises tend to be picked up in group discussions exploited by weekly chats.

The communication area offers students the following facilities: personal mail, a forum where general topics are posted, a chat service for those connected synchronically or wanting to carry out a group activity, a resource area – where the course bibliography is kept for any student to download – and some general links of interest to (audiovisual) translators. The job offer area is also located here, together with a diary of events such as seminars, conferences, etc.

The platform is an on-going project that is being constantly revised, developed and improved to meet the unique needs and features of this particular course. Bibliographical references and website links are regularly updated and expanded, and it is hoped that new and innovative modules in such areas as creating master subtitles or subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing will be developed to provide a wider range of options. We are also considering the possibility of offering other language combinations. At present the language combination is from English into Spanish.

4.   The student as the focal point of learning in the postgraduate course on AVT on-line virtual learning environment

A Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is actually a symbolic-educative representation based on network technology and Web support which includes various tools for the presentation of information and communication that together permit the synchronic and asynchronic interrelation between all sections of the Educative Community .

Sharp (1994) maintains that one of the keys to success in distance learning lies in the student's autonomy, his capacity to listen actively and ability to work independently in the teacher's absence.

These characteristics, together with the demands of the Information Society and the TAV special features generate perforce a new role for the student.

– They cease to be receptacles of information and become builders of their own knowledge, promoting metacognitive reflection.
– They become providers of solutions to problems instead of warehouses of contents, developing personal autonomy through taking decisions.
– They work as members of a group undertaking tasks that require greater collaboration and cooperation, with increased interaction between the participants.
– They work towards the acquisition of skills with the same tools used in the professional environment.
– They are efficient managers of their own time and of the learning process.
– They have a collaborative and cooperative attitude in their relationships with teachers and other participants.
– They have access to a greater number of resources.

For De Corte (forthcoming) this learning method is a process of building knowledge and meaning that is individually distinct, directed towards goals, self-regulated and collaborative:

– Learning is accumulative
– Learning is self-regulated
– Learning requires collaboration
– Learning is individually diverse/different

In short, the students in the postgraduate course on AVT (PGAVT) VLE must be guided towards instructional environments that can develop constructive

learning processes, apart from desirable educative, functional, contextual and real objectives that are focussed towards understanding, problem solving skills, metacognitive strategies and the notion of learning to learn.

5.   Didactic strategies in the postgraduate course in AVT VLE

Didactic strategy, in macro terms, is the group of processes based on techniques having as their objective the bringing of pedagogic action within the VLE to a successful conclusion and achieving the proposed objectives.

A technique is considered to be a part of the didactic strategy pursuing the attainment of elements of learning. In this sense activities are considered as even more specific actions, facilitating the carrying out of certain techniques. The strategic organisation and selection of a VLE depends on the pedagogic-technological conception, making from the same its management and coordination team, who are responsible for the design and development of the educative model of distance learning.

The basic objectives of the didactic strategies for teaching-learning AVT can be summarised as follows:

-   Develop a culture of collaborative work in the VLE
-   Involve all members in the active participation of the teaching-learning process
-   Promote the development of cognitive skills and social interaction, through participation in the VLE
-   Explain the suitability, identification and significance of the didactic contents
-   Encourage the use of the environment as place of reference for exchange and learning

Examples of didactic and technical strategies along these lines are:

-   Project work undertaken in groups
-   Methodologies of examples, roles and simulation
-   Guided questioning and self-questioning
-   Cognitive modelling
-   Learning based on techniques and problems
-   Forums and chats for exhibitions, discussion and debate
-   Strategies for creativity and flow of ideas

6.   Functions and interactions in a VLE

Departing from constructivist principles as a theoretical point of reference, we propose for AVT on-line a viewpoint based on the metaphor of the "negotiated construction" of personal experiences, opinions, knowledge outlines and the social environment, starting from the assembling of new elements, upon those that already exist.

Important conditions within this context are, therefore, collaboration between individuals and the shared construction of meanings as interaction between both factors. This construction is undertaken through interaction, negotiation, mediation, communication... of reflections, reasoning, explorations and intentions generated by the presentation of certain contents. Gunawardena (1994) refers to the debate on interaction in distance teaching-learning virtual environments, basing his argument on three types of interaction: student-content, student-instructor, and student-student. Later McIsaac and Gunawardena (1996) added that interaction between the student and technological methods should also be included, which is crucial for the AVT. In this type of interaction the student interacts with these methods in order to be able to do so later with the content, the tutor or other students.
We can, then, enumerate four types of interaction:

Student-teacher: which provides motivation, feedback, dialogue, personal guidance, etc. Within this new perspective the tutor's role is to guide, support and facilitate the student's learning process through exposure to multimedia, mediation and shared communication. In this way, a learning system is generated with the student as its central axis, in a relational system based upon
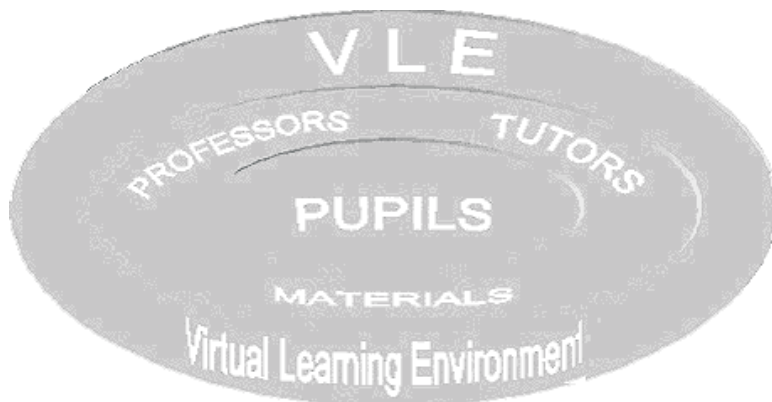
dialogue and cooperation between students. The student therefore finds himself at the centre and connected to resources such as the teacher, tutors, coordinators, other students, experts, instruction from the multimedia materials themselves, computer programmes, libraries, network/systems references, databases…

Teachers in a virtual learning environment (VLE) have two basic teaching roles:

A – Consultative. Individualised and collective performance regarding the learning of contents (conceptual, procedural and/or attitudinal).

It can be thought of in terms of the content specialist providing a supporting role, which corresponds with the duty of teacher-consultant, the undertaking of the duties of academic tutor, of whom clarifications and answers to questions regarding very specific theoretical or practical content in relation to the contents are sought. His innovative vision must be directed towards a new perspective. In the case of PGAVT we have the policy of recruiting teachers who are also experienced active translators in the field taught, who can provide first hand experience in both the translation and the industry:

- Instead of being a teacher in a live class he must adapt to being a consultant or guide and provider of network resources, information regarding the industry and market trends. This change of attitude is crucial in a VLE and moreover for PGAVT.

- He is an information provider who must take more into account the psychological teaching design of the learning experience than the logical limits of the content itself.

- Supply students with the initial work structure, encouraging them to become more personally responsible for their studies, in some cases acting as real clients would.

- Has to become another member of the VLE, directing questions at the students rather than supplying answers.

- Give up total control of the learning situation in order to share it with the student. The roles of teacher-student can, in fact, alter between them at different times.

- These new roles between teacher and student dilute the traditional power structure, facilitating communication and interaction.

- This is a more sensitive and measured method of learning and provides

solutions to the different learning styles of students. In the PGAVT we have students from all types of academic background, not only from English Philology or Translation Studies.

Garrison (1993) emphasises the teacher's role as a developer of cognitive skills in the student that can be inferred and transferred. The learning process should be designed with the support of technology, not merely in order to assimilate information more quickly or easily, but rather to encourage and stimulate students to construct their own meaning and generate new knowledge/understanding.

Typical tasks:

1. Indicate what the student needs to research or do, supplying the necessary information. This is typically done at the beginning of the module, and in particular every Monday when a new unit starts.
2. Reinforce the contents worked on through summaries, asking questions and answering them either publicly or privately, as appropriate: which performed in the forum.
3. Evaluate the students' tasks individually and send them the results in the same way: that is every Monday.
4. Work collaboratively with groups of students. In some units team work is required.
5. Undertake discussion in workshops or virtual seminars, mainly through weekly chats.

B – Counselling. Personal guidance and tutoring on the educational process.

According to Beaudoin (1990), one of the teacher-advisor's functions as a learning mediator is to constantly "monitor" the stages of the learning process, in order to be able to adapt to possible changes that can arise in the student's conduct and way of thinking, in relation to his own process and context.

The advisor should encourage students to participate directly in activities, whether through direct positive reinforcement or in an indirect way through tasks that encourages participation. An important consequence of the change that has taken place in the role of the advisor is the adoption of a more positive attitude towards learning facilitation. This has increased the interaction between advisor and students, inevitably leading to greater personal and personalised contact. Under these criteria the teacher-advisor becomes more of a colleague who is near the student and helps him to overcome moments of difficulty.

Student-content: access to instructional contents and study material.
The content presented as digital didactic material make up the supporting axis of the pedagogic mediation in a virtual environment. Its objective is to ensure students' motivation, facilitate the learning process and the acquisition of new knowledge. The contents should, therefore, be conceived more from the perspective of the student and the environment, and less from the linearity of the contents themselves. But this content design must also endeavour to respond to this context, which must itself look for and ensure the success of the objectives. The content will be presented in a format that takes into account a logical structure and at the same time a psychological appropriateness to the student and the method.

Student-student: exchange of information, ideas, motivation, parallel help between equals, etc. In the conception of the VLE, these types of interaction should be considered very important in the learning process. Working in groups and on projects should, then, be encouraged, and from this specific roles will be defined according to formative profiles or individual availability. This can, through the combination of different group dynamics, achieve excellent results.

The projects method is a learning strategy that focuses on central and principle concepts of a discipline. It involves the students in problem solving and other meaningful tasks, allows them to work autonomously in order to construct their own knowledge and culminates in real results which they generate themselves.

Comparing the results of this way of working with traditional learning methods, it has been proven that students learn more when they put collaborative learning into practice, through the VLE's communication tools. They remember content for longer, develop higher reasoning and thought skills, and feel more confident and valued by themselves and others (Millis 1996). The elements always present in this type of learning are:

1. Cooperation
2. Responsibility
3. Different level of Communication
4. Team work, companionship and sense of relevance
5. On-going self-evaluation

Communicative student-interface: all communication between participants of the formative/training process and their access to the relevant information is

undertaken through some type of interface. What is meant by this is the aspect, metaphor, structure, typology, and levels of action that the user can produce within this context. The use of different interfaces is determined by several variables (cost of opportunity, effectiveness, availability, etc.).

According to McIsaac and Gunawardena (1996) the relationship between the student and the technology which offers the opportunity to communicate with the teacher, other students and access contents, is a fundamental factor in the success or failure of distance learning processes.

In order for students to be able to work with the course contents they should be able to demonstrate their ability to interact with the interface and the technological system that supports it. Students should also be conversant with the specific communication protocols linked with the delivery system so that they are able to effectively transmit and receive information. Within the PGAVT platform and its communication tools and facilities, there are added technological challenges such as the self installation of some programmes (TRADOS, Dejà vú, Subtitul@m, etc). This extra technical awareness – compared with traditional teaching situation where students in university IT rooms learn with these programmes already installed and running – adds a challenge and at the same time a sense of success which is the fruit of communication between students and teacher-students.

The challenge for distance learning educators is to facilitate the development of a mental model, based on metaphors appropriate to students which help to ensure successful interaction with the mediating technology.

7.   Document typology in a VLE

Paper *versus* bits: Documents Base
This dichotomy must be considered when designing the VLE's educative documents. Apart from having certain quality contents, correct presentation of the didactic material will allow good mediation. It should incorporate and relate images, sound, video, computer programmes, text, and different links. Its principal objective being to achieve the highest degree of connectedness and interactivity possible in order to ensure the students' interaction, in such a way that they become aware of the concepts and of what has been learned within the process. These must never, therefore, be materials "only" to "read and print", but also with which to interact.

Despite all these considerations, the printed word still occupies a privileged

position in the world of distance learning and still has validity, given its usefulness when producing materials, along with the specific knowledge and previous learning required by teachers in order to create multimedia material.

Furthermore, from an ergonomic viewpoint, on-screen texts are read far less efficiently than printed texts. It is more difficult to read a text on-screen and it is harder to locate and gain access to it quickly. The difficulties of efficient reading are considerably reduced by reading from paper rather than bits. Nevertheless, multimedia materials reinforce comprehensive reading and aid conceptual assimilation and that of certain other processes. Perhaps the problem lies in a change of attitude. An unavoidable factor for such a change is the passage of time.

Everyday practice and the present culture of learning demonstrate the need to combine these two types of materials. On the one hand, printed materials for in-depth reading tasks and analysis of conceptual content – the theoretical part of the course – and on the other, multimedia materials and programmes for more operational and explorational content documents, such as theory examples, which require the use of procedures and the PC in order to find procedural solutions.

All of the above theoretical argument is, in fact, the basis of the PGAVT, which is a specialist course at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB).

This innovative post-graduate programme is an initiative from the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation, as well as the Translation Department of this university, in response to a market reality where technology has placed the translation of audiovisual and multimedia formats above paper/hard copy format.

8.   PGAVT's first year

In the first year we started the course with 14 students and finished with 20. Six students enrolled in modules 2, 3 or 4. They will be finishing their course in the second edition, once they have completed the four prescribed modules. The students lived in U.S., Germany, U.K, Belgium, Italy and Spain. This second year we have six students from last year and 17 new students who have enrolled for the full course. In the first edition we also had two students who were only interested in one module – dubbing. After slight changes in the material, and the exploitation of certain exercises, we are pleased with the results of the first year, and we are now looking for new challenges, that is the implementation of

new and innovative modules in such areas as creating master subtitles or subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, or a module dealing with videogame translation in order to provide a wider range of options. We are also considering the possibility of offering other language combinations. From 2005 the course will become a MA degree, and will have the already mentioned modules of AVT theory, dubbing, subtitling, media translation; plus the new addition of a module on creating master subtitles, and another on videogames translation. A module on media accessibility will also be created. Students will also have to write a dissertation.

Note

1. The first manual has already been published: Jorge Díaz-Cinta's *Teoría y práctica de la subtitulación. Inglés-Español.* Ariel: Barcelona, 2003. The translation into Catalan and Galician will appear in 2004. There is another manual dealing with dubbing which should be brought up in 2005 written by Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Anna Matamala.

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5. AVT research

The challenge of research in audiovisual translation

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1.   Introduction

Research in audio-visual translation has led to a number of diverse approaches which have, in the main, inherited much from Translation Theories but which have taken on board perspectives deriving from Film Studies. In this study I shall maintain an eclectic position regarding five different tendencies, each of them thought-provoking, which have a bearing on the future of audiovisual translation. These five tendencies take an interdisciplinary approach as their starting point but enable us to determine the specific characteristics of this type of translation.

In using the term *audiovisual text* we mean that which we receive via two channels, the visual and the acoustic. Essential to understanding is the synchrony between verbal and non-verbal messages. Furthermore, such a text contains a succession of images in movement which are transmitted via the screen. As a result of these particular characteristics, research into audio-visual translation requires a specific theory that discards the general models for the field outlined within the theory of translation. These models seek to identify aspects of audio-visual translation which pertain to general translation.

The tentative incursions which Film Studies are making into the field of audiovisual translation will be of great value in the future in the search for a definition of the specific characteristics of the audiovisual mode: the simultaneous transmission of image, verbal language and sound, the complex semiotic interaction which this implies and the consequences of this condition for the practice of translation. In addition, future research projects in audiovisual translation should incorporate the updating of information gathered by both

descriptive and experimental studies. There is, indisputably, a need for a theory that is flexible enough to account for the rapid development of our sphere of professional activity.

In this study I shall analyze five possible areas of research, which focus on the translated product. These areas have as their starting points, respectively, the study of the screenplay, film adaptation, audience design, pragmatics and Polysystem Theory. The choice of one of these five directions will depend on what we wish to describe and any one of them may lead us to new discoveries which may render obsolete some accepted notions regarding research into dubbing and subtitling. The most obvious example of this would be the sterile debate between dubbing and subtitling, a debate which completely ignores the economic, cultural and ideological aspects which have motivated their survival.

2.   From scriptwriting to audiovisual translation

Research in audiovisual translation is faced with specific empiric difficulties. The first is the inaccessibility of the original screenplay, the translated screenplay, the adapted screenplay, the postproduction script… Anyone who has attempted to study audiovisual translation will have come across this problem, which is of particular importance because of the diversity of types of screenplays: the initial screenplays, the pre-production screenplay (which is used to shoot the film), the postproduction screenplay (which is a description of the finished film with a transcription of action and dialogue), the screenplay which has been translated and synchronized for dubbing with the list of subtitles (spotting list). Internet has significantly increased the availability of screenplays online but the screenplay which is on the Net is not always the postproduction script. Furthermore, dubbing and subtitling studios are reluctant to allow researchers into audiovisual translation access to the screenplays, whether original or translated.

Film Studies have added a new perspective to the analysis of the screenplay current in the field of audiovisual translation. Aline Remael (1995 and in this volume) has pointed out that the study of the screenplay is interdisciplinary in excess and that it has been addressed from points of view which differ greatly, and which are, at times, even contradictory. Thus, we go from the consideration of the screenplay as an unfinished product — merely an imperfect technical base for the making of the film — to the glorifying of the screenplay

as a work of art in every sense. It is clear that the importance of the screenplay varies from film to film.

Remael suggests considering the screenplay as a textual model and examining the role which it plays in the production of the film while at the same time, analyzing the impact that the future production will have on the pre-production script itself: "The questions of whether there are requirements for a text to qualify as a screenplay, how it functions in film production and what exactly the approach and goal of screenplay studies should be, remain to be answered" (Remael 1995: 126). Similarly, she makes reference to the intertextual nature of the screenplay, to the way in which this relates to future films and refers back, at the same time, to previous sources.

We should raise the issue of whether or not it is necessary for audiovisual translators to have knowledge of types of screenplays, the writing of dialogues and visual language. From a pedagogical point of view, it would be interesting to discover if the translations done by translators who have studied or been trained in the analysis of screenplays and Film Studies are superior in quality to those produced by other translators not trained in this field. This would allow the faculties of Translation and Interpretation to defend the possibility of offering subjects which cater to this specific need.[1]

One line of study which has not as yet been explored and which is of irrefutable importance is that of the redundancy of the interaction between the verbal text and the visual text and the different strategies of translation which such redundancy creates.[2] The insights which Film Studies can bring to audiovisual translation have only just begun to make an impact.

3.   The labyrinth of translated film adaptations

We should consider the possibility of research into the relationship which exists between audiovisual translation and film adaptation (see also Gambier in this volume). To do this, we must start with the work by Patrick Cattrysse (1992a, 1992b and 1996) and the article by Aline Remael (1995) referred to above. Cattryse and Remael share the merit of having pursued a line of study in the opposite direction from that presented here. Instead of referring to Film Studies aid in the definition of the specific characteristics of audiovisual translation, they have turned to the theory of translation to postulate stimulating insights into the theory of cinema and that of film adaptations in particular. The ideas related to the theory of film adaptation which have been outlined in Film Theory by

Edward Branigan (1992) Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan (1999) have opened up new paths to be explored in the area of audiovisual translation. The studies that have been carried out on the relationship between film adaptation and translation show some very interesting coincidences.[3]

Frequently, however, research in this field adopts a philological point of view and seeks the glorification of the literary work in the film world. Translation occupies a secondary role in these studies and many of the aspects commented on pertain to the area of general translation. In addition, the literary source text tends to be compared to the film target text without taking into consideration the respective contexts of production or the procedures, rules, models and context of reception which may have influenced the process of adaptation and the process of translation of the literary work and the film. On other occasions, the research centers on the nature of the relationship between the theatre, the short narrative, the novel and the cinema, leaving to one side the diversity of solutions which the relationship between literary genres implies for the practice of translation. For their part, Film Studies have conceded a marginal role to adaptations as they are considered too literary and of little interest from the film point of view.[4]

In the application of Polysystem Theory, in the view of film adaptation held by Cattrysse, and also in the proposal made by Remael who suggests incorporating the study of screenplays into the research on translation, we are faced with a similar issue: the overwhelming problem posed by binary oppositions in the theory of audiovisual translation. What can we consider as the source text in the study of film adaptations? In fact, all films can be considered adaptations, as they are all based on a screenplay or on various screenplays. Furthermore, even when a literary text is the object of an adaptation, the adaptation may be dealing with a text which the majority of the audience is familiar with. (For instance, the text may have been made popular through other genres, for example, the comic or publicity.) And, finally, in the field of film adaptations the idea of a disguise or a mask persists; not all adaptations are presented as such, in the same way that not all multimedia translations are presented as translations.

To be of real use for research into translated film adaptations, a corpus should incorporate films aimed at different audiences, all the screenplays involved in their elaboration, their literary sources and film sources, their respective translations, the history of their productions and the history of their reception by the public.

4.   Audience design: the path to explore

Alan Bell, in his article "Language Style as Audience Design" (1984), proceeds from the supposition that all speakers (or senders) adapt their message to their audience (or receivers). This factor, which determines the style of communication, is what we understand by "audience design". Bell distinguishes four types of receivers: addressees, who are known to the speaker and directly addressed; auditors, who are known to the speaker but not directly addressed; overhearers, who are not confirmed participants and eavesdroppers, who are not known to the speaker. In general, speakers adapt themselves to the audience to a greater or lesser extent, in direct relation to the proximity of the latter. That is to say, they adapt themselves much more to the addressees and the auditors than to the overhearers and eavesdroppers. However, in audiovisual products, the speakers adapt their discourse much more to the auditors than to the addresses (their interlocutors on the screen). In this case, audience design does not imply adapting to the real receivers. Rather it is an initiative taken by the primary communicators, who form a mental construct of the social cultural groups to whom they address themselves. As a result, the style of the film screenplay would be influenced to a greater degree by the auditors than by the addressees in the fictional dialogue.

The role of the translator involves maintaining the coherence of the communication between the addressees on the screen, while at the same time seeking to transmit the coherence of the discourse that the communicator directs towards the auditors en masse. This two-fold task can give rise to interesting studies on the diversity of the reception of the communicative interchange presented in the audiovisual product. It can also imply the need to ask questions about the point of view which the translation adopts and the way in which the audience receives this point of view.

The tentative contributions to date regarding audience design have come from experimental studies and tend towards gratuitous generalizations. As Roberto Mayoral has shown clearly, we have to adapt the parameters to specific groups of contemporary spectators (Mayoral 2001: 33). In fact, we need to revise all the established conventions regarding the audience which are reproduced in the literature on audiovisual translation.

We also need more studies on audiences of audiovisual translations and the expectations generated by the context; the context of the reception of an audiovisual product affects the decisions made by translators. Various studies

on the audience for film adaptations, such as that by Derek Paget (1999) or that by Henry Jenkins (1992) have drawn attention to the importance of redundancy and excess amongst communities of fans (fandom). This leads us to ask ourselves questions about aspects which may acquire greater relevance for the field of audio-visual translation. For example: how does the fact that the adaptation is produced within the framework of the conventions proper to a specific film genre affect the translation? Do such conventions further establish intertextual relationships with other contemporary film discourses?

I should stress that most recent studies on dubbing and subtitling incorporate the concept of reception as one of the elements which should be borne in mind in the translation process. Rosa Agost in *Traducción y doblaje: voces e imágenes* includes the conditions of reception as a fundamental factor in determining visual synchrony, depending on the size of the screen, be it cinema or television (Agost 1999: 81). Likewise, Jorge Díaz Cintas, in *La traducción audiovisual. El subtitulado* lays emphasis on the figure of the potential spectator as a key element which affects the translation and the solutions chosen by the subtitler, for example, in choosing the translation option which is closest phonetically to the original so that it will be identified by the audience (Díaz 2001: 138).

5.   Politeness and interpersonal communication

The proposals made by Ian Mason, based on the application to audiovisual translations and specifically to subtitling of the pragmatic studies on politeness by P. Brown and S. Levinson in *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Use* (1987), are very thought-provoking (Hatim and Mason 1997 & Mason 2001). His approach starts from the hypothesis that interpersonal meaning is the aspect which is most sacrificed in the strategy of synthesis created by subtitling. Mason shows that the purpose of the communicative interchange can be "read" in a much clearer way in the subtitles, with the result that part of the pragmatic interchange of the characters involved in the dialogues on screen is lost: "What tends to be omitted is explicit markers of the interpersonal pragmatics of dialogue, including the negotiation of face conducted by characters portrayed on screen" (Mason 2001: 24).[5] Nevertheless, subtitling does allow the conservation of paralinguistic features (such as physical expressions or sounds) which can transmit interpersonal meanings without these having to appear in the subtitles.

The codifying of politeness includes lexical choice, the grammatical form of the phrases (imperatives, interrogatives, etc), intonation and the ambiguity of reference. Such characteristics disappear in the process of subtitling: "The problem is not so much that explicit markers of politeness are just absent from the translation; it is rather, that subtitling may create substantially different interpersonal dynamics from that intended" (Hatim and Mason 1997: 89). That is to say that subtitling can produce, for example, a false interpretation of the supposed honesty or the intended aggressiveness of a character.

As I understand it, the proposal made by Mason becomes highly problematic if we bear in mind the fact that the audience constructs its interpretation of the interpersonal dynamics of the characters from a film text. It is clear that the perception of these dynamics can vary differently depending on the relative proximity of the source culture and the target culture to one another. As Mason puts it: "What happens to retrieval of meaning from intonation, gaze, posture and so on, when source and target cultures are remote from each other?" (Mason 2001: 30). And there is yet another problem that must be solved: what happens when the subtitles transmit information that seems contrary to the rest of the verbal and iconographic messages?

Moreover, we may question the importance that a pragmatic aspect such as politeness has within the area of research into audiovisual translation when this aspect is at loggerheads with the technical priorities of subtitling. If the notion of quality in the context of professional subtitling is characterized by speed, synthesis, and readability, there is no doubt that the faculties of Translation and Interpretation should train the translator in accordance with such criteria. The role of the transmission of interpersonal dynamics in the reception of the subtitles would be rendered relative.

6.   Audiovisual map-making and the mask

Many descriptive studies have demonstrated that Polysystem Theory, due to its historical and functional characteristics, may be able to provide a response to the challenges posed by research into audiovisual translation (as proposed in this volume by Díaz Cintas). In this way, research projects on worldwide procedures and norms governing the policy of dubbing and subtitling allow us to analyze in depth the adaptation of translated audiovisual products to the target culture.

Theo Hermans in *Translation in Systems. Descriptive and Systemic Approaches Explained* (1999) includes and updates the suggestion made some time ago by José Lambert (1993) that we should embark on the audiovisual translation starting from the creation of maps which could give us a picture of the socio-cultural geography of the treatment of the language in the modern world. Here, the term map-making is in direct opposition to that of history-writing. This could be of interest if we bear in mind the characteristics of audiovisual translation in the contemporary world: its international nature, the use of multimedia technology, its now inevitable presence in our daily life. The importance of mass communication and international discourse in our contemporary society is unquestionable as is evidenced by the tremendous volume of translated audiovisual texts. Finally, there is awareness that a relatively small number of senders reach a very great number of receivers all over the world (Hermans 1999: 121).

All these factors force us to consider problematic, once again, the binary nature of theoretical distinctions (such as source text/target text, amongst other terms). Anthony Pym has also followed up Lambert's work in showing the difficulty that exists in establishing which system is sending and which is receiving in our multimedia world and in locating the intercultural space where the determinants of media translation are situated (Pym 2001: 278). The notions of translation, system and culture are questioned and an opportunity offered to explore new definitions more in tune with present-day reality.

As a result of all these considerations, perhaps it would be best to abandon the proposal made by Gideon Toury, that we may understand by translation what a culture considers as such, or what we can assume as translated. To do so we need to ask some serious questions. For example: how, when, where and why do audiovisual translations escape the notice of consumers in the sense that they are not received as translations by the audience. It is if audiovisual translations were hiding behind a mask. It is worth examining the reasons why different audiovisual model texts function in different ways. Thus, many advertisements or commercials try to hide their origin and the fact that they are translations, perhaps all the better to appeal to and seduce consumers more directly. In marked contrast, voice-over in documentaries, in which the speech of the dubbing actor is played over the original oral text, which in turn is broadcast at a lower volume, proclaims the fact that the text is a translation. This is probably done to achieve greater credibility (see Espasa in this volume).

The research outlined here would be based on the creation of maps which

would delineate the economic and sociocultural geography of audiovisual translation. This would include the channels for the distribution of translated audiovisual texts, the financial sources, and the problematic issue of what is considered a translation, and what is not, in this mode of communication. This approach enables us to tackle questions related to power, control and the dependence in Europe on the audiovisual products coming from the United States. The emphasis in this case is on the political and ideological relevance of the audiovisual translation. This important area of influence in the media affects our value systems. However, we should not forget that Hermans (1999: 124) himself considers map-making as a complement to history writing rather than a substitute for it. In their respect, maps show us distribution, quantities and flows but do not indicate motives, reasons and causes: maps help us to visualize situations but not to explain them.

With this last proposal we have come to the end of our survey of the range of possibilities which research into audiovisual translation offers us today. The present plurality of tendencies and opinions only leads us to the certainty that ahead of us lie even greater challenges.

Notes

1. With this intention, the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Vic has signed an agreement with the School of Cinema and Audio-visuals of Catalonia (ESCAC) which allows students who wish to specialise in audiovisual translation to take courses in this film school.

2. It is worth drawing attention to the study of the mechanism of cohesion in audiovisual translation by Frederic Chaume (Chaume 1999: 217 and Chaume 2001: 66).

3. Also worthy of attention are studies such as the one by José María Bravo (1993) and those presented at the periodic gatherings of the conference "Trasvases culturales: literatura, cine y traducción", a conference organised by the University of the País Vasco in Vitoria-Gasteiz, which offers a wonderful occasion to reflect on this theme and make contributions which have been compiled in Eguíluz *et al.* (1994), Santamaría *et al.* (1997) and Pajares *et al.* (2001).

4. This is the starting point of the article "Adaptations. The contemporary dilemmas" by Imelda Whelehan (in Cartmell & Whelehan 1999: 3–19).

5. It has also been formulated thus: "Specifically, there is systematic loss in subtitling of indicators of interlocutors accommodating to each others' face wants" (Hatim and Mason 1997: 84).

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Tradaptation cinématographique*

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1.   Introduction

L'adaptation filmique peut être comprise de plusieurs façons et à divers niveaux. Surtout elle englobe différents systèmes sémiotiques (verbal, visuel, sonore, graphique, kinésique, gestuel, etc.). Roman Jakobson (1959) a été l'un des premiers à distinguer trois formes de traduction, liées à trois manières d'interpréter un signe linguistique:

–   la traduction intralinguistique ou reformulation avec d'autres signes de la même langue: cas de la synonymie, de la paraphrase, du résumé, etc.
–   La traduction interlinguistique ou traduction proprement dite, avec transfert, substitution en une autre langue; l'auteur s'interrroge alors sur le sens verbal et le concept d'équivalence.
–   Et la traduction intersémiotique ou transmutation, avec passage des moyens langagiers à un ou des systèmes non-linguistiques, par exemple formules mathématiques, poème mis en musique, roman adapté au cinéma, conte devenant pièce de théâtre, code de la route explicité par des panneaux et des couleurs de la signalisation routière, etc.

Cette tripartition, considérée souvent comme bien établie dans la réflexion traductologique, n'a pourtant pas été approfondie, la plupart des chercheurs s'en tenant à la seule traduction interlinguistique. Reiss (1971: 34) a bien mentionné les textes "audio-média" mais sans aller réellement au-delà de cette allusion terminologique. Avec la localisation de logiciels, de sites web, de cédéroms, et la traduction audiovisuelle (télévision, cinéma, vidéo, DVD),

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c'est-à-dire le travail sur plusieurs systèmes sémiotiques (Gambier 2001: IX–XV), l'objet "traduction"redevient problématique (Petrilli 1999–2000).

A partir d'une étude de cas — d'un roman aux sous-titres d'un film "tiré" de ce roman, je me propose d'explorer une suite de transferts ou comment une "traduction", englobant diverses transformations de genres, une adaptation cinématographique et un sous-titrage, sert à métamorphoser un texte dit de départ.

2.   Des dichotomies à dépasser

Depuis un certain temps, la traduction audiovisuelle (AV), au cinéma, à la télévision, en vidéo, retient l'attention (Gambier, 1997). Mais à ce jour, les recherches restent dispersées, ponctuelles et dans la majorité des cas, faibles méthodologiquement.

On sait qu'un certain nombre de dichotomies hantent bien des discours sur la traduction — comme traduction libre/traduction littérale, traduction centrée sur la source/traduction cibliste, fidélité à l'auteur/fidélité au récepteur, approche prescriptive /approche descriptive, traduction (écrite)/interprétation (orale), etc.

D'autres oppositions plus subtiles ont également cours, comme celle qui place d'un côté la traduction non-littéraire forcément orientée vers la langue-culture d'arrivée et de l'autre certaines traductions littéraires plutôt rivées à la source. Il y a aussi des paradoxes répétés avec plus ou moins de conviction, comme celui du traducteur pris entre son effacement, son invisibilité sur le marché de l'écrit et l'explicitation du texte à traduire, comme celui de la traduction prise entre l'universalité supposée de la compréhension et les différences irréductibles dues aux mécanismes de la culture réceptrice. La création d'hypertextes et les industries dites culturelles mettent à mal ce dernier point. Enfin, quelques notions semblent si ancrées qu'on n'ose les interroger, comme celle d'intentionalité et celle de public visé, qui sont le plus souvent des projections du traducteur plutôt que des catégories objectives.

Peut-on se contenter de tels schémas binaires si on veut saisir les processus et les enjeux à l'oeuvre quand par exemple on sous-titre? Deux présupposés corollaires semblent être bousculés par le transfert langagier dans l'AV:

–   le texte écrit, conçu comme seule autorité valide pour nombre de traducteurs et qui reste paradigme dominant dans la plupart des réflexions traductologiques. Rappelons ici qu'avec l'AV, les frontières oral/écrit sont constamment brouillées. Ainsi, le scénariste conçoit les dialogues comme

de la parole mais il les écrit; le metteur en scène lit le script tout en entendant sa propre conception du texte par la voix de ses acteurs; ces derniers donnent une version orale; le sous-titreur transforme les répliques orales en mots écrits, inversant le processus des acteurs qui ont mis en bouche un texte couché sur le papier; chez lui, le téléspectateur peut lire à quelqu'un les sous-titres.
– La traduction est équivalente (de quelque manière) à sa "source", ce qui exige de rendre compte des liens entre références et représentations qui existent entre énoncé et images.

Pour servir ma démonstration, j'ai choisi Aki Kaurismäki, productif dans les années 80 avec de longs métrages comme *Rikos ja Rangaistus* (Crime et Chatiments) 1983, *Calamari Union* 1985, *Hamlet goes business* 1987, *Ariel* 1988, *Leningrad Cowboys go America* 1989, *Tulitikkutehtaan tyttö* (La fille aux allumettes) 1990, *I hired a contract killer* 1990, *Kauas pilvet karkaavat* (Au loin s'en vont les nuages) 1996, *Juha* 1999, *Mies vailla Menneisyytta* 2002. Avec son frère ainé Mika, reconnu entre autres pour *Rosso* 1985, *Helsinki-Napoli* (1987). *All night long* 1987, *Amazon* 1991, *Zombie* 1991, *Sound of Brazil (Moro no Brasil)* 2002, il a fondé sa propre maison de production Villealfa, hommage dyslexique à l'*Alphaville* de Godard. Avec un minimum de mots, un ton détaché et une caméra souvent immobile, leurs films, émaillés de traits d'humour ou de fantastique, disent le désarroi sans que jamais rien ne soit pris au tragique. Les références et clins d'oeil littéraires, filmiques (Godard, Bresson, Dreyer, Becker, Hawks, Ozu, Fuller, etc.) y sont nombreux. Métissages des citations, de sentiments, d'émotions, de rêves, etc.

3. Une traduction sans un "original"

3.1 De l'adaptation filmique

Le cheminement de la réalisation d'un film de fiction ou documentaire est une suite de transformations, entre autres textuels. En effet un film peut être "inspiré par", "adapté librement de", "adapté" d'un ouvrage littéraire (canonique ou pas: BD, science fiction, etc.), d'un fait divers relaté dans la presse ou rapporté par des dossiers de police, etc. Ce (premier) "texte" devient scénario, selon une écriture à deux ou quatre mains ou plus; il peut donner lieu alors à un script de pré-production puis de production et de post-production. A chaque fois, la structure

narrative, les isotopies, les indices temporels, les points de vue, les allusions, etc. peuvent subir des altérations, avant que les acteurs ne s'emparent du dialogue. Ce serait une bien courte vue de trancher en disant que l'"adaptation" filmique doit être considérée par rapport à une source (écrite) tandis que le sous-titrage le serait par rapport à une audience visée. Toute "adaptation" s'inscrit dans un système de références, de transformations textuelles possibles, acceptées à un moment donné. Bien des films ont été "adaptés" de la littérature (*texte d'inspiration*): on peut citer, entre autres, Shakespeare mis en pellicule d'Orson Wells à Kenneth Branagh, Flaubert qui a hanté Renoir, Zola, Simenon, Chabrol, Giono, Octave Mirbeau dont le *Journal d'une femme de chambre* (1900) a servi J. Renoir (en anglais – 1946) aussi bien que L. Buñuel (en français – 1964) (Simons 1996), James M. Cain dont *Le facteur sonne toujours deux fois* (1934) a donné lieu à quatre productions cinématographiques entre 1939 et 1981, John Fowles, Paul Auster, L. Sciascia avec le film par ex. de F.Rosi *Cadaveri eccelenti* (Coremans 1990), ou plus récemment *Trainspotting*, ouvrage d'Irvine Welsh devenu film de Danny Boyle, etc. Ce n'est pas le lieu ici de s'interroger systématiquement sur les liens et les jeux intertextuels (avec ou sans passage d'une langue à une autre) entre roman, pièce de théâtre et autres types de texte et scénario d'une part, entre scénario et production du film d'autre part (voir par ex. Coppieters 1999, à propos de *Out of Africa*). La place et la fonction de ce scénario dans le processus de l'adaptation ne sont pas linéaires. D'où la diversité des étiquettes, déjà mentionnées, pour esquisser le rapport éventuel entre un texte et un long métrage — quand, bien sûr, une telle étiquette est donnée. La complexité, sinon l'ambiguïté, du rapport apparait ainsi assez manifeste dans le concept de "scène" (romanesque/filmique), travaillé depuis le cinéma muet, par Eisenstein, A. Bazin, Ch. Metz et autres sémioticiens, pour indiquer une unité de temps, de lieu, d'action ou d'évènement et remplir diverses fonctions dans la construction dramatique et rythmique du film.

P. Cattrysse (1992) a tenté de systématiser l'adaptation filmique dans la perspective du polysystème, en analysant en particulier le film noir américain des années 40 et 50. Ce qui ressort de son étude, c'est que l'adaptation n'est pas la reproduction, plus ou moins fidèle, d'un texte d'origine: elle prend place et sens dans un contexte socioculturel donné de production et dans un contexte filmique, esthétique de fonctionnement.

On peut dire que Hollywood "traduit", adapte, transpose des films en films (ou remakes), des textes en films. Ces derniers sont néanmoins reçus indépendamment de leur origine romanesque (russe avec *Dr Jivago*, français avec *Mme Bovary*, etc.). Les critiques procèdent aussi selon certains critères déterminés, légitimés par le milieu culturel et par la position du critique dans ce milieu.

Pour le traducteur, peu importe directement l'origine et la filiation de ces textes (version publiée d'un éventuel roman, scénario, script). Ce qui vaut pour le sous-titreur s'applique également au traducteur d'informations de presse (Vuorinen, 1995) qui travaille à partir d'un certain matériau plutôt qu'à partir d'un texte donné, clos, d'un auteur identifié, abstrait de toutes conditions d'énonciation et de réception. On peut avancer en outre que le traducteur de théâtre, d'opéra rencontre aussi une "source" parfois aléatoire, souvent complexe puisque la pièce, le livret peuvent être des "adaptations" d'autres textes (légendes, récits, contes, etc.). De toute façon, pour films, romans et pièces, le dialogue n'est jamais copie d'une conversation spontanée, en face-à-face: il est toujours médiatisé, au service d'une intrigue (plot) ou tension narrative. Même dans les films dits parlés d'un W. Allen, E. Rohmer, J. L. Godard, la parole sert la dramatisation, tantôt marquant l'atmosphère, tantôt caractérisant un personnage, tantôt faisant évoluer l'action.

L'intertextualité constante, souterraine entre un roman, un roman traduit, une adaptation filmique, un scénario, les divers scripts, un sous-titrage (ou doublage) ne s'arrête pas là aujourd'hui. On sait qu'un film, en v.o. ou pas, peut être source à son tour d'une vidéo, d'un jeu vidéo, d'un récit, d'un livre illustré, etc.

Ce métissage vaut à des degrés divers pour toute production filmique, les coproductions de plus en plus fréquentes le renforçant y compris au niveau linguistique, jusqu'à rendre difficile toute identification "nationale" (Jäckel, 1995).

3.2   La vie de bohème (1992)

Plus de la moitié des films d'Aki Kaurismäki, selon les dires du metteur en scène, sont réalisés sans script, même *Hamlet*, car les dialogues sont souvent écrits très peu de temps avant le tournage.

La vie de bohème, tourné à Paris en noir et blanc, en français, avec des acteurs finlandais et français, est sorti en 1992. Il a été écrit, réalisé et coproduit par A. Kaurismäki.

L'ouvrage qui lui sert de texte d'inspiration est paru d'abord sous forme de feuilleton dans un journal satirique (1845–49), avant d'être publié en volume (2 éditions la même année 1851) avec le titre *Scènes de la bohème*. C'est la 3ème édition (1852) qui sortira avec le titre définitif *Scènes de la vie de bohème*. Auparavant, certains épisodes avaient été dramatisés en 5 actes pour la scène (*La vie de bohème*), en collaboration avec un jeune vaudevilliste Théodore Barrière. Ce fut un succès immense, dès la première (22 novembre 1849). La pièce servira au livret de l'opéra italien de Puccini (1896) — adaptation

donc d'une adaptation (Foucart, 1986). Quand il écrit le scénario, Kaurismäki ignore délibérément le film déjà tiré de Murger en 1943, par Marcel L'Herbier.

On a donc, pour s'en tenir au long métrage, un roman en français, traduit en finnois par Eino Palola (*Boheemielämää*) en 1924 puis réédité avec de légères modifications en 1959, en 1974 et en 1992 (6ème édition); un scénario en finnois (1990) "basé sur le roman d'Henri Murger *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1851)", traduit en français (1991) et des dialogues filmés en français, sous-titrés en finnois. On remarquera d'une part la confusion du titre et de l'année du roman et d'autre part l'absence de toute référence explicite au roman traduit en finnois. Plus que cette suite, ce qui compte ce sont les corrections, les modifications des scènes, d'une année à l'autre (1851–52), et surtout l'agencement différencié de ces scènes entre elles, de 1845 à 1852. Des quatre scènes initiales aux 23 actuelles, les perspectives, la tonalité changent: l'auteur passe de la parodie écrite en une langue vivace, des allusions à des personnes réelles à une morale sévère, pessimiste. D'évidence, la matière littéraire, langagière a connu des métamorphoses, non sans analogie avec les turbulences politiques et économiques survenues entre 1848 (fin de la Monarchie de Juillet) et 1851 (coup d'état de Louis Napoléon; exil et proscription de nombre d'insurgés de 1848).

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→ 1845 FEUILLETON DANS LE CORSAIRE (journal satirique)
         ↓
  1849 PIECE DE THÉATRE: LA VIE DE BOHEME
               ↓
           → LIVRET (OPÉRA DE PUCCINI 1896)

→ 1851 VOLUME (2 éditions): SCENES DE LA BOHEME        ⎫
                                                        ⎬
→ 1852 3ème édition: SCENES DE LA VIE DE BOHEME        ⎭
           ↓
       → TRADUITE EN FINNOIS BOHEEMIELÄMÄÄ
         1924 (1959+1974+1992, 6è édition)
                   (?)

→ 1990 SCENARIO PAR KAURISMÄKI  ◄ – – – – – – – – –
   ↓
 → 1991 TRADUIT EN FRANÇAIS
             ↓
      SCRIPT EN FRANÇAIS
             ↓
   1992 SOUS-TITRES EN FINNOIS
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Le mythe et les réalités de la bohème de Murger ne sont plus ceux de Nodier, de Vigny, de Balzac: ils portent désormais davantage sur des situations que sur des traits de caractère, davantage sur une atmosphère que sur une analyse. Ecrits pour la presse populaire, les feuilletons souscrivent à la rhétorique de l'hyperbole, aux références à l'actualité. Les personnages ne coïncident plus avec des prototypes (du séducteur cynique, de l'amoureux transi…). Avec le roman, on a des petits tableaux de genre, exécutés avec précision et ordonnés selon une certaine logique: il n'est pas simple compilation de textes parus dans *Le Corsaire*; il ne suit pas non plus les conventions de l'intrigue et de la psychologie. On a des épisodes qui se succèdent au gré de la mémoire, des lieux fréquentés (mansarde, café, rue, coulisses, salle de rédaction, etc.), qui entrelacent certains thèmes récurrents (la misère qui détruit, le luxe qui aliène, les désirs dont on saisit mal la vérité, etc.).

La suite de tableaux avec leur durée propre, les personnages éclatés, l'importance des lieux dans la ville, la lucidité et l'ironie désenchantées, le présent lentement infernal, la perte des illusions sous un ciel vide: tout cela croise les obsessions de Kaurismäki. Le cinéaste a ramassé les scènes, a réduit le nombre des personnages, a effacé les clins d'oeil et souvenirs de Murger pour les remplacer par les siens (migrants sans papier d'aujourd'hui et aux accents divers; références filmiques; chanson de Boris Vian, chanson japonaise, etc.). Il n'a pas cherché à reproduire, à calquer (plus ou moins littéralement) le roman. Son film s'inscrit pleinement dans sa filmographie, dans son univers dépouillé et lyrique, sordide et émouvant. Le metteur en scène regarde vivre des marginaux cosmopolites d'aujourd'hui dans son Paris à lui (rencontre entre Marcel, écrivain français, Rodolfo, peintre réfugié albanais, et Schaunard, compositeur irlandais, puis avec Mimi et Musette, déracinées, déplacées de leur propre milieu). Le scénario débute d'ailleurs par deux citations désabusées: "Les échecs m'ont rendu solide, indulgent" (Ho Tsi Minh) et "La pensée nait dans la bouche" (T. Tzara).

4. Des décisions normées

4.1 Normes préliminaires

On a vu les liens éventuels entre les divers textes qui ont généré le film: une analyse minutieuse révèlerait comment les caractères, les évènements ont été filtrés, déformés, recomposés pour être ce qu'ils sont dans le film. On peut

considérer d'autres normes préliminaires (Toury 1995: 58), touchant davantage l'initiateur de la double traduction.

Dans notre exemple, Kaurismäki a cherché à faire traduire d'abord le scénario (vers le français) pour obtenir un financement. Son film de fait a été co-produit par des agents ou maisons allemands, français, suédois et finlandais. Le distributeur, en Finlande, a dû plus tard faire sous-titrer, en finnois et en suédois (pour la TV, uniquement en finnois). Dans aucun des cas, semble-t-il, la visée d'une audience ou d'un public particulier a orienté les choix du traducteur. Ce qui peut être différent pour des programmes télévisés.

Entre l'écriture et la mise en scène du scénario d'une part et la mise en circulation du film dans les salles de cinéma et la compagnie de télévision d'autre part, il y a nombre d'intervenants qui génèrent le produit fini significatif. Dans ce processus, des décisions financières, techniques, esthétiques sont à prendre, par des professionnels aux compétences, au rang, au statut différents (voir plus loin 3.3).

4.2   Normes opérationnelles

Les sous-titres sont quasi automatiquement perçus comme "traduction" par le spectateur ordinaire qui croit aussi que le dialogue entendu est le texte "original" unique. D'ailleurs on compare "spontanément" les sous-titres à cet oral. De fait, les sous-titres fonctionnent souvent comme "traduction" à cause des deux langues en présence, à cause des deux codes juxtaposés (oral/écrit), à cause de la convention (dans nos pays) qui fait qu'on rattache la ou les deux lignes en bas d'un petit ou grand écran à de la "traduction" (interlinguistique). Pourtant il y a des sous-titres intralinguistiques (pour les sourds et malentendants; comme support pour apprendre la langue); il y a des sous-titres bilingues (flamand et français en Belgique; hébreu et arabe en Israël, etc.) dont l'un peut être traduction de l'autre et non réalisé à partir par exemple du script.

Avec *La vie de bohème*, les sous-titres en finnois sont issus du scénario lui-même traduit en français, ceux en suédois l'ont été certainement des sous-titres en finnois mais cela n'a pu être confirmé.

Le scénario (en français) contient outre toutes les remarques nécessaires sur le lieu, le moment, le décor, les accessoires de chaque séquence, les réparties du dialogue.

a. Entre ce dernier et les réparties du script (traduction interlinguistique), les divergences sont assez limitées:

– Il y a des substitutions. Par ex. "Monçao" par "Poitiers", "avis du peuple" pour "avis des travailleurs".
– Il y a des omissions. Par ex. bribes de conversation du genre question-réponse; énoncé phrastique.
– Il y a des additions. Par ex. répliques sur Malevitch, Schoenberg, Berg; citation extraite de Rimbaud; dialogues dans le débit de tabac, etc.
– Il y a des modifications énonciatives. Ex. "Ça je ne vous permettrai pas" → "ça je ne le permettrai pas"; "pour la salle de séjour" → "ma salle"; "au diner" → "mon diner"; "on a promis" → "ils ont promis"; "le chien" → "Baudelaire".
– Il y a des simplifications lexicales. Ex. "accomplir mon devoir" → "faire mon devoir"; "on donne sa vraie valeur à mon mérite" → "on reconnait mon mérite"; "il faut qu'il sèche jusqu'à demain" → "je vais le finir demain"; "les goujats" → "les idiots".
– Il y a quelques références contemporaines. Ex. Alfa Roméo; *le Monde*; une Suze.

b. Entre le script et le dialogue filmé des personnages, les transformations, peu nombreuses, sont liés au visuel (ex. "on peut continuer" → "nous pouvons continuer"; réparties de Marcel chez l'éditeur; lors de la séance de photo de Musette; répliques de Mimi comme tenancière; échanges pendant le jeu de cartes — non sous-titrés non plus).

On peut dire que le matériau linguistique du scénario est repris largement tel quel par le script qui à son tour sert de matrice au sous-titrage. Il faut redire que les dialogues chez Kaurismäki sont brefs, sans guère de répétitions et de redondance, aux structures syntaxiques et mélodiques assez élémentaires, avec très peu de variations de registre.

Plusieurs séquences sont sans paroles. Cela n'exclut pas ailleurs un humour dû à des "vérités" admises prises à contrepied (ex. les offres de Rodolfo de faire de Mimi une femme au foyer, d'obtenir un bon prix de l'industriel — marchand de sucre et collectionneur de tableaux).

Cette non-profusion de paroles facilite grandement la réalisation linguistique, le découpage ainsi que la vitesse de défilement des sous-titres. Elle empêche de parler de normes de neutralisation, de naturalisation (ou domestication), d'explicitation… — ce que renforce la forte analogie entre le scénario, le script, le dialogue à l'écran et la master list (script avec indication de longueur des répliques). L'esthétique minimaliste et la circulation entre français et finnois, contrainte en partie par la co-production, interdisent d'une façon de parvenir à une description systématique convaincante: si régularités il y a, elles sont peu distinctives.

4.3   Présence du traducteur

Dans le cinéma, les rapports entre les intervenants sont souvent d'autorité, de compétences. Avec *La vie de bohème*, le scénario traduit en français et les sous-titres en finnois sont le fait de la même personne (Irmeli Debarle), Finlandaise installée à Paris. En scrutant plus le générique par exemple, on s'aperçoit néanmoins qu'elle a eu l'aide de son mari (Français) et qu'elle a été assistante de Kaurismäki. Son rôle n'a pas été subalterne, secondaire. C'est dans une constellation de places qu'elle a joué au va-et-vient entre finnois et français, qu'elle a exercé ses responsabilités et pris ses décisions. Du fait même de sa présence à divers moments de la production, elle légitime son travail aux niveaux institutionnel, culturel, textuel. Elle manifeste les différences entre les activités induites pour le traducteur et la nature, le processus même de traduction

5.   Tradaptation: une chaine de transformations

Producteur, metteur en scène, acteurs, distributeur, traducteur ont fait leur travail. Comment celui-ci est-il reçu? Comment intègre-t-on le message verbal dans la perception globale du film?

On peut dire que Kaurismäki a été reconnu d'abord en France et en Allemagne avant de l'être en Finlande. Il serait pertinent d'étudier les comptes rendus, les critiques, les annonces et les communiqués de presse, pour saisir les attentes des spectateurs dans les différentes sociétés, leurs présupposés, pour relever les indications de "genre" et autres commentaires de traduction. Peut-être alors devrait-on substituer au concept d'*acceptabilité*, orienté sur le langagier, celui d'*accessibilité*.

Celle-ci incluerait pour le sous-titrage:
– *l'acceptablitié*, c'est-à-dire ce qui touche aux normes linguistiques, aux choix stylistiques, aux conventions rhétoriques, à la terminologie en langue d'arrivée, etc.
– La *lisibilité scripto-visuelle* des sous-titres, comprenant la taille, la forme et le contour des caractères typographiques; la position des lignes, justifiées à gauche ou au centre; la durée de présence ou vitesse de défilement, liée au nombre de caractères à lire, à la largeur de l'écran, au changement de plan et de séquence, au rythme des dialogues; la netteté des sous-titres, en rapport à la luminosité des images, à la présence ou pas d'autres écrits sur l'écran, etc.
– La *lisibilité psycholinguistique*, corrélée à la vitesse et aux habitudes de lecture

des récepteurs, à la complexité textuelle, à la densité des informations à transmettre; elle se manifeste dans la manière de segmenter, de condenser, de fusionner les sous-titres en unités sémantiques et syntaxiques cohérentes, dans le jeu des traits paratextuels (ponctuation) qui donnent sa respiration au soustitrage, facilite aussi la saisie et le traitement des répliques.

– La *pertinence*, c'est-à-dire les informations à donner, à omettre, à ajouter, à clarifier, à expliciter, afin de ne pas accroître l'effort cognitif du spectateur.

– La *dimension domestication*, définie en termes culturels. Jusqu'où accepter et rendre les nouveaux modes de narration, les valeurs véhiculées par les dialogues? Il s'agit ici d'intégrer les choix stratégiques du traducteur, pris entre les attentes, besoins et présupposés des récepteurs et la complexité multisémiotique des sens à faire passer.

La notion d'accessibilité, centrée sur la situation et divers facteurs de reception, serait d'autant plus importante, on l'a vu, que la notion de texte "original" (priorité ontologique de l'origine) est un leurre, un trompe l'oeil qui fait toujours croire à l'auteur-ité et à la linéarité texte-transfert-sous-titres.

Que tout texte (traduit ou pas) puise à de multiples sources n'est pas une idée récente. Dans le cas qui nous intéresse, un roman "adapté" d'un feuilleton (traduction intralinguistique) a servi de *texte d'inspiration* pour le scénario (traduction intersémiotique). Celui-ci s'est construit avec des restructurations, des omissions, des ajouts au niveau de la narration, avec une nouvelle caractérisation des personnages et des changements énonciatifs. Dans ce texte intermédiaire ou "intertexte", Kaurismäki a imprimé sa marque, son style "akilien" (Kainulainen 1999). De cet intertexte (traduit aussi) a dérivé le script de production, *texte de départ* à son tour du sous-titrage, traduction (interlinguistique) d'une traduction (interlinguistique), sans être retraduction (ou back translation). On pourrait par analogie rapprocher ces deux types de textes (d'inspiration et de départ) du "génotexte" (phase initiale du processus de signification) et du "phonotexte" (comme il apparaît tel quel, à tel moment), définis par Julia Kristeva (1974) qui est à l'origine aussi de la notion d'intertextualité (inspirée du "dialogisme"de Bakhtine).

La chaine de transformations, aux macro- et micro-niveaux, sous la contrainte des idéologies, des canons esthétiques, des rapports de pouvoir et d'argent entre les agents engagés (producteurs, metteur en scène, distributeur, etc.) n'est pas sans rappeler la traduction perçue comme "reformulation" ou "manipulation"par André Lefevere (1992).

Dans cette perspective et cette dynamique, la pseudopolarité entre traduction (plus dépendante d'un "original") et adaptation (relative autonomie par

rapport à cet "original") ne tient plus: il y a circulation textuelle et surtout synergie entre systèmes sémiotiques. D'où la notion proposée de *tradaptation* cinématographique (ou transadaptation), apte à englober tous les types de transformations. La tradaptation permet donc à la fois de dépasser les oppositions dichotomiques habituelles (cf. Section 1) et permet de prendre davantage en considération les publics ciblés, si divers dans leurs attentes et bagages socioculturels et sociolinguistiques, dans leurs compétences et possibilités de lecture (enfants, personnes âgées, sourds et malentendants, étudiants et cadres, etc.).

Marcel, Rodolfo, Mimi, Schaunard, l'homme, Blancheron (selon Kaurismäki) sont des avatars des personnages de Murger. Comme Violetta, la "traviata", femme égarée qui aspire à la rédemption, est une métamorphose de Marguerite, "la dame aux camélias", quand Verdi a "traduit", transadapté en opéra la pièce de Dumas.

La traduction, qui bouscule nos conceptions traditionnelles de l'auteur, du texte, de l'original, de la contextualisation, est un concept toujours à négocier (Gambier 1999–2000: 67).

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Myths about documentary translation

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1.   Introduction

Documentaries constitute a fascinating field which has given rise to an academic domain in its own right, Documentary Studies, within Film Studies. Michael Renov (1993: 1–2) gives the following reasons for the recent rise of research on documentaries:

> It may well be that the marginalization of the documentary film as a subject of serious inquiry is at an end. After all, the key questions which arise in the study of nonfiction film and video — the ontological status of the image, the epistemological stakes of representation, the potentialities of historical discourse on film — are just as pressing for an understanding of fictional representation.

Curiously, in Translation Studies (TS), however, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) has scarcely addressed the translation of documentaries. For example, in Yves Gambier's comprehensive bibliography on AVT (1997), there are fewer entries on documentaries than on other audiovisual genres (cf. Franco 2000: 233). And in the first SETAM (Seminari de Traducció Audiovisual i Multimèdia) conference, April 2001, entitled 'An Update on Audiovisual-Translation Studies in Spain', only two out of thirty papers addressed either the documentary (Herrero) or voice-over (Orero), the mode of dubbing which is commonly used in Spain for the translation of both interviews and documentaries. On November 2003, the prestigious journal *The Translator* published a monograph on AVT which featured no article on documentary translation.

One reason for this neglect of documentaries is that AVT is a relatively new academic field, within a relatively new academic field which is TS. Both popular culture and translation have been traditionally considered as subproducts; therefore, research on AVT has had little academic prestige (Delabastita 1989: 193), which contrasts with the enormous social impact of audiovisual translated products (Díaz Cintas 2003: 289). The situation has

now changed, with a boom on audiovisual translation publishing at the turn of the millennium, as can be seen from the dates of the bibliographical references in this article.

Another reason might be that every new discipline has to justify its very existence by determining the boundaries which constitute its specificity (Chaume 2002: 1). Therefore, it is perhaps not very surprising that most research within AVT addresses this specificity in modes of translating which are considered more prototypical (lip-sync dubbing and subtitling) or in genres, such as feature films or TV series, which attract wider audiences. All this might indicate that the audiovisual specificity of documentaries is not yet fully acknowledged. For this purpose, I would like to briefly examine the following related myths:

1. a documentary is not a film
2. documentary translation is not specifically audiovisual.

2.   Myth 1: a documentary is not a film

Often, in daily conversations, one hears commentaries about favourite films, and the typical qualification follows in discussing a documentary: 'well, it's not *really* a film'. The underlying assumption is that a documentary is not a film because it is not fictitious, as though all documentaries — or all artistic constructions — were strictly real; as though all fiction films were not real. A brief survey of the history of film may help to expose such related myths. This review of the first documentaries may also help us understand the dilemmas facing the genre nowadays: documentation versus spectacle, reality/nonfiction versus fiction, as well as the protean nature of documentary forms, which may be exploited by opposing ideologies.[1]

2.1   The origins of documentary

Historically, cinema was born as a documentary, as Erik Barnouw has persuasively argued (1998). The first experiments in photographing motion came out of an urgent need to document a phenomenon, with the camera providing a more exact, detailed view than the human eye: the passing of Venus in front of the Sun (Pierre Jules César, 1874); the galloping of racehorses (Eadweard Muybridge, 1872–1877), and the movements of birds in flight (Étienne Jules Marey, 1882); or the articulation of human lip movements (Georges Demeny, 1892). In these experiments in series photography, the main virtue of docu-

mentary was that of showing us worlds which were accessible but, for some reason, we had not perceived before (Barnouw 1998: 12). However, the interest was in deconstructing movement, rather than synthesizing it, and the experiments did not go much beyond the realm of high-speed, or instantaneous, series photography (Manvell & Weis 1990: 380).

The distribution of the early motion-picture cameras came with inventors, not scientists, who exploited the spectacular dimension of film. Thus, pioneers like Thomas Alva Edison and Louis Lumière turned the first film experiments into commercial and industrial projects. The first motion pictures by Edison featured music hall shows, recorded at a studio, since Edison's camera, the Kinetoscope, was not portable. By contrast, the Lumière brothers' *Cinématograph* could be transported and allowed the documentation of real events, which gave rise to what is generally considered the first motion picture: *La sortie des ouvriers de l'usine Lumière* (1895). Some of the first Lumière takes showed actions prepared for the camera, like the feeding of a baby, or other comedy shorts, but most recorded everyday events, with real witnesses and without actors.

From the beginning, documentary films showed their versatility, which would serve the arts, industry, medicine, the armed forces, science and education alike (Barnouw 1998: 31). In early documentaries we can see the varying roles played by documentarians: promoters and advertisers, artists, reporters, travellers and ethnographists. Erik Barnouw's history of documentaries is shaped around the different social functions of documentaries: explorer, reporter, painter, advocate, clarion call, prosecutor, poet, chronicler, promoter, observer, catalyst and guerrilla fighter, as can be seen by a glance at the chapter headings of the book (1998: 7).

It was not until 1907 (the earliest Lumière films were from 1895) that fiction films started to predominate over documentaries, for various reasons. Their themes (such as military parades, crowning ceremonies of kings, or imperialist portrayals of colonies) easily converted them into propaganda agents. Furthermore, the art of montage was initially developed only in fiction films, not in documentaries (Barnouw 1998: 25). And the reliability of documentary as historical witness diminished when trick techniques were introduced, in which real takes of events were combined with studio takes of actors impersonating famous people, with scale models (Barnouw 1998: 27–30).[2] Other factors that contributed to the decline of documentary in the Lumière period and the rise of fiction were the appearance of cinema stars and the first use of fiction films of several reels (Barnouw 1998: 30).

Later documentaries made use of the same rhetorical devices that made fiction film successful and attracted large audiences again. A well-known example is Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), with its use of suspense and character construction. Nowadays, even though documentary does not attract the massive audiences of fiction film, interest in the genre has prevailed, especially in investigative projects. And recently there seems to have been something of a renaissance: films like Wim Wenders' *Buenavista Social Club* (1999) or, more recently, *Bowling for Columbine* by Michael Moore (2002), have been very popular documentaries.

2.2   Defining documentary, a protean institution

Documentaries are a specifically audiovisual genre, despite their hybrid, protean nature; or precisely due to this nature, since the screen image can absorb all kinds of material. Documentaries are usually defined negatively, in opposition to feature films, as can be seen from the label 'nonfiction film' which is preferred by certain authors, like Carl Plantinga (1997), or by certain institutions. Miramax Films argued for this category when their documentaries did not receive any award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts; they proposed the term 'nonfiction,' 'so that the "negative connotations" of "documentary" could be jettisoned' (*cf.* Renov 1993b: 5).

It is certainly difficult to establish the limits between fiction and nonfiction. 'One useful shorthand distinction [Bill] Nichols draws between fiction and nonfiction is between their respective orientations towards *a* world as opposed to *the* world' (Renov 1993b: 194). Michael Renov has argued that

> 'the label of 'nonfiction,' while a meaningful categorization, may, in fact, lead us to discount [the documentary's] (necessarily) fictive elements. […] With regard to the complex relations between fiction and documentary, it might be said that the two domains *inhabit* one another'. (*ibid.*: 3)

Documentaries certainly have fictitious as well as fictive elements. For Michael Renov, fictive elements refer to the rhetorical construction of the image, its 'recourse to tropes or rhetorical figures', which documentaries share with fiction films, for the construction of narrativity: a focus on character and deliberate, creative use of camera angles (*ibid.*: 2–7). Therefore, given the uncertain boundaries between fiction and nonfiction, in this text we use the term 'documentary' to refer to the aim of 'documenting' some reality, without evaluating the truth of such reality.

Many definitions of documentary insist on its versatility. For example, Bill Nichols considers the multiple perspectives from which documentary may be studied, as a protean institution, consisting of texts, a community of practitioners and of conventional practices, subject to historical change (in Plantinga 1997: 13; *cf.* Nichols 1997, 2001). This view acknowledges the hybrid nature of the documentary and claims that this versatility comes from the distinct agents creating/using documentaries. It will be a specific community at a given time which will ratify something as a documentary:

> One way to define documentary is to say: 'Documentaries are what the organizations and institutions that produce them make.' […] This definition, despite its circularity, functions as an initial cue that a given work can be considered as a documentary. The context provides the cue; […] we make certain assumptions about the film's documentary status and its degree of likely objectivity, reliability, and credibility. (Nichols 2001: 22)

Carl Plantinga has examined several definitions of the documentary (or nonfiction film in his terminology) but they tend to be either too vague or too restrictive. Plantinga compares the difficult task of defining nonfiction film with that of defining art, a term on which no consensus can easily be reached, since it is an empty concept which can be filled with all kinds of material (*ibid.*: 14). Merely functional definitions might be more useful, such as the following, based on prototypicality, on indexing and on assertiveness.

George Lakoff (1987: 40ff.) has explored the fuzzy boundaries of categories which can only be defined in relation to certain prototypes. The prototypical example of a category has all the properties which are considered as central to that category, whereas a more peripheral member may only have some of those categories. Carl Plantinga has applied this to documentaries, and persuasively argued that some gradation can be established between prototypical and exceptional documentaries, at a given point in time in a specific culture (Plantinga 1997: 15).

The theory of indexing of Noël Carroll may also be applied to documentaries: a documentary can be considered as such when it is indexed — or publicly identified — as such by certain agents, such as producers, distributors or reviewers. But not only that: a documentary is such when it is perceived as such (Carroll in Plantinga 1997: 16).[3]

What all these definitions have in common is the central role of agency in ratifying something as a documentary. A documentary cannot be defined as such without taking into account a context of practitioners, where certain power relations operate. What is important is who labels something as a

documentary and who accepts this. And, as we will see, who translates it for whom.[4] In all this, agency is at the heart of the matter; as well as the rhetorical effacement of agency:

> To represent a realistic likeness of something is to efface the agency of representation so that the likeness comes to the fore. To stand for someone or something else is to assert the agency of representation so that an issue or concern comes to the fore (Nichols 1993: 175).

Another approach to defining documentaries comes from the assertive function of texts. The question is not whether a certain reality exists, but whether a certain documentary asserts that such a reality exists. Carl Plantinga exemplifies this with the hypothetical sentence, 'There was once a woman of Paris' which, depending on the context in which it is uttered, will be perceived as a fictitious tale or will be seen as an *assertion* of reality (Plantinga 1997: 16–17).

All these characterizations of documentary, based on indexing, prototypicality and assertiveness, may seem rather meaningless. Inasmuch as they depend on the content provided by senders or viewers of such documentaries, who may see them as more or less prototypical, who might accept or reject the label of documentary, and who might question their assertive value, they are somewhat empty definitions. An example might be *JFK*, by Oliver Stone, 1991, a film which toys with the conventions of documentary representation, that plays with the boundaries between fiction and documentary. The film starts like a conventional documentary, with voice-over narration, and little by little fictitious scenes are interpolated. For the audience this ambiguous representation may emphasize the difficulty of establishing historical fact in a postmodern age (Plantinga 1997: 23–24). The controversy around 'the truth' of Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) may also be read in this light.

3.   Myth 2: documentary translation is not specifically audiovisual

Let us now turn to translation and examine the myth according to which a documentary is not specifically audiovisual, i.e. it is not representative of the difficulties involved in audiovisual translation, especially in such major translation modes as dubbing and subtitling. As we will see, there is a confusion between translation modes (lip-sync dubbing, subtitling, voice-over), and their correspondence with audiovisual genres, and the confusion reality/fiction is also present in documentary translation.

The current debates on reality construction in documentaries may have effects on translation. As Eliana Franco has argued, 'one of the direct consequences of such an approach is to suggest the active participation of translation in this process of construction/representation, therefore challenging its objectivity' (Franco 2000: 235).

Current theories of translation acknowledge the agency of the translator in the construction of text. The paradox is that the questioning of reality, in both TS and Film Studies, clashes with the use of voice-over, a translation mode which is chosen for the illusion of authenticity it may foster in the audience.

If in documentaries 'the value of the image depends upon its ability to inspire belief in its "real" provenance' (Renov 1993: 8), in their translation with voice-over this illusion of authenticity may come from the discourse, from the speaker's voice, or even from his or her accent (Orero 2001).[5]

Rosa Agost and Frederic Chaume provide a clear definition of voice-over as used in Spain:

> Voice-over: a mode of dubbing, used especially in documentaries, where the dubbing actor's utterance overlaps with the original oral text. This original oral text is emitted at a lower volume than the translation, which starts about three seconds later, but finishes at the same time. (Agost & Chaume 1999: 250)

There may be slight differences in different studios: it is also common that voice-over starts two seconds later and finishes two seconds before the source-text. Or voice-over may start after three or four words, not seconds, of the original sound track.

Voice-over is similar to simultaneous interpretation in that the voice does not aim at total replacement of the source text as in dubbing (Zabalbeascoa 2001: 51). It is also similar to subtitling, where source and target language coexist, although in different codes. This coexistence allows for constant comparison, and usually criticism, from an audience; that is why Díaz Cintas labels subtitled versions 'vulnerable translations' (2003: 43–44). In voice-over, since there is scarcely auditory overlap between soundtracks, what translators tend to do is be as 'literal' as possible at the beginning and end of utterances, so that the audience does not question the quality or authenticity of the translation (Orero 2001).

Roberto Mayoral has rightly questioned the suitability of voice-over for translating documentaries in Spain. Since the language of the original is incomprehensible to most Spanish spectators, keeping the original soundtrack for the sake of authenticity is useless and hinders the reception of the documentary.

Since there is no one-to-one correspondence between audiovisual genres and translation modes, it would be useful to reconsider what translation mode might be most efficient for translating documentaries nowadays, be it voice-over, lip-sync dubbing, subtitling, narration or any other mode (2001: 43).

The main characteristic of documentaries, as in any audiovisual text, is the interplay between image and sound, between verbal and non-verbal elements. The verbal text reaches us through the auditory channel (in lip-sync dubbing and voice-over), or the visual channel (in subtitling and chyrons). This specific interplay of audio/visual, verbal/non-verbal might account for the following instruction for translating documentaries issued by a dubbing studio. Among other specifications, the studio's style sheet reminds translators, in capitals, that they have to dub documentaries, not translate texts. Thus dubbing is opposed to translation or, following Jakobson's distinction, intersemiotic translation is opposed to interlinguistic translation, even though both forms coexist in audiovisual translation.[6] Furthermore, 'documentaries' are opposed to 'texts', implicitly assuming documentaries to be specifically audiovisual, in contrast with 'texts', which are assumed to be written.

We have seen above the difficult characterization of documentaries, given their protean, hybrid nature. According to Frederic Chaume (2003: 190), a characterisation of genres from a translator's perspective may depend on such aspects as:

- the duration of the text
- the presence or absence of technolects
- de degree of referenciality between acoustic and visual narration
- the predictability and the nature of events
- the relevance of lip synchronisation
- the creativity of language in the source text.

In order to characterise documentary translation as specifically audiovisual, we might also consider the following discursive aspects: field, mode, translation mode and textual function.

Field: Documentaries can include any field of discourse and subject matter, given their multifunctionality as explorer, reporter, guerrilla fighter, as we have mentioned, following Erik Barnouw. As a documentary translator has argued, 'the task of a documentary translator is close to an investigative journalist's. It requires minimum knowledge of a maximum number of topics' (Mir 1999: 55). It can be argued that this requirement applies to all kinds of translators. But, whereas a translator of written texts might be a specialist in

specific fields, an audiovisual translator is not generally assumed to specialize in a specific field (say, biology) but in a specific mode, i.e. 'audiovisual' versus 'written'. This specialized knowledge has to be complemented with queries to specialists, with bibliography, and internet searches.

Mode of discourse: audiovisual. It is worth remembering that it is the mode, not the field, that distinguishes audiovisual translation, including documentaries, from other types of translation. As Frederic Chaume (2002: 2) has put it, audiovisual translation is 'opposed to written or oral translation, and not to legal, technical or scientific translation, because these fields can be broached by the written, oral or audiovisual texts that the translator manipulates'.

The audiovisual documentary text, following the well-known characterisation by Gregory and Carroll (1978: 47), is written to be said, as the oral utterance of a written text (in the case of the narrator) and as more spontaneous text (in the case of talking heads). This brings about a diversity of registers in translation. The narrator's register and diction tends to be more formal than that of the talking heads and social actors. This may give rise to different translation guidelines, as is the case in the stylebook for dubbing of Televisió de Catalunya (TVC 1997), which recommends different registers for narrators and talking heads in terms of syntax, lexicon and pronunciation (*cf.* Chaume 2001: 79–80). Talking heads may have more varied registers, from the stilted/formal style of a specialist to the supposed spontaneity of a child; in any case, for talking heads a more 'oral' text is presumed than for narrators, which triggers corresponding translation decisions.

Translation modes: lip-synch dubbing, voice-over, and subtitling. This latter option in Spain is restricted to a few cinemas and is virtually non-existent in television. Both dubbing and voice-over are used in documentaries on Spanish TV, and both translation modes may be used for narrators and talking heads. Usually voice-over is used when the narrator is a well-known scientist or reporter (Agost 1999: 88), so as to allow some comparison between original and translation. Thus we can see that the need for resemblance is linked to the status of the speaker. But perhaps the most important reason for choosing voice-over instead of lip-sync dubbing is financial: voice-over is much cheaper, since fewer agents are involved, and 'the length of time required to carry out voice-over is far less than for lip-sync dubbing' (Luyken 1991: 81).

In Spain subtitling can be used occasionally together with dubbing and subtitling. For example subtitles are used for a third language, or when the speakers' dialect is difficult to understand. Also a chyron can be used, that is a written message on the screen to translate written information which appears

in the film, such as dates, posters, advertisements, subtitles or any visual information which might be important (Castro 2001: 291). Subtitling is also used for documentaries shown in cinemas.

Textual functions: Documentaries may be considered informative genres, with narrative, descriptive, persuasive and expository functions, according to the classification by Rosa Agost for the translation of audiovisual genres (1999: 30, 40). Within the expository, persuasive functions of informative genres, there are different degrees of specialization. Klaus Gommlich (1993: 175–184) proposes a translation-oriented classification, devised for technical and scientific texts, but which may be applied to all documentaries:

–   Transfactual texts I: They have an informative function and are addressed to an expert audience. An example of communication from expert to expert might be a film on a specific surgical technique.
–   Transfactual texts II: They have an informative function and are addressed to a non-expert audience, such as a European documentary on Afghanistan.
–   Transbehavioural texts I: They have a persuasive non-binding function; that is, they may propose, rather than impose, changes in the behaviour of the target audience; for example, a documentary on Antarctica by an environmentalist organisation.
–   Transbehavioural texts II: They have a binding persuasive function. Gommlich mentions laws and patents (1993: 178). In the case of audiovisual translation, we might think of the text which is shown on rented videotapes on the legal conditions for viewing the film.

Prototypical documentaries may fall within the category Transfactual texts II, assuming an information-based communication from expert to non-expert. Documentaries may also be considered Transbehavioural texts II when they serve as propaganda, as guerrilla action, as a clarion call, to mention only some of the social functions of documentary proposed by Erik Barnouw (1998: 7).

Audience: This is the crux of translating documentaries. The presumed TV or cinema audience, vaguely defined as the 'general public', may be so heterogeneous that translators ideally have to cater their translations to all spectators. But one never knows how many experts and non-experts will watch a documentary; hence the difficulty of defining, a priori, the textual (transfactual or transbehavioural) functions of texts; hence, the difficult task of a translation which caters to the widest range of audience.

This points to an interesting field of research. If audience design is a promising perspective within audiovisual translation research (Hatim &

Mason 1997; Gambier & Gottlieb 2001; Mason 2001; Bartrina, in this volume), it is particularly relevant for documentaries. The slippery characterization of the genre may be linked to the protean audiences viewing it; in turn, this problematizes the translation's accommodation of the target audience. Marsa Laine reminds us of the questions a translator should take into account in this respect. These may be paraphrased as follows: What was the programme's potential audience in the source culture? What target audience will the translated programme have? The general public? A specific section thereof? Experts in the field? All these point to the translator's role as mediator (*cf.* Laine 1996: 199).

'Translation does not end with "text" but with delivery', as Yves Gambier and Henrik Gottlieb remind us (2001: xix). In this regard, translators construct a potential target audience, and take corresponding translation decisions, taking into account considerations such as: the relative importance of a given segment within the documentary as a whole; the type of documentary; the time of broadcast, and the interaction between text and image; this interaction may be a problem — the translation segment cannot be omitted if the image is important — or a solution, when the image provides details which are not available in the target verbal text.

Therefore, terminology, an oft-quoted translation challenge, is not an absolute prerequisite, but is relative to the audience for which the translation is designed. For example, in the translation of a documentary for four- to ten-year-old children, the Catalan translator Jordi Mir decided to avoid the Latin scientific names of animals, so as to foster comprehension, whereas in most documentaries he painstakingly researches the most appropriate scientific terms (Mir 1999: 53).

Likewise, in a documentary on Chernobyl and the effects of radioactivity on children, the translator Ramon Burgos considered using a specific term for the expression 'anti-sick serum' in the source-language text, but when he found out that the Catalan medical term was 'antiemètic', he deliberately avoided it as unintelligible to most lay spectators. It is worth noting that, generally speaking, some terms might be regarded as more specialized in English than in Romance languages. Besides, popular scientific English texts, both audiovisual and written, tend to paraphrase specialized terms, especially from Greek or Latin origins, such as 'hypertension', which might be glossed as 'raised blood pressure', or 'neuron', as 'nerve cell'; terms which in Spanish or Catalan may be used without further explanation. Similarly, in the Catalan translation of a documentary on Antarctica, the translator substituted well-

known scientific terms for general terms in the original: 'the *face* of Antarctica is changing' was translated as '*l'ecosistema* de l'Antàrtida està canviant'; 'people doing plant research' was rendered as 'botànics', and 'this place' as 'paisatge'.[7] These examples are offered, therefore, not as prototypical translation solutions, but as samples of how translation solutions try to fit the conventions of a specific genre in the target culture, taking into account its potential audiences.

In summary, documentaries pose the following challenges for translation and research: the fuzzy definition of this protean genre across different times and audiences; hence, the slippery characterization of target audiences, which affects the whole translation process, and which in turn is the key to tackling terminology and information translation problems of all kinds. Finally, the interaction between text and image is both a problem and a solution. The documentary, as a protean institution, with many functions (denunciation, exploration, propaganda, etc.), entails translation and research needs which are still largely unexplored.

Notes

1. In Section 2.2. we will briefly discuss the notions of fiction, nonfiction, truth, reality in documentaries. In this section on the origins of documentary, we do not, for methodological convecience.

2. Bill Nichols (1993: 176–177) vindicates the value of explicit reenactment techniques nowadays: 'Reenactment was once an accepted convention of documentary representation, but observational styles all but destroyed its credibility. Compared to the vivid impression of reality conveyed by early cinema verité, reenactments seemed encrusted with the traditions of studio filmmaking. But the matter of authenticity is not so easily settled. In what ways is a reenactment less authentic than a recounting? In a typical recounting, we hear what someone says about an event that has long since happened while we see "authentic" archival images of the event itself. Does this strategy not confer greater truth-value on the spoken word than it deserves? Is the spoken word not a reenactment in its own right, an interpretation aided by hindsight and motivated by an implicit point of view shaped over time?'

3. This, incidentally, reminds us of the operative definition of translation used in Descriptive TS: a translation is what is considered as such by a specific community at a given point in time (Hermans 1985: 13, *cf.* Toury 1980).

4. 'Who transmits/ to whom/ what for/ by which medium/ where/ when/ why […]'. With these questions from the New Rhetoric Christiane Nord summarises the tenets of translation-oriented text analysis (Nord 1991: 36).

5. Orero summarizes the findings of Luyken (1991), Pönnio (1995) and Fawcett (1996). Specifically on accent, Fawcett refers to the increasing practice in the United Kingdom of

replacing 'neutral' accents by a regional or cultural accent which is deemed appropriate for a specific programme (Fawcett 1996: 76 in Orero (2001)). Jorge Díaz Cintas comments on voice-over, also in the United Kingdom, in English with a foreign accent, to replace the foreign source text, recreating how a speaker of the programme's language might speak English, a practice which, Díaz adds, helps to perpetuate linguistic stereotyping (2001: 39).

6. For a lucid critique of Jakobson's distinction, see Hermans (1997: 16ff.), following Derrida (1985).

7. I would like to acknowledge the help of Ramon Burgos, translator for Televisió de Catalunya, who has let me consult his translated documentaries; I am also indebted to him for the fruitful conversations we have had on audiovisual translation, with his illuminating, ironic insights.

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Closed subtitling in Brazil

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1. Introduction

Subtitling has been used in Brazil since the 60's. It is the preferred mode of translation both in cinema and on cable television. However, this is not the case with open access television, which uses dubbing on all programmes transmitted; consequently, as subtiles are not available, deaf and hard-of-hearing people cannot follow national productions.

Two events contributed to a change in this situation. In 1997, Globo Television, the most popular network in Brazil, decided to translate using intralingual closed subtitling on one of its daily news programmes, *Jornal Nacional* (National News). Two years later, a bill mandating closed subtitling of almost all open television programmes was sent to Congress to be voted on. While parliament is still discussing the regulation, Globo continues to subtitle a variety of programmes, ranging from feature films to news and talk shows. Although Globo pioneered closed subtitles, it is not the only network to use them in the country nowadays. Brazilian Television System (*Sistema Brasileiro de Televisao* — SBT) also subtitles some of its productions.

This paper intends to present an overview of the current situation regarding closed subtitling in Brazil, describing some of its features and main characteristics, it's production aspects, and 'reception research' to investigate its effectiveness for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers.

2. Closed caption or closed subtitle?

The closed subtitling system used by Globo follows the principles of a North-American model, which inserts the title in line 21 of the vertical blanking interval — the black horizontal bar between individual television images — in the video

signal. The titles are only visible by means of a decoder operated by the remote control of the TV set. This is the main technical aspect that distinguishes closed from open subtitles, which can be seen without the decoder.

Another distinction between the titles is related to translation. During the translation process, open titles are condensed to synchronise with speech and image. It is the type of subtitle that people, including the deaf and the hard-of-hearing, are familiar with in the country. This shortening is not a usual practice in the production of closed titles. As a consequence, there is no speech-image-title synchronism, because the titles are almost a transcription of the speech, in its verbatim version. These titles scroll too fast on the screen, demanding a lot of effort on the part of the viewer to read them and therefore to be able to enjoy the programme.

Because of this difference in format, the titles are going to be designated differently here. When the reference is to the open title, it will be called "subtitle". Otherwise, it will be referred to as "caption", the term used by North-Americans. That is the way Brazilian viewers differentiate them: they expect subtitles to be an editing and captions to be a transcription of the speech.

Globo TV presents two types of captions. Roll-up captions scroll continuously from the bottom to the top part of the screen, reaching up four lines at a time. Words come out from the left to the right side of the screen. It is the type of caption used in programmes requiring real time translation, such as talk shows and news. Picture 1[1] shows one of these captions, taken from a daily news programme, called Jornal Hoje (Today's News):

Picture 1. Roll-up closed caption

Pop-on captions are similar to the open subtitles usually seen in Brazilian cinema and television screens. Globo TV uses them in films. Unlike roll-up captions, they come on and off the screen synchronising with speech and image. Picture 2 shows two pop-on captions from the feature film *Jesus*:

Picture 2. Pop-on closed captions

The two features mentioned are not the only ones distinguishing captions and subtitles. Another aspect is the inclusion of additional information, such as speaker identification, sound effects, soundtrack noises, paralinguistic information and other acoustic signs that are not visible but audible to a hearing audience. De Linde and Kay say that in order to understand how important these elements are, hearing viewers should take the place of deaf and hard-of-hearing at least once by doing the following "experiment":

> Turn down the volume of an interlingual subtitled film and you will experience some of the frustrations endured by deaf viewers: confusion over who is speaking the subtitled words; puzzlement as to why, for example, there is a sudden change of human behaviour (e.g. the panic stricken face of someone who hears a murderer's footsteps); misunderstanding due to the overlapping subtitle across a shot change. (1999: 9–10)

Corroborating their view, I would say that hearing viewers would experience the same kind of frustration as deaf viewers, even in an intralingual subtitled film. When TV volume is low, it is sometimes impossible to get the information needed to enjoy the film.

Additional information is shown in different ways depending on the type of caption and information provided. For example, speaker identification is carried out by means of italics, brackets, superimposition on image, and symbols.

Pop-on closed captions identify the speaker in two ways. First (exemplified in Picture 2), when the person speaking is off-screen the identification is shown in brackets or in italics. Brackets are also adopted to inform deaf viewers of the acoustic signs in the film, such as telephone or door bell ringing, a murderer's steps approaching, people laughing or crying etc. Second, when the person speaking is on-screen, the caption is superimposed on the speaker. This procedure is used even when there is more than one character speaking at the same time. In this case, the captions appear simultaneously placed on the speakers, as we can see in Picture 3 below:

Picture 3. Identification of on-screen speaker

Roll-up captions make use of either the speaker's name (in brackets) or the symbol >> to identify the person speaking. As there is no speech-caption-image synchronism, and captions scroll fast, sometimes one can get confused and identification of the speaker may be hard. That is the case of the captioned talk show, called *Programa do Jo* (Jo's Show). This show tends to be verbally dense, about 241 words per minute, which is the normal speech rate for Brazilian Portuguese. As the captions are almost a verbatim version of the speech, they roll up fast, creating difficulties for the viewer in following the conversation.

3. The making of closed captions

Closed captions are produced by a company called Steno do Brasil and transmitted by satellite to Globo TV. The professional in charge of the task is a stenocaptioner, who operates a stenograph, a machine equipped with a steno-

type keyboard. This kind of keyboard allows the fast typing required in real time captioning.

The stenocaptioner must be a skilful typist, for she/he has to type about 160 words a minute. According to a Brazilian newspaper (*Folha de Sao Paulo* 9/3/2000), sometimes the stenocaptioner has to deal with reporters who speak more than 187 words a minute. Steno do Brasil has a training course for captioners and is now beginning to train blind people to do the job (*JA* magazine, 10/1/2000), as the aspect of speech-image-title synchronism is not an important feature in captioning.

The stenograph is a computerised piece of equipment with 24 keys that can be pressed simultaneously. Robson claims that it "allows the stenocaptioner to write entire syllables or words with a single hand motion (known as a "stroke") rather than having to type one letter at a time" (1997: 73). That is one of the reasons why it is faster than a normal keyboard. Another reason is that words and syllables are not typed according to the spelling, but to the sound. It means that "the entire language of stenocaptioning is phonetic" (Robson 1997: 73). The last reason that accounts for the speed of the equipment is that the stenocaptioner only needs to type a few sounds for the computer to search for the desired word in a dictionary.

The stenotype is similar to the keyboard used in court and its keys are not the same as the ones in an ordinary keyboard. Robson (1997: 73) explains how it works:

> The seven keys on the left (STKPWHR) are stroked by the fingers of the left hand to create initial consonants (sounds at the beginning of a syllable). The ten keys on the right (FRPBLGTSDZ) are stroked by the fingers on the right hand to create final consonants. The thumbs write the vowels (AOEU).

As one can see, not all sounds are represented in the stenotype, so the stenocaptioner will use a combination of the existing keys to produce the non-existing sounds. For instance, to produce the sound [I], one has to press [E] and [U] (Robson 1997: 74). In the case of vowels, there is also a differentiation between short and long sounds that can be distinguished by means of different combinations.

To write a number, the stenocaptioner has to press the number bar located at the top of the stenotype. Then the numbers show up with the following positions: 1234 on the left, 6789 on the right, and 05 at the bottom. From left to right, any combination can be created in one stroke; so, one can write 369 by pressing the keys simultaneously. This is not the case with numbers like 693 for which individual strokes are required.

Due to the complexity of the stenotype, where the striking of a wrong key can produce a completely different word from the one intended, many errors are made. Robson says that these mistakes do not cause many difficulties to the deaf viewer reading, as the wrong words will not make sense in the context (1997: 76). In my opinion, this can be a problem, because it will be an extra difficulty. To many Brazilians who are born deaf, Portuguese functions as a second language, Sign Language being their first tongue.

The example below shows some errors caused by the incorrect use of the stenotype. They certainly generated misunderstanding on the part of the viewers, as the anchorman said: "Nem era um sonho de Cinderela como na ..." [It was not a Cinderella dream as in a ...] , but a different and very strange version was aired:

> **NEM ERA UM SONHO DE ZE INDIO REGISTRA RELATA COMO NA**
>
> **[IT WAS NOT A ZE INDIO DREAM REGISTER TELL AS IN A ...]**

Even though I disagree with Robson's statements about mistranslation of words, I agree with him about mistranslation of numbers. Producing a wrong number may cause a lot of confusion. Stenocaptioners are aware of this problem and in order to avoid it American captioners "write out all of their numbers by expressing them in words" (Robson 1997: 77). Brazilian captioners do the same thing, as we can see that sometimes the numbers are expressed in words. Although the procedure requires more key striking, it prevents the captioning professionals from making this kind of error.

Now that the main aspects of closed captioning have been explained, an analysis about its effectiveness will conclude this brief overview. The knowledge of the facts described above made researchers from the State University of Ceará wonder if Brazilian deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers could watch Globo's programmes by making use of this kind of closed caption. To find an answer to this question, we decided to carry out reception research (Araújo 2000, Franco 2001, Franco and Araújo 2003). The main results are presented below.

4. Do Globo TV captions meet the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing Brazilians?

The United States has been using closed captioning successfully for more than twenty years, but this system is not satisfactory to British audiences, according to Donaldson (1998) and De Linde and Kay (1999). Although the authors agree that British people's reading ability allows them to watch TV with rapid captions, this is not the case of those with congenital deafness. Having sign language as their main method of communication, their reading of fast captions may be problematic. The main question to be answered in the research is in which of these two categories Brazilian audiences belong.

The reception research was composed of two studies. The first one was a pilot scheme[2] carried out with a small group of Brazilian viewers (twelve deaf and thirteen non-deaf). As the results suggested that more condensation was needed for deaf viewers to enjoy captioned programmes, the second study was proposed to test this hypothesis. It consisted of three stages: retranslation of some sequences of Globo programmes, remaking of the questionnaires, and the new research.

4.1   Retranslating Globo captions

A new translation of Globo programmes was produced, because Fortaleza deaf viewers' reading ability did not allow them to follow the captions. A lot of effort on their part was needed to read the rapid captions. Roll-up captions did not synchronise with speech and image, appearing two seconds after them. Although pop-on captions were not so fast, they also brought difficulties to the participants. They were similar, but less condensed than open subtitles, as the editing was based on the dubbed version of the film and was carried out only for the sake of image-caption synchronism.

The procedure employed for the new translation was similar to the one used in video and television open subtitling in Brazil, that is, Globo captions were reduced to synchronise with speech and image. The captions had to be converted to open subtitles, because the computerised stenograph was not available. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the process.

Six sequences from fictional and factual programmes broadcast by Globo in the year 2000 were selected to test these new subtitles. Details of these sequences are presented in Table 3.

Table 1. Globo captions

Globo Captions	Speech	Caption rate Characters per second (cps)	Translated speech (%)
Nem era um sonho de Zé índio [It was not a Ze indio dream]	Nem era um sonho de Cinderela [It was not a Cinderela dream]	27	
Registra relata como na [Register tell as in]	Como na [As in]	23	
Maioria dos casos esta [Most of the cases … this]	Maioria dos casos … esta [most of the cases … this]	23	100
Costureira queria algo nem e [Dressmaker wants something … neither… and]	Costureira queria algo [Dressmaker wanted something]	28	
Bem [Much]	Bem mais simples [Much simpler]	16	
Mais simples [Simpler]			

Table 2. The new captions

Retranslated Captions	Speech	Caption rate (cps)	Translated speech (%)
Nem era um sonho de Cinderela [It was not a Cinderela dream]	Nem era um sonho de Cinderela como na maioria dos casos. [It was not a Cinderela dream as in most of the cases]	29	55
Ela queria algo bem mais simples [She wanted something much simpler]	Essa costureira queria algo bem mais simples. [This dressmaker wanted something much simpler]	32	

Table 3. The programmes

Programme type	Programme	Sequence	Duration (minutes)
News	*Bom dia Brasil* (*Good Morning Brazil*)	A football game	4.24
	Jornal Nacional (*National News*)	Drug dealers	2.11
	Jornal Hoje (*Today's News*)	Prostitution of Brazilians abroad	2.27
Television Variety Show	*Fantástico* (*Fantastic*)	Borrowed words	4.0
Talk Show	*Programa do Jô* (*Jô's Show*)	Interview with a singer	4.0
Feature Film	*Jesus*	The apostles	2.27

4.2 Remaking the questionnaires

The multiple-choice questionnaires were not an effective instrument, because they created a lot of difficulty for the deaf because of their poor reading ability. The Brazilian Sign Language (LIBRAS) interpreter, hired to enable communication between the researchers and the subjects, had to translate all the questions and possible answers into LIBRAS for the deaf to mark the correct alternative in the answer sheet. As a result, the tests lasted longer than expected, fatiguing all the people involved. In an attempt to overcome this difficulty, a new strategy was applied. The new questionnaires were composed of open and closed questions that the respondents had to answer right after the interpreter's translation. This strategy proved to be more efficient, as deaf people's writing in Brazilian Portuguese is better than their reading.

Tables 4 and 5 exemplify the two types of questionnaire, showing the questions for the sequence *Borrowed Words*. The questionnaire is based on that proposed by De Linde and Kay (1999) and consists of 'concept', 'detail' and 'picture' questions. They point to the "deaf subject's level of understanding of content in each sequence and their ability to follow the accompanying captions" (Franco and Araújo 2003).

Table 4. The questionnaire for the first study

CONCEPT	What is the programme about? (a) the difficulty of understanding English; (b) the difficulty of pronouncing some words in English; (c) the importance of having borrowed words in Brazilian Portuguese; <u>(d) the influence of English in Brazilian Portuguese</u>
	Which words were mispronounced? <u>(a) DRIVE THRU and BIRDS & CO</u>. (b) BARRA BEAUTY and BLUE SHOP; (c) HOT FUDGE and SUMMER COLLECTION (d) PARK STREET and MALL NUMBER ONE
DETAIL	Where is the Statue of Liberty? <u>(a) in Barra</u>; (b) at a car park; (c) in New York (d) in Miami
	What is the name of Mauro Rasi's House Keeper? (a) Rufiana; (b) Rufia; <u>(c)Rufina</u>; (d) Rutiana
PICTURE	What is the colour of Zeca Baleiros's jacket? (a) light blue; <u>(b) blue</u>; (c) brown; (d) black
	Zeca Baleiro is wearing <u>(a) a hat</u>; (b) glasses; (c) gloves; (d) a ring

Table 5. The questionnaire for the second study

CONCEPT	What is the programme about?
	Do you think people in the report pronounced the words correctly? Why?
	Is Mauro Rasi in favour of the inclusion of foreign words in Brazilian Portuguese?
	What does Zeca Baleiro do in the end of the programme?
DETAIL	Where is the Statue of Liberty?
	What is the name of Mauro Rasi's house keeper?
	What is Mauro Rasi's opinion about the Brazilian Statue of Liberty?
PICTURE	What is the colour of Zeca Baleiros's jacket?
	What instrument is Zeca Baleiro playing?

4.3 Carrying out the new reception research

Fifteen (15) deaf-born secondary students of the Ceara Institute of Education for the deaf , located in the city of Fortaleza, one of the largest north-eastern cities in the country, volunteered to test the new subtitles. The subjects were all men and women between 26 and 30 years of age. Three of them had taken part in the previous research. The other twelve were senior students of the Institute.

The procedure was similar to the one adopted in the first study. The participants had to watch the six sequences of the programmes one by one and had to answer the questionnaire right after each sequence. The performance was better with speech-image synchronised subtitles, but the results are still inconclusive as will be shown below.

Watching *Jo's show* was not easy for the viewers as the talk show is composed of very dense dialogues with a speech rate of 168 words per minute (wpm) and a subtitle rate of 241 wpm. Subtitles were close to verbatim since 70% of the original speech was translated. But, even though the task demanded fast reading, the subjects could follow the programme. The hypothesis that said "whenever speech comprehension did not depend on image, lack of speech-image-caption synchronism would not impair their reception" (Franco and Araújo 2003) was confirmed.

However, contrary to expectations, the subjects' performance was not better with the new subtitles. They could watch the programme, but could not integrate concept, detail and image, as Table 6 shows.

In the first experiment, the results were more balanced, about 50% of correct answers for each type of question. This time, deaf viewers focused too much on content and image, and neglected the details. They also felt uncomfortable with the synchronised captions. This fact suggests that subtitling for

the deaf demands much more editing. Even though they could follow the new subtitles, more condensation is needed for them to enjoy the programmes.

In spite of these unbalanced results for *Jo's Show*, the same problem could not be observed in the reception of the other programmes translated by roll-up captions. In the first study, they tested the second hypothesis that said "whenever speech depended on images, lack of synchronism would impair the reception and the understanding of content" (Franco and Araújo 2003). This assumption was also confirmed, as deaf people's reception of these programmes was unsuccessful. In the second study, the participants had a different performance with the synchronised subtitles. Table 7 shows the figures.

Table 6. Test results for *Jo's show*

Question type	Jo's Show			
	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	17	5	2	2
Image	17	2	13	38
Concept	17	2	18	53

Table 7. Test results for programmes with roll-up captions

Question type	National News			
	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	13	2	15	58
Image	13	2	5	19
Concept	13	3	22	56
Question type	Today's News			
	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	12	5	36	60
Image	12	2	23	96
Concept	12	2	12	50
Question type	Fantastic			
	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	12	1	2	17
Image	12	2	23	96
Concept	12	2	22	92

Although *National News* and *Fantastic* present good results, their figures are not harmonious. *National News* showed a report on the the tapping of radio communication in Rio de Janeiro fishermen's boats. Some practically inaudible recordings that proved the existence of tapping were shown on the screen translated by open subtitles. The reason for not perceiving the image details (19% of correct answers) might be the deaf's confusion over two different types of subtitles appearing in the same programme. But, in spite of this difficulty, they demonstrated that they understood the content of the report (an average of 57% of correct answers).

Fantastic was about the influence of foreign languages in Brazilian Portuguese. The report featured many Brazilian shops and restaurants with their names in English. The difficulty in perceiving the details (17% of correct answers) might be that if it is hard for the deaf to understand a second tongue, reception may get worse when they have to deal with a third language.

In the first research, there was an exception in the reception of roll-up captions. It was in the news programme *Good Morning Brazil*, which featured the report on the final match of the national football championship. The reason why the deaf did better with this programme (an average of 44% of correct answers) "might be that Brazilians are quite used to watching football, their national sport, and thus deaf viewers will have had more exposure to this type of event" (Franco and Araújo 2003). In the new research, their understanding of the programe was much more effective (an average of 78% of correct answers), giving evidence that condensation is beneficial for reception (see Table 8).

Only one programme with pop-on captions was included in the second research, the feature film *Jesus*. In the first study, the films tested the assumption that synchronism facilitates reception. This was the only rejected hypothesis in the study as deaf viewers did not understand the content (an average of

Table 8. Test results for *Good Morning Brazil*

Good Morning Brazil				
Question type	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	13	1	11	85
Image	13	2	23	88
Concept	13	2	16	62

31.95% of correct answers), focusing on the image (62.5% of correct answers). In the second study, their figures were a little bit more harmonious. Table 9 shows that content and image questions had similar results.

Table 9. Test results for *Jesus*

	Jesus			
Question type	Number of subjects	Number of questions	Number of correct answers	Correct answers %
Detail	11	5	14	25
Image	11	2	14	64
Concept	11	2	11	50

5.   Concluding remarks

This article has presented a brief description of the closed subtitling system used in Brazil, concluding that some adjustments are required for it to be tailored to the needs of the country's deaf community. The two reception studies carried out so far demonstrated that condensation and editing are key elements in enabling deaf viewers to enjoy a better reception of subtitled programmes.

Nevertheless, only two studies are not sufficient to arrive at reliable conclusions. Until the bill mandating closed subtitling is passed, more research with different group of subjects from different locations is needed to validate these results. But it is hoped that the discussion held here will contribute to ensure deaf people's right of access to television. Brazilian television networks should take their views, preferences and expectations into account, if they really want to produce an efficient closed subtitling model.

Notes

1. All photos by Cid Barbosa.

2. For further details on this study, see Franco and Araújo (2003).

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