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Íkala

Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura

Artist: María Morán

Master Morán was born in the city of Pasto, at the foot of the imposing Galeras volcano, in Nariño, Colombia, where she grew up surrounded by beautiful landscapes and an infinite variety of plants. This is why her work reflects a deep respect for nature. As she herself says: "through my paintings, I evoke places and plants I have seen. Through space and color and technique, I explore different ways of approaching abstract and figurative compositions, seeking to bear witness to the fortune of enjoying and caring for the generous space that I inhabit."

She holds a licensure in Fine Arts, with a specialization in Painting, from Universidad Nacional de Colombia, where she studied with excellent teachers, such as Master Santiago Cárdenas, who became one of her main guides due to his extraordinary knowledge and respect for his students. In 1991, Master Morán took a PhD course in Theory and Teaching of Plastic Arts, at Universidad Complutense de Madrid, in Spain, which not only strengthened her knowledge of visual arts and its varied and rich expressive possibilities but also augmented her love for teaching.

Professor Morán has held individual and collective exhibitions in several Colombian cities, such as Bogotá, Cartagena, Pereira and Medellín. She has also participated in exhibitions of her work in other metropolises around the world, including Budapest and Tapolka, in Hungary; Beijing and Guangzhou, in China; Madrid, Spain; Venice, Italy; Mexico City, Mexico; La Paz, Bolivia; Lima, Perú; and Quito, Ecuador. Among her most recent exhibitions are *Landscape in the Works*, held at Casa de la Independencia, in Bogotá, Colombia; *The Elusive Engraving Project*, carried out at the Guangzhou Museum, in China; and *Imago Mundi,* at the Venice Biennale, in Italy, all in 2015.

Due to her outstanding work in the plastic arts, Master Morán has received countless distinctions and accolades, among which it is worth highlighting a stamp with the reproduction of the work *Palmeras Doradas*, issued in 2004 by the government of Nariño and Adpostal to commemorate 100 years of the foundation of the Nariño department.

Currently, Maestra Morán works as an Associate Professor at the School of Plastic Arts at Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. As a teacher, rather than teaching formulas for composition, the artist is committed, as she herself claims, to make the country we inhabit known: "I promote awareness and the study of the different territories, climates and peculiarities of Colombia, and I use every classic and contemporary tool to find a language that approaches and promotes the discovery of the places that belong to us." Since 2000, Master Morán has also served as the Chair of Cooperartes Ltda., a non-profit organization aiming to support and promote contemporary practices of art and culture in Colombia.

For Íkala, it is an honor to publish this compilation of Master Morán's works, which includes an unknown painting made to honor the memory of her brother, Doctor Carlos Emiro Morán (1951–2022), a member of the Faculty of Medicine at Universidad de Antioquia, and which serves, at the same time, as a tribute to the campus where Dr. Morán completed his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Cover: *Sábila lejos del cerro,* oil on canvas, 1.26 x 1.26 m.
Dividers: *Magnolio (homenaje al dr. Carlos E. Morán)*, oil on canvas and ancestral blue, 50 x 70 cm. *Jacarandas de ciudad de México*, oil on canvas, 70 x 50 cm. *Tela de lirios*, oil on canvas, 1 x 1.4 m. *Alocacias*, oil on canvas, 79 x 119 cm. *Frailejones en los cerros bogotanos*, oil on canvas, 1.26 x 1.26 m.

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Escuela de Idiomas

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Escuela de Idiomas

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Abstract

This article depicts the current state of the art of English-language audiovisual translation (AVT) and sheds light on the recent changes impacting media localisation practices, viewing patterns, and viewer agency. The motivations that have catapulted practices like subtitling and dubbing into English on video-on-demand (VOD) platforms are considered, and special emphasis is placed on the move from English-language content to the production and distribution of originals created in a multitude of languages and showcased on streaming platforms with subs and dubs in English. Some of the latest technological advancements are discussed as they have influenced the viewing experience and audience selection of AVT modes, leading to a significant change in viewing patterns and preferences of anglophone viewers. Challenges posed to studying and training in English AVT are identified and the importance of inverting one's gaze and perceiving English as the target language of translation, rather than the source language, is stressed in this new paradigm. Concrete suggestions are made for potential avenues of research in this flourishing field, which will hopefully contribute to painting a more detailed picture of English AVT.

Keywords: streaming platforms, audiovisual translation, subtitling, dubbing into English

Resumen

Este artículo describe el estado del arte de la traducción audiovisual (TAV) y arroja luz sobre los cambios recientes que impactan las prácticas de localización en medios, los patrones de visualización y la agencia del espectador. Se consideran también las motivaciones que han catapultado prácticas como el subtitulado y el doblaje al inglés en las plataformas de vídeo por demanda y se hace especial énfasis en el paso del contenido en lengua inglesa a la producción y distribución de contenidos originales creados en una multiplicidad de idiomas y exhibidos en las plataformas de video por demanda con subtítulos en inglés y doblaje a esa lengua. Se exponen, además, algunos de los más recientes avances tecnológicos por la influencia que han ejercido en la experiencia de visualización y los modos de TAV preferidos por la audiencia, los cuales han llevado a un cambio importante en los patrones de visualización y las preferencias de los espectadores anglófonos. Por otro lado, se identifican los retos que
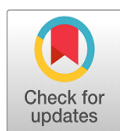
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esto plantea para el estudio y la formación en TAV en inglés y se recalca la importancia del cambio de paradigma en el que se invierte el enfoque y la percepción del inglés como lengua de llegada de la traducción, dejando atrás la imagen del inglés como lengua de partida. Finalmente, se hacen recomendaciones concretas de posibles líneas de investigación en este campo en plena expansión, esperando que contribuyan a dibujar un panorama más detallado de la TAV en inglés.

Palabras claves: plataformas de video por demanda, traducción audiovisual, subtitulado, doblaje al inglés

Résumé

Cet article décrit l'état actuel de la traduction audiovisuelle en langue anglaise (TAV) et apporte un éclairage aux changements récents qui ont un impact sur les pratiques de localisation des médias, les modes de visionnage et l'action des téléspectateurs. Les motivations qui ont catapulté des pratiques telles que le sous-titrage et le doublage en anglais sur les plateformes de vidéo à la demande (VOD) sont examinées, et l'accent est mis sur le passage d'un contenu en anglais à la production et à la distribution d'originaux créés dans une multitude de langues et présentés sur des plateformes de streaming avec des sous-titres et des doublages en anglais. Certaines des dernières avancées technologiques sont examinées car elles ont influencé l'expérience de visionnage et la sélection des modes de TAV par le public, entraînant un changement significatif dans les modes de visionnage et les préférences des téléspectateurs anglophones. Les défis posés à l'étude et à la formation pour la TAV en anglais sont identifiés et l'importance d'inverser son regard et de percevoir l'anglais comme la langue cible de la traduction, plutôt que comme la langue source, est soulignée dans ce nouveau paradigme. Des suggestions concrètes sont faites pour des pistes de recherche potentielles dans ce domaine en pleine expansion, qui contribueront, nous l'espérons, à brosser un tableau plus détaillé de la TAV en anglais.

Mots-clef : services de streaming, traduction audiovisuelle, sous-titrage, doublage en anglais

Resumo

Este artigo descreve o estado atual da tradução audiovisual em inglês (TAV) e lança luz sobre as mudanças recentes que afetam as práticas de localização de mídia, os padrões de visualização e a agência do espectador. As motivações que catapultaram práticas como a legendagem e a dublagem em inglês em plataformas de vídeo sob demanda (VOD) são consideradas, e é dada ênfase especial à mudança do conteúdo em inglês para a produção e distribuição de originais criados em vários idiomas e exibidos em plataformas de streaming com legendas e dublagens em inglês. Alguns dos mais recentes avanços tecnológicos são discutidos, pois influenciaram a experiência de visualização e a seleção do público dos modos TAV, levando a uma mudança significativa nos padrões de visualização e nas preferências dos espectadores anglófonos. São identificados os desafios impostos ao estudo e ao treinamento em TAV em inglês, e é enfatizada a importância de inverter o olhar e perceber o inglês como o idioma de destino da tradução, e não como o idioma de origem, nesse novo paradigma. Sugestões concretas são feitas para possíveis caminhos de pesquisa nesse campo florescente, o que, espera-se, contribuirá para a elaboração de um quadro mais detalhado do TAV em inglês.

Palavras chave: plataformas de vídeo sob demanda, tradução audiovisual, legendagem, dublagem em inglês

Introduction

This special issue offers a different perspective on language combinations to that which so often prevails in translation studies literature. Scholars, practitioners, students, and other readers of audiovisual translation (AVT) are invited to invert the Anglocentric lens through which English is customarily viewed as the source or original language, and to explore AVT theory and practice in consideration of English as the target language, i.e., the language of translation.

In the privileged position it holds as the de facto lingua franca worldwide, English has been either the source or pivot language of innumerable translations over the past century, especially insofar as audiovisual texts are concerned. With the arrival of the talkies in the late 1920s, the film industry soon became dominated by Hollywood, propelled in part by the 'star system' (Holmes, 2000; McDonald, 2000). This marketing strategy involved a management style by studios that curated and promoted idealistic personae for movie stars that made their films all the more alluring. The ensuing popularity of Hollywood titles led to the establishment of postproduction industries around the globe dedicated to the localisation of imported English-language content. Films were translated into a myriad of target languages, through professional practices such as subtitling and dubbing, which remain popular to this day, as well as multilingual versions (also called MLVs), which are now defunct. According to Chaume (2012, p. 2), the latter fell out of favour due to "the high production costs involved, and their unpopularity with foreign audiences who wanted to see the original actors and actresses on screen rather than their local counterparts", likely due to the carefully cultivated stardom of these artists mentioned previously and possibly also due to a certain exoticism attributed to the foreign.

In countries where English is not spoken natively, these English-language originals were and continue to be mainstreamed in cinema theatres, on TV channels and, more recently, on streaming platforms. Conversely, in the Anglosphere, non-English-language, or 'foreign', content has traditionally been reserved for film festivals and art-house cinemas until recent times. The surge of subscription video-on-demand platforms (SVoDs or streamers)—such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, HBO Max, Disney+, or Hulu—has witnessed a balancing act whereby content in languages such as Spanish, Korean or Turkish, to name but a few, is now mainstreamed alongside English-language originals. Many over-the-top (OTT) platforms have also embraced the creation of their own original content, both in English and in many other languages, turning themselves from distributors into production companies too.

Ahead of the curve as is its wont, Netflix began creating such content that, in the first instance, was "local-for-local" (Brennan, 2018), thereby catering more thoughtfully to their international audiences. In a move from globalisation to glocalisation (Svensson, 2001), this meant that the company created original content in countries where the streamer was operational, for instance, Spanish content in Spain or German content in Germany. Their tactic has generally been to join forces with existing production houses in the host countries so as to co-produce titles availing of local infrastructure.

It is advantageous for an over-the-top (OTT) media service to have boots on the ground and foster local ventures in such a way, with a physical rather than merely cyber presence. Nevertheless, the fact that the initiative or incentive to produce content at a local level did not emanate from Netflix alone, rather, great impetus arose from European Union legislation that entered into force in 2018. Indeed, Article 13, Directive (EU) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/ EU, explicitly states that VoD platforms operating in the member states of the EU must thereafter exhibit a portfolio composed

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of at least 30% European content, whether that involve acquiring distribution rights to said content, (co-)producing it or providing funding to local producers: "Member States shall ensure that media service providers of on-demand audiovisual media services under their jurisdiction secure at least a 30% share of European works in their catalogues and ensure prominence of those works" (Official Journal of the European Union, 2018, n. p.).

Netflix had already recognised the metamorphosis in content origins before the EU legislation entered the fray, having stated in 2017 that they were "quickly approaching an inflection point where English [would no longer] be the primary viewing experience on [the platform]" (Fetner & Sheehan, 2017, n. p.). In the face of their burgeoning non-English catalogue, Netflix seized the opportunity to go beyond their local-for-local offering, and expanded to a "local-for-global" (Brennan, 2018) one. This meant that not only would the company undertake the production of non-English-language titles, but it would also embark on the widespread post-production of these titles, localising them into a symphony of languages, including English.

Bearing in mind that Netflix was now co-producing its own content in EU nations, the above meant the streamer had unfettered distribution rights to that content, which created more incentive to invest in and get creative with localisation practices, in the aim of appealing to a wider number of viewers. A development of this nature would not be as straightforward as localising English-language content into other languages, for which localisation precedents have existed since the invention of cinema, and new complexities have been brought about in workflows in which the language of the original production has ceased to be English. Adding to this, absolute distribution rights have certainly given rise to larger localisation budgets. Taking the example of English-language localisation for Castilian-Spanish series and films, Netflix

has proven more likely to dub 'Netflix original' content, for which it has exclusive, open-ended distribution rights (Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022, p. 223). The company could, however, have relied solely on the more affordable alternative of subtitling but has decided to invest more into a localisation mode that might captivate more viewers over a longer span of time. Netflix's zeal for translating non-English materials into a myriad of languages can be interpreted as an attempt to appeal to its largest cohort of viewers at home in the US and in other English-speaking territories. We can speculate that translation efforts have not been altogether altruistic, but a means to maximise returns on its expenditure into European productions.

Netflix's global localisation, or 'glocalisation', strategy has involved different modes of AVT, such as subtitling, dubbing, voiceover, lector dubbing, subtitling for the d/Deaf and the hard of hearing or closed captioning (SDH or CC) and audio description for the blind and the partially sighted (AD). In most cases, the company has adhered to existing conventions in the markets it seeks to attract with these translational practices and produces, for instance, dubs and subs in language varieties such as Castilian-Spanish for Spain and 'neutral' Spanish for Latin America, voiceover (also called lektoring) for countries like Poland, and Cantonese dubs for non-English or non-Mandarin content aimed at Hongkongers. Conventions can be observed in the exhibition patterns displayed in any given country, such as in the higher volume of subtitled or dubbed versions available in their territories, depending on the tradition of the country, and in the default preselection of a given mode when both are available. Nevertheless, preferences can be very subjective and differ between viewers on an individual level rather than national level, which, as put forward by Chaume (2012, pp. 7–8) makes it very difficult to continue to distinguish nowadays between dubbing and subtitling countries as has been done in the past. Having said that, it is interesting,

from a company's operational perspective, to identify which are the most common AVT practices in the various countries where they operate because habituation can sway individual preferences towards one AVT mode or another (Nornes, 2007, p. 191).

Known as a disruptor in the industry, and arguably aware of the changes taking place in the viewing habits of the new digital generations, Netflix has gone against the grain on AVT conventions in cases where the company deems that gains are to be made in so doing. A case in point is that of the English-language dubbing industry. Netflix tiptoed into the virtually empty dubbing arena in late 2016 with its English dub of Brazilian series *3%* (Pedro Aguilera, 2016–2020) and adopted an aggressive localisation strategy in its English dubbing thereafter. Taking the example of Netflix's portfolio of Castilian-Spanish live-action fiction alone, for the period between January 2017 (i.e., the dawn of English dubs) and June 2021, 65.9% of the titles available in this category on Netflix in the UK and Ireland were dubbed into English (Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022). Netflix's English-dubbing endeavours were largely considered brand new when they first launched but this seemingly novel attribute was not entirely accurate. English dubbing had been popularly practised at different moments in time since the inception of the talkies, with European content localised this way in the 1930s and 1950s, Spaghetti Westerns in the 1960s and Kung Fu films in the 1970s (Hayes, 2021). Despite the decline of dubbing for live-action, animation had continued to be dubbed into English across the threshold of this century. Yet, many native anglophones currently subscribed to Netflix had not ever seen these historic dubs of live action or had not paid heed to the technical quality of the dubbing therein. It could also be argued that viewers might not be consciously aware that productions such as anime are dubbed, due to the characters' mouth flaps being "simplistic and non-language specific" (Hayes, 2023, p. 10).

Netflix's modern English dubs are divorced from English dubbing precedent, not only in time but in many other respects, including linguistic and technical quality. To a large extent, the present-day dubs are a big improvement on English-dubbing shambles in the past, which had a rather detrimental effect on films by legendary directors like Fellini or Almodóvar. On the other hand, subtitling has been a constant in the localisation of foreign content in this century and the last. Examples date back to the pioneering English subtitles employed on the BBCs broadcasting of *Der Student von Prag* (*The Student of Prague*, Arthur Robinson, 1935) in 1938 (Hall, 2016) to Anthony Burgess's acclaimed English subtitles for *Cyrano de Bergerac* (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, 1990) in 1990, through to the annually subtitled films showcased at festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Venice, or Toronto, and into the art-house cinemas in anglophone countries mentioned previously.

Of course, non-fiction is often subtitled on mainstream distributors like national TV channels, to translate foreign reporters on the news or in documentaries. Furthermore, in the age of streaming and social media, subtitles are prolific on networks like YouTube and Instagram, and many of these are typically created via speech-to-text synthesis, with or without human intervention, and, in the case of Instagram, they appear as paint-on subs rather than full subtitles as is conventional in subtitling fiction. As for non-fiction, such content is often subtitled on more mainstream distributors like national TV channels in anglophone countries. However, it must also be acknowledged that there is perhaps a more notable tendency towards using voiceover in these situations, such as for speech by foreign reporters speaking their native language on the news, e.g., on the BBC (Filmer, 2019), or for speakers in documentaries.

Until the advent of streaming platforms, foreign content had seldom been screened on national TV channels or in mainstream cinemas in anglophone countries and a rather negligible number

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of English speakers were accustomed to consuming subtitled or dubbed versions. This reality has changed dramatically now that streaming platforms have established themselves as prominent if not prime distributors in the entertainment industry. Given the avalanche of media being produced in languages other than English, Netflix conducted research to determine how best to attract native anglophones to this new content. The company surveyed viewers in the US and found that they reported they would not be interested in watching foreign content in general; however, when this perception by subscribers was contrasted with their viewing habits, the company discovered two main facts: that foreign content was actually being consumed more than the questionnaire had indicated and that viewers in the US who had watched the dubbed version of a series proved more likely to finish the series than those viewers who had selected the subtitles instead (Bylykbashi, 2019).

It is worth noting that English dubbed versions of foreign content are defaulted—or pushed—on the platform. The default setting on English dubs could be a tick-the-box exercise for the 'prominence' stipulated in the EU directive. It could also be a ruse to distract viewers in the US who had proclaimed their disinterest in non-English content so that they might watch such content and get hooked on it in time before twigging that it is a dub of another language. The ultimate motivating factor behind attracting more American viewers is, of course, to generate more revenue.

Then Chief Product Officer of Netflix and now (at the time of writing) co-CEO, Greg Peters, has praised the quality of English dubs for increasing viewership of non-English-language content (Collins, 2018). In his keynote speech at Web Summit held in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2018, he stated that "great stories can come from anywhere, and they can travel everywhere, as long as we use technology to get the right story in front of the right person, and make it a great experience" (Netflix, 2018, online). His speech instantly led to media coverage with online article titles like "Netflix's plan to get everyone watching foreign-language content. Yes, even English-speaking Americans" (Collins, 2018). By 2020, statistics released by Parrot Analytics (2021) revealed that across different distributors in the US —beyond streaming giant Netflix— the demand in the country for non-English content was reflected in 15.7% of content watched, with Japanese, Spanish and Korean contributing most notably to the data, as illustrated in the graphic in Figure 1, which is not exclusively representative of dubbed versions but of localised ones more generally.

Figure 1 Parrot Analytics (2021) Demand in the US for the year 2020 according to original language
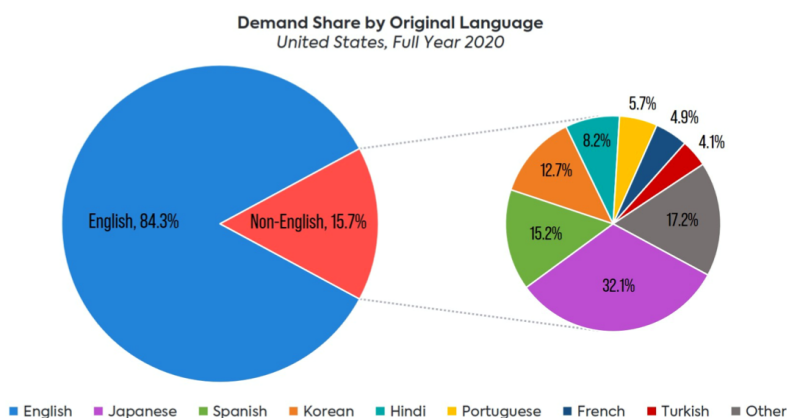
A similar study conducted by Patel (2021) confirms that an increasing share of the most popular TV shows and films around the globe are being produced outside the USA, with 27% of the most popular titles in 2021 coming from outside the USA, up from 15% in 2017. One can speculate that diasporic and migrant populations account for a significant portion of this demand, as well as cult followings for the anime genre and the fact of blockbuster titles captivating large audiences, such as in the cases of Spanish series *La casa de papel* (*Money Heist*, Álex Pina, 2017–2021) and Oscar-winning Korean film 기생충 (*Parasite*, Joon-ho, 2019).

Mainstream media in different countries have picked up on the resounding and continual successes of foreign content available on different platforms, often lauding the availability of dubbed versions and giving them credit for these triumphs. On this front, the vast list of Spanish series that have captivated viewers via their English dubs, cited in an article by Adoma (n.d.), the voice actor syndicate of Madrid, Spain, or the South China Morning Post's (2021) call for more voice actors to meet Netflix's demand for dubbed versions are clear symptoms of the changes taking place. Might it be serendipitous that through compliance with legislation adopted by countries in the EU, companies such as Netflix springboarded into mass localisation and discovered the unprecedented draw of the likes of English dubs? Or might it be that the streaming giant is forever ahead of the curve, paving its own path that many other streamers then follow? Whichever the case, what is clear is that non-English language films, series, and non-fiction content is thriving among native anglophone audiences, and this is largely due to translations provided in English, whether through dubbing or subtitling.

Wherever English dubbed versions are made available for non-English content, subtitles are also available, whether defaulted or in need of manual selection. Furthermore, non-English content which streaming platforms make available to viewers in anglophone countries and which have not been dubbed invariably come with subtitles. It is therefore safe to say that subtitling remains the most prominent form of localisation for the into-English directionality and the explosion of non-English content on streaming platforms has meant that subtitling is not only more prolific than ever before but it has also brought about a battery of new challenges to transfer content across so many language combinations in a satisfactory manner. Netflix's Greg Peters, mentioned previously, disclosed that in 2021 the platform "subtitled seven million and dubbed five million run-time minutes" (Marking, 2022), and, according to information released by Netflix, consumption of dubbed programming increased 120% from 2020 to 2021 (Lee, 2022). We can logically calculate that a healthy portion of that dubbing and subtitling was devoted to the robust and growing portfolio of content from languages other than English, requiring translation into English, whether as a final-destination language or stopover, i.e., pivot.

Subtitles are becoming increasingly popular among viewers, especially among a youth demographic. There are multiple explanations for this reality, with the increase in foreign content being only one and not necessarily the most pivotal in steering this demand for subtitles. Indeed, subtitles are often consumed intralingually, meaning in the same language as the audiovisual text itself, whether this be the viewer's native language or not. One reason viewers tap into the subtitles available in English for an English-language original, for instance, may be for clarity in the sound quality. Not all films have dialogue as unclear as in Christopher Nolan's movies (Pearson, 2022); however, many are difficult to decipher and taxing on the ears and brain. Dr Ben Byrne, from the RMIT University, Australia, a specialist in sound in digital media, has explained that films were traditionally produced for cinema exhibition and, as such, are made with the expectation

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of being screened in a room with a surround-sound speakers, a plush acoustic environment, and little or no noise interference (Forsberg, 2023). He further commented on the irony that technological advancements can backfire and whereas actors used to have to project their voices into overhead microphones they now have lapel or portable mics and this can make them complacent in the delivery of their lines and lead to problematically indistinct speech.

Nowadays, individuals often access audiovisual content on devices significantly smaller than a cinema screen, ranging from TV sets to laptop monitors and from tablets to mobile phones. These devices typically have limited speaker projection, with the dwindling size of devices tending to lead to a diminuendo in decibels. Furthermore, nowadays viewers are often nowhere near optimum acoustic environments, with earphones in or headphones on, consuming content in noisy spaces such as public transport. In 2022, Netflix reported that 40% of its subscribers worldwide were using subtitles for all viewing and that 80% would switch on subtitles at least once each month, with both figures surpassing the number of viewers who require subtitles due to hearing loss (Cunningham, 2023).

In a study carried out by YouGov surveying 3,600 participants, the British internet-based market research and data analytics firm found that 61% of viewers in the 18–24 demographic used subtitles vs. 31% of people aged between 25 and 49, 13% for 50 through 65, and 22% for individuals aged 65 and above (Greenwood, 2023). The sound quality of dialogues is sometimes so dire that it can be held responsible for new remote controls (e.g., the Sony Sound Bar) that enable individual viewers to customise their listening experience, such as by amplifying the dialogue tracks so that they stand out from ambient noise. Other reasons a hearing viewer might access subtitles is due to cognitive variation such as hyperactivity impacting attention spans, or due to accents in the film or series that are difficult to attune to, or in aid of learning

a foreign language or consolidating the native one, as propelled by the initiative Turn on the Subtitles (https://turnonthesubtitles.org).

Irrespective of the motivation for using subs, distributors must cater to this huge demand. It comes as little surprise that streaming leader Netflix has been setting the trends on subtitling conventions for the past decade. Netflix's Timed Text Style Guides are offered on open access on the company's website, available for use by the ilk of partner vendors, e.g., language service providers (LSPs), their freelance translators or anyone interested in subtitling, such as translation academics and subtitlers in training. These guides prescribe technical and linguistic parameters to which subtitlers must adhere in their work. Pedersen (2018, p. 97) noted that Netflix's early such guidelines were a "one-size-fits-all system", but that as they are regularly updated, local specificities are being incorporated into many language-specific subtitling guides. Nevertheless, it is undisputable that whether Netflix decides to converge with or diverge from traditional subtitling conventions in any given market, its guides turn to gold and become adopted as the de facto industry standard because many largescale LSPs are clients of the platform, so the guidelines proliferate, and they are also used in many academic centres to train future subtitlers.

It is remarkable to witness the transformation of media (post)production throughout the 2010s and into the 2020s, which has seen English displaced from centre stage as US companies the ilk of Netflix have hedged their bets across a sea of languages. The severity of change over the past decade can be felt in reading previous scholarship:

> The international exchange of films and TV productions is becoming increasingly asymmetrical. Onscreen, English is the all-dominant foreign language, and even major speech communities are turned minors in the process. In Europe, only France, Denmark and Sweden have a domestic film production able to keep the United States and other imports below a market share of 80%. Meanwhile, audiences in the United States and the UK are rarely bothered with

foreign-language productions. Like people almost all over the planet, they enjoy Anglophone productions. But unlike all others, they do not often enjoy foreign-language productions, whether dubbed or subtitled. (Gottlieb, 2009, p. 21)

Challenges Posed to Studies on English AVT

The invasion of streaming platforms in the field of media distribution and exhibition, together with the boom in foreign-language content on these platforms have created a large amount of work for many professionals in the entertainment industry. Insofar as media localisation is concerned, workload has skyrocketed for practitioners of subtitling (project managers, templators, translators, QCers, etc.) and dubbing (transcribers, translators, script adaptors, voice actors, dubbing directors, dubbing assistants, sound engineers, etc.). In tandem with these developments, scholars in the field of audiovisual translation have been galvanised into researching the novelties brought about by streaming platforms and into updating course curricula to ensure they are keeping abreast of industry practices and best preparing their students for market realities (Bolaños-García-Escribano et al., 2021).

In the specific case of English-language localisation, the above can be a particular challenge for such educators, and the reasons are threefold. On the one hand, the novelty in many of the workflows and processes mean that educators must liaise closely with the industry to have accurate information as to how the processes are evolving, and these details might not be openly available. Although it can be considered that English AVT studies are being thrown in the deep-end or experiencing a baptism of fire, they can reap the benefits of relying on earlier research into AVT that focused on other languages as the target language, and chartered practices harking back to VHS tapes through to DVD and Blu-ray discs, to silver-screen cinema, terrestrial and satellite TV channels, and now to streaming services. Although English has not generally featured as a target language in the

subs or dubs of these studies, many of the analytical tools remain applicable when the language combinations or directionalities are inverted.

Furthermore, there is a fundamental shift in paradigm at play when one considers distribution directionality and its bearing on research methodology. That is to say that English has predominantly been treated as the source language in translation studies and certainly within studies in audiovisual translation. By trading places and becoming the language of translation, the lens through which English is viewed needs to be adjusted. In *Translation-Driven Corpora*, Zanettin (2012, pp. 48–51) highlights the need to understand the difference between original and translated texts. For instance, a novel widely distributed in mainstream bookshops in its country of origin might be published by a boutique publisher and marketed differently in a country where the book has been translated. We can draw from this logic that it is difficult to compare English-language originals to English dubs or foreign content with subtitles; however, not necessarily due to questions of distribution.

As streaming platforms are international and offer multilingual content, they can be considered to transcend issues of asymmetry in distribution. Nevertheless, an English-language localised production cannot be equated to an English-language original and must be analysed as a localised version, with many of its characteristics dictated by the original audiovisual text which pertains to another language, culture, and sign system. Although the "scale of postproduction at Netflix is blurring the lines between originals and localised versions and the latter are being treated with the creativity typically reserved for originals" (Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022, p. 229), this creative licence is bringing about trends in the burgeoning category of English-language productions that are the result of translation.

Additionally, the novelty of foreign content for many anglophone viewers has been a double-edged

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sword as on the one hand it has meant that there are generally few expectations to meet in creating localised versions. On the other hand, however, these expectations are not low, rather they are extraordinarily high because the closest benchmark they have is that of original versions. On occasion, such high standards have led to intolerance, with keyboard warriors lashing out on social media before managing to habituate themselves to English-language localisations and get a sense of their particularities and distinctiveness as a genre in their own right. In response to such complaints about the subtitling of Korean series 오징어 게임 (*Squid Game*, Hwang Dong-hyuk, 2021–) on Netflix, AVT scholar Orrego-Carmona (2021) safeguarded the AVT discipline and practitioners of audiovisual translation alike by publishing an article in mainstream media to address the concerns of viewers and explain to them the differences between originals and AVT modes like subtitling and dubbing and the restrictions therein. The translation community has also been raising awareness of streaming platforms and language service providers cutting costs and engaging in machine translation with human input only arising at the point of post-editing, i.e., the proofreading stage, which is often carried out by an individual who may have no knowledge of the source language or its cultural nuances and, hence, the poor quality being found in translations.

Content Covered in the Articles of this Issue

The authors of the 12 articles in this issue have approached its theme from an empirical (3), descriptive (7), or theoretical (2) viewpoint, complementing each other so as to paint a clearer picture of the state of the art of audiovisual translation into the English language. Regarding the various professional AVT practices, seven of the articles focus on subtitling and five on dubbing, thereby covering the two dominant modes of AVT. Yet, this special issue heralds more research on AVT into English, dealing with other cognate fields

that also form part of the English AVT ecosystem, such AD, SDH, or revoicing practices beyond dubbing such as UN-style voiceover or simil sync, to mention a few possible avenues. Concrete themes explored by the authors include pivot-translation practices, the challenges of dealing with the transfer of expletives, diglossic communities and multilingualism, linguistic variation, culturally specific references, argot, cultural identities, interlingually recycled terminology, quality assessment, transcreation, and the use of AVT as a didactic tool in the foreign language classroom.

The source languages revisited throughout the issue are Spanish and Italian, which reflects the fact that the cradle of studies in audiovisual translation finds itself primarily in Spain and Italy. Much scholarly literature in this area is therefore written in or by speakers of Spanish or Italian. The Spanish majority also reflects the Colombian provenance of this journal, as well as realities such as the immense global success of Spanish and Latin American originals hitherto mentioned, which has been possible thanks to English dubs as well as English subtitles. To a lesser extent, other source languages are also discussed, including French, Portuguese, Dutch, German, Russian, and English itself (both intra- and interlingually). Eleven of the articles are written in English and one in Spanish.

The issue opens with three empirical studies. In "On Pivot Templators' Challenges and Training: Insights from a Survey Study with Subtitlers and Subtitler Trainers," Hanna Pięta, Susana Valdez, Ester Torres-Simón, and Rita Menezes shed light on a questionnaire concerned with both subtitling practice and training and the challenges faced therein. There were 380 respondents, 100 of whom were pivot templators, 83 of whom also translate from pivot templates, and 75 subtitler trainers. Focusing on the responses provided by the participants, the authors found that Spanish was the most frequent source language of the audiovisual material for which English pivot templates

were created and English itself was the second most frequent language of the original material. Nonetheless, findings also revealed that templates were mostly created in English irrespective of the source language spoken in the audiovisual production. Furthermore, most templators creating such English templates speak English as their L2 and so exophonic translation comes into question. Another finding was that training on pivot templating is a rarity despite being widely practised by subtitlers working for SVoDs, and any training provided tends to happen in-house, e.g., from an LSP. The authors respond to the challenges in pivot-template creation by suggesting areas on which to focus when training students or professionals into the practice.

Pięta et al.'s article segues nicely into the next by José Fernando Carrero Martín and Beatriz Reverter Oliver, called "El inglés como lengua pivote en la traducción audiovisual: industria y profesión en España" [English as a Pivot Language in Audiovisual Translation: Industry and Profession in Spain]. These authors surveyed 81 practising translators and interviewed eight more. Almost all respondents had used English-language templates frequently in their work in the preceding five years. Respondents reported that translating from a pivot was increasingly part of their routine and especially in work from SVoDs but also in work for film festivals, with the latter having used pivot translation traditionally, unlike TV channels or the cinema in Spain, where translation directly from the original is more common. The participants in the study routinely translated from pivots for subtitles, dubbing and voiceover scripts, with 74.1% doing so for subs, 65.4% for dubs and 14.8% for voiceover. The article offers insight on a range of AVT practices for different outlets, including SVoDs, language-service providers (LSPs), dubbing studios, videogame studios, TV channels, film festivals and museums. A point worth mentioning from this article is that a high percentage of translators in Spain noted having received education in translation studies (TS) or AVT more specifically.

This can be contrasted with the sparsity of TS or AVT tradition at universities or other institutes of higher education in anglophone countries, which might be one reason behind the finding in Pięta et al.'s article that English-language templates are often created by non-native speakers.

The next article, entitled "Exploring Stereotypes and Cultural References in Dubbed TV Comedies in the Spanish-as-a-Foreign-Language Classroom," focuses on the use of English dubs in the Spanish-language classroom and is co-authored by María del Mar Ogea Pozo, Carla Botella Tejera and Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano. The authors carried out a perception study with 57 native-anglophone undergraduate students to gauge their understanding and comprehension of certain culturally specific references embedded in the Spanish series *Valeria* (María López Castaño, 2020–present), often inserted for comic effect. During the experiment, the students viewed the English dub of the series only and were provided with a transcript of the original Spanish for comparison. First, their comprehension of the cultural references was assessed, then the transcription was provided to them and, finally, students were asked to assess the actual translation of the cultural item in the dub and to select their preferred translation from a list of options provided. Using taxonomies from Franco-Aixelà (1996), Pedersen (2011) and Ranzato (2016), the authors then explain the students' preferences. The participants in the experiment generally preferred conservation techniques, such as specification, but favoured substitution in many cases of obscured meaning. It is also highlighted that the visuals contributed positively to contextualising cultural references and conveying meaning. The article foregrounds the utility of audiovisual translation in the foreign-language classroom, breathing life into linguistic and cultural realities and fostering an acute sense of awareness about the ramifications of using cultural references in an interlingually communicative scenario. Complementary to their experiment, it would be interesting to conduct a

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similar study with participants that do not speak the language of the original and to compare their preference for different translation strategies.

The descriptive section of this special issue is comprised of seven case studies. The first is authored by Laura Bonella and is called "Language Variation in the Dubbing into English of the Netflix series *Baby* (2018-2020) and *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017-2020)." The author documents the strategies used in the English dubs of two Italian series on Netflix, both of which were dubbed at VSI Los Angeles. She analyses the portrayal of sociolects in the original and dubbed versions and shows how they are often conveyed via compensation strategies when linguistic asymmetries arise, such as by introducing expletives for colloquial registers or basilects. This article paints a nuanced picture of what is generally termed a 'standardisation' strategy, insofar as one American-English accent is used throughout the English dub, but efforts are made elsewhere to differentiate between characters' speech in lexis, whereas the original resort to both lexis and accent for differentiation.

The following article is by Susana Fernández Gil and its title is "Quality Assessment of the English Subtitles in Five International Award-Winning Colombian Films." Fernández Gil applies a revised and adapted version of Pedersen's (2017) FAR model to the study of the English subtitles of five award-winning Colombian films in order to assess their quality. The films in question, which have all won at least one international award, are *La sirga* (*The Towrope*, William Vega, 2012), *La playa D.C.* (Juan Andrés Arango García, 2012), *Tierra en la lengua* (*Dust on the Tongue*, Rubén Mendoza, 2014), *La tierra y la sombra* (*Land and Shade*, César Augusto Acevedo, 2015) and *Niña errante* (*Wandering Girl*, Rubén Mendoza, 2018). This study reveals how technical parameters in subtitles are generally respected in film festivals, such as in relation to reading speeds and characters per line, but that quality wavers to a notable level when it comes to the transfer of cultural references and idiomacy. The author therefore raises the important question of whether and to what extent subtitlers are assessed on their knowledge of the source language or varieties therein, stating that there might be a disproportionate emphasis on experience in the technicalities of subtitling and being a native speaker of the target language, rather than on the profound knowledge of the source language and culture.

In "Multilingual and Multi-Generational Italian Identity in a Netflix Series: Subtitling *Generazione 56k* (2021) into English," authors Marina Manfredi and Chiara Bartolini investigate the rendering of Italian identities in a case study focusing on the English subtitles of the series. They pay special attention to regional or diatopic language varieties and multilingualism. In their study, multilingualism is understood as encompassing geographic dialects (Neapolitan specifically), which is a relevant consideration in the complex linguistic landscape of Italy. They also pay special attention to diachronically marked or generation-specific varieties as well as to colloquialisms, youth speak and taboo language. Within their framework of analysis, linguistic variation is considered insofar as it contributes to characterisation, realism and humour. The authors found in their research of the chosen texts that, in line with existing literature, the subtitles tend towards standardisation of geographically marked language variation and neutralisation of cultural specificities, which leads to a loss of Italianness and sometimes humour. Echoing recent literature noting a change in treatment of taboo language, the authors also found that these subtitles favoured the use of taboo register. Interestingly, another finding is the fact that non-Italian-specific cultural references engaging millennials is generally maintained. This final point might link to Fernández Gil's speculation about the level of subtitlers' familiarity with source-language specificities or to a shift in globalised cultural values more broadly, as reflected in the priorities of the subtitler.

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In the next article, "Subtitling the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia from Italian into English: An Analysis of Cultural Transfer," Gabriele Uzzo analyses the techniques employed to convey mafia and anti-mafia lexicon present in the Italian series based in Sicily *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia* (*Vendetta: Truth, Lies and the Mafia*, Davide Gambino et al., 2021) when subtitled into English. Uzzo highlights that much of the existing literature on this lexicon and its translation deals with English-language originals, therefore focussing on Italo-American English and, to a lesser extent, Italian. The author conducts a quantitative analysis, documenting the number of times given translations have been chosen for the mafia-related references, *mafia*, *mafioso*, *mafiosi*, *mafiosa*, and *mafiose*. Then, he proceeds to a qualitative analysis of these data where anomalies arose in translation choices. The scholar explores the fundamental differences between the Italian and English languages as potential contributing factors to some of the translation challenges. The main taxonomy employed in the description of different strategies is that of Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007). It would be interesting for a follow-on study to compare mafia terminology used in English-language originals with that of the English translation of Italian originals.

In the following article, we move away from feature fiction and into a new territory altogether. In their article entitled "Is Transcreation Another Way of Translating? Subtitling Estrella Damm's Advertising Campaigns into English," Montse Corrius and Eva Espasa explore the concept of transcreation in their case study of the English subtitles produced for an ad campaign led by Catalan beer brand Estrella Damm. The authors acknowledge debates surrounding the use of the term 'transcreation' in translation studies and how it can be deemed controversial. Yet, they also highlight the industry benefits translators can enjoy when the term is used, such as unimpeded creative licence and higher remuneration for their labour, as well as the fact that the term elevates the perception of translation as a fundamentally creative activity. In the context of their study, the scholars use the term in relation to creative licence in cultural adaptations carried out to reach new audiences. The research focuses on the transcreation of 14 Estrella Damm ads into English for the UK as part of the company's *Mediterráneamente* [Mediterraneanly] campaign, which zoned in on the regional origins of the beer. The authors focus on strategies utilised in advertising translation with respect to slogans, cultural references (to food and places) and song lyrics. The authors also conducted two semi-structured interviews: with the creative director of Estrella Damm and with the translator of the ad campaigns from Spanish into English. It is underlined that some of the original ads were recorded in Catalan and others in Spanish but that all 'source texts' analysed in the study were Spanish (i.e., some source texts were themselves translations, though culturally and linguistically close to the first source). The findings revealed literal translation in many instances for slogans, transcreation for cultural elements, and non-translation of numerous verbal items such as in the case of song lyrics. Many interesting topics are covered throughout the article including the translation of multilingualism and diglossia or Spanglish. It would be interesting for transcreation such as in this Estrella Damm corpus of subtitles to be compared with transcreation in dubbed ads or in entirely new versions of ads, e.g., with different actors and settings, and in marketing materials such as posters, as compared to videos.

The penultimate article in this case-study section is authored by Noemí Barrera-Rioja, under the title "The Rendering of Foul Language in Spanish-English Subtitling: The Case of *El Vecino*." The scholar conducts an exploration on the translation of expletives in the English subtitles of the Spanish series, *El Vecino* (*The Neighbor*, by Miguel Esteban & Raúl Navarro, 2019–2021), beginning with a useful walkthrough of terminology pertaining to the topic of profane language,

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often termed 'taboo' in translation literature though not to be confused with culturally taboo topics more broadly. Using Ávila-Cabrera's (2020) terminology to describe translation techniques, Barrera-Rioja describes the transfer of 'offensive load' as being either neutralised, preserved, toned-down, or toned-up (i.e., amped up). The author finds that swearwords have been conveyed in the subtitles in almost 70% of cases, whether accurately or toned up or down, and they have been omitted in the remainder of cases. She then hypothesises why strong language has been kept or not and acknowledges the fact that the series is being shown on Netflix, which has a no-censorship policy. Such is the intent to preserve the taboo register in the subs that the findings show compensation by non-offensive language being 'toned-up' as well as auxiliary swearwords being maintained despite their minimal contribution to the plot and their necessarily oral nature vs. the written nature of subtitles. This article demonstrates the value placed on register if the tone of a text is to be faithfully conveyed.

Finally, John D. Sanderson closes the descriptive studies section of this special issue by taking us back to the history of cinema and into the world of Spaghetti, or more generally Euro-Westerns, as well as (American) Westerns, in his article entitled "A Stranger in the Saloon: Lexical Disruption in the English Translation for Euro-Westerns Dubbing." He rewinds in time and takes us on a round tour of the impact that dubbing has had on both European and North American Westerns, while paying special attention to the unique lexis pertaining to each of the two categories of Western, which he derives from the analysis of a comparable corpus. The first part of the corpus is comprised of 15 American Westerns from the 1940s through 1960s and their translation for dubbing into Spanish. The second half of the corpus is made up of 15 Euro-Westerns from the 1960s and 1970s along with the Spanish dialogue and their English translation for dubbing. Using keyword searches in SketchEngine across

the parallel and comparable corpora, Sanderson discovers that a Spanish dubbese arose in the translation of American Westerns, often due to an overreliance on the same translation for terms expressed differently in the original. In turn, terminology used in these Spanish dubbed versions was perpetuated in Euro-Westerns and when these were dubbed into English, the terms were often recycled in English, e.g., via calques or cognates, rather than the translators availing themselves of the existing lexicon from American Westerns. We can consider that the different lexis is reflective of these two types of Westerns being somewhat of a different genre to one another. Alternatively, this cycle of dubbese might more simply be a result of pigeonholing by translators, insofar as they would immerse themselves in the source text so deeply that they became too far removed from appropriately idiomatic and genre-specific lexis in their respective native languages. The notion of the same genre being created on two sides of the Atlantic and perhaps belonging originally to one location more than the other is reminiscent of Uzzo's discussion on Mafia terminology. We should not underestimate the socio-cultural impact of dubbese and it would be interesting to charter the translation choices for dubbing in the new English dubs of content originating from different languages.

The final section fast-forwards to the English dubs of the late 2010s and early 2020s, venturing into theoretical planes, with both articles investigating the experience of viewers in consideration of the fact that the dubbing mode is new for most of the audience in question. In her contribution entitled "English Dubs: Why Are Viewers Receptive to the Dubbing Mode on Streaming Platforms and to Foreign-Accent Strategies?," Lydia Hayes interrogates the extent to which native-anglophone viewers may be receptive to the dubbing mode as a novelty and to foreign-accent strategies therein. She explores the evolution of English dubbing and the unique environment in which the English-dubbing industry is

currently operating. The Castilian-Spanish dubbing industry is analysed for comparison and the relevance of the (im)maturity of a localisation industry is elucidated inasmuch as it impacts viewer expectations, preferences, and (in)flexibility in professional practices. The author explains a threefold mechanism, called 'the dubbing trinity', that viewers engage in when watching dubbed versions. She delves into the habituation of native anglophones to foreign accents in English and then explores the interplay between the aforementioned dubbing trinity and foreign-accent strategies used in English-dubbed versions. The article ends with a series of hypotheses and speculations that seek to explain the current success of English dubbing as a mode of AVT (e.g., in opposition to subtitles) and the acceptance of foreign accents used in English dubbed versions, while at the same time anticipating the future of dubbing practices in English.

The final article, "Engaging English Audiences in the Dubbing Experience: A Matter of Quality or Habituation?," is authored by Sofía Sánchez-Mompeán, who looks into potential ways to engage English-speaking audiences in the dubbing experience and explores whether the engagement of this specific group comes down to the quality of the dubbed dialogues or to viewer habituation in the consumption of dubbed versions. The author discusses the negative impact that a lack of exposure to the dubbing mode can have on the viewing experience and, therefore, the importance of exposure in leading to acceptance of or willingness to engage with dubbed material. She explores lip-sync, voice performance, and naturalness in wording as key elements that lead to quality in a dubbed version. In relation to these, the author bears in mind comments made by viewers on social media or popular outlets about their experience of dubbed versions. Ultimately, Sánchez-Mompeán states that both high quality and exposure are needed to drive viewer engagement in English dubs, given that there have been lapses noted in lip-sync and given that viewers are

not habituated to consuming dubbed versions. This article is a reminder that, despite the noteworthy boom in English-dubbed content, English dubbing is still in its infancy and viewers are particularly immature inasmuch as habituation is concerned.

Concluding Remarks

The remodelling of the production, post-production, distribution and exhibition mediascape has generated the need for more localisation of audiovisual content to be done into English. In turn, this demand has brought about a significant growth in the English-subtitling industry as well as the emergence of a most promising English-dubbing industry. This special issue is home to a collection of articles which add to the existing body of research on English-language AVT, currently in nascent stages and consequently modest in size; yet, gathering notable momentum as demonstrated by the publication of recent articles such as on the topic of dubbing (Hayes, 2021; Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021; Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a, 2021b; Hayes, 2022; Savoldelli & Spiteri Miggiani, 2023; Bruti and Vignozzi, forthcoming), as well as subtitling (Sanders, 2022; Black, 2022; Zeng & Li, 2023). Much scholarship to date has focused on English dubbing, likely due to the novelty of the practice in the industry and for most viewers; however, the contents of this special issue tip in favour of subtitling which is representative of the ubiquity of this particular practice.

When it comes to accessibility studies, most research conducted on areas such as SDH or AD have typically tended to focus on English intralingually, while works on dubbing and subtitling, as previously discussed, have looked at English as the source language of translation. Research into access services in English has traditionally received a fair deal of attention but given the current developments in the sector it would be most interesting to look into the interlingual practices of SDH and AD, to make foreign content accessible to people with sensory disabilities.

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Additionally, alternative forms of dubbing into English, such as in videogame localisation, and of subtitling, such as in the case of surtitling and fansubbing, are being regularly practised but are nevertheless somewhat lacking in research. Furthermore, beyond the two dominant modes of AVT, i.e., subtitling and lip-sync dubbing, UN-style voiceover has often been used for translating non-fiction into English, such as for foreign news reports, documentaries, as well as in the arguably pseudo-non-fiction genre of reality TV, and so these are more areas for exploration in future research. The relatively recent advent of lector dubbing in English (Netflix, 2023), as practiced in shows like 피지컬: 100 (*Physical: 100*, Jang Ho-gi, 2023), a hybrid between lip-sync and the more traditional UN-style voiceover in which the two languages can be heard at the same time (Díaz-Cintas & Orero, 2010), lends itself as a novel field of exploration.

It would also be academically enriching to compare localisation practices for international streaming platforms with those for national ones such as, for instance, BBC iPlayer in the UK, RTÉ Player in Ireland, RTVE Play in Spain, Rai Play in Italy and ARD Mediathek in Germany, as well as for international ones such as ARTE, BritBox and IFLIX to name but a few. By studying a wider range of source languages, this would further help to paint the picture of processes currently followed in English AVT, as there is a plethora of European languages being translated but also many Asian languages. Archival research conducted by scholars such as O'Sullivan and Cornu (2019), Alfano (2020) and Mereu Keating (2021) on the historiography of dubbing and subtitling into English, as an informative precedent of what is being done these days, has the potential of shedding light on and informing current industry practices and our understanding thereof. Finally, it would greatly benefit the body of literature on English AVT if more empirical research were undertaken, especially insofar as reception and perception studies with viewer respondents are concerned. This is

not least of all because viewers nowadays hold sway over industry practices, given the projection of their voices on social media.

Drawing on the work of some prominent and promising scholars in the field of AVT, this special issue covers a few of the central areas of concern in the novel and dynamic study of dubbing and subtitling into English. A wide range of themes and issues have been discussed from a variety of perspectives, representing some of the many facets in which AVT manifests itself in the Anglosphere and are a testimony to the transforming power of AVT in cultural and media exchanges. The articles herein not only take stock of current practices and supply answers to some crucial questions, they also open up new debates by formulating new questions. We are optimistic that this volume will mark a solid start in the academic study of English-language AVT and will encourage further research that will allow us to charter the territory as practices evolve and the sample size of localised material expands.

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Title: Jacarandas de CDM
Technique: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 70 cm x 50 cm
2020

Empirical Studies

Pivot Templators' Challenges and Training: Insights from a Survey Study with Subtitlers and Subtitler Trainers

Desafíos y formación para los creadores de plantillas dinámicas: hallazgos de una encuesta con subtituladores y formadores en subtitulado

Défis et formation pour les créateurs de modèles dynamiques : résultats d'une enquête avec des sous-titreurs et des formateurs en sous-titrage

Desafios e treinamento para criadores de modelos dinâmicos: resultados de uma pesquisa com legendadores e treinadores de legendagem

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Abstract

Given the increase of non-English audiovisual content, translating through pivot templates is increasingly common. Yet, pivot templates have attracted scant scholarly attention. Several factors remain unclear. Among the first factors are the questions of who creates pivot templates, from what languages are they translated, into what languages are they translated, and what audiovisual products and channels are they for? Secondly, what are the challenges involved in the creation of templates? The third factor would be whether there is any training available for pivot template creators, and whether this training is effective. To provide more clarity, we distributed a questionnaire and elicited replies from 100 pivot templators and 75 subtitler trainers based in Europe. The results indicate that most pivot templators translate into English as L2, i.e., having learned it as a second language. Because of this, diverse difficulties arise. Training in pivot template making seems rare, especially compared to training in subtitling in general. The training that is offered comes mainly from the industry and not academia. This is problematic for various reasons: (a) the former does not typically cover issues related to subtitler ethics or the sustainability of the profession, and (b) translator training and professional codes of conduct eye L2 translation with suspicion. Drawing on the respondents' insights, we argue that much can be gained from teaching non-English-language native speakers how to create English-language templates.

Keywords: Pivot templates in English, subtitler training, L2 translation, pivot templators, online questionnaire, AVT

Resumen

El aumento de contenido audiovisual en lenguas distintas al inglés está extendiendo la traducción mediante plantillas dinámicas. Sin embargo, estas han atraído

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escasa atención académica. Aún no está claro: en primer lugar, quién crea plantillas pivote, desde y hacia qué idiomas y para qué productos y canales audiovisuales se crean. En segundo lugar, qué desafíos implican sus creaciones y si hay capacitación disponible para *pivot templators* (también conocidos como creadores de plantillas) y si es útil. Para cerrar esta brecha, informamos sobre los resultados de un cuestionario que involucró 100 plantillas dinámicas y 75 capacitadores de subtituladores en Europa. Los resultados indican que la mayoría de los creadores de plantillas dinámicas traducen al inglés como segunda lengua, lo que plantea variados desafíos. La formación en creación de plantillas dinámicas parece rara, especialmente en comparación con la formación general en subtitulaje. La formación que se ofrece proviene principalmente de la industria y no de la academia. Esto es problemático porque: a) el primero generalmente no cubre temas relacionados con la ética del subtitulador o la sostenibilidad de la profesión, y b) la capacitación de traductores y los códigos de conducta profesionales ven con recelo la traducción en una segunda lengua. Basándonos en las opiniones de los encuestados, argumentamos que se puede ganar mucho enseñando a los hablantes nativos que no hablan inglés cómo crear plantillas en inglés.

Palabras clave: plantillas dinámicas en inglés, formación de subtituladores, traducción en segunda lengua, creadores de plantillas dinámicas, cuestionarios en línea, TAV

Résumé

La croissance du contenu audiovisuel dans des langues autres que l'anglais favorise la traduction à l'aide de modèles dynamiques. Toutefois, ces derniers n'ont guère attiré l'attention des universitaires. On ne sait toujours pas : premièrement, qui crée les modèles pivots, à partir de quelles langues et vers quelles langues, et pour quels produits et canaux audiovisuels ils sont créés. Deuxièmement, quels sont les défis liés à leur création et si une formation est disponible pour les créateurs de *pivot templates* (également connus sous le nom de créateurs de modèles dynamiques pour le sous-titrage) et si elle est utile. Pour combler cette lacune, nous présentons les résultats d'un questionnaire auquel ont répondu 100 créateurs de modèles dynamiques et 75 formateurs de sous-titreurs en Europe. Les résultats indiquent que la majorité des créateurs de modèles dynamiques traduisent en anglais comme deuxième langue, ce qui pose un certain nombre de problèmes. La formation pour la création de modèles dynamiques semble rare, surtout par rapport à la formation générale en sous-titrage. Les formations proposées proviennent principalement de l'industrie plutôt que du monde universitaire. Cela pose problèmes car : a) la première ne couvre généralement pas les questions liées à l'éthique du sous-titrage ou à la durabilité de la profession, et b) la formation des traducteurs et les codes de conduite professionnels considèrent la traduction en langue seconde avec méfiance. Sur la base des opinions des personnes enquêtées, nous soutenons qu'il y a beaucoup à gagner à enseigner aux locuteurs natifs non anglophones comment créer des modèles en anglais.

Mots clef : modèles dynamiques anglais, formation des sous-titreurs, traduction vers une seconde langue, créateurs de modèles dynamiques, enquête en ligne, TAV

Resumo

O crescimento do conteúdo audiovisual em outros idiomas além do inglês está difundindo a tradução usando padrões pivô. No entanto, estes têm atraído pouca atenção da academia. Ainda não está claro: primeiro, quem cria os padrões pivô, de e para quais idiomas e para quais produtos e canais audiovisuais eles são criados. Em segundo lugar, que desafios estão envolvidos em sua criação e se o treinamento está disponível para os *pivot templates* (também conhecidos como criadores de modelos) e se ele é útil. Para preencher esta lacuna, relatamos os resultados de um questionário envolvendo 100 padrões pivô e 75 treinadores de legendagem na Europa. Os resultados indicam que a maioria dos criadores de modelos dinâmicos traduzem para o inglês como um segundo idioma, o que representa uma série de desafios. A formação na criação de padrões pivô parece rara, especialmente em comparação com o treinamento geral de legendagem. O treinamento que é oferecido vem principalmente da indústria e não da academia. Isto é problemático porque: a) o primeiro geralmente não cobre questões relacionadas à ética da legendagem ou à sustentabilidade da profissão, e b) o treinamento de tradutores e códigos de conduta profissionais vêem a tradução para o segundo idioma com desconfiança. Com base nas opiniões dos entrevistados, argumentamos que há muito a ganhar com o ensino de falantes nativos de outros idiomas que não o inglês como criar padrões em inglês.

Palavras chave: padrões pivô em inglês, formação de legendadores, tradução para uma segunda língua, criadores de padrões pivô, questionário online, TAV

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Introduction

In this article, we discuss the use of templates, which are subtitle files "timed to film shots and audio that [are] used as a basis to originate other subtitle versions" (AVT Masterclass, 2021, p. 4). Templates "usually serve as a basis for interlingual subtitling in multilingual workflows where the content is localised into multiple languages." (p. 4). We are concerned with a particular group of templates, which audiovisual translation (AVT) researchers term *pivot templates* (i.e., templates produced in a language different from the language of the original content and the final subtitles). When referring to the professional practitioner who creates (pivot) templates, we use the term *templator*, coined by Díaz-Cintas (2021).

The rationale for this study is that, although the use of pivot templates is a widespread practice (Valdez et al., 2023), several aspects remain unclear. First, who creates pivot templates, which audiovisual products are created using this type of templates, and which languages work as source, stepping-stone, and target languages in pivot-template workflows. Second, what challenges are involved in creating pivot templates. Third, whether there is training available for templators and what type of training is considered helpful to produce a fit-for-purpose pivot template. This lack of research-based knowledge is problematic given the increase in original content production in non-English-languages (Netflix Q4 2021 Earnings Interview, 2022) and the resulting demand for professionals with training and experience in translating into English as a pivot language (see, for instance, Bolaños-García-Escribano et al., 2021, p. 5).

To address these issues, we report on the results of a dedicated questionnaire aimed at templators and subtitler trainers; but, first, we analyse key takeaways from related research and outline the methods used in questionnaire design and data analysis.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, we outline relevant insights gained from earlier studies on pivot translation, on pivot templates, as well as on the relation between these two practices and translation directionality, English as a lingua franca, and subtitler training. In so doing, we highlight gaps in the current understanding of these pivot practices.

Pivot Translation and Pivot Templates

Pivot templates are a particular instance of pivot translation (also known as indirect translation; see Pięta, 2021). Pivot translation is a long-standing and widespread practice in many domains (e.g., Bible translation, interpreting, video game localization). However, as a subfield of research, pivot translation is recent, rarely looks beyond the 20th century, and has focused mainly on literature printed in book form (Pięta, 2021).

In the AVT industry, templates started to be commonly used with the arrival of the DVD in the 1990s (O'Hagan, 2007, p. 162) in a paradigm where non-English content was rarely distributed on a global scale and when subtitles needed to be produced fast (to avoid piracy) and cheaply (to maximise profit). To efficiently manage subtitling projects where English content was simultaneously translated into multiple languages, templates were created by native English speakers to ensure that the dialogues were reproduced accurately.

Pivot templates became a standard go-to solution in the 2010s when subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) platforms forced a new paradigm in the distribution of audiovisual content (for instance, Hayes (2021) discussed how SVoD platforms drove the increase in demand for dubbing into English). It was then that, in the global media landscape, English language productions began to give way to non-English productions, and non-English originals became more common (for instance, Netflix (2022) reported non-English original content as a higher growth area since 2015).

Stakeholders' opinions about pivot templates vary. Language service providers tend to emphasise their positives, as pivot templates help minimise the technological requirements for subtitlers (Georgakopoulou, 2019, p. 139) and streamline outsourcing (Kapsaskis, 2011). In many pivot workflows, subtitlers only need to know how to do linguistic transposition, as timing is done by templators.

Moreover, subtitlers do not need to understand the language of the non-English content, as they will be working from the English pivot. This allows minimisation of costs (translating from and into English is typically cheaper than translating between non-English languages; see Vermeulen 2011, p. 122) while enlarging the pool of available translators (more subtitlers are working to or from English than in language combinations that do not involve English; Georgakopoulou, 2019, p. 138). Locked templates can be used as an additional risk management strategy. When using locked templates, subtitlers are not allowed to adjust timing and segmentation (e.g., no in- and out-time adjustments, no merging or splitting), proving useful when updates to the video (and, consequently, the subtitles) are expected.

In contrast, translators approach pivot workflows with mixed feelings. Some recognize the benefits: more job offers, an opportunity to broaden cultural horizons, less heavy-lifting (as timing and some detective work about culture-specific elements might have been done for the final subtitler, who can now focus on other relevant issues), and more freedom because viewers do not understand the non-English content either (Costa, 2020; Oziemblewska & Szarkowska, 2020; Valdez et al., 2023). Others see pivot templates as a threat to translation quality. A mistake in the English pivot may be replicated downstream; ambiguities and nuances in the non-English original may be filtered (Casas-Tost & Bustins, 2021; Oziemblewska & Szarkowska, 2020). If templates are locked, fine-timing and easy adaptation to local guidelines (and norms) are hindered

(Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 81). Pivot templates are also seen as a threat to translation jobs and ethics. For example, subtitlers translating from pivot can be said to take away jobs from colleagues who are already disadvantaged because of their working languages (DuPlessis, 2020).

Despite these controversies, pivot templates are unlikely to disappear. One reason for this is the streaming giants' strategies to increase their non-English content (Rodríguez, 2017).

Pivot Template Creation and Directionality

Creating pivot templates is often combined with another commonly disapproved practice, namely L2 translation (or translation into a non-mother tongue), whereby translators work out of their L1 (or native language) and produce translations in their "first foreign" language (L2; Whyatt, 2019, p. 80). L2 translation has traditionally been considered substandard and cognitively more demanding (Pokorn, 2005). However, this view has not been consistently supported nor rebutted by research. Despite an increasing body of dedicated studies (for an overview, see Ferreira et al., 2016), we still do not know to what extent and how exactly L2 translation differs from L1 translation — both in terms of the challenges involved and the quality — although some progress has been made, particularly with regard to written translation. For example, Whyatt (2019) shows that the effect of directionality (i.e., whether translators work into or out of their L2) might be modulated by text type, translator experience, and the degree of familiarity with certain text types.

The fact that translators (need to) translate into their L2 has been acknowledged in different subfields, and many training methods have been studied (Campbell, 1998). However, in AVT, systematic research is rare. A telling example is that mainstream handbooks and encyclopaedias of audiovisual translation do not include a dedicated entry on English as L2 in AVT. Therefore, it remains unclear which challenges templators face when working from their L1 into English.

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Pivot Translation and English

Pivot templates as well as pivot translation in general are intricately linked to the hegemonic status of English as a lingua franca. Research suggests that pivot translation can reinforce and undermine the hegemonic position of English (Ringmar, 2007; Tesseur & Crack, 2020). On the one hand, English pivot templates enhance worldwide access to content originally created in languages other than English, thus working as an empowering device for the cultures where these languages are spoken. On the other hand, English pivot templates can act as anglocentric filters, further exacerbating the power imbalance between English and other languages and cultures (Valdez et al., 2023). With English acting as a main default middleman, "there is a danger of cultural homogenization, whereby consumer preferences are anglicised, and English mediating is preferred to direct translation from more peripheral languages" (Pięta, 2021; cf. Ringmar, 2007).

Pivot Translation in Training

Given the conflicting opinions about pivot workflows, it is unclear to what extent creating pivot translation is part of subtitler training. To the best of our knowledge, only one study tried to partly address this issue. Torres-Simón et al. (2021) looked at the responses to their survey addressed to translator trainers, at mainstream training textbooks, at references to pivot translation in the European Masters in Translation (EMT) competences, and at the syllabi of EMT programmes. Their results suggest that there might be a disassociation between what is publicly on display and what happens in translation classrooms. EMT competences, official EMT syllabi, and published textbooks are practically silent on pivot translation; but many trainers surveyed in this study teach how to translate from a translation and, to a lesser degree, with a further translation in mind.

To recap, pivot translation in other domains has been attracting growing scholarly attention, but studies on pivot templates are recent and rare.

The few studies that exist are product-oriented and focused on issues of quality (Artegiani & Kapsaskis, 2014; DuPlessis, 2020; Oziemblewska & Szarkowska, 2020; Vermeulen, 2011). Much has been said about the negative consequences of this practice; but who creates pivot templates, what challenges templators face, and what type of training is available, if any all remain unclear. These are the issues that we want to explore.

Method

We designed a comprehensive online questionnaire in SurveyMonkey to elicit templators' and trainers' experiences and expectations when creating pivot templates and teaching about how to create pivot templates. The questionnaire, conducted between January and March 2021, was distributed online among audiovisual translators and trainers in specialised groups on social media, through European professional translation and audiovisual translation associations, universities in Europe, and personal networks. Before its dissemination, the questionnaire was pilot tested, and the feedback was implemented. The most common error types related to survey research, such as coverage, sampling, and non-response, were also carefully considered during the questionnaire design and data collection.

To conduct this study, we abided by GDPR (European Union General Data Protection Regulation) procedures. In addition, we followed the ethical standards of research set by our universities, and we obtained informed consent from the respondents. In particular, before agreeing to participate, respondents were asked to read a written text describing the study's general goals, how data is collected and stored, how confidentiality is managed, and the respondents' rights. We also explicitly asked respondents to confirm that they had read and understood the information given. Participants expressly agreed for the data collected to be stored and used in research in an anonymised form. If consent was denied, respondents were sent to the final page of the survey and their information was not collected.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections with fifty-six questions in total.[1] The first part was aimed at subtitlers and the second at subtitling trainers. Each main section was subdivided into two additional sub-sections. The first contained questions related to the profile of the respondents, and the second questions were about respondents' experience in working from and/or for pivot templates. In this article, we focus on answers provided by the templators and subtitling trainers.

Different types of questions were employed: open and closed questions, including multiple-choice, verification box, and Likert-scale type questions. The Likert-scale type questions included reserve-coded statements so that respondents did not "fall into the habit of agreeing or disagreeing" (Mellinger & Hanson, 2017, p. 32), and the order of the statements was randomized to avoid primacy bias and recency bias.

In the analysis phase, the data from the closed questions were processed in Excel using descriptive statistical analysis. For the open questions, the data were exported to ATLAS.ti. Here, the data were coded and organised around recurring themes (thematic analysis) using inductive coding. In other words, the extracted codes were based on the actual language used by the respondents — their words, phrases, and terms (Saldaña, 2016, p. 105). As for the presentation of the data, when reporting the open answers, the respondents' statement beliefs are quoted verbatim, including any typos.

Three hundred eighty subtitlers from 32 European countries answered our questionnaire. Of these, 100 indicated that they knowingly create pivot templates used for further translation into a third language. The next section reports on these 100 templators.

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1   The complete questionnaire is available at https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.19368896.v1

Results and Discussion

This section presents the questionnaire results to discuss (i) the profile of templators and template use, (ii) the challenges involved in creating pivot templates, and (iii) the availability and characteristics of training considered helpful to produce a fit-for-purpose pivot template. To do so, we have analysed 100 templators' responses to 19 open and closed questions on their profile (demographics questions) and professional practice (see Templators). To understand if and how the creation of pivot templates is taught, the profile of these trainers, and the motivations behind not teaching how to create pivot templates, we analysed seventy-five subtitling trainers' responses to 19 open and closed questions (see Trainers).

Templators' Profile

Based on the 100 answers, the results show that our templators are mostly professional subtitlers (83), with seven working as volunteers and fansubbers and ten working as both professionals and volunteers. Their age ranges from 18 years to 55 or above, but most are under 44 (61).

Regarding qualifications, the data shows that most respondents (63) have qualifications in subtitling or qualifications that included modules on subtitling, with 25 holding a master's degree, 12 a bachelor's degree, another 12 a course or workshop certificate, five a postgraduate degree, and two a PhD. These results seem to be in keeping with the most recent reports on the training of AVT. As Bolaños-García-Escribano et al. (2021, p. 2) point out, in the last 20 years, undergraduate and postgraduate AVT modules have been created and introduced in new and existing translator training programmes in significant numbers. This has been corroborated to some extent by the survey conducted by the AVT working group of the European Master's in Translation in 2020 (Valdez et al., forthcoming). Nevertheless, there are still reports of a perceived distance between what language service providers (LSP) need from

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subtitlers and the competences of (recent) graduates (Nikolić & Bywood, 2021, p. 61).

In terms of experience in subtitling, most participants (53) had more than ten years of experience: 25 participants with more than 20 years, 10 with 16-20 years, and 18 with 11–15 years. Twenty-four participants had between 6 and 10 years of experience, 19 had between 1 and 5 years, and four had less than 1 year.

In terms of distribution per country, our templators are based in 24 European countries. Figure 1 shows the distribution by country. The six most represented countries are the Netherlands (16),

Portugal (14), Spain (13), the United Kingdom (nine), Germany (six), and France (five).

Regarding the source and target working languages that they usually work from and into, these templators usually work from and into English (94 working from, and 43 into), Spanish (31 and 15), French (29 and five), German (18 and nine), Italian (12 and four), and Dutch (Netherlands) (10 and 16). The data, therefore, suggests that English is the main source and target language independently of the templators' native language.

Figure 2 shows the usual source and target languages with more than one respondent. The languages (source or target) with one respondent

Figure 1 Distribution of Respondents per Country
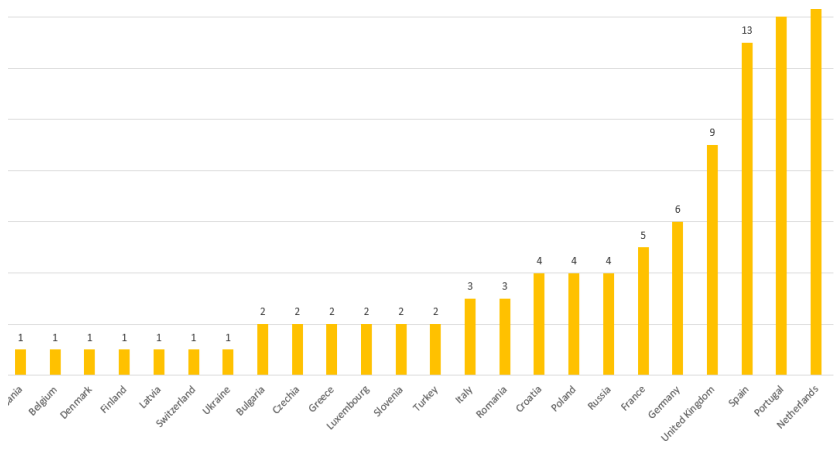
Figure 2 Usual Source and Target Languages of Respondents

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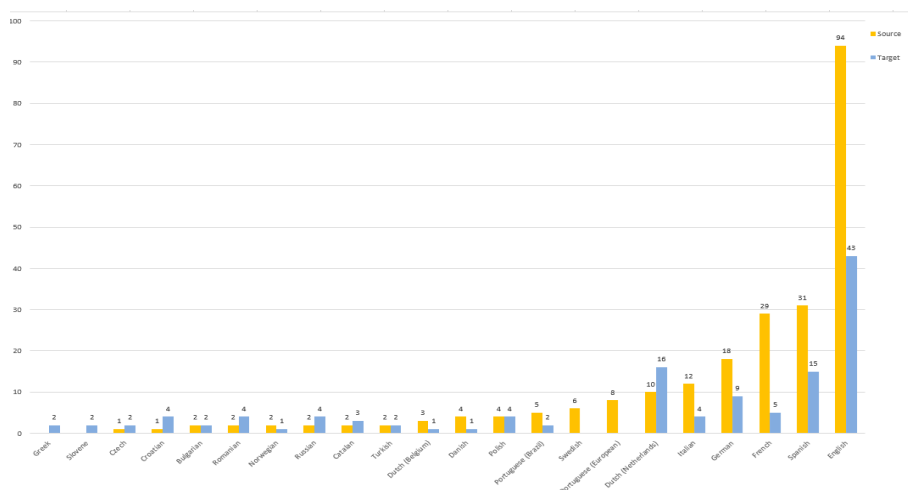
were Serbian, Bosnian, Finnish, Latvian, Yiddish, Macedonian, Korean, Basque, and Ukrainian.

Pivot Languages and Ultimate Source Languages

To identify the pivot languages and further understand the predominance of hyper-central English or central languages in template creation, we asked the respondents to indicate the template languages they usually create with a further translation in mind. As shown in Table 1, most respondents (64) reported that they typically create templates in English. This is not surprising given the traditional status of the English language as the lingua franca worldwide and in the AV sector. These numbers also suggest that our respondents create pivot templates in English, even when English is not their native language.

Concerning other languages, a smaller number of templators answered that they create templates in Spanish (13), French (eight), German (four), Dutch (four), Italian (two), Portuguese (two), and Russian (two), among other languages.

We did not ask our respondents for what purpose their non-English templates are used. However, based on earlier research (Nikolić, 2015), we presume that some are used only as a technical support (i.e., subtitlers downstream only make use of the predefined timing and not the language in the

template). However, in other cases, non-English pivot templates might be used as a linguistic aid too (i.e., subtitlers might use them to cut English as a go-between, for instance between closely related languages, such as Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian).

Concerning the ultimate source languages (USL), the respondents were asked to indicate the languages of the audiovisual products they typically work from when creating a pivot template. We wanted to identify the languages of the original audiovisual content when translators are asked to create templates to understand if there were signs of the increased linguistic diversity reported in the literature. Among the respondent templators, as seen in Table 2, the most common USL is Spanish (23), followed by English (18), German (14), and French (13). In other words, even though hyper-central English (Heilbron, 2010) is not the most common USL, it still occupies an important second place. It also highlights the role of English as a pivot language. It is also

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Table 2 Ultimate Source Language (With More Than One Respondent)

Language of the Audiovisual Products	Number of Respondents
Spanish	23
English	18
German	14
French	13
Swedish	6
Japanese	4
Dutch	4
Portuguese	4
Korean	3
Chinese	3
Norwegian	3
Polish	3
Russian	3
Czech	2
Catalan	2
Romanian	2
Slovenian	2

Table 1 Language of Pivot Templates (With More than One Respondent)

Language of Pivot Templates	Number of Respondents
English	64
Spanish	13
French	8
German	4
Dutch	4
Italian	2
Portuguese	2
Russian	2

interesting to see Spanish, German, and French (i.e., central, globally powerful languages) occupying such prevalence in this list of USLs.

AVT Products and Their Channels

We were also interested in the type of AVT products that templators usually work with. When asked "Which AVT products do you usually create a template for?" respondents indicated that in most cases, they create templates for films (TV or cinema), series, sitcoms, and/or trailers (66; see Table 3). This is closely followed by documentaries, docudramas, and/or fly-on-the-wall docudramas (53). In a smaller proportion, our templators create templates for corporate videos, promotional videos, specialised videos and/or commercials (27), news, political speeches, press conferences, and/or interviews (15), cartoons and/or anime (14), and video clips (music, YouTubers) (four).

The respondents were also asked about the channels or platforms where the subtitles based on their templates are distributed, and 47 indicated streaming services (see Table 4). This confirms our expectation that, for our respondents, the use of pivot language templates is most common on streaming platforms. This is followed by cable TV

Table 3 AVT Products for Which Pivot Templates Are Usually Created for

AVT Products	Number of Respondents
Films (TV or cinema), series, sitcoms or trailers	66
Documentaries, docudramas or fly-on-the-wall docudramas	53
Corporate videos, promotional videos, specialised videos and/or commercials	27
News, political speeches, press conferences, and/or interviews	15
Cartoons and/or anime	14
Video clips (music, YouTubers)	4

Table 4 Channels or Platforms Where the Subtitles Created Based on Templates Are Distributed

Channels or Platforms	Number of Respondents
streaming services	47
cable TV	30
open/public TV	27
cinema	26
websites	20
DVD	16
YouTube	13
I am not informed/ I don't know	11

(30), open/public TV (27), cinema (26), and websites (20). DVD (16) and YouTube (13) gather the lowest number of responses.

Challenges and Expectations Creating Pivot Templates

In response to the question "Tell us what is your biggest challenge, in terms of quality, when creating templates?", answered by 81 templators, three broad themes emerged from the analysis: "Linguistics and Cultural Aspects" (45), "Professional Ecosystem" (39), and "Temporal and Spatial features" (32). Importantly, the only pivot language mentioned in the dataset was English.

Particularly revealing is how the respondents expressed their challenges. Throughout the dataset, templators conveyed concerns regarding what the subsequent translator might need from the pivot template. Commenting on this, one of the respondents wrote that their main concern was "knowing that other translators will be working from it and that I need to lay the groundwork." Thus, when creating English-language templates, templators attempt to anticipate the needs and expectations of translators working into other languages. Templators then base their decision-making process on these expectations of others. Curiously, even though pivot templates

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are sometimes reported to have dual audiences (English-language viewers and subsequent translators), these templators only referred to the translators' expectations and not the viewers (Torres-Simón et al. 2022).

As for the most common challenges, 45 respondents expressed concerns related to "Linguistics and Cultural Aspects" (see Figure 3). Among these, 15 templators commented that one of their biggest challenges was related to text reduction or, as one respondent wrote, "condensation - because I know, the next translator will miss that information." This is also observed when our respondents refer to a literal "translation/transcription," indicating that they "should be as literal as possible" or that they should "adapt as little as possible so the target language can remain as faithful as possible to the original."

This belief that a pivot template should avoid text reduction and be as "literal" or as "faithful" as possible is very much opposed to what is recommended for subtitling without a further translation in mind. Text reduction is, in fact, one of the main recommended strategies when subtitling. For instance, as Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, pp. 146–147) write, "subtitles are rarely a verbatim and detailed rendering of the spoken text, and they need not be." But this does not seem helpful when creating pivot templates, as Artegiani and Kapsaskis (2014, p. 433) have found from their analysis of French, Greek, and Spanish subtitles of episodes of *The Sopranos* based on pivot template files:

> At the same time, because they follow the conventional and normative format of interlingual subtitles, the template files examined made use of standard strategies of text reduction, which were on many occasions blindly reproduced in the TLs. (...) [T]he consequences of text reduction choices in the template left visible traces in all three languages examined and sometimes had an adverse impact on translation quality.

Templators also expressed concerns regarding segmentation and line breaks (seven). Some templators mentioned that when segmenting, templators have to consider that "it has to work for different languages," while others reminded that "the grammar might be very different in the third

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Figure 3 Biggest Challenges When Creating Pivot Templates — Theme "Linguistics and Cultural Aspects" (45)

		Mentions
Linguistics	Text reduction	15
	Literal translation	14
	Segmentation and line breaks	7
Cultural aspects	Cultural references	3
	Taboo	3
	Language variation	2
	Humour	1
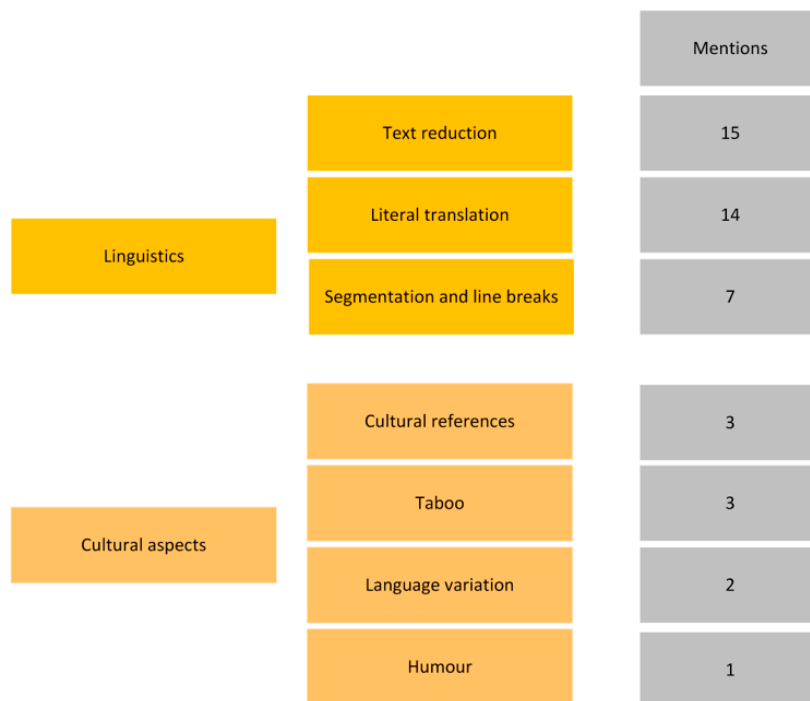
language and might need different partitions." This suggests that, as a pivot language, English might be challenging for templators, as it might lack certain grammatical categories or syntactical structures that the USL and the ultimate target language (i.e., the language of the final subtitles) might share. Besides these considerations, others also showed that they were aware that some translators might not be allowed to change some of the spatial or temporal features of the template, like adjusting time codes or merging or splitting segments, and how negative this can be. As Nikolić (2015, pp. 199–200) points out, discussing the use of locked templates: "[W]hat subtitling companies tend to ignore is the lexical, syntactic and cultural differences between languages."

For other respondents (nine), cultural aspects, such as cultural references, taboo, language variation, and humour are particularly challenging to anticipate. As one templator wrote, "Accuracy and making sure to anticipate any queries the translator may have in terms of slang, culture, etc. so that I can add the relevant notes to the template." Another commented, "To consider if the English is 'clear enough' to be understood by my colleague, and ensure that substitling [sic] quality criteria are met, dealing with culture specific items." These replies seem to stress that what matters in template creation is not only the quality of English. Templators' prior knowledge of other languages and cultures matters as well, as it might help mitigate the Anglocentric filter and provide helpful information to subtitlers downstream, catering to the needs of their languages and cultures.

The second most recurrent challenges, mentioned 39 times, were related to the Professional Ecosystem (see Figure 4). This theme came up in discussions of challenges pertaining to

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Figure 4 Biggest challenges when creating pivot templates - Theme "Professional Ecosystem" (39)

annotations (16), the materials provided with the template creation task (15), the profession (six), and communication (two).

Concerning annotations, templators mainly referred to the challenge of creating complete annotations. "Knowing what to include in the annotations/comments that could help the translators when they translate from the template," as written by one of the respondents, was recurrent among the templators that took this opportunity to discuss annotations. Others also referred to templators' lack of "skill" when it comes to creating "significant notes" and to the need to have "vast linguistic knowledge, such as the importance of formality, gender sentence structure of languages you don't speak" to "be helpful to other languages."

Related to this is the challenge of creating annotations "that will fit all languages." This related challenge was expressed by six respondents. Notably, two of our respondents referred to not being allowed to add annotations and how that hinders the process. In the words of one of these respondents, "it would be great if it were possible to leave some comments for translators to help them with translation and understanding linguistic choices in templates." Such lack of annotation field thus seems to hold back the templator-subtitler communication in pivot workflows: what is

lost in the English translation due to reduction, for example, might not be easily flagged for the benefit of subtitlers downstream because the templator lacks a dedicated space for this purpose.

In the case of the materials provided by the client or project manager with the template creation task, the principal reported challenge is related to the audio quality of the source file (seven). Other challenges include the dialogue lists that are either not provided (two) or contain errors (two). Guidelines also seem to be a source of the problem since, in some cases, they are "incredibly strict" or they are not provided at all, leaving the templator to her own devices: "I didn't receive further instructions, so I did the same as I use to do when I translate and subtitle."

Respondents (six) also reported challenges related to the profession itself (see Figure 5). Among these challenges, the most reported were tight deadlines. For example, one of the respondents stressed that the deadlines "do not leave much time for research." Related to this is the challenge of rates since templators feel they are not paid proportionally to the time they need to dedicate to the template creation. Writing about this, one of the respondents commented that her challenge was

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Figure 5 Biggest Challenges When Creating Pivot Templates - Theme "Temporal and Spatial features" (32)
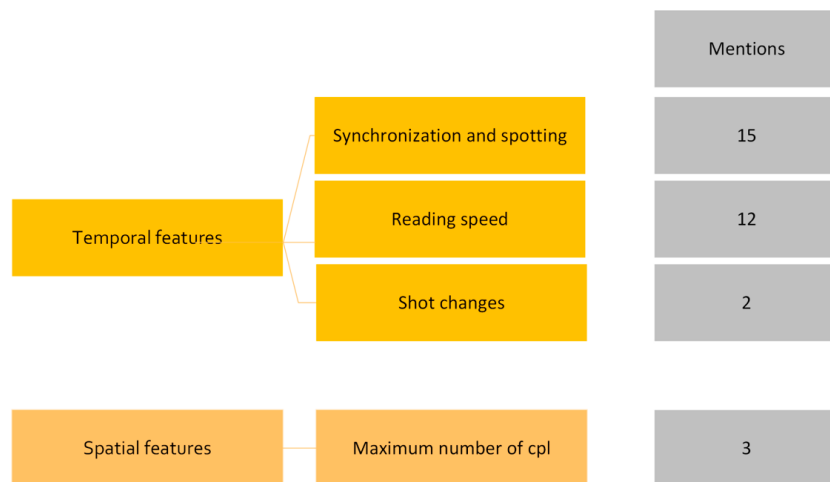
"spending enough time leaving long notes when the pay is not worth the time spent."

Less mentioned but equally important is the lack of communication with clients or project managers and with the original creator (two mentions). "Getting information," as one respondent points out, is particularly challenging. And to another templator, the challenge is "[n]ot having access to the creator to verify obscure dialogue."

The third most recurrent challenges, mentioned 32 times, were related to Temporal and Spatial features (see Figure 5). Templators (15) reported synchronization and spotting as challenges. In this case, the challenge seems to be related to "timing properly to allow proper cps (characters per second) and cpl (characters per line) for any language the template might be used with, especially those very different from my own." On this topic, one templator commented about the possibility of subsequent translators being negatively influenced by the template saying, "If the translator is not careful, they might rely too much on the template and not make the appropriate changes." Templators also referred to shot changes and the maximum number of characters per line being technically challenging.

Some of the above comments seem to relate to locked templates, and to "unnecessary compressions," (i.e., instances when timing unnecessarily reduces the space allowed, for example, by generating one subtitle instead of two; Wexler, 2021, p. 12). Many ultimate target languages might need more space to convey the meaning contained in the English translation. Given the increase of characters, the viewers of the subtitles in the ultimate target language may also need more time to read the subtitles. If the templator unnecessarily compresses the subtitle timing in the English pivot template, they might steal precious time from subsequent subtitles in other languages.

Templators were also asked to rate statements on a 5-point Likert-type agreement scale regarding their beliefs about template creation (based on Oziemblewska and Szarkowska, 2020).

The majority of the templators agreed (answering *agree* or *strongly agree*) with the first three statements (see Figure 6). These are: "I believe that templates should allow for time code adjustment and changing subtitles" (85 respondents); "I believe that a good template should contain on-screen text" (66); and "I believe that a good template should provide annotations" (66). In a lower percentage, 49 of our

Figure 6 Templators' Beliefs Regarding Template Creation
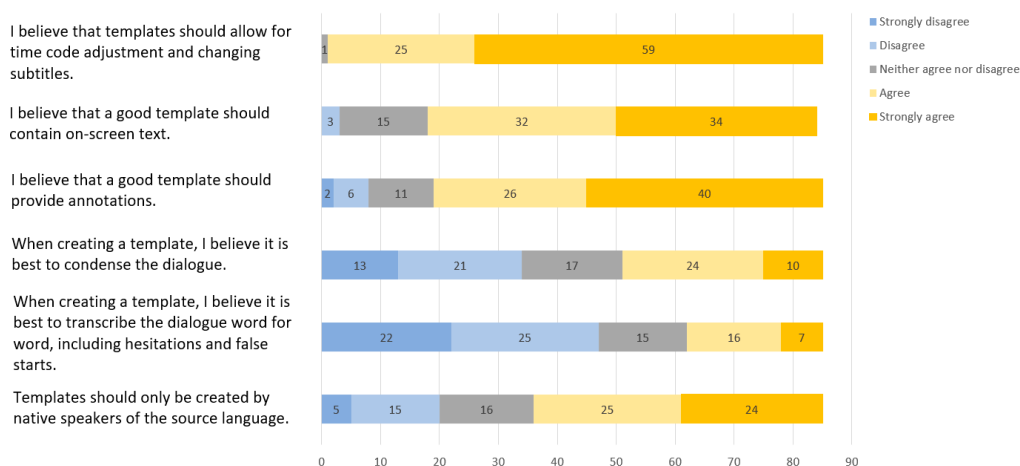
respondents also *agreed* and *strongly agreed* that templates should only be created by native speakers of the source language.

The statements about how to deal with dialogue elicited mixed responses. Forty-seven templators *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement, "When creating a template, I believe it is best to transcribe the dialogue word for word, including hesitations and false starts." Interestingly, when it comes to condensing the dialogue, opinions seem to be divided: 34 respondents indicated they *agree* or *strongly agree*, and another 34 indicated they *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

Templator training

As one of our aims was to identify if templators receive specific training (in the broadest sense) on how to create pivot templates and what type of training they have been offered, we asked not only if they "ever received help, training, guidance or instructions on how to create a template, knowing that your translation will be used by other translators," but also what type of support they received and to what extent it was helpful.

As expected, little over half of the respondents (52) indicated that they had never received help, training, guidance, or instructions on creating a pivot template. Those who had received some form of training focussed mainly on the most helpful type of training received (see Table 5). Nine felt that specific guidelines or instructions on creating templates were helpful, while six highlighted that feedback on expectations and advice from fellow translators was the most helpful. One templator even wrote that "colleagues are the best!"

Other templators expressed that the most helpful type of training received was on English language templates focusing on annotations. For example, one templator wrote:

> I think the most important thing is to always bear in mind the translator who will be using your file, in particular in terms of thinking that merging subtitles is

Table 5 Helpful Training on How to Create Pivot Templates

Helpful Training Strategies Checked by Respondents	Number of Responses
Specific guidelines on template creation	9
Feedback on expectations and advice from fellow translators	6
Training on English language templates with a focus on annotations	6
Academic training	2
Q&A with PMS	2
Inhouse training	2
Video training	1
Expert training	1

easier than splitting them; not wasting time creating unnecessary annotations (such as providing a link to a website for proper nouns that translators can easily research themselves or will already know); taking care when choosing how to segment your subtitles, e.g. thinking about what translators will be able to edit out and what they will need to include and segmenting your subtitles accordingly.

For two participants, the type of academic training that they received, for instance, in their MA in Translation, was particularly helpful, while one templator made a point of writing that "academia unfortunately is not able to provide sufficient training for the realities of the market per se." Q&As with project managers, inhouse training, video training, and expert training were also mentioned as helpful.

Even though most templators focussed on their most positive experiences, a small number took the time to indicate what was least helpful. For them, general training on subtitling and spotting was described as usually short and superficial. For instance, one templator wrote, "Mostly I have received general training on time cueing (not useful,

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Figure 7 Trainers' Beliefs Regarding Competences and Task Difficulty of Pivot Templators
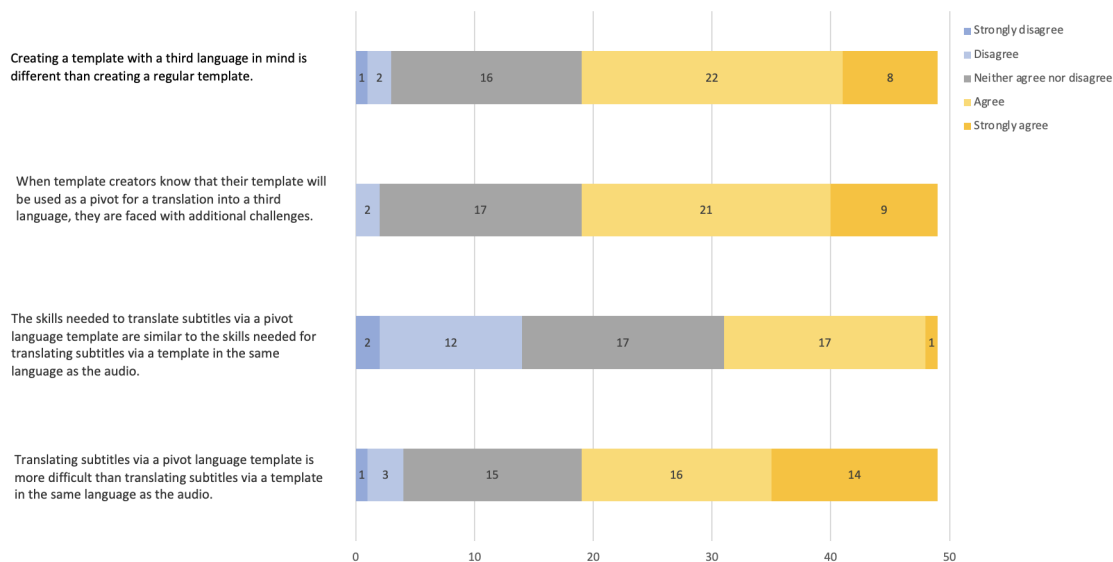
as I already knew how to)." Online instructions or "on-line guides" were also considered the least helpful, alongside general subtitling guidelines.

Trainers

Seventy-five subtitling trainers from 24 European countries answered our questionnaire. Of these 75 trainers, 17 trainers reported teaching how to translate from pivot templates, and five trainers indicated that they teach how to create a pivot template with a translation into a third language in mind. This was somewhat expected given Torres-Simón et al.'s (2021) findings.

This section draws on the answers of the 70 respondents who indicated that they had had experience in teaching subtitling but did not train subtitlers on how to create pivot templates. It also compares these 70 repondents to the five respondents who have trained pivot templators.

Trainers' Beliefs

We asked our trainers to rate a series of belief statements about pivot templates and training (from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*). We first discuss

the data for the 70 trainers who do not teach template creation.

As shown in Figure 7, most respondents (30) believe that creating a template with a third language in mind is different from creating a regular template; therefore subtitlers face additional changes when creating pivot templates. What is more, Figure 7 shows that, according to most respondents (30), translating subtitles via a pivot template is more complex than translating subtitles via a template in the same language as the audio (answering *agree* or *strongly agree* to the three statements).

Opinions seem to be divided regarding the skills needed to create pivot templates. While 14 either *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that "the skills needed to translate subtitles via a pivot language template are similar to the skills needed for translating subtitles via a template in the same language as the audio"; 18 either *agree* or *strongly agree* with this statement. It is also important to acknowledge that the number of respondents that indicated that they "Neither agree nor disagree" seems to be high (above 15) and might suggest that they did not have a clear opinion on the matter or that the statements were not sufficiently clear.

Figure 8 Template Trainers' Beliefs Regarding Competences and Task Difficulty of Pivot Templators
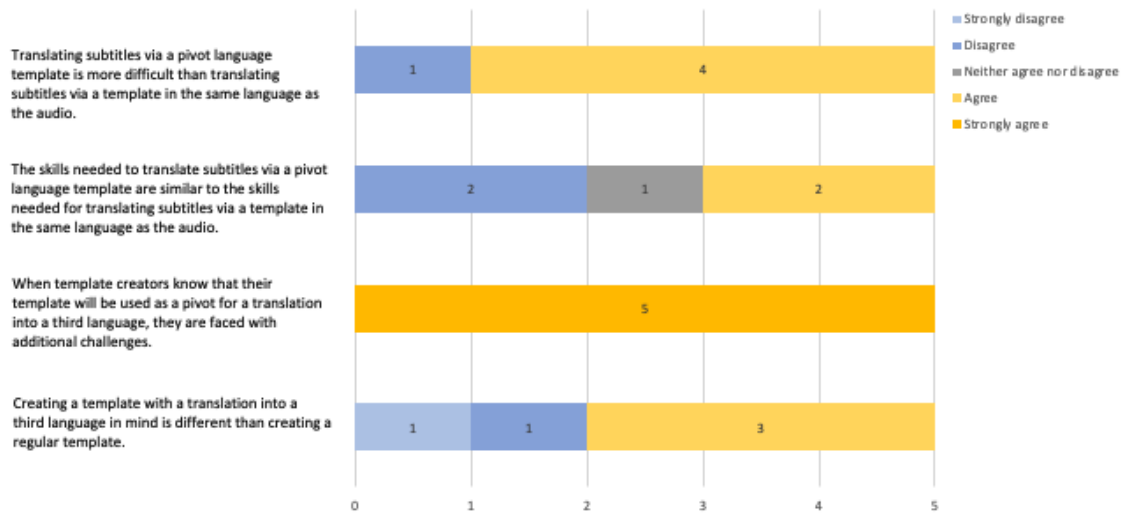
Figure 8 presents the view of pivot template trainers regarding competences and task difficulty. The pivot language covered in their training was, in all cases except one, English. The exception was a pre-conference workshop on English-French-Japanese translation. The main difference is that, in this case, most trainers agreed that pivot template creation is more challenging when compared with templates in the same language as the audio. For most of our trainers (four), it is also clear that translating via a pivot template is more difficult than translating via a non-pivot template.

All in all, their answers do not diverge significantly from answers given by trainers in the first group.

Motivations Behind not Teaching Subtitlers How to Create Pivot Templates

We also asked the subtitling trainers that do not teach how to create pivot templates to describe, in an open question, their motivations behind it, and their answers were quite telling. The main reported motivations for not teaching template creation were (1) time limitations (mentioned 14 times), (2) not a common practice (10 times), (3) pivot translation should not happen (eight times), (4) not part of the curriculum (seven times), and (5) does not involve a specific set of unique skills (three times).

With 14 mentions, time constraints were the main reason pointed out by the subtitling trainers that do not teach students how to create pivot templates. In the words of one respondent, trainers "lack [...] teaching hours to reach the subject." Data analysis also revealed that this "insufficient time to cover those aspects" was mainly associated with another factor: one trainer felt "there are more relevant issues to cover first," and other respondents who mentioned time constraints echoed this feeling.

From their answers, it seems that our trainers mostly teach the "basics" or a basic set of subtitling skills. Addressing this issue, another trainer wrote, "In order to master template translation and create any kind of templates, I find it important to first master subtitling from scratch. I would need a larger module to teach creating templates, which I do not, unfortunately, have." These comments might suggest that training sometimes aims to equip students with skills that are needed for established practices (localizing out of English), and not so much for emerging practices that are already on the horizon (localizing into English).

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The second most mentioned motivation, referred to 10 times, was that pivot translation is not a well-established translation practice. "Doesn't seem like a particularly useful skill in our national market", "it's been a rare task", or "not all players use templates" are comments that illustrate this point of view. On language combinations, one of the respondents wrote for instance, "As things stand, there is no call for this in my language combination (DE>EN). There is not enough German content that is localised into enough other languages, so pivot templates are very rarely used". This last view, in particular, seems to be countered by the data discussed in "Templators' profile": German is the third most common USL for our respondents.

The third most mentioned motivation to avoid teaching the creation of pivot templates, referred to eight times, was that pivot translation should not be practised. From the analysis, this motivation seems to be stemmed mainly from the belief that translators should translate into their native languages only and from a language and culture they are proficient in. Three of them, for example, commented the following:

> Example 1: The normalization of templates in certain countries means stealing work from translators who actually have the skills to translate from source languages other than English and who can do a better job (i.e., avoid translation mistakes, understand the cultural references and choose for themselves whether or not to keep them, explain them, etc., for instance). Subtitling from templates should be a last resort, not the default.

> Example 2: We should translate into our native languages only. Other languages cannot be a concern.

> Example 3: The importance of knowing the original language is pivotal to creating a quality end product.

The two least mentioned motivations were that pivot template creation is not part of the curriculum (seven times) and does not involve a specific set of unique skills (three times). As for the latter, some trainers expressed that they "don't think it's different from creating a general template" or that

subtitlers can "build upon knowledge of template creation in general," indicating a lack of awareness of the specific challenges of pivot template creation.

Overall, the motivations for not teaching translators how to create pivot templates seem to clash with pivot templators perspectives not only on the challenges they face when creating pivot templates (see Challenges and expectations when creating pivot templates) but also on their opinion on what they consider to be helpful training (see Templators' training). As one templator commented, "The more training there is, the better, I never had a training which was not helpful."

Unfortunately, little was reported by the group that teaches template creation in a similar open question on reasons to teach, so a solid comparison cannot be established. Therefore, we can only speculate that differences will lie in the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations discussed above.

Conclusions

Our study partly overcomes limitations of earlier studies, but it has its own limitations. Despite the rigorous design, four participants reported difficulties understanding some questions, so their answers were not included in the analysis. Moreover, our data focuses on respondents based in Europe, with a possible over-representation of respondents from the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. English pivot templates are a global phenomenon; therefore, our findings only portray a part of the complex picture of ongoing changes in the subtitling English-language industry. Still, the study offers valuable insights into AVT practices for English as a pivot language and opportunities to reflect on ways to move forward.

We characterize, for the first time, templators (their profile and professional practices) and their training. We highlight the challenges and expectations when creating pivot templates and trainers' motivations behind not teaching about how to create pivot templates. Our data suggest that creating

pivot templates is a common practice. Of the 380 subtitlers from 32 European countries, 100 create pivot templates, 83 of which also translate from pivot templates. It is clear from the data that translating from templates is an almost ubiquitous activity for subtitlers, especially for subtitlers working for SVoDs. Most of these templators are seasoned professionals (53 participants had more than ten years of experience) with formal qualifications in subtitling, and the majority of the respondents (63) have qualifications in subtitling or qualifications that included modules on subtitling. For our respondents, English is the main source and target language, independent of the templators' native language. Most respondents (64) reported that they typically create templates in English. Among the respondent templators, the most common USL is Spanish (23), followed by English (18), German (14), and French (13). This goes to show that although English is not the most common USL for pivot templators, it still occupies an important second place.

Templators from our dataset face various challenges related to linguistic and cultural aspects, their professional ecosystem, and the temporal and spatial features of templates. However, our findings suggest that teaching the creation of pivot templates is rare, particularly when compared to training in subtitling in general or training on how to translate from pivot templates. Of the 75 subtitling trainers from 24 European countries, only five teach how to create pivot templates. The pivot-template-making training offered comes mainly from the industry and not academia. This is problematic because (a) in-house training does not typically cover issues related to templator ethics or the sustainability of the translator profession and (b) translator training and professional codes of conduct are underpinned by a rationale that prioritises translating into the subtitler's native language (Delabastita, 2008) and, based on our responses, the key worries of templators are not addressed in training.

Against this background, and based on the respondents' insights, we make suggestions that academic trainers, industry, and researchers might want to take on board. First, to address the problematic issue of text reduction in pivot templates, English templates that serve dual purposes should be avoided. Instead, two sets of English subtitles should be created. First, the English subtitles should be created for viewers and the pivot texts to be translated further. Second, subtitlers working from pivot templates should be allowed to adapt the spatial and temporal features since these considerations can be culture and language-dependent. Importantly, pivot templators should be informed if the templates will be locked or not since this affects the way they time and segment the content.

Third, to help pivot templators anticipate the needs of translators downstream, trainers in academia should teach how to create helpful annotations, so as to make explicit what has become implicit in the pivot translation. Pivot language translators reported difficulties in selecting what to foreground. Thus, source culture subtitlers might be more aware of the elements to highlight, but would need to be trained in L2 translation. Multilingual classrooms and cross-cultural remote collaborations might be a fertile ground for such training.

Fourth, to address the issue of English lacking many of the grammatical categories that USL and UTL might have, the use of non-English pivot templates should be studied more systematically, as these templates might be a valuable alternative for some language combinations.

Fifth, software developers should optimise the annotation fields on their subtitling platforms. Templator annotations should be easily accessed by all translators downstream, facilitating templator-subtitler communication. They should not be approached as add-ons stashed away for sporadic use (e.g., for notes to self or for quality control only).

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All things considered, if the aim is to better prepare AVT students for current and future challenges, much can be gained from teaching non-English-language native speakers how to create English-language templates.

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El inglés como lengua pivote en la traducción audiovisual: industria y profesión en España

English as a Pivot Language in Audiovisual Translation: Industry and Profession in Spain

L'anglais, une langue pivot dans la traduction audiovisuelle : industrie et profession en Espagne

O inglês como língua pivô na tradução audiovisual: indústria e profissão na Espanha

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Resumen

La traducción audiovisual ha vivido una revolución en la última década, con un aumento en el número de producciones de habla no inglesa. Esto la ha convertido en un mercado en el que el uso del inglés como lengua pivote parece estar cada vez más extendido. Este artículo presenta un estudio mixto en el que se traza el perfil de los traductores que trabajan con inglés como lengua pivote, se describen las características que presentan los encargos en esa combinación de lenguas y se recogen las experiencias y opiniones de los traductores sobre esta práctica. La recolección de datos se efectuó mediante un cuestionario y unas entrevistas personales a profesionales que han realizado encargos de esta naturaleza. Los resultados muestran que esta práctica ha aumentado en los últimos cinco años debido a la expansión del vídeo bajo demanda. Aun así, este tipo de encargos supone menos del 10 % del volumen de trabajo de los traductores encuestados Además, esta práctica se emplea tanto con lenguas comunes en el mercado de la TAV de España como exóticas. Los traductores reconocen que esta no es una práctica ideal deontológicamente, pero permite recibir productos que, de otra manera, no llegarían a España.

Palabras clave: inglés como lengua pivote, perfil del traductor, traducción audiovisual, traducción en España

Abstract

Audiovisual translation has undergone a revolution in the last decade, with an increase in the number of non-English speaking productions. This has increasingly turned English into a pivot language. This article presents a mixed study aiming to profile translators who work with English as a pivot language. It describes the characteristics of assignments in language combinations involving English as a pivot language. In addition, translators' experiences and opinions on this practice are collected. Data collection was carried out by means of a questionnaire and personal interviews with professionals who have dealt with assignments of this nature.
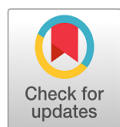
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The results show that this practice has increased in the last five years due to the expansion of video on demand. Even so, this type of assignment accounts for less than 10% of the workload of the translators surveyed. Moreover, this practice is used with both common and exotic languages in the Spanish AVT market. Translators recognise that this is not a deontologically ideal practice, but it enables the reception of products that would otherwise be unavailable in Spain.

Keywords: English as a pivot language, translators' profile, audiovisual translation, translation in Spain

Résumé

La traduction audiovisuelle a connu une révolution au cours de la dernière décennie, avec une augmentation du nombre de productions en langues autres que l'anglais. Cela en a fait un marché où l'utilisation de l'anglais comme langue pivot semble de plus en plus répandue. Cet article présente une étude mixte établissant le profil des traducteurs qui travaillent avec l'anglais comme langue pivot, décrivant les caractéristiques des commandes issues de la combinaison linguistique où l'anglais est une langue pivot, ainsi que les expériences et les opinions des traducteurs sur cette pratique. La collecte des données a été réalisée au moyen d'un questionnaire et d'entretiens personnels avec des professionnels ayant complété ce sorte de tâches. Les résultats montrent que cette pratique s'est accrue au cours des cinq dernières années à cause de l'essor de la vidéo à la demande. Malgré cela, ce type de tâche représente moins de 10 % de la charge de travail des traducteurs interrogés. De plus, cette pratique est utilisée aussi bien pour les langues courantes que pour les langues exotiques sur le marché espagnol de la traduction assistée par ordinateur. Les traducteurs admettent qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une pratique déontologiquement idéale, mais elle permet de recevoir des produits qui, autrement, ne seraient pas disponibles en Espagne.

Mots clef : anglais comme langue pivot, profil du traducteur, traduction audiovisuelle, traduction en Espagne

Resumo

A tradução audiovisual sofreu uma revolução na última década, com o aumento do número de produções que não falam inglês. Isto transformou cada vez mais o inglês em uma língua pivô. Este artigo apresenta um estudo misto com o objetivo de traçar o perfil dos tradutores que trabalham com o inglês como língua pivô. Ele descreve as características das tarefas na combinação de línguas usando o inglês como língua pivô. Além disso, são coletadas as experiências e opiniões dos tradutores sobre esta prática. Os dados foram coletados por meio de um questionário e entrevistas pessoais semi-estruturadas desenvolvidas online, visando profissionais que lidaram com tarefas desta natureza. Os dados do questionário foram analisados usando porcentagens de frequência e representados em gráficos e tabelas. As entrevistas foram transcritas e codificadas de acordo com o assunto tratado. Os resultados mostram o perfil sócio-profissional dos tradutores e as características destas tarefas, bem como suas reflexões sobre as implicações éticas e trabalhistas desta prática, que dificilmente foram abordadas em pesquisas anteriores sobre o inglês como língua pivô na tradução audiovisual.

Palavras chave: inglês como língua pivô, perfil do tradutor, tradução audiovisual, tradução na Espanha

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Introducción

En la última década, el panorama audiovisual internacional se ha transformado por completo. Si en los años 2000 la expansión del DVD, el Blu-Ray y la televisión digital terrestre introdujo cambios en los hábitos de consumo de los espectadores, el surgimiento y la expansión de las plataformas de vídeo bajo demanda (VoD) durante la segunda década del siglo XXI supuso una revolución. Más aún, la pandemia de la COVID-19 convirtió el VoD en el principal canal de difusión audiovisual, aumentando su consumo y contenido (Alexander, 2020; Shevenock, 2020). Esto tuvo consecuencias en el ejercicio de la traducción audiovisual (TAV), que, en los últimos años, ha ganado gran importancia en el sector de los servicios lingüísticos (Carrero Martín *et al.,* 2019; Reverter Oliver y Carrero Martín, 2021).

Esta proliferación de contenidos ha implicado un aumento de la demanda de profesionales capaces de afrontar encargos con unos plazos reducidos y unas condiciones variantes. Igualmente, esta revolución ha llegado a la universidad; según Bogucki y Díaz-Cintas (2020, p. 11), la TAV ha pasado de estar en los márgenes, a situarse en el centro de la discusión académica. No obstante, aún existen prácticas profesionales que reciben escasa atención, como el uso de lenguas puente o pivote (LP) en la TAV, es decir, la traducción de un texto audiovisual, generalmente en una lengua poco conocida o *exótica,* mediante una lengua intermedia (Ávila-Cabrera, 2013, p. 88), normalmente, el inglés (Casas-Tost y Bustins, 2021, pp. 97-98).

Aunque el uso del inglés como lengua pivote (ILP) estaba extendido en la traducción de videojuegos (Mangiron, 2020) y el subtitulado en festivales de cine (Martínez-Tejerina, 2014), el auge del VoD y la mayor comercialización de producciones en habla no inglesa podrían estar cambiando este escenario. En una investigación anterior (Reverter Oliver y Carrero Martín, 2021), constatamos un uso creciente del ILP para la traducción de obras francófonas al español, algo que, según algunos encuestados, afecta negativamente la calidad de la traducción y las condiciones laborales de los traductores de francés. Como consecuencia, considerábamos necesario profundizar en el uso del ILP en la TAV en España.

Este artículo persigue tres objetivos generales: 1) trazar el perfil de los profesionales que traducen mediante ILP (combinación lingüística, formación, experiencia profesional, etc.), 2) describir las características de estos encargos (modalidades de TAV y lenguas origen [LO] más frecuentes, calidad de los materiales, etc.) y 3) recoger las experiencias y opiniones de los traductores acerca de esta práctica.

Marco teórico

El uso de una LP en TAV —normalmente el inglés, pero también otras como el francés (Chaume, 2018, pp. 15-16)— ha sido una práctica poco comentada desde la academia, salvo excepciones. Díaz-Cintas y Remael (2007, 2021), por ejemplo, señalan aspectos generales del uso del ILP y ofrecen apuntes sobre esta práctica en el subtitulado; Vermeulen (2011) y Martínez-Tejerina (2014), por su lado, describen el proceso y las dificultades de traducir desde el ILP, tanto para una película como en festivales de cine, respectivamente; Chaume (2018, pp. 14-18) menciona el uso de LP en España para traducir contenido audiovisual hacia lenguas cooficiales del Estado, y Casas-Tost y Bustins (2021) analizan el uso de LP en los festivales de cine asiático en Cataluña y la repercusión en la calidad de las traducciones.

Como decíamos, el ILP ha estado vinculado a la localización de videojuegos y al subtitulado para festivales. Sin embargo, esta situación parece estar evolucionando debido a los cambios que está viviendo el mercado audiovisual internacional (Díaz-Cintas y Remael, 2021, p. 54). En 2018, la Unión Europea publicó la Directiva UE 2018/1808, que decretaba que las plataformas de VoD debían ofrecer hasta el 30 % de producciones europeas en sus catálogos. Paralelamente, el contenido asiático también ha proliferado en dichas plataformas. En este sentido, el máximo

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exponente ha sido Netflix, que ha multiplicado su inversión en Asia, con el fin de aumentar su número de suscriptores en dicho continente (Toh, 2021, s. p.). Este auge de la producción no anglófona coincidió con la pandemia de la COVID-19, lo que, según Butler (2021, s. p.), ha incrementado su consumo por parte del público.

Así pues, en los últimos años, los suscriptores a estas plataformas han estado expuestos a productos con LO que hasta hace poco tenían una relevancia reducida en el panorama audiovisual internacional. También en esto ha destacado Netflix, con obras en lengua no inglesa como la española *La casa de papel* (Pina, 2017), la francesa *Lupin* (Kay y Uzan, 2021) o la surcoreana *El juego del calamar* (Dong-hyuk, 2021). Además, conviene no olvidar la expansión, en la última década, de las producciones de Turquía, segundo máximo exportador audiovisual mundial detrás de Estados Unidos (Fernández, 2021).

En este nuevo paradigma, la posibilidad de que plataformas, estudios de doblaje y proveedores de servicios lingüísticos refuercen su apuesta por el ILP es real (Díaz-Cintas y Remael, 2021, p. 54); es más, esta podría no verse limitada a lenguas *exóticas* —principal razón histórica aducida por autores como Chaume (2018, p. 16)—. Para comprobar en qué medida esta práctica se está adoptando ya, desarrollamos este estudio, cuya metodología describimos a continuación.

Método

Este estudio aborda una cuestión poco explorada, por lo que hemos adoptado un alcance eminentemente exploratorio, aunque en la fase final de análisis e interpretación de los resultados podríamos hablar de un alcance descriptivo (Hernández Sampieri *et al.,* 2010, pp. 78, 151-152). Asimismo, se trata de una investigación no experimental, pues no existe manipulación de variables, y transaccional, cuyos datos se obtuvieron en un momento único (principios de 2022). Se trata, además, de un estudio mixto de triangulación concurrente,

donde se ha llevado a cabo una triangulación múltiple (Denzin, 1990): metodológica, pues hemos combinado la recolección y el análisis de datos mediante los métodos cualitativo y cuantitativo, y de datos, ya que hemos recurrido a distintas fuentes, como cuestionarios y entrevistas personales semiestructuradas.

Población y muestra

Para la selección de la población se siguieron los mismos criterios en las fases cuantitativa y cualitativa: 1) haber traducido profesionalmente para las modalidades de doblaje, subtitulación o voces superpuestas mediante el ILP y 2) haber tenido como lengua meta (LM) una de las lenguas oficiales del territorio español: castellano, catalán, gallego o euskera.

Con estos criterios, no es posible determinar el número total de personas que conformaría la población, pues no existe un censo oficial que recoja cuántos traductores han traducido desde el ILP en España. Además, pese a que algunas asociaciones, como la Asociación de Traducción y Adaptación Audiovisual de España (ATRAE), cuentan con un listado de los socios que ofrecen servicios desde el inglés, no es posible saber cuántos han recibido encargos con ILP. En consecuencia, para la fase cuantitativa, se optó por no acotar una muestra, ya que no podemos generalizar o extrapolar de un modo probabilístico los resultados al grueso de la población. Así, buscamos conseguir el máximo número posible de respuestas.

En cuanto a la muestra cualitativa, dado que el tamaño no resulta relevante desde una perspectiva probabilística, sino que responde al objetivo de entender el fenómeno en mayor profundidad al documentar experiencias u opiniones, se seleccionó una muestra no probabilística, formada por ocho personas, mediante un criterio de muestras por conveniencia (Hernández Sampieri *et al.,* 2010, pp. 176, 394, 398-401). Consideramos este número aceptable para nuestros objetivos, tras comprobar que, llegados a cierto punto, las

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respuestas de los entrevistados apenas variaban, de modo que creímos tener suficientes datos para obtener un primer acercamiento al fenómeno.

Instrumentos de recogida de datos

Para la recolección de los datos, usamos dos fuentes: una entrevista y un cuestionario en línea.

La entrevista

Se recogieron datos cualitativos mediante ocho entrevistas personales semiestructuradas a traductores con experiencia en encargos con ILP. Todos fueron informados de los objetivos de la entrevista. Por motivos de confidencialidad, hemos mantenido su anonimato.

La entrevista se organizó en tres bloques. El primero incluía preguntas sobre el perfil socioprofesional (años de experiencia como traductores audiovisuales, combinaciones lingüísticas en las que ofrecen sus servicios, formación académica y formación específica en TAV y en el ILP). En el segundo, se preguntaba por la frecuencia y el flujo de encargos, LO de las obras, modalidades de TAV traducidas más frecuentemente con el ILP, tipos de clientes, calidad de los materiales, procesos de control de calidad y diferencias en el proceso traductor y en las condiciones de trabajo entre los encargos con el ILP y con inglés como LO. El tercer bloque incluía preguntas relacionadas con las experiencias personales y opiniones acerca del ILP: se preguntaba por las LO en las que tiene mayor sentido utilizar el ILP, los aspectos positivos y negativos de esta práctica, las dificultades concretas, las impresiones respecto a la calidad de sus traducciones y las consecuencias de desconocer la lengua y la cultura original en el proceso y resultado de la traducción.

El cuestionario

Los datos cuantitativos se obtuvieron mediante un cuestionario anónimo en línea, diseñado con Google Forms y compuesto de tres bloques. En el primero, se incluían preguntas acerca del perfil de los encuestados: años de experiencia como traductores audiovisuales, lenguas de trabajo, formación académica y en TAV, situación laboral y LM a las que han traducido desde el ILP. El segundo bloque preguntaba sobre las características de estos encargos: frecuencia con la que se reciben, LO de los productos, volumen de trabajo anual que suponen, canales de distribución, modalidades de TAV y productos audiovisuales más frecuentes, tipo de clientes, características y calidad de los materiales, procesos de control de calidad e implicaciones éticas al aceptar estos encargos. Por último, el bloque tres estaba formado por dos preguntas, en las que los encuestados destacaban los aspectos positivos y negativos de esta práctica. Además, podían añadir comentarios acerca del estudio si lo deseaban.

El cuestionario cumplió con dos fases de medición de su confiabilidad y validez. Inicialmente, fue evaluado por una experta en TAV, con experiencia en la dirección de tesis doctorales centradas en estudios mixtos similares al nuestro. Tras implementar sus propuestas de mejora, se realizó un estudio piloto con cuatro traductores para evaluar la comprensibilidad. La versión final del cuestionario se distribuyó entre los afiliados de asociaciones profesionales de traducción e interpretación como ATRAE, la Asociación Gallega Profesional de Traductores e Intérpretes (AGPETI), la Asociación Profesional de Traductores e Intérpretes de Cataluña (APTIC) y la Asociación de Traductores, Correctores e Intérpretes de Lengua Vasca (EIZIE). Obtuvimos 81 respuestas.

Resultados

Presentamos aquí los resultados obtenidos mediante la confrontación de los instrumentos cuantitativo y cualitativo, con el objetivo de hallar convergencias y divergencias entre ambos. Estos revelan aspectos importantes en cuanto al perfil de los participantes, los encargos que se les hacen y el uso de ILP.

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Perfil de los participantes

Esta sección indaga por la formación específica, la experiencia laboral y el tipo de trabajo que desempeñan los encuestados.

Años de experiencia y lenguas de trabajo

El 37 % de los encuestados tiene entre uno y cinco años de experiencia como traductores audiovisuales; el 33,3 %, de 6 a 10 años; el 13,6 %, más de 15 años; el 9,9 %, de 11 a 15, y, por último, el 6,2 % tenía menos de un año de experiencia. Los entrevistados tienen desde 2 años y medio hasta 18 años de experiencia.

Sobre las LO de trabajo, además del inglés, casi la mitad de los encuestados (48,1 %) trabaja con el francés. A este idioma le siguen el alemán (25,9 %), el italiano (11,1 %) y el portugués (9,9 %). Asimismo, observamos lenguas oficiales de España entre las respuestas: catalán (11,1 %), español (2,5 %), gallego (1,2 %), euskera (1,2 %), así como otras relativamente menos frecuentes entre los traductores en España, como el japonés (3,7 %), el ruso (2,5 %), el árabe o el turco (1,2 % cada una). Es interesante destacar que el 14,8 % trabaja únicamente con el inglés como LO. En cuanto a los entrevistados, además del inglés, entre sus LO de trabajo figuran mayoritariamente el francés, el alemán, el portugués y el catalán.

Formación académica

La mayoría tiene formación universitaria en Traducción e Interpretación (80,2 %), seguida por aquellos con un perfil filológico (23,5 %). Las cifras evidencian también que algunos tienen ambos grados (Traducción e Interpretación y Filología o Lenguas Modernas) (8,6 %) o una carrera en Filología o Lenguas Modernas, y un posgrado en TAV (3,7 %).

Además, los resultados revelan otros perfiles formativos menos frecuentes, casi todos relacionados con estudios universitarios dentro de la rama de las humanidades. Sin embargo, también observamos un porcentaje minoritario de traductores con formación no universitaria.

Por su parte, todos los entrevistados tenían la carrera en Traducción e Interpretación, salvo un graduado en Filología Inglesa.

Formación en traducción audiovisual y en inglés como lengua pivote

Un total de 73 encuestados (90,1 %) tiene formación en TAV. En un 100 % de los casos, el inglés fue la LO en la que se centró dicha formación, seguida del francés (17,8 %), el alemán (3,7 %), el italiano (4,1 %), y el español y el gallego (1,4 %).

En cuanto al tipo de formación, gran parte de los encuestados cuentan con formación en TAV adquirida durante los estudios de posgrado (83,6 %), mientras que la formación autodidacta es la segunda opción más frecuente (69,9 %), por delante de asignaturas cursadas durante el grado o la licenciatura (47,9 %) y de la formación en empresas (41,1 %). Respecto a los entrevistados, la mayoría recibió formación en TAV en la universidad, ya fuera en el grado, en el máster o en ambos, y otros afirman que su formación proviene de cursos o de su experiencia profesional. Sobre las modalidades de TAV más estudiadas, casi la totalidad de los encuestados se formó en subtitulación (97,3 %) y doblaje (93,2 %). Las modalidades de accesibilidad, voces superpuestas y traducción de videojuegos han sido estudiadas también por la mitad de los encuestados (67,1, 65,8 y 50 %, respectivamente). Las modalidades con menor formación son la traducción de páginas web o programas informáticos (2,7 %), de cómics y el rehablado (1,4 % cada una). Por otro lado, el 81,9 % no dispone de formación sobre cómo trabajar con el ILP, frente a un 18,1 % que sí. De las 13 personas que respondieron afirmativamente, el 69,2 % considera dicha formación suficiente para el desempeño de este tipo de encargos, frente al 30,8 %, a quienes les resulta insuficiente.

También se les preguntó si creían que debería existir una mayor oferta formativa (universitaria o no) en el uso del ILP, a lo que el 76,9 % responde que sí; el 7,7 %, que no, y el 15,4 %, no sabe/no contesta (NS/NC). Por su parte, ninguno de los

entrevistados tenía formación en ILP; es más, solo uno de ellos afirma que, durante la carrera, esta práctica se mencionó de forma superficial.

A la vista de estos datos, es evidente que la mayoría de los traductores encargados de estos proyectos no cuenta con formación específica para resolver posibles problemas derivados del uso de LP y del desconocimiento de la lengua y cultura originales del producto.

Situación laboral y lenguas metas traducidas desde el inglés como lengua pivote

Los resultados evidencian que el 86,4 % es trabajador autónomo, mientras que el 7,4 % trabaja únicamente en plantilla. En cuanto a los demás, el 2,5 % es autónomo, además de laborar en una empresa; otro 2,5 % no se dedica a la traducción actualmente y el 1,2 % es autónomo y docente universitario.

Sobre las LM a las que traducen más frecuentemente con el ILP, los datos muestran que el 98,8 % lo hace al español; el 16 %, al catalán; el 3,7 %, al gallego; el 2,5 %, al euskera, y el 1,2 %, al italiano. En cuanto a los entrevistados, todos traducen únicamente al español.

Características de los encargos

Tiempo transcurrido desde el último encargo con el inglés como lengua pivote e incremento del uso de este en la traducción audiovisual

Los datos muestran que esta es una práctica frecuente actualmente, pues el 98,8 % ha traducido desde el ILP en los últimos 5 años, y solo el 1,2 %, hace más de 6 años. Los entrevistados apuntan a una tendencia similar, pues todos han tenido encargos con ILP en los últimos años. Por otro lado, en la Figura 1 se muestran los datos sobre un posible aumento de los encargos con el ILP en los últimos años.

Como se ve, la mayor parte de los encuestados constata un incremento de encargos de esta naturaleza. Según un entrevistado, las razones tras este

Figura 1 Aumento del número de encargos. ILP: inglés como lengua pivote; TAV: traducción audiovisual.

¿Has constatado, a partir de tu propia experiencia o la de tus compañeros de profesión, un aumento en el número de encargos de traducciones audiovisuales con inglés como lengua pivote durante los últimos 5 años?
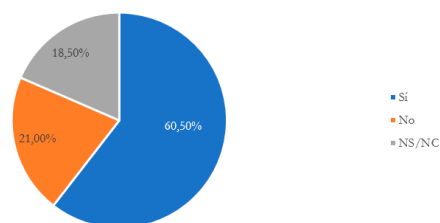
aumento podrían deberse al auge de las plataformas de VoD y de las producciones no anglófonas —especialmente turcas— de los últimos años, como señalábamos. Otro comenta:

> Sí [ha habido un aumento]. He tenido en tres campos diferenciados. Por ejemplo, en DVD para contenidos adicionales. Luego, en festivales también, porque a lo mejor la copia de subtítulos que tenían estaba en inglés, aunque la original estaba en otro idioma [...]. Por comodidad, si puedes trabajar con los subtítulos en inglés, ya tienes la plantilla hecha. Y, luego, para nuevas plataformas sí he tenido también. Eso ha sido lo más reciente, así que para mí sí que ha sido más reciente como fenómeno. En toda la carrera profesional no me había pasado antes que tuviera tanto. Es un porcentaje muy pequeño en mi caso, pero es bastante reciente. (Entrevistado 1)

Un tercero, con 11 años de experiencia, constata un incremento, pero explica que el ILP también se empleaba antes de la expansión del VoD, especialmente en festivales de cine, como relatábamos:

> Desde que empecé mi carrera profesional, la traducción con el ILP ha sido una constante. He traducido durante años contenido para festivales asiáticos y ese ha sido siempre el proceso. Ahora, con las plataformas, quizá estén aumentando aún más los casos, dado que en España empezamos a consumir cada vez más producciones no angloparlantes. (Entrevistado 2)

Lenguas origen de los productos

Los encuestados respondieron la información que se presenta en la Tabla 1.

Tabla 1 Lenguas origen traducidas desde el inglés como lengua pivote por los encuestados

¿De qué lo has traducido con el ILP? (Puedes marcar más de una opción)	
Opciones de respuesta	**Porcentaje de respuestas (%)**
Japonés	46,9
Turco	39,5
Coreano	30,9
Alemán	29,6
Francés	27,2
Chino	27,2
Sueco	24,7
Ruso	22,2
Neerlandés	21
Italiano	19,8
Polaco	17,3
Árabe	17,3
Danés	17,3
Portugués	16
Húngaro	8,6
Checo	8,6
Noruego	7,4
Pakistaní	6,2
Rumano	4,9
Hindi	3,7
Serbio	2,5
Islandés	2,5
Hebreo	2,5
Búlgaro	2,5
Finés	2,5
Griego	2,5
Tailandés	2,5
Filipino	1,2
Indonesio	1,2
Farsi	1,2
Malayo	1,2
Luxemburgués	1,2
Esloveno	1,2
Georgiano	1,2
Ladino	1,2

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Parece existir una gran variedad de lenguas *exóticas* —en el sentido de poco comunes en nuestro país y cuyos traductores tampoco parecen frecuentes en España (Ávila Cabrera, 2013; Chaume, 2018)— traducidas desde el ILP. Entre otros, el japonés (46,9 %) y el turco (39,5 %) son las dos lenguas más traducidas mediante el ILP, algo que, según un entrevistado, se explica por el elevado número de animes y de telenovelas turcas importadas a nuestro país. No obstante, en cuarto y quinto lugar encontramos el alemán (30,9 %) y el francés (27,2 %), dos lenguas comunes en el mercado de la traducción en España (véase Rico Pérez y García Aragón, 2016).

Los entrevistados, por su lado, han traducido tanto lenguas comunes o cercanas al español —no solo del alemán o del francés, sino también del italiano y del portugués— como *exóticas* —afrikáans, árabe, bengalí, checo, chino, coreano, danés, filipino, hindi, húngaro, indonesio, islandés, japonés, malayo, neerlandés, noruego, polaco, rumano, ruso, sueco, tailandés y turco—. En cualquier caso, debemos señalar que la mayoría afirma desconocer estas lenguas y culturas, lo que repercute en la calidad de sus traducciones.

Trabajo que representan los encargos con el inglés como lengua pivote

En cuanto al porcentaje anual de trabajo, los encargos con el ILP suponen menos del 5 % del volumen de trabajo total para algo menos de la mitad de los encuestados (40,7 %). Sin embargo, un encuestado afirma que esto puede variar según el año. Asimismo, estos encargos suponen del 5 al 10 %, para un 16 %, y del 51 al 70 %, para un 11,1 %. También vemos casos aislados en los que estos encargos representan entre el 80 y el 90 % del trabajo (1,2 % cada uno).

En cuanto a los entrevistados, si bien no dan porcentajes, sí afirman que se trata, en mayor o menor medida, de una constante en su vida laboral. Uno de ellos explica que parece existir una motivación económica

tras esto: "las empresas también están intentando abaratar más costes, así que les viene mejor".

Producto audiovisual traducido y canales de distribución

Los productos audiovisuales más traducidos con el ILP son largometrajes (70,4 %), series de ficción (61,7 %) y documentales (37 %). En cambio, otros, como programas de telerrealidad (8,6 %), vídeos corporativos (7,4 %) o publicidad audiovisual (3,7 %), parecen poco frecuentes.

Mención aparte merece la traducción de videojuegos. Dado que el uso del ILP en esta modalidad es común, en este artículo no pretendíamos recoger datos sobre ello, y así se indicó. No obstante, un encuestado no solo confirmó el uso de esta práctica en videojuegos, sino que la defendió como recurso para solventar problemas culturales:

> Al menos en videojuegos, el uso del ILP es muy habitual y no considero que la traducción se vea perjudicada por este proceso. Es más, se suele hacer, precisamente, para que muchos aspectos culturales ya se hayan adaptado al traducir del japonés al inglés. Así, hay mayor coherencia en el resto de idiomas europeos, al menos en cuanto a nombres de personajes y demás. (Encuestado 1).

En cambio, en lo referente a películas y series, la mayoría de los participantes sostiene que traducir con el ILP puede suponer un problema añadido para trasladar los referentes culturales si se desconoce la cultura original o si la traducción en inglés no los reproduce apropiadamente.

Respecto al canal de distribución al que están destinados los productos traducidos con el ILP, el VoD (86,4 %) es el principal, algo que, atendiendo a lo señalado por los entrevistados, no resulta sorprendente, pues muchos indican que el ILP se ha asentado como práctica habitual en la TAV por la proliferación de estas plataformas. A estas le siguen la televisión (53,1 %), los festivales (33,3 %) y las salas de cine (21 %), y, en menor medida, el formato doméstico (9,9 %) o los portales de visualización de vídeos (2,5 %), entre otros.

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Modalidades de traducción audiovisual

En la Figura 2 se presentan las respuestas obtenidas a la pregunta, ¿qué modalidades has traducido con inglés como lengua pivote?

Figura 2 Modalidades de TAV traducidas con el ILP por los encuestados.
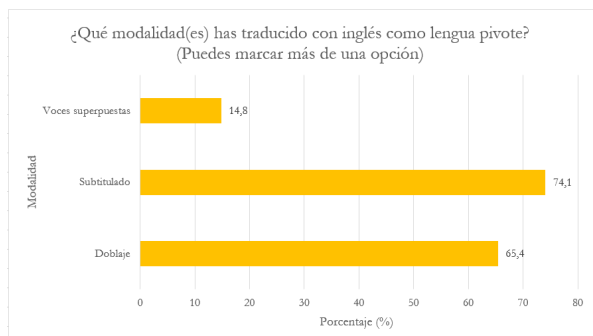
Los datos cuantitativos concuerdan con los recogidos en las entrevistas, ya que solo un entrevistado trabaja con el ILP para doblaje, mientras que los demás lo hacen exclusivamente para subtitulado.

Clientes

En cuanto a los principales clientes que solicitan encargos desde el ILP, algo más de la mitad son estudios de doblaje (53,1 %), seguidos por agencias de traducción (48,1 %). Asimismo, encontramos otros menos frecuentes, como plataformas de VoD (27,2 %) o distribuidoras y festivales de cine (18,5 % cada una). De forma anecdótica, hay también museos (2,5 %) y canales de televisión (1,2 %). Sobre la procedencia, el 82,7 % son españoles, mientras que el 44,4 % son de otros países.

Por su lado, la mayoría de los entrevistados recibe este tipo de encargos exclusivamente de agencias de traducción, excepto dos, que lo hacen de estudios de doblaje.

Tarifas

Nos parecía relevante saber si las tarifas varían respecto a los encargos donde no hay una LP, pues la falta de conocimiento de la lengua y la cultura original podría implicar una mayor inversión de tiempo para la documentación o, incluso, para subsanar posibles errores en el material en ILP. Los resultados se muestran en la Figura 3.

Figura 3 Relación de tarifas entre el ILP y la traducción de una obra originalmente en inglés
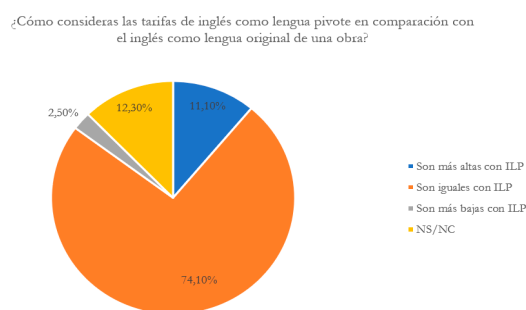
Un 74,10 % de los encuestados señala que las tarifas de encargos con el ILP son iguales a los que tienen el inglés como LO, aunque es llamativo que hasta el 11,1 % declare que son más bajas. Los entrevistados coinciden en que las tarifas suelen ser las mismas. Uno ofrece la siguiente explicación:

> [los clientes] lo consideran un encargo más. No se plantean que tenga una dificultad adicional porque probablemente entienden que, como no entiendes la lengua origen, te vas a limitar a trabajar con el texto y lo que buenamente puedas sacar de la imagen. (Entrevistado 1)

Materiales

La mayoría de encuestados recibe el vídeo en versión original (95 %), la plantilla de subtítulos en inglés (73,8 %) y el guion traducido al inglés (60 %), aunque en la mitad de los casos (50 %) se envía también el guion en versión original. Otros materiales poco frecuentes son el vídeo doblado al inglés (3,8 %), la plantilla de subtítulos en la LO (1,3 %) o una plantilla anotada por nativos de la LO en la que se indiquen matices, juegos de palabras, tratamientos, etc. (1,3 %).

Los entrevistados confirman estas respuestas: la mayoría recibe el vídeo original con una plantilla de subtítulos o un guion traducido al inglés. Con todo, tres han llegado a recibir también el guion original. Algunos explican que suele ser de escasa utilidad cuando no se comprende la lengua, aunque otros aclaran que, cuando sí se entiende, suele ser una ayuda para traducir, hasta el punto en el que lo llegan a solicitar expresamente:

> Yo recibía el vídeo original en francés y el pautado con los subtítulos hechos en inglés. Lo que pasa es que pedía que me dieran también los subtítulos originales en francés. Aunque podía escuchar el francés, porque tenía acceso al audio original, siempre es mejor tenerlos. El francés es un idioma muy dado a la homofonía, con lo cual siempre es mejor tener también un respaldo escrito para entenderlo mejor. En algunos casos, uno o dos, me lo daban sin yo pedirlo. En otros, tuve que pedir yo los guiones en francés. (Entrevistado 3)

Cuando se pedía a los encuestados valorar la calidad del material en una escala de cuatro puntos (1, malo y 4, bueno), la mayoría parece de acuerdo en que esta suele ser media (véase Figura 4).

Figura 4 Valoración sobre la calidad de los materiales recibidos por los encuestados
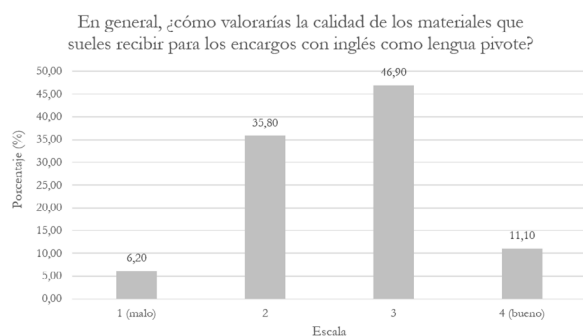
Además, preguntamos si suelen encontrar errores o incoherencias entre la imagen, el guion en inglés y, en caso de conocer la LO, el guion original. Las respuestas se presentan en la Figura 5.

Los materiales presentan errores e incoherencias hasta en el 90,1 % de los casos, con mayor o menor frecuencia; es decir, únicamente el 6,2 % afirma no haber encontrado estos problemas. Sobre esto,

Figura 5 Frecuencia de errores o incoherencias en los materiales
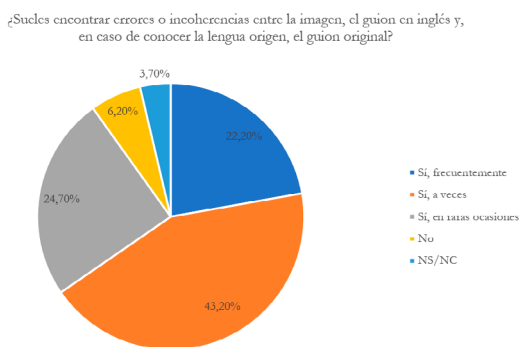
los entrevistados dan respuestas muy diversas. Uno comenta las diferencias de calidad entre las traducciones en ILP que recibe:

> Dependes al 100 % de la calidad del texto. Tienes que hacer una traducción desde un inglés que a veces está muy bien y piensas "parece que esté escrito en original en inglés", pero a veces es terrible. Pocas, eso sí. Yo creo que solo me ha pasado dos veces de haber dicho: "¡Menuda traducción pivote es esto!". (Entrevistado 4)

Otro afirma: "En mi caso, las traducciones en inglés que he utilizado para trabajar han sido, en muchas ocasiones, bastante pobres, y eso ha hecho que haya tenido que deducir en muchas ocasiones lo que está ocurriendo o inventármelo" (Entrevistado 5). Un tercero comenta al respecto:

> No diría "mal", pero hay cosas que, a lo mejor, no he entendido bien o, viendo la imagen, no *me pega* la respuesta en un diálogo o no acabo de ver la coherencia textual con lo que es la imagen y el sonido. Eso sí me ha pasado. Tengo el contexto, pero el original no me aclara nada o es demasiado ambiguo. O, a lo mejor, es un juego de palabras que, si no me funciona en español, tener el referente me habría ayudado porque no sé por dónde va. Entonces no me puedo apoyar en eso tampoco. Más que nada, si tiene estas carencias, dices: "bueno, pues lo hago literal" o, si veo que no encaja, intento poner algo que pueda encajar ahí. Eso es una decisión que vas tomando un poco *sobre la marcha,* dependiendo de la situación de la escena que está pasando, pero es un poco a tu criterio. (Entrevistado 1)

Con todo, otro asegura que las traducciones pivote no suelen suponer un problema: "La verdad es que, en ese aspecto, bastante bien. Era un inglés bastante

comprensible, bastante simple. No había mucho problema de entender" (Entrevistado 7).

Control de calidad

Sobre posibles procesos de control de calidad (revisión, corrección, etc.), los resultados se muestran en la Figura 6.

Figura 6 Respuestas sobre si las traducciones pasan por un proceso de control de calidad
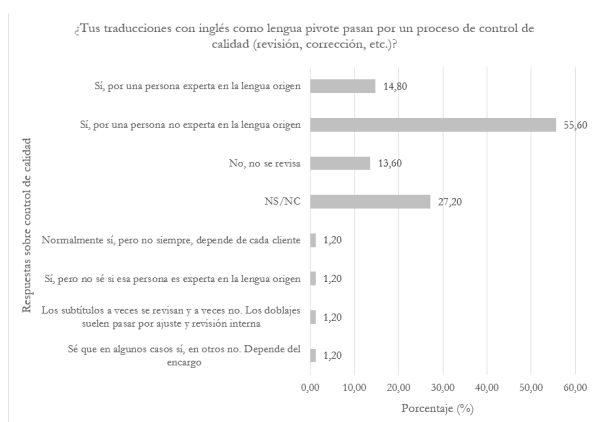
La revisión de los textos traducidos mediante el ILP suele hacerse por personas no expertas en la LO en un 55,6 % de los casos. Vemos también que el 27,2 % de los encuestados desconoce esta información, y solo en el 14,8 % la revisión la hacen personas que sí conocen la LO del producto. Asimismo, el 13,6 % afirma que no hay proceso de revisión. Además, un 4,9 % indica que la presencia de un revisor depende del cliente y del encargo, o tiene constancia de que existe un proceso de revisión, pero desconoce si lo realiza una persona experta en la LO.

Los entrevistados confirman estos datos heterogéneos: mientras que unos son conscientes de que sus traducciones pasan por un control de calidad (e, incluso, reciben correcciones), otros ni siquiera saben si existe este proceso. Además, algunos desconocen si el revisor es experto en la LO del producto y otros declaran directamente que no lo es. Un entrevistado afirma esto cuando le preguntamos sobre si quien revisa es experto en la LO de la obra:

No tengo constancia. Yo diría que no, pero no lo sé con seguridad... A lo mejor sí. Pero sí revisan. A mí me han devuelto las correcciones de la revisión, pero no sé quién era, así que no tengo ni idea. Revisarse, se ha revisado, pero no puedo decirte si conocía el idioma, si le habían contratado adrede [...]. (Entrevistado 1)

Otro añade:

No puedo decirlo con certeza, pero lo dudo mucho. En la mayoría de las ocasiones, [las traducciones] pasarán, como mucho, por un revisor de la lengua materna, en este caso inglés-español. En algunas, ni eso. Lo ideal sería que el revisor fuera hablante de la lengua origen y la lengua meta, pero eso es *un sueño:* la disponibilidad de lingüistas con determinadas combinaciones tiende a ser escasa, y los plazos y presupuestos dudo que lo permitan. (Entrevistado 2)

Un tercero afirma rotundamente: "No. La traducción la revisaba el dueño de la agencia, pero no un nativo" (Entrevistado 7). En cambio, también encontramos respuestas que caminan en la línea contraria: "En teoría, sí. No lo aseguro porque luego a mí no me dan esa revisión. Pero se supone que sí" (Entrevistado 4). Otro asevera: "Sí. En la mayoría de los encargos que he traducido con ILP, ha habido una revisión por un nativo con experiencia en traducción, ya sea audiovisual o no" (Entrevistado 5). Este añade que, gracias a la revisión, la traducción al español habría mejorado respecto al ILP:

Yo he tenido la suerte de haber contado con revisiones muy pulidas en las que he podido conocer mejor las implicaciones de determinado término o expresión en estos idiomas poco comunes y, gracias a ello, elegir, junto a la persona que me revisa, una traducción mucho más precisa. Y sí, en ocasiones, ese término estaba traducido de forma más general en el guion en inglés. (Entrevistado 5)

Rechazo de encargos

A la pregunta de si los encuestados han rechazado un encargo con el ILP y cuáles son las posibles razones, el 68,8 % responde que no; el 17,5 %, que sí, debido a la calidad de los materiales; el 11,3 % también ha rechazado encargos cuando existen traductores expertos de la LO, y el 8,8 %, si

desconoce de la LO de la obra. Seis personas añadieron estas aclaraciones:

> Siempre pregunto y solo ofrezco mi disponibilidad si ya han agotado o descartado por completo la opción del traductor experto [1,3 %]. (Encuestado 2)
>
> Prefiero traducir contenidos de mis dos lenguas origen si los hay [(1,3 %)]. (Encuestado 3)
>
> No, porque no me llegan muchos encargos así [1,3 %]. (Encuestado 4)
>
> Siempre remarco que sería mejor alguien que tuviera como mínimo un conocimiento básico de esa lengua, pero no siempre hay (al menos no en el pool de esa empresa) [1,3 %]. (Encuestado 5)
>
> No. En películas para cine había recomendado alguna vez que buscaran un traductor nativo, pero el estudio de doblaje no lo consideró oportuno, ya que preferían contar con un traductor audiovisual especializado al precio de traducción audiovisual habitual [1,3 %]. (Encuestado 6)
>
> No he llegado a rechazarlas, pero dejo claro cuando no domino o entiendo la lengua origen, y siempre mejor si al menos me revisa alguien que sí lo haga [(1,3 %)]. (Encuestado 7)

También los entrevistados son conscientes de las implicaciones éticas de esta práctica, pero explican que, pese a saber que no es *lo ideal,* el uso del ILP también conlleva ciertas ventajas. Por ejemplo, que llegue a España un mayor número de obras audiovisuales con lenguas poco comunes y que se traduzcan por un experto en TAV:

> [...] no hay gente que traduzca de esa lengua origen al castellano en el mercado audiovisual. Yo recomendé dos traductores de islandés y el cliente dijo "prefiero que se traduzca al inglés y que lo haga alguien que sabe traducir audiovisual a que lo haga alguien que hace traducción jurídica". Porque la traducción audiovisual tiene sus peculiaridades: tienes que saber dialogar para que las frases queden naturales... Entonces, igual, si vienes de jurídica no se te da tan bien... o igual sí. [...] Entonces, si es una lengua como el urdu, ¿quién habla urdu y hace audiovisual? Pues igual nadie. (Entrevistado 4)

Este mismo entrevistado explica que, pese a las implicaciones negativas que pueda tener el uso del ILP, no suele rechazar estos encargos, ya que "si no lo haces tú, lo va a hacer otro" o, cuando se

trata de una LO poco común, porque "quien lo va a coger tampoco va a saber". Además, añade que si se informa al cliente de que el traductor desconoce la LO, "ya es cosa del cliente". No obstante, sí ha rechazado traducir desde el ILP cuando la LO es el italiano, el francés o el alemán, pues alega que es sencillo encontrar traductores expertos en estos idiomas.

Grado de confianza

Los encuestados valoraron su grado de confianza cuando presentan una traducción con el ILP (1, bajo y 4, alto). Los resultados se muestran en la Figura 7.

Figura 7 Valoración del grado de confianza de los encuestados sobre sus traducciones con el ILP
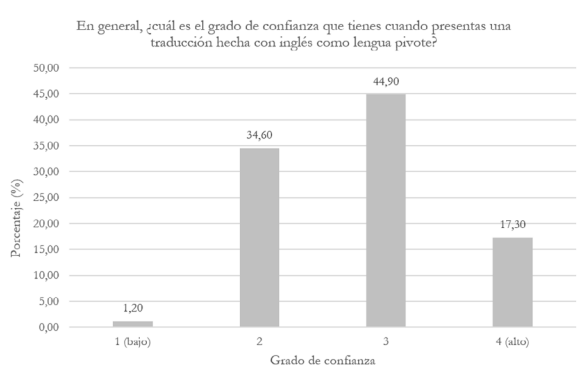
La mayoría parece mostrar un grado de confianza medio o medio-alto con sus traducciones a partir del ILP. Estas respuestas pueden entenderse gracias a los entrevistados, quienes explican que una de las principales dificultades de trabajar con el ILP es la inseguridad que genera depender de una traducción cuya calidad se desconoce, lo que afectará, a su vez, a la calidad final de su propia traducción: "Si una traducción es una interpretación del texto, la traducción de la traducción es la interpretación de la interpretación. [...] Te tienes que fiar de que el traductor de la lengua puente lo haya hecho bien" (Entrevistado 6). Otro explica lo siguiente sobre cómo las decisiones del traductor al ILP también afectan a las suyas, aunque ignore si las primeras son acertadas o no:

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Las dificultades se basan en el aspecto cultural, principalmente, o en las expresiones más idiomáticas. Si el traductor de inglés decide adaptar mucho una expresión para darle sentido en su idioma o cultura (sin dejar una explicación al hacerlo) es probable que, al pasar esto por una segunda traducción, se pierda la intención original o la literalidad a la hora de entender el concepto base. (Entrevistado 2)

Un tercer ejemplo interesante lo muestra un entrevistado que explica que, tras detectar un error en una plantilla, tuvo que inventar una solución, algo que afectó negativamente su nivel de confianza durante el proceso de traducción:

Hay una película turca, una comedia de hace muchos años, que tuve que traducir para subtítulos. Me llegó la plantilla en inglés como lengua pivote y, de repente, leyendo una frase totalmente neutra en inglés en la que no se apreciaba ningún chiste ni juego de palabras, veías que se estaban muriendo de la risa en el vídeo. Entonces dices: "Aquí se ha perdido algo por el camino, porque en el original hay un chiste o una broma y en inglés no aparece nada". En ese caso, ya tienes que, usando un poco el contexto para que no quede tan raro, poner algo que *haga gracia* también en español mientras ves que se están riendo en pantalla. (Entrevistado 6)

Experiencias y opiniones sobre el uso del inglés como lengua pivote

En esta sección, los participantes valoraron su experiencia con el ILP.

Aspectos positivos

El principal aspecto positivo que destacan los encuestados sobre el ILP es que permite el acceso a contenido audiovisual que, de otra forma, no estaría disponible en nuestro país (72,5 %). También algo más de la mitad acepta que esta práctica se convierte en una mayor oferta de trabajo para ellos (55 %). Con todo, resulta llamativo que hasta 11 traductores (13,8 %) no le vean aspecto positivo alguno.

Cuatro encuestados añadieron lo siguiente sobre los aspectos positivos del uso del ILP:

Hoy en día, la formación principal en traducción audiovisual se hace con la combinación inglés-español. Por

desgracia, y hasta que esto cambie, casi todos los profesionales del país tienen esta combinación principal, y, por lo tanto, es más probable que hagan un trabajo profesional (sin desmerecer a los profesionales de traducción audiovisual que tienen otras combinaciones menos frecuentes, pero que al haber tenido una buena formación, hacen un buen trabajo) [1,3 %].

En ficción audiovisual, es esencial que el traductor tenga mucha experiencia escribiendo diálogos naturales para ficción en lengua materna, sin perderse en su fascinación por la lengua origen. Ser experto en una lengua poco común, pero no dominar la dramaturgia en la lengua materna vuelve la traducción inútil para el cliente foral, así que prefieren traductores con amplia experiencia audiovisual en cada país meta y usar un único traductor de la lengua origen para todo el planeta que explique los matices en el guion en inglés. Un traductor de un idioma poco común que demuestre su calidad dramatúrgica en sus traducciones se hartará de trabajar [1,3 %].

En el caso del subtitulado, mayor coherencia del producto en las distintas lenguas maternas al usar todas la misma plantilla de subtítulos con la traducción en inglés [1,3 %].

Mayor calidad, incluso. A menudo es imposible encontrar traductores de combinaciones poco comunes que estén especializados en audiovisual [1,3 %].

Por su parte, los entrevistados coinciden en señalar exactamente las mismas ventajas: acceso a un mayor catálogo cultural que, de otro modo, probablemente no llegaría a España, y una mayor oferta de trabajo para los profesionales de la TAV con combinación inglés-español. Dos mencionan también que el ILP es como "una segunda opinión", en el sentido de que, si se conoce la LO de la obra, se cuenta con *dos versiones* del texto origen.

Aspectos negativos

En contra, al preguntar por los aspectos negativos, la mayoría señala la reproducción de posibles errores del texto puente en el meta (87,7 %). Sobre esto, un entrevistado dice: "cuando el único apoyo es la traducción al inglés, puede que haya cometido fallos, o no solamente fallos, sino palabras polisémicas u homofonías [...] que haya *metido la pata* y te hace a ti cometer un error". Igualmente,

otro indica: "si la traducción al inglés no es buena, fiel o está demasiado adaptada a la cultura meta, el segundo traductor nunca llegará a saber qué dice realmente el original y acabará plasmando *a saber qué* en su traducción".

A esta desventaja le sigue la imposibilidad de detectar cambios o errores en el guion en caso de desconocimiento de la LO (79 %) y la pérdida de información lingüística y cultural (78,8 % cada una). También en esto coinciden los entrevistados. Uno afirma:

> Se pierden cosas en la traducción al inglés, [...] te faltan también muchas veces conocimientos culturales de la cultura de la lengua origen [...]. Hay bastantes desventajas y, aun así, se acaba haciendo y se acaba *sacando*. Lo ideal sería que lo hiciese alguien que conoce tanto el idioma como la cultura. (Entrevistado 6)

Otro explica lo siguiente sobre las limitaciones y pérdidas de información que puede presentar la gramática inglesa:

> Si alguien dice en un idioma "médica" y en inglés ponen "doctor", cuando tengas que traducir, ¿cómo vas a saber si "doctor" es un hombre o una mujer si no aparece en escena y solo se le menciona? A lo mejor, si optas por una u otra, ya estás perdiendo ahí. Si tú conoces el original, por ejemplo, *professeure,* y te dicen *teacher,* si entiendes el francés, sabes que es una mujer. En inglés eso se pierde. O en portugués tienes muchos matices de tiempo verbal. Si lo pasas al inglés, ya pierdes el matiz de pasado que tiene el portugués y que en portugués-español es muy fácil de solucionar. Cuando se usa el inglés como lengua puente se da esa pérdida (Entrevistado 3)

Igualmente, más de la mitad de los encuestados (65,4 %) indica como aspecto negativo la pérdida de ofertas laborales que el ILP supone para traductores cuya combinación no sea inglés-español, algo que también destaca un entrevistado: "es algo negativo para los traductores que han aprendido otros idiomas". Otro entrevistado señala la falta de seguridad que genera el uso del ILP: "es un proceso que a mí me ralentiza, no me siento seguro y, posiblemente, [la traducción] queda peor que si la hiciera una persona que controlara la LO".

Otros de los aspectos negativos señalados por los encuestados incluyen la falta de control de calidad de la traducción puente (60,5 %), la imposibilidad de adaptar referentes culturales por desconocimiento y la falta de un revisor nativo experto (59,3 % cada una), la invisibilización de combinaciones más allá del inglés o la mayor inversión de tiempo en el proceso de documentación (56,8 %). Solo uno de los encuestados señala que no ve aspectos negativos a esta práctica (1,2 %).

Comentarios finales

Los encuestados dejaron libremente sus comentarios sobre el estudio. A grandes rasgos, algunos señalan el conflicto deontológico que supone trabajar con el ILP, conscientes de las implicaciones laborales negativas para los traductores especialistas en las LO de los productos, amén de defender que se trata de un fenómeno provocado por un mercado abusivo: "considero que traducir desde el ILP es una práctica que se debe evitar en la medida de lo posible por no ser moral ni justa", reza uno.

También hay encuestados conscientes de que traducir con el ILP, sin contar con un experto en la lengua y cultura origen del producto, afecta tan negativamente a la calidad de la traducción que no debería llevarse a cabo. Otros explican que, con independencia de su postura, los clientes prefieren contratar a profesionales de la TAV antes que a especialistas en la LO, y argumentan que si se dejan claras las condiciones del encargo, la responsabilidad e implicaciones éticas recaen en el cliente, y no en el traductor.

Asimismo, algunos encuestados destacan también como razones para adoptar el ILP el abaratamiento de costes de las traducciones, una menor dificultad de gestión y la optimización del proceso de traducción, pues con una sola plantilla se traduce a diversas lenguas. Con todo, un encuestado aclara que esto puede cobrar sentido con clientes con menores recursos económicos, pero no con aquellos con capacidad para contratar a traductores especialistas en diversas lenguas.

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Conclusiones

En primer lugar, el uso del ILP se ha convertido en una práctica frecuente hoy en día: casi la totalidad de los participantes han tenido encargos de este tipo en los últimos cinco años, y más de la mitad constata que están en aumento. Más aún, los resultados muestran que el ILP está ya instaurado más allá de los ámbitos en los que ha sido una constante —festivales de cine y videojuegos—: más del 86,4 % de participantes afirma que el VoD se ha convertido en el principal canal de distribución de los productos traducidos con esta práctica, seguido por la televisión. Esto vendría a confirmar lo expresado al inicio del presente artículo: que el aumento de producciones no anglófonas en las plataformas de VoD —según los datos que recogen Martínez y Sánchez (2022), hasta el 43 % de las series más vistas de Netflix no tienen el inglés como LO— está llevando a un aumento de esta práctica y, paradójicamente, del mercado para los traductores del inglés. Aun así, para la mayoría de los participantes, estos encargos no suponen más del 10 % de trabajo anual.

En cuanto a las LO de los productos traducidos con el ILP, los sujetos de nuestra investigación mencionan una amplia variedad de lenguas *exóticas,* como el japones, el turco o el coreano (opciones con mayor índice de respuesta en el cuestionario), entre otras muchas, aunque también indican otras *comunes* en el mercado de la traducción de nuestro país, como el alemán y el francés (cuarta y quinta opción con mayor índice de respuesta). Esto podría deberse a que son lenguas de países que han experimentado un amplio crecimiento en el panorama audiovisual mundial.

En el caso del japonés, la exportación de material audiovisual ha vivido un gran crecimiento a lo largo de los últimos 20 años gracias a la industria del anime (Statista, 2022), una tendencia que, se espera, continue a lo largo de esta década (Precedence Research, s. f.). Turquía, igualmente, se ha convertido en uno de los máximos exportadores audiovisuales del mundo gracias a las telenovelas (Fernández, 2021). El coreano ha visto también una expansión internacional en los medios audiovisuales: según Frater (2021), entre 2015 y 2020, Netflix invirtió 700 millones de dólares en la producción de contenido coreano. Es más, de las 20 series más vistas en dicha plataforma entre junio de 2021 y agosto de 2022, 8 tenían esta lengua como LO (Martínez y Sánchez, 2022).

Ocurre algo similar con las producciones originales en alemán y en francés: de acuerdo con Grece y Jiménez Pumares (2020, s. p.), Alemania y Francia son los dos mayores productores de contenido de VoD en la UE, razón que explicaría el alto índice de respuestas que han recibido estas lenguas en el cuestionario. Con todo, recordamos que el francés y el alemán son la segunda y tercera lengua, respectivamente, con más traductores en nuestro país según Rico Pérez y García Aragón (2016, p. 36), algo que concuerda en cierto modo con los datos del cuestionario, pues los encuestados dominan, además del inglés, el francés y el alemán principalmente.

Así, pensamos que el uso del ILP ya no responde únicamente a cuestiones de falta de disponibilidad de profesionales en la LO del producto, como alegara Chaume (2018) hace unos años, sino que obedece, en gran medida, a la tendencia de los clientes y proveedores de servicios lingüísticos de ajustar presupuestos y simplificar el flujo de trabajo: "el fin último es abaratar costes y, sobre todo, agilizar el proceso, aunque a veces no es por carencia de traductores, sino porque la industria lo ha tomado como una dinámica muy habitual", explica un entrevistado. Otra razón que podría advertirse es que las distribuidoras a veces prefieren apostar por profesionales de TAV de confianza antes que por traductores especialistas en la LO.

Al margen, nuestros resultados apuntan a una falta de procesos estandarizados al traducir mediante el ILP. Según los datos recogidos, aspectos como las condiciones de trabajo, los materiales recibidos y los procesos de control de calidad varían

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dependiendo del encargo y cliente. Pese a ello, sí encontramos ciertos puntos en común: el subtitulado y el doblaje parecen ser las principales modalidades de TAV, los clientes suelen ser agencias y estudios de doblaje ubicados en España, los encargos parecen cobrarse con tarifas similares a aquellos con inglés como LO (si bien pueden suponer una mayor inversión de tiempo) y, aunque con excepciones, la mayor parte de los traductores parece desconocer la lengua y la cultura de los encargos, por lo que dependen exclusivamente del material en ILP, con las consecuencias que ello implica. Y es que, a pesar de que la mayoría indica que la calidad de los materiales es media o media-buena, muchos reconocen que la presencia de errores en estos es más o menos frecuente.

Además, la mayoría de participantes afirma no sentirse plenamente seguro durante el proceso de traducción y reconocen que la calidad final se ve afectada negativamente, en mayor o menor medida, por el uso del ILP —en especial por la reproducción de errores de la traducción puente y por la pérdida de información lingüística y cultural—, algo que no parece subsanarse en el proceso de revisión, en caso de haberlo, dado que este se lleva a cabo mayoritariamente por expertos desconocedores de la LO.

Acerca de otros aspectos positivos y negativos, la mayoría reconoce que esta práctica no es ideal desde un punto de vista deontológico, si bien los participantes afirman que suelen aceptar estos encargos, sobre todo cuando existe una escasez en el número de traductores expertos en las LO en activo. También destacan aspectos positivos, como el hecho de que el ILP posibilita el acceso a productos que, de otra manera, no llegarían traducidos a nuestro país, amén de ofrecer un mayor mercado para los traductores con combinación inglés-español.

Como futuras líneas de investigación, cabría la posibilidad de preguntar a traductores con combinaciones de lenguas *exóticas* su opinión sobre esta clase de encargos para conseguir una fotografía más completa del fenómeno. Igualmente, creemos que podría ser interesante indagar qué formación existe en torno al ILP en la TAV en España, así como elaborar propuestas formativas sobre esta práctica que puedan atender a las características del mercado —LO, modalidades de TAV, materiales, etc.—, una cuestión de la que están a favor tanto encuestados como entrevistados.

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Exploring Stereotypes and Cultural References in Dubbed tv Comedies in the Spanish-as-a-Foreign-Language Classroom

Estereotipos y referencias culturales en comedias de televisión dobladas: una exploración en la clase de español como lengua extranjera

Stéréotypes et références culturelles dans des comédies télévisées doublées : une exploration dans la classe d'espagnol langue étrangère

Estereótipos e referências culturais em comédias televisivas dubladas: uma exploração na aula de espanhol língua estrangeira

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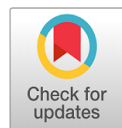
Abstract

Streaming video-on-demand (SVoD) platforms have recently set out to produce an ever-increasing number of non-English-language films and tv series distributed worldwide. These, in turn, have become the perfect vehicle for disseminating cultural realities other than those from English-speaking countries. In this article, we endeavour to analyse the presence of stereotypes and cultural references in the English-dubbed version of the Spanish tv series *Valeria* (Benítez, 2020–present) and the way they travel through dubbing. To this end, we conducted a comparative study in which seven video excerpts from the English-dubbed version and their original Spanish version were shown to 57 native English-speaking participants from a British higher education institution, who shared a similar knowledge of Spanish as a foreign language. Specifically, we explored the participants' overall perception of humorous passages, their identification of cultural references, their informed opinion on the translation techniques applied (and alternatives given), and their self-assessment of the metacognitive effort required. The findings show two aspects of learners: (a) overall, these learners were eager to maintain stereotypes and cultural references used for humorous purposes in audiovisual comedies, and (b) their understanding of these items often relies on audiovisual support. The findings offer an initial examination of English speakers' cognitive and evaluative perception of Spanish comedies that have been dubbed in English and can be useful for translator training purposes.

Keywords: audiovisual translation, English dubbing, tv series, stereotypes, romantic comedies, cultural references, non-English-language films

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Resumen

Recientemente, las plataformas de video por demanda (SVoD) en streaming se propusieron producir un número cada vez mayor de películas y series de TV con distribución global. Estas, a su vez, se han convertido en el vehículo perfecto para divulgar realidades culturales diferentes a las de los países anglófonos. En este artículo, intentamos analizar la presencia de estereotipos y referencias culturales en la versión doblada al inglés de la serie de televisión española *Valeria* (Benítez, 2020–presente) y de la manera como estos aparecen en el doblaje. Con este fin, realizamos un estudio comparativo en el que se presentaron siete fragmentos de video de la versión doblada al inglés y su versión original en español a 57 participantes nativos de habla inglesa pertenecientes a una institución británica de educación superior, quienes compartían un conocimiento similar del español como lengua extranjera. Específicamente, se exploró la percepción general entre los participantes de los pasajes humorísticos, su identificación de referentes culturales, su opinión informada sobre las técnicas traductivas aplicadas (y las alternativas dadas) y su autoevaluación del esfuerzo metacognitivo que requirieron. Los hallazgos mostraron dos aspectos de los estudiantes: a) en términos generales, estaban bien dispuestos a conservar los estereotipos y referentes culturales usados con fines humorísticos en las comedias audiovisuales, y b) la comprensión de estos elementos muchas veces dependía del apoyo audiovisual. Los hallazgos ofrecen un análisis inicial de la percepción cognitiva y evaluativa de los hablantes de inglés sobre las comedias españolas dobladas al inglés y pueden ser útiles para la formación de traductores.

Palabras clave: TAV, doblaje al inglés, series de TV, estereotipos, comedias románticas, referentes culturales, películas en lengua no inglesa

Résumé

Récemment, les plateformes de vidéo à la demande (SVoD) ont entrepris de produire un nombre croissant de films et de séries télévisées distribués à l'échelle mondiale. Celles-ci sont devenues le véhicule idéal pour diffuser des réalités culturelles autres que celles des pays anglophones. Dans cet article, nous tentons d'analyser la présence de stéréotypes et de références culturelles dans la version doublée en anglais de la série télévisée espagnole *Valeria* (Benítez, 2020-aujourd'hui) et la manière dont ils sont transférés par le biais du doublage. À cette fin, nous avons mené une étude comparative dans laquelle sept clips vidéo de la version doublée en anglais et de sa version originale en espagnol ont été présentés à 57 participants anglophones natifs d'un établissement d'enseignement supérieur britannique, qui partageaient une connaissance similaire de l'espagnol en tant que langue étrangère. Plus précisément, nous avons exploré la perception générale des passages humoristiques par les participants, leur identification des références culturelles, leur opinion éclairée sur les techniques de traduction appliquées (et les alternatives proposées) et leur auto-évaluation de l'effort métacognitif requis. Les résultats montrent deux aspects des apprenants: a) en général, ces apprenants étaient désireux de retenir les stéréotypes et les références culturelles utilisés à des fins humoristiques dans les comédies audiovisuelles, et b) leur compréhension de ces éléments dépendait souvent du support audiovisuel. Les résultats constituent une analyse initiale de la perception cognitive et évaluative par les anglophones des comédies espagnoles doublées en anglais et peuvent être utiles pour la formation des traducteurs.

Mots-clef : TAV, doublage vers l'anglais, séries de TV, stéréotypes, comédies romantiques, références culturelles, filmes dans des langues différentes de l'anglais

RESUMO

Recentemente, as plataformas de streaming de vídeo sob demanda (SVoD) se propuseram a produzir um número cada vez maior de filmes e séries de TV com distribuição global. Essas plataformas, por sua vez, tornaram-se o veículo perfeito para disseminar realidades culturais diferentes dos países de língua inglesa. Neste artigo, tentamos analisar a presença de estereótipos e referências culturais na versão dublada em inglês da série de TV espanhola *Valeria* (Benítez, 2020-atual) e a maneira como eles são transferidos por meio da dublagem. Para isso, realizamos um estudo comparativo no qual sete videoclipes da versão dublada em inglês e sua versão original em espanhol foram apresentados a 57 participantes falantes nativos de inglês de uma instituição de ensino superior britânica, que compartilhavam um conhecimento semelhante de espanhol como língua estrangeira. Especificamente, exploramos a percepção geral dos participantes sobre as passagens humorísticas, sua identificação de referências culturais, sua opinião informada sobre as técnicas de tradução aplicadas (e as alternativas dadas) e sua autoavaliação do esforço metacognitivo necessário. Os resultados mostram dois aspectos dos aprendentes: a) geralmente, eles estavam mais que dispostos em reter os estereótipos e as referências culturais usados para fins humorísticos em comédias audiovisuais, e b) sua compreensão desses elementos muitas vezes dependia do apoio audiovisual. Os resultados oferecem uma tentativa inicial de analisar a percepção cognitiva e avaliativa de falantes de inglês sobre comédias espanholas dubladas em inglês e podem ser úteis para fins de treinamento de tradutores.

Palavras chave: TAV, dublagem para o inglês, séries de TV, estereótipos, comedias románticas, referentes culturais, filmes em língua não inglesa

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Introduction

In the last few years, mainly with the advent of video-on-demand streaming platforms, audiovisual productions seem to travel easier and faster. Many productions are released on the same dates worldwide, thus enhancing the importance of media localisation nowadays. Spanish series, for instance, are becoming increasingly popular; *La casa de papel* (*Money Heist*, A. Pina, 2017–2021), *Las chicas del cable* [*Cable Girls*] (R. Campos et al., 2017–2020), and *Élite* (Montero & Madrona, 2018–present) are just a few examples that showcase the reception of Spanish TV series among international audiences, and how Spanish fiction series are settling in abroad (Diego & Grandío, 2018). According to Filmarket Hub (2020), the success of Spanish TV series worldwide is due to factors such as Spanish being the fourth most spoken language in the world in terms of the number of speakers (EFSA, 2020), the use of recognisable stories, and their ability to respond to the target audience's demands. Despite the design of this new type of Spanish series, the original culture is always present in their scripts, especially in those genres in which cultural allusions are used for depicting the daily life of a social group.

Series constitute a great means for the dissemination of culture. In this respect, Ranzato (2016, p. 3) points out that the transfer of cultural references into other languages and cultures "is particularly relevant in the case of fiction television texts as this kind of audiovisual programme usually contains a great number of cultural elements". She states that these "culturally embedded references" (Ranzato, 2016, p. 104) are not always used to attain the same effects in audiovisual texts although some shows use a considerable number of elements specific to the original culture to produce humour and jokes. In this sense, Chiaro (1992, pp. 5–10) suggests that jokes do not always travel well from one culture to another; as confirmed by other scholars more recently (Pedersen, 2011; Ranzato, 2013). On the contrary, studies focusing on the translation of jokes in sitcoms such as *Friends* (Ranzato, 2016) and *Veep* (Ogea Pozo, 2020) prove that the effect of

having viewers enjoy the programme and have fun while following the plot in translation may be better achieved with target-oriented solutions.

This article aims to analyse instances of humour based on stereotypes and cultural references in a Spanish TV series recently dubbed into English by Netflix. An empirical study on the perception of a dubbed Spanish comedy by English-speaking viewers is presented to establish whether, and if so how, culture-bound humour travels and how translation can foster this cultural exchange. To this end, a selection of video excerpts from the first season of the Spanish comedy *Valeria* was collated. These passages were considered to be highly representative of Spanish popular culture and, in most cases, used to pursue a humorous effect that would be easily identifiable by native Spaniards of any age range. The same excerpts were taken from the English-dubbed version for the experiment. Participants were undergraduate students enrolled in a bachelor's programme in modern foreign languages at a UK higher education institution. The responses and feedback obtained were analysed to determine how a sample of native English-speaking participants perceive Spanish cultural elements in media productions, how they interpret the given translation in terms of cultural and humorous transference, and whether they would prefer a different option, based on either a source-oriented or a target-oriented translation strategy, for an English-speaking audience.

Theoretical Framework

This section will delve into previous studies that sustain the theoretical basis for the empirical approach that has been developed. For this purpose, the discussion will focus on the latest industry trends that capitalise on English dubbing of Spanish productions as well as on culture, humour, and perception.

State of the Art: English-Language Dubbing

Traditionally, English-speaking countries have not been included by scholars on the list of so-called

"dubbing countries" (Chaume, 2012, p. 6). However, as Hayes (2021, p. 1) argues, "in 2017, English dubbing entered the mainstream on the initiative of the subscription video-on-demand service (SVoD) Netflix". Despite earlier attempts, the English dubbing mediascape has now changed dramatically; and according to Spiteri Miggiani (2021, p. 137), there is a "sudden boom" of non-English language content on streaming platforms. One of the reasons behind this increase in non-English language content is that some platforms are complying with Article 13 of the *Audiovisual Media Services Directive* (2018) passed by the European Union in November 2018, according to which, 30% of the content that is to be distributed in the EU needs to have been produced in Europe.

Following this mushrooming of non-English language media productions, dubbing audiovisual productions into English has become an emerging field of research. Although some authors claim that audiences tend to prefer the translation method they are accustomed to (i.e., the one they have grown up with and are best acquainted with; Nornes, 2007; Wissmath *et al.*, 2009), the reality is that many dubbing-oriented countries are currently consuming more and more subtitles (Chaume, 2019), and subtitling-oriented countries are also experiencing a "dubbing revolution" (Moore, 2018, in Ranzato & Zanotti, 2019, p. 3) or "dubbing resurge" (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021, p. 180). However, in countries less habituated to dubbing, viewers seem to feel a stronger "dubby effect", which has been described as anything that is not speech-like or is conspicuously out of time with how actors' mouths are moving onscreen (Goldsmith, 2019, in Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021, p. 185) and can break the "suspension of linguistic disbelief" (Romero-Fresco, 2009, p. 49). Since English-speaking audiences have traditionally been less exposed to dubbed content, this effect could certainly affect their perception of newly dubbed mainstream productions. Viewers from the Anglophone spheres may need some time to get used to dubbing until the "cultural discord" (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021, p. 139) is less present.

Humour and Cultural Elements

Describing humour may be tricky, since definitions and approaches have accumulated over time. According to Nash (1985), humour is an interaction between people in social situations and cultures which is normally intended to make receivers smile, laugh, or giggle, even though it may also aim to hurt by being derogative. Some humorous utterances may fail to produce laughter, not have any intent to produce it, or even provoke an invisible reaction (i.e., an emotional response such as exhilaration; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021; Chiaro, 2010). Consequently, humour relies on both the language and the culture in which it originates (Santana, 2005). Based on Nash's observation (1985), Martínez-Tejerina (2016, p. 73) suggests that "all people laugh, but not for the same reasons, nor in the same situation, nor at the same references." Humour usually depends on factual knowledge shared among individuals and may have different meanings in different social contexts (Dore, 2019). Being a universal phenomenon, it is not necessarily limited to a specific society or community, because small groups and communities may also have distinct ways of conceptualising humour. As remarked by Botella Tejera (2022), and as previously stated by Nash (1985), while humour is universal, the act of humour is not. Therefore, the concept of humour, which we will not try to define in this paper, includes "culture-specific references pertaining to the culture of origin which are frequently involved in humorous tropes" (Chiaro, 2010, p. 2); and this is precisely what we understand as culture-bound humour in this study.

Consequently, the focus is put on the translation of culture-specific references in audiovisual comedies, especially those that create some form of humour. As stated by Dore (2019), cultural references are not humorous per se, although they can be used to convey specific humorous features.

As for audiovisual texts, Ramière (2006) suggests that culture-specific units also encompass

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an additional dimension, that is, the co-existence of verbal and non-verbal signs that determine the cross-cultural transfer in the localisation process. As mentioned before, cultural references may be used parodically or ironically as a recurrent strategy (Leppihalme, 1997), as is the case with some of the passages collected for this study. In audiovisual texts, this so-called "allusive humour" (Leppihalme, p. 44) may lead to scenes deemed hilarious, which is the reason why scriptwriters seem to exploit culture-specific elements in audiovisual comedies (Dore, 2010). Moreover, some of these elements may not be considered literally funny, but ironic, incongruent, unexpected, or surprising, provoking humour in the mind of the receiver (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004).

Nevertheless, these references may only be understood if the target audience is sufficiently familiar with the culture in question (Leppihalme, 1997) and may be rendered incomprehensible or unfunny otherwise (Chiaro, 2008). In this regard, Botella Tejera (2017) noted that translators must be aware of the different expectations the original and the target audience may have and mediate accordingly. Thus, it is the translator's task to determine whether the receivers of the target text might be able to recognise cultural references and perceive the implicit humour. If the target audience is not able to comprehend certain references in the same way as the original audience do, then linguists must resort to different degrees of "intercultural manipulation" (Franco Aixelá, 1996, p. 64), and the original text must thereafter be transformed to facilitate the cultural exchange (Chiaro, 2010). Therefore, a certain degree of manipulation may be found in translated audiovisual texts (dubbed versions being the ones that often display greater manipulation) although subtitlers do not underestimate the entertaining function of cultural elements (Dore, 2019). The selection of the appropriate translation strategies is especially complex when dealing with audiovisual texts, as any mismatch between the (verbally expressed) cultural reference and the image could lead to confusion (Dore, 2010). Moreover, the

humorous load may be impossible to transfer, or predictably not understood by the general audience, if they are not familiar with the original cultural context. In that case, the omission of such elements may be an alternative, albeit the least desirable option (Dore, 2019).

Along with culture-specific terms, other linguistic elements are recurrent for humorous purposes and bound to cultural factors. For instance, taboo words may function as a mocking form of humour (Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004) and youth slang serves to distort or grant different meanings to existing terms (Rodríguez, 2002), thus enabling expressiveness, irony, or the pejorative tone attached to some speakers' lingo. In *Valeria,* these linguistic elements may be found, and their main function is to produce laughter or amusement among the audience, as the characters bring up cultural concepts unexpectedly or ironically in a normal conversational setting.

Perception and Translation of Cultural Humour

Recent research suggests that understanding and appreciating humour is strongly dependent on sociocognitive factors and is related to other factors such as the age and psychological aspects of the individuals and groups as well as their way of capturing humour (Juckel *et al.,* 2016; Chiaro, 2006; Buijzen & Valkenburg, 2004). Comedies often highlight aspects of a specific nation or culture with the expectation that the audience will recognise these humorous elements and react accordingly. These aspects thereafter constitute challenges when it comes to localising and distributing said comedies in other countries and languages.

The reception of audiovisual content has been scrutinised by AVT scholars to shed light on audiovisual processing and appreciation (Gambier, 2018; Di Giovani, 2018), audience types depending on age and their preference for dubbing versus subtitling (Orrego, 2019; Perego *et al.,* 2014), or cultural and/or humour-specific issues (Denton & Ciampi, 2012; Fuentes, 2003). For Fuentes

(2003, p. 293), "the successful reception of an audiovisual production depends not only on a good phonetic and character synchrony in the case of dubbing [but] on the quality of the translation", and viewers belonging to different language and culture groups may experience a similar humorous effect if the target text is duly marked by a significant humorous load that has been transferred using purposeful techniques.

Research on techniques for translating culture-specific elements is extensive and has led to various taxonomies. According to Franco Aixelá (1996), the choice of a particular translation technique is conditioned by several variables, such as textual factors and the characteristics of the relevant and representative elements concerned. In addition to these, one must bear in mind how the audience of the target culture may react to said localised elements. Table 1 contains a classification based on two macro-strategies that account for the degree of cross-cultural manipulation involved.

Some of the above conservative techniques are not (fully) applicable to translation for dubbing due to spatiotemporal restraints, such as the use of extratextual glosses, which was dismissed when designing the model of translation techniques to be used for the didactic experience described in

Table 1 Strategies and Techniques Applied to Cultural References in Translation (Franco Aixelá, 1996, pp. 61–64)

Conservation	Substitution
Repetition	Synonymy
Orthographic adaptation	Limited universalisation
Linguistic (non-cultural) translation	Absolute universalisation
Extratextual gloss	Naturalisation
Intratextual gloss	Deletion
	Autonomous creation

this article. As for intratextual glosses, norm-based and synchrony-based constraints on dubbed dialogue may not always allow for the addition of words due to synchrony.

In her study, Dore (2019) provides a useful summary of the most recent taxonomies for the translation of culture-specific references (illustrated in Figure 1) that "can be subsumed under three macro-categories (retention, explicitation, and substitution) along the foreignisation-domestication continuum" (Dore, 2019, p. 187). It is worth mentioning that she particularly recommends some of these strategies – such as lexical recreation and substitution – to translate humorous cultural references, since creativity can help to

Figure 1 Summary of *Taxonomies* for the *Translation* of CSRS in AV (Dore, 2019, p. 188)

Table 4.4 Summary of the most recent taxonomies for the translation of CSRs in AV

Fidelity scale	Ramière (2006)	Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007)	Pedersen (2007)	Gottlieb (2009)	Dore (2008, 2010)	Ranzato (2016)
Foreignisation (Source-oriented)	Transference or Borrowing	Loan	Retention (by *direct translation* or *official equivalent*)	Retention Literal translation	Transference (by Literal translation or calque)	Loan Official translation
	Literal translation or calque	Calque Literal translation				
	Explanation/ gloss	Explicitation (by *Specification* with hyponym or *Generalisation* by hypernym/ superordinate)	Specification (by addition or completion)	Specification	Explanation (by Retention or Guidance)	Explicitation Generalisation by hyponym (subtype of explicitation)
	Neutralisation		Generalisation (by hyponym or paraphrase)	Generalisation	Neutralisation	Concretisation (or specification; by hyponym)
		Lexical recreation (e.g. replace neologism by neologism)			Re-creation	Lexical recreation
Domestication (Target-oriented)	Cultural substitution	Substitution (by *TL equivalent* by *paraphrase*) Transposition (by *TC reference* or *general equivalent*)	Substitution (cultural or situational)	Substitution (by foreign element known to the target audience; by international element foreign element shared with the target culture; replacement by a domestic element)	Substitution (Replacement by SL item or Replacement by TL item)	Substitution (by *TL equivalent* by *paraphrase*; by *TC reference* or general equivalent)
						Creative additions (mostly arbitrary)
		Compensation	Omission (a.k.a. Elimination)			

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retain the perlocution of the text even if not retaining the knowledge attached to the original version.

Drawing on the above taxonomies, a model of translation techniques was designed and used in the pedagogical experiment described in the Analysis section. Even though these translation strategies are applicable to the translation of audiovisual texts in general, they are somehow limited to the transfer of linguistic units. The interaction between visual and verbal elements must also be considered insofar as the transfer of cultural elements may cause a certain loss of humorous load or at least a change of relation (Martínez-Sierra, 2009).

Method

This section describes the pedagogical experiment carried out during the academic year 2021-2022 which involved a group of undergraduate students from a British institution who study Spanish as a foreign language. For this purpose, the Spanish series *Valeria* was used. The reasons for this selection were threefold: the fact that an English dubbed version of this series is available, the notable presence of cultural terms found in comical scenes, and the age of the potential audience targeted by this audiovisual production might be similar to that of the students. Further details on the activity, methodology, and sample are described below.

Materials

Valeria is a Spanish series produced by Netflix and catalogued in the online platform as a romantic TV comedy, based on the namesake saga written by Spanish writer Elísabet Benavent. The book series has become internationally popular, with more than three million copies sold in 15 countries in Europe and Latin America (Mantilla, 2021). The series, set in Madrid and focusing on the daily adventures of four female friends nearing thirty, deals with issues related to interpersonal relationships, sex, work, and gender. The production aims to construct a portrait of contemporary life through young adults who struggle to forge their own identity and their interactions with members of the same social group. This is undoubtedly reflected in their conversations, which are marked by Spanish Millennial slang, and replete with colloquialisms, vulgarisms, neologisms, and cultural terms.

Data Collection

For this study, an online questionnaire was set up containing a set of AVT exercises focusing on the perception of Spanish cultural references and stereotypes in the English dubbed version. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, the first one being the pre-experiment personal questions and the second one involving the actual exercises. For this study, only English-dubbed video clips were used, meaning that respondents were solely exposed to the English dialogue; however, a transcript of the original Spanish version of each relevant dialogue (i.e., translatable material for each exercise) was provided in written form, too. The excerpts contained dubbed utterances featuring at least one cultural element deemed to be funny, ironic, absurd, or mocking in Spanish. The respondents had to identify, analyse said references and then express their views and overall perception of the official translation alongside their preferred translation out of the ones proposed in the form. The practical component of the questionnaire encompassed seven exercises, each of which contained a video clip and questions. The students were prompted to carry out the following tasks:

1. Watch the dubbed clip.

2. Check their understanding of the cultural element(s) encountered in the clip.

3. Answer open-ended question on what they thought the cultural element stood for.

4. Offer information and extra reading on the cultural element(s) to confirm understanding of the said cultural element.

5. Evaluate the dubbed script in terms of culture and humour transfer.

6. Select their preferred version of the English translation from a multiple-choice question.

As a rule of thumb, up to six different translations were offered in the multiple-choice task. At no point were respondents prompted to produce their own translations since this would have led to a scenario where quantification would have been too complex and the current framework might have become irrelevant. Lip synchrony and isochrony were not considered, as the main purpose of this exercise was to delve into the perception of cultural references found in an audiovisual text. In this sense,

this approach may be considered as preparatory in the training for dubbing translation and adaptation. The techniques used can be seen in Table 2.

The cultural elements that the students had to identify and analyse to choose their preferred translated version were selected after a close examination of *Valeria*'s first season. Following a detailed analysis of the original and English-dubbed versions, a sample of passages of 8 to 28 seconds containing culture-related information was produced, from which seven were deemed highly representative instances of Castilian Spanish culture-specific items. The elements were challenging, though still recognisable, by students of Spanish as a foreign language. The chosen passages are included in the Table 3.

Table 2 Translation Techniques (Based on Franco Aixelá, 1996; Pedersen, 2011; and Ranzato, 2016)

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="9">Translation Techniques</td><td>Retention: Keep the same cultural element (e.g., "C. Tangana").</td></tr>
<tr><td>Specification: Keep the same cultural element but, if possible, add some contextual information (e.g., "Spanish rap-pop singer C. Tangana").</td></tr>
<tr><td>Substitution-Limited universalisation: Use another Spanish/Hispanic reference with which the English-speaking audience could be more familiar (e.g., "Pitbull" instead of "C. Tangana").</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Substitution-Absolute universalisation: Omit the name and explain the idea behind the reference (e.g., "rap-pop singer").</td></tr>
<tr><td>Naturalisation: Use a cultural reference that is more popular in English-speaking countries (e.g., "Eminem").</td></tr>
<tr><td>Elimination: Omit the cultural element altogether.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 3 Original and Dubbed Dialogues Analysed and Used in the Questionnaire

Clip	Dialogue in Spanish OV	Dialogue in English Dub	Cultural Element(s)
1	- Con este *look* lo petas de C. Tangana. - ¿50 pavos para ir disfrazado de chungo?	- This is perfect for you to go as C. Tangana. - 50 bucks to look like a douchebag?	C. Tangana
2	Yo hice la comunión de marinerito.	I did my communion dressed in a sailor suit.	Primera comunión Traje de marinerito
3	- ¿Eres del Opus? - Yo no soy del Opus, eh.	- Are you a member of Opus? - I'm not a member of Opus.	Opus Dei

Table 3 Original and Dubbed Dialogues Analysed and Used in the Questionnaire (cont.)

Clip	Dialogue in Spanish OV	Dialogue in English Dub	Cultural Element(s)
4	- Cari, ¿por qué no compartimos un secreto ibérico? - No. ¡Operación bikini!	- OK, love, shall we share the pork fillet? - My bikini.	Operación bikini
5	Cari, ni todos los gais escuchamos copla, ni todos abrimos la relación.	My love, not all gays listen to copla, and have an open relationship.	Copla
6	El AVE es caro.	The high-speed train is expensive.	AVE
7a	- Yo, sinceramente, nunca le he encontrado el punto a este tío. Ave María, ¿cuándo serás mía? […]	- I never liked his music much at all. Ave Maria, when will you be mine? […]	*Operación Triunfo* stars
7b	- ¿Team Bisbal o Bustamante? - ¡Pero qué pregunta! Team Chenoa hasta la muerte.	- Team Bisbal or Bustamante? - What a stupid question. Team Chenoa forever.	David Bisbal David Bustamante Chenoa

Table 4 Model of the Table Used to Classify Translation Options

		Conservation Strategies	Substitution Strategies
Clip		Retention (R)	Limited universalisation (LU)
			Absolute universalisation (AU)
Number			Naturalisation (N)
		Specification (S)	Elimination (E)

The translation options given in each section of the multiple-choice task were produced by the experiment designers on the basis of the conservation and substitution strategies shown in Table 4. These options were scrutinised by external English-speaking evaluators in order to guarantee the accuracy and purposefulness of each option as well as its pedagogical value. Among the options included in Table 5, respondents were allowed to select as many as they deemed appropriate in the context given. Therefore, the culture-specific translation options provided to the participants are shown in Table 5.

The pedagogical value of the questionnaire (e.g., learning about translation techniques and becoming more aware of culture-specific challenges) was deemed sufficient for distribution among undergraduate students learning Spanish as a foreign language.

Participants

This questionnaire was completed by 57 respondents, all of whom were studying Spanish as a foreign language at the undergraduate level at a British higher education institution. Most of them were in the first year of a sandwich bachelor's degree (41 respondents or 72%), whereas 14 (25%) were in their second year, and two (3%) were in their year abroad (i.e., third year). All students were undertaking a joint programme with Spanish and another modern foreign language (20, or 35%), History (5, or 9%), Business Management (4, or 7%), European Studies (4, or 7%), Philosophy (4, or 7%), and Politics (4, 7%). Most respondents were female (47, or 82%), with only nine (16%) males, and one who identified as they/she. Given that most students were still completing their undergraduate studies, only two

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Table 5 English-Translated Dialogues After Relevant Techniques Were Applied

Clip	Conservation	Substitution
1	as C. Tangana (R) as rap singer C. Tangana (S)	as Pitbull (LU) as a rap singer (AU) as Eminem (N) This is tacky. (E)
2	a little sailor suit (R) a communion sailor suit (S)	a bullfighter costume (LU) a suit and tie (AU) dressed in my Sunday best (N) I used to wear trousers at church. (E)
3	a member of Opus (Dei) (R) a member of the Catholic group Opus Dei (S)	a religious order (LU) a devout Catholic (AU) Are you a Mormon? (N) What's the problem? (E)
4	Bikini diet! (R) Bikini season soon! (S)	No carbs before Marbs! (LU) Watching my figure! (AU) Beach bod! (N) I shouldn't put on any weight. (E)
5	Copla (R) old-school copla ballads (S)	flamenco music (LU) gay icons (AU) Elton John (N) Not all gays celebrate Pride. (E)
6	AVE (R) AVE high-speed train (S)	Iberia travel (LU) Spanish high-speed train (AU) National Rail (N) Travelling by train is expensive. (E)
7a	I never liked his music very much at all. Ave Maria, when will you be mine? (R) I never liked *Operación Triunfo* singer David Bisbal very much at all. (S)	I never liked male soloists like Julio Iglesias very much at all. (LU) I never enjoyed singing contests on TV. (AU) I was never into girl bands or boy bands. (N) I always disliked this type of music. (E)
7b	- Team Bisbal or Bustamante? - What a stupid question. Team Chenoa forever. (R) - Team Bisbal or Bustamante? - What a stupid question. Team Chenoa, girls forever. (S)	- Team Enrique Iglesias or Ricky Martin? - What a stupid question. Shakira forever! (LU) - Team Pop boyband or Rock boyband? - What a stupid question. Rock girl bands (AU) - Team Backstreet Boys or NSYNC? - What a stupid question? Spice Girls forever! (N) - Which was your favourite boyband? - Ugh. You must mean girl. (E)

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of them (3%) were older than 25, while the vast majority were either 19 or younger (44, or 77%) or 20 – 21 years old (10, or 17%).

Respondents came from a wide variety of cultural and national backgrounds. A total of 40 (70%) had lived most of their lives in England and four (7%) had done so in other parts of the UK, though only 30 (53%) and five (9%) were born in England and other parts of the UK, respectively. Seven (12%) were French, five (9%) were Italian, and three (5%) were Romanian. Other countries that the respondents listed included Austria, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the USA. In addition to the international nature of the group, the participants accessed the university programme via English; so it was soon established that the English-dubbed versions of the series would constitute the perfect opportunity for the respondents to offer a representative view in terms of how they would perceive translated culture-bound humour on screen.

Results

The findings show that, overall, learners were eager to maintain stereotypes and cultural references used for humorous purposes in audiovisual comedies, and that their understanding of these items often relies on audiovisual support.

In the first clip, students were exposed to a reference to Spanish pop-rap singer C. Tangana and the fact that he might be perceived as unrefined. Visuals help to foster the humorous load in this scene due to the eccentric garments chosen by the protagonist. Most respondents (35 of them or 61%) were either unaware (19, or 33%) or unsure (16, or 28%) of the cultural element, whereas 22 (39%) answered positively. After reading the description and extra information on the singer, 40 (70%) claimed they had understood the reference. The context of the utterance and, more specifically, the visuals might have helped students to understand this was a singing celebrity as the

characters wandered around a fashion store. This is directly linked to Martínez-Sierra's (2009, p. 147, own translation) findings on visual support to better decode translatable dialogue in AVT. In his words, "although the visuals may at times hamper the translation of humour in audiovisual texts, in most cases, they have the opposite effect and help both translators and viewers [understand the relevant jokes]".

Since most students recognised the cultural element, it is no surprise almost half of them agreed that the humour had been adequately transferred in the dubbing (25, or 44%). However, 16 respondents (28%) disagreed, and 16 (28%) were unconvinced. For the students, the most convincing approach would be conservative with specification coming first (chosen by 20 participants or 35%) and retention coming second (preferred by 19 or 33%) in their priority list, though 11 of them (19%) preferred neutralising the name of the singer (absolute universalisation). Only 7 students (12%) would choose a different Spanish-speaking singer such as Pitbull, while 5 (9%) would opt for an American rapper such as Eminem, and even fewer (4 students or 7%) would omit the reference (see Figure 2).

In the second clip, the cultural element *marinerito* referred to the traditional naval suit that Spanish boys usually wear for their First Communion. It is worth mentioning that *marinerito* is the diminutive form of *marinero* ("sailor") and that this could have been used ironically (Figure 3). The incongruity of referring to a ceremony in the Spanish Catholic community along with a traditional male costume worn by a lesbian girl is a humorous detail that would remain unnoticed by anyone unfamiliar with these cultural aspects. A very similar pattern was observed in terms of recognition: only 21 (37%) understood the cultural reference, whereas 13 (23%) did not and 23 (40%) were unsure. Opinions were more sharply divided on whether the dubbing conveyed the culture-bound humour; subsequently, 16 (28%) disagreed or

Figure 2 Responses to Clip 1: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element (i.e. C. Tangana)? Choose the preferred option below
57 responses

Option	Count (%)
C. Tangana	19 (33.3%)
Spanish rap singer C. Tangana	20 (35.1%)
Pitbull	7 (12.3%)
a rap singer	11 (19.3%)
Eminem	5 (8.8%)
[omission of reference] This is perfect for you!	4 (7%)
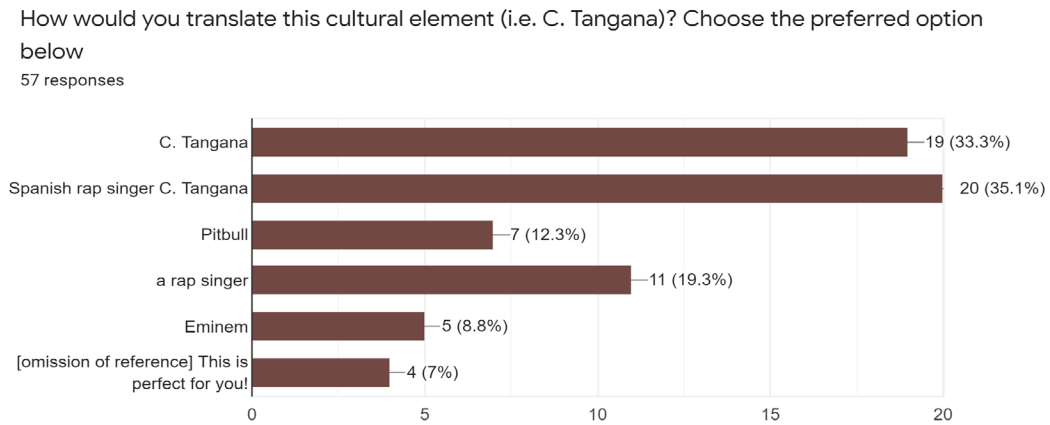
Figure 3 Responses to Clip 2: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Translate the below sentence in your own words in English.
57 responses

Option	Count (%)
a little sailor suit	30 (52.6%)
a communion sailor suit	9 (15.8%)
a bullfighter costume	0 (0%)
a suit and tie	15 (26.3%)
my Sunday best	4 (7%)
[omission of reference] I used to wear trousers in church.	8 (14%)

13
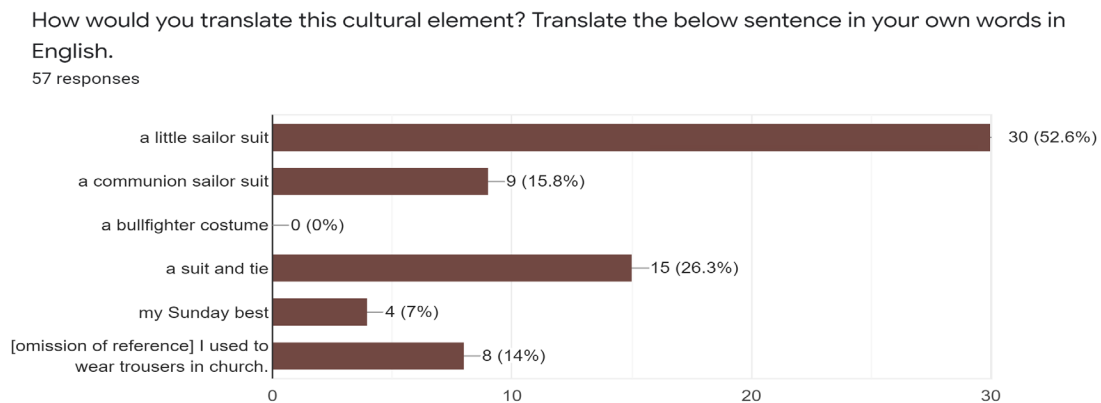
completely disagreed, 24 (42%) agreed or completely agreed, and 17 (30%) were still unsure. Perhaps more striking is the fact that the vast majority of respondents (that is, 30 of them or 53%) thought a literal translation of the element ("a little sailor suit") was the best translation in English, with only 15 respondents opting for neutralising the element ("a suit and tie"), 8 (14%) choosing the omission of the reference ("wearing trousers in church") and only 4 (7%) preferring the more idiomatic, though gender-neutral, rendering ("my Sunday best"). The clip does not contain any visual support to suggest a more literal translation would have been preferred; however, the viewers could have inferred that the woman is a lesbian on account of both her physical aspect and the way she was flirting with one of the female protagonists (e.g., body movement, gestures and physical proximity when introducing each other).

The third clip also included a religious reference to the Spanish Catholic group Opus Dei, which seemed to cause confusion among respondents insofar as the recognition of the cultural element was concerned (see Figure 4). This reference, which implies the connection between the

Figure 4 Responses to Clip 3: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Translate the below sentence in your own words in English.

57 responses
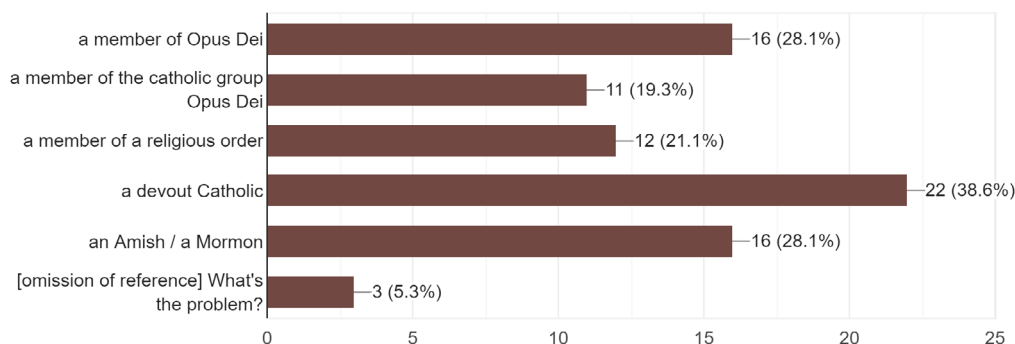
14

said Catholic group and chastity before marriage, was clearly used with a humorous purpose, as the girl gestures her eagerness to have sex with her boyfriend, while he avoids her, prompting her to utter this unexpected comment. Only 12 (22%) students claimed they understood it, with most expressing a hesitant (22, 39%) or negative (22, or 39%) answer; however, once they read about the cultural element, the vast majority (36, or 63%) claimed to be able to see the point. Opus Dei is too closely attached to Spanish Catholicism and is arguably little known to English-speaking students who have had limited exposure to the Iberian religious landscape. Unsurprisingly, 23 (40%) students were not too happy about the dubbing, though 5 (9%) completely agreed and 19 (33%) agreed the humour was present in the dubbed version, while the remaining students were hesitant. Interestingly, 22 (39%) participants found the more idiomatic version ("a devout Catholic") much more appropriate, 16 (28%) thought a natural equivalent ("a Mormon") was the go-to option and another 16 (28%) would have chosen a literal translation ("a member of Opus Dei). The intratextual gloss and universal neutralisation scored similarly, that is, 11 (19%) and 12 (21%) respectively, whereas omission was considerably less preferred (3, or 5%).

The fourth clip is an excerpt from a dinner conversation between two young couples, one of which is composed of two gay men who are discussing what to order from the restaurant's menu. The cultural element is *operación bikini* (a Spanish expression promoted by the media for female target groups to indicate the weight loss process before summer), which one of them utters to remind him, in a sarcastic tone, that they are on a diet. Over half of the respondents (31, or 54%) did not recognise the reference and 12 (21%) were unsure, though only 25 (44%) still claimed they had not understood the reference once they read about it. Interestingly, many students (25, or 44%) visibly disagreed that the given translation ("my bikini") was appropriate, or clear enough, perhaps due to a lack of visual support, and only 19 (24%) found it satisfactory (see Figure 5). The new translation options seemed perhaps more attractive: 23 students (or 40% of them) were particularly keen on specification ("bikini season soon!") and 22 of them (39%) preferred to substitute the expression with a more natural equivalent ("beach bod!"), closely followed by 20 respondents (35%) who chose absolute universalisation ("watching my figure!). Once again, the alternative Hispanic-flavoured option ("no carbs before Marbs!") was less preferred (6, or 11%),

Figure 5 Responses to Clip 4: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Choose the preferred option
57 responses

Option	Count
Bikini diet!	12 (21.1%)
Bikini season soon!	23 (40.4%)
No carbs before Marbs!	6 (10.5%)
Watching my figure!	20 (35.1%)
Beach bod!	22 (38.6%)
[omission of reference] I shouldn't put on any weight.	0 (0%)
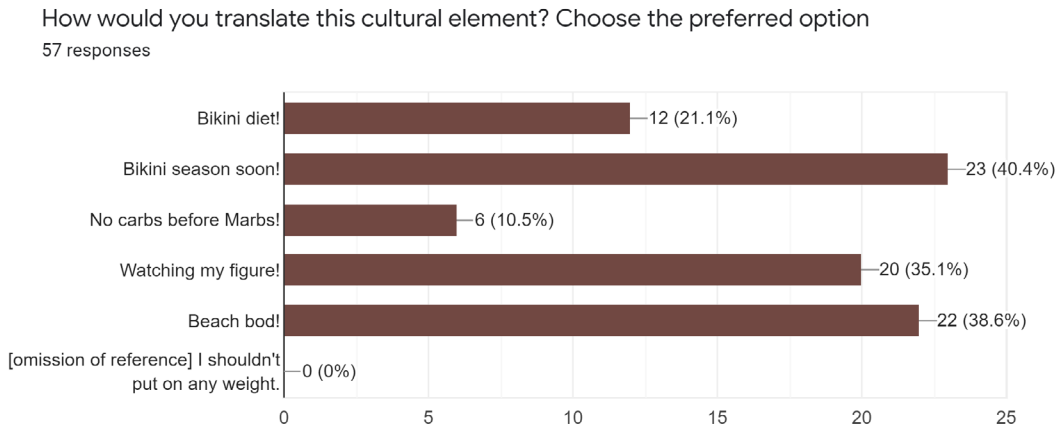
while the literal translation ("bikini diet") caught significant attention (12, or 21%) and the omission option (less idiomatic and matter-of-factly longer than the rest) was not chosen by anyone. Again, the little visual context of this utterance meant that further creativity could be shown by the respondents who effectively pointed out that the official translation ("my bikini") was perhaps clashing with the visuals (i.e., a gay man).

The fifth clip is the natural continuation of the above-mentioned dinner conversation, where the newly introduced cultural element was *copla*. The protagonist misunderstands something one of the gay men said and mistakenly assumes the latter have an open relationship. One of them argues, in a sarcastic tone, that not all gay men are in an open relationship, nor do they listen to *copla* music, thus playing on a gay stereotype in modern Spain. There is neither a visual nor aural component to exemplify what *copla* is; however, the gay couple are sitting together, and Valeria assumes this fact from the outset. Only 16 respondents (28%) were confident they had understood the reference to this type of traditional Spanish music, while 21 (37%) were unsure and 20 (35%) did not understand the concept. After reading about this stereotype, more students claimed to have understood it (27, or 47%), but 28 (49%) were still not confident (Figure 6). Opinions were

Figure 6 Responses to Clip 5: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Choose the preferred option
57 responses

Option	Count
copla	10 (17.5%)
old-school copla ballads	17 (29.8%)
flamenco music	10 (17.5%)
gay icons	9 (15.8%)
Elton John	16 (28.1%)
[omission of reference] My love, not all gays celebrate Pride an…	8 (14%)
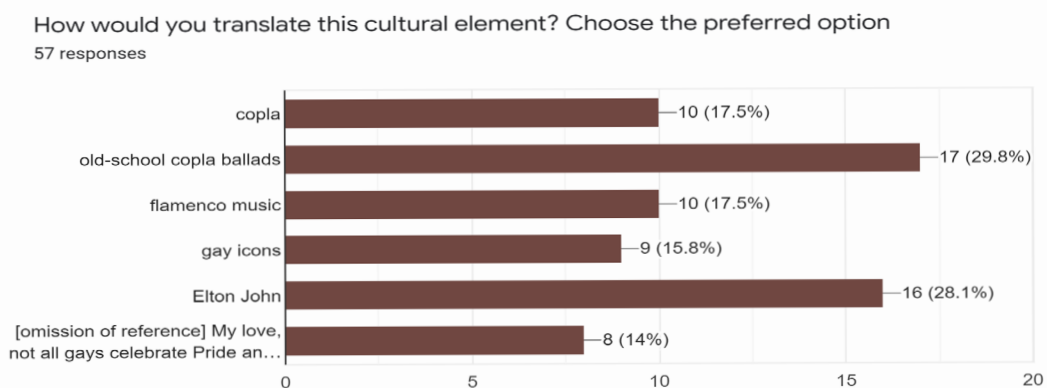
divided when it comes to the transfer of the culture-bound humour in this excerpt, with only 15 students (26%) claiming that they agreed (or completely agreed) with the given translation; many, however, either disagreed (21, or 37%) or were unsure (21, or 37%). Contrary to previous clips, some respondents (16, or 28%) would have considered replacing the cultural element with one that is more widely known in English-speaking countries ("Elton John"), and a similar number (17, or 30%) would have added an explanation ("old-school *copla* ballads"). Again, some students (10, or 17%) would have opted for a literal translation with no explanation and others (10, or 17%) would have replaced this type of music with *flamenco*. Even fewer (9, or 16%) would have explicitated the meaning even further ("gay icons") or left the reference out altogether (8, or 14%).

In the sixth clip, the protagonist criticises train fares, which she uses as an absurd argument to visit her family less often. Most respondents recognised the acronym "AVE" (which stands for Spanish high-speed train), with only 8 students (14%) claiming they had not understood the reference. Most (38, or 67%) agreed that the given translation ("high-speed train") was appropriate and only 8 (9%) disagreed with said translation. It is worth mentioning that 25 (45%) would

eliminate the cultural element ("travelling by train"), as was done in the English dubbing; but 23 (41%) would use the Spanish acronym and add a short intratextual gloss ("AVE high-speed train"). No respondents would choose another Spanish equivalent, but 11 (20%) would have used the absolute universalisation ("Spanish high-speed train") or the more natural equivalent ("National Rail"). In this clip, the viewers are not exposed to any visual support, so the cultural reference appears in isolation and with little extralinguistic context that could determine its translation (Figure 7).

Finally, the last two clips, which have been merged and named 7a and 7b respectively, are consecutive parts of the same conversation, introducing references to three pop music singers who became famous after appearing on a talent show (*Operación Triunfo*) in the early noughties. Although Spanish Millennials plausibly know who the singers are, they might not be easily recognised by younger generations despite the audiovisual support offered, consisting of the lyrics of David Bisbal's song *Ave María* and a poster portraying him holding a mic. While many students did not understand (18, or 30%) or were unsure they had understood (20, or 35%) the musical references, many did write that they thought the conversation had to do with

Figure 7 Responses to Clip 6: Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Choose the preferred option
56 responses

16
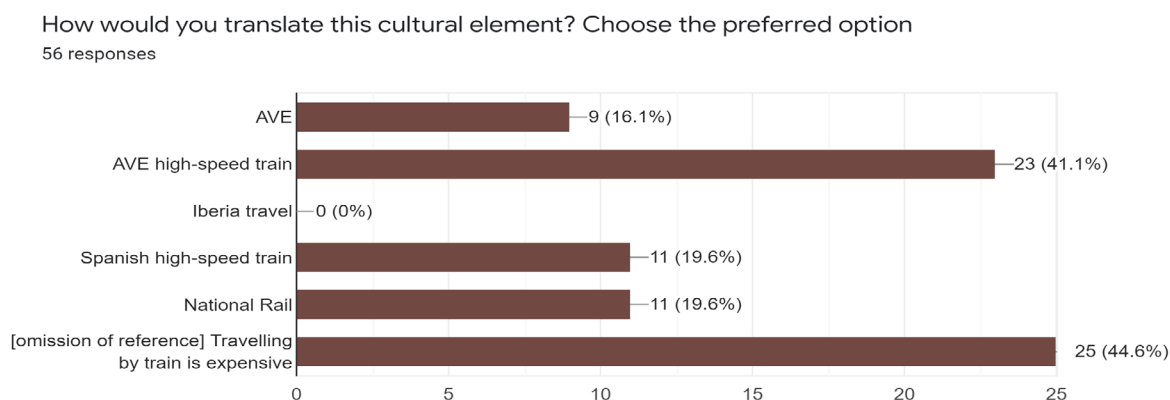
popular Spanish singers, and so 28 (49%) confirmed their grasp of the dialogue was correct (see Figure 8 and Figure 9).

On this occasion, most respondents (43, or 75%) agreed that rendering the first cultural element literally ("his music") was the best option. It could be inferred that respondents perhaps thought that the reference to singer David Bisbal, whose name is shown on a poster hung on the protagonist's wall in a close-up shot, was clear enough; only 6 (11%) would have added a reference to *Operación*

Triunfo talent show, whereas 7 (12%) would have removed the reference to the singer and used "girl bands or boy bands" instead (naturalisation). Unsurprisingly, the second cultural element was also deemed appropriate for retention ("Team Bisbal or Bustamante? What a stupid question. Team Chenoa forever") by 26 respondents (46%), though 15 (26%) thought that it should be stressed that Chenoa is a girl (specification). Therefore, the preferred options were those in line with the visual elements, which are key to the conveyance and understanding of the

Figure 8 Responses to Clip 7(a): Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Choose the preferred option
57 responses
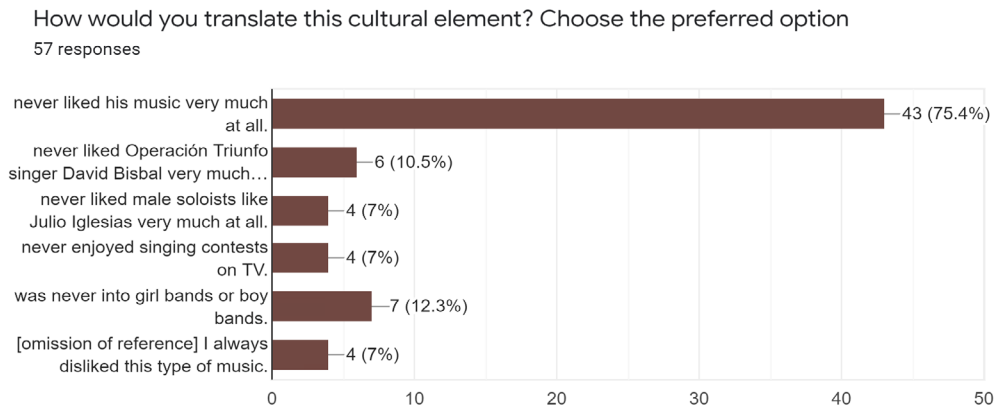
Figure 9 Responses to Clip 7(b): Translation Techniques

How would you translate this cultural element? Choose the preferred option
57 responses
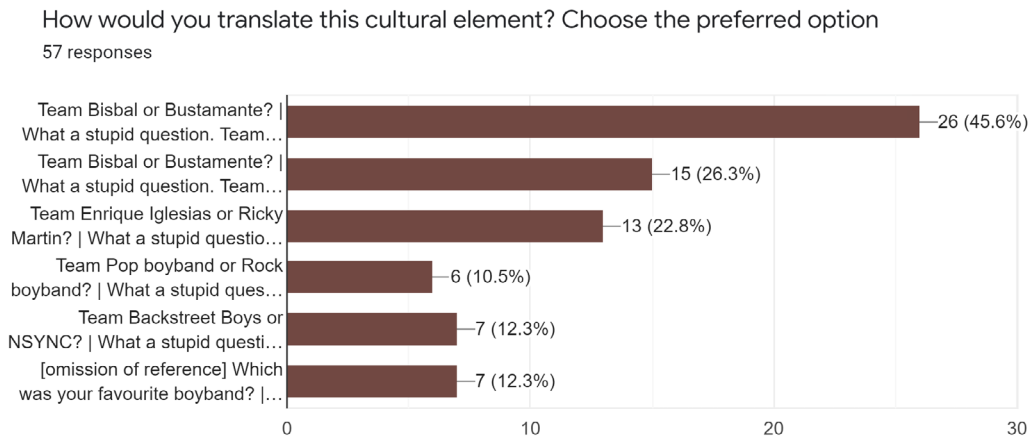
cultural element, helping both the translator and the viewer. However, some students were prone to using alternative Hispanic/Spanish references – 13 (23%) would have changed them and gone for the likes of Enrique Iglesias, Ricky Martin and Shakira (limited universalisation). The rest of the techniques were less preferred, but again some students (7, or 12%) would have opted for removing references altogether and prioritising the boy vs. girl band message that this exchange connotes.

The following sections will analyse the results obtained in quantifying terms.

Discussion

All the responses to the techniques that have been discussed in this section can be seen in Table 6, which shows all options chosen by students.

As seen in Figure 10, conservation and substitution techniques are equally distributed; overall, 49% of responses were conservation techniques, whereas 51% were substitution techniques. The literal translation options (aka retention) were the most popular choice preferred by 165 respondents (28%), closely followed by the specification (aka intratextual gloss) at 21% (124 participants).

Table 6 Number of Responses per Translation Technique for Each Clip

Clip	Conservation		Substitution				Total Number of Responses
	Retention	Specification	Limited Universalisation	Absolute Universalisation	Naturalisation	Elimination	
1	19	20	7	11	5	4	66
2	30	9	0	15	4	8	66
3	16	11	12	22	16	3	80
4	12	23	6	20	22	0	83
5	10	17	10	9	16	8	70
6	9	23	0	11	11	25	79
7a	43	6	4	4	7	4	68
7b	26	15	13	6	7	7	74
Total	165 (28%)	124 (21%)	52 (9%)	98 (17%)	88 (15%)	59 (10%)	=586 (=100%)

Figure 10 Count of Translation Techniques Chosen by Participants

	Retention	Specification	Limited universalisation	Absolute universalisation	Naturalisation	Elimination
■Total count	165	124	52	98	88	59
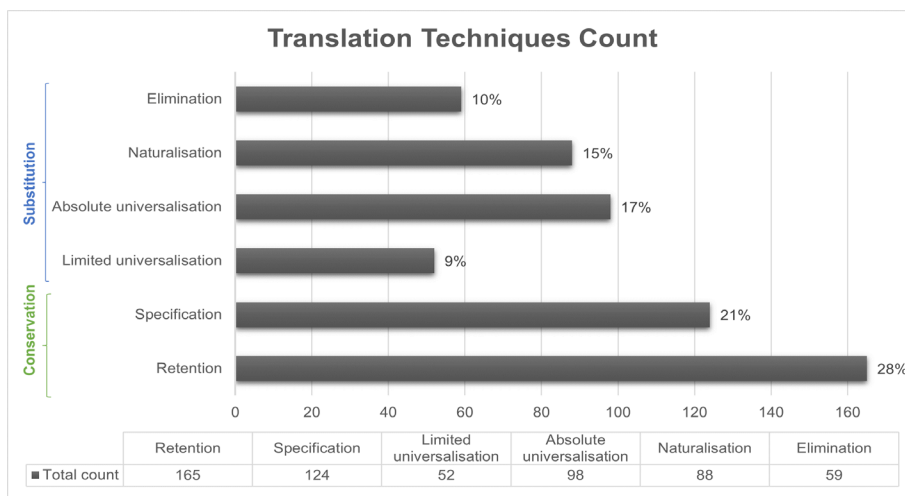
It seems that full neutralisation (aka absolute universalisation) and cultural adaptation (aka naturalisation) were the most convincing substitution techniques (98, or 17%, and 88, or 15%, respectively). Respondents were less prone to using better-known Spanish/Hispanic alternatives for the cultural elements (aka limited universalisation, preferred by 52 respondents or 9%); neither were they completely convinced about deleting the references and replacing them with a supposedly standardised version with no cultural items present (chosen by 59 of them or 19%).

Similarly to scholars who have examined the foreignisation-domestication continuum to produce taxonomies (Dore, 2019), the techniques applied in this study could be subsumed under conservation (aka foreignising or source-oriented) and substitution (aka domesticating or target-oriented). This paper has emphasised how these future translators perceive translation techniques when it comes to adapting cultural references in a more or less literal fashion. It has been observed that students seem to be keener on techniques that preserve the cultural references and perhaps explain them by paraphrasing them slightly, whereas substitution seems to be less preferable even where idiomaticity could potentially improve the naturalness of the dialogues in the English dubbings.

The above finding recalls a study by Spiteri Miggiani (2021) in which she notes a proclivity for the use of source calques and literal translation in English dubs while there is a low recurrence to the over-domestication of audiovisual productions. Having said that, it is worth mentioning that most of the respondents have received little training in professional or specialised translation, not least AVT. The respondents were enrolled on an undergraduate programme, in which the translation training provided is purely pedagogical and aims at honing their bilingual competence (i.e., comprehension and writing skills) in the target language (Spanish). This means that, despite the attempts made by translation educators, they might still attach greater importance to the comprehension and rendering of the source-text material, which in their eyes might as well mean translating as closely to the original — and its dictionary meaning — as possible according to a pedagogical translation tradition where the target audience is usually made up of fellow students or the evaluator (Steward, 2008).

Conclusions

The rapid spread of audiovisual products through SVoD platforms enables viewers to become accustomed to an unprecedented scene of globalised culture. This is particularly striking among young audiences, who tend to watch international films and have some knowledge of at least one foreign language and, therefore, its associated culture(s). An easier and better understanding of culture-bound scenes in audiovisual programmes may be achieved through didactic sequences such as the one used in this study. When audiovisual texts are contextualised in a specific cultural background, they seem to be partially untranslatable; however, the present study has proved that different strategies are eligible for rendering humour and cultural realities to meet the needs and preferences of the target audience. In this regard, this study has revealed that the sample (i.e., young adults who share a common British English language and culture and are studying Spanish as a foreign language in tertiary education) prefer an English dub that is respectful with the presence of those cultural elements (both visual and verbal) that contextualise the series.

The findings of the experiment show that the respondents of the present study were overall eager to keep cultural references as they are (i.e., conservation techniques), especially in cases where comprehension was not particularly problematic. In clips 1, 2, 7a, and 7b, the percentage of participants who fully understood the cultural reference after watching the clips ranged from 35–39%. In those cases, they particularly opposed domesticating practices such as using other Hispanic/

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Spanish references (i.e., limited universalisation). Specification was the most widely accepted among the Conservation techniques, along with retention for those passages constrained by the image. Substitution strategies were preferred for the passages with the lowest degree of comprehension of the cultural reference by the students (clips 3, 4, and 5, with rates of 22%, 24%, and 28%, respectively). The exception is Clip 6, the passage where the AVE is mentioned, for which 67% of respondents claimed to have fully understood the cultural reference but elimination was favoured. This datum is worth being further examined in future studies to better understand how English native speakers perceive the translation of certain references depending on the proximity to their culture as well as their degree of understanding.

When watching the dubbed version, the understanding of cultural references present in the translated dialogue somehow relies more heavily on the audiovisual support (i.e., the context in which the references appear). Even though the students were expected to have a significant grasp of popular Spanish language and culture(s), many misunderstandings were observed when analysing the open-ended questions. For instance, some respondents were misled by the reference to bikinis and the fact that a gay man uttered said sentence in Clip 4. On the other hand, many of them did not seem confident about their comprehension of said references but still reported high levels of understanding. This could also suggest the students had a good grasp of the visuals; for instance, many respondents made observations about the male clothing mentioned by a gay woman in Clip 2. Therefore, we can posit that having audiovisual support is key in the transfer, and subsequent understanding, of cultural references on screen.

This study has included a limited number of excerpts to better cater for the students' needs. Therefore, it offers an initial attempt at examining English speakers' cognitive and evaluative perceptions of Spanish comedies that have been dubbed into English. The findings provide relevant data that can be useful to pursue further research avenues on this front.

Future studies can further examine the perception of culture in English dubs. This audiovisual modality has recently boomed in English-speaking countries and yet requires further perception and reception research to better understand whether existing dubbings are deemed appropriate and satisfactory enough by viewers and whether foreignising or domesticating approaches are preferred when it comes to adapting cultural references on the screen.

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Case Studies

Title: Tela de lirios
Technique: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 1m x 1.4 m
1998

Language Variation in the Dubbing Into English of the Netflix Series *Baby* (2018–2020) and *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017–2020)

Variación lingüística en el doblaje al inglés de las series de Netflix *Baby* (2018-2020) y *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017-2020)

Variation linguistique dans le doublage en anglais des séries de Netflix *Baby* (2018-2020) et *Suburra : Blood on Rome* (2017-2020)

Variação linguística na dobragem em inglês das séries de Netflix *Baby* (2018-2020) e *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017-2020)

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Abstract

Although standard Italian is taught from primary school and is widely prevalent in the media, dialects are still spoken in many households all over the country. This trend is captured by many popular video-on-demand providers such as Netflix and HBO, who are diversifying their offer by promoting their own non-English language productions via both subtitling and dubbing. This article analyses how language variation, particularly in the form of dialect and slang, is adapted for dubbing in the Italian Netflix series Baby (2018-2020) and Suburra: Blood on Rome (2017–2020). Specifically, it examines the most common translational strategies that have been implemented in the dubbing of both series in English. In particular, dialectal elements are often translated directly or generalised, at times, with the addition of taboo words. Correspondingly, youth jargon is largely translated via direct translations or creative additions. Despite having two different age groups at the centre of the narration, similar translation strategies were used in the two series. The qualitative analysis demonstrates that dialect is used to define social disparity, since characters involved with criminality speak principally dialect whereas wealthy students, affluent characters, politicians, and churchmen draw on standard Italian primarily.

Keywords: Netflix, *Baby*, *Suburra: Blood on Rome,* language variation, dialects, slang, Italian-English translation, AVT, dubbing into English

Resumen

Aunque el italiano estándar se enseña desde la escuela primaria y prevalece ampliamente en los medios de comunicación, en muchos hogares de todo el país se siguen hablando dialectos. Esta tendencia es acogida por muchos proveedores de video por demanda, como Netflix y HBO, quienes están diversificando su oferta mediante la promoción de sus propias producciones en lengua no inglesa, tanto
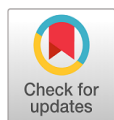
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a través del subtitulado como del doblaje. Este artículo analiza cómo la variación lingüística, en particular en forma de dialecto y jerga, se adapta al doblaje en las series italianas de Netflix *Baby* (2018–2020) y *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017–2020). En concreto, se examinan las estrategias traslativas más comunes que se han implementado en el doblaje de ambas series en inglés. Los elementos dialectales suelen traducirse de forma directa o generalizarse, a veces con la adición de palabras tabú. Por consiguiente, la jerga de los jóvenes se tradujo principalmente mediante traducción directa o adición creativa. A pesar de que las series se centran en grupos etarios distintos, se utilizaron estrategias traslativas similares. El análisis cualitativo demuestra que el dialecto se utiliza para definir la disparidad social, puesto que los personajes que participan en la criminalidad hablan principalmente en el dialecto, mientras que los estudiantes y personajes adinerados, los políticos y los clérigos utilizan sobre todo el italiano estándar.

Palabras clave: Netflix, *Baby*, *Suburra: Blood on Rome*, variación lingüística, dialectos, slang, traducción italiano-inglés, tav, doblaje al inglés

Résumé

Bien que l'italien standard soit enseigné dès l'école primaire et qu'il soit largement répandu dans les médias, les dialectes sont encore parlés dans de nombreux foyers à travers le pays. Cette tendance se reflète dans de nombreux fournisseurs de vidéo à la demande (*streaming*) tels que Netflix et hbo, qui sont en train de diversifier leur offre en promouvant des productions propres en langues autres que l'anglais par le biais du sous-titrage et du doublage. Cet article analyse comment la variation linguistique, en particulier sous la forme de dialectes et d'argot, est adaptée au doublage dans les séries italiennes de Netflix *Baby* (2018-2020) et *Suburra : Blood on Rome* (2017-2020). Plus précisément, il examine les stratégies de traduction les plus courantes mises en œuvre dans le doublage anglais des deux séries. En particulier, les éléments dialectaux sont souvent traduits directement ou généralisés, parfois avec l'ajout de mots tabous. De même, le jargon des jeunes est largement traduit par des traductions directes ou des ajouts créatifs. Bien que deux groupes d'âge différents soient au centre de la narration, des stratégies de traduction similaires ont été utilisées dans les deux séries. L'analyse qualitative démontre que le dialecte est utilisé pour définir la disparité sociale, puisque les personnages impliqués dans la criminalité parlent principalement en dialecte alors que les étudiants et personnages aisés, les politiciens et les ecclésiastiques utilisent principalement l'italien standard.

Mots-clef : Netflix, *Baby*, *Suburra : Blood on Rome*, variation linguistique, dialectes, slang, traduction italien-anglais, tav, doublage vidéo en anglais

Resumo

Embora a língua italiana padrão seja ensinada a partir da escola primária e seja amplamente difundida na mídia, os dialetos ainda são falados em muitos lares em todo o país. Esta tendência se reflete em muitos produtos audiovisuais destinados ao cinema, televisão e plataformas de streaming. Em um esforço para levar histórias locais a uma audiência global, provedores populares de vídeo sob demanda como Netflix e hbo estão diversificando suas ofertas, promovendo suas próprias produções em idioma não-inglês através da legendagem e da dublagem. Este artigo analisa como a variação linguística, particularmente na forma de dialeto e gíria, é adaptada à dobragem na série italiana *Baby* (2018-2020) e *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017-2020) da Netflix. Especificamente, ela examina

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como esta variação é traduzida do italiano para o inglês e estabelece as estratégias translacionais mais comuns implementadas na dublagem em inglês de ambas as séries. A análise qualitativa do espaço narrativo dado aos vários grupos sociais que produzem uma alta taxa de variação diastrática, onde muitos socioletos são utilizados por uma gama diversificada de caracteres, demonstra que o dialeto é utilizado para definir a disparidade social.

Palavras chave: Netflix, *Baby*, *Suburra: Blood on Rome*, variação linguística, dialetos, slang, tradução italiano-inglês, TAV, dublagem para o inglês

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Introduction

Since its creation in 1997 in California as a movie rental service, Netflix has gone a long way, becoming one of the world's leading video-on-demand platforms (McFadden, 2020) with over 209 million subscribers in over 190 countries worldwide, as of June 2021 (Moody, 2021). The spread of online technologies and the coincidental development of mobile devices are undoubtedly among the main factors that paved the way for the growth of internet entertainment providers (Fernández-Costales, 2018, p. 299). Over years of increasing success and diversification of its own business model, Netflix managed to identify and acknowledge viewers' increasing interest in local original productions. The term *local* is used in this paper to indicate original productions in countries other than the US, where the streaming company Netflix was founded. It all started with *Club de Cuervos* (2015-2019), produced in Mexico, followed by the sci-fi *3%* (Aguilera, 2016-2020), produced in Brazil. Although the former achieved resounding success in Mexico, the latter drew international attention. Hence, according to Kelly Luegenbiehl, Netflix's Vice President of Global Franchises, they made the decision to start producing locally to export globally (Ermisino 2019).

This article contributes to the field of audiovisual translation (AVT), a recognised sub-discipline within the wider discipline of translation studies. This research seeks to examine how the linguistic variation present in two Italian television series is rendered from Italian into English dubbed versions. In this vein, the aim is to understand which translation strategies are used for the dubbing of language variation, particularly into the English language, which is more traditionally associated with subtitling. The study reported here was built upon previous work that has only recently been carried out in AVT, providing new insights into the field. The main research questions were: (1) How and to what extent has the language variation of the original been maintained or altered in the dubbed version (Italian-English)? (2) What similar and dissimilar strategies are used to render cultural elements in each of the versions and what impact do they have on the narrative, the plot, and the context? To address these questions, building on excerpts from *Baby* (2018-2020) and *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017-2020), the article presents examples of translation strategies used in the dubbing of both series.

Why Dubbing?

Traditionally, audiovisual literature has included English-speaking countries (as well as Portugal, Greece, and Scandinavian countries) in the list of countries where audiovisual products are commonly subtitled, as opposed to dubbed (Antonini & Chiaro, 2005, p. 97; Chaume, 2012, p. 6). By contrast, Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Czech Republic, and Turkey, as well as parts of Central and South America (e.g., Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela), some Asian countries (e.g., China, Iran, Japan, South Korea) and some North African countries are among those where dubbing constitutes the norm in audiovisual translation (AVT) (Gagne & Wilton-Godberfforde, 2021, p. 163). Despite this traditional divide, in 2017, Netflix made the innovative decision to offer both dubbing and subtitles in English for some of its original series, starting with the Spanish *Cable Girls* (original title *Las chicas del cable*) (2017–2020) and the German *Dark* (Odar & Friese, 2017–2020) (Hayes, 2021, p. 2). This choice is reportedly attributed to market demand, since dubbed versions of renowned shows are more popular than their subtitled equivalents, as stated by Kelly Luegenbiehl, Vice-President of Netflix's Global Franchises (Roxborough, 2019). Hence, Netflix's growing investment in dubbing, between 25% and 35% per year, is fuelled by an annual increase in the consumption of dubbed content of 120% (Roxborough, 2019). Moreover, according to Netflix's International Dubbing Manager, Denise Kreeger, most US viewers watched the Brazilian series *3%* (Aguilera, 2016-2020) and the German drama series *Dark* (Odar & Friese,

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2017–2020) taking advantage of the dubbed version (Roettgers, 2018). Around 170 dubbing studios currently collaborate with Netflix, with the platform dubbing audiovisual products in at least 34 languages (Shaw, 2021). Brian Pearson, Netflix's Vice-President of Creative Services, confirmed that US viewership of dubbed content tripled since 2018, a clear sign that a greater audience exists for dubbed products in English-speaking countries.

The expansion rate that the platform is trying to reach in terms of dubbed AV products is astounding. Considering that film and TV studios ordinarily require months to arrange dubbing and then distribute international shows, Netflix's effort in attempting to release new shows every week in multiple languages at the same time (Shaw, 2021) is remarkable. However, despite the platform's determination in overcoming the cultural barrier linked to dubbing in English-speaking countries, followed by rigorous quality control (Shaw, 2021), many viewers are still reluctant. "Dubby" expressions, i.e., wording that does not correspond to natural speech, and lack of lip-sync (synchronisation with the movements of the actor's mouth) (Goldsmith, 2019) were among the most common criticisms towards the English dubbed version of *Money Heist* (original title, *La casa de papel,* Pina, 2017–present), which compelled Netflix to re-dub the first two series. This meant re-adjusting scripts and hiring a new dubbing director as well as a new cast of voice-over actors (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021, p. 3). All things considered, Anglophone viewers are more exposed to potential discrepancies and less susceptible to suspending their disbelief or to unconscious automatism, which is instead typical of those viewers who are used to dubbing (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021, p. 189).

A Boost to Local Productions: All Roads Lead to Rome

Believing that "great stories can come from anywhere and be loved everywhere" (Netflix, 2021a), Netflix's non-English content investments are also growing in relation to local series produced abroad, and in terms of their success. Standing as a testament, the French action-mystery series *Lupin* (Kay & Uzan, 2021-present) became the most-watched debut of any foreign language series in Netflix's history (Shaw, 2021), before being overtaken by *Squid Game* (Hwang, 2021-present), with its second part becoming the platform's largest non-English title in the second quarter of 2021, with 54-million-member households choosing to watch the French series in its first four weeks (Netflix 2021a). During the third quarter of 2021, the Korean series *Squid Game* (Hwang, 2021-present) turned out to be the platform's biggest TV show ever, with 142,000,000 member households globally watching the title in its first four weeks. The series has been ranked as Netflix's number-one programme in 94 countries (Netflix, 2021b). Additionally, the platform has even committed to intensifying the distribution of local original series by 2022 (Vivarelli, 2021) and increased its offices to 26 worldwide. These include Netflix's first office in Rome, whose opening was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak until the second half of 2022 (Whittock & Goldbart, 2022), in a neoclassic building called Villino Rattazzi, located near the U.S Embassy (Paolini, 2021). As confirmed by Eleonora Andreatta, Netflix Vice-President of Italian original series, this expansion demonstrates the platform's desire to establish a system of relationships and offer great prospects for the Italian creative community (Vivarelli, 2021). In 2020, five new Italian drama seasons were distributed on the platform, including the last chapter of the recurring series, *Suburra: Blood on Rome* and *Baby*. Numerous original films were also added to the platform, most remarkably *The Life Ahead* (original title *La vita davanti a sé*), starring Sophia Loren. The film was critically acclaimed and won a Golden Globe as well as an Academy Award nomination for Best Original Song (IMDB).

As of April 2021, ten Italian original TV series were present in Netflix's library (What's on Netflix, 2021), including the above-mentioned *Suburra: Blood on Rome* and *Baby*, which are the

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case studies of this article. Moreover, considering the forecast and enhancement that should be brought to Netflix by opening the hub in the Italian capital, the numbers of Italian Originals should be rising shortly. Therefore, the following section examines language variation, which is a predominant feature in Italian films and series.

Theoretical Framework

This section presents research on dubbing and language variation. Particularly, it addresses research on the increasing interest in English dubbing, as well as the intertwined proliferation of local productions undertaken by new platforms such as Netflix. Additionally, it examines some literature on the audiovisual translation of language variation, with a specific focus on geographic and social dialects.

Dubbing Dialects

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Language variation, in the form of dialect, plays a very important role in the history of Italian culture, as dialects are still spoken in many households all over the country. Numerous studies on language variation have been conducted within linguistics and translation studies since the 1960s, some of which are mentioned in this section. For instance, Halliday et al. (1964) acknowledged that language varies based on the type of situation; therefore, they described language variation as a continuum and divided it into user-related varieties i.e., dialects, and use-related varieties, that is registers (p. 77). In addition, due to its vast nature, the idea of a "whole language" has been considered challenging in translation. Hence, Catford (1965) suggested the idea of varieties within a language, or sub-languages (p. 83). In particular, Catford distinguished between varieties that are permanent to the performer (i.e., idiolects and dialects), and varieties that are transient since they vary with changes in the immediate situation (i.e., registers, styles, and modes) (Catford, 1965, p. 85). Within the study of linguistics, Gregory (1967) expanded on Catford's theory and defined

variation according to situation and context (p. 181). The former describes extra-textual features which can be semantically relevant to the text; the latter relates to the correlation between linguistic features and situational features that are fundamental in processing meaning. Later, building on previous studies, Hatim and Mason (1990) differentiated between dialects, i.e., user-related varieties that are orally and individually distinguishable, and registers, i.e., use-related varieties only different in language form (p. 39). In examining dialect within translation, Chaume (2012) divided dialects into five categories: geographical dialects, temporal dialects, social dialects, standard/non-standard dialects, idiolects (Chaume, 2012, p. 136). Some examples of geographical dialects and social dialects will be analysed below because these were the most common varieties encountered in the script of the first season of *Suburra: Blood on Rome* and *Baby*. Albeit most of the theorists above did not refer directly to the domain of audiovisual translation, they were included in the theoretical framework of this article due to their detailed investigation of language variation and its relevance to the examples found in the corpus examined from the series which are the object of analysis here.

Diatopic Variation: Geographical Dialects

A language varies within the different geographical areas in which it is used, thus generating geographical dialects. Generally speaking, if an audiovisual product contains only one dialect, it is prone to be translated into standard language in dubbing (Chaume, 2012, p. 137). Yet, when two or more dialects of the same language are used in an audiovisual product, the challenges faced by translators are much more complex. Ranzato (2010) suggests that, in limited cases, translators could attempt at translating dialects by playing with syntax and vocabulary in the target language, recreating a non-localised variation of the standard language (p. 120). This choice would be preferable to the not-so-politically-correct decision of replacing a dialect with another, as is the

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case for the Italian dubbing of the American animated television sitcom *The Simpsons* (Groening, 1989-present), where the citizens of Springfield are characterised through the use of particular accents which derive from other specific accents of the original American version (Fusari, 2007, p. 10).

Another hurdle set by diatopic variations is translating accents and pronunciation in multilingual films. When foreign characters speak with an accent, translators need to decide whether to imitate the same accent in dubbing, replace it with another accent if it is the same as the target language, or domesticate the accent by using standardisation techniques (Chaume, 2012, p. 138). The foreignising-domesticating dichotomy was previously examined by Venuti (2008), who puts these two concepts on a continuum and describes them as "ethical attitudes towards a foreign text and culture" (p. 19). Venuti's stance is towards foreignisation, which should make the target viewer aware of cultural and linguistic differences, thus giving more acknowledgement to the translator, although domesticating techniques are more common in British and American translation customs (Venuti, 2008, p. 15).

Diastratic Variation: Social Dialects or Jargons

Languages vary based on speakers' social group; this type of dialect is defined as social dialect. In order for translators to understand the socio-political implications of a specific dialect, they should first recognise the dialectal element in the original text and then verify whether the element is repeatedly used during the audiovisual product, or if it belongs to specific characters (Chaume, 2012, p. 139). For instance, in her research on idiolects in the animated series *The Simpsons* (Groening, 1989-present), Fusari (2007) determined that Bart Simpson's frequently-employed expression "eat my shorts" was translated into Italian as "ciucciati il calzino" (literally "suck your sock") (pp. 2-35). The language and particularly the catchphrase used by

Bart, one of the protagonists of the series, tries to mimic an exaggerated and mostly made-up form of youth slang which Italian translators managed to reproduce by using recreation strategies (Fusari, 2007, p. 7), that is by creating a set of expressions ad hoc for the character.

Language Variation in Other Italian Series Distributed Abroad

In both series analysed, dialect (mostly Romanesco dialect) is spoken predominantly by characters involved with the underworld, whereas affluent students, wealthy characters, politicians, and churchmen use mainly standard Italian. In the adaptation to English, translators did not choose to use an existing English-language dialect to avoid generating an artificial effect (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p, 41), but applied translation strategies that impacted morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. A similar approach was adopted in the translation of other Italian multilingual series based on books of significant international success. For instance, in her study on the literary translation of the series of novels about *Inspector Montalbano* (1994-2020) written by Andrea Camilleri, Segnini (2018) identified that a standard register was used to translate its language variation into Spanish and English although certain attempts at creative additions were undertaken in the translation into Catalan and French (p. 9). Direct translations and localisations of culture-specific elements were also common in the translation into English of Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan tetralogy *My Brilliant Friend* (Segnini, 2018, p. 11). In this instance, the diglossic feature, which distinguished social classes and registers used, was highlighted through indirect speech alluding to dialect (Goldstein & Reynolds, 2015). Even though this analysis was not directly based on the audiovisual version of these novels, the outcomes were very similar, as pinpointed by the study conducted by Bruti and Ranzato (2019).

In their investigation of the strategies adopted to translate popular Italian series containing numerous dialectal features, Bruti and Ranzato (2019)

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found several similarities in the strategies used to translate *Inspector Montalbano* (1999–2021) and *Romanzo criminale – La serie* (De Cataldo, 2008–2010). Specifically, Bruti and Ranzato (2019) found that dialectal expressions in the former were mostly standardised, neutralised, or compensated, although instances of expletive language were translated using marked language when alternative diatopic expressions could not be found (Bruti & Ranzato, 2019, p. 350). Standardisation was also observed as the main strategy for the translation of dialectal features in *Romanzo criminale – La serie* (2008–2010), along with an inclination to use equivalent slang forms in the target language (Bruti & Ranzato, 2019, pp. 351–353).

Method

This article addresses how language variation, particularly in the form of dialect and slang, is adapted for dubbing in the Italian Netflix series *Baby* and *Suburra: Blood on Rome*. It demonstrates that dialect is used to define social disparity by undertaking a qualitative analysis of the narrative space afforded to the diverse social groups who produce a high rate of diastratic variation, where many sociolects are used by a range of different characters. In examining how this variation is rendered linguistically from Italian into English, the article establishes the most common translational strategies that have been implemented in the English dubbing of both series. Additionally, the article determined how similar and dissimilar translation strategies have been employed despite having two different age groups at the centre of the narration.

To answer the research questions, sequences for analysis were selected from the first season of the series *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017) and the first season of the series *Baby* (2018). Only the first seasons of both series were selected for the purpose of this article considering the vast quantity of examples available and due to the space restraints set by the word-limit of a journal article. The analysis centred on how linguistic variation is transposed in the English-dubbed versions of both series. The

Dubbing Studio VSI Los Angeles dubbed *Suburra: Blood on Rome*; the Dubbing Director was Todd Haberkorn whereas the Adaptor was Greg Snegoff. The Dubbing Studio VSI Los Angeles also dubbed *Baby*, specifically Dubbing Director Carrie Keranen and Adaptors Carrie Keranen and Connor DeMita. In order to determine the linguistic elements to be analysed, including their respective translations, a taxonomy of translation strategies was selected. In her study on the dubbing of cultural references, Ranzato (2015) created a corpus-based taxonomy (pp. 83–84) adapted for dubbing from the one generated by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007), originally conceived for the subtitling of cultural references in audiovisual translation. Albeit Ranzato's taxonomy is not applied directly to language varieties, it was employed in this study as it is relevant to the extracts analysed.

Findings

The section below addresses how language variation, particularly in the form of dialect and slang, was adapted for dubbing in the Italian Netflix series *Baby* and *Suburra: Blood on Rome*. In order to provide a thorough evaluation, examples of the translation strategies applied to the dubbing of Italian language variation in English are presented. Hence, the most common strategies (e.g., direct translation, generalisation, creative addition, etc.) are illustrated by dialogue excerpts from the corpus, in the following sections of the article.

Suburra: Blood on Rome: A Novel, a Film, a Series

The Italian crime drama series (set in Rome) serves as a prequel to the 2015 film *Suburra*, which was also inspired by the novel of the same name by Giancarlo De Cataldo and Carlo Bonini (2013). It is the first Italian-language original television series produced by Netflix (Niola, 2017) and is inspired by the Mafia Capitale investigation focused on corruption and power struggles among organised crime, politicians, and churchmen in Rome (Caprara, 2019). The investigation, which

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concluded in 2014, resulted in 39 people's detention, including Massimo Carminati and Salvatore Buzzi. Together, they created a system based on political power in order to control contracts in the sector of environmental and social policies, as well as a complex organisational structure that included criminals, politicians, entrepreneurs, and professionals, in addition to connections to organised crime (Pezzi, 2019, p. 515). Using illicit methods such as extortion, bribery, violence, and corruption, Carminati and Buzzi's system is said to have created revenues of over 204 million euros (Fusani, 2014). The label "Mafia Capitale", initially created by the media, is given to the fact that the organisation had a system of a mafia-like association that was not based in southern Italy but in Rome, the country's capital.

Inspired by the investigation, in 2013, judge and playwright Giancarlo De Cataldo and journalist Carlo Bonini published a best-seller novel titled *Suburra* (De Cataldo & Bonini, 2013). The title is due to the homonymous filthy and disreputable but populous neighbourhood of Ancient Rome, home to the urban underclass who used to live there in miserable conditions (Treccani, 2021b). As mentioned above, the film *Suburra* (2015) is inspired by the novel of the same name; however, several differences can be noticed in relation to the characterisation of the protagonists and some narratives that were omitted or modified for the screen (Koch 2017).

The series *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017–2020) is made up of three seasons and a total of 24 episodes. The first episode opens with the resignation of the mayor of Rome. This power vacuum creates considerable consequences, particularly, concerning the assignment of some territories in Ostia, which are disputed among many. From the first episode, it is clear that Samurai is the boss and everyone must submit. From the beginning, Samurai is determined to bribe Amedeo Cinaglia, an honest and humble city councillor who initially refuses any enticement. Things change, however, when he realises that in a world like the one he lives

in, candid people do not go far. Sara Monaschi, who works as an auditor for the Vatican, is also interested in the land in Ostia and wants it to be assigned to her husband's building company. She uses her influence on Monsignor Theodosius as a way to achieve her target and plans for him an evening of illegal substances and prostitutes thanks to the help of her young lover Gabriele (often shortened as Lele).

The young man is the middle-class son of a policeman. Lele maintains an on-and-off affair with Sara Monaschi and tries to keep up his small-scale drug trafficking despite the threats received by Samurai for invading his territory. Lele soon meets the other two protagonists of the series: Spadino Adami, a member of a gypsy family who live on the outskirts of Rome, and Aureliano Adami, who, on the other hand, is part of a prominent family in Ostia. The three men happen to witness Monsignor Theodosius fall ill during the soirée, surrounded by drugs and prostitutes, and decide to blackmail him. The fight for Ostia is constantly in the background of the first season whereas the unexpected friendship between the three protagonists is at the forefront. Spadino falls for Aureliano although he is forced by his family to get married to Angelica.

Dubbing Strategies: Suburra

The excerpts in the following tables contain several examples of regionalisms and taboo words with their respective translation for the dubbing offered by Netflix. Usually, in subtitling, swear words and taboo words are softened through the use of euphemisms or totally omitted (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021, p. 189); nevertheless, Ciampi's (2019) research on youth identities in dubbing (2019) demonstrated a tendency to apply retention strategies to the translation of taboo words, which could be read as a sign of changes in cultural values (Ciampi, 2019, p. 278). Table 1 presents an example of compensation whereby the swearword (1) *porca de quella puttana*, which could have been translated as "for fuck's sake", was

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Table 1 Compensation of Taboo Words

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Aureliano Adami	Ma *porca de quella puttana* (1), ma ce l'hai l'occhi? Tu lo vedi o no la gente che locali vole frequentà? Su quer chiosco *ce butti du spicci* (2), se riempie. E un certo tipo de clientela, oltre che magnà e beve, *vole pippà* (3).	But *for fuck's sake,* have you got eyes? Do you see or not what kind of places people want to hang out in? On that kiosk *you throw two coins,* it fills up. And a certain type of clientele, other than eating and drinking, *wants to snort.*	I mean, *for Christ's sake,* have you got eyes or what? Do you see *what kinda fucking* places people want? I know it's a dump but t*hrow a little money at it* and it'll fill up! And certain kinds of clients, beside eating and drinking, *they wanna do a couple lines!*

Table 2 Creative Addition of Dialectal Phrase

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Sicilian	O sentissi? *O pidocchio ha la tosse* (4). Però si scordò che *i piccioli* (5) sugnu i nostri.	Did you hear him? *The head lice is coughing.* But he forgot that the *money* was ours.	D'you hear that? *The mouse that roared.* Except he forgot he's roaring with our *money.*

Table 3 Direct Translation and Generalization of Dialect

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Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
2	Spadino	E *guardie* (6) 'n ce stanno. To' detto, *zio Prete ha smartito* (7). Vedrai mo come *viene a cuccia* (8).	The *guards* are not there. I told you, *uncle priest got scared.* You'll see now how he *comes to the doghouse.*	No *cops* around. What did I tell you, *that fucking priest is ours.* Now watch as *he rolls over.*

mitigated by "for Christ's sake". Yet, the swearing element recurs later in the dialogue, where the Italian word *che* [what kind] was translated as "what kinda fucking". Moreover, the dialectal expressions (2) *ce butti du spicci* [throw two coins] and (3), *vole pippà* [want to snort] are explicitly and creatively translated.

In Table 2, the Sicilian dialectal phrase (4) *o pidocchio ha la tosse* [the head louse is coughing] was translated metaphorically through another creative addition. The additional verb "roaring" is then repeated to translate (5) *i piccioli*. In parallel with the standardised rendition of Roman dialectal expressions, Table 2 shows no reference to the Sicilian provenance of the character. Any viewer who chooses to watch the series dubbed in English can only understand that the dialogue takes place

between a Roman gangster and a representative of the Sicilian mafia based on the context.

Table 3 shows an excerpt providing further examples of Roman dialect. Particularly, in (6) *guardie*, the slang word used to indicate law enforcement, is translated via a direct translation. In (7), *zio Prete* [uncle priest] is rendered into the additional swearword "fucking". In the original script, despite the presence of the word *zio* [uncle], omitted in the English dubbing, no reference is made to a family member. The expression is, in fact, used in central and southern Italian regions as a form of address for older family members and members of the Catholic Church (Treccani, 2021c). Later in the dialogue, the regional verbal expression *ha smartito* [got scared] is generalised with "is ours" to indicate Spadino's realisation that Monsignor

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Table 4 Explicitation of a Geographical Reference

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Tullio Adami	E invece tu pe prima cosa vai lì e je chiedi scusa e je porti i sordi, i tua pe la precisione. Quelli che piji dalla roba *dei Cancelli (9)*.	And instead you firstly go there and apologise and you bring him the money, yours to be precise. The one you get from the stuff at the *Cancelli* area.	You're gonna move your butt over there and make some excuse, tell em you're sorry. And you bring the money, yours to be precise, what you make out of *the north end.*

Table 5 Calque of a Taboo Word

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
2	Aureliano Adami	(…) io ce vengo de giorno, quando non c'è nessuno che *me rompe li cojioni* (10)	(…) I come here during the day, when there's no one that can piss me off.	(…) I come here during the day, when there's no one around to *bust my balls*

Theodosiou will very likely fulfil their requests without having the option of refusing. Finally, the metaphor in (8) *viene a cuccia* [comes to the doghouse], intended as "to lie down", infers that the priest is expected to have a submissive reaction and is translated using a direct translation.

Table 4 displays an example of a geographic reference in (9) *i Cancelli¸ which* is translated with explicitation. Indeed, (9) indicates an area of Ostia towards the southern shore where entry to the beach is free of charge. This is different from the northern and central areas of Ostia Lido where visitors are charged by *stabilimenti* [beach clubs] if they intend to stay on the beach and use parasols, sun loungers, etc. This regional cultural reference would be obscure for anyone even for Italian speakers, who are not familiar with the geography of Ostia and its neighbouring areas. The explicitation in the English dubbing helps viewers understand the geographic clarification made by Tullio Adami to his son Aureliano.

Additionally, Table 5 presents an indirect example of calque, which could potentially be unnoticeable to American viewers since it contains an idiom that belongs to American English (American Heritage®, 2011). Indeed, the dialectal taboo expression (10) *me rompe li cojoni*, from

the Italian *rompere i coglioni* [to break someone's balls], is translated as "bust my balls", which infers the same idea. This translation choice could be considered unclear since more neutral expressions, which bear similar meanings, could have been used, without creating misperceptions in non-American viewers.

Finally, an example of repetition can be found in Table 6, where the form of address (11) *Monsignor* is repeated in English dubbing. In fact, (11) represents a title used with the name of a Roman Catholic priest of high rank (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus, 2021). Although an equivalent noun exists in numerous other languages, the Italian word *Monsignor* is used in standard English, therefore it is repeated in the English dubbing.

Similarly to the analysis proposed above, the following section presents a review of the translation strategies applied to the dubbing of Italian language variation in English for the first season of the series *Baby* (2018).

Baby: A Truly Roman Teen Drama

If you're 16 and live in the most beautiful neighbourhood in Rome, you're lucky. Ours is the best possible world. Like exotic fish in a pristine tank longing for

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Table 6 Repetition of a Form of Address

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Sara Monaschi	D'accordo. Lo so ma la commissione è spaccata. L'altro concorso è in mano alla maggioranza. Quello che conta è il voto del *Monsignor (11)* Theodosiou, sono mesi che ci lavoro. Va bene, oggi lo inchioderò	Agreed. I know but the commission is split. The other bid is in the hands of the majority. What matters is *Monsignor* Theodosiou's vote, it's been months that I've worked on that. Ok, today I will frame him.	I do. I know, but the committee is split, the other company has the majority. *Monsignor* Theodosious's vote is the tie-breaker. I've been after him for months. Fine. Yes, I will nail it today.

the sea. That's why, even though everything looks perfect, to survive... We need a secret life. (Le Fosse et al., 2018)

The opening scene of the series sets a clear ambience: privileged teenagers, wealthy families, and postcard-like sceneries. They feel trapped in their desirable lives, besieged by boredom, and longing for financial independence and sexual freedom. These are the main reasons why Chiara (Benedetta Porcaroli) and Ludovica (Alice Pagani) are lured into joining the underworld of underage prostitution. The former is a model student initially unaware that her parents are separated yet still living together. She is also bored with her upper-class upbringing, which provides her with every opportunity but no sense of satisfaction. The latter is considered a rebel by her schoolmates (mostly because of a sex tape leaked by her popular ex-boyfriend). She has financial issues, due to the erratic behaviour of her mother and the refusal of accepting money from her estranged father. Those two apparently different girls become friends, attend exclusive parties together, and fall into the trap set by entrepreneur Saverio (Paolo Calabresi), who introduces them to the underworld of prostitution (Nicolau, 2018). The series also revolves around teenage love stories as well as more difficult topics such as bullying and drug trafficking.

Written by a group of young Roman authors, *Baby* is loosely based on the 2013 prostitution ring scandal which involved two minors and over 50 high-profile clients in the Roman upper-class

Parioli district (Autieri, 2014). As mentioned earlier, the series *Baby* does not only revolve around the double lives of the protagonists, but also the love affairs of their schoolmates. For instance, Damiano (Riccardo Mandolini), a character who is not linked to real events, moves to Parioli after growing up in Quarticciolo (a deprived area of eastern Rome). Initially, he sells drugs in his new school and falls in love with Chiara. From a language perspective, his character is the epicentre of regionalisms and cultural references particularly linked to his district of provenance, mostly referred to by other characters in a derogatory way. His constant use of dialect, in opposition to the posh pronunciation of standard Italian used by Chiara and her upper-class friends, defines the evident boundary between his disadvantaged upbringing and their privileged background.

Dubbing Strategies in *Baby*

In Table 7, two translation strategies can be identified. The first is a concretisation, whereby (12) *l'interrogazione* is replaced by a "test" in mathematics, losing the connotation of an oral exam, which is usually more feared by students than written exams. Later, (13) *un cazzo* [fuck all] is generalised to "any" and the correspondence with the word "fucking", which bears a similar meaning, is delayed, thus implying the use of a compensation strategy.

The same character, Ludovica, is at the centre of the following excerpt. Despite the presence of only one line, Table 8 displays two translation strategies used. Firstly, the Roman definite

Table 7 Concretisation of a Cultural Reference and Generalization of a Taboo Word

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Ludovica	(…) è che c'ho *l'interrogazione* (12) di matematica… e non so *un cazzo* (13), quindi mi stavo preparando.	(…) it's that I have the maths *oral test*… and I know *fuck all*, so I was preparing.	(…) it's just, I got a *test* today in <u>fucking</u> mathematics… and I don't know *any* of it, so I need to prepare for the worst.

Table 8 Direct Translation of Dialect and Situational Substitution

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Student	Ecco *er Secchiello* (14)	Here is *the Bucket*	Here comes *the Slut*

article *er*, is translated as "the" via a direct translation. The dialectal nuance is not transferred although the intended meaning remains unvaried. Secondly, a situational substitution is used to translate *Secchiello* into "Slut" since the first word is not translated but replaced by a word with a different meaning. The Italian word *secchiello*, literally "bucket", is employed by most characters when referring to Ludovica, probably because her bob haircut reminds them of a bucket hat. The use of the derogatory word "slut" as a substitute is more likely to be linked to the poor relationship between Ludovica and her peers, which, throughout the series, also seems evidently linked to her bad reputation.

Table 9 and Table 10 display different strategies to translate the same word, *coatto*. The Roman term is usually employed to represent a coarse individual who speaks vulgarly, has poor taste in clothes, and tends to live in deprived suburban areas (Treccani, 2021a). In Table 9, the word is translated via a creative addition with a possible allusion to the good looks of the character described.

Nonetheless, the same word is generalised in Table 10, where a negative connotation is added to the character, who is described as a "bad boy". The cultural references to two very different *quartieri* [districts] of Rome were omitted. Indeed, a reference to the upper-class

neighbourhood of Parioli is generalised through the use of the adjective "posh", and so is the allusion to the working-class area of Quarticciolo, through the use of the noun "ghetto".

Unlike dialogues among upper-class characters, every conversation between Damiano, a drug dealer, and Falco, his supplier, is marked by a distinct presence of Roman dialect. Frequently, dialectal elements are generalised or translated directly. Examples of this are a) the verb *semo*, replacing the standard-Italian *siamo* [we are]; b) *nun*, rather than the standardised *non* [don't]; c) two apocopes, that is, the truncation of the word *tornare* [to come back] into *torna'* are typical elements of the Roman dialect; d) (19) *tre piotte*, another element of the Roman dialect, is explicitly translated as "300 euros" (Table 11).

Similarly, the same dialectal connotations can be identified in dialogues between Damiano and Fiore, another supplier. As seen in Table 12, the first dialectal exclamation (20) *ma che davero* is omitted although a reference to its meaning is present with a compensation, "I can't believe it!". Moreover, the noun (21) *bottarella* [blow] is generalised as "time" without any specific reference to drug intake as the Roman word would otherwise entail. The interjective expressions (22) *macché* and (23) *aho'*, typical of the Roman dialect, are also eliminated. In the final sentence,

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Table 9 Creative Addition of a Slang Word

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
1	Fabio	E mi lasciate da solo col *coatto* (15)	And you leave me here alone with the *chav*	I'll stay here with your *handsome trash*

Table 10 Omission of Geographical References and Generalisation of a Slang Word

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
2	Fabio	La principessa dei *Parioli* (16) con il *coatto* (17) del *Quarticciolo*? (18)	The princess from *Parioli district* with the *chav* from *Quarticciolo district*?	The *posh* princess has a thing for the *bad boy* from the *ghetto*, uh?

Table 11 Generalisation and Direct Translation of Dialect

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
4	Falco	Allora forse non se semo capiti. A me me devono torna' *tre piotte* (19) entro domani. Poi, come li rimedi, sono cazzi tuoi. Nun me fa torna'.	So maybe we are not understood. I need to have *300 euros* returned to me by tomorrow. Then, how you get them, it's your fucking problem. Don't make me come back.	I guess you didn't understand me. You're gonna hand me *300 euros* by tomorrow and I don't give a shit how you get it. Don't make me come back.

Table 12 Omission and Compensation of Dialect

Episode	Character	Original Dialogue	Back Translation	Dubbing
5	Fiore	*Ma che davero?* (20) A prima *bottarella?* (21) Prova!	*But really?* The first *blow?* Try!	*Is this your first time?* I can't believe it!
	Damiano	No, *macché,* (22) no.	No, *as if,* no.	No, *of course not.*
	Fiore	*Aho'* (23), provala. Questa tra i *fiji de papà* (24) va a *rubba* (25).	*Hey,* try it. This, among *dad's children sells well.*	Try it, *rich kids love* this stuff.

(24) *fiji de papà* [dad's children], is generalised as "rich kids". Finally, (25) *rubba*, an example of doubling of voiced occlusive in intervocalic position, is neither transferred with a dialectal reference; however, the intended meaning is maintained.

Conclusions

The goal of this study was to address how language variation, particularly in the form of dialect and slang, was adapted for dubbing in the Italian Netflix series *Baby* and *Suburra: Blood on Rome*. This article provided examples of translation strategies applied to the dubbing of Italian language variation in English. It demonstrated that dialect was used to define social disparity by undertaking a qualitative analysis of the narrative space afforded to the diverse social groups who produce a high rate of diastratic variation, where many sociolects are used by a range of different characters.

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In fact, the use of standard Italian has frequently been associated with higher education and higher social status. On the contrary, the "uncontrolled and dominant use of dialect in daily communication is regarded as a sign of lower education and unsuccessful Italianisation" (Dal Negro & Vietti, 2011, pp. 73–74). In both series analysed, characters involved with criminality speak principally dialect whereas wealthy students, affluent characters, politicians, and churchmen draw on standard Italian primarily.

As mentioned before, in the adaptation to English, translators did not choose to use an existing English-language dialect to avoid generating an artificial effect (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 41), but applied translation strategies that concerned morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. Consistently, in examining how language variation was rendered in this study from Italian into English, the article established the most common translational strategies implemented in the dubbing of the two series in English. In particular, dialectal elements were often translated directly or generalised, at times, with the addition of taboo words. Correspondingly, youth jargon was largely translated via direct translations or creative additions as observed in Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10.

In the series *Suburra: Blood on Rome,* dialectal expressions used by characters Aureliano and Spadino were often translated with *explicitations*, generalisations, or creative translations, sometimes, with the addition of a taboo expression via compensation as observed in Table 1, Table 3, and Table 5. In the series *Baby*, similar translation strategies were employed to translate dialectal expressions used by characters Damiano and Fiore as observed in the direct translations and generalisations in Table 11 and Table 12.

Finally, despite having two different age groups at the centre of the narration, similar translation strategies were used in the two series. This could be associated with the fact that the same dubbing studio, VSI Los Angeles, performed the English dubbing of both *Suburra: Blood on Rome* and *Baby*.

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17

Quality Assessment of the English Subtitles in Five International Award-Winning Colombian Films

Evaluación de la calidad de los subtítulos en inglés en cinco películas colombianas premiadas en eventos internacionales

Évaluation de la qualité des sous-titres anglais dans cinq films colombiens primés lors d'événements internationaux

Avaliação da qualidade das legendas em inglês de cinco filmes colombianos que ganharam prêmios em eventos internacionais

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Abstract

The Colombian film industry is growing and gaining relevance in the international market, which demands products that comply with the highest quality standards. Consequently, a study was designed to analyze the current English subtitle quality of five Colombian films that participated in different international film festivals from 2012 to 2018 and won at least one award: *La sirga* by William Vega (2012), *La playa D.C.* by Juan Andrés Arango (2013), *Tierra en la lengua* by Rubén Mendoza (2014), *La tierra y la sombra* by César Augusto Acevedo (2015), and *Niña errante* by Rubén Mendoza (2018). The subtitles were examined using Pedersen's (2017) FAR model to have a general overview of their quality. The results evidenced a weakness in the functional equivalence category by presenting mistranslations in many of the cultural references and idiomatic expressions, potentially affecting the audience's reception and, therefore, jeopardizing the international success of the films. Additionally, the readability category included many segmentation and spotting errors. In general, the subtitles comply with the subtitling guidelines regarding reading speed and line length but need to improve the transmission of idiomatic expressions and the segmentation of the subtitles.

Keywords: AVT, FAR model, subtitling into English, Colombian films, quality assessment, error analysis

Resumen

La industria cinematográfica colombiana está creciendo y ganando relevancia en el mercado internacional, pero esto exige productos que cumplan con los más altos estándares de calidad. En consecuencia, se diseñó un estudio para analizar la calidad actual de los subtítulos en inglés de cinco películas colombianas que participaron en diferentes festivales internacionales de cine entre 2012 y 2018

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y obtuvieron al menos un premio: *La sirga,* de William Vega (2012); *La playa D.C.,* de Juan Andrés Arango (2013); *Tierra en la lengua,* de Rubén Mendoza (2014); *La tierra y la sombra,* de César Augusto Acevedo (2015), y *Niña errante,* de Rubén Mendoza (2018). Los subtítulos fueron examinados mediante el modelo FAR de Pedersen (2017) para tener una visión general de su calidad. Los resultados evidenciaron una debilidad en la categoría de equivalencia funcional al presentar errores de traducción en muchas de las referencias culturales y expresiones idiomáticas, afectando potencialmente a la recepción del público y, por tanto, poniendo en peligro el éxito internacional de las películas. Además, la categoría de legibilidad incluyó muchos errores de segmentación y localización. En general, los subtítulos cumplen las directrices de subtitulación en cuanto a velocidad de lectura y longitud de línea, pero necesitan mejorar la transmisión de expresiones idiomáticas y la segmentación de los subtítulos.

Palabras clave: TAV, modelo FAR, subtitulado al inglés, cine colombiano, evaluación de calidad, análisis de errores

Résumé

L'industrie cinématographique colombienne se développe et gagne en importance sur le marché international, mais cela exige des produits qui répondent aux normes de qualité les plus élevées. Par conséquent, une étude a été conçue pour analyser la qualité actuelle des sous-titres anglais de cinq films colombiens qui ont participé à différents festivals internationaux du cinéma entre 2012 et 2018 et ont remporté au moins un prix : *La sirga,* de William Vega (2012); *La playa D.C.,* de Juan Andrés Arango (2013); *Tierra en la lengua,* de Rubén Mendoza (2014); *La tierra y la sombra,* de César Augusto Acevedo (2015), et *Niña errante,* de Rubén Mendoza (2018). Les sous-titres ont été examinés à l'aide du modèle FAR de Pedersen (2017) afin d'obtenir un aperçu de leur qualité. Les résultats ont mis en évidence une faiblesse dans la catégorie de l'équivalence fonctionnelle en présentant des erreurs de traduction dans de nombreuses références culturelles et expressions idiomatiques, ce qui pourrait affecter la réception du public et donc compromettre le succès international des films. En outre, la catégorie de lisibilité comprenait de nombreuses erreurs de segmentation et de localisation. En général, les sous-titres répondent aux directives de sous-titrage en termes de vitesse de lecture et de longueur de ligne, mais doivent améliorer la transmission des expressions idiomatiques et la segmentation des sous-titres.

Mots-clef : TAV, modèle FAR, sous-titrage vers l'anglais, cinéma colombien, évaluation de qualité, analyse des erreures

Resumo

A indústria cinematográfica colombiana está crescendo e ganhando relevância no mercado internacional, mas isso exigirá produtos que atendam aos mais altos padrões de qualidade. Por isso, foi elaborado um estudo para analisar a qualidade atual das legendas em inglês de cinco filmes colombianos que participaram de diferentes festivais internacionais de cinema entre 2012 e 2018 e ganharam pelo menos um prêmio: *La sirga,* de William Vega (2012); *La playa D.C.,* de Juan Andrés Arango (2013); *Tierra en la lengua,* de Rubén Mendoza (2014); *La tierra y la sombra,* de César Augusto Acevedo (2015), e *Niña errante,* de Rubén Mendoza (2018). As legendas foram examinadas

usando o modelo far de Pedersen (2017) para obter uma visão geral de sua qualidade. Os resultados evidenciaram uma fraqueza na categoria de equivalência funcional ao apresentar erros de tradução em muitas das referências culturais e expressões idiomáticas, o que pode afetar a recepção do público e, assim, comprometer o sucesso internacional dos filmes. Além disso, a categoria legibilidade incluiu muitos erros de segmentação e localização. Em geral, as legendas atendem às diretrizes de legendagem em termos de velocidade de leitura e comprimento de linha, mas precisam melhorar a transmissão de expressões idiomáticas e a segmentação das legendas.

Palavras chave: TAV, modelo FAR, legendagem para o inglês, cinema colombiano, avaliação de qualidade, análise de erros

3

Introduction

The film industry is a multi-billion-dollar business providing entertainment to millions of viewers globally. Hundreds of movies are released each year, and the United States and Canada alone released over 700 films per year between 2014 and 2019 (Navarro, 2022) in addition to the thousands of films and series available on streaming platforms such as Netflix, which had over 2000 titles available in the same period (Soda, 2019). However, translation is key to globalization and the international success of any industry.

During Netflix's FQ4 Earnings Call in January 2022, Theodore Sarandos, Co-CEO of Netflix, expressed that "great storytelling from anywhere in the world can entertain the world" (Gupta, 2022, p. 6), and reaching the entire world is only possible through translation. The biggest cinematographic hits such as *Joker*, *Avengers*, *Squid Game*, *Money Heist*, and many others would not have become global phenomena without their dubbed and subtitled versions, which are the most common translation modalities to broadcast programs in television, cinema and streaming platforms. During the same call, Gregory K. Peters, Netflix's COO, stated that the streaming platform subtitled seven million run-time minutes and dubbed five million run-time minutes in 2021 (Gupta, 2022), demonstrating a small gap between subtitling and dubbing. However, the company usually dubs into nine languages and offers subtitles in 27 (Goldsmith, 2019), which makes the gap between the two modalities more considerable; and this could be related to the difference in time and money necessary to produce each translation modality.

Cinema was born in Paris with the Lumière brothers, but the biggest muscle in the industry continues to be Hollywood (Nowell-Smith, 2017). Nonetheless, in recent years other territories have presented internationally successful films such as *Rome* (2018) by Alfonso Cuarón (México), *A Fantastic Woman* (2017) by Sebastián Lelio (Chile), *Embrace of the Serpent* (2015) by Ciro

Guerra (Colombia), *Wild Tales* (2014) by Damián Szifron (Argentina), and *Parasites* (2019) by Bong Joon-Ho (South Korea). On the series side, Netflix has produced several non-English shows that have become global phenomena: *Money Heist* (Spain), *Lupin* (France), *Elite* (Spain), *Dark* (Germany), *Squid Game* (South Korea). According to Bela Bajaria, Netflix's global head of TV, the viewing of non-English language content in the US increased by 71% between 2019 and 2021 (Avila, 2021).

Bigger audiences come with more considerable pressure on the quality of the productions. In this case, English subtitles become one of the barriers in the way to the heart of the English-speaking audiences, as expressed by Bong Joon-Ho, the director of *Parasites*, through his interpreter, Sharon Choi, during the Golden Globes ceremony of 2020, "Once you overcome the one-inch-tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films" (Bucaria, 2022). Although small countries, such as Colombia, have many other barriers to overcome before reaching international markets, subtitles will also determine the industry's growth.

Streaming platforms have globalized and revolutionized cinema and television, but this also means there are many critical eyes on their products. For example, there have been several controversies regarding Netflix's subtitles, one of the more recent was about the translation into Spanish and English of the subtitles of *Squid Game,* where the fans noticed and complained about the discrepancies between the subtitles and the original audio, demonstrating how important it is for the public to have high-quality subtitles.

Cinematographic Industry in Colombia

In 1922, the first fiction feature film produced in Colombia was *María* by Máximo Calvo Olmedo, and the following six years are considered to be the Golden Age of the Colombian cinema, with around 14 feature films recorded in the country (Idartes, 2020). One of the most important

moments in the history of the country's cinema was when Victor Gaviria's *Rodrigo D: No futuro* (1990) was the first Colombian film to participate in the Cannes Film Festival, and a bigger surprise arrived nine years later when *La vendedora de rosas* (1998), from the same director, was part of the official selection in Cannes (Correa, 1999). However, it took over 20 years to see another international success of this magnitude when Ciro Guerra's *Embrace of the Serpent* made its way to the Oscars in 2016.

The industry is growing steadily. In 2022, there were 194 films released, re-released, or broadcasted in film festivals in Colombia—154 less than in 2019, where 354 films were released (Proimágenes Colombia, 2021). However, this is the effect of the pandemic; the pre-pandemic statistics reveal there was a constant increase in the number of films released and box office sales in the national cinemas (Proimágenes Colombia, 2021). Now Netflix, Prime Video, and HBO are producing original content in the country, and programs like the Colombian Film Commission are working on the international projection of Colombia in the audiovisual market. The objective of this program is the promotion of the country as a destination for international audiovisual production. Thus, translation will play a determining role in all the stages of these processes.

Considering the increasing international recognition of the Colombian film industry, there is an increasing need to assess the quality of the productions to ensure they meet the highest quality standards or find solutions for the problematic areas. As English is one of the most spoken languages in the world and subtitles one of the most used translation modalities in the cinema, this study assesses the quality of the English subtitles of five international award-winning films: *La sirga* (2012) by William Vega, *La playa D. C.* (2013) by Juan Andrés Arango, *Tierra en la lengua* (2014) by Rubén Mendoza, *La tierra y la sombra* (2015) by César Augusto Acevedo, and *Niña errante* (2018) by Rubén Mendoza.

The FAR model for the assessment of subtitles proposed by Pedersen (2017) is the tool selected to carry out the analysis since it was designed for interlingual subtitles and uses a penalty score system that will allow determining the adequacy of the subtitles quantitatively. Some adjustments were made to the model to align it with the objective and scope of this research.

Theoretical Framework

This section presents and overview of the translation quality assessment models used in written texts and in subtitling, followed by the description of the FAR model by Pedersen (2017) and how it was adapted to fit the purpose of this paper.

Translation Quality Assessment

The term "quality" has been the topic of discussion in translation studies for several years, and it has been challenging to define, but there is a long history of different approaches. For the translation of written texts, there is the proposal of Reiss (2000), for whom the text operates at a communication level, and therefore, the translation should aim at being functionally equivalent to the source. House (2015), who initially made the proposal in 1971 but presented a reviewed version in 2015, focuses the analysis on the register and genre of both texts. Also, Nord (1997), with the functionalist approach, focuses on the target audience. O'Brien (2012) analyzed eleven quality assessment models and concluded that most of them were based on an error typology. Moreover, organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization and the European Committee for Standardization have drafted norms for the translation process where the qualities and competencies necessary for translating are specified (ISO 17100:2015, EN 15038). However, all these models are designed for written text and do not consider the technical parameters of audiovisual translation. Therefore, they are not suitable for assessing subtitling or other modalities.

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Audiovisual translation entails technical restrictions specific to each modality that force translators to modify the texts only to comply with the spatial and temporal restraints imposed by the media they use. Thus, what might be considered an error in the translation of a scientific article might not be an error in a documentary's interlingual subtitles. For example, in dubbing, the restrictions are related to lip synchronization and isochrony (Chaume, 2005). Likewise, in audio description, the limitation is the time since it is only possible to describe when there is no dialogue (Orero & Vilaró, 2014). Furthermore, for the different subtitling modalities, there is a limit on reading speed and characters per line, among others (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021). All these elements particular to each translation modality create the necessity of using a quality assessment method designed specifically for each modality.

Subtitles Quality Assessment

Subtitling is part of a superordinate concept: timed text, divided into several categories, subtitling, surtitling, subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, live subtitles, and cybersubtitling (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021). Each of these types of subtitles has its own set of limitations, and the guidelines are usually established by the company requesting the service from the translators, making the definition of quality in subtitling more complex.

Defining quality is not the only challenge; designing a model for measuring quality can be even more complicated. In interlingual subtitling, this term can be addressed differently depending on the agents involved in the subtitling process, subtitler, quality controller (QCer), language service provider, researchers, and others (Díaz-Cintas, et al., 2020). Nonetheless, quality is measured every day in translation. In the case of interlingual subtitling, Nikolić (2021) describes the quality assurance processes followed in different companies —where QCers usually check the technical and linguistic aspects of the subtitles against the client's guidelines— and presents the results of a survey which

indicate that the stakeholders in the quality control process do not have significantly different opinions on what are quality subtitles. This is somehow different from what Remael and Robert (2016) found in their survey study on subtitle quality assurance and quality control, which suggested that clients seem to be more focused on the technical requirements than the linguistic ones, and subtitlers had a broader approach and considered every aspect equally (Remael and Robert, 2016).

Guidelines tend to be a quality assessment tool in subtitling; but each company usually creates its own guidelines, and different translators' associations have also proposed their guidelines. Carroll and Ivarson (1998) proposed the Code of Good Subtitling Practices a couple of decades ago, a short and simple list of principles for subtitle spotting and translation supported by the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation. This association also provides a list of guidelines for each audiovisual translation modality proposed by international translators' associations such as the Association des Traducteurs/Adaptateurs de l'Audiovisuel (ATAA) or the Asociación de Traducción y Adaptación Audiovisual de España (ATRAE). However, these guidelines are focused on the technical limits and not on assessing the quality of a finalized product. They provide instructions regarding technical restrictions such as character limit, the use of italics and hyphens, and how to treat songs. There is also the Multidimensional Quality Framework (MQM) designed to assess human and machine translation, and it includes over 100 categories for issue types that can be selected depending on the specific type of text to be assessed (Lommel et al., 2014). Nevertheless, it does not include categories related to audiovisual translation.

Within the audiovisual translation models, there is the NER model. Martínez and Romero-Fresco (2015) proposed this model for the quality assessment of live subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing. It includes three severity labels for the errors (*minor, standard,* and *serious*) and measures

accuracy by subtracting the total number of errors from the total number of words in the respoken subtitles. Then, the result is divided by the total number of words, and this is multiplied by 100 to obtain a number in percentage values. Based on this model, Romero-Fresco and Pöchhacker (2017) developed the NTR model to assess interlingual live subtitles. The NER model is also the basis for the FAR model proposed by Pedersen (2017).

The FAR Model

In 2017, Pedersen proposed this model for assessing translated subtitles, an error-based analysis where the errors are included and classified depending on their impact on the viewer.

FAR stands for the three main areas assessed in the model: functional equivalence, acceptability, and readability. The functional equivalence area includes two types of errors, semantic and stylistic. These errors are related to the transmission of the original meaning or message; and for Pedersen (2017), the adequate form of assessing this is pragmatic equivalence. Acceptability assesses the adherence of the subtitles to the target language norms and is divided into grammar, spelling, and idiomaticity errors. Finally, readability evaluates how easy to read the subtitles are, and it is essentially related to the technical parameters of subtitling. It is divided into the following three categories: segmentation and spotting, punctuation and graphics, and reading speed and line length.

This model uses error labels and a penalty point system by classifying the errors into *minor, standard,* or *serious,* with scores ranging from 0.25 to 2 points. It also proposes an approval rate by dividing the error score by the total number of subtitles.

The far model was selected to carry out this research due to the broad scope of the error categories and the penalty point system that allows the comparison of the results between the categories of one set of subtitles and several sets, which was the purpose of this study. However, some modifications were made to increase objectivity when classifying the errors and speed up the process in general.

Model Adaptation

The assessment of these subtitles was made to obtain a general perspective of the English subtitle quality in Colombian films with international exposure. However, given the study's limits, and since the objective was to give an appreciation of a finalized product instead of a deep analysis of the translation errors, the adaptation of the FAR model in this study modified the use of the *minor, standard,* and *serious* labels since the author believes classifying each error within these three categories could entail a high degree of subjectivity unless a group of professional translators can reach an agreement on the severity.

The penalty points of the errors in the FAR model depend on their impact on the contract of illusion with the viewer. For Pedersen (2017), the contract of illusion is an agreement the viewer makes when watching subtitled films where they pretend the subtitles are the exact representation of what is being said on screen. However, measuring that impact is not easy. There are some studies on the subject, such as that of Deckert (2021), where the impact of spelling errors in interlingual subtitles was assessed, and it was found that the viewers did not report a negative impact on their enjoyment, comprehension, or cognitive effort. Furthermore, Kruger et al. (2022) conducted an eye-tracking experiment to assess the impact of high reading speeds and concluded that comprehension declined as the reading speed increased.

More research is necessary to reach a consensus regarding the impact of specific errors on the audience. Nonetheless, as presented in the models of Pedersen (2017), Martinez and Romero-Fresco (2015), and other quality assessment systems, not all errors have the same impact; missing a comma or adding a capital letter will not affect the viewer in the same way a semantic error would, but both should be avoided.

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After carefully considering the previously mentioned issues, the author decided that it would be more suitable for the study to apply the severity labels to the categories instead of the errors as follows: *minor* for readability, *standard* for acceptability, and *serious* for functional equivalence. This modification recognizes that not all errors have the same impact while decreasing the subjectivity in the error classification. Therefore, the scores are assigned equally to all errors in the category: all readability errors will have a score of 0.25, all acceptability errors 0.5, and all functional equivalence errors 1.

The approval rate will also be obtained as proposed by the FAR model although, as expressed by Pedersen (2018), there is no reference range for this type of measure in interlingual subtitling. The NER model (Martínez & Romero-Fresco, 2015) considers an approval rate of over 98% acceptable, but since the calculation is based on words and not subtitles as the FAR model, they cannot be compared. Therefore, this measure will only be used to compare the films and support the qualitative data.

Method

Films are not only distributed in cinemas; they usually go through a series of screenings in film festivals around the world and are also screened for international award ceremonies such as the Golden Globes or the Oscars. Usually, non-English language films have to be subtitled into English to participate in these festivals and international screenings, which is why for this research, the English subtitles of the films *La sirga* by William Vega (2012), *La playa D.C.* by Juan Andrés Arango (2013), *Tierra en la lengua* by Rubén Mendoza (2014), *La tierra y la sombra* by César Augusto Acevedo (2015), and *Niña errante* by Rubén Mendoza (2018) were analyzed.

All these films are dramas developed in a Colombian context; in turn, the language used in the films includes many colloquialisms and cultural references. The five films participated in several national and international film festivals, and each of them won at least one international award. The subtitles analyzed are those included in the official DVD, and these were extracted using Subtitle Edit; the technical information of each set of subtitles was also obtained with this software.

The films used premiered more than five years ago. However, not all films released in Colombia offer an official DVD that can be used for research or are easily accessible. In this case, the objective was to analyze subtitles that were not created by streaming platforms since the practices and processes in those platforms are well known. Thus, in order to extract the subtitles, DVDs were selected. All the DVDs also included French subtitles since, traditionally, France has been an ally of Colombia in film productions, and it hosts one of the most important international film festivals, the Cannes Film Festival. Nonetheless, those were not included in this study.

The linguistic and technical elements of translation and subtitling were considered during the implementation of the adapted FAR model. Assessing the readability area requires establishing the technical norms to be followed. In this case, since it was not possible to obtain the guidelines each translator received, the subtitles were compared against the standards of the industry described by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021). Therefore, the maximum characters per line was 42; one-line subtitles are preferred unless it exceeds the character limit per line; lines should follow grammatical and syntactic considerations instead of aesthetic rules; italics should be used for song lyrics, characters off scene, voices through electronic media such as phones and TV, and for inner monologues; hyphens for distinguishing characters speaking at the same time or interrupted dialogue; and the maximum reading speed will be 17 characters per second (cps). That said, having some subtitles over the limit is allowed in most guidelines; therefore, no penalizations were made for exceeding reading speed unless the average is over that limit.

Before including an error in the analysis, the technical restrictions were checked to make sure there was a more suitable translation that fit the parameters used in each film. In addition to the FAR model implementation, other possibly relevant statistics of the subtitles were retrieved with Subtitle Edit: Maximum reading speed, average reading speed, subtitles below 5 cps, maximum characters per line, minimum duration of a subtitle, maximum duration of a subtitle, and number of subtitles above 17 cps. Also, to provide more information that might help identify the source of the errors, there will be a brief description of the experience of the subtitlers that were credited in some films. The following section includes the results of the FAR model assessment followed by descriptive analysis.

Results

This section presents the results of the application of the adapted FAR model, followed by a table presenting technical information for each film individually, with examples of the main errors found. Next, there will be a table comparing the results of all films included in the study. The FAR results include the total number of errors, the total score according to the penalty system (1, 0.5, 0.25), and the approval rate obtained by dividing the total error score by the total number of subtitles. The result is multiplied by 100 and subtracted from 100, thus, obtaining the approval rate.

La sirga (Vega, 2012)

This film is a drama narrating the story of Alicia, who has fled the armed conflict in her village to go live with his uncle and help him build a hostel in the Andes. It was part of the Director's Fortnight in Cannes 2012 and won the Best Debut Film award at the Havana Film Festival, among other international and national awards.

Table 1 shows that the functional equivalence category had the highest score, which is of concern since this category has the most severe errors, those that

Table 1 FAR Scores for *La sirga*

Categories	No. of Errors	Score	Approval Rate
Functional Equivalence	12	12	97.87 %
Acceptability	14	7	98.76 %
Readability	4	1	99.83 %
Total	30	20	96.45 %

might affect the general cohesion and understanding of the film. In addition, it appears the translator had issues understanding some local phrases and expressions; for example, at 00:36:04, three characters are talking about a friend of theirs who is not present to help them with something.

In the subtitles in Table 2, we can see a semantic error with the phrase "A strange child." In the original audio, "Y que anda raro" is a local expression that, in this context, means that the person is not behaving as usual, something is wrong with them, but it is related to the paranormal event. Instead of referring to this situation with the ill character, the translation repeats the fragment about the strange child. It was considered a functional equivalence error since the original sentence intends to explain why the character is not there to help the others, and omitting this information leaves the absence of the character unexplained, affecting the coherence of the dialogues especially since the next subtitle also has a functional equivalence error. The Spanish sentence "Sí, está enduendado" means to be haunted by an elf, but the English translation repeats the information about the child instead of referring to the character. Since the scene finishes there, the viewer might not understand the dialogue entirely.

Table 2 Functional Equivalence Error in *La sirga*

Spanish Audio	English Subtitles
Que estaba allá en la carbonera y se le apareció un niño y... Y que anda raro.	He was in the mine, and a child appeared to him... A strange child.
Ah, eso es el duende.	It must've been the elf!
Sí, está enduendado.	Yes, it is strange.

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The acceptability category had the highest number of errors, which were related to the spelling of proper names and some missing verbs and articles (such as the missing article in the sentence "I forgot shovels"), the name Óscar was written without the accent, there is a missing verb in "The only one who does don Julian," and the name of the lagoon is La Cocha, thus, the article has to be capitalized, which was not the case in the entire film.

This film does not present a challenge regarding technical aspects of subtitling since the dialogues are slow. Table 3 presents some statistics regarding the technical aspects of the file, and it can be said that this film is within the average guidelines of the industry by not exceeding 40 characters per line and maintaining an average reading speed of 12 cps. Furthermore, the minimum time on screen of a subtitle is usually 1 second (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021), and at least one subtitle was below this measure. However, no penalizations were made for those subtitles since this could be within the guidelines provided to the translators and some companies consider 20 frames acceptable as the minimum duration (for example, Netflix).

La playa D. C. (Arango, 2012)

This film narrates the story of Tomás, an Afrodescendant young man who ran away from the armed conflict on the Pacific coast with his family and arrived in Bogotá, where life is not easy either. It was part of the Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard, and it won the Best Director award at the Santiago International Film Festival

Table 3 Technical Statistics in *La sirga*

Number of subtitles	562
Maximum characters per line	40
Minimum duration on screen (ss:ff)	00:21
Maximum duration on screen (ss:ff)	05:00
Subtitles over 17 cps	28
Subtitles below 5 cps	23
Average reading speed	12 cps
Maximum reading speed	20 cps

Table 4 FAR Scores for *La playa D.C.*

Category	No. of Errors	Score	Approval Rate
Functional Equivalence	27	27	95 %
Acceptability	37	18.5	96.58 %
Readability	20	5	99.08 %
Total	84	50.5	90.65 %

Table 5 Functional Equivalence Error in *La playa D.C.*

Spanish Audio	English Subtitles
Y la mujer no sé cómo se enteró por allá qué significaba ese corte	His wife found out about it, I don't know how.
y casi lo pela.	She almost shaved his head.

(SANFIC), among other international and national awards.

This film also had many errors in the functional equivalence category and had the lowest approval rate of all films; most issues were related to the translation of cultural references (see Table 4). For example, at 00:36:11, one of the characters is telling the story of a man who was fighting with his wife over a secret she discovered (Table 5).

The word "pelar" means "to peel," but it is also commonly used in slang to replace "kill" (Table 5). However, in this case, it means that the woman was extremely angry with the man and almost got physical with him. The English translation is far from the original meaning and creates a different interaction between the characters; something similar to what happened at 00:37:59, where a character gives his opinion on his haircut.

The literal translation for "violento" is "violent," but here it is slang for "really good" (Table 6). The man thinks his haircut is amazing; however, the translation conveys the opposite. This film, in particular, had a high number of spelling mistakes and punctuation errors, such as the following subtitles: "What's *uo*?," "Go on, tell him *waht* we decided.", "You've got talent or *ypu* don't.", "Unbelieable!"

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Table 6 Functional Equivalence Error in *La playa D.C.*

Spanish Audio	English Subtitles
Quedó violento.	Real bad.

Table 7 Technical Statistics in *La playa D.C.*

Number of subtitles	540
Maximum characters per line	37
Minimum duration on screen (SS:FF)	00:16
Maximum duration on screen (SS:FF)	06:00
Subtitles over 17 cps	37
Subtitles below 5 cps	7
Average reading speed	12 cps
Maximum reading speed	26 cps

This film is also within the industry standards (Table 7), but the minimum duration on screen here is low, with only 16 frames in several subtitles.

Tierra en la lengua (Mendoza, 2014)

This is the story of a man raised in the violence of the Colombian countryside who one day makes a trip with two of his grandchildren to convince them to kill him before a disease does. It won a special mention by the jury and the Best Film award by the Youth Jury in the Pesaro Film Festival, among other international and national awards.

This film had the highest number of errors in total and the lowest approval rate for functional equivalence (Table 8). The approval rate for readability was the lowest of all films, but given the low score for these errors, the total approval rate of the film was not significantly affected; most errors were due to poor segmentation. Something probably related to the result in functional equivalence is the fact that it contains a significantly higher number of cultural references, which is where the translator failed to convey the accurate meaning. For example, at 00:00:45, a woman is describing her feelings for her husband (Table 9).

The original phrase "que no le temblara la mano" is an expression making reference to a determined, confident man who does not hesitates

Table 8 FAR Scores for *Tierra en la lengua*

Categories	No. of Errors	Score	Approval Rate
Functional Equivalence	36	36	94.68 %
Acceptability	15	7.5	98.9 %
Readability	37	9.25	98.64 %
Total	88	52.75	92.2 %

Table 9 Functional Equivalence Error in *Tierra en la lengua*

Spanish Audio	English Subtitles
Yo creo que a mí me gustaba un tipo que no le temblara la mano	I think I was attracted to a man whose hands didn't shake.

when making decisions. Unfortunately, the literal translation used in this case does not render the original meaning adequately, affecting the understanding of the sentence. The same issue happens at 00:17:55 when a woman is in a difficult yoga position, and her grandfather sees her and says, "Uy, mamacita, ¿se torció?" In Colombia, it is a local belief that if you have been in the heat or exercising, you should not open the freezer or take a cold shower because your face or body might get paralyzed due to the sudden temperature change; this is called "torcerse." The grandfather's comment in the scene is related to this local belief, and it is also a joke due to the intonation of his voice, a joke lost in the English translation of "Honey, you're all bent out of shape!"

There were also ten missing subtitles in the file, two of which were on-screen text. Regarding readability, the score was affected by poor segmentation, as exemplified in Table 10.

Table 10 Poor Segmentation Examples in *Tierra en la lengua*

Subtitle in English	Proposed Version
If your grandfather comes, we'll have to stop.	If your grandfather comes, we'll have to stop.
Jennifer! Miguel! Come say hello to your [grandpa!	Jennifer! Miguel! Come say hello to your grandpa!
and shot him in the back of the head.	and shot him in the back of the [head.

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Table 11 Technical Statistics in *Tierra en la lengua*

Number of subtitles	676
Maximum characters per line	43
Minimum duration on screen (ss:ff)	00:14
Maximum duration on screen (ss:ff)	06:00
Subtitles over 17 cps	87
Subtitles below 5 cps	28
Average reading speed (cps)	12
Maximum reading speed (cps)	33

Table 11 presents the technical statistics. The technical aspect of this film follows the tendency of the previous two. It is within the industry parameters regarding line length and reading speed, but the minimum duration on screen is too low (14f). Moreover, when observing the waveform in the subtitling program, it was noticeable that the spotting was not very precise; the out time of many subtitles is over 20 frames late, which would be the reason so many subtitles have reading speeds under 5 cps, and in some occasions, the audio does not match the subtitle on screen due to the late timing. Figure 1 shows the soundwave with the subtitles of a scene. We can see that the boxes do not exactly match the audio. The first subtitle appears six frames after the audio starts. Moreover, subtitles 1, 2, 3, and 4 end more than 6-7 frames after the audio, which affects the synchrony of the subtitles. These issues are not related to reading speed since it is low in all of them.

La tierra y la sombra (Acevedo, 2015)

This film is a drama narrating a fragment of an old man's life who returns after 17 years to a home he abandoned, given that his only son is ill. He quickly discovers that sugarcane monocrops have destroyed all the farms in the area. It won the Camera d'Or at Cannes and the Le Grand Rail D'Or and Cannes sacd awards during Critics

Figure 1 Soundwave of *Tierra en la lengua*
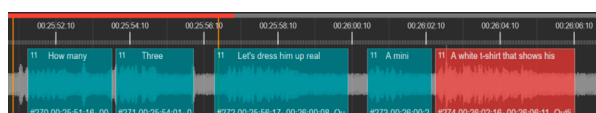
Table 12 FAR Scores: *La tierra y la sombra*

Categories	No. Errors	Score	Approval Rate
Functional Equivalence	9	9	98.11%
Acceptability	6	3	99.37%
Readability	18	4.5	99.06%
Total	33	16.5	96.53%

Table 13 Functional Equivalence Error in *La tierra y la sombra*

Spanish Audio	English Subtitles
Tu mujer es brava.	Your wife is brave.

Week, among other international and national awards.

The results in Table 12 indicate that, although the highest number of errors were in the readability category, the category with the highest score was also functional equivalence, with a score of 9. For example, at 01:04:20, one character admires the personality of the other character's wife (Table 13).

While in the Royal Spanish Academy's dictionary, the first definition for "bravo" is someone brave, in Colombia, this word is usually connected to being upset or bad-tempered, which is the case in this scene. Another linguistic error was found at 00:04:42, where one character is saying to the other that he arrived really fast from the other city. He says, "Le rindió" in Spanish, which means he arrived faster than expected. However, the English translation says, "You must be exhausted," which is entirely unrelated to the original expression.

Two subtitles appeared 10 seconds before the actual start of the audio, and the dialogue happening at the moment was lost. This error would severely affect the viewer since it does not have coherence with what was said before. Therefore, the viewer cannot understand that part of the scene. Regarding readability, there were several missing commas and poor segmentation (Table 14).

Table 14 Technical Statistics in *La tierra y la sombra*

Number of subtitles	475
Maximum characters per line	40
Minimum duration on screen (ss:ff)	00:18
Maximum duration on screen (ss:ff)	05:18
Subtitles over 17 cps	57
Subtitles below 5 cps	20
Average reading speed (cps)	12
Maximum reading speed (cps)	25

Overall, the spotting of the subtitles can be significantly improved. The out time of many subtitles was unnecessarily late compared to the audio, and the in time was a couple of frames late sometimes, making the subtitles appear a little bit later than the audio. However, these issues were not included in the score. This film is also within the technical limits of the industry, except for the minimum duration on screen, which is again too low.

Niña errante (Mendoza, 2018)

This film tells the story of Angelita, a young girl who meets her three half-sisters when their father dies. They make a trip to leave Angelita with an aunt while they grieve their father and get to know each other. It won the Golden Wolf award at the Tallin Black Nights Film Festival and the Best Fiction Film award at the Colombian Film Festival New York, among other international and national awards.

This was the film with the highest total approval rate (Table 15). However, there are several errors related to local expressions or cultural elements, which is why the functional equivalence category has the lowest approval rate. One crucial but easily avoidable error was in the pseudonym of a poet. There is a scene where all the girls are listening to a recording from their father, which transcribed says, "Acordáte[1] de equis quini," literally translated

Table 15 FAR Scores in *Niña errante*

Categories	No. of Errors	Score	Approval Rate
Functional Equivalence	7	7	98.86 %
Acceptability	4	2	99.68 %
Readability	9	2.25	99.64 %
Total	20	11.25	98.17 %

Table 16 Technical Statistics in *Niña errante*

Number of subtitles	613
Maximum characters per line	53
Minimum duration on screen (ss:ff)	00:14
Maximum duration on screen (ss:ff)	06:00
Subtitles over 17 cps	93
Subtitles below 5 cps	23
Average reading speed (cps)	12
Maximum reading speed (cps)	28

would be "Remember X five hundred." However, it was translated as, "Remember the poet, 'X Quint'...?", which is incorrect because X Quint is not the name. X-504 is the correct pseudonym of a Colombian poet named Jaime Jaramillo Escobar and what should be included in the subtitle. The problem may come from the fact that the actor does not say the complete name "ex five hundred and four"; he only says "equis quini," which is "ex five hund." Nevertheless, the translator did not do further research to confirm the name, even though the next lines were a poem written by X-504. A quick search on the internet with the poem's verses would have clarified who the author was (Table 16).

On the technical side, there were several subtitles with more than 45 characters per line, even one with 49 and another with 53; these were included as errors. Something particular about this film was the use of hyphens. The others used two hyphens at the beginning of the line to indicate that two

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1 This is the transcription of what the actor says. It is the conjugation of the verb "acordarse" (remember) for the pronoun "vos," which is used instead of the second personal singular "tú" or "usted." This linguistic phenomenon is very common in the Southern Cone but also in Central America. In Colombia, it is typical of the department of Antioquia.

characters were speaking, which is the standard. However, in this film, only the second line contained a hyphen, but it was consistent throughout the film. Therefore, there were no penalizations since the guidelines could have instructed it.

Translators

All the films included the name of the translators or subtitling company except for *Tierra en la lengua*. *La tierra y la sombra* was translated by a French company that specializes in film production and subtitling services in several languages; no individual names appeared. The same translator worked in *La sirga, La playa D.C.*, and *Niña errante*. This translator has a blog advertising translation services, including a summary of their extensive experience in several translation fields. This blog states that the translator was born in an English-speaking country and has lived in Colombia for more than 15 years. The specialty areas are social sciences and film and television. It was not possible to determine the background education of the translator, but some of the errors found are unusual given the extensive experience in the field.

Overall Quality

Table 17 compares the scores and approval rates for all the films. *La playa D.C.* was the film with the lowest approval rate, and *Niña errante* had the highest; all of them were over 90%.

When calculating an approval rate for the films together, the result was 93.62%, showing there

Table 17 FAR Scores and Approval Rate Comparison Between Films

Film	Total Score	Approval Rate
La sirga	20	96.45%
La playa D.C.	50.5	90.65%
Tierra en la lengua	52.75	92.20%
La tierra y la sombra	16.5	96.53%
Niña errante	11.25	98.17%
Total	151	93.62%

Figure 2 Total Number of Errors per Category
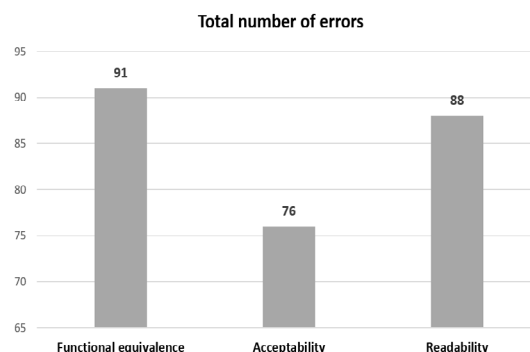
is room for improvement in the overall quality. However, Figure 2 presents the total number of errors per category (all films combined) and evidences that the highest number of errors are present in the functional equivalence category, with readability in second place and acceptability in the third.

- *Functional equivalence:* Most errors were related to semantics, especially the mistranslation of cultural references and local expressions. Two of the films had additional or missing subtitles. Even though these errors were included in the functional equivalence category since they considerably affect dialogue cohesion and viewer experience, they could result from the translator not working on the final cut of the film, which occurs sometimes, and it would not be the translator's responsibility.

  On the stylistic side of functional equivalence, only a couple of subtitles seemed to have a register that was too high for the character on screen; but in general, the translations maintained the tone and register of the original.

- *Acceptability:* Even though this category did not have as many errors as functional equivalence, there were still many spelling errors, especially in *La playa D. C.*, which could have been avoided by using a spellchecker either on the subtitling tool or in a text editor. Moreover, there were some grammar issues in the other

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films related to missing articles or verbs; and in some subtitles, an adaptation instead of the literal translation would have been preferable.

- *Readability:* All the films are within the standard parameters of the subtitling industry described by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) regarding character limit per line and reading speed. However, the segmentation in all films can be improved significantly. For example, many prepositions and conjunctions were left at the end of a line and nouns were separated from adjectives, which might indicate a lack of knowledge of the current subtitling practices.

The spotting of all films can also be improved. The out times were usually late compared to the audio, and on some occasions, the subtitles appeared more than 8 frames after the audio started. However, no spotting errors were included in the assessment since, after an initial viewing of all films with English subtitles, it was noticeable that this issue was repetitive and including them in the scoring would not have enriched the analysis. Moreover, some subtitles were too short. They contained two or three words that could have been merged with the next one to create a more fluid reading experience. There were no penalizations regarding the shot changes since the parameters vary significantly from company to company. The frame gap between subtitles was 2, a standard parameter in subtitling.

The minimum duration of the subtitles is of particular interest since several subtitles appeared on screen for less than a second or even less than 20 frames. The subtitles might have an adequate reading speed; however, as mentioned by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021), less than 20 frames might affect the viewer's ability to read the subtitle completely.

Other Findings

The absence of italics in all films is also interesting. There were scenes with songs, voices heard through phones, or characters out of the scene that were not translated with italics. Nonetheless, this might not be the translator's responsibility since a different team is in charge of formatting and creating the DVD files for these types of projects. There were no penalizations for this error.

Some films presented inconsistencies in writing words or names, such as Álvaro and Alvaro, Óscar and Oscar, OK and Okay. Since the FAR model does not include a category for inconsistency, these issues were included in *readability* due to their minimal impact on the viewer.

Discussion

Translating cultural references or cultural-bound terms, for Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007), is always a challenge for any translator. Several studies discuss the translation strategies for cultural references (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007) or classify the types of cultural references (Zojer, 2011; Malenova, 2015), but the challenge for the translators in these films was the language variety from Colombia. The translators decided to do literal translations of most of the local expressions; however, they did not work in the context. And even though the translator of three films has lived in Colombia for more than 15 years, it was not enough to understand the phraseology. Unfortunately, these errors lowered the quality of the films dramatically since they will probably have more impact on the viewer than a minor reading speed or segmentation error.

Since the film industry in Colombia is just starting to grow and become more international, there are no previous studies on the quality of the English subtitles of Colombian productions. Therefore, this study is an initial assessment that should be replicated with more recent films and other languages to have a broader perspective of the quality of the subtitles. Further studies should help in the detection of repetitive quality issues that would help in the design of improvement plans for the subtitlers, but especially to inform film producers about the relevance of producing

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high-quality subtitles. Therefore, another field for future research is the quality of the French subtitles, which are almost always included in the DVDs, and it could be valuable to compare the results between languages. Finally, given the characters' usually slow and short utterances in the films included in this research, it is worth exploring if films with faster and longer dialogues (which would require condensation) also maintain slow reading speeds or if they increase.

Conclusions

In general, the quality of the subtitles was acceptable. The most common parameters of subtitling, such as character limit per line and reading speed, were implemented in all films. However, having the functional equivalence category with the highest number of errors is concerning since those errors potentially change the narrative of the film by modifying the meaning, which directly affects the reception of the film.

It is common in the translation industry to find job opportunities where one of the requirements is to be a native speaker of the target language. However, the results of this research suggest that it might not be enough to correctly translate the colloquialisms and phraseology of a Spanish variant, in this case, the Colombian. The fact that the subtitlers of these films had experience in subtitling, were native speakers of English, and had experience subtitling raises the concern of what qualifications clients should request when hiring a subtitler since the previous parameters were not enough to render correct translations in these films.

The high number of spelling mistakes in *La playa D. C.* emphasizes the importance of final revisions on the files with external spellcheckers before delivery or with QCers, as it happens in audiovisual translation companies. However, freelancers usually self-revise. Although it was not possible to determine the processes carried out in the subtitling of these films, the spelling errors strongly

suggest the revision process was not completed adequately.

In three of the five movies, readability was the category with the highest number of errors, suggesting that subtitlers need more training in the technical aspects of subtitling, such as segmentation and spotting. These results make it relevant to conduct research on the audiovisual translation industry in Colombia to determine if the quality of the subtitles produced in the country is being affected by the low availability of professional subtitlers or by the hiring processes in the producing companies.

Although the objective of this work was to assess the overall quality of the subtitles of Colombian films into English, the results are also relevant to the cinematographic industry. Subtitles are the medium to transmit the film's dialogues to an international audience and the juries of film festivals. Thus, they should be created with the same rigorousness as the source dialogues to avoid affecting the general audience's experience and increase the possibilities of a good outcome in film festivals.

Quality is a complex concept in translation in general, and it is difficult to establish the limits between good and bad quality. Thus, this work only considered obvious errors, such as those presented in the examples. The subtitles may have more issues that can be improved regarding fluency and adequacy.

The effect that errors in subtitles has on the audience cannot be measured precisely. However, the subtitles of these five films included many errors in all the categories. With audiences demanding better quality subtitles (as with *Squid Game*, for example), it is more important than ever to produce subtitles of the best quality.

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Multilingual and Multi-Generational Italian Identity in a Netflix Series: Subtitling *Generazione 56k* (2021) into English

Identidad multilingüe y multigeneracional italiana en una serie de Netflix: el subtitulado al inglés de *Generazione 56k* (2021)

L'identité italienne multilingue et multi-générationnelle dans une série Netflix : le sous-titrage anglais de *Generazione 56k* (2021)

Identidade italiana multilíngue e multigeracional em uma série Netflix: a legendagem em inglês de *Generazione 56k* (2021)

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This paper is the fruit of constant collaboration. Nonetheless, Chiara Bartolini is responsible for "Introduction", "Background to the Study" (introductory part), "Multi-Generational Language in AVT" and "Method"; and Marina Manfredi is responsible for "Geographical Dialects in AVT", "Our integrated theoretical framework"; "Generazione 56k" and "Results". "Discussion and conclusions" were written up jointly.

Abstract

This article reports on an investigation into the representation of "Italianness" in the recent Netflix Italian series *Generazione 56k*, which was exported to English-speaking countries. The series deals with characters from different generations and displays regional varieties. This qualitative study examined the macro- and micro-strategies used in the creation of English subtitles for the first season. The focus is on key functions of telecinematic discourse, i.e., characterisation, realism, and humour, which is realised through the use of (a) multilingualism in the broadest sense, including geographical dialects, and (b) multi-generational language (colloquialisms, "unconventional language", particularly, teenage and youth language, and taboo). Findings reveal a tendency towards neutralisation strategies in the English subtitles. Even considering the constraints inherent in the subtitling mode, these strategies do not successfully represent "Italianness" with its local geographical diversity, and only partially convey the representation of multi-generational language, also affecting humour. The themes which engage millennials, however, are expressed and might be appreciated by an international audience. Our analysis and conclusions suggest it may be interesting to understand whether younger generations, increasingly accustomed to "multilingualism" especially in Netflix programmes, would also envisage a different subtitling experience.

Keywords: AVT, English subtitling, Netflix, linguistic variation, Italian identity, representations of Italianness, multilingualism, multigenerational language, Italian series

Resumen

Este artículo reporta una investigación sobre la representación de la "italianidad" en la reciente serie italiana *Generazione 56k*, transmitida por Netflix, que se

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exportó a países de habla inglesa. Esta serie estudia personajes de diferentes generaciones y exhibe variedades regionales. El estudio de corte cualitativo analizó las micro y macro estrategias usadas en la creación de subtítulos en inglés para la primera temporada. Se enfoca en las funciones clave del discurso telecinemático, es decir, caracterización, realismo y humor, que se evidencian en el uso de a) el multilingüismo en su sentido más amplio, incluidos los dialectos geográficos, y b) lengua multigeneracional (coloquialismos, "lenguaje no convencional", en especial, la jerga de adolescentes y jóvenes, y las expresiones tabú). Los hallazgos revelan una tendencia a las estrategias de neutralización en los subtítulos en inglés. Aun considerando las limitaciones inherentes al modo de subtitulado, dichas estrategias no representan a cabalidad la "italianidad" con su diversidad geográfica local y solo transmiten en parte la represenación de la lengua multigeneracional, lo que también afecta el humor. Sí se expresan, por otro lado, los temas que interesan a los *millennials* y que podrían ser valorados por una audiencia internacional. Nuestro análisis y conclusiones indican que sería interesante entender si las generaciones más jóvenes, cada vez más acostumbradas al "multilingüismo" en especial en los programas de Netflix, también imaginarían una experiencia de subtitulado distinta.

Palabras clave: TAV, subtitulado en inglés, Netflix, variación lingüística, identidad italiana, representaciones de la italianidad, multilingüismo, lenguage multigeneracional, series italianas

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article présente une enquête sur la représentation de l'« italianité » dans la récente série italienne *Generazione 56k*, diffusée sur Netflix et exportée dans les pays anglophones. Cette série étudie des personnages de différentes générations et met en scène des variétés régionales. L'étude qualitative a analysé les micro et macro stratégies utilisées dans la création de sous-titres anglais pour la première saison. Elle se concentre sur les fonctions clés du discours télé cinématographique, à savoir, la caractérisation, le réalisme et l'humour, qui se manifestent par l'utilisation a) du multilinguisme au sens large, y compris les dialectes géographiques, et b) du langage multigénérationnel (expressions familières, « argot », en particulier l'argot des adolescents et des jeunes, et expressions taboues). Les résultats révèlent une tendance aux stratégies de neutralisation dans les sous-titres anglais. Même en tenant compte des limites inhérentes au mode de sous-titrage, ces stratégies ne représentent pas entièrement l'« italianité » avec sa diversité géographique locale et ne transmettent que partiellement la représentation de la langue multigénérationnelle, ce qui affecte également l'humour. D'un autre côté, elles expriment des questions intéressant aux milléniaux, lesquelles pourraient être appréciées par un public international. Nos conclusions et résultats suggèrent qu'il serait intéressant de comprendre si les jeunes générations, de plus en plus habituées au « multilinguisme », notamment dans les programmes Netflix, imagineraient également une autre expérience de sous-titrage.

Mots-clef : TAV, sous-titrage en anglais, Netflix, variation linguistique, identité italienne, représentations de l'italianité, multilinguisme, langage multigénérationnel, séries italiennes

RESUMO

Este artigo relata uma investigação sobre a representação da "italianidade" na recente série italiana *Generazione 56k*, transmitida pela Netflix, que foi exportada para paí-

ses de língua inglesa. Essa série estuda personagens de diferentes gerações e mostra variedades regionais. O estudo qualitativo analisou as estratégias micro e macro usadas na criação de legendas em inglês para a primeira temporada. Ele se concentra nas principais funções do discurso telecinematográfico, ou seja, caracterização, realismo e humor, que são evidenciados no uso de a) multilinguismo em seu sentido mais amplo, incluindo dialetos geográficos, e b) linguagem multigeracional (coloquialismos, "gírias", especialmente gírias de adolescentes e jovens, e expressões tabu). Os resultados revelam uma tendência às estratégias de neutralização nas legendas em inglês. Mesmo considerando as limitações inerentes ao modo de legendagem, essas estratégias não representam totalmente a "italianidade" com sua diversidade geográfica local e transmitem apenas parcialmente a representação da linguagem multigeracional, o que também afeta o humor. Por outro lado, elas expressam as questões que interessam aos millenials e que poderiam ser apreciadas por um público internacional. Nossas descobertas e resultados sugerem que seria interessante entender se as gerações mais jovens, cada vez mais acostumadas ao "multilinguismo", especialmente nos programas da Netflix, também imaginariam uma experiência de legendagem diferente.

Palavras chave: TAV, legendagem no inglês, Netflix, variação linguística, identidade italiana, representações da italianidade, multilinguismo, linguagem multigeracional, séries italianas

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Introduction

In the last decade, a new tendency has emerged in contrast with prevalent "downstream translation" (Gottlieb, 2009, p. 40) practises, one which has seen European TV series being exported into the Anglosphere and achieving remarkable international success, particularly on video-on-demand platforms. Italy has certainly been no exception as new films and TV series have been increasingly produced and exported in the past few years. Some examples include *Il commissario De Luca* (Frazzi, 2008), *Romanzo Criminale – La Serie* (Sollima, 2008–2010), *Suburra – La Serie* (Cesarano & Petronio, 2017–2020), *L'amica geniale* (Costanzo, Rohrwacher & Luchetti, 2018–present), *Summertime* (Lagi & Sportiello, 2020–present), and *Fedeltà* (Molaioli & Cipani, 2022–present). This shift has prompted a growing need for the English dubbing and subtitling of Italian TV series.

Despite this evolution, audiovisual translation (AVT) practises from Italian into English still seem to be under-researched with a few exceptions (Balirano & Fruttaldo, 2021; Bruti & Ranzato, 2019; Cavaliere, 2008, 2019; De Meo, 2012, 2019; Dore, 2017a, 2017b; Magazzù, 2018; Sandrelli, 2018). Still, there is a gap in the literature regarding the translation strategies employed in adapting Italian series that feature geographical dialects and youth slang.

This paper reports a study on the representation of "Italianness" in a recent Netflix Italian series exported to English-speaking countries, i.e., *Generazione 56k* (Ebbasta & Federici, 2021), which displays a strong geographical identity and deals with characters from different generations. This TV series has thus been selected for representing "Neapolitanness" and being aimed at young adults, specifically the so-called "millennials". Furthermore, although Italian is not a minor speech community, the subtitling of this series into English may be seen as an example of "upstream translation" (Gottlieb, 2009, p. 28). Gottlieb's (2009) hypothesis, according to which

the translation "up the river" does not entail the need for domesticating the dialogue and hence allows for a higher degree of adherence (p. 41), shall be tested here to prove its validity as far as this TV production is concerned.

Background to the Study

The debate over the translation of linguistic variation in audiovisual (AV) products is not new in AVT research (cf. Ellender, 2015). As two different types of language variation, geographical dialects and other instances of "marked language" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 188), including colloquialisms, slang, and taboo, are employed in films and TV series to connotate characters and locations (at times in a stereotypical manner) and articulate the concept of "Otherness" (Díaz-Cintas, 2012, p. 281). These varieties, which are "sociolinguistic markers" that frequently go hand in hand with one another, have often tended to "disappear in screen translations" (Chiaro, 2009, p. 158) either in dubbing or subtitling. As a matter of fact, all characters in a film or show speak a standard, homogenised variety of the target language (TL). Nevertheless, standardisation is not the only option available "to ensure the smooth processing of the target text [as translators may also devise] more creative solutions" (Dore, 2017a, p. 122) to retain linguistic variation for characterisation or a thematic purpose.

Geographical Dialects in AVT

In the present paper, the label "geographical dialect" is preferred over others like "regional dialect", "regiolect", and "dialect". Dialectology has long informed the study of dialects *vs* so-called standard languages (see Chambers & Trudgill, 1998). However, as Delabastita and Grutman (2005) put it, dialects as sub-standard varieties of language co-exist "within the various officially recognised languages, and indeed sometimes cutting across and challenging our neat linguistic typologies" (p. 15). Moreover, while a given regional variety is related to a specific place, it may also involve

a distinct social group (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 191), blurring the boundaries between regiolects and sociolects.

A systematic framework for the analysis of language variation was provided by Halliday et al. (1964), who put forth a distinction between varieties according to the "user" and the "use". The former concerns "dialects" and refers to "who the speaker or writer is"; the latter is labelled as "registers" and implies "what the speaker or writer is doing" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 41). Any "dialect" is characterised by lexical, grammatical, and phonological features, including "accent", which refers to the "articulatory and acoustic" levels of language (Gregory & Carroll, 1978, p. 12).

From the point of view of Translation Studies (TS), user-related varieties have been investigated by various scholars. For instance, Hatim and Mason (1990) argue that language can vary according to the user with respect to diverse aspects such as geographical, temporal, social, (non-)standard, or idiolectal factors. While geographical dialects are related to the origins of the speakers, social dialects are usually linked to their social status. When translators tackle language variation in the shape of geographical dialects, lexical, grammatical, and phonological features will inevitably pose problems, not least because the linguistic side will be inextricably associated with sociocultural considerations; thus translators' decisions will have cultural implications. By the same token, Catford (1965) remarks that the criterion to be fulfilled is "'human' or 'social' geographical [rather than] purely locational" (Catford, 1965, pp. 86–87). Likewise, Hatim and Mason (1990) admit that the most common strategies to deal with geographical varieties might cause problems. For example, normalising a geographical dialect might result in a loss in the translated text whereas replacing that variety with a TL might produce unintended effects (pp. 40–41).

When it comes to subtitling geographical dialects, subtitlers may resort to the use of socially connotated style, e.g., in the form of colloquialisms and slang expressions in the TL to compensate for the loss of geographical connotation (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 188). By operating a shift from the paralinguistic (the accent) to the verbal (style and lexico-grammatical variation), translators may reduce the "neutralising effect" (De Meo, 2012, p. 86) and the impression of a homologated, standard language in subtitles. In doing so, this approach seems to enable subtitlers to convey at least the social belonging and "in-group bonding" (Dore, 2017a, p. 122), thus contributing to characterisation. Finally, it may not always be essential to reproduce all the variations in the TL subtitles thanks to the "intersemiotic redundancy" (Gottlieb, 1998, p. 247) typical of subtitling. This encompasses the assumed ability of the viewer to decode the message by means of other communicative elements, including non-verbal components (e.g., gaze and gestures), paraverbal components (e.g., loudness or pitch), and other contextual information that may be inferred from the images and sounds of an AV—hence, multimodal—product.

Multi-Generational Language in AVT

In this paper, multi-generational language will be used as an umbrella term to refer to different features of linguistic variation such as colloquialisms, teenage/youth language, and taboo language—i.e., distinct phenomena showing similarities and overlaps. When it comes to marked language, special attention has been devoted to slang (Bruti, 2020; Mattiello, 2008; Tagliamonte, 2016) and to the challenges this poses to the translation of AV products, mainly considering dubbing (Bianchi, 2008; Dore, 2017a; Mattiello, 2009; Ranzato, 2010, 2015) and, to a lesser extent, subtitling (Hamaidia, 2007; Rittmayer, 2009). Here we draw on Partridge's (1937) concept of "slang and unconventional English", re-proposed by Dalzell (2008), who refers to "all unconventional English that has been used with the purpose or effect of either lowering the formality of communication and reducing solemnity and/or identifying

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status or group and putting oneself in tune with one's company." (p. vii). This may involve an "innovative, playful, metaphorical and short-lived" use of language that includes words ranging "*below the level of stylistically neutral language*" (Stenström et al., 2002, p. 67, emphasis in the original). Since the identification and definition of slang with respect to the Italian language may be controversial, the focus here is placed on "unconventional teenage/youth language". This decision was made in line with previous AVT research on the translation of English slang (Dore, 2017a; Ranzato, 2015) into "the jargon of youngsters" in Italian (Ranzato, 2015, p. 173) to convey "the in-group bonding" (Dore, 2017a, p. 122) among people of similar age and experience.

Taboo language is also, albeit not exclusively, a major trait of teenage/youth language (Beseghi, 2016), in which it generally performs a phatic or exclamatory function and may contribute to characterisation and realism in AV products. Although the phenomenon of swearing includes obscenities, profanities, blasphemy, name-calling, insulting, verbal aggression, taboo speech, vulgarisms, and scatological terms (Jay, 2000, p. 9), this paper adopts the all-encompassing label of "taboo language". As regards subtitling emotionally-loaded language from English in other languages, this might imply occasional omissions according to space/time constraints and the assumed sensitivity of the target culture. This is because the impact of taboo language is perceived to be stronger in writing than in speaking. Nonetheless, swearwords seem to be increasingly more common in subtitles in Europe (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007), and nowadays, they even tend to be added to the TL subtitles to compensate for the loss of other non-standard language features, especially in "downstream translation" (Gottlieb, 2009, p. 28, cf. Dore, 2017b; Valdeón, 2020). Whether the same also happens in the other direction is still unclear.

Our Integrated Theoretical Framework

Viewing translation as an act of communication within a sociocultural context, this paper adopts

the framework offered by systemic functional linguistics (SFL). For the analysis of language variation, we thus draw on the Hallidayan distinction between dialects and registers outlined above. However, while SFL views user- and use-related varieties as conceptually distinct despite their interconnections (Halliday & Hasan, 1985), we argue that, from a translational perspective, user-related variation could be analysed as intersecting with the contextual variable of use that focuses on the relationship between the participants in a communicative act (specifically, tenor). Furthermore, despite the debate around the differentiation between "standard" and "non-standard" (Gramley, 2012; Manfredi, 2021a; Murray & Simon, 2008; Trudgill, 1999), for the purpose of our study, we consider "non-standard" those language characteristics typically entailed in sociolinguistic research on telecinematic discourse, i.e., vernacular elements, colloquial/informal features, "slang" (in our case study rather "teenage/youth language") and swear/taboo words (Bednarek, 2018).

In light of a functional view, in the forthcoming sections, instances of user- and use-related variation will be observed on the basis of their communicative purposes such as adding realism to the AV product, developing characterisation, and creating humour (Bednarek, 2018). Finally, as both TS and SFL recommend (Ramos Pinto & Adami, 2020), the verbal code will be seen as embedded in a wider multimodal context that contributes to the overall meaning-making of the episodes.

Method

The TV series chosen for this study is *Generazione 56k* (Ebbasta & Federici, 2021), produced by Cattleya. The show displays geographical dialects and multi-generational language to depict and tell the stories of a group of young characters.

By adopting a descriptive translation studies (DTS) methodology (Assis Rosa, 2018; Díaz-Cintas, 2004), this paper offers a qualitative analysis of

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"multilingualism" —including both interlingual and intralingual varieties (cf. Manfredi, 2021b) —in this Italian series and its English subtitles. Although it is acknowledged that the language used in films and tv series is an example of "pre-fabricated orality" (Chaume, 2001), the issue of naturalness is not taken into consideration within the scope of this paper. A linguistic analysis of language variation is rather reported, stressing accent, vocabulary, and lexicogrammar. Ramos Pinto (2017) provides the analytical tool for classifying the two macro-strategies of translation that may be employed, i.e., "neutralisation" and "preservation", and the micro-strategies these entail, namely "discourse standardisation" and "discourse dialectalisation" for the former, and "centralisation", "maintenance", and "decentralisation" for the latter. The micro-strategies of "discourse standardisation" and "discourse dialectalisation" entail eliminating variation, either "by the exclusive use of the standard variety" or "of a non-standard variety in the target product"; the micro-strategies of "centralisation", "maintenance", and "decentralisation" preserve variation by showing "a lower presence of non-standard discourse", "in similar terms", and "a higher presence of non-standard discourse in the target product" (Ramos Pinto, 2017, p. 6).

Central to our analysis are some of the key functions of telecinematic discourse—i.e., characterisation, realism, and humour (Bednarek, 2018). When deemed relevant, the AV product is also viewed in its multimodal nature and both the visual and acoustic code are considered: drawing again from Ramos Pinto (2017), character behaviour, setting, and background music are touched upon, while the multimodal category of "clothes/makeup" is not included since it is not relevant in the series under scrutiny. We collected data based on a direct comparison of the original Italian dialogues and the English subtitles, that is English closed captions.

Generazione 56k

The series *Generazione 56k*, which IMDb classifies as comedy, drama, and romance, was released on Netflix on July 1, 2021. The one-season eight episodes revolve around the changes occurring in the so-called "net generation" or "millennials", seasoned by technology, from the advent of the Internet connection through the slow and noisy, albeit exciting, 56k dial-up modem to the hyper-connected present, when smartphones and apps serve as tools for work and search for love. The story is narrated in two plot lines, one set in 1998, in the island of Procida, where the protagonists, Daniel and Matilda, live in their middle-school years; and the other at the current time, in Naples, where the same characters are torn between nostalgia for the past and complicated feelings and relationships.

The main characters' adventures as kids and young adults in their 30s are accompanied by those of their families and friends. Ines, Matilda's best friend from childhood to adult life, has chosen a traditional marriage and is the mother of a child. Luca and Sandro, Daniel's mates and business partners, are interpreted by two members of *The Jackals*, a comic group from Naples that has reached success by creating web videos and series. A minor character who plays a significant role in the story is Ciro, the island's bar owner and guardian of people's desires and secrets. All characters, in various ways and to different extents, represent their Neapolitan identity. Magnificent views of the Neapolitan Gulf and the city of Naples with its traditional terraced roofs, typical yards, and baroque balconies, along with the picturesque island of Procida, with its multi-coloured buildings and narrow alleys, contribute to offering a stunning setting, animated by the seagulls' call and popular Italian songs from the 1980s and 1990s.

Results

The following sub-sections will illustrate selected examples from the case study to show the macro- and micro- strategies used in the creation of the English subtitles, with a focus on geographical dialects and multi-generational language.

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Geographical Dialects

In *Generazione 56k*, the main geographical dialect used by characters is Neapolitan and, more broadly, a variety from the Campania region or sometimes Southern Italy. The dialectal variety is differently encoded in the characters' speech.

For example, Daniel, who works as a creative director at a company that develops apps, generally speaks Italian, with an educated regional accent. However, both as a young boy and an adult man, some Neapolitan traits emerge in his speech, such as apocopes (e.g., *pa'* instead of *papà* [dad] or *ancora con sta' storia?* [this story again?]), the use of the popular and dialectal adverb *mo'* [now], or regional grammatical features, which are mostly neutralised in the English subtitles. Only occasionally, Daniel uses dialectal expressions, especially when he is anxious, for instance, when his younger sister Raffaella makes fun of him by reading his schooltime diary twenty years later, and he silences her with the dialectal *statte zitta* [be quiet], standardised into "Stop it!". More frequently, his sentences include dialectal structures, such as the inversion between the possessive and the noun, typical of Southern Italian, exemplified in *È morta prima l'amica sua* [It's been first 'her friend' to die], which reads "her friend just died" in the English subtitles. The omission of "has" entails a partially compensatory solution regarding a shift from geographical variation to informal language. In the cited example, Daniel is talking about an app that helps people who are not satisfied with a blind date by offering a so-called "exit strategy", i.e., a call from a friend who informs about a loss or urgent need. Along with Daniel, Matilda is the other main character in the series. After giving up her dream of doing a master's degree in Paris, she works at a furniture restoration shop and is about to get married when she bumps into Daniel after many years. Matilda's variety is more marked: although she does not use a dialect, she displays a marked Southern Italian accent, as in *Devo anda' da Punzo, devo paga' 'e bollette, devo paga' 'e bollette de mia madre*, standardised in the English subtitles

as "I have to see Punzo, pay my rent, pay my mom's bills". This shows a partial compensation strategy, i.e., the omission of the implicit subject "I" and the modal verb "must", repeated twice in the Italian version; hence, it is a shift from the phonological to the grammatical level.

Luca and Sandro are Daniel's friends and business partners. As far as Luca is concerned, he is a shy boy as a teenager and a sarcastic nerdy in his 30s. Despite his strong Neapolitan accent and use of a typically dialectal lexicogrammar, he seldom speaks the dialect but intermingles his speech with regional expressions and structures. A case in point is *Capace che c'incontriamo quando vado a buttare l'immondizia*, with a humoristic effect, which simply becomes "I might run into her when I'm taking out the trash or something" in the English subtitles. Conversely, the adult Sandro, a lively boy and later a funny young man, often uses the Neapolitan dialect, which is neutralised in the TL even if it is sometimes compensated with other codes, e.g., gestural expressiveness, thus providing a sense of realism. On the other hand, gestures may be perceived as typically Italian and not necessarily Neapolitan by an English-speaking audience. Significantly, the use of a dialect is thus not totally "associated with negative, minor, humorous, weak characters or characters that represent cultural stereotypes (while "standard" English may be associated with heroes or desirable qualities)" (Bednarek, 2018, pp. 64-65): Sandro is a humorous character yet not negative and not even properly "minor". Ines, Matilda's best friend, the most good-looking girl at schooltime and now an exuberant and chatty young woman, invariably speaks Italian with a strong regional accent (e.g., *ma como fa?* [but how does she do that?], completely omitted in the English subtitles), dialectal expressions (e.g., *va buo'* or *piglia il regalo*, standardised into "okay" and "get a gift"), and also the Neapolitan dialect.

Interestingly, only adult characters, both from the outskirts and the city, use pure Neapolitan dialect, which functions as an important element of characterisation. In all cases, they are "older" characters in

terms of age and way of life. In Procida Island, the wise and witty barman and Daniel's godfather, Ciro, speaks Italian with a strong regional accent (e.g., *O me fa' turna' a Napuli?!* [Do you let me come back to Naples?!], subtitled as "Are you going to make me go back?"). Ciro also employs the Neapolitan dialect, with entire stretches of dialogue or through code-switching, for example, in the scene where he addresses his greeting to a customer with the Neapolitan colloquialism *statte buono* [stay good], subtitled as "take care". When he refers to Daniel, he uses the dialectal word *picciniello*, in *Che ha fatto il picciniello?* [What has the *picciniello* done?], neutralised as "kid" and compensated in the clause with a colloquial form, i.e., "gotten" in "What's the kid gotten into now?".

As for minor, albeit supporting, characters, Matilda's boss, the elderly Mr. Punzo, owner of a furniture restoration shop in Naples and named "Professor"—probably as an appellative of respect—speaks the Neapolitan dialect or a regional Italian with a very strong Neapolitan accent, which produces a humoristic effect. Humour deriving from his hilarious comments is compromised for instance when he uses the dialectal expression *Mica 'ncoppa a Marte*—where the colourful *'ncoppa* means "on top of" —which is rendered into a more standard "not flying off to Marte". In this case, kinetics partly compensates for the loss since Mr. Punzo accompanies his talk with lively gesticulation, from pinching his fingers against the thumb to circling his hand and rolling his eyes. Daniel's mother, Rosaria, who lives in Procida, and is often portrayed in the kitchen, also speaks the dialect or Italian with a strong Neapolitan accent, typically neutralised in subtitling. She plays the role of a "traditional" mother that is busy with cooking and scolding her son and daughter when they use dirty words. Her gestures and facial expressions, however, contribute to conveying her Neapolitanness.

As far as the youngest generation is concerned, Sandro and Ines both speak the dialect. They are in their thirties and married as if to suggest that they have embraced a more "traditional" way of life. Daniel's father, Bruno, on the other hand, who is torn between his role of strict and companionable father, rarely uses the dialect. Nonetheless, his accent is Neapolitan, as is the lexicogrammar of his speech. This occurs, for instance, when he uses the typical Italian regional expression *buono, buono*, with a Neapolitan accent, standardised as "good, good".

Overall, Neapolitan traits in the Italian dialogues are represented at all linguistic levels, from phonology through accents to the lexico-grammatical structure, fulfilling the functions of realism and characterisation. Elements traditionally subject to neutralisation such as accents are standardised and rarely compensated with other marked elements. For example, many characters use the typical phonological features of Italy's Southern dialects, such as *a' mamma* rather than *alla mamma* [to mum], *a' mmare* rather than *nel mare* [into the sea], or *apposto* rather than *a posto* to mean "ok", to name just a few examples. Characters' names undergo the phenomenon of apocope, e.g., *Lu'* for Luca and *Mati* for Matilda.

At the lexical level, culturally-specific references are not very frequent. When they are inserted in a dialogue and maintained in the English subtitles, comprehension for an English-speaking viewer might be problematic and the phonetic effect might not be necessarily humorous as is in Italian. The case of *scarpariello* (i.e., a recipe for a Neapolitan tomato sauce) mentioned by the elderly Punzo is an example. A slightly different solution is found in a dialogue between Bruno—Daniel's father—and Cristina—Sandro's wife—at a party, where *Scusate, ma lo sentite questo odore di.... zeppoline me pare?* [Sorry, but... can you feel this smell of... *zeppoline* it seems?] is subtitled as "Can you... can you smell that? It's like, uh, *zeppole* pastry". Here, the typical cake *zeppoline*, with the diminutive suffix *"-ine"* is translated into "zeppole pastry", which shows a strategy of maintenance accompanied by an explanation. In general, dialectal terms are almost invariably neutralised without

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recurring to colloquial language for compensation. This is the case of the Neapolitan vocative *guagliò* or of the regional term *capatosta*, simply rendered as "guys" and "stubborn" respectively. In various episodes, characters use the expressive verb *azzeccarci* [have to do with], typical of Southern Italy, which is subtitled into standard English, with no marked trait, as shown in Table 1. Note that only "gotta" in Example 3 conveys an informal tone:

From a lexico-grammatical point of view, the regional use of verbs is very common, for example, *stare* [to stay] instead of *essere* [to be], and *tenere* [hold] instead of *avere* [to have] (see examples in Table 2).

In Table 2, the trait is simply neutralised (see examples 4, 6, and 7) and only rarely compensated with colloquial language (as in example 5). Even marked thematic structures in the Italian dialogues undergo standardisation in the English

Table 1 Geographical Dialect: Lexical Level

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(1)	1x02	00:10:31,208	Young Daniel	Io non *ci azzecco* niente con lei. [I have nothing that 'has to do' with her]	I don't even know her.
(2)	1x03	00:03:31,041	Sandro	Che *ci azzecca*, che è "di nuovo"? [What does this 'have to do' with it, what is 'again'?]	What do you mean "no more"?
(3)	1x07	00:14:49,041	Ines	Ma che *c'azzecca*? [But what does this 'have to do' with it ?]	What's that *gotta* do with it?

Table 2 Geographical Dialect: Lexico-Grammatical Level

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(4)	1x01	00:08:28,083	Rosaria	Ci *sta* il caffè. [Here 'is' coffee]	Your coffee's ready.
(5)	1x01	00:04:58,000	Bruno	Tua madre *sta* un po' nervosa per il trasloco. [Your mother 'is' a bit nervous about the move]	Your mother's a little *wound up* from the move.
(6)	1x02	00:14:06,750	Young Matilda	Ma *tieni* Internet? [But do you 'have' the Internet?]	Do you *have* the Internet?
(7)	1x02	00:11:05,458	Ines	Non *tieni* proprio voglia eh? [You really don't feel like it, eh?]	You really *don't* want to be here.

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Table 3 Forms of Courtesy

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(8)	1x03	00:17:35,791	Young Luca	Per favore, *Signor Bruno*, non lo *picchiate*. [Please, Mr. Bruno, do not beat him]	Please, Mr. Bruno, don't hit him.
(9)	1x03	00:00:38,708	Luca	*Signor* Bruno, non mi *fraintendete*, a me manca pure casa mia, le mie cose. [Mr. Bruno, do not misinterpret, I miss 'my' house, my things, too]	Don't get me wrong, *Bruno*, there are things I miss about my home.
(10)	1x02	00:08:35,083	Matilda	*Voi siete* sicuro di questo fatto di Parigi? [Are you sure about this Paris thing?]	Are you sure about Paris?

subtitles, for instance, the extremely frequent use of *pure* [too] in a marked position in the sentence, typical of Southern Italian varieties. This is evident in Young Raffaella's *Ci vediamo pure i cartoni* [We watch cartoons too], standardised into "And we can watch cartoons if we want". This feature is invariably neutralised and rarely compensated with an informal style such as in the case of Daniel's *Pure gli specchi?* [Mirrors too?], subtitled as "You can restore mirrors?", which contains a question without inversion.

A sociolinguistic aspect related to language use and intersecting with a geographical practise can be considered the old-fashioned courtesy form *voi* (second-person plural pronoun) to address adult people. It is used by Luca (both when he is young and adult) towards elders such as Mr. Ciro and Mr. Bruno as well as by adult Matilda towards "Professor" Punzo, which is standardised (see examples in Table 3).

Although the convergence of the Italian second-person singular and plural pronouns in the English "you" is clearly unavoidable for contrastive linguistic reasons, no compensatory solution is applied in these subtitles to render the formal way of addressing elders. Neapolitan is also featured, with a humoristic effect, in the English-accented Italian of Enea Greenwood, Matilda's fiancé. He only occasionally switches to his native language (e.g., "There you go", "Let's go") and also

tries to imitate the Neapolitan dialect like in *Nu mariuolo*—where *mariuolo* means "rogue" —subtitled as "The man is a crook, huh!" in which the geographical dialect is replaced with a colloquial style.

In the dialogues, Neapolitan humour is also conveyed through the Italian language with a redundant style that might function intertextually, possibly reminding viewers of the Italian comic Totò's famous films, as the two examples in Table 4 suggest. In similar cases, cultural issues seem to go far beyond subtitling practises.

In the series, the geographical dialect also overlaps with other types of marked language, for instance, colloquialisms and multi-generational language, as in the following examples in Table 5.

In these examples, subtitlers do not undertake any compensatory solution. In Example 13, no marked linguistic feature compensates for Southern Italy's lively verb *impicciare* (to swamp), whereas in (14), the Italian verb *appendere* (to hang) is used in the Neapolitan variety with the sense of "jilting" (a partner), losing the geographical trait while maintaining the colloquial tone. In (15), where "hung" (face) is unconventionally used in the sense of "long", the final effect of the English subtitles is that they convey a moral judgement, while Ines vividly describes the man's face. Likewise, the popular interjection *mannaggia,*

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Table 4 Intertextuality

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(11)	1x01	00:08:19,083	Bruno	Stai lontano dal modem.	Stay away from the modem.
		00:08:21,000	Young Daniel	*E che è* il modem? [And what is modem?]	*Uh*, modem?
		00:08:22,041	Bruno	*Una cosa per* Internet [A thing for Internet]	It goes to the Internet.
			Daniel	*E che è* Internet? [And what is Internet?]	Internet?
		00:08:24,750	Bruno	È *una cosa* che serve per cercare *le cose*. Non devi tocca', è *una cosa* di lavoro. [It's a thing that is needed to look for things. You must not touch it, it's a thing for work]	It's something you use to look for things. Don't touch it, it's for work.
(12)	1x01	00:26:51,416	Daniel	Sono uscito *con una persona* ma *quella persona* non era *quella persona*,	I went out with *somebody* I met online, but it wasn't *her.*
		00:26:54,166		era *un'altra persona*. [I went out with a person, but that person was not that person, it was another person]	It was *a different person.*
		00:26:56,583	Luca	Hai mangiato? [Have you had dinner?]	Are you hungry?

Table 5 Geographical Dialect Intersecting with Colloquialisms and Multi-Generational Language

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(13)	1x04	00:01:45,333	Matilda	Se tu *stai impicciato*. [If you're swamped (with work)]	Yeah, but if you*'re busy.*
(14)	1x04	00:05:53,541	Ines	Mati, vedere una persona per *appenderla* significa "non *appenderla*".	Mati, seeing someone to *dump* them means "not *dumping*" them.
(15)	1x02	00:02:27,416	Ines	*Tiene* sempre *quella faccia appesa*, pare che ha passato *un guaio*. [He always 'has' that 'long' face, it seems he has got into trouble]	That guy's got no soul.

typical of Southern Italy's dialects, used by Bruno when scolding his young son and daughter who are fighting (*Mannaggia, ragazzi* [*Mannaggia*, guys]), is standardised as "Come on. Come on now". Conversely, in another occurrence, the same interjection is used by young Luca, conveying it with

an offensive swearword, i.e., "motherfuck", thus involving use-related variation.

The series also includes a different geographical variety, i.e., the Veneto dialect from the North of Italy spoken by a minor character, Nando. He

is an agent working for Matilda's father—a film actor—who displays a strong accent and uses a typical taboo word in *Ti se un mona* [You're a *mona*]. *Mona*, a vulgar term, acquires in the co-text the meaning of "idiot", subtitled as "You're a real joker".

In sum, Neapolitan traits permeate the Italian dialogues and completely disappear in the English subtitles through a strategy of neutralisation and more specifically of discourse standardisation without any compensatory solutions. Admittedly, Naples and the island of Procida on the background multimodally convey the environment where characters live their adventures, and untranslated Italian popular songs underline a nostalgia for the 90s. Nonetheless, the characters' identity expressed through the language they speak is fundamentally lost.

Multi-Generational Language

The language spoken by young, teen, and adult characters in the series is often marked and includes features of colloquialisms, informal and unconventional teenage/youth and taboo language, contributing to realism and characterisation.

Sometimes the colloquial language is maintained, as in the offensive *cagasotto* [shit-scared] of young Raffaella, which becomes "wuss" in the subtitles,

thus informal. However, overall, the English subtitles do not show the same level of informality as the Italian dialogues. For instance, the colloquial style is toned down when the clause *fa schifo* [it sucks] is rendered into a neutral "it's awful". In the same vein, most characters frequently use the colloquial adverb *manco*, with an emphatic function, which is essentially standardised (as in Example 16 below). Let us consider further similar cases in Table 6 where the English subtitles have been neutralised and, therefore, have become unmarked.

The colloquial use of the pleonastic *c'*, as in *C'aveva 60 anni* [She was 60], is simply standardised as "She was in her sixties". Discourse standardisation also occurs with the colloquialism *coso* (used for an unidentified object), which is omitted in the subtitles (in *Dammi 'sto coso* [Give me this thing]/"Let go!", referring to a cellphone). In this specific case, the visual code helps comprehension even though the function of realism is toned down. When it comes to interjections, the popular Italian *porca miseria* [blast!] used by Daniel is slightly softened into "jeez". In turn, an exclamation implying a Catholic reference such as *Madonna santa!* is preserved in the English subtitles although comprehension may not be ensured,

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Table 6 Colloquialisms

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(16)	1x01	00:08:54,25	Rosaria	Niente anticipo. Anzi, se continui a litigare con tua sorella, *manco* il mese prossimo te lo diamo. [No advances. In fact, if you keep fighting with your sister, not even next month we'll give it to you]	No advances. In fact, if you keep fighting with your sister, you won't get it at all.
(17)	1x07	00:22:03,000	Daniel	Shakespeare mi piace *un sacco*. [I like Shakespeare an awful lot]	I *love* Shakespeare.
(18)	1x02	00:19:15,583	Ines	Guarda che ti sei *combinata* sotto agli occhi. [Look at the mess you've made under your eyes]	Look what you've *done* to your eyes.
(19)	1x07	00:21:47,791	Matilda	Sono *incasinatissima*. [I'm in a big mess]	I'm really *very busy*.
(20)	1x02	00:11:17,958	Ines	Magari pensavi che porto *sfiga*. [Maybe you thought I'm jinxed]	Well, maybe you think I'm *bad luck*.

and thus humour might be lost. An interesting case of compensation of humour occurs when the Italian *Quanto ti devo, Ciro?* [How much do I owe you, Ciro?] is rendered as "What's the damage?", an expression used to ask how much one has to pay for something, with a shift from colloquial to informal humorous language. Compensation is also achieved with the insertion of "gotta/gotten", to convey a colloquial tone in the English subtitles (e.g., *Ma si può sapere che ti piglia*? [What's the problem with you?]/"What's gotten into you?"). Such an insertion also reinforces the function of realism when the Italian dialogue does not feature any marked language (e.g., *Devo proprio andare* [I really must go]/ "I really gotta go").

By the same token, a colloquialism in the English subtitles is used to pursue the function of humour, for example, when Ines shows disapproval for her friend Matilda and her boyfriend Enea who avoid technology. About this, Ines comments *Ah certo, perché tu e Enea siete luddisti* [Of course, because you and Enea are Luddites], which is subtitled as "Ah, I forgot you two suck with tech", perhaps, for the sake of greater comprehension. Another humoristic effect is lost when Matilda, during her first blind date with Daniel, uses a *ni*—an Italian colloquial expression to mean "neither yes nor no"—, which is translated into "Mm, yes".

Regarding youth language, the typical *ma ci sei proprio finito sotto* [but you really are head over heels] expressed by Rosa —a secondary character presumably around her 30s— is rendered as "You've really got it bad for her". Along the same lines, Table 7 offers three instances of unconventional use in the Italian version that seems to correspond to teenage/youth language.

In (21), the term *tamarro*, spread from Southern Italy to other regions as a juvenile term to refer to rough people, especially from the poorer areas, is neutralised as "brute". Likewise, in (22), the use of the indefinite word "thing" to mean "drink" is completely lost, whereas in (23), the extremely colloquial expression in italics —conveying the meaning of a long and noisy talk— is shifted to a taboo choice.

Considering the multi-generational characteristics of the series, children's language is instantiated in the word *femmina* [female], repeatedly used by

Table 7 Teenage/Youth Language

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(21)	1x08	00:05:07,083	Young Sandro	Così ti sei fatto rubare l'amore da un *tamarro* con il motorino. [So you've let a rough guy on a scooter steal your love]	But now you've let a *brute* on a scooter steal your woman!
(22)	1x02	00:03:22,416	Matilda	Ho bevuto *una cosa* con *uno* delle medie. [I drank a thing with somebody from middle school]	I stayed and had *a drink* with *a guy* from middle school.
		00:03:22,500	Ines	*Una cosa*? [A thing?]	*A drink*?
		00:03:24,625	Matilda	Dieci *cose*. [Ten things]	Ten *drinks*.
(23)	1x07	00:22:48,791	Matilda	Io sono l'ultima persona che può farti dei *pipponi* moralisti. [I am the last person who can give you a lecture	The last one who should be *busting your balls* about morals is me.

the young protagonists in the 1990s to identify either "girls" or "women", which are the general terms found in the English subtitles.

Moving along the cline of colloquial use, taboo language is widely present in the Italian dialogues and is one of the marked features that is majorly preserved yet not thoroughly. Direct equivalence is exemplified, for instance, by *merda*! [shit!], *cazzo* [cock], *figlio di puttana* [son of a bitch], etc. On the other hand, functional equivalence is achieved, according to the situation, in *cazzo* [cock], which becomes "shit" or "fuck", *che palle* [what a drag], rendered as "shit" or "what a pain in the ass", *una marea di cazzate* [a stream of bullshit] subtitled as "all that horseshit", etc. Likewise, the functions of realism and characterisation fulfilled by the swearwords in the specific co-text are recreated (see example 24 in Table 8). Nevertheless, the strong value of taboo language also happens to be standardised, for instance, when the vulgar verb *scopare* is translated into "sleep with" and "get laid" (elsewhere, as "fuck"). Significant examples where the vulgar tone is neutralised involve both main and secondary characters, including Aurelio, Daniel's boss, as the examples in Table 8 illustrate.

It might be noticed that, while Examples 25 and 27 shift to a merely colloquial tone, in 26 any connotation disappears from the subtitles. Additionally, in (28), the subtitled version is not only neutralised in terms of taboo language but also semantically changed: as a matter of fact, the not-so-serious mistake (conveyed by *mezza* [half]) becomes "huge".

Blaspheme language is also partly neutralised, as in Punzo's exclamation *Gesù Cristo*! [Jesus Christ!] rendered as "Jeez" with a shift from taboo to popular. A partial compensation, although at a different level of marked language, occurs when Young Raffaella rails against her brother with *E tu mi hai rotto le palle!* [And you've busted my balls!], which is softened from vulgarity to informality with "Why are you such a brat?". The opposite strategy is applied when Daniel answers with a plain comment such as *Non ti sopporto più* [I can't stand you anymore], which becomes a colloquialism in the subtitles: "You're a brat". Finally, and significantly, albeit not regularly, English subtitles contain more vulgar lexical choices than the Italian dialogue. A case in point is the male protagonist's assertion *Aurelio ci manda in mezzo a una strada* [Aurelio throws us out on the street], subtitled as "Aurelio is gonna fire our asses".

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Table 8 Taboo Language

Example	Episode	Time	Character	Italian Dialogue	English Subtitle
(24)	1x07	00:16:52,458	Daniel	*Porca puttana!* [Holy shit!]	No! No! Oh, *shit*! What the *fuck*?
(25)	1x03	00:07:07,375	Young Sandro	Che *palle*. [What a drag]	What a *pain*!
(26)	1x03	00:11:50,458	Aurelio	È un mondo *di merda*, Daniel. Un mondo *di merda*. [It's a shitty world, Daniel. A shitty world]	It's *a cruel* world, Daniel. A *cruel* world.
(27)	1x02	00:11:14,166	Ines	Non le ho *mandato io a puttane* il matrimonio. [I didn't fuck up her wedding]	I really *messed up*. I didn't *curse* her marriage.
(28)	1x02	00:08:38,166	Matilda	Secondo me fate *una mezza cazzata*. [In my opinion you're kind of fucking up]	I think you are making *a huge mistake*.

Another example is Aurelio's question *È così che mi ringraziate?* [Is this how you thank me?], rendered as "And in return you pull this shit?". Similarly, when Matilda's old car has stopped working, she exclaims, *No, non va* [No, it doesn't work], which becomes stronger in the English subtitles with a taboo expression such as "No! It's fucked", proving again that taboo language is multi-generational in this series.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings from the analysis of *Generazione 56k* confirm a tendency towards neutralisation strategies, and more specifically, towards discourse standardisation of geographical varieties in the TL, which had been observed in previous studies (Balirano & Fruttaldo, 2021; Bonsignori et al., 2019; De Meo, 2012; Ellender, 2015; Magazzù, 2018; Tortoriello, 2012). A geographical dialect is not normally compensated with variation according to use, which also tends to be softened in the English subtitles, especially when it comes to colloquialisms and the youth language. Moreover, since the border between geographical dialect and multi-generational language is sometimes blurred, normalising the former also affects the latter. Subtitlers seem to endeavour to essentially preserve the taboo language, which has already been pointed out as a new, emerging attitude in other AVT modes such as dubbing (Dore, 2017a). Interestingly, taboo language seems to overcome age and gender barriers and may be described as multi-generational and universal. This contrasts with a traditional attitude in subtitling, where swearwords "are more likely to be used in male-dominated contexts" (Cavaliere, 2019, p. 4).

Although humour is generally present, its effect in subtitles is toned down since it often derives from the use of a geographical variety. The Italian audience may have the possibility of appreciating the expressiveness and the musicality of the Neapolitan accent, rhythm, and expressions. They might also enjoy detecting intertextual references to a literary, theatrical, and cinematic comic tradition, which spans from Eduardo De Filippo to Totò

and Massimo Troisi and that, in the society of the new millennium, is exploited in web media (see the phenomenon of *The Jackals*). Inevitably, unless English-speaking viewers are familiar with the Italian language, culture, and artistic/popular background, they are deprived of such appreciation.

Despite the recent move of AVT towards multimodal studies (Ramos Pinto & Adami, 2020), in this paper, we have primarily followed the linguistic direction trend ascertained by Guillot and Pavesi (2019) in considering the verbal code "a key component in multimodal cinematic discourse" (p. 498). We posit that this, particularly, holds true for contexts in which characters' representation is mainly construed through the language they speak. Visual compensation in the subtitles has also been partially commented upon in the analysis, although we concur with Tortoriello (2012) that this compensatory element may require a stronger effort on the part of the foreign audience. The stunning views of the blue sea, Vesuvio, Naples, and Procida's atmosphere might even enhance the stereotypical image of Italy rather than contribute to representing a specific cultural identity. For an Anglophone audience, the Mediterranean traditionally evokes beauty, sunshine, and warm weather.

In conclusion, Gottlieb's (2009) hypothesis in relation to the translation "up the river" (p. 41) is not confirmed by the analysis of subtitles in this series. This is because only a limited degree of adherence was noted. As a consequence, the representation of "Neapolitanness" seems invariably to be compromised. It is worth bringing up Cavaliere's (2019) claim in her study of the film *Gomorra*, "non-Italian audiences who are unfamiliar with the sounds and rhythms of standard Italian might not even be aware that the characters are making extensive use of dialect since in the film Neapolitan is basically rendered into standard English" (p. 19).

Even though in Anglophone contexts subtitling has traditionally been linked to the idea of

"authenticity", the Neapolitan identity may hardly be perceived. Given the constraints inherent in subtitling, this might be interpreted as an inexorable outcome. Nevertheless, even considering the issues of legibility and intelligibility imposed by the subtitling mode, we believe that alternative translation strategies could be contemplated in some cases. An example of this is the use of a standard variety followed by written indications informing the public that the character is speaking a geographical dialect like in the Italian intralingual subtitles. Obviously, this would require a longer process that is, perhaps, not compatible with the number of subtitled series released, tight deadlines, and marketing needs of video-on-demand platforms. Moreover, those consumers of Netflix series who are keen on binge-watching might have different expectations. To conclude, the subtitling of *Generazione 56k* does not fulfil a successful representation of "Italianness" and its local geographical diversity, which is strongly instantiated by the linguistic variation of the Italian dialogues. Yet, the typical themes engaging millennials are conveyed in the English subtitles and might be appreciated by an international audience.

Although limited to a case study, this paper has sought to contribute to the ongoing research on geographical dialects and multi-generational language in AVT. In this vein, it allows for discussing how these language variations affect translation practises, consequently, influencing the representation of Italian geographical variation intersecting with multi-generational language. Another aspect that is worth analysing in further research, since it did not fall within the scope of this paper, regards the possible differences between the English dubbing and subtitling of the same AV product. The effects of neutralisation of geographical variation might also be examined through a reception study, in line with that conducted by Cavaliere (2008), to assess the grade of appreciation of identity and humour by English-speaking viewers. In addition, it might be fruitful to investigate whether younger generations, accustomed to Netflix programmes

where "multilingualism" and issues of representation are increasingly championed (Manfredi, 2021b), would envisage a new subtitling experience.

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Subtitling the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia from Italian into English: An Analysis of Cultural Transfer

El subtitulado de la mafia y la antimafia del italiano al inglés: un análisis de transferencia cultural

Le sous-titrage de mafia et anti-mafia dès l'italien vers l'anglais : une analyse de transfert culturel

Legendagem de mafia e anti-mafia do italiano para o inglês: uma análise da transferência cultural

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Abstract

Besides big Hollywood productions, like *The Godfather* trilogy, and video-on-demand productions, like *The Sopranos*, both filmed in English, new popular Italian productions, based on the linguistic and cultural representation of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia, have gained momentum. Nonetheless, the body of academic research on the linguistic traits of the former is larger than research on the latter. This study aims to investigate how and by which strategies the lexicon and the culture-bound terms related to the concept of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia are culturally transferred and subtitled from Italian into English. The TV series *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia* is used as the corpus for both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis. Results show that the translation of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia for the purpose of audiovisual translation, through subtitling, is a simpler and less convoluted form of translation than written legal translation, aimed at conveying complex concepts in a simpler way.

Keywords: mafia, anti-mafia, subtitling into English, culture-bound terms, Italian TV series translation, AVT, cultural transfer

Resumen

Aparte de las grandes producciones de Hollywood, como la trilogía de *El Padrino*, y de las producciones de vídeo por demanda, como *Los Soprano*, ambas rodadas en inglés, han cobrado fuerza nuevas producciones italianas populares basadas en la representación lingüística y cultural de la Mafia y la Antimafia han cobrado fuerza. Sin embargo, el corpus de investigación sobre los rasgos lingüísticos de la primera es mayor que la investigación sobre la segunda. El presente estudio se propone analizar cómo es y a través de qué estrategias se hace la transferencia cultural y el subtitulado del italiano al inglés del léxico y algunos culturemas relacionados con
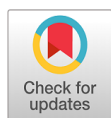
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los conceptos de mafia y antimafia. Para el análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo se empleó un corpus tomado de la serie de televisión *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*. Los resultados muestran que la traducción de culturemas del campo de la mafia y la antimafia con fines de traducción audiovisual, a través del subtitulado, plantea menos complejidad que la traducción legal escrita, pues su objetivo es transmitir conceptos complejos de forma más simple.

Palabras clave: mafia, antimafia, subtitulado al inglés, culturemas, traducción de series de TV italianas, TAV, transferencia cultural

Résumé

En dehors des superproductions hollywoodiennes telles que la trilogie du *Parrain* et des productions vidéo à la demande telles que *Les Sopranos*, toutes deux filmées en anglais, de nouvelles productions italiennes basées sur la représentation linguistique et culturelle de la mafia et de l'antimafia ont pris de l'ampleur. La recherche sur les caractéristiques de la représentation linguistique sont plus nombreuses que celles sur sa représentation culturelle. Cette étude vise à analyser le transfert culturel et le sous-titrage de l'italien à l'anglais du lexique et de certains éléments culturels liés aux concepts de mafia et d'antimafia. Pour l'analyse quantitative et qualitative, nous avons utilisé un corpus tiré de la série télévisée *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*. Les résultats montrent que la traduction de culturèmes du domaine de la mafia et de l'antimafia à des fins de traduction audiovisuelle, par le biais du sous-titrage, est moins complexe que la traduction juridique écrite, car elle vise à transmettre des concepts complexes d'une manière plus simple.

Mots-clef : mafia, antimafia, sous-titrage vers l'anglais, culturèmes, traduction des séries télévisées italiennes, TAV, transfert culturel

Resumo

Além dos sucessos de bilheteria de Hollywood, como a trilogia *O Poderoso Chefão*, e das produções de vídeo sob demanda, como *Os Sopranos*, ambos filmados em inglês, novas produções italianas baseadas na representação linguística e cultural da máfia e da antimáfia tem ganhado impulso recentemente. O conjunto de pesquisas sobre as características linguísticas da representação linguística é maior do que as pesquisas sobre sua representação cultural. O presente estudo tem como objetivo analisar como se dá a transferência cultural e a legendagem do italiano para o inglês do léxico e de alguns culturemas relacionados aos conceitos de máfia e antimáfia. Para a análise quantitativa e qualitativa, foi utilizado um corpus extraído da série de TV *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*. Os resultados mostram que a tradução de culturemas do campo da máfia e da antimáfia para fins de tradução audiovisual, por meio de legendagem, apresenta menor complexidade que a tradução jurídica escrita, pois visa a transmitir conceitos complexos de forma mais simples.

Palavras chave: mafia, antimafia, legendagem para o inglês, culturemas, tradução de séries televisivas italianas, TAV, transferência cultural

Introduction

As highlighted by Parini (2017, p. 103), "the figure of the mafioso is indisputably the most notorious and successful representation of Italians on the Hollywood screen", and it has attracted a great deal of attention from scholars investigating "the distinguishable language variety that characters starring in Hollywood Mafia movies speak" (Parini, 2014, p. 145). However, in addition to big Hollywood productions, like *The Godfather* trilogy (Coppola, 1972, 1974, 1990), *The Untouchables* (1987), *Goodfellas* (1990), *Casino* (1995), *Donnie Brasco* (1997,) and to video-on-demand (VOD) productions, like *The Sopranos* (Chase, 1999–2007), all filmed in English, popular Italian productions, based on the linguistic and cultural representation of the Mafia, have gained momentum in recent years. Nonetheless, the body of academic research on the linguistic traits of the former is larger than that of research on the latter, which is still very limited to this day (Laudisio, 2017; Parini, 2013, 2015; Scarpino, 2011).

This study aims to investigate how and by which strategies the lexicon and the culture-bound terms related to the concept of the Mafia and the anti-Mafia are culturally translated and subtitled from Italian into English. The TV series *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia* (2021), comprising six episodes of approximately 38 minutes each, is used as the corpus for both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis highlighting, on the one hand, the frequency of occurrences and, on the other hand, the translation strategies adopted.

With reference to the translation of the vocabulary referring to the Mafia and its cultural context in legal translation as much as in audiovisual translation, "translators need to be able to mediate on three levels: linguistic, legal and cultural" (Whithorn, 2014, p. 169). Attention here is paid to the approaches adopted for the English translation of Mafia-related terms against the background of the translation strategies applied to audiovisual texts according to Díaz-Cintas and Remael's taxonomy (2007).

The term Mafia, defined as "a criminal organisation that makes money illegally, especially by threatening people and dealing in drugs" (Collins Dictionary, n.d.), is deeply embedded in the culture and the society of Sicily, and Italy; but it is also true that this term has travelled across countries and languages, so much so that de Franchis (1996) affirms that the word does not require a translation. Whilst it has been established that the term "Mafia" does not require a translation, its compounds like *antimafia*, its derived words like the adjective *mafioso*, and other Mafia-related terms like *pizzo* or *pentito* may pose a challenge for translators and subtitlers. Furthermore, the different legal systems in place in the various English-speaking countries should be taken into account when translating legal jargon. Lastly, there is a difference between legal documents and audiovisual products, in the sense that the former are legally binding and the latter are for entertainment and/or educational purposes. Therefore, there is a difference between legal translation of documents (for instance, birth certificates, court rulings, etc.) and audiovisual translation of TV series; that is, the former must be accurate and precise, and every word should be chosen carefully, whereas the latter needs to convey the general message and should be easy to understand for the general public.

When analysing audiovisual material, and in particular subtitles in Italian and in English of a docuseries from a renowned VOD platform, such as Netflix, one should take into consideration that the function of subtitles (or any other form of audiovisual translation and media accessibility for that matter) is to provide linguistic accessibility (Díaz-Cintas, 2005), that is to say its purpose is "to facilitate the access to an otherwise hermetic source of information and entertainment". It is known that the concept of linguistic accessibility bears the concept of cultural accessibility in the sense that language and culture are intertwined

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and that language is used to express phenomena deeply embedded in the culture of a certain area, in this case Sicily.

The idea for this research stemmed from the practice of translation from Italian into English of some audiovisual material of this docuseries, mainly archive footage and interviews in addition to random film footage, court rulings, wiretaps, etc. during its production stage. The research question that this article aims to answer is how the subtitles translated into English help the general public understand and ultimately—through films and TV series —appreciate the audiovisual output of a complex phenomenon such as that of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia.

Theoretical Framework

This section provides a theoretical framework with respect to the differences between legal translation and audiovisual translation. Furthermore, it highlights some differences between the English language and Italian language in relation to the different legal systems adopted by different countries. Lastly, it sums up the taxonomy adopted for the qualitative analysis of this article after providing examples and data excerpted from the quantitative analysis.

The Mafia: Legal and Audiovisual Translations

It seems only logical to start with a cultural and linguistic background of the Mafia phenomenon and its many facets. As highlighted by Di Piazza (2010), the Mafia has its own language, jargon, and identity; and its history is embedded in the history of Sicily in particular and Italy in general. From a linguistic viewpoint, the terms Mafia, Anti-Mafia and other Mafia-related words can be considered "culturemes" (Nord, 1997, p. 34), for which Katan (2009, p. 79) gives the definition of "formalized, socially and juridically embedded phenomena that exist in a particular form of function in only one of the two cultures being compared".

From the point of view of translation from Italian into English, a translator should ask which legal system to take into account, as English is the official language of several countries, and each country has or might have a different legal system and, therefore, linguistic differences. For instance, in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, etc., the legal system is different from one another, so much so that a lawyer passing the bar in one country cannot automatically practice law in the other, despite speaking the same language. It is not just a matter of choosing whether to use UK or US spelling for a word; it is a deeper issue which resonates with the surge of foreign audiovisual content subtitled and translated into English that we are seeing these days (for dubbing into English, see Hayes, 2021 and Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021).

Another important difference between legal translation (as a form of written translation) and audiovisual translation, in any of its modalities, is the (im)possibility to resort to footnotes or any other additional piece of information or appendix to explain a complex concept or phenomenon that does not have a direct translation. For instance, further below, it will be shown that the word *pizzo,* the protection money paid to the Mafia, has no direct translation into English. Therefore, a loan is the preferred translation strategy in audiovisual translation, as there is the possibility to resort to an explanation of the phenomenon in a footnote or within the text, which is common in the case of legal written translation.

One last consideration on the differences between Italian and English is that Italian has a grammatical gender system, and English does not. In Italian, all nouns and adjectives are either masculine or feminine, for instance; and this will constitute an important part of the corpus analysis, the adjective *mafioso* is masculine singular (declensions in gender and number are *mafiosa, mafiosi, mafiose*). When translating from English into Italian, the pragmatics of the text and, in the case of audiovisual translation, the reference to the video and

audio help the translator identify the gender (and number). However, when translating from Italian into English, this very issue poses the same challenge from a different point of view, that is, the lack of gendered adjectives and nouns and the lack of use of the word "mafioso" as an adjectival noun.

Taxonomy

Throughout the years, many scholars have devised several classifications of translation strategies in the attempt to produce taxonomies useful for the translation of written text and more recently of audiovisual material. Taking into consideration the chosen modality of (interlingual) subtitling, the taxonomy devised by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) will be used for the analysis of the English translated subtitles of the docuseries *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*. This classification encompasses strategies, such as:

- Loan: when no translation is possible. In subtitles, this is usually italicised (ex. "*pizzo*").

- Calque: a literal translation which benefits from an explanation. In subtitles, this is not always possible due to space and time constraints (ex. "*trattativa Stato-mafia*" [State-Mafia negotiations] translated with "negotiations between State and mafia").

- Explicitation: making the source text more accessible to the target audience.

- Substitution: similar to explicitation. Particularly used to translate wordy subtitles.

- Transposition: replacing a cultural concept in the source language with a cultural concept in the target language.

- Lexical recreation: the invention of a neologism in the target language. In subtitles, the neologism is in quotation marks.

- Compensation: making up for a translation loss by adding something else.

- Omission: sometimes unavoidable due to the space and time constraints.

- Addition: adding something as a form of explicitation.

Particular attention should be paid to the strategy of transposition, which is highly versatile (Walinski, 2015) and "probably the most common structural change undertaken by translators", as argued by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995, p. 94), who identify up to ten types of transposition, including verb to noun, adverb to verb, and adjective to noun, etc.

Method

Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia (Di Maggio & Gambino, 2021) is a docuseries comprising six episodes of approximately 38 minutes each. The docuseries tells and reconstructs the human and court events of Pino Maniaci and Silvana Saguto, two prominent personalities of the Anti-Mafia movement. During their professional life, both have been at the centre of controversy and accused of crimes against which they claim to be innocent (Ciarlante, 2021). Pino Maniaci, journalist and TV host, took over the Sicilian TV broadcaster Telejato, and has devoted the past two decades to the fight against the Mafia. More recently, he dedicated his work to expose and fight against some personalities of the Anti-Mafia, *i.e.*, the parliamentary commission set up in 1962 to investigate the Mafia phenomenon (Treccani, n. d.a). Silvana Saguto, former magistrate of the Court of Palermo and former President of the Preventive Measures Section, has been one of the most important judges at the forefront in the fight against the Mafia in Sicily.

In 2013, the stories of the two protagonists are intertwined. Maniaci begins to conduct a series of investigations into serious episodes of corruption against some representatives of the Sicilian judiciary system, and in particular, of the Preventive Measures Section of the Court of Palermo,

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focusing precisely on Silvana Saguto. Maniaci accused the then magistrate of having illegally seized assets, charging excessive fees for their administration, and having made several companies go bankrupt with the complicity of her husband and members of her staff. Silvana Saguto, in turn, accuses Pino Maniaci of favouring the Mafia that he himself has attacked from his TV station. In 2016, the Palermo prosecutor's office investigated Pino Maniaci for defamation and extortion. That same year, Silvana Saguto was also investigated: 39 charges were brought against her, including corruption, abuse of office, and embezzlement. Both claim to be innocent and believe the other to be guilty. They both claim to be victims of a "vendetta", a vengeance (Donzelli, 2021).

The docuseries is produced by the production company Nutopia (https://www.nutopia.com/) in association with Mon Amour Films (https://www.monamourfilms.com/), and it is the result of a project started in December 2005 when the producers were given unprecedented access to the protagonists, their families, their legal teams, Sicilian courtrooms, and a vast archive and repertoire material.

The production of the docuseries was based in Italy, while the editing process was carried out in London with the intent to hire producers and directors who spoke Italian (Creamer, 2021). A team of 11 translators was hired to transcribe and translate hours and hours of footage, archives, interviews, wiretaps, and other audiovisual material. The task was not to create perfectly synchronised subtitles following strict guidelines, but to give a "rough time-code", usually in the region of 30 seconds before or after the start of the sentence, and to translate the audio from Italian into English (and sometimes from Sicilian or a regional Italian into English) without any limitations on characters per line, number of lines, or reading speed. With the aid of the software Inqscribe (https://www.inqscribe.com/), the synchronised translations were then sent to editors, both Italian and English speakers, who would work on the

editing of the episodes based on the work provided as the production team produced more material to be translated and then edited. One of the peculiarities of this workflow was that there was no need to translate legal terms exactly and precisely, but rather to provide a rough translation, a general idea of the words or sentences, taking advantage of the fact that limitations of space and time, usually applicable to subtitling and other audiovisual modalities, did not apply in this instance. The job was carried out by various translators, and there was no concerted approach to the legal terms and the Mafia-related terminology to be translated. Instead, each translator was free to create their own glossary as the project progressed and shared it or compared it with colleagues. However, the English subtitles available on Netflix were translated by a single translator from a time-coded template in Italian. The episodes of the docuseries are listed in Table 1.

In 2019, this author was hired, along with ten other translators to work on the translation of audiovisual material during the production of the docuseries. The translators, located between London and Palermo, where the two production companies operate, were asked to synchronise and translate from Italian into English hours and hours of video footage, archive footage from Italian TV news, secret recordings or wiretaps, and other audiovisual material needed for the editing. The software of choice, as mentioned, was Inqscribe, and the videos were sent or shared via a cloud-based server. The usual daily workflow would require the translators to synchronise as much audiovisual material as possible without a specific chronological sequence to allow the editors to continue their work. The timecodes did not need to be accurate to the frame, or to the second for that matter; instead, they were rough timecodes allowing the editors to follow what was being said in the clips. The transcription and translation file was then sent via email to the editors, and no feedback or comments were provided before moving on to the following clip.

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Table 1 List of Episodes of *Vendetta: guerra nell'Antimafia*

Original Title	English Title	Duration
Dichiarazione di guerra	*Declaration of War*	43'
Il grande tradimento	*Death by Video*	33'
Corruzione e estorsione	*Corruption, the Sicilian Curse*	37'
Trappole e complotti	*Traps and Conspiracies*	38'
Verità e bugie	*Truth and Lies*	38'
La resa dei conti	*The Reckoning*	44'

With respect to the translation of the dialogues from Italian (sometimes also from Sicilian dialect or regional Italian, and more rarely from Spanish) into English, the translators were free to provide a sensical translation of the dialogues without the constraints of space and time usually applied to subtitling.

The official subtitles in Italian closed captions (cc), representing a verbatim transcription of the Italian dialogues, and the official subtitles in English were analysed from a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

The first type of analysis that was carried out was quantitative. The occurrences of certain words related to the realm of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia were listed in a table and divided by episode. Whenever a numeric match of the Italian words and the English translation occurred, the words were classified as "Matched" (i.e., for every Italian subtitle containing that word, there was an English subtitle containing the corresponding direct translation of that word). Whenever a discrepancy in number between the Italian and the English words occurred, a further qualitative analysis was carried out. The qualitative analysis carried out subsequently followed a more thorough approach by watching each episode with Italian original audio and English subtitles. The context, the scenes, and the visual elements all contributed to achieving a better understanding of the translation strategies adopted for the translation of certain words related to the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia.

To start the discussion about the qualitative analysis of the translation of the subtitles, Table 2 features a sequence from Episode 2, titled "Death by video", with the Italian subtitles, the English back translation (my translation) and the English subtitles. The scene depicts a separation of the hearing from the Kevlera trial, which saw Pino Maniaci being charged with Mafia crimes, along with other Mafia associates. This passage can be considered the most technical and complex passage of the entire season due to the presence of legal jargon and complex syntax, and it is interesting to see how the English subtitles use a simpler and clearer vocabulary and syntax.

After watching the episodes and having noted the words related to the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia, a first quantitative analysis was carried out, by counting the repetitions of the words in all episodes. The words or groups of words taken into consideration for this article are listed below (for the purpose of this list, all words start with a capital letter, and foreign words are not italicised). The list is in order of appearance in the subtitles:

- Mafia (noun, both in lowercase and uppercase)

- Antimafia (noun, or "Anti-Mafia" as per English spelling)

- Mafioso (adjective, and its declension in gender and number: mafiosa, mafiosi, mafiose)

- Criminalità Organizzata (noun, or just "Criminalità")

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Table 2 Excerpts of Subtitles from the *Death by Video* Episode

Italian Subtitles	Back Translation	English Subtitles
La richiesta in esame è fondata sulla premessa	The request under consideration is founded on the premise	The request under review is founded on the premise
che i reati contestati all'imputato Maniaci,	that the alleged offenses to the accused Maniaci,	that the crimes that Maniaci is accused of
sono del tutto slegati con quelli contestati agli altri imputati.	are completely unrelated with those disputed to the other defendants.	have nothing to do with the crimes of the other defendants.
E in subordine disporre oᵃ stralcio della posizione	And in the alternative, arrange the excerpt of the position	And therefore, we accept that Maniaci Giuseppe
di Maniaci Giuseppe avanzata	by Maniaci Giuseppe advanced	should be removed from that hearing
dalla difesa dello stesso.	by the defense of the same.	as requested by his attorney.

ᵃThe Italian cc reads "E in subordine disporre o stralcio della posizione" but the Italian original dialogue says "E in subordine disporre allo stralcio…". This discrepancy can be understood as a typo.

- Pizzo (noun, uncountable)

- Racket (noun, uncountable)

- Pentito (adjectival noun, and its declension in gender and number: pentita, pentiti, pentite)

- Misure di Prevenzione (noun, usually plural, but also "Misure")

- Beni (noun, usually plural, but also "Bene")

- Confiscare (verb, and the adjective "Confiscato" and its declension in gender and number: confiscata, confiscati, confiscate)

- Sequestrare (verb, and the adjective "Sequestrato" and its declension in gender and number: sequestrata, sequestrati, sequestrate)

- Trattativa Stato-Mafia (as a compound)

Upon entering the data on the frequency of occurrence in the table and realising that some words did not occur as much as originally anticipated, words repeated four times or less were excluded from the in-depth analysis. These words were *racket* (extorsion of money), *pentito* (informant), and the compound *trattativa stato-mafia*. Nevertheless, the compound *trattativa stato-mafia*, despite being repeated only twice throughout the six episodes, deserves a brief analysis. The term refers to a pact between the Italian government and the Mafia after the terror attacks of 1992 and 1993 to prevent further attacks[1]. In the English subtitles the term was translated with "negotiations between the State and Mafia" in Episode 4, and with "the State versus Mafia trial" in Episode 6, using the strategy of explicitation.

In the analysis, there are some terms that relate to the Mafia and are culturally and socially relevant but did not pose any particular strain on the translation. These terms were translated consistently throughout the TV series, and they include the nouns *antimafia* and *pizzo* as well as the collocations *criminalità organizzata* and *misure di prevenzione*.

1   https://tg24.sky.it/cronaca/2018/04/20/trattativa-stato-mafia-sentenza

Results

In the Italian subtitles, the term *antimafia*, which is both an adjective and a noun referring to anything that is against the Mafia, is spelt as one word and in lowercase. In the English subtitles, the word is rendered with Anti-Mafia, capitalising the A for Anti and the M for Mafia and using a dash to indicate a compound.

The noun *pizzo*, which refers to the protection money extorted by the Mafia organisations, was left untranslated, using the loan strategy. In the English subtitles, the word *pizzo* was italicised following two rules of the *Netflix English Timed Text Style Guide* (2022). The style guide states that "familiar foreign words and phrases which are listed in Webster's dictionary should not be italicized and should be spelled as in Webster's dictionary (e. g. bon appétit, rendezvous, doppelgänger, zeitgeist, etc.)" and also that "unfamiliar foreign words and phrases should be italicized". The word *pizzo* is widely known in Italy and it is starting to circulate outside Italy also thanks to docuseries like *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*. However, as of yet, the word *pizzo* is not listed in Webster's dictionary (The Merriam-Webster dictionary: http://www.merriam-webster.com/), therefore it was italicised in the Netflix English subtitles. The collocation *criminalità organizzata*, which refers to the criminal activities of organised groups, was translated as "organized crime".

The term *misure di prevenzione* (sometimes just *misure* or *misura*), which refers to a law introduced in 1982 aimed at the recovery of illicitly gained assets by means of seizure of confiscation (Treccani, n. d.c; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014), plays a pivotal role in the TV series and also in the history of the Anti-Mafia. In the English subtitles, the term "preventive measures" (sometimes "measure" if singular) was used consistently, much in line with legal translation (see La Spina, 2014; Calamunci et al., 2021), although the translation "prevention measures" is sometimes used in other legal documents.

Numerically speaking, on one occurrence the Italian *misure di prevenzione* was not translated at all in the English version because it was uttered by a TV news anchor and the entire utterance, which was neither clear nor loud enough, was not subtitled in the English version.

The first group of words worth further analysis was related to a practice typical of the fight against the Mafia, and it is of pivotal importance for plot development. The words were: the noun *bene* (often plural, *beni*), combined with the verbs *confiscare* and *sequestrare*, the adjectives *confiscato* (and its declension in gender and number) and *sequestrato* (and its declension in gender and number), and the nouns *confisca* and *sequestro*. These words were used throughout the six episodes of the series as they describe a phenomenon typical of the Anti-Mafia.

Usually, when a person is suspected of having something to do with the Mafia, but there is no evidence against them or it will take time to produce evidence, it is possible for a judge to use the aforementioned preventive measures (*misure di prevenzione*) to stop said person from using everything that has value (homes, financial assets, businesses, etc.). Around Sicily, and around Italy in general, it is now common to see businesses that once belonged to the Mafia being confiscated and given to new organisations to repurpose them and give them a new life. Outside or inside these businesses, there is usually a sign reading "*Bene confiscato alla mafia*" (asset confiscated from the Mafia, my translation). The literal translation provided is not widely used as the few official translations tend to specify which asset (property, land, etc.) is being confiscated (Cascone et al., 2019; Rakopoulos, 2014). This is just another example of how translating legal words and sentences, outside the courtroom and not for the purpose of legal translation, can be challenging.

Quantitative Analysis

In the corpus under scrutiny, the quantitative analysis shows the repetition of occurrences of the

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word *bene* (singular) or *beni* (plural) 23 times in the Italian subtitles throughout the six episodes; whereas, in the English subtitles, the words "asset", "assets", "good" (as a noun), and "goods" were used 29 times throughout the six episodes. The increase in the number of occurrences in the English subtitles was not directly related to an increase by six occurrences (e.g., in Episode 1, in the Italian subtitles, there were 1 *bene* and 9 *beni* as opposed to 1 "goods" and 13 "assets" in the English subtitles; in Episode 2, in the Italian subtitles there were 2 *bene* and 7 *beni* as opposed to 2 "goods" and 5 "assets" in the English subtitles).

The majority of the occurrences of the words *bene* and *beni* were translated with their direct translations "good(s)" or "asset(s)" interchangeably as synonyms; however, a preference for "asset(s)" should be noted. One of the subtitling constraints to bear in mind when choosing between one word and its closest synonym is the maximum number of characters per line and maximum number of lines per subtitle allowed by the different guidelines. Netflix guidelines (2022) allows up to 42 characters per line (cpl) and this can be considered a generous character limit as it usually ranges between 37 and 42 for other VOD platforms and broadcasters. Linguistic economy would suggest choosing one over another based on their character count; however, the words "goods" and "assets" have a very similar number of characters, so this rule does not apply. Unlike written translation, in audiovisual translation, space and time constraints dictated by the modality may impact the choice of words when it comes to synonyms. Similarly to subtitling, where the compliance with the maximum number of characters per line is paramount, in dubbing, a word may be chosen over its closest synonym in order to match the lip-sync as close as possible to the original. Unfortunately, the TV series Vendetta has not been dubbed into English, but rather Voiced-Over, therefore an analysis of this theory is not possible at this stage.

The nouns "good(s)" and "asset(s)" usually collocate with the verbs *confiscare* and *sequestrare*, and

the past participle *confiscato* (and its declension in gender and number) and *sequestrato* (and its declension in gender and number). In the Italian dialogues, the verbs *confiscare* and *sequestrare* are sometimes used interchangeably, although their exact meaning is different because *confiscare* means "to take and give to the fiscal system" (Treccani, n. d.b), whereas *sequestrare* means "to take possession of by legal process" (Treccani, n. d.d). Once again, should the purpose of the translation be of legal nature and should the translations of the verb *confiscare* and *sequestrare* be as accurate as possible for the purposes of court room translations, the English translation of the verbs in question—the most direct translations of which are "to confiscate" and "to seize", respectively—should be chosen carefully. Even the protagonists of the TV series used the verbs interchangeably, and the translation of the subtitles from Italian into English reflected this randomness of terms. However, from a quantitative point of view, the words relating to the verb *confiscare* (verb *confiscare*, past participle *confiscato* and its declension in gender and number, and the noun *confisca*) were used 14 times throughout the six episodes, as opposed to their direct translations, which were used 10 times. The words relating to the verb *sequestrare* (verb *sequestrare*, past participle *sequestrato* and its declension in gender and number, and the noun *sequestro*) were used 14 times throughout the six episodes, as opposed to their direct translations, which were used 23 times.

The Translation of Mafia and Mafioso

The group of words that generated the most interest for the quantitative and qualitative analysis of this contribution comprised the noun *mafia* (spelt in lowercase and uppercase, more on this later) and the adjective *mafioso* with its declension in gender and number (*mafiosi* masculine plural, *mafiosa* feminine singular, *mafiose* feminine plural). In the Italian subtitles, the word *mafia* was repeated 74 times, whereas the word "Mafia" was repeated 124 times in the English subtitles, where the word "Mafia" was always capitalised (apart

from one instance in Episode 1) following the spelling and capitalisation of dictionaries and usually introduced by the article "the": "Definition of the Mafia: a secret criminal organization in Italy" (Merriam-Webster, n. d.) and "The Mafia is a criminal organization that makes money illegally, especially by threatening people and dealing in drugs" (Collins Dictionary, n. d.).

The strategy used for the translation of the word *mafia* in the English subtitles was mainly direct translation, apart from a few instances in which even the original Italian dialogues were somewhat intricate, although understandable for an Italian audience. Therefore, different translation strategies were adopted, as shown in Table 3.

In the Italian dialogues, the word *mafioso* (masculine singular) was used as an adjective as well as an adjectival noun. In the English subtitles, the word *mafioso* was used only as a noun due to the lack of the adjective in the English language. In Italian, the masculine plural of the word is *mafiosi* and it is used as an adjective as well as an adjectival noun; in English, the (masculine) plural is "mafiosos" or sometimes *mafiosi* if used as a loan. The feminine adjective, both singular and plural—*mafiosa* and *mafiose*, respectively—was used in the Italian dialogues in agreement with feminine nouns and not

in reference to female members of the Mafia. This was merely a coincidence as the adjective can, in fact, be used as an adjectival noun in reference to a female member of the Mafia (*Lei è mafiosa.* [She is a Mafia member]). From a quantitative point of view, the adjective *mafioso* with its declension in gender and number was used 62 times in the Italian subtitles; whereas, in the English subtitles it is possible to read "mafioso" 6 times and the plural "mafiosos" 16 times, not in italics as it is present in the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n. d.). Table 4 shows a variety of translation strategies employed for the translation of the adjective and adjectival noun *mafioso* in the English subtitles. The translation of the word in the English subtitles required a deeper analysis of the strategies employed.

Similarly, the adjective *mafiosi*, masculine plural, was used as an adjective and as an adjectival noun in the Italian dialogues and translated with "mafiosos" in the English subtitles. By adding the inflectional suffix -s at the end of the word "mafioso", the noun substitutes de facto the Italian *mafiosi*. In the English subtitles, the word was not italicised as it is the plural of a word found in the Merriam-Webster dictionary. Odd translations, or rather translations that deserved a deeper analysis, are listed in Table 5, in which it is possible to see the Italian dialogues, the back translation, the English subtitles, and the strategy adopted.

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Table 3 Translation Strategies of the Word Mafia

Italian Subtitles	English Back Translation	English Subtitles	Strategy
La mafia di Riina era una mafia troppo stragista.	Riina's mafia was too much of a massacre mafia.	Riina's Mafia committed many massacres.	Omission (of Repetition)
[…] e poi ci arrestano con l'accusa di mafia.	[…] and then they arrest us on mafia charges.	They arrested us under suspicion of being Mafia members	(Addition as a form of) Explicitation
Sono stati colpiti dall'accusa di mafia.	They were charged with mafia.	They were accused of being Mafia members.	(Addition as a form of) Explicitation
[…] e che è stato, appunto, condannato definitivamente per mafia.	[…] and who was, in fact, definitively convicted of mafia.	and who was ultimately convicted of Mafia association.	(Addition as a form of) Explicitation
[…] il cui nonno era stato condannato per mafia.	[…] whose grandfather had been convicted of mafia charges.	[…] whose grandfather had been convicted of Mafia association.	(Addition as a form of) Explicitation

Table 4 Translation Strategies of the Word Mafioso

Italian Subtitles	English Back Translation	English Subtitles	Strategy
Una pallottola non costa niente a un mafioso.	A bullet costs a mafioso nothing.	One bullet doesn't cost the Mafia anything.	Transposition
[. . .] a combattere il fenomeno mafioso in Sicilia.	[. . .] to combat the mafia phenomenon in Sicily.	[. . .] to fighting the Mafia in Sicily.	Transposition
[. . .] lo strapotere mafioso della famiglia dei Vitale.	[. . .] the mafia dominance of the Vitale family.	[. . .] to the Vitale family's excessive power.	Omission
il potere mafioso sul territorio di Partinico,	mafia power in the Partinico area,	the Mafia's power in Partinico,	Direct Translation / Transposition
Il rischio per il mafioso è accettabile.	The risk for the mafioso is acceptable.	The risk is acceptable to the Mafia.	Transposition
[perché l'estorsione è il tipico reato] delle associazioni criminali di stampo mafioso.	[because extortion is the typical crime] of mafia-type criminal associations.	because extortion is a typical Mafia crime.	Substitution
Generalmente, il mafioso è omertoso.	Generally, the mafioso is omertous.	In general, mafiosos abide by the code of silence.	Explicitation

Table 5 Translation Strategies of the Word Mafiosi

Italian Subtitles	English Back Translation	English Subtitles	Strategy
[È amico] di mafiosi.	[He is friends] with mafiosi.	[He's a friend] of the Mafia.	Transposition
"Qui siamo al punto giusto per cercare di fargli il culo ai mafiosi".	"Here we are at the right place to try to kick the mafia's ass."	"We're in the right place to try to fuck the Mafia"	Transposition
[. . .] che i mafiosi esercitano sui commercianti locali.	[...] that mafiosi exert on local traders.	[. . .] that the Mafia is putting on local business owners.	Transposition
[. . .] foraggiare quello che sono i mafiosi,	[...] foraging what mafiosi are,	[. . .] funding the Mafia,	Explicitation
Ora, pensate se questa legge diceva: "Togliamo i beni ai mafiosi, [. . .]	Now, think if this law said: 'Let's take the assets away from the mafia, [...]	Now, imagine if this law said, "We take assets from the Mafia, [. . .]	Transposition
[. . .] per poter perseguire su questo terreno i presunti mafiosi.	[...] in order to prosecute alleged mafiosi on this ground.	[. . .] to be able to prosecute the alleged Mafia members.	Transposition
Ovviamente non solo per i mafiosi e i malavitosi, [. . .]	Obviously not only for mafiosi and gangsters, [...].	and not just the Mafia and criminals, [. . .]	Transposition
la gestione dei beni sequestrati ai mafiosi	the management of assets seized from mafiosi	the management of the seized Mafia assets	Transposition
[. . .] e che avevano come riferimento dei mafiosi locali.	[...] and that they had local mafiosi as their reference.	[. . .] and had connections with the local Mafia.	Substitution
Mi accusa che io ho incontrato dei mafiosi a New York.	He accuses me of meeting mafiosi in New York.	He accuses me of having met with Mafia members in New York.	Transposition
Sono tanti a voler far tacere Maniaci, mafiosi e non mafiosi.	There are many who want to silence Maniaci, mafiosi and non-mafiosi alike.	Many people want to shut Pino Maniaci up, and not just mafiosos.	Omission
Io i mafiosi li conosco.	I know mafiosi.	I know the Mafia.	Transposition

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In the corpus analysed, the adjective in its feminine declension, *mafiosa* and *mafiose* (singular and plural, respectively) were used in the Italian dialogues with feminine nouns, for gender accordance mainly; they were rarely used as adjectival nouns in reference to female members of the Mafia. Therefore, in the English subtitles the translator resorted to different translation strategies, mostly transposition, to bypass the lack of gendered adjectives in the English language.

Examples of translations and strategies can be found in Table 6 as well.

It is interesting to see how the declension of gender and number of the Italian adjective "mafioso" was rendered in the English translated subtitles mainly with the transposition strategy. The lack of gendered adjectives in the English language was compensated by a clever restructuring of the syntax, highlighting the functionality and the pragmatism of the English subtitles. The Netflix

Table 6 Translation Strategies of the Word *Mafiosa* and *Mafiose*

Italian Subtitles	English Back Translation	English Subtitles	Strategy
Partinico è un paese con una discreta densità mafiosa.	Partinico is a town with a fair Mafia density.	Partinico is a town with a lot of mafiosos.	Explicitation
[...] nell'ambito di un'inchiesta sulla cosca mafiosa di Borgetto.	[...] as part of an investigation into the Borgetto Mafia gang.	[...] as part of an inquiry into the Mafia in Borgetto.	Explicitation
[...] di "partecipazione ad un'associazione mafiosa".	[...] of 'participation in a Mafia association'.	[...] of "participating in a Mafia group."	Explicitation
Perché appena si dice "famiglia" si intende la famiglia mafiosa!	Because as soon as you say 'family' you mean the Mafia family!	You say "family" and people think of the Mafia family.	Explicitation
[...] una minaccia di natura mafiosa.	[...] a threat of a Mafia nature.	[...] a threat from the Mafia.	Transposition
Borgetto, sciolto il comune per infiltrazioni mafiose.	Borgetto, municipality dissolved for Mafia infiltration.	The Borgetto Council has been disbanded due to Mafia infiltration.	Direct Translation

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English subtitles help the foreign audience understand a complex phenomenon, such as that of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia, and allow the foreign audience to appreciate an audiovisual product that showcases real-life characters in the form of a docuseries about the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia of Palermo, and Sicily in general.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this article's goal was to demonstrate how the translation of the word *mafia*, the word *antimafia* and other Mafia-related words are being translated from Italian into English against the background of audiovisual translation as opposed to the realm of legal translation. This was possible through the analysis of the Italian subtitles (which are a verbatim transcription of the original dialogues) and the English subtitles of the Netflix TV series *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia*, a modern series narrating the complicated yet engaging world of the Anti-Mafia focussing on the story of the two main characters, Pino Maniaci and Silvana Saguto.

Legal translation aids legal teams understand the facts and the documents written in foreign languages, whilst audiovisual translation is employed, in this case, for the purpose of entertainment (and possibly educational purposes). Furthermore, the constraints of audiovisual translation play an important role in the word choice process (for instance, in subtitling as much as in dubbing, it is not possible to use footnotes explaining a certain concept which is clear or understandable in one language but unclear or complicated in the other language).

The quantitative analysis aimed to demonstrate how and how much certain translations were employed and how systematic the choice of words and the consistency were in relation to the repetitions of the same term. The discrepancies and the anomalies were examined using a subsequent qualitative analysis, which took into consideration many factors: Italian is a Romance language whereas English is a Germanic language; Italian and English follow different rules when it comes to the declension of adjectives and nouns; Italian has gendered adjectives and nouns, whereas English does not; Italian is a language mainly spoken in Italy whereas English is the official language in many countries; each English speaking country has or might have a different legal system; and so on and so forth.

From the results shown in the last section of this article, it is both possible to understand and safe to assume that the translation of the Mafia, the Anti-Mafia, and Mafia-related terms for the purpose of audiovisual translation through subtitling is a simpler and less convoluted form of translation aimed at conveying complex concepts in a simpler way. This type of translation aims at "striking a balance between accuracy and accessibility" (Sandrelli, 2020, p. 318) in the sense that it aims at making it more accessible for the general public interested in learning more about one important social phenomenon that has characterised the modern history of Sicily, and Italy in general.

It is worth mentioning that, at the time this article was written, the Sicilian TV broadcaster Telejato, at the centre of the story of *Vendetta: guerra nell'antimafia* was shut down (Scafiddi, 2022). After 33 years of militancy, Telejato was forced to close its doors because the broadcaster was not admitted to the list of local broadcasters that can transmit with the so-called second-generation digital terrestrial television broadcasting, although it keeps on living in its web and social media format.

Streaming services and productions, such as Netflix, Amazon, Disney+ to name a few, are bringing more and more projects to Sicily (Vivarelli, 2022). As a consequence, more and more audiovisual content will be translated from Italian into English and other languages, which is a fresh change from the Anglocentric Hollywood market. These films, documentaries, and TV series will certainly focus on the lives of great people who live or have lived in Sicily, but they will also (certainly) tell other stories of the Mafia and the Anti-Mafia hence the need for more research on the translation of the Mafia, the Anti-Mafia, and other Mafia-related terms from Italian into English and into other languages with the modalities of audiovisual translation.

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Is Transcreation Another Way of Translating? Subtitling Estrella Damm's Advertising Campaigns into English

¿La transcreación es otra forma de traducir? Subtitulación al inglés de las campañas publicitarias de Estrella Damm

La transcréation est-elle une autre façon de traduire ? Sous-titrage en anglais des campagnes publicitaires d'Estrella Damm

A transcriação é outra forma de traduzir? Legendagem das campanhas publicitárias de Estrella Damm em inglês

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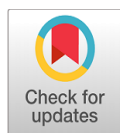
Abstract

The current international advertising scenario has led to a new professional profile within advertising translation called transcreator. Transcreation has an explicit call for creativity and semiotic and cultural adaptation. Beer advertising has tried to respond to this call by undergoing significant changes when this product has been internationally marketed in English in global advertising campaigns. For example, Estrella Damm, advertised as "the beer of Barcelona", has improved its international positioning with its *Mediterráneamente* campaign, which started in 2009 and has centred on the association of beer with the Mediterranean culture and enjoyment. Since 2019, the campaign has promoted sustainability as "another way of living". In this article, we examine the English translation strategies used by Estrella Damm's campaigns between 2009–2021, which are available on the company's British website and YouTube channel. Specifically, we focus on the following prominent elements: slogans, cultural references, and songs. To do this, we use a descriptive case study methodology, with textual analysis and semi-structured interviews to the creative director and the translators of Estrella Damm commercials. The analysis shows that this campaign uses strategies that are common in advertising translation: internationalisation, envisaged from the start of campaign; dialogue between translators and art directors; some adaptation to the conventions of the target language and culture, and creativity and co-creation. This emphasizes the added value of transcreation in the translation industry.

Keywords: advertising translation, beer, commercials, transcreation, subtitling, AVT, advertising campaigns

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Resumen

El actual panorama de la publicidad internacional ha llevado a un nuevo perfil en la traducción publicitaria en la figura del transcreador. Esta aboga de manera explícita por la creatividad y la adaptación semiótica y cultural. La publicidad de cerveza ha tratado de responder a ese llamado con la introducción de cambios importantes en la comercialización de dicho producto para una audiencia internacional en las campañas publicitarias en inglés. Por ejemplo, Estrella Damm, que se anuncia como "la cerveza de Barcelona", ha fortalecido su posicionamiento internacional con su campaña *Mediterráneamente*, lanzada en 2009, y se ha centrado en la asociación de la cerveza con la cultura y el disfrute mediterráneos. Desde 2019, la campaña ha promovido la sostenibilidad como "otra forma de vida". En este artículo, se analizan las estrategias de traducción al inglés empleadas en las campañas de Estrella Damm entre 2009 y 2021, que se encuentran en el sitio web corporativo y en su canal de YouTube. Nos enfocamos en los siguientes elementos destacados: eslóganes, referencias culturales y canciones. Para esto, empleamos una metodología de estudio de caso descriptivo, con análisis textual y entrevistas semiestructuradas al director creativo y los traductores de los comerciales de Estrella Damm. El análisis muestra que esta campaña usa estrategias comunes en la traducción publicitaria: internacionalización, contemplada desde el inicio de la campaña; diálogo entre traductores y directores artísticos; cierta adaptación a las convenciones de la lengua y la cultura de llegada, y creatividad y cocreación. Esto pone de relieve el valor agregado de la transcreación en la industria de la traducción.

Palabras clave: traducción publicitaria, cerveza, comerciales, transcreación, subtitulado, campañas publicitarias, tav

Résumé

Le scénario actuel de la publicité internationale a donné naissance à une nouvelle profile dans la traduction publicitaire, la transcréation. Celle-ci vise explicitement la créativité et l'adaptation sémiotique et culturelle. La publicité pour la bière a essayé de répondre à cette nécessité avec d'importants changements sur la commercialisation de la bière à l'échelle internationale dans le cadre de campagnes publicitaires en anglais. Par exemple, Estrella Damm, qui se présente comme « la bière de Barcelone », a renforcé son positionnement international avec sa campagne *Mediterráneamente*, lancée en 2009, et a mis l'accent sur l'association de la bière avec la culture et la joie de vivre méditerranéenne. Depuis 2019, la campagne promeut la durabilité comme « un autre mode de vie ». Dans cet article, nous analysons les stratégies de traduction en anglais des campagnes d'Estrella Damm entre 2009 et 2021, que nous trouvons sur le site web de l'entreprise et sur sa chaîne You-Tube. Nous nous concentrons particulièrement sur les éléments saillants suivants : slogans, références culturelles et chansons. À cet effet, nous avons utilisé une méthodologie descriptive d'étude de cas, avec une analyse textuelle et des entretiens semi-structurés avec le directeur créatif et les traducteurs des publicités d'Estrella Damm. L'analyse montre que cette campagne utilise des stratégies communes à la traduction publicitaire : l'internationalisation, envisagée dès le début de la campagne ; le dialogue entre les traducteurs et les directeurs artistiques ; une certaine adaptation aux conventions de la langue et de la culture cibles, ainsi que la créativité

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et la co-création. Ça met l'accent sur la valeur ajoutée de la transcréation pour l'industrie de la traduction.

Mots-clef : traduction publicitaire, bière, spots publicitaires, transcréation, sous-titrage, campagnes publicitaires

Resumo

O atual cenário da publicidade internacional levou a um novo perfil na tradução publicitária chamada transcriador. A transcriação pede explicitamente a criatividade e a adaptação semiótica e cultural. Respondendo a essa necessidade, a publicidade de cerveja passou por mudanças importantes quando a cerveja foi comercializada internacionalmente em campanhas publicitárias em inglês. Por exemplo, a Estrella Damm, que se anuncia como "a cerveja de Barcelona", fortaleceu seu posicionamento internacional com sua campanha *Mediterráneamente*, lançada em 2009, e se concentrou na associação da cerveja com a cultura e o prazer mediterrâneos. Desde 2019, a campanha promoveu a sustentabilidade como "outro modo de vida". Neste artigo, analisamos as estratégias de tradução para o inglês das campanhas da Estrella Damm entre 2009 e 2021, encontradas no site corporativo e em seu canal do YouTube. Nosso foco são os seguintes elementos importantes: slogans, referências culturais e músicas. Para isso, utilizamos uma metodologia descritiva de estudo de caso, com análise textual e entrevistas semiestruturadas com o diretor criativo e os tradutores dos comerciais da Estrella Damm. A análise mostra que essa campanha utiliza estratégias comuns na tradução publicitária: internacionalização, contemplada desde o início da campanha; diálogo entre tradutores e diretores de arte; certa adaptação às convenções do idioma e da cultura de destino; e criatividade e cocriação. Isso tira a ênfase no valor agregado da transcriação para a indústria da tradução.

Palavras chave: tradução publicitária, cerveja, comerciais, transcriação, legendagem, TAV, campanhas publicitárias

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Introduction

As advertising is becoming global, the role of translation in the creation of campaigns has gained importance and given rise to the new professional profile of transcreation, i.e. a term that combines words' translation and creation. Semiotic and cultural adaptation, as well as creativity, are components of translation, especially in the audiovisual field. These components are brought to the fore in transcreation, which has become a specific profile of translation in advertising and marketing, where freedom and adaptation to target culture and customers are crucial.

This article focuses on arguably under-researched issues such as transcreation in advertising translation. This is less researched than film translation despite the "transcreational turn" in translation studies (Katan, 2016). We look at aural aspects in audiovisual translation (AVT), with a focus on multilingualism and song, rhythm, and rhyme, which are also less researched than visual elements in AVT and advertising translation. Additionally, an under-examined issue addressed here is the translation into English —especially relevant in international advertising. All these aspects are studied in connection with the translation of *Mediterráneamente*, an acclaimed beer advertising campaign.

Being traditionally a local product, Spanish beer has undergone significant changes in recent years. It has been marketed internationally and English has become the target language for its global advertising campaigns. The brand Estrella Damm, produced in Barcelona, has adapted to this situation and improved its international positioning whilst enhancing its geographical origins and culture. In 2009, Estrella Damm started its first Mediterráneamente campaign focusing on the association of beer with the Mediterranean regions, its culture, enjoyment, and sustainability.

This article examines the strategies of English translation in Estrella Damm campaigns between 2009–2021. Although this brand creates its campaigns in Catalan and Spanish, they are also available in English, mostly via subtitling, on the company's British website and YouTube channel. (In this article, the names of the slogans are quoted in English, given the language combination analysed in this article: Spanish-English. On the British Estrella Damm website and YouTube channel, the slogan Mediterráneamente is kept in Spanish).

We analyse strategies for translating the following prominent elements in the campaigns: slogans, cultural references, multilingualism, and songs. The article provides an overview of translation strategies throughout the campaign and a detailed analysis of specific commercials in which the transcreation of elements is involved. After an introduction to Estrella Damm's communication campaign, the theoretical framework revolves around transcreation in advertising translation. The method section describes the corpus and the rationale for translating the following aspects, which will be dealt with in specific sections: cultural references, multilingualism, and transcreation of the aural, which are then summarised in the general conclusions.

Estrella Damm's Communication Strategy for National and International Markets

Spain is one of the largest beer producers in Europe but one of the countries with the lowest beer consumption (Statista, 2022b). From 2008 to 2020, the average beer consumption per capita was under 55 litres per person a year (Statista, 2022a) while countries such as Germany or Austria consumed twice as much (Statista, 2022b). In 2020, the Czech Republic consumed 135 litres per person a year, Austria, 100, and Germany, 95. Mediterranean countries are at the bottom of the list. In 2020, Spain's consumption was 50 litres per person a year, Cyprus, 43, Malta, 39, France, 33, Italy, 31, and Greece, 28 (Statista, 2022b). Nevertheless, beer is still one of the most frequently consumed drinks in Spain (Statista, 2022c).

According to Brand Finance (2021) and its World Brand Finance Beer Ranking, the most valuable

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beer brands in Spain in 2021 were Estrella Damm (position 24), Mahou (position 35), and San Miguel (position 49). Estrella Damm, which now leads the ranking in Spain, was not in such a good position before 2009 when this traditional brand was losing its luster. This was partly due to advertising campaigns that did not have a unique selling proposition. The company had previously presented a huge variety of campaigns but could not transfer a clear and continuous perspective into their communication actions. In fact, Estrella Damm's position did not start to improve until it changed its communication strategy in 2009.

That year, their first Mediterranean campaign was launched with a strong strategic communication approach. This enabled the brand to reconnect with young people through social networks. The campaign utilised a remarkably effective transmedia mix (Álvarez-Ruiz & Castro Patiño, 2021, p. 20). As stated by Estrella Damm's creative director, Oriol Villar, the Mediterranean campaigns are aimed at disseminating the Mediterranean lifestyle precisely because the brand is strong in this geographical area and advertising reinforces its identity. For him, advertising puts a magnifying glass on one part of the brand and amplifies it (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021).

Even though the brand's main target audience is the local market, internationalisation is a pillar of Damm's strategic plan. Since Spain is the second most popular tourist destination for British people, Estrella Damm considers that it is useful to run advertising campaigns in the United Kingdom. There, they use the same campaigns on the Mediterranean lifestyle to be coherent with their communication strategy.

Damm's Mediterranean campaigns work for local people as they transmit a feeling of pride and belonging. For foreigners, the ads work as they make them feel good by bringing back beautiful memories of their holidays in Spain. However, the role of the campaigns is very different in each country. In Barcelona, Estrella Damm can be found almost everywhere and it is a common beer. In contrast, in the UK or the United States, this brand can only be found in some places, and it is a special beer (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

The term *transcreation* has progressively been used in translation studies, particularly, in the context of advertising translation. In this section, we present (i) how the term has been used in this context and has evolved as a translation strategy, (ii) some key factors involved in it, and iii) a few challenges of translating aural elements, i.e. songs and rhyming texts.

Transcreation in Advertising Translation

Research on advertising translation has flourished, especially, after the turn of the millennium, and has emphasised the need for cultural, semiotic, and target-user transfer (Adab & Valdés, 2004; Torresi, 2021). The terms *translation*, *adaptation*, and *transcreation* coexist in the literature on advertising translation in several ways, sometimes interchangeably. We understand the first one broadly as any act of linguistic and cultural transfer. In this sense, we consider that both adaptation and transcreation are translation strategies used to carry out linguistic and iconographic transfers to the conventions and social practises of the receiving culture. In the nineties, adaptation was a common term. For example, Smith and Klein-Braley (1997) define adaptation as "the technique which makes the necessary tactical adjustments in terms of addressee needs and expectations, cultural norms, frames of reference" (p. 183). Increasingly, and particularly in the new millennium, transcreation has been employed in the context of advertising translation (Gaballo, 2012). According to Torresi (2021), transcreation is "a type of adaptation that involves copywriting and, possibly, prompting the creation of new visuals for the promotional material, rather than relying on the same verbal and visual structures of the source text" (p. 199). Thus, there is continuity with the sense of adaptation as a translation strategy.

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However, Torresi's definition adds the following specification: "in this approach, the translator is seen as a creative professional with highly developed language skills and an in-depth understanding of social, cultural, legal and promotional conventions currently in place in the target culture" (Torresi, 2021, p. 199). This has specific consequences for translators such as higher specialisation and remuneration and the explicit brief of freedom in translation: "the process of trans-creating an entirely new text to accommodate the expectations of the target group requires more flexible deadlines and higher price" (Torresi, 2021, pp. 12–13).

The current advertising scenario, which combines globalisation and localisation, has fostered this new professional profile of translation. Transcreators have the explicit brief to incorporate semiotic adaptation, drawing from their expertise in content localisation, and "the creative dimension of the translation process, which is particularly necessary in marketing" (Fuentes-Luque & Valdés, 2020, pp. 81–82). When we state that transcreation is a *new profile*, we mean a new professional profile, especially in the advertising field. This is compatible with the view that creativity, as well as semiotic and cultural adaptation, are integral parts of translation.

The boundaries between the concepts of translation and transcreation have been the focus of a rich discussion in translation studies by specialists in audiovisual translation (Pedersen, 2014; Spinzi & Katan, 2014; Chaume, 2018), advertising translation (Torresi, 2021), and illustrated literature (Oittinen, 2020). It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss all the theoretical issues involved in the alleged "transcreational turn" of translation studies (Katan, 2016), which include a need to find a new concept of equivalence that embraces new types of relations between original and target texts (Chaume, 2018, p. 84). Scholars generally agree that the ingredients of transcreation are present in translation. For example, Torresi (2021) uses translation in the context of advertising and gives the term its etymological

meaning of *transfer*: "the transfer of a text, concept or promotional purpose across languages, cultures, and markets. This by no means implies that translation is limited to the verbal dimension, nor to texts as seen out of their real-life contexts" (Torresi, 2021, p. 5). Nevertheless, there is also agreement among specialists and scholars that the label *transcreation* is increasingly used by the translation industry (e.g. Balemans, 2016) and analysed by scholars (Carreira, 2020; Gaballo, 2012) to emphasise its value as an addition to translation (Pedersen, 2014). Even then, following Torresi (2021), translation is a general term and transcreation, a translation strategy (p. 5).

Key Factors Involved in Transcreation

As a translation strategy, transcreation involves four factors: *creativity*, *cocreation*, *internationalisation*, and *adaptation*. We discuss them in this subsection.

From an advertising perspective, Villar considers that creativity implies problem-solving in different ways (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021). More specifically, language creativity can involve the "purposeful use of non-standard language [where a specific trope can be replaced] with another creative device that engages the reader [or viewer] with equal intensity" (Torresi, 2021, p. 142). This engagement is all-important and can relate to the emotional dimension of translation: "Transcreation is not only about communicating effectively but also affectively, establishing an emotional connection between the audience/ the customer and the message" (Dybiec-Gajer & Oittinen, 2020, p. 3).

Another key factor is cocreation or, at least, the dialogue or negotiation between translators and creative directors. Cocreation can entail suggesting alternative versions to provide creative language (Torresi, 2021, p. 142) or different versions for close-ups to help lip-syncing, for example, of Spanish word *vale* or Catalan word *d'acord*, uttered by Dakota Johnson in Estrella's *Vale* 2015 commercial (El Periódico, 2015).

The following factors, internationalisation and adaptation, often coexist in transcreation briefs and reveal current tensions between globalisation and localisation. As regards internationalisation, in global advertising campaigns, translation is envisaged from the outset and text is often translated from one into many languages or markets (Pedersen, 2014, p. 65) and transferred from one culture to a different one.

Hence, cultural transfer has been emphasised in research on advertising translation (e.g. Adab & Valdés, 2004). Adaptation is a specific factor of transcreation that "accommodates the conventions of the target language and culture, the canons of literary genres thereof, and the expectations of the target readership/audience" (Torresi, 2021, p. 195). This can involve specific adjustments or completely "re-building the entire promotional text so that it sounds and reads both natural and creative in the target language and culture" (Torresi, 2021, pp. 4–5). This frequently implies adaptation to local legislation that can prompt the creation of new "visuals", that is, "each visual element of a (promotional) text. Also, the typeset version of a print advertising or promotional text, complete with pictures and any other visual material that accompanies the written text" (Torresi, 2021, p. 200).

According to Chaume (2018), "types of shots can also be manipulated in order to share a domesticated product that, allegedly, satisfies a specific target audience" (p. 96). For example, advertising in the UK does not allow images of people drinking beer while in the water. Therefore, when Estrella Damm commercials are filmed, specific shoots are taken for the English versions (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021). The specific role of translators in adapting the commercials to target cultural or legal aspects depends on the degree of cocreation and their presence in the workflow, which varies greatly (Carreira, 2020).

In short, "transcreations are all forms of semiotic adaptation and manipulation where some or most – if not all – semiotic layers of the original (audio) visual product are localised" (Chaume, 2018, p. 96). In academic literature, greater emphasis has been put on the visual elements of the text and, arguably, not so much on its aural elements. An exception to this are studies on dubbing or illustrated children's literature and the importance of rhythm in stories for reading aloud (Oittinen, 2020).

Challenges of Transcreating Aural Elements

Transcreating aural elements such as songs or rhyming texts is common in advertising. Since the corpus of this study comprises sung translation and subtitled songs, both are tackled succinctly.

Low (2016) summarises the challenges of musical translation through the sporting metaphor of the pentathlon and its five components: singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme. Low analyses each of these separately but stresses the flexibility that is required and the relative importance of each individual aspect for an overall effect. Professional practise is pragmatic and defends "tweaks" or small adjustments, especially regarding rhythm (Low, 2016, pp. 100–102), which can also be extrapolated to other pentathlon principles like rhyme. In advertising, flexible, imperfect rhyme schemes might be used in rap music or the translation of musicals (Espasa, in press). If rhyme has to be translated, this needs to be anticipated: "Any strategic decision to use rhyme needs to be made early in the process, so that some rhyming words (the crucial ones) can be found early on" (p. 103).

Subtitling of songs has been tackled by Franzon (2008) and Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, pp. 195–200), among others. Subtitled songs "belong to the category of song translations meant to be read rather than sung" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 196). Yet, the simultaneous reception of subtitles and music is a relevant factor since "viewers read the subtitles while listening to the music and lyrics at the same time, which may have an impact on the translation, rhythmically speaking" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 196).

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Therefore, all the pentathlon factors mentioned above (singability, sense, naturalness, rhythm, and rhyme) are relevant, even if sense tends to be the subtitler's main concern.

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020) provide criteria for choosing the songs to translate. Usually, thematic or plot relevance is an important criterion. However, songs "suggesting a mood or creating an atmosphere […] must be given special attention" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 196) even though they are often left untranslated. As regards formal aspects, they discuss the challenges of deciding whether it is important to preserve the rhythm and the rhyme of song lyrics since subtitles are a supporting translation and would not detract too much attention from the images and soundtrack. Nonetheless, they also report Franzon's

(2008) claim that respecting the prosody of lyrics in subtitling can actually enhance their readability. Low (2016) states that the specific relevance of rhyme in songs should be considered. For Corrius and Espasa (2022), "the decision as to when and how to subtitle songs shows the delicate balance between logocentric and musicocentric approaches" (p. 40) that is, between attention to the verbal or the musical aspects involved.

Method

We used a descriptive case study methodology to analyse and compare 14 Estrella Damm commercials between 2019–2021, which are available on the company's website and YouTube channel and included in Table 1.

Table 1 Mediterráneamente Commercials: Corpus of Analysis

Year	Name of the Ad	Director	Celebrity	Song/Band	Visualis. (Millions)	Likes (Thousands)	Links
2009	"Formentera"	–	–	*Summercat*/Bille the Vision & The Dancers	7	16,8	https://cutt.ly/9Hwr0dl
2010	"San Juan"	–	–	*Applejack*/The Triangles	8,1	16,6	https://cutt.ly/SHwte90
2011	"elBulli"	Isabel Coixet	Ferrán Adriá	*I wish that I could see you soon*/Hermann Düne	2,5	4,8	https://cutt.ly/9Hwtpdl
2012	"Tramuntana"	–	–	*You can't say no forever*/Lacrosse	5,1	12,9	https://cutt.ly/zHwtRpE
2013	"Love of Lesbian"	–	–	*Fantastic Shine*/Love of Lesbian	3,5	10	https://cutt.ly/7HwtSSx
2014	"Entrena el alma"	Claudia Llosa	–	*La música es cultura*/The Vaccines	1,5*	3,1*	https://cutt.ly/vHwdVkR
2015	"Vale"	Alejando Amenábar	Dakota Johnson	*Our place*/Maïa Vidal	8,9	39,6	https://cutt.ly/7Hwt3rR
2016	"Las pequeñas cosas"/"The little things"	Alberto Rodríguez	Jean Reno	*Those little things*/Ramon Mirabet	7,4	26,5	https://cutt.ly/5HwyeAk
2017	"La vida nuestra"/ "La vida nuestra (Our Life)"	Raúl Arévalo	Peter Dinklage	*(Don't fight it) Feel it*/Aron Chupa	8,6	20,4	https://cutt.ly/qHwyaao
2018	"Álex y Julia"	Dani de la Torre	Michelle Jenner	*The place to stay*/Oriol Pla y Michelle Jenner	10,7	13,8	https://cutt.ly/ZHwyhM1
2019	"Acto I. Alma"/"Act I. Soul"	Nacho Gayán	Claire Friesen	*Otra forma de vivir* / Joan Dausà ft. Maria Rodés, Santi Bames	11,7	42,3	https://cutt.ly/mHwiymf

Table 1 Mediterráneamente Commercials: Corpus of Analysis (cont.)

Year	Name of the Ad	Director	Celebrity	Song/Band	Visualis. (Millions)	Likes (Thousands)	Links
2019	"Acto I. Alma"/"Act I. Soul"	Nacho Gayán	Claire Friesen	*Otra forma de vivir /* Joan Dausà ft. Maria Rodés, Santi Bames	11,7	42,3	https://cutt.ly/mHwiymf
2019	"Acto II. Amantes"/ "Act II. Lovers"	Nacho Gayán	–	*Otra forma de vivir/*Joan Dausà ft Maria Rodés, Santi Bames	10,5	19,9	https://cutt.ly/jHwiiLQ
2020	"Acto III. Compromiso"/"Act III. Commitment"	Nacho Gayán	–	*Otra forma de vivir/*Joan Dausà ft. Magalí Sare	14,5	14,5	https://cutt.ly/gHwipXO
2021	"Amor a primera vista"/"Let's try together"	Nacho Gayán	Mario Casas	*A ver qué pasa/*Rigoberta Bandini	14,8	6,7	https://www.estrelladamm.com/en/lets-try-together

Source: based on Álvarez-Ruiz and Castro Patiño (2021).

* Information has not been updated since September 26, 2019, as the video is private now.

Data Collection

For our analysis, we worked with the Spanish version and the subtitled English version of 14 commercials (detailed in Table 1) that are part of the Estrella Damm Mediterráneamente campaign. These ads were aired on Spanish television between 2009–2021 and can be found on the internet, where they have been viewed many times. Although we examined the Spanish version as the source text (st), according to Villar, the ads were recorded in either Spanish or Catalan depending on the director's language (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021).

Data Analysis

Following the case study methodology, we used several qualitative techniques, which are commonly employed in translation, to analyse the most relevant content of each ad. We gathered information from the scientific literature and data from official sources. We carried out two semi-structured interviews, the first with Oriol Villar, a creative director with Estrella Damm (October 4, 2021), and the second (February 8, 2022) with Tony Gray, who has been responsible for the translation of Estrella

Damm's Mediterráneamente campaigns (from Spanish into English) since 2015.

For the content analysis we designed an Excel sheet in which we registered information about the commercial, location, slogan, cultural references, music and soundtrack, and languages used in the ad. Then we selected the commercials that contain more text (2015–2021), either spoken or sung in Spanish, where the role of translation is more relevant. Finally, we studied the strategies for translating the following prominent elements of these ads: slogans, cultural references, multilingualism, and songs. We also did a detailed analysis of those commercials in which transcreation of aural elements was involved.

Results

The following subsections show to what extent the main ingredients of transcreation are present in the translation of Estrella Damm advertising campaigns into English: internationalisation, envisaged from the start of campaign and combined with some adaptation to the conventions of the target language and culture; the dialogue between translators and art directors; the

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importance of effective and affective communication; and creativity and co-creation.

Cultural References and Language in the Mediterráneamente Campaign

As every country has its own language, cultural codes, laws, and norms, it is challenging to devise a global advertising campaign that can be adapted worldwide. Many campaigns have failed because the idea has not connected with the public in the country despite the fact it is properly translated. For Sánchez (2020), the translation of an advertising campaign should work for the ad and the brand (p. 174). Not only should the text be translated, but also its values. In the case of the Mediterráneamente campaign, the meaning of the content is multiplied when the images are put in context. As mentioned above, the campaigns, which repositioned the brand, focus on reinforcing Mediterranean culture and identity. By culture, we refer to "the set of values, traditions, beliefs and attitudes that are shared by the majority of people living in a country or, alternatively, in a local community that is distinguished from the rest of the national society by major traits such as language, religion, or political and legal systems" (Torresi, 2021, p. 34).

In the campaigns at issue, the scenes, values, beliefs, and attitudes transmitted are those associated with some aspects of Mediterranean culture: the landscape, the weather (sunshine), living by the sea, food, music, enjoyment, friendship, and the Mediterranean lifestyle in general. For Amenábar (Estrella Damm, 2015), the director of the *Vale* campaign, "to live *mediterraneanly* means going out, meeting people and soaking up music, cinema, theatre, exhibitions..." (para. 4). For the analysis of Mediterranean cultural references, we follow Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2020) classification, which distinguishes between (a) real-world cultural references and (b) intertextual cultural references (p. 203). We could say that *Mediterráneamente* spots contain both real-world and intertextual cultural references, as follows.

Real-World Cultural References

- *Geographic references* including: (i) locations such as Formentera (Estrella Damm, 2009), Menorca (Estrella Damm, 2010), Costa Brava, El Bulli (Ferran Adrià's restaurant; Estrella Damm, 2011), Empúries, Dalí Museum (Estrella Damm, 2016), Serra de Tramuntana, Mallorca (Estrella Damm, 2014), Ibiza (Estrella Damm, 2015), Mediterranean beaches with pines (Estrella Damm, 2018); (ii) animal and plant species like Mediterranean fish that appear in a number of spots.

- *Ethnographic references* including: (i) food and drinks such as paella (Estrella Damm, 2010, 2013), Mediterranean prawns, Spanish omelette (Estrella Damm, 2017), *ensaïmada* (a typical pastry from the Balearic Islands) (Estrella Damm, 2016), and, in most commercials we can see images of Estrella Damm beer (with the insert "the beer of Barcelona"); (ii) objects such as *avarques* (typical sandals from Menorca), *Menorquina* boats (Estrella Damm, 2010), *porró* (a special container for drinking wine) (Estrella Damm, 2014a); and (iii) culture such as the bands Love of Lesbian (Estrella Damm, 2014b), the Vaccines (Aires de Bares, 2014), and the cook Ferran Adrià (Estrella Damm, 2011).

Intertextual Cultural References

Intertextual cultural references, especially *overt intertextual allusions*, can be found in these spots. There are explicit references to the bands Gorillaz and Pet Shop Boys and the films *Antes de Amanecer* [*Before Sunrise;* Linklater, 1995] and *Training Day* (Fuqua, 2001) (in Estrella Damm, 2015). These are part of the shared cultural background between Spain and the UK, which can be understood by both audiences.

Transferring Linguistic and Cultural Elements

Since the beginning of the Mediterráneamente campaign in 2009, the ads have been run in the

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UK. Still, Estrella Damm's marketing strategy in the UK has changed over the years between 2009–2021 and has been slightly modified in Spain. The first commercials (from 2009 to 2014) did not have any dialogue or text except for the slogan at the end of the film and the name of the campaign. Only songs in English could be heard, which made internationalisation easier. For example, a version of the ad *Formentera* (2009) was launched in the UK, primarily on Channel 4 (during the summer) although outdoor marketing, cinema advertising, and sponsorship of Spanish independent films were also used (Joseph, 2012). Notably, the slogan, the only written message in the Spanish version, *lo bueno nunca acaba si hay algo que te lo recuerda* was translated as "Good times never end if there's something to remind you of them". Hence, following Zabalbeascoa and Arias-Badia's (2021) classification of translation techniques for subtitling (p. 370), we could say that rewording (which affects lexicosemantic features) was used; for instance, *lo bueno* [good things] was translated as "good times". Plus, the song *Summercat* by Billie the Vision & the Dancers was a great success. Villar describes it as a *temazo* [a great song] that was suggested by a woman working at the advertising agency (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021).

The following campaign (Estrella Damm, 2010) was very similar but was recorded in Menorca and the story took place in Sant Joan (Saint John) festivities. The song for that ad was *Applejack* by the Triangles. The slogan *A veces lo que buscas está tan cerca que cuesta verlo* [sometimes what you are looking for is so close that it is hard to see] was translated as "Sometimes what you are looking for is closer than you think", is not written on screen but can be heard in the translated version. Again, rewording occurred. The verb "see" was changed to "think".

In the summer of 2011, another commercial was aired in Spain directed by Isabel Coixet. Unfortunately, it was banned in the UK by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) because "it was deemed 'irresponsible', for showing people

running for a dip in the ocean right after drinking some lager" (AdAge, 2011). The ad, set on the Costa Brava (north of Barcelona), was about a man who takes part in a cooking course at the famous restaurant El Bulli of prestigious chef Ferran Adrià. We see images of this man with his friends riding motorbikes, swimming, snorkelling, and dancing on the beach. In the ad, cultural Catalan sites and elements are shown such as the Empúries ruins, the Dalí Museum, and Dalí's moustache.

In 2015, the commercials became short films and dialogues were included. This was the case of *Vale* (Estrella Damm, 2015), *Las pequeñas cosas* (Estrella Damm, 2016), *La vida nuestra* (Estrella Damm, 2017) and *Alex & Julia* (Estrella Damm, 2018). In 2019, there was another change in Estrella Damm's communication strategy to raise awareness about the environmental emergency in the oceans and climate change. The company decided to keep on focusing on the Mediterranean sea but from a sustainable point of view, which resulted in a group of commercials that call for action on the Mediterranean pollution: *Act I. Soul* (Estrella Damm, 2019), *Act II. Lovers* (Estrella Damm, 2020) and *Act III. Commitment* (Estrella Damm, 2021).

The word Mediterráneamente, which appears at the end of all commercials just below the Estrella Damm logo, has not been translated in the English version. For Tony Gray, the Spanish–English translator of Estrella Damm since 2015, "globalisation has homogenised European and global culture, so there is no need to translate some cultural elements that needed to be translated in the past" (Interview, Gray, February 8, 2022). Everybody is supposed to know about the Mediterranean diet, olive oil, good food, and the Mediterranean coast and this is a trend in most of the commercials analysed. Cultural elements such as the traditional Catalan dish *suquet* (fish and shellfish soup/stew) that appears in *The Little Things* (Estrella Damm, 2016) has been kept in the English subtitled version. Note, however, that occasionally the translation provides

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more information about a particular cultural reference. For example, in *The Little Things* (Estrella Damm, 2016), *la mejor gamba roja de aquí* [the best red prawn from here] has been translated as "the best Mediterranean prawns". Whether cultural references have been translated or not, what all commercials in the Mediterráneamente campaigns have in common is the representation of the Mediterranean cultural values, which is perceived by both local and international audiences.

Multilingualism

The *Vale* commercial (Estrella Damm, 2015) makes use of global identity and local culture by code-switching English with Spanish (in the Spanish version) and English with Catalan (in the Catalan version). As stated above, the Mediterráneamente campaigns play a different role locally and abroad and the use of two languages in the same commercial reinforces this. As Gore (2020) puts it,

> for a British audience, the use of Spanish (combined with scenes of the Mediterranean) enables advertisers to mobilise the positive associations of the corresponding stereotype [while for the home audience] [...] English signals 'cool' for the upwardly mobile or those that aspire to be so (p. 13).

In the short film *Vale*, the presence of multilingualism—or "third language" (L3) as used by Corrius and Zabalbeascoa (2011, p. 114)—is part of the plot and does not seem to be a problem for the local or the British audience. In the Spanish version, when Víctor asks Claudia if she would like a beer, she answers *vale* and David repeats *vale*. At this stage, *vale* has not been translated into the English version because the meaning of this word will be part of a later conversation. Víctor then approaches Rachel and Toni who are cooking. As Rachel only speaks English, most of the dialogue is in English and, consequently, it has not been translated into the target text. Only the sentence uttered in Spanish *Victor, anda, ¿me ayudas a poner la mesa?* has been subtitled as "Víctor, come on, can you help me set the table?". Víctor's answer *¡Vale!* is interesting because Rachel asks "What's *vale*? What

Table 2 *Vale*. Gays/Guys

ST	TT
[Woman]: ¡Una pinta!	[Woman]: This looks delicious
[Man 1]: Ey, ¿qué haces, qué haces hombre? Que estamos brindando	[Man 1: Hey, what are you doing? We are toasting
[...]	[...]
[Víctor]: ¿Qué dice de *gays*?	[Víctor]: What did she say about "guys"?
[...] [Víctor]: ¿Cómo?	[...] [Víctor]: What?
[...] [Man 2]: Oye chicos, ¿y sabéis que Rachel ha sido *my assistant?* Para todo esto, ¡eh!	[...] [Man 2]: Rachel has been my assistant. For all this!

does it mean? Everybody is always saying *vale, vale, vale*". Víctor answers, "*Vale* is for *todo*" [*Vale* is for everything] and Toni clarifies: "It just means *OK*". The mix of English and Spanish in this dialogue about the meaning of the word *vale* is the same in the Spanish and English versions. Table 2 illustrates a similar phenomenon in another scene, in which the characters are all at the table about to start lunch.

Only a few sentences in Spanish have been translated into English. The rest of the sentences in the ST, which are in English, are left untranslated in the TT. When this happens, the foreign language cannot be differentiated from the TT main language. Therefore, language variation becomes invisible to the TT audience (Corrius & Zabalbeascoa, 2011, p. 125).

Yet, this lack of L3 visibility has been compensated for by keeping some sentences in Spanish in the TT. Note, for instance, the scene when they arrive at the port. There is a conversation in the original version in which there is constant code-switching between Spanish and English, which has been transferred in an unchanged way:

> Toni: *Hemos llegado ya.* [We have now arrived.]
> Sara: *Sí, vamos ya.* [Yes, come on.]
> Toni: Let's go Rachel. This is my favourite place.
> Claudia: The wall, the wall.
> Toni: You can see all the night clubs.

A further point needs to be made in this analysis as there is a scene in which multilingualism has a humorous effect in the ST (see Table 3). Víctor

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Table 3 English not my forte

ST	TT
[Víctor]: Y yo he pensado. I am, *pensing*, si te apetece, if *apeteis* you. *To look the stars. I'm sorry*, el inglés no… *English, not my forte*, not my, not my fort. Pero mis amigos me traducen. *My friends, traduce* me. *My friends, my friends* are lo más. The *more*. Es que *my friends*…	[Víctor]: And I just thought. I am, *pensing*, if you feel like it, if *apeteis* you. To look at the stars. I'm sorry, *el inglés no*… English is not *my forte*. But my friends translate for me. My friends, *traduce* me. My friends, my friends are the best. The more. *Es que* my friends…

(who does not speak English) is walking along the streets in Ibiza while thinking about what he is going to tell Rachel. He is trying to translate into English what he would like to tell her. For the Spanish audience, this scene is very funny as Victor is making Spanish words sound English.

However, keeping the same invented Spanglish L3 in the TT, as in this example, does not necessarily entail that it has the same effect in the target audience, particularly, if they do not know any Spanish.

Multilingualism is also present in *The Little Things* (Estrella Damm, 2016), but here the third language is represented through the French accent of actor Jean Reno. In this clip, the type of language variation used would be the "dialectal meme" as it denotes "all the connotations associated with an individual or character due to the accent that features in his or her speech" (Hayes, 2021, p. 5). The subtitles provided for the English version do not mark any type of language variation, as is common in subtitling.

Language variation through accent is also present in *Alex & Julia* (Estrella Damm, 2018), where we can hear a presenter speaking in Spanish with a strong English accent. In this commercial, the dialogues are in Spanish and the lyrics of the songs are all in English. As Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020) state, "linguistic accents and pronunciation are problematic to render in subtitles" (pp. 194) but "the degree to which language variation can be rendered in subtitles will depend, of course, on the

technical constraints, on the guidelines the subtitler has received and on the socio-cultural TT context for which the subtitled production is made" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 183).

Something different can be spotted in *Our Life* (2017): a short film completely recorded in Spanish except for the sentence "*arrivederci* boys" (a mixture of Italian and English), which was not translated into the TT. In this clip, the protagonist, Anton, moved to Amsterdam but came back to Barcelona to sell his boat. In Barcelona, he is watching a series whose main character is the detective Chad Johnson, who then appears in Anton's dream to make him realise that he has a nice life, but should learn to live it. The translated English version mixes English and Spanish. The series that Anton is watching and the dream that he has at night can be heard in English while the rest of the dialogues are in Spanish and subtitled in English in the TT. In this case, there is much more language variation in the TT than in the ST.

Transcreating the Aural: Songs, Rhythm, and Rhyme in Mediterráneamente

Songs are a very important component of the Estrella Damm summer campaigns. The first commercial, *Formentera* (Estrella Damm, 2009), marked the trend for the Mediterráneamente campaign. Accor*t's Try Together*, 2021) (Interview, Villar, October 4, 2021). In this second case, when we asked Villar whether co-creation of music had occurred, in that the agency gave composers tips about the goal of the songs, Villar agreed, but with the following nuances: "the work and the merit are all theirs. You need a really motivated singer […] and something really cool can come out of it. When you combine these songs with the music, it can be explosive" (Villar, Interview, 2021, own translation).

The Mediterráneamente campaign has two types of commercials, in which songs play different roles: (a) the summer commercials (2009–2018) celebrating the Mediterranean lifestyle, to which songs add a festive mood; and (b) the sustainable commercials

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(2019–2020) that centred on the need to preserve the Mediterranean, which is a message that is conveyed through the final slogan: "If we love our way of living, shouldn't we protect what makes it possible?" (Estrella Damm, 2019, 2020).

Commercials broadcast between 2009–2018 included a co-branding component because Estrella Damm promoted musicians and vice versa. Songs that had not been very well-known were (re)discovered and revitalised. The promotion of music is visible in the 2014 slogan "Music is culture", the scenery of the commercials including live concerts, and even dialogues with specific reference to music festivals, bands, and musicians. This phase closed with the 2018 commercial *Alex & Julia*, a celebration of the ten first years of the campaign. It includes fragments of all the songs involved in the previous commercials and closes with a new song, *The Place to Stay*. Songs are both the soundtrack and part of the show as the characters are singers, but the songs are not subtitled keeping with the usual criterion of translating only plot-relevant songs; just intralingual subtitles were provided for *Place to Stay* song in the English version of the 2018 *Alex & Julia* commercial.

In 2019, Estrella Damm changed its communication strategy to a more social one, focusing on sustainability but maintaining the Mediterranean aspect at its core, as can be seen in a specific section of the company's website.[1] The sustainability campaign *Another Way of Living*, which is also a part of Mediterráneamente, was made up of three commercials: *Act i. Soul* (Estrella Damm, 2019), *Act ii. Lovers* (Estrella Damm, 2019), and *Act iii. Commitment* (Estrella Damm, 2020). As we will see in the next section, it is only in these commercials that songs are translated.

Another Way of Living

Catalan musician Joan Dausà composed *Una Altra Manera de Viure* (2019) [Another Way of

Living] specifically for Estrella Damm. The song has three parts, which are sung, respectively, in the three commercials: *Act i. Soul* (Estrella Damm, 2019), *Act ii. Lovers* (Estrella Damm, 2019), and *Act iii. Commitment* (Estrella Damm, 2020). These were translated by Dausà into Spanish. In turn, the Spanish song's lyrics was the source text for the songs in English, which were translated by Gray.

Villar explained why these songs were translated. According to him, "the lyrics of *Another Way of Living* are a key factor because music fulfils an emotional and narrative role. Therefore, it is crucial to understand its concept" (Villar, Interview, October 4, 2021). In turn, for Gray, "translating the songs is surprisingly easy. This is because the lyrics are very short". even though he also mentioned songs as among the most creative elements in his task as a translator for Estrella Damm (Gray, Interview, February 8, 2022).

Act i. Soul (Estrella Damm, 2019)

The commercial consists of a subaquatic dance in which Claire Friesen swims underwater surrounded by big transparent pieces of plastic at the bottom of the sea. The dancer slowly sinks to the bottom, which changes from blue to black, before closing her eyes on the seabed (Figure 1).

The images of the commercial are set against the background of *Another Way of Living* (Estrella Damm, 2019) sung by the same singer, Maria Rodés, in the three versions — Catalan, Spanish, and English. There are no subtitles. According to Villar, "the lyrics are key, because the music fulfils an emotional and narrative role. [...] In *Soul*, it is the sea singing and asking for help, not the drowning woman". (Villar, Interview, October 4, 2021). Table 4 shows the lyrics in Spanish and English, the language combination used by translator Gray.

When we listen to the song, we can see that there is no strict rhythmic pattern, which may explain the translator's comments on the ease of this task. However, all assonant rhymes have been
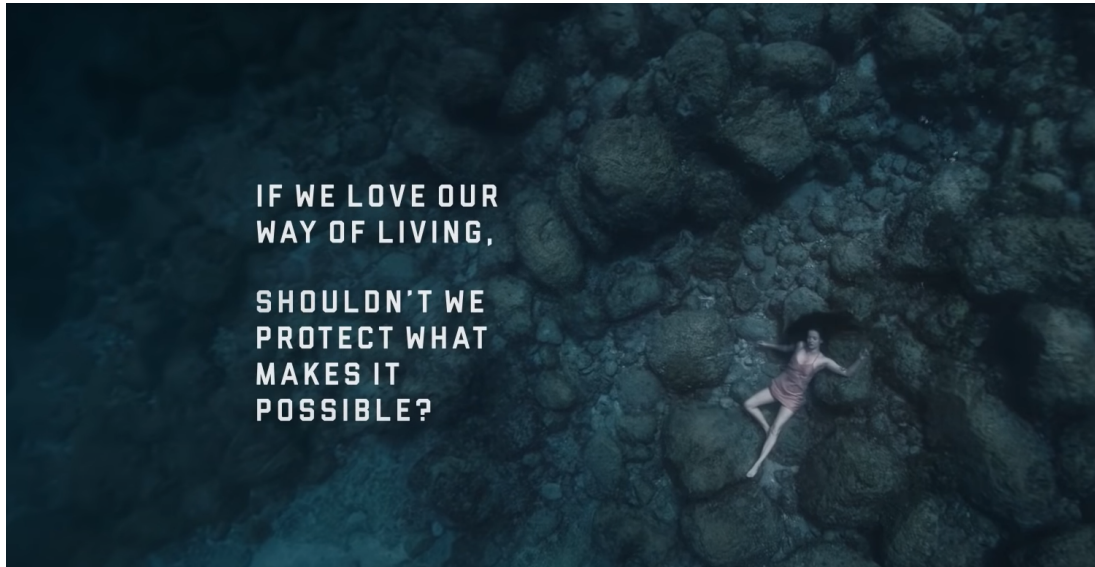
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1 https://www.estrelladamm.com/en/sustainability

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Figure 1 Frame from *Act I. Soul*

Table 4 Lyrics of *Act I. Soul* (Estrella Damm, 2019a)

ST	TT
Acto I. Alma	*Act I. Soul*
Ahora yo	Now I,
Que vi nacer el mundo	Who saw you come to life
Que mi latido es tuyo	Who helped you when you
Ahora yo	cried
Que abrazo tus recuerdos	Now I
Y callo tus secretos	Whose heart beats in your
Siento terror	eyes
No comprendo	Who tries to see you smile
Por qué escupes veneno	I'm terrified
Me dejas sin aliento	I don't get
Me quemas todo el cuerpo	Why you tear up my hair
Hace un tiempo	Leave my body in flames
Que te veo y no te entiendo	And take away my breath
Debe haber otra forma de	It's been time
vivir	That you seem to be in the
	blind
	There must be another way
	of living

preserved. We can also see the importance of the first-person narrative, evoking the Mediterranean according to Villar, but visually personified in the figure of the dancer (Villar, Interview, October 4, 2021). There are some changes of order in the lines, probably due to production changes, but the general atmosphere of the commercial poetically conveys the perils of suffocating the sea. It is the only commercial where there are no images of Estrella Damm beer.

Act II. Lovers (Estrella Damm, 2019b)

The English version (see Table 5) is consistent with the criteria used in *Act I* in prioritising a rhyming pattern, for example, in translating *Con miedo y sin razón/Y apenas corazón* [scared and without reason/and barely with heart] (Figure 2). In its rendering as "sailing in the dark/looking for my heart", the metaphor sailing/searching is in keeping with the visuals: the ships and boats of several NGOs involved in environmental preservation that are portrayed in the commercial (Figure 2). Activists are shown saving turtles and dolphins, cleaning litter from the seabed, preserving Posidonia, and enjoying themselves and resting with a bottle of beer.

Act III. Commitment (Estrella Damm, 2020)

The series of *Another Way of Living* commercials end with the third stanza of the song in the commercial *Act III. Commitment*. There are sung versions

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Figure 2 Frame from *Act II. Lovers*

Table 5 Lyrics of *Act II Lovers*

ST	TT
Acto II. Amantes	*Act II. Lovers*
Soy yo	It's me
Con miedo y sin razón	sailing in the dark
Y apenas corazón	looking for my heart
Bajo la piel	Under your skin
Soy yo	It's me
Y te pido perdón	And I need to apologize
Y, sabes, lo peor	You know what makes me sad
He estado bien	I was fine
Mientras tú por dentro vas muriendo	While you are melting down inside
Te arrojan hierro ardiendo	They throw you burning iron
Te ahogas por momentos	You drown in the fight
Hace un tiempo	It's been time
Que me veo y no me entiendo	that I wake up at night
Me escucho y no me creo	shaking like a child
Debe haber otra forma de vivir	There must be another way of living

in Catalan and Spanish. In the English commercial, subtitles in English are available while the song is sung in Spanish.

The images show groups of contemporary dancers and eco-activists collecting plastic from the sea and protecting endangered birds. Figure 3 portrays a connection between humans and nature with a mixture of poeticism and activism: action and angry gestures from ecowarriors. There is an interplay of visuals and lyrics: "thousands like you", the appeal to the earth or nature as "mother", and the action ("gesture") that "suddenly stops time" (see Table 6).

The graphic design of the slogans in all versions of the commercials is the same in the three languages. The only untranslated element in the English version is the slogan *Mediterráneamente*, which appears in Spanish.

Let's Try Together (Estrella Damm, 2021)

This last commercial combines the festive summery atmosphere of the first *Mediterráneamente* commercials (2009–2018) with the eco-friendly message of the latest commercials in *Another Way of Living* (2019–2020). It is a playful homage to Spanish Golden Age theatre from a twenty-first-century perspective. It is set, like all the other commercials, on a Mediterranean beach. The dialogue imitates a comedy of errors, playing with the "guy meets girl" scheme, where the girl does not choose the "heartthrob" but a volunteer who is clearing plastic and litter from the sea. In a metafictional framework, a big red curtain

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Figure 3 Frame from *Act III. Commitment*

Table 6 Lyrics of *Act III. Commitment*

ST	TT
Act III. Compromiso	*Acto III. Commitment*
Y ahora tú	And now you
y miles como tú	and thousands like you
hablando de un lugar	talking about a place
donde empezar.	where to begin.
Y ahora aquí	And now here
tu voz vuelve a existir	your voice exists again
y aquella sensación	and that feeling
de ser feliz.	of being happy.
Y un gesto	And a gesture
de golpe para el tiempo	suddenly stops time
junta ese dolor	it unites the pain
y lo aleja con el viento.	and carries it off
Madre aquí me tienes	in the wind.
en tu inmensidad	Mother here I am
como una hija más...	in your immensity
Debe haber	like just another child...
otra forma de vivir.	There must be
Debe haber	another way of living.
otra forma de vivir.	There must be
	another way of living.

is drawn over the beach to signal the end of the performance. The curtain rises again on a real theatre stage, where the previous scene—beach included—is reproduced and the actors and singer bow at the end of the performance and commercial. The baroque style of the whole *mise-en-scene* is reflected in the rhyming pattern of the dialogue.

For translator Gray, the balance between rhyme and content was a special challenge that is common to songs and poems: "You have to make it rhyme without straying away from the meaning or the content. But sometimes you have no choice". (Interview, Gray, February 8, 2022)

He gave the example of the following lines:

> No seas tan pesimista.
> No importa si es un capricho
> o amor a primera vista.
> (Gray, Interview, February 8, 2022)
> [Don't be a pessimist/it doesn't matter if it's a whim/
> or love at first sight]

Initially, he had translated *pesimista* as "contrite" (to make it rhyme with sight). However, advisors at the London Estrella office asked him to change this word as it is not common in British English. He replaced it with "uptight":

> Don't be so uptight.
> Who cares if it's a whim
> or love at first sight. (Gray, Interview, February 8, 2022)

Gray pointed out another example that, for him, epitomised the challenges of audiovisual translation (Interview, February 8, 2022). The name of a boat (Greta) is mentioned in the dialogue and shown on screen, and it rhymes with *tableta* in reference to abdominal muscles:

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Table 7 Subtitles of *Let's Try Together* (Excerpt)

ST	TT
[...]	[...]
[Chica 1] Venga, ve y cierra tu herida.	[Girl 1] Go on, have some fun.
[Chico 1] ¿Que no ves que es solo un *crush*?	[Boy 1] It's only a *crush*, can't you see?
[...]	[...]
[Chico 2] De un gran amor sin barreras estoy siendo ahora testigo.	[Boy 2] A love story without limits is unfolding before my eyes.
[Chica 2] Ella normal, y él *guaperas*. Es *traicionera* y *fallida* esa historia que esperas.	[Girl 2] She's normal, he's a *heartthrob*. *Clearly doomed to fail,* the story will make you sob.
[...]	[...]
[Chico 2] No seas tan *pesimista*. No importa si es un capricho o amor a primera vista.	[Boy 2] Don't be so *uptight*. Who cares if it's a whim or love at first sight.
[Chica 2] Yo creo que como mucho él la aceptará en su *insta*.	[Girl 2] He'll treat her like *spam*, maybe one photo on Instagram.
[Mujer] Hay que creer en el amor frente a tristes y *agoreros*.	[Woman] You must believe in love despite the *naysayers*.
[...]	[...]
[Hombre] Pero... ¿sabes qué, muchacho? El destino me trajo a *Greta* y a ti una buena *tableta* [...]	[Man] But who's *keeping tabs*? Fate gave me my *Greta* and it gave you... *nice abs* [...]

Pues yo pescaré un cabracho
si Neptuno me respeta.
Pero... ¿sabes qué, muchacho?
El destino me trajo a Greta
y a ti
una buena tableta. (Gray, Interview, February 8, 2022)
[Then I'll catch a scorpion fish/If Neptune respects me/But... do you know what, guy?/ Fate brought me to Greta/ and to you/ good abs.]

This involved some changes to keep the rhythmic pattern and to convey the playful combination of classic and contemporary registers:

Then I'll catch a red scorpion fish
if that's Neptune's wish.
But who's keeping tabs?
Fate gave me my Greta
and it gave you...
nice abs. (Interview, Gray, February 8, 2022)

Another important aspect is that this commercial has a song specifically composed by a well-known singer, Rigoberta Bandini. The song is sung in Catalan and Spanish in the respective versions. In the English version, the song is sung in Spanish and not subtitled, following the same criterion as the festive summer commercials (2009–2018).

Table 7 shows excerpts from the Spanish and English versions of the rhyming dialogue. Even though subtitles do not include character names, they have been added here for clarification. Emphasis is added to the examples discussed above, and to the vocabulary that marks a contrast between classical theatre and contemporary twenty-first-century word choice. In the Spanish version, the anachronistic mentions of *Insta*(gram) or the Anglicism "crush" produces a comical effect.

Conclusions

Even though the boundaries between the concepts of translation and transcreation are controversial

in translation studies, there is an agreement that the main ingredients of transcreation are present in translation. There is agreement among specialists and scholars that the label transcreation is increasingly used, and this label has specific positive consequences for translators, such as higher specialisation and remuneration, and the explicit brief for freedom in translation. Among the key factors in transcreation, the following have proven to be relevant in translating Estrella Damm advertising campaigns into English: internationalisation, envisaged from the start of campaign; the dialogue between translators and art directors; some adaptation to the conventions of the target language and culture; the importance of effective and affective communication, and creativity and co-creation.

From our analysis of Estrella Damm's *Mediterráneamente* campaign we could say that commercials can be divided into four groups: (a) *Commercials with no dialogue* (2009–2014): there is only music (with the lyrics in English) and a Spanish slogan at the end. Only the slogan was translated into English for the British market. (b) *Short films with a lot of dialogue* (from 2015–2018): these ads are much longer (between 10 and 16 minutes) and they all have a mixture of languages in both the ST and the TT. The frequency of the third language varies depending on the language and commercial. Different translation solutions have been used that range from omitting the third language in the TT (L3 invisibility) to clearly highlighting the third language in the TT. In the latter case, the presence of the third language is sometimes much greater in the TT than in the ST. This is the case of *La vida nuestra/Our Life* (Estrella Damm, 2017).

Apart from the difficulties posed by the translation of an advertisement, Estrella Damm translators are faced with other challenging problems, that can be found in groups 3 and 4, where transcreation was foregrounded: (3) *commercials with rhyme*, as we have seen in *Let's Try Together* (Estrella Damm, 2021), and (4) *ads where the lyrics are relevant to convey the sustainability message*, as shown in *Act I*, *Act II*, and *Act III* (Estrella Damm, 2019, 2020, 2021). Song translation is an example of language creativity, along with attention to visuals, according to Estrella Damm's English translator. Transcreation, therefore, might not be "another way of translating" (paraphrasing Estrella Damm's slogan "another way of living") but an integral part of translation even if it emphasises its added value in the translation industry (Pedersen, 2014). In sum, we might say that Estrella Damm campaigns (Estrella Damm, 2009–2021) were conceived taking into account their international distribution, where translation plays an important role.

Acknowledgements

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The Rendering of Foul Language in Spanish-English Subtitling: The Case of *El Vecino*

La traducción de lenguaje soez en el subtitulado del español al inglés: el caso de *El vecino*

La traduction des gros mots dans le sous-titrage espagnol-anglais : le cas de *El vecino*

A tradução da linguagem obscena na legendagem de espanhol para o inglês: o caso de *El vecino*

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Abstract

Audiovisual translation into English is recently gaining importance as the material produced in other languages is now increasingly crossing borders thanks to the internet. This article explores foul language, deemed one of the most problematic aspects of subtitling. The aim is to elucidate how this is normally subtitled into English. Drawing on a corpus of swearwords from Netflix Spanish comedy series *El Vecino* (Vigalondo, 2019-2021), this paper examines the frequency of use of different translation techniques and the reasons behind the omission of certain instances of foul language. Results show that, while omitting swearwords is the second most common scenario, the most frequent one is transferring the offensive load of the original expression, with roughly 70 % of instances making it into the target product. As for factors influencing this decision, it was observed that overall swearwords are omitted not because they are offensive, but primarily because of their low narrative value, the subtitling's vulnerability, and the interaction between swearwords and non-verbal elements. Time and space constraints of subtitling appear to have little impact. These results suggest that the potential influence of censorship and cultural differences on foul language omissions in English subtitles is presented as a possible research avenue.

Keywords: avt, foul language, Spanish-English subtitling, swearwords, Netflix, Spanish comedy, offensive load

Resumen

La traducción audiovisual al inglés está cobrando importancia en los últimos tiempos, ya que el material producido en otras lenguas cruza cada vez más fronteras gracias a Internet. Este artículo explora el lenguaje soez, considerado uno de los aspectos más problemáticos de la subtitulación. El objetivo es dilucidar cómo se subtitula normalmente al inglés. A partir de un corpus de palabras
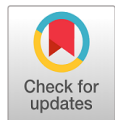
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consideradas soeces de la serie de comedia española de Netflix *El Vecino*, este artículo examina la frecuencia de uso de diferentes técnicas de traducción y las razones detrás de la omisión de varias de estas palabras. Los resultados muestran que, si bien la omisión de palabras soeces es la segunda situación más común, la más frecuente es la transferencia de la carga ofensiva de la expresión original, con aproximadamente un 70 % de estas expresiones llegando al producto de destino. En cuanto a los factores que influyen en esta decisión, se observa que, en general, las palabras soeces se omiten no porque sean ofensivas, sino principalmente por su escaso valor narrativo, la vulnerabilidad del subtitulado y la interacción entre las palabras soeces y los elementos no verbales. Las limitaciones de tiempo y espacio del subtitulado parecen tener poca repercusión. Estos resultados sugieren como vía de investigación la posible influencia de la censura y las diferencias culturales en la omisión de palabras soeces en los subtítulos en inglés.

Palabras clave: TAV, lenguaje soez, subtitulado español-inglés, palabras soeces, Netflix, comedia española, carga ofensiva

Résumé

La traduction audiovisuelle en anglais a récemment gagné en importance, car le matériel produit dans d'autres langues traverse de plus en plus les frontières grâce à l'internet. Cet article explore le langage grossier, considéré comme l'un des aspects les plus problématiques du sous-titrage. L'objectif est d'élucider la manière dont ce langage est normalement sous-titré en anglais. S'appuyant sur un corpus de gros mots tirés de la série comique espagnole *El Vecino* de Netflix, cet article examine la fréquence d'utilisation de différentes techniques de traduction et les raisons qui sous-tendent l'omission de certaines occurrences. Les résultats montrent que, si l'omission de gros mots est le deuxième scénario le plus courant, le plus fréquent est le transfert de la charge offensive de l'original, avec environ 70 % des instances qui se retrouvent dans le produit cible. En ce qui concerne les facteurs influençant cette décision, il a été observé que, dans l'ensemble, les gros mots sont omis non pas parce qu'ils sont offensants, mais principalement en raison de leur faible valeur narrative, de la vulnérabilité du sous-titrage et de l'interaction entre les jurons et les éléments non verbaux. Les contraintes de temps et d'espace du sous-titrage semblent avoir peu d'impact. Les résultats suggèrent que l'influence potentielle de la censure et des différences culturelles sur les omissions de jurons dans les sous-titres anglais est une piste de recherche possible.

Mots-clef : TAV, langage grossier, gros mots, sous-titrage espagnol-anglais, Netflix, comédie espagnole, charge offensive

Resumo

A tradução audiovisual para o inglês está ganhando importância recentemente, uma vez que o material produzido em outros idiomas está agora cada vez mais cruzando fronteiras graças à internet. Este artigo explora a linguagem grosseira, considerada um dos aspectos mais problemáticos da legendagem. O objetivo é elucidar como isto normalmente é legendado em inglês. Baseado em um corpus de palavrões da série de comédia espanhola *El Vecino* (Vigalondo, 2019-2021) da Netflix, este artigo examina a frequência do uso de diferentes técnicas de tradução e as razões por trás da omissão de certas instâncias. Os resultados mostram que, embora a omissão de palavrões seja o segundo cenário mais comum, o mais frequente é a transferência da carga ofensiva do original, com cerca de 70 % das instâncias fazendo com que ele se torne o produto alvo. Quanto aos

fatores que influenciam esta decisão, foi observado que os palavrões em geral são omitidos não por serem ofensivos, mas principalmente devido ao seu baixo valor narrativo, à vulnerabilidade da legendagem e à interação entre palavrões e elementos não-verbais. As restrições de tempo e espaço da legendagem parecem ter pouco impacto. Os resultados sugerem que a potencial influência da censura e das diferenças culturais nas omissões de linguagem grosseira nas legendas em inglês é uma possível via de pesquisa.

Palavras chave: TAV, linguagem grosseira, palavrões, legendagem espahnol-inglês, Netflix, comedia da Espanha, carga ofensiva

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Introduction

This article deals with the translation for subtitles of foul language into English. This is a segment where it appears to be a certain terminological confusion since there is a lack of established metalanguage to talk about it (Wajnryb, 2005) and a truly remarkable variety of terms such as *bad language, coarse language, foul language, offensive language, profane language, strong language, taboo language*, or *vulgar language*. Given this disparity, the terms foul language, offensive language, and strong language were chosen and will be used interchangeably in this paper. The term *swearword(s)* will also be used, even if these can be considered a subcategory of the previous (Ávila-Cabrera, 2015b), to refer to a unit or instance of foul language rather than the concept in general.

Other terms were discarded based on their definitions. For instance, *bad language* can go beyond words and encompass grammar or dialects considered incorrect or that may have negative connotations (Battistella, 2005). Taboo language, in turn, includes terms that are not necessarily inherently offensive because they are deemed (in)appropriate depending on the context (Ávila-Cabrera, 2015b). As regards vulgar language, it could refer to language of an intimate nature (Wajnryb, 2005) or used by unsophisticated or under-educated people (Jay, 1992); hence a subcategory of offensive language.

As Stapleton (2010) puts it, "swearing is forbidden and carries the risk of censure" (p. 290). Despite this, strong language persists in constituting a vital part of languages and cultures both in everyday conversation and audiovisual content, in which it is constantly and increasingly present (Fuentes-Luque, 2015). Therefore, it seems worth looking into the translation of foul language, particularly in subtitling, as it presents unique challenges such as conveying a predominantly oral feature of speech in writing and a restricted context. Indeed, as claimed by Díaz Cintas (2001),

dealing with strong language is, unquestionably, one of the most complicated tasks of subtitling. Other factors are subtitling's vulnerability, cultural differences in the degree of tolerance to swearing or what is considered taboo, or finding the most appropriate equivalent in the target language (TL). Despite these difficulties, the adequate rendering of foul language is vital for the appreciation of translated audiovisual products (Pérez et al., 2017). As reported by Scandura (2004), some viewers taking part in a small-scale survey about subtitling and censorship in a cinema in Buenos Aires (Argentina) expressed that partially or not rendering strong language in subtitles "changed the essence of the programme" (p. 132).

The study of audiovisual translation (AVT) into English is gaining importance since it is increasingly needed and practised. This occurs because non-English language productions are becoming more popular in English-speaking countries thanks to the internet (Zanotti, 2018) and, more specifically, through video-on-demand (VoD) platforms. In Anglophone countries, "the most established AVT modality" is subtitling (Perego & Pacinotti, 2020, p. 43); however, this practice lacks sufficient research-backed guidelines (Díaz-Cintas & Hayes, 2021), hence the need to explore it.

Notwithstanding all this, academic research on foul language subtitling into English is insufficient. Some preliminary work was done by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007), but there are very few studies addressing this (e.g., Ávila-Cabrera & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2018; Gedik, 2020). Consequently, in this context of research on subtitling *into* English, it is relevant to consider offensive language. Swearwords in subtitling have been studied more comprehensively *from* English into other languages such as Spanish (e.g., Ávila-Cabrera, 2015a, 2015b; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007; Valdeón, 2015), Arabic (e.g., Alsharhan, 2020; Hawel, 2019), or Chinese (e.g., Chen, 2004; Han & Wang, 2014). Nonetheless, it still remains an under-researched area (Fuentes-Luque, 2015).

This article explores the translation of foul language in subtitles translated from Spanish into English[1] subtitling aiming to conduct a descriptive analysis of the subtitling of swearwords spotted in Netflix's Spanish comedy series *El Vecino* (Vigalondo, 2019-2021) in order to determine how strong language may be subtitled into English. The research design was based upon the following two research questions:

1. How many instances of offensive language found in the source text (ST) were (not) transferred to the target text (TT) and which translation technique was used for this purpose?

2. Were there any omissions of strong language? If so, why were they omitted?

A corpus of 120 instances of foul language was compiled to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis from an empirical and corpus-driven approach. The corpus is composed of relevant extracts taken from the first three episodes of *El Vecino* and their English subtitles. It was classified according to their communicative function and transfer of their offensive load (OL) into the TL.

Following this introductory section, a three-section theoretical framework of relevant key concepts and issues is presented. This is followed by a description of the data set studied and the data collection methods employed to compile the corpus. Next, the results of the quantitative analysis of subtitling techniques used for foul language are shown, which answers RQ1. In this respect, results indicate that OL was transferred to the TL subtitles in most cases even if omission is the second most frequently used technique. A qualitative analysis of several examples is also offered to answer RQ2. Here, issues such as subtitling's vulnerability, kinesic synchrony and the function of swearwords are examined as potential reasons to omit certain

swearwords. Last, the conclusions drawn from this study can be found.

Theoretical Framework

The following sections present and discuss key concepts and issues dealt with in this paper, namely subtitling, foul language, the restrictions and challenges of subtitling foul language, and the techniques available to do so.

Subtitling

Subtitling is a highly complex activity due to the number of restrictions that it entails. These include time and space constraints, linguistic restrictions and simplification, code switching, isochrony, kinesic synchrony, and the preservation of the original soundtrack (see Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998; Díaz Cintas, 2001; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). However, to keep the theory presented relevant to the analysis, this article will focus on three key aspects: code switching, spatiotemporal constraints, and subtitling's vulnerability.

Firstly, subtitling involves converting oral speech into written text (code switching). Written texts are more linguistically-formal and standardised (Díaz Cintas, 2001), hence less expressive and spontaneous than oral texts. Additionally, since processing information takes longer when conveyed through written language (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007; Perego, 2008), there is a need to reformulate and omit some of it due to time and space constraints. Consequently, certain linguistic elements tend to be omitted in subtitles, primarily, features of oral discourse such as discourse markers, vocatives, repetitions, interjections, or modal particles (Chaume, 2004; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). This includes swearwords since these can sometimes act as discourse markers or fillers. This is the most important if we consider that on Netflix, character limitation is set at 42 per line and reading speed at 20 characters per second in adult programmes (Netflix, 2021).

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1   In this case, the ST is in European Spanish and American English is used in the TT.

Additionally, in Gottlieb's (1994) words, "subtitling is an overt type of translation, retaining the original version, thus playing itself bare to criticism from everybody with the slightest knowledge of the source language" (p. 102). This is known as subtitling's vulnerability (Díaz Cintas, 2003). As a result, subtitlers are not only conditioned by spatiotemporal restraints, but also by the scrutiny of viewers, especially, those with knowledge of the source language and unfamiliar with the intricacies of translating and subtitling. Indeed, the nature of subtitling does not always allow the preservation of every linguistic element, normally, because of the need for condensation (Botella Tejera, 2007). Moreover, translations cannot always be literal (Chesterman, 1997; Hurtado, 2001), particularly, in contexts involving "spoken idiomatic language" (Newmark, 1988, p. 31) such as most audiovisual products. Lastly, subtitling vulnerability can be even more prominent on DVD or VoD platforms as the audience can hit pause and dissect the subtitles or even compare them with the dubbed version of the product (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007), which usually do not match because the constraints and priorities of both AVT modalities are dissimilar.

Foul Language

Briefly, offensive language is closely associated with swearwords (Ávila-Cabrera, 2015b; Battistella, 2005; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007), which are seen as the linguistic realisation of taboo subjects (Beseghi, 2016; Stapleton, 2010). These encompass also what can be considered inappropriate or unacceptable in certain circumstances or cultures (Ávila-Cabrera, 2015b) and thus, they are "restricted or prohibited by social custom" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 194). Thus we may say that the concept of *strong language* covers a wide range of words and topics.

Several classifications of foul language have been proposed (e.g., Andersson & Trudgill, 1990; Ávila-Cabrera, 2015a; Battistella, 2005; Jay, 1992; Wajnryb, 2005). For the purposes of this paper, two taxonomies are used. Firstly, foul language can be classed into three categories according to the *topic* or sphere from which they originate (Battistella, 2005, p. 72), namely, as *epithets*, *profanity*, or *vulgarity/obscenity*.

Epithets are "various types of slurs" (Battistella, 2005, p. 72) that can refer to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, appearance, disabilities, or other characteristics. Some examples include "bitch", "fag", or 'retard'. Based upon corpus observation, epithets can also refer to animals ('pig') and family ('son of a bitch') (Jay, 2009) (see Table 2).

Profanity is "religious cursing" (Battistella, 2005, p. 72). It entails the use of religious terms as swearwords with no intention to denigrate religion. For instance, "hell", "damn", "God", or "Jesus" are profanities (Wajnryb, 2005). It seems interesting to mention blasphemy here, as it is also connected with religious cursing yet intends to vilify religion or religious figures. A case in point is "Jesus fucking Christ" (Ávila-Cabrera, 2020).

Vulgarity/obscenity refers to "words or expressions which characterize sex-differentiating anatomy or sexual and excretory functions in a crude way, such as *shit* and *fuck*" (Battistella, 2005, p. 72). Although vulgarity is broader than obscenity, both are generally used interchangeably (Wajnryb, 2005).

Secondly, foul language can also be categorised according to the *function* fulfilled in each communicative exchange (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990; Pinker, 2007). Indeed, as Stapleton (2010) asserts, "swearing fulfils some particular communicative functions, which are not easily accomplished through other linguistic means" (p. 290). In this respect, four categories have been proposed by Andersson & Trudgill (1990):

- *Abusive swearing* takes place when using slurs, name-calling, and other cursing expressions to offend and cause insult (Jdetawy, 2019, p. 27051).

- *Expletive swearing* is an expression of emotions or attitudes that is not directed towards others but simply vents emotion (Jdetawy, 2019, p. 27051).

- *Humorous swearing* is directed towards others but is "playful" and "humorous" rather than offensive (Jdetawy, 2019, p. 27051).

- *Auxiliary swearing* is not addressed to others either (Jdetawy, 2019, p. 27051) but rather serves as an intensifier. It does not necessarily have negative connotations —sometimes it can emphasise positive feelings (Grohol, 2009), or simply constitute a casual conversational habit adopted to fit in (Jay, 2009). However, it "can still be regarded as impolite or offensive" (Jay, 2009, p. 155).

Having observed the corpus, adding a fifth category was deemed necessary: *descriptive swearing* (Pinker, 2007), which consists in using strong language with its literal meaning; thus, it fulfils a referential function that contributes to plot development. An example is the sentence "let's fuck".

Examples of the swearing sorts discussed above are shown in Table 1 while Table 2 summarises both taxonomies of foul language addressed here.

The first taxonomy classifies swearwords according to the topic from which they originate and is used to establish which words can be considered strong language. It appears sufficient for the purposes of this paper as it covers all the instances conforming the corpus. Nonetheless, swearwords are not necessarily limited to these spheres. As Montagu (1967, p. 90) puts it, "[a]ny word carrying an emotional charge is capable of serving the swearer as ammunition for [their] purposes." The second classification proposal, which categorises foul language based upon its function, is used to helps elucidate the reason to omit some swearwords in subtitling (see research question 2). Given the different functions that they can fulfil, it could be argued that some may be considered more relevant than others in terms of narrative value, which might influence the choice for omission.

Restrictions and Challenges in Subtitling Foul Language

As stated previously, strong language is an integral part of everyday speech and spoken audiovisual

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Table 1 Types of Foul Language According to their Communicative Function

Type of Swearing	Definition	Example(s)
Abusive	Expressions that insult or offend.	*You bastard.* *Go to hell!*
Expletive	Expressions that vent emotion.	*Shit!* *Goddamn it!*
Humorous	Playful rather than offensive expressions.	*Get your ass in gear!*
Auxiliary	Serves as an intensifier.	*This concert is fucking awesome!*
Descriptive	Fulfils a referential function.	*Let's fuck.*

Source: Adapted from Jdetawy (2019), Jay (2009), and Pinker (2007).

Table 2 Taxonomy of Foul Language Depending on Topic and Function

Topic From Which It Originates	*Function* That It Fulfils
	Abusive
Epithet	Expletive (or cathartic)
Profanity	Humorous
Vulgarity/obscenity	Auxiliary (or emphatic)
	Descriptive

discourse. Its subtitling is not governed solely by the constraints characteristic of this practice but also by factors of ideological or cultural nature (Fawcett, 2003).

Firstly, *censorship*, which "constitutes an external constraint on what we can publish or (re)write" (Santaemilia, 2008), can affect this practice. Nevertheless, this is not the case in present-day English-speaking countries as there are no censorship measures in place such as those existing in politically or religiously oppressed environments. In this cultural context, the subtitling of swearwords may be influenced by the requirements set out by commissioners, TV channels, or AV content distributors (Díaz Cintas, 2001; Mattsson, 2006), which are normally a reflection of each culture's norms and view of the world (Mattsson, 2006). However, according to Netflix's guidelines, "[d]ialogue must never be censored" and subtitles must "[a]lways match the tone of the original content" (Netflix, 2021). Thus, since the corpus was extracted from this VoD platform, censorship imposed by the client is not considered a potential factor contributing to the omission of foul language in this case.

Yet, censoring is not necessarily conditioned only by external pressures. It can also occur by ideological or cultural circumstances, thus becoming "an individual ethical struggle between self and context" (Santaemilia, 2008, pp. 221-222). This struggle stems from the fact that every culture has different taboos (Fuentes-Luque, 2015; Parini, 2013). Since translators tend to "operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating" (Toury, 2012, p. 6), they might sometimes function as *self-censors*, voluntarily or involuntarily, by producing translations that are socially and personally deemed "acceptable" in the target culture (Santaemilia, 2008). In this respect, Spanish speakers seem highly tolerant of strong language on screen (Pavesi & Zamora, 2021), more so than English speakers; according to Valdeón (2015, 2020), Spanish dubbed versions of English-language audiovisual products usually increase the offensive load (OL). This

could derive from factors such as cultural differences or the frequency of the use of swearwords in each language. For instance, Dewaele (2004) presents the testimony of a bilingual person who asserts that "Spanish speakers seem to be able to insult one another without anybody getting very upset whereas in English you would make enemies for life" (pp. 214-215).

Moreover, given the cultural specificity of offensive language, reflecting it in the target product can constitute a major challenge. This is because determining the degree of offensiveness of swearwords and finding an adequate equivalent for the target culture can be difficult (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). Despite this difficulty, researchers commonly advocate their preservation in the TT (e.g., Chaume, 2004; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007; Greenall, 2011; Santaemilia, 2008). One reason is that omitting swearwords can potentially alter the reception of the target product and the perception of the characters given their substantial cultural, social, and subjective load. Thus, "the correct translation and adaptation of foul language in audiovisual products is of the utmost importance" (Pérez et al., 2017, pp. 72-73).

Furthermore, "a character's speech is an important part of [their] personality" (Tveit, 2004, p. 16). Swearing can be an indication of aspects such as age, social class, level of education (McEnery & Xiao, 2004), emotional state, or the relationship among interlocutors (Vingerhoets et al., 2013). Nonetheless, attempting to impose the value system of a culture onto another is "dangerous ground" (Bassnett, 2013, p. 33), and the target culture's moral patterns may differ from the source culture's. Plus, they may not always be suitable for the translation of foul language. For example, as explained earlier, Spanish speakers are quite lenient with insults while English speakers would generally feel deeply offended. Hence, some changes resulting from the translation process may be unavoidable.

Another issue influencing the subtitling of strong language is the previously mentioned concept

of subtitling vulnerability. In Scandura's (2004) words, "[w]hen watching subtitled material, audiences often feel they are being cheated because they realise that what was said could not have been what was written in the subtitles" (pp. 125-126). This can severely affect the perception of the product and the quality of the translation and may be unjustly criticised.

Finally, it seems interesting to draw attention to the findings of a survey conducted in Argentina after the viewing of a subtitled film (Scandura, 2004, pp. 131-132). These findings largely coincide with the challenges and restrictions outlined here. When asked about the possible reasons for neutralising or omitting offensive language, some respondents (10 %) thought these actions were the result of legislation prohibiting the use of swearwords in translations, that is, censorship. Others thought it was done "out of respect for the audience" (25 %) so that children could also watch the programme (26 %), or because Latin Americans are "too puritanical" (10 %). In other words, they thought it stemmed from self-censorship for cultural or ideological reasons. The rest of the respondents did not know why these omissions or changes might have been made, but they did find that these were "unnecessary" and "changed the essence of the programme," that is, the perception of the target product was indeed altered.

Rendering Offensive Load

As noted above, assessing the degree of offensiveness of swearwords and matching their meaning and OC in the TC can be challenging for several reasons. Therefore, according to Ávila-Cabrera (2015a), the impact of offensive words on the target audience depends largely on the translator's decisions when subtitling each instance of strong language (p. 16). In this respect, there are five possible techniques[2] to which the translator can resort (Ávila-Cabrera, 2015b, 2020).

The first one is *toning down* the OL in the subtitle, which is softened or partially transmitted, even though the translator tries to render it to some extent (for instance, by removing the swearword while preserving the allusion to a taboo topic). The second technique is *preserving* the original OL. The third one is *toning up* the OL, i.e., enhancing the degree of offensiveness of the TT with respect to the ST's. This can also encompass cases in which there was no OL at all in the ST but there is some in the TT (Ávila-Cabrera, personal communication, November 24, 2021). In any case, this is generally done to compensate for some previous loss. The fourth technique is *neutralisation* of the OL as a result of replacing the swearword with a non-offensive word. The fifth one is the *omission* of OL by deleting the swearword. Table 3 shows examples of each translation technique.

Ávila-Cabrera (2015b, 2020) considers that the first three options result in OL's transmission whereas the last two entail the loss of that load in the TT (see Table 4). Although Ávila-Cabrera's (2020) proposal derives from analyses of foul language in the subtitling of English into Spanish, it is deemed appropriate and sufficient as a starting point for examining this phenomenon in the reverse language combination. Thus, this will be the basis to determine whether the OL of instances of strong language detected in this corpus is transferred or lost in the subtitles, carrying out a quantitative analysis (see research question 1).

Method

Given the nature of the research questions that this paper seeks to answer, a descriptive study has been conducted based on quantitative and qualitative methods. The specific research questions posed can be found in the introduction.

The first research question (RQ1) was addressed by documenting the number of instances and

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2   Ávila-Cabrera (2020) defines these as "techniques" instead of "strategies" because the "the main focus is on the

TT as a result" (p. 129).

Table 3 Examples of Offensive Language Translation Techniques

Translation Technique	Definition	Example
Toning down	Softening or partial transmission of OL	"They should be fucking killed" → *Deberían ejecutarles* [They should execute them]
Preserving	Maintaining OL	"What the fuck...?" → *¿Qué coño...?* [What the fuck...?]
Toning up	Enhancing OL	"Jesus Christ!" → *¡Hostia puta!* [Fucking shit!]
Neutralising	Eliminating OL	"You cheap bastard" → *Tacaño* [Miser]
Omitting	Eliminating the swearword and OL	*Shit!* → Θ

Table 4 Taxonomy of Techniques to Translate Offensive Language According to the Transference of OL

OL is transferred	OL is not transferred
Toning down Preserving Toning up	Neutralising Omitting

Source: based on Ávila-Cabrera (2020, p. 129).

establishing which of these techniques are used to convey foul language from the ST, e.g., no attempt, toning down, "equivalent" TL usage, etc. Regarding the second research question (RQ2), it was tackled by detecting the cases of omission in the corpus and carrying out qualitative analysis to assess the potential reasons behind this decision, e.g., whether aspects such as the communicative function of the swearword or its phrasing may have played a part in choosing to omit it.

Since this study provides new data derived from observation, an empirical perspective and a corpus-driven approach (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014) were adopted. The examined corpus—both the ST in Spanish and the English subtitles—was extracted from the first three episodes of Netflix's Spanish comedy *El Vecino* (Vigalondo, 2019-2021) broadcast in the UK.

The choice of this show to do the analysis stems from the personal experience of the researcher as a viewer, it is stated that this product contains sufficient and fairly varied examples of foul language. Variety constitutes a desirable trait of corpora in the field of Translation Studies because it results

in "a balanced representation of the population" (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014, p. 73) and, thus, in studies "with a much greater power of generalization" (Alves & Hurtado, 2010, p. 34). Additionally, this show was produced recently, so the findings derived from examining it can be considered relevant as they conceivably reflect the television industry and subtitling practices of the present.

The sample consists of 120 units of selection and 127 units of analysis, which is considered appropriate in size given the scope and purpose of this paper. The examples were selected based primarily on the first taxonomy of strong language that classifies swearwords according to the sphere from which they originate. Hence, those words or expressions that fall under the category of epithet, profanity, or vulgarity were included in the corpus. Regarding the corpus compilation procedure, it consisted of the following actions: viewing the product, detecting potential examples of foul language, assessing their suitability as such, making notes of information relevant to the analysis of each instance, and classifying them according

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to their function in the communicative exchange and the degree of transference of OL to the TL. Table 5 displays a sample of the corpus.

Results and Discussion

Table 5 Sample of the Corpus Analysed

Example 0			
Instance 38			
OL	Preserved		
Type of swearing	Expletive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	Joder. [Fuck.]	Shit.	23:57 − 23:59

The following quantitative analysis establishes the frequency with which the OL of foul language was rendered in the TL subtitles of the first three episodes of *El Vecino* and to what extent it happened. All the analysed instances are illustrated in the form of two pie charts (Figures 1 and 2). It is worth pointing out that humorous swearing will not be commented upon as no examples were spotted in the corpus examined.

Figure 1 shows the frequency with which the OL of the ST was transferred to the TT. In response to RQ1, out of the 127 instances examined, the OL of 85 of them (nearly 67 %) was found to be transferred from the ST to the TL subtitles whereas in the remaining 42 cases (roughly 33 %) that did not occur.

Figure 2 displays the frequency of use of each translation technique, i.e. to what extent the OL was (not) transferred to the TT. This responds to RQ1 as well. First, the OL of 59 examples (46.4 %) was preserved, which implies that, in this corpus, preserving the OL of swearwords in English subtitles is the most common scenario. The second trend is omission as 24 of the instances analysed (18.9 %) were eliminated in the TT. Next,

18 examples (14.2 %) of strong language are toned down, which coincides with the number of neutralised instances. Lastly, only 8 of the 127 instances detected (6.3 %) were toned up, thus making this the least common technique to subtitle strong language in Spanish into English.

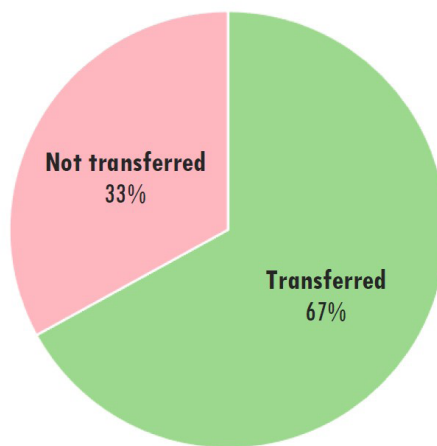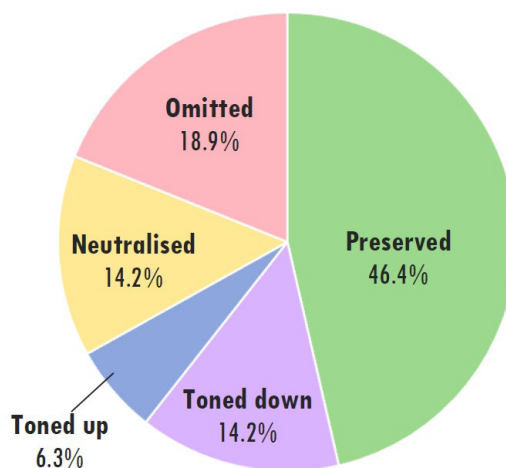**Figure 1** Frequency of Transfer of the ST OL to the TL Subtitles

Figure 2 Frequency of Use of Translation Techniques to Transfer the ST OL to the TL Subtitles


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An additional quantitative analysis was performed to be used as a basis for the subsequent qualitative analysis. In this vein, Table 6 and Figures 3 and 4 present the frequency of use of each technique for each type of swearword (see Table 6, Figures 3 to 6).

Table 6 Frequency of Use of Each Technique Classified According to Kinds of Swearing

	Descriptive	Abusive	Expletive	Auxiliary	Total
Preserved	21	10	22	6	59
Toned down	7	0	8	3	18
Toned up	5	0	2	1	8
Neutralised	8	1	7	2	18
Omitted	1	2	20	1	24
Total	42	13	59	13	127

Figure 3 Transfer of the OL of Descriptive Swearwords
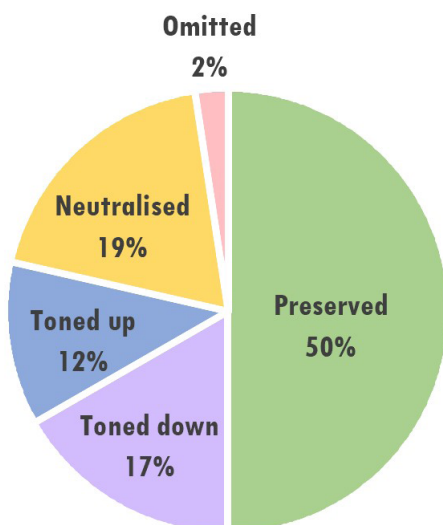
This data will be further explained and used to establish whether the type of swearword (based on its function in the text) might influence translation decisions concerning the transfer of its OL and if so, how. For this purpose, a qualitative analysis was conducted with the aim of identifying possible patterns for the choice of each technique, focussing particularly on omitted strong language (see RQ2). Thus, the discussion presented below responds to RQ2.

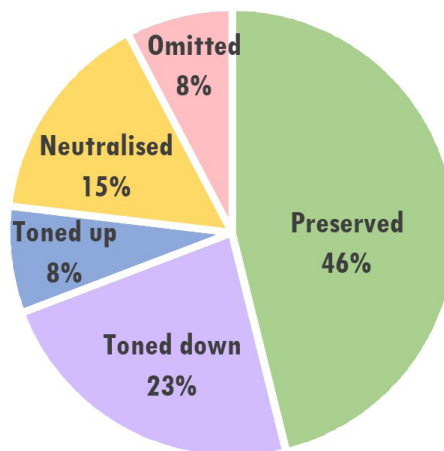**Figure 4** Transfer of the OL in Auxiliary Swearwords

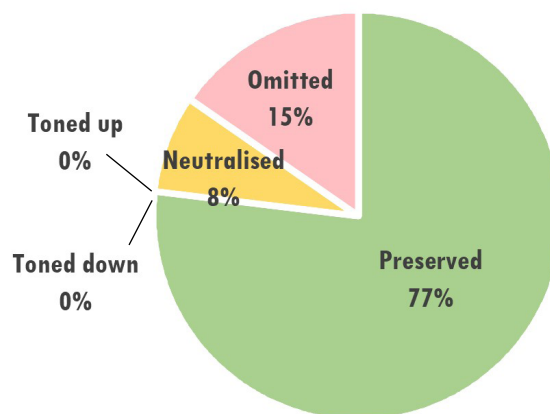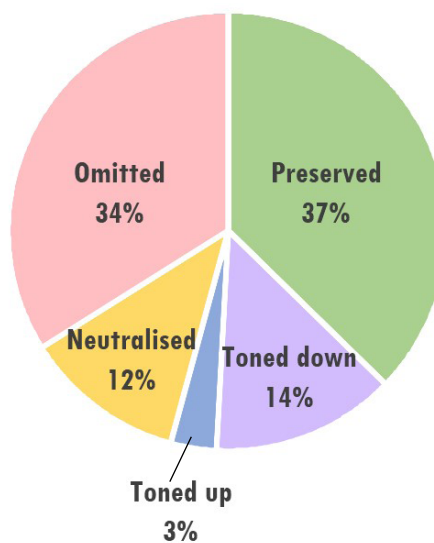**Figure 5** Transfer of the OL of Abusive Swearwords

Figure 6 Transfer of the OL of Expletive Swearwords

First, as shown in Figure 3, descriptive swearing is most frequently preserved in TL subtitles although other strategies that maintain its semantic load such as neutralisation are also used; however, omission hardly ever happens. The reason could be that failing to transfer the meaning of the ST swearword in cases of descriptive swearing does not seem appropriate given its relevance to the plot. In these cases, it could be argued that the translator's prime concern is to transmit the meaning because doing otherwise could result in the loss of information relevant for the audience to follow the story (Table 7).

Table 7 Descriptive Swearing Being Preserved in TL Subtitles

Example 1			
Instance 41			
OL	Preserved		
Type of swearing	Descriptive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	Perdón. Perdón, perdón. Es que llevo un día *de mierda.* [Sorry. Sorry, sorry. It's just that I've had a shitty day.]	Sorry. I've had a really *shitty* day.	23:57 − 23:59

Furthermore, as explained previously, omission alters the target audience's emotional impact and perception of the product and the character as it does not render the original OL. This is also the case for neutralisation, which may explain the perception that it is normally reserved for cases where the OL of ST cannot be transferred. This is because there is no (natural) equivalent swearword or offensive expression in the TL —yet the semantic load must be preserved. An example is the following:

Notwithstanding, in the following case, the OL is toned up since an utterance with no OL is replaced with another that has a similar meaning and is offensive (Table 9).

Table 8 Neutralisation Where the OL Was Not Rendered in the TL

Example 2			
Instance 116			
OL	Neutralised		
Type of swearing	Descriptive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E03	Salgo corriendo, me doy una *hostia* contra la pared que me quedo todo loco... [I run out, bang into a wall, which makes me go completely mad...]	I ran out and *banged* into a wall // and started spinning out...	22:40 − 22:43

Table 9 Toning Up of OL

Example 3			
Instance 22			
OL	Toned up		
Type of swearing	Descriptive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	Porque sé que me está cambiando el whisky escocés del caro por *whisky* DYC. [Because I know she's swapping the expensive Scotch for DYC whisky.]	I know she's swapping my // expensive Scotch for cheap *crap.*	11:15 − 11:20

The example in Table 9 seems worth examining because the ST incorporates an extra-linguistic cultural reference (ECR)—a Spanish whisky brand—whose meaning and connotation are presented in the form of a swearword in the

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TT. Here, the translator opted for generalising the ECR (Pedersen, 2011), possibly, because this brand is not popular in English-speaking countries. Likewise, this could also offer the opportunity to incorporate a swearword in the TT given the negative connotation of this ECR (Table 10).

In contrast, in this example, an expression with a certain OL was added to the TT despite the absence of one in the ST. In any case, toning up non-offensive language —such as the ones in Tables 9 and 10— may be a way of compensating for omitting or neutralising some instances of strong language. As Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) point out, concerning marked speech —including swearwords:

> [s]ubtitlers regularly apply the strategy of compensation when translating marked language. This means that a particular intervention becomes more 'marked' or 'colourful' in some subtitles, to compensate for the loss of such speech elsewhere in the translated film. (p. 186)

Despite subtitling's vulnerability, this choice arguably contributes to the characterisation of the show and its speakers—and thus the reception of the target product—being as close as possible to the original.

Secondly, a tendency to transfer auxiliary swearing to the TL subtitles is observed (see Figure 4) —even if it tends to be is predominantly expressive and not as semantically relevant as other types—it does contribute towards characterisation, but it can generally be regarded as dispensable in terms of narrative value. Two examples of this are shown in Tables 10 and 11.

Thus, if auxiliary swearwords were omitted in the TL subtitles, this decision should not prevent the target audience from following the story—in contrast with omitting descriptive swearing, for instance. Nonetheless, the emotional impact and portrayal of the character uttering this swearword would conceivably differ from that of the ST. Thus, similar to toned up instances, the translator may have chosen to preserve most instances of auxiliary swearing in an attempt to transmit these emotions and characterisation. Moreover, in both examples, Netflix's character limitation (42 per line) did not pose a problem to the preservation or addition of these swearwords.

Next, as shown in Figure 5, the OL of abusive swearing is commonly transferred to the TL subtitles, possibly, due to its relevance to the plot and product. As a rule, abusive swearing is not only considerably expressive but also semantically

Table 10 ECR Rendered as a Swearword

Example 4			
Instance 69			
OL	Toned up		
Type of swearing	Auxiliary		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E02	Pero... ¿pero esto qué es? [But... but what's this?]	What the... // *what the hell* is this?	13:06 — 13:09

Table 11 Transference of Auxiliary Swearing to TL

Example 5			
Instance 73			
OL	Preserved		
Type of swearing	Auxiliary		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E02	¡Javier, qué *puta* maravilla de plan te has inventado! [Javier, what a fucking wonderful plan you came up with!]	Javier, what a *fucking* // awesome plan you came up with!	16:17–16:21

that this case is somewhat unusual since the target is not a character of the show, but the avatar of a videogame that is not even part of the story. This causes this instance of abusive swearing to have little to no narrative value. Additionally, the speaker does not display any of the non-verbal traits described above. Therefore, this particular non-transfer of OL should not, in principle, give the target audience a feeling of strangeness as it is not incongruous with the image and the paralinguistics of the ST; in other words, it does not rupture kinesic synchrony.

Nonetheless, it is interesting to point out that in the other example of omitted abusive swearing found (see Table 14), omission happened yet it did not rupture kinesic synchrony even if the non-verbal traits are characteristic of an angry person. The reason is that the ST includes two abusive swearwords but only one of them is eliminated from the TT. In this case, one of them may have been deemed superfluous as they both fulfil the same communicative function, hence the omission. However, it should be borne in mind that, as explained above, the target audience's perception of the product might still be altered. This is because the OL of the utterance is overall reduced (see Table 14).

In connection with *expletive swearing*, as Figure 6 displays, almost half (46%) of the instances detected

loaded. It provides crucial information about the emotional state or the attitude of a character towards another and their relationship, which can normally have an impact on the development of the story. Table 12 brings an example of preserved abusive swearing.

Moreover, these cases of abusive swearing might have been preserved also due to the *multimodal* nature of audiovisual texts, which are "a multi-channel and multi-code type of communication" since they use simultaneously both the acoustic and visual channels (Delabastita 1989/2015, p. 196) and combine verbal and non-verbal codes (Chaume 2004) to transmit a message. In this show, it has been observed that when a character uses abusive swearing, they tend to raise their voice, very obviously address the victim, and look angry. In other words, non-verbal information makes it fairly evident that the speaker could be insulting someone. Since the target audience perceives this information, it is quite probably taken into consideration when making translation decisions as omitting the swearword in these cases might result in a somewhat incoherent or confusing TT.

In fact, Table 13 shows one of the only two cases of omitted abusive swearing spotted throughout the corpus. The reason for this omission could be

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Table 12 Abusive Swearing Transferred to TL

Example 6			
Instance 24			
OL	Preserved		
Type of swearing	Abusive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	¡Es que eres *gilipollas*! [You're a moron!]	You're such a *jerk*!	12:11—12:12

Table 13 Example of Abusive Swearing Omitted in the TL

Example 7			
Instance 66			
OL	Omitted		
Type of swearing	Abusive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E02	¡Va, *cabrón*! [Come on, you bastard!]	Come on!	12:19—12:20

Table 14 Reduction of OL in Utterance

	Example 8		
Instance 94			
OL	Preserved (*cabrón*) and omitted *(hijo puta)*		
Type of swearing	Abusive (both)		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E03	Será *cabrón, hijo puta.* [He's such an asshole, son of a bitch]	What a total *asshole*!	10:20–10:21

Table 15 Preserved Expletive Swearing

	Example 9		
Instance 44			
OL	Preserved		
Type of swearing	Expletive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	*¡Hostia!* [Shit!]	*Holy shit!*	26:34–26:37

in the corpus have not been transferred to the TL subtitles. This points to expletive swearing as the most likely to get lost in English subtitling translations, either by omitting or neutralising. Table 15 brings a case of preserved expletive swearing.

Here, the swearword was the only word uttered, thereby omitting it could create a sense of strangeness in the target audience due to the phenomenon of subtitling's vulnerability. The audience perceive the ST but not the TL subtitle for it. Indeed, it has been observed that when a swearword is uttered on its own, it is normally preserved. It may also be neutralised in some cases but is never—at least in this corpus—omitted. Nonetheless, when it is not the only element making up the utterance, it tends to be omitted (Table 16).

Table 16 Omission of Swearwords

	Example 10		
Instance 57			
OL	Omitted		
Type of swearing	Expletive		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E02	*¡Coño*, claro! ¡Que me vean, *joder*! Si soy un tío que vuela. [Fuck, of course! Let them see me, damn it! I'm a guy that flies]	Let them see me! I'm flying!	09:14–09:16

In the excerpt in Table 16, swearwords are not the only elements eliminated from the TL subtitles. The main reason behind these omissions could be that those elements conceivably act as discourse markers or fillers since the message is still the same after eliminating them. Additionally, given the ST's length, Netflix's character limitation would have probably been exceeded if all elements had been transferred to the TT. Thus, given their expletive function, lack of narrative value, and the need to condense this subtitle, the swearwords in this instance may have also been regarded as fillers and removed from the TL subtitles. Nevertheless, unlike other fillers, strong language carries OL. Therefore, even though omitting it may not affect the plot, as mentioned earlier, it might alter the target audience's emotional impact, viewing experience, and perception of the characters and product.

Finally, it is worth nothing that the following example involves two different types of swearwords are combined in the same utterance (Table 17).

Here, the translator has decided to omit the swearword that fulfils an expletive function (i.e., *joder*) over the descriptive one (i.e., *putada*), arguably because, as already pointed out, expletive swearing does not normally contribute significantly to

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Table 17 Two Different Swearwords Combined in One Utterance

Example 11			
Instance 13			
OL	Omitted (*joder*) and toned down (*putada*)		
Type of swearing	Expletive (*joder*) and descriptive (*putada*)		
Episode	ST	TT	Time stamp
S01 E01	*Joder*, vaya *putada*. Pues ya lo siento. [Fuck, what a pain in the ass. I'm sorry]	That *sucks.* I'm sorry.	05:52–05:53

plot development. In this case, interestingly, both swearwords convey the same information: *putada* [pain in the ass] and *joder* [fuck] transmit a feeling of disappointment and frustration. This may have also influenced the translator's choice to eliminate one since the message is conceivably accurately transmitted despite the loss of expressiveness and slightly decreased OL. Given the length of the ST, character limitation does not seem to be a reason to omit the expletive swearword in this case.

Conclusions

In this article, RQ1 sought to determine the frequency with which offensive language is (not) transferred to the TL subtitles and to what extent. Quantitative results indicate that OL has been transferred to the TL subtitles in most cases. Thus, although omission is the second most frequently employed technique, a tendency to transfer the original OL when translating foul language into English subtitles is observed. In fact, in this corpus, occasional attempts to compensate for omissions were detected. This is because some non-marked language was toned up and most auxiliary swearwords were preserved despite their predominantly oral nature and little impact on plot development. These suggest that the transfer of OL is taken into consideration and pursued to the greatest possible extent, which is in line with

current academic recommendations for the subtitling of foul language and Netflix's instructions against censorship.

RQ2 looked at the reasons behind the omission of certain instances of strong language in English subtitles. The qualitative analysis carried out allows to conclude that the selection of omission as a foul-language translation technique, in the context of Spanish-English subtitles, could result from or be influenced by subtitling's vulnerability and other factors. Those factors —to the best of the author's knowledge— have not previously been studied in connection with the translation of strong language. Some examples are multimodality (i.e. kinesic synchrony) or the communicative function of each swearword. It could be inferred that time and space constraints of subtitling might not play a particularly central part in this case; yet, since subtitling software could not be used to analyse these subtitles, this is simply an assumption that may be desirable to verify.

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Even though this study establishes a basis for further studies in the field, some limitations were encountered, which give rise to valuable ideas in this sense. Firstly, given the limited number of examples of omission detected (24) and the scarce research on subtitling strong language into English, it would be worth expanding the corpus or conducting this analysis on other subtitled products to have broader information available. Apart from that, due to the impossibility to use a subtitling editor, the impact of character limitation on the omission of strong language has not been assessed thoroughly enough. This comes across as an interesting research avenue as well as reception studies. These would also be useful as they could shed light on how foul language in English subtitles is being perceived by viewers.

Additionally, research focused particularly on censorship is desirable, considering that these factors could not be discussed here due to their complexity and the scope of this article. First, as pointed out in the *Restrictions and challenges*

section, Spanish speakers may be more comfortable than English speakers with strong language in audiovisual products. Research on this could help to elucidate whether and to what extent self-censorship due to cultural differences influences omissions of strong language in subtitles into English, or whether factors such as age group or frequency of use of foul language in each language might play a role in people's degree of tolerance of strong language. Lastly, it would be interesting to analyse the subtitling of foul language into English on TV channels or VoD platforms other than Netflix—which, as mentioned earlier, does not impose any restrictions in this respect—to establish whether external constraints may constitute a reason for omitting foul language in other contexts.

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Appendix

The complete corpus of instances examined in this paper can be accessed by scanning the following QR code.

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A Stranger in the Saloon: Lexical Disruption in the English Translation for Euro-Westerns Dubbing

Un forastero en el salón: alteración léxica en la traducción al inglés para el doblaje de Euro-Westerns

Un étranger dans le saloon : disruption lexicale dans la traduction anglaise pour le doublage d'euro-westerns

Um estranho na cantina: disrupção lexical na tradução inglesa para a dublagem de Euro-Westerns

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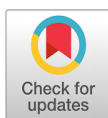sanderson@ua.es
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Abstract

Within the current context of a surge of foreign audiovisual content dubbed into English, the purpose of this article is to analyze how, half a century earlier, a *dubbese* developed in the translation of Euro-Westerns into English, resulting in a disruption of the established lexis of American Westerns. In order to analyze the root of this phenomenon, a corpus of fifteen American Westerns and their translations for dubbing into Spanish was compiled to understand how the Spanish distinctive lexis of the genre developed between the 1940s and 60s. Then, another parallel corpus of fifteen Euro-Westerns from the 60s and 70s with Spanish scripts and their English translations for dubbing was collected to explore whether the artificially created Spanish dubbese had any linguistic effect by means of its translation into English upon the canonical lexis of American Westerns. Finally, a comparable corpus is derived from the two previous corpora and analyzed. The results show that several distinctive lexical elements used in the corpus of American Westerns were replaced in the Euro-Westerns dubbed into English by terms never used in the original genre due to the influence of foreign scriptwriters. Thus, dubbese can be found in both cultural contexts. At first it was developed in dubbed American Westerns and, eventually, to a lesser degree, in dubbed Euro-Westerns.

Keywords: AVT, dubbing, Euro-Westerns, American Westerns, dubbese, lexical disruption, English translation

Resumen

En el contexto actual de auge de contenido audiovisual extranjero doblado al inglés, este artículo se propone analizar cómo, hace medio siglo, se desarrolló un *dubbese* o transferencia léxica en la traducción de eurowesterns al inglés que introdujo cambios en el léxico establecido en los westerns estadounidenses. Con

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el fin de analizar la raíz de este fenómeno, se recopiló un corpus de quince westerns estadounidenses y sus traducciones para el doblaje al español entre los años 40 y 60. Posteriormente, se reunió otro corpus paralelo de quince eurowesterns de los 60 y los 70 con los guiones en español y sus traducciones para el doblaje al inglés con el fin de explorar si el *dubbese* creado artificialmente en español tenía algún efecto lingüístico por medio de su traducción al inglés en el léxico canónico de los westerns estadounidenses. Finalmente, se generó un corpus comparable a partir de los dos corpus anteriores y se analizó. Los resultados muestran una sustitución de varios elementos léxicos distintivos del corpus de los *westerns* estadounidenses en el doblaje de los eurowesterns al inglés por términos que nunca antes se habían usado en el género original, lo que se atribuye a la influencia de guionistas extranjeros. Así, puede hallarse *dubbese* en ambos contextos culturales. Al comienzo, se desarrolló en los westerns estadounidenses doblados al español y eventualmente, en menor grado, en los eurowesterns doblados al inglés.

Palabras clave: TAV, doblaje, eurowesterns, westerns estadounidenses, *dubbese*, alteración léxica, traducción al inglés

Résumé

Dans le contexte actuel de l'essor des contenus audiovisuels étrangers doublés en anglais, cet article se propose d'analyser comment, il y a cinquante années, dans la traduction des Eurowesterns en anglais il est développé un *dubbese* ou transfert lexical qui a généré une altération du lexique établi des westerns américains. Afin d'analyser l'origine de ce phénomène, nous avons constitué un corpus de quinze westerns américains et de leurs traductions pour le doublage en espagnol entre les années 1940 et 1960. Ensuite, nous avons assemblé un corpus parallèle de quinze westerns européens des années 1960 et 1970 avec les scripts espagnols et leurs traductions de doublage en anglais afin d'explorer si le *dubbese* espagnol créé artificiellement avait un effet linguistique par le biais de sa traduction anglaise sur le lexique canonique des westerns américains. Enfin, un corpus comparable dérivé des deux corpus précédents a été analisé. Les résultats ont permis de constater que plusieurs éléments lexicaux distinctifs du corpus des westerns américains ont été remplacés dans le doublage des euro-westerns en anglais par des termes qui n'avaient jamais été utilisés dans le genre original, en raison de l'influence des scénaristes étrangers. Ainsi, le *dubbese* se retrouve dans les deux contextes culturels. Il s'est d'abord développé dans les westerns américains doublés, puis, dans une moindre mesure, dans les euro-westerns doublés.

Mots-clef : TAV, doublage, Eurowesterns, westerns américains, *dubbese*, disruption lexicale, traduction vers l'anglais

Resumo

No contexto atual do boom de conteúdo audiovisual estrangeiro dublado para o inglês, este artigo se propõe a analisar como, há meio século, desenvolveu-se um *dubbese* ou transferência lexical na tradução de eurowesterns para o inglês que gerou uma alteração do léxico estabelecido nos westerns americanos. Para analisar a raiz desse fenômeno, foi compilado um corpus de quinze westerns americanos e suas traduções para dublagem em espanhol entre as décadas de 1940 e 1960. Posteriormente, foi montado outro corpus paralelo de quinze euro-westerns das décadas de 1960 e 1970 com os scripts em espanhol e suas traduções para a dublagem em inglês, a fim de explorar se o *dubbese* em espanhol criado artificialmente teve algum efeito linguístico por meio de sua tradução em inglês no léxico canônico

dos westerns americanos. Por fim, um corpus comparável foi gerado a partir dos dois corpora anteriores e foi analisado. Os resultados mostraram uma substituição de vários itens lexicais distintos do corpus de westerns americanos na dublagem em inglês de euro-westerns por termos nunca usados antes no gênero original, o que é atribuído à influência de roteiristas estrangeiros. Assim, o *dubbese* pode ser encontrado em ambos os contextos culturais. Inicialmente, ele se desenvolveu nos westerns americanos dublados em espanhol e, por fim, em menor grau, nos euro-westerns dublados em inglês.

Palavras chave: TAV, dublagem, eurowesterns, westerns americanos, *dubbese*, tradução para o inglês, alteração lexical

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Introduction

Greg Peters, chief product officer at Netflix, claims that one of the largest current challenges for this platform concerning US audiences is to make dubbing accepted in the mainstream for the first time (Bylykbashi, 2019) in its attempt to encourage American customers to watch foreign language productions. However, there was a period in the 1960s and 70s when dubbed English versions of Euro-Westerns and Martial Arts films (Hayes, 2021) were released in mainstream cinemas in the US and other English-speaking countries, unlike most other foreign language productions which were subtitled and released in the more restricted art-house cinema circuit. There is, then, a precedent that can contribute to understanding the effect that this unusual linguistic transfer practice had on target texts in English when compared to original American productions, whose research results could be transferred to the analysis of contemporary productions dubbed into English.

This article focuses on the former genre and, more specifically, on Euro-Westerns with Spanish screenwriters in order to analyze whether their translation into English for dubbing had any linguistic effect on the canonical lexis of the genre established by original American Westerns.

Dubbese, a term coined by Myers (1973), is foregrounded by Gómez Capuz (2001) as a major influence in Spain concerning the outstanding presence of calques derived from the translation of English language films into Spanish for dubbing. Defined by Marzá and Chaume (2009, p. 36) as "a culture-specific linguistic and stylistic model for dubbed texts," *dubbese* refers to the resulting lexis of a translation routine based mainly on calques and lexical loan translations, which initially sounded contrived when compared to the normative usage of the target language but eventually became canonical and, therefore, the *norm* (Toury, 1978) within the context of viewing of an overwhelming number of dubbed American films released in Spain.

The influence of the subsequent canonical lexis was such that it would eventually become a requirement for acceptability within the Spanish audiovisual polysystem, considering Toury's (2012, p. 94) reminder of these "cases where the text's acceptability as a translation and the conditions underlying it do not fully concur with its acceptability as a TL [target-language] text in general; that is, when the norms governing translations differ from those that govern non-translations." Within the specific film genre analyzed in this article, the Western, linguistic expectations would be triggered more easily for Spanish audiences due to its powerful iconographic code (Chaume, 2004), which contributed to visually identifying its specificity and, therefore, to accepting and even requiring the use of a lexis that differed from the one used in everyday life.

In the 1960s, a sub-genre was derived from American Westerns in Spain and other European countries—Euro-Westerns—which, in many cases, had their original script written in Spanish for films shot mainly in Spain. With the formation of a comparable corpus made up of the versions dubbed into Spanish of a sample corpus of fifteen American Westerns and another sample corpus of fifteen original Spanish scripts of Euro-Westerns, this article reports research carried out to establish whether local scriptwriters made use of normative Spanish language in their creative work or the dominant artificial *dubbese* of the time.

The final twist is that many Euro-Westerns were exported to English-speaking countries, where they were unusually dubbed into English rather than subtitled, as most other foreign films were. This may have been because, bearing in mind that their plots were technically set on American soil with English-speaking characters, it would have created an incongruity for target culture audiences if the dialogues were uttered in Spanish or Italian, the other language in which many source texts were written. The derogatory term (Frindlund, 2006; McDonald Carolan, 2020) *Spaghetti Westerns* was

then generated to refer to the country which produced or co-produced them, foregrounding their non-American origin and their excessive violence, which prevented this sub-genre from reaching art-houses, where more respectable foreign films subtitled into English were shown.

Consequently, the main aim of this article is to analyze by means of another comparable corpus, made up of fifteen original American Western scripts and fifteen versions dubbed into English of Euro-Westerns, whether the translation into English of the latter allowed the Spanish *dubbese* to pervade the established standard language of the original American genre. To do that, it evaluates the effect made by a *stranger*, the Spanish scriptwriter, who entered the *saloon*, the cultural context where the genre originally came from, in the 1960s and 70s.

There has been plenty of scholarship on *dubbese* concerning Spain and Italy, countries which experienced this phenomenon in their translation for dubbing of English-speaking audiovisual productions. *Afro-dubbese* (Naranjo, 2015), when referring to translation into Spanish of African American cinema, or *doppiaggiese* (Schwarze, 2012), to allude to the linguistic interference of the English language in the translation for dubbing into Italian, are some of the terms used in these analyses. In the research concerning other languages, this issue has been explained without coining a specific term, as in the studies of this effect in the translation for the dubbing of American productions into German (Queen, 2004) or French (Caron, 2003). However, there is a research gap in translation studies for English-dubbed versions for two obvious reasons: the established translation mode for foreign audio-visual productions in English-speaking countries has generally been subtitling, and these countries' commercial audiovisual needs had been fulfilled thus far by productions in their own language, mainly from US origin, so there was no requirement for the analysis of a translation practice that was hardly present.

But now there is an attempt in English-speaking countries to dub a wide variety of foreign language productions, mainly for video-on-demand platforms. Therefore, the analysis of the effect of translations for dubbing into English of those 1960s and 70s Euro-Westerns upon the canonical lexis of the original genre in the target language could be applied to current dubbing translations promoted by major platforms to verify whether an English *dubbese* may be developing, proving to be a field of study whose conclusions could be useful for both researchers and translators of dubbed English versions.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of polysystem (Even-Zohar, 1990) applies to the dynamic relationship that a cultural system establishes between its source and translated texts incorporated in their culture. This is a starting point to contrast the theoretically differing approach to dubbed Westerns in the Spanish and American cultural contexts. In the former, they were given a dominant position since they were far more popular than any Spanish film production, whereas in the latter, they were incorporated secondarily because, at least technically, they were following the normative usage of the target language.

In the case of dubbed versions in Spain, a conceptualization developed by Venuti (1995, p 20) has to be taken into account: "Foreignizing translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language." On the other hand, dubbed Euro-Westerns in English-speaking countries technically had to fit into the canonical lexis established by American Westerns. Therefore, the *norm* (Toury, 1978) in the Spanish cultural context was to adjust to the development of its artificially created *dubbese*, whereas in English- speaking countries, dubbed versions of Euro-Westerns were expected to follow norms of usage of the target language. However, as we shall see, the latter did not always conform to the norm.

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The *principle of relevance* developed by Sperber and Wilson (1995), a theory of communication focused on the contextual effects perceived on the cognitive processing effort, which was later applied to translation by Gutt (2000), generates some useful concepts that can be applied specifically to the analysis of the translation of "mainstream film, a form of communication that automatically draws attention to the relevance of its cues" (Vandaele, 2019, p. 230). One concept is *ostensive communication*, which describes the specificity of a message's typology. This could relate to the distinctive multimodal narrative of American Westerns in the source context, which Spanish translators might have tried to emulate by developing an equally outstanding lexis which moved away from the norms of usage of the target language.

Another applicable concept developed by Sperber and Wilson would be *cognitive environment*, which, in the case of such a visually identifiable genre, would generate linguistic expectations for dubbed American Westerns in Spain restricted to an intertextual relationship held by the average spectator with previously viewed dubbed films; this would result in a linguistically secluded glossary with hardly any connection with the audience's everyday language. In the case of English-speaking viewers of dubbed Euro-Westerns, since this sub-genre

was commercialized as if it were the original genre, the expectations would be that the lexis used was identical to the one found in canonical American Westerns. Therefore, in both cultural contexts, a distinctive lexis stored in the memory of spectators would likely make them anticipate the reception of a canonical terminology related to Westerns which would become a requirement of acceptability in the target polysystems.

Method

By means of the software *SketchEngine* (Kilgarriff et al., 2004), a sample parallel corpus of fifteen American Westerns released in Spain between the 1940s and the 60s was developed. These samples are made up of their original scripts in English and their translation for dubbing into Spanish. This enables keywords of the genre from the original source texts to be input, and the system displays all the lines of dialogue that include them (Figure 1). Another parallel corpus of fifteen Euro-Westerns of the 1960s and 70s with their Spanish scripts and their versions dubbed into English was developed similarly. This alignment structure enables the identification of translation pairs, and the statistical results contribute towards reaching conclusions on the hypothetical problems.

Figure 1 Search for a Keyword in the Sample Corpus of American Westerns Released in Spain
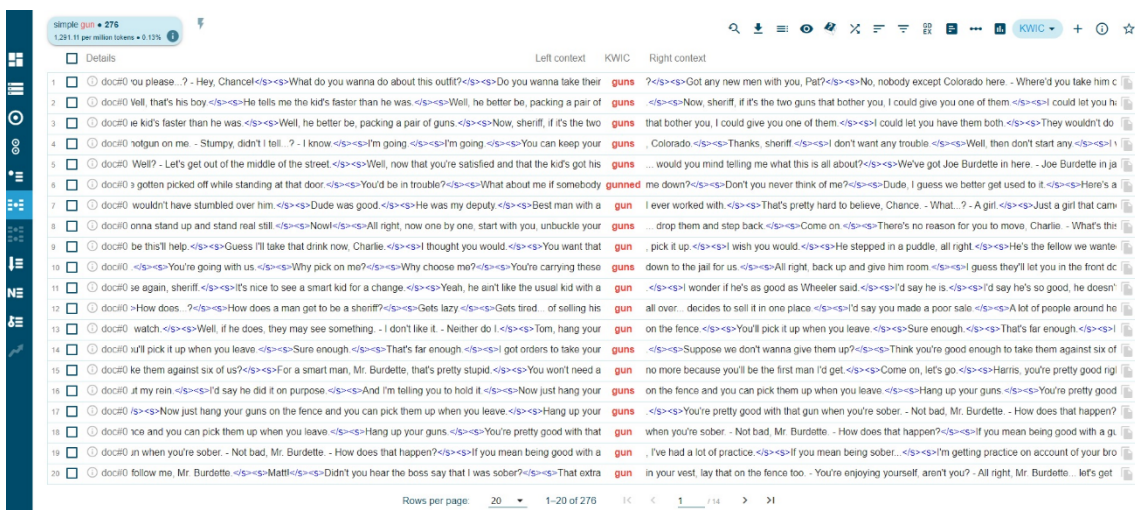
The above-mentioned parallel corpora also make it possible to establish a comparable Spanish corpus of dubbed versions of American Westerns and the original Euro-Western scripts to analyze whether the latter's scriptwriters made use of the artificial Spanish *dubbese* or followed their language's normative use. Finally, and more importantly, another comparable corpus formed by original American Westerns and dubbed into English Euro-Westerns elucidates how the translation of the latter might have had an effect on the English linguistic canon of the original genre.

Corpora

A compilation of fifteen American *Westerns* whose Spanish-dubbed versions into were released in Spain during the 1940s (the period when the first dubbed versions of American Westerns can currently be identified) and the 1960s (the decade when the Euro-Western surged) has been put together to make up a parallel corpus that can contribute to determine how a distinctive lexis related to the genre was developed in Spain (see Table 1). These films have been chosen according to the presence of specific words in the source texts which can be considered distinctive of the genre or, at least, whose translation for dubbing into Spanish made them part of the canonical lexis in the target context. Since the effect of the translation would take place in the context of reception, the films are listed in the chronological order of their commercial release in Spain, which is relevant to the analysis of the diachronic formation of this lexis.

A compilation of fifteen Euro-Westerns was also put together, representing this short-lived sub-genre whose popularity ran for hardly a decade (Table 2). The main criterion for their selection was that they had a Spanish scriptwriter (whose name is included in the listing) and that they were dubbed into English. In addition to this, the fact that they have distinctive terminology related to the genre connected to sub-topics developed by the analysis of the translation for dubbing into Spanish of the previous compilation of American Westerns has also been relevant. Whenever possible, the year of the premiere of the dubbed version into English has been included.

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Table 1 Parallel Corpus of American Westerns and Their Dubbed Versions Released in Spain.

Original title, director and year	Dubbed version and year of release
Stagecoach (John Ford, 1939)	*La diligencia* (1944)
My Darling Clementine (John Ford, 1946)	*Pasión de los fuertes* (1948)
The Return of Frank James (Fritz Lang, 1940)	*La venganza de Frank James* (1950)
Rio Grande (John Ford, 1950)	*Río Grande* (1953)
High Noon (Fred Zinnemann, 1952)	*Solo ante el peligro* (1953)
3.10 Train to Yuma (Delmer Daves, 1957)	*El tren de las 3.10* (1958)
Gunfight at the O.K. Corral (John Sturges, 1957)	*Duelo de titanes* (1958)
Rio Bravo (Howard Hawks, 1959)	*Río Bravo* (1959)
The Horse Soldiers (John Ford, 1959)	*Misión de audaces* (1959)
The Left-Handed Gun (Arthur Penn, 1958)	*El zurdo* (1962)
The Comancheros (Michael Curtiz, 1961)	*Los comancheros* (1962)
The Man who Shot Liberty Valance (John Ford, 1962)	*El hombre que mató a Liberty Valance* (1962)
Cheyenne Autumn (John Ford, 1964)	*El gran combate* (1964)
Bandolero! (Andrew V. McLaglen, 1968)	*Bandolero!/¡Bandolero!* (1968)
The Wild Bunch (Sam Peckinpah, 1969)	*Grupo salvaje* (1970)

Table 2 Parallel Corpus of Euro-Westerns with a Spanish Scriptwriter and Their Dubbed Versions Released in English-Speaking Countries

Original Title, Director, Year and Scriptwriter	Dubbed Version and Year of Release
Gringo (Ricardo/Richard Blasco, 1964) Ricardo Blasco	*Gunfight in the Red Sands*
Brandy (José Luis Borau/Boraw, 1964) José Luis Borau & José Mallorquí	*Ride and Kill* (1965, UK)
Por un puñado de dólares (Sergio Leone/ Bob Robertson, 1965) Víctor Andrés Catena	*A Fistful of Dollars* (1967, USA)
Una tumba para el sheriff (Mario Caiano, 1965) David Moreno	*Lone and Angry Man*
7 dólares al rojo (Alberto Cardone/Albert Cardiff, 1966) Juan Cobos	*Seven Dollars on the Red*
Django (Sergio Corbucci, 1967) José Gutiérrez Maeso	*Django* (1966, USA)
Oro maldito (Giulio Questi, 1967) María del Carmen Martínez Román.	*Django, Kill… If You Live, Shoot!*
El hombre que mató a Billy el Niño (Julio Buchs, 1967) Julio Buchs & Federico de Urrutia.	*I'll Kill Him and Return Alone* (1968, USA)
La furia de Johnny Kidd (Gianni Puccini, 1969) María del Carmen Martínez Román.	*Ultimate Gunfighter*
Quince horcas para un asesino (Nunzio Malasomma, 1969) José Luis Bayonas	*15 Scaffolds for a Murderer*
Mátalos y vuelve (Enzo G. Castellari, 1969) Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent	*Kill Them All and Come Back Alone* (1970, USA)
Arizona vuelve (Sergio Martino, 1971) Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent	*Arizona Colt, Hired Gun*
¡Viva la muerte… tuya! (Duccio Tessari, 1973) Juan de Orduña.	*Long Live …Your Death!* (1974, USA)
El hombre de Río Malo (Eugenio Martín, 1973) Eugenio Martín	*Bad Man's River* (1974, USA)
En el Oeste se puede hacer… amigo (Maurizio Lucidi, 1973) Rafael Azcona	*It Can Be Done, Amigo* (1974, USA)

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The anglicization of the names of Spanish and Italian professionals would prove that the initial intention was to aim at domestication (Venuti, 1995); commercially speaking, it was an attempt to sell these Euro-Westerns abroad (as well as locally) as American productions. For instance, the Spanish director and scriptwriter of the first film of the corpus, Ricardo Blasco, had his name changed to Richard Blasco, and the one of the second film, José Luis Borau, had the final letter of his surname replaced with a *w*, which is non-normative in Spanish, in a hypothetical attempt to anglicize it. It must also be remembered that the Italian director of the third film of the corpus, *Por un puñado de dólares* (1965, *A Fistful of Dollars*), canonical in the history of Euro-Westerns, Sergio Leone, had his name changed to Bob Robertson for the international release of the film. Spanish and Italian actors of the genre followed suit: Antonio Luiz de Teffe/Anthony Steffen; Francisco Braña/Frank Braña; Alfredo Sánchez Brell/Aldo Sambrell, and many more.

Figure 2 -Advertising Poster for *En el Oeste se puede hacer... amigo*

American actors were also lured into these profitable Euro-Westerns in order to make the production look as much as possible as the original genre. In the final film of the corpus, *En el Oeste se puede hacer...amigo* (1973, *It Can Be Done... Amigo*), we can find, for instance, a well-known American actor, Jack Palance, sharing the cast with Bud Spencer (born Carlo Pedersoli), who had famously changed his name to honor his favorite American beer and actor (Sanderson, 2015), and consecrated Spanish actor Francisco Rabal (by then he had worked with distinguished European directors such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Claude Chabrol, and Luchino Visconti), who, having a Spanish name, was thus removed from most advertising of the film in Spain (Figure 2).

American Westerns and their Translation for Dubbing into Spanish

According to Newman (1990, p. 46), "*Stagecoach* was the most important of several 1939 movies (*Jesse James, Dodge City, Union Pacific, Destry Rides Again*) that revitalized the talking Western after a decade of 'B' and series quickies." Due to warfare issues, it was released in Spain five years later with a very positive reception in the target context; it is included as the first film of the corpus because it is the oldest dubbing into Spanish of a Western which has been identified. It therefore becomes a starting point to analyze the evolution of the translation for the dubbing of specific lexical elements which would become distinctive of the genre. The six terms in Table 3 can be found repeatedly in different sections of the film.

Whisky and *sheriff* were already part of the Spanish linguistic landscape before the advent of sound on film, or of film itself; they can be found, respectively, in the Spanish novels *Pequeñeces* (Coloma, 1891) and *Aita Tettauen* (Pérez Galdós, 1905).

The rest of the Spanish terms foregrounded in the table are what would be considered formal equivalents of the source text lexical elements. For

Table 3 Terms Found in *Stagecoach*

English Script	Spanish Script
(1)-To your health, **reverend**. -I'm not a clergyman. My name is Peacock and I'm a... - He's a **whiskey** drummer. (00:7:53).	-Salud, **reverendo**. -No, no soy clérigo. Me llamo Peacock y soy... - Es un viajante de **whisky**.
(2) If you don't want to lose your prisoner, **sheriff**, you'd better take care of him yourself! (01:23:36)	Si no quiere quedarse sin su preso, **sheriff**, más vale que se lo lleve.
(3) **Marshal!** Make room for one more. (00:13:45)	*¡Comisario!* ¿Hay plaza para mí?
(4) Give me the **shotgun**! (01:27:31)	¡Dame la **escopeta**!
(5) With the barrel of his **gun**. (00:05:00)	Con el cañón de su **pistola**.

instance, the other figure of authority mentioned, *marshal*, a federal law enforcer, was suitably translated as *comisario*, an equivalent national figure of authority in Spain. As for weapons, *shotgun*, "a long gun that fires a large number of small metal bullets at one time, designed for shooting birds and animals" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) finds its correspondence in the commonly used *escopeta* in the target context. And when the hypernym "gun" refers to a short firearm, its customary equivalent translation would be *pistola*, which shares an etymological origin with "pistol." Finally, "reverend," a neutral term to refer to members of the clergy of any Christian creed, had an almost identical term in Spanish, *reverendo*, due to its Latin etymology even though it is a non-normative term in Spanish (*sacerdote* or *cura* are the common terms to refer to churchmen). In any case, the concept of formal correspondence established by Catford (1965, p. 27) as "any TL category which may be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the 'same' place in the 'economy' of the TL as the given SL [source-language] category occupies in the SL" is present in these examples emphasized in the first film of the corpus.

However, three normative terms mentioned in the previous paragraph, *comisario*, *escopeta*, and

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pistola, practically disappeared as translations of, "marshal," "shotgun," and "gun," respectively. In the 75 occurrences of "marshal" which can be found in the following five films of the corpus, from *My Darling Clementine* (1946, *Pasión de los fuertes*) to *3.10 Train to Yuma* (1957, *El tren de las 3.10*), it was always translated as *sheriff*. This leads to the remarkable finding that this Anglicism is more present in the corpus of Spanish dubbed versions than in the original fifteen American Westerns (other terms such as "lawman" and "deputy" were occasionally translated as *sheriff* as well) in spite of the fact that, technically, this direct active Anglicism incorporates a phonetic borrowing, the fricative postalveolar consonant /ʃ/, which is non-existent in the Spanish language and, therefore, not included in the norms of usage of pronunciation. In two of the following dubbed American Westerns, *The Left-Handed Gun* (1958, *El zurdo*) and *The Man who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962, *El hombre que mató a Liberty Valance*), there was a short-lived return to the normative *comisario* as a translation for "marshal" before it definitely disappeared from the rest of the corpus.

As for the hypernym "gun," it was eventually translated with two anglicisms: *revólver* (with a stress on the *o* to differentiate it from the verb *revolver*, which means to stir or turn around in Spanish) when it referred to a handgun, and *rifle* (spelled the same in Spanish and English but used in Spanish here) when it referred to a long gun. In the latter case, even when the term used in the source text was "shotgun," the term mainly used to translate it was *rifle*, as can be found in *Rio Bravo* (1959, *Río Bravo*) and *The Left-Handed Gun*, even though it referred to a different type of firearm. In *3.10 Train to Yuma*, it was even translated as *carabina* (carbine), yet another kind of firearm, which also seemed to be acceptable, as long as *escopeta*, perceived as too local, could be avoided. As for *revólver*, seventeen occurrences are recorded in the corpus of dubbed versions whereas "revolver" does not appear a single time in the corresponding American source texts.

Therefore, the formal correspondence observed in the first dubbed film of the corpus seemed to have decreased in the following films in favor of a foreignizing tendency in the development of a distinctive lexis for this specific genre, mainly with the use of Anglicisms which were progressively accepted as linguistic items in the target language. Apart from the adoption of Anglicisms, there were other strategies of linguistic transfer applied, such as loan shifts or lexical loan translations, which contributed to differentiating the canonical language used in this film genre from normative speech to a greater extent (Sanderson, 2021).

For instance, the first time "saloon," "A public bar, especially in the past in the western US" (Cambridge Dictionary, n. d.) appears in the corpus, in *My Darling Clementine*, it is translated as *salón*, when the word already existed in Spanish to refer to "living room" or "lounge."

> (6) You and Buck go clean the **saloon**. (01:13:01)
> *Limpien el salón.*

This unnecessary loan shift (there is a wide variety of terms in the Spanish drinking culture that could have been used) is yet another example of a seeming attempt to develop a specific lexis for the distinctive multimodal narrative of Westerns which moved away from the norms of usage of the Spanish language. In the dubbed versions that came after this film we can find a variety of options to translate "saloon," led by the above mentioned *salón* (53 per cent), followed by the lexical borrowing *bar* (33 per cent), which had entered the normative Spanish language through journalism (Stone, 1957), and, exceptionally, the more normative *taberna* (tavern) in *3.10 Train to Yuma*, and *cantina* (canteen), alternating with *salón*, in *The Man who Shot Liberty Valance*.

In the last two films of the corpus of American Westerns dubbed into Spanish we can find a case of *lexical loan translation*, which is "the morphemic substitution of a polymorphemic unity of a foreign language by means of elements, previously

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existing in the receiving language as independent lexemes, but new as a lexical compound" (Gómez Capuz, 1997, p. 88). In this case, the strict censorship imposed by Franco's dictatorship must be acknowledged (Gutiérrez Lanza, 2000), since it exerted a huge influence in any creative work, including translation. Westerns were, by and large, a conservative and chauvinistic genre, and the American film industry already imposed its own restrictions by means of the Production Code Administration and the Catholic Legion of Decency (Camus-Camus, 2015). However, the repeated appearance of taboo language once the Motion Picture Association of America modified its rating system in 1968 (Jowett, 1990) seems to have put Spanish translators in a difficult position. The expletive "son of a bitch," used five times in *The Wild Bunch*, was translated into Spanish as "*hijo de perra*," a lexical loan translation of the original, with an atypical reference to the animal.

(7) You dirty **son of a bitch!**
¡Maldito *hijo de perra!* (00:20:54)

The customary *hijo de puta* can be traced back to respectable literary works such as Cervantes' *El ingenioso caballero Don Quijote de la Mancha* (2015), which expresses, "no es deshonra llamar hijo de puta a nadie cuando cae debajo del entendimiento de alabarle" (p. 134). As can be verified in CORDE (Corpus Diacrónico del Español, n. d.), a database from the RAE (Real Academia Española), *hijo de puta* is found in various Spanish texts since the fifteenth century even though it is taboo language. Therefore, this lexical loan translation was technically unnecessary; but as swearing was banned under Franco's dictatorship, it was eventually adopted in the local *dubbese* (according to the database above-mentioned, *hijo de perra* can only be found once in print in Spain [a translation] prior to its use in *dubbese*) to the extent that, decades after Franco's death and the subsequent abolition of censorship, it had become so standardized in this genre that it can still be found in the dubbed version of, for instance, *The Assassination of Jesse James by the*

Coward Robert Ford (2007, *El asesinato de Jesse James por el cobarde Robert Ford*).

(8) So leave me alone! Get off me, you **son of a bitch!** (00:57:55)
¡Déjame en paz! ¡Suéltame, *hijo de perra!*

In the previous film of the corpus, *Bandolero!*, the expletive was only used once in the source text, and it was translated with an equally anomalous *hijo de un puerco* (son of a pork). However, the most remarkable issue in this film is that its original title in the USA was a single word in normative Spanish, the archaism *Bandolero!* (bandit), which had never been used in the previous thirteen dubbed westerns, where the customary term to translate "outlaw" or "bandit" was another archaism: *forajido*. *Bandolero!* was released in Spain with exactly the same title as the original (Figure 3), even though it implied making a punctuation mistake in Spanish, since, in the target language, exclamation marks are placed at the beginning and at the end of the word or sentence. It was eventually modified in another Spanish

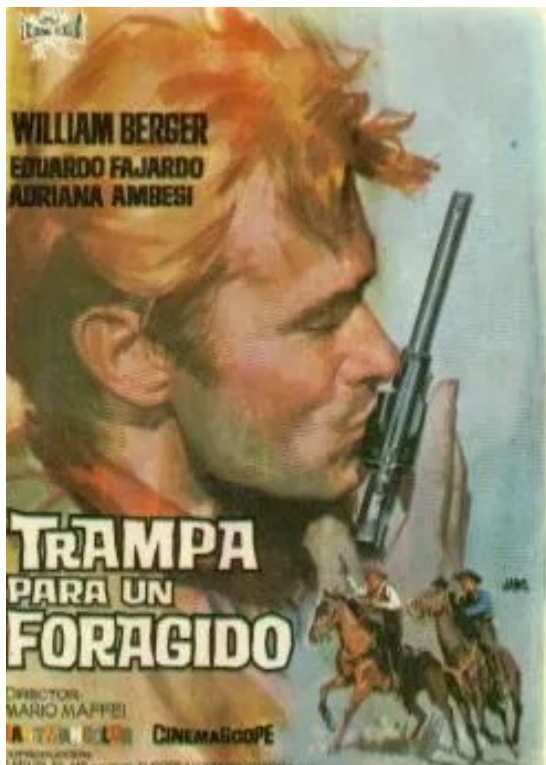**Figure 3** First Advertising Poster for *Bandolero!* in Spain

Figure 4 Second Advertising Poster for *Bandolero!* in Spain

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Figure 5 Advertising Poster for *Trampa para un foragido*

poster that advertised the film (Figure 4), but it stands as an example of the dominant linguistic effect of the source culture, in this case even with a normative Spanish word, simply because it had been used in the source text. The three times "bandolero" is uttered in the original English version were duly translated as such although it statistically contravened the canonical *dubbese*. It is worth noting, however, that the use of the customary term *forajido* was not always properly dealt with in the target context. The Spanish release of the Euro-Western *La grande notte di Ringo* (Mario Maffei, 1966, *Ringo's Big Night*), not included in the corpus because its sole scriptwriter was its also Italian director, was premiered in Spain as *Trampa para un foragido* (Figure 5) with a misspelling in the canonical term used.

On the whole, the outstanding iconographic code referred to by Chaume (2004) concerning this genre may have encouraged a generalized attempt by Spanish audiovisual translators to provide an equally outstanding lexis which, in the target language, diverged from the norms of usage. There was a distinct asymmetry between source and target cultures; but there were also several shared features, such as "marshal" (*comisario*) or "shotgun" (*escopeta*), whose formal Spanish equivalents eventually disappeared in the artificially created *dubbese*. In these and other cases, the *lexical need* foregrounded by Weinreich (1968) as a motivation for the incorporation of foreign words in the target language was not an issue, since there were plenty of pre-existent corresponding equivalents, as can be found in the first dubbed film of the corpus; but they were subsequently erased from most target texts that came after it. According to Rabadán (1991) in her research on translation from English into Spanish, equivalence in translation depends on the socio-cultural circumstances of the polysystem in which the translator works. In the case of Spain, according to the examples which have been analyzed in this section, translation for dubbing into Spanish of American Westerns was subsidiary to the source cultural context, even if

it was detrimental to semantics (as with *rifle* or *salón*), which, as Rabadán foregrounds (39), is one of the basic foundations of any translemic model which follows Catford's theorization of equivalence. How these circumstances would affect Spanish scriptwriters of Euro-Westerns is another matter that will now be approached.

Euro-Westerns and Their Translation for Dubbing Into English

The research in this section of the article is initially focused on whether Spanish scriptwriters of Euro-Westerns in the 1960s and 70s were influenced by the artificial *dubbese* developed in the local audiovisual translations analyzed above. But the main purpose of the whole article is to verify if the decisions of these scriptwriters had an effect on the translation for the dubbing of Euro-Westerns into English, the language in which the original genre had been created.

Using the words foregrounded in the opening examples of the previous chapter as a starting point, we can only find one occurrence of *escopeta* in the whole corpus of fifteen Euro-Westerns (in *Brandy;* 1964, *Ride and Kill*); and *comisario* does not appear a single time, which would confirm the tendency to erase words which sound too normative. Actually, *marshal* was coined as a Spanish word by local scriptwriters even though, as *sheriff* (present in most Euro-Western scripts), it also contains the fricative postalveolar consonant /ʃ/, a phonetic borrowing non-existent in the Spanish language. In *Arizona vuelve* (1971, *Arizona Colt Returns*), for instance, its scriptwriter, Joaquín Luis Romero Marchent, incorporates the term *marshal* five times in the source text. This was yet another direct Anglicism brought into the Spanish language which, for obvious reasons, did not have an effect on the translation for dubbing into English.

(9) *¿Dónde está el **marshal**? ¡Marshal! (00:28:48)*
*Where is the **marshal**? Marshal!*

This would be an example of Spanish scriptwriters definitely favoring Anglicisms to the extent of going beyond the generalized strategy which has been observed above in the work of local translators. Remarkably, *marshal* was eventually incorporated as part of the canonical lexis in Spanish dubbing translations themselves. We can find examples in *True Grit* (Ethan Coen & Joel Coen, 2012, *Valor de ley*, with 51 occurrences in the source text) and *Django Unchained* (Quentin Tarantino, 2013, *Django desencadenado*, with 16 occurrences), where they were always translated as *marshal* in the Spanish dubbed version.

Notwithstanding, the evolution of other terms foregrounded at the beginning of the previous chapter did influence the versions dubbed into English. Even though the calque *whisky* was generally used to refer to the canonical alcoholic drink served in Western saloons, a new calque, *burbón*, unexpectedly appeared to refer to "bourbon," a term which had not been used a single time in the fifteen American Westerns. For instance, in the fourth film of the corpus of Euro-Westerns, *Una tumba para el sheriff* (1965, *Lone and Angry Man*), it is compulsively uttered five times between minutes 00:06:50 (10; *¡Un **burbón**!*) and 00:13:50 (11; *El **burbón** nos da asco.*) within the premises of the *salón* (dubbed into English as "bar" in this film). In the English dubbed version, we can find four instances of "bourbon" in that fragment (the fifth occurrence is omitted), which is remarkable for an American culture specific item which had never appeared in the corpus previously analyzed: (10) "***Bourbon!***"; (11) "***Bourbon's for cheapskates.***"

In the following film of the corpus, *7 dólares al rojo* (1966, *7 Dollars on the Red*), there was a return to *whisky* as the customary drink, but another unexpected liquor was incorporated to the corpus, again non-existent in the fifteen American Westerns mentioned above:

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(12) - ¿Lo de siempre, jefe?
-Un **jerez** y un whisky. (1:00:21)
-Set them up, Fred.
*-A **sherry** for her and a whiskey for me.*

This wine of Spanish origin did exist in the USA in the 19th century; actually, "sherry" is an anglicization of the Spanish word *jerez*. This time, the Anglicism was not included in the Spanish script; the whole maneuver could be interpreted as a minor nationalistic stance to promote the Spanish wine in a foreign context. On the whole, the outstanding issue is the incorporation of liquors in the versions dubbed into English which had never appeared in the corpus of original American Westerns. In the latter film, we can also find *tequila* due to the inclusion in the plot of an archetypical Mexican bandit usually played by Spanish actor Fernando Sancho (Aguilar, 1999).

As for the final word from that opening list of examples of the previous chapter, the hypernym "gun," the most outstanding issue is the widespread use of the Anglicism *revólver* (twenty-three times by Spanish scriptwriters), which was derived from the English word "revolver," which, as mentioned above, had not been used a single time in the fifteen American Westerns compiled for the previous corpus. A consequence foregrounded in this research is that this latter word did seep into the versions dubbed into English of Euro-Westerns. In *Brandy*, for instance, we can find the use of the term in English.

(13) Solo por llevar ese **revólver** puedes volver a la cárcel. (1:14:55)
They can send you right back to jail for carrying that ***revolver***.

In the three other occurrences in which *revólver* is used in the original Spanish version of *Brandy* (the name of the main character in the film, not a reference to the liquor), it is translated twice with the canonical hypernym "gun" and once as "six-shooter"; so it was still far from becoming an established term in the English lexis related to Westerns, but it had made its first appearance.

Expletive language could not be found in Spanish scripts, as it was severely controlled by the fascist dictatorship. In fact, Spanish productions or co-productions of Euro-Westerns (or any other genre) had to go through such a lengthy administrative process until they got the official permission for distribution from the Spanish Censorship Board that sometimes they were released abroad earlier than locally (for instance, *Django* was released a year earlier in the US, 1966, than in Spain, 1967). Once the Motion Picture Association of America had modified its rating system, there seemed to be an attempt to fulfill the expectations of the foreign market of Spanish Euro-Westerns in that linguistic field. *Hijo de perra*, developed in Spanish dubbing translations since the repeated use of "***son of a bitch***" in *The Wild Bunch*, was used once that same year by Romero Marchent, the Spanish scriptwriter of *Mátalos y vuelve* (1969, *Kill Them All and Come Back Alone*), with no censoring consequences: (14) "**-¡Hijo de perra! -***Son of a bitch!*" (00:56:30). However, other Spanish scriptwriters may have still felt uneasy about the term and came up with, for instance, (15) "**hijo de Satanás**" (son of Satan), translated as the not so normative "***dirty low down dog***" (00:17:00), in *Arizona Colt Returns*, which, like the customary euphemisms *canalla* and *bastardo*, present, respectively, in *7 dólares al rojo* and *Django*, would never be used in everyday Spanish. A different case can be found in *El hombre de Río Malo* (1973, *Bad Man's River*) when the still unsteady lexical loan switches gender in the original Spanish script, (16) "**¡Hijo de perro!**" (00:27:20), being subsequently, but not very normatively, dubbed into English as "***Son of a dog!***"

Incomprehensibly, the lexical loan translation developed in the dubbed version into Spanish of *The Wild Bunch* can be found once in the Spanish version of *Por un puñado de dólares*, written by Víctor Andrés Catena and released four years earlier, which would not be chronologically coherent

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with the development of the Spanish lexis and will require further research:

(17) ¿Quién hay ahí? ¡Salid de una vez, **hijos de perra**! (00:41:00)
Who is there? Come out!

As mentioned above, it must be taken into account that censorship under Franco's regime greatly influenced creative work in Spain, and its consequences can still be appreciated. Romero Marchent claimed that Spanish Euro-Westerns were an indirect consequence of Franco's censorship (Aguilar, 1999) in the form of mild resistance to it by Spanish professionals who participated in multinational co-productions whose plots were fictitiously located in a different country. The most outstanding case can be found when contrasting the Spanish and English versions of *Oro maldito* (1967, *Django Kill...If You Live, Shoot!*).

(18) - ¿Qué ha pasado? Ha sido una verdadera **desgracia**.
- Jugaba con mi pistola. (1:04:05)
*- He committed **suicide**. 'Cause there's no one standing round.*
- He must have taken my gun.

Suicide was taboo during the Spanish fascist regime, strongly influenced by the Catholic church, so the reference to it in the Spanish script would have been censored and replaced with an allusion to an accident. However, the former reference remains in the dubbed version into English, perhaps because the pre-censored original dialogues were used for the translation for dubbing into English. Later in the same film we can also find:

(19) Quizás por eso el señor ha querido castigarle con la muerte de su hijo. En el pueblo sentó muy mal cuando **se casó** con esa mujer. Y encima la tiene en la taberna cantando para cuatro borrachos. (01:12:10)
*That's why the Lord struck down his son. He lives with that woman openly and they are **not married**. It's a scandal everyone talks about.*

Another taboo issue was the notion that a man and a woman could cohabitate without being married, so the Spanish censored version made them

husband and wife. Again, the English version seems to have followed the original uncensored script.

The censored version of this Euro-Western is still commercialized on DVD in Spain; the latest edition is dated 2014, and the distorted dialogue in Spanish remains. One, therefore, has to watch the version of this and other films dubbed into English to find out what they were originally about, which would prove to be yet another example of the lasting legacy of Franco's regime in contemporary Spain.

As Gutiérrez Lanza (1997, p. 40) points out, "During Franco's dictatorship (...) dubbing is one indication that translation was not really a target-audience oriented activity, but one that would meet the needs of the people in favour of the maintenance of a particular *status quo*." The Spanish Catholic church was an institution that supported the maintenance of this *status quo* with the presence of several of its members in the *Comisión de Censura Cinematográfica* (Gutiérrez Lanza, 1997, p. 43) and exerted its influence on a wide range of issues. As has been seen concerning the terminology used to refer to churchmen in American Westerns dubbed into Spanish, the term "reverend," which could refer to clergy from different faiths, had been duly translated as *reverendo* in *Stagecoach*, as it was also done in *The Horse Soldiers*, even though the normative terms in Spain are either *sacerdote* or *cura*. Other terms such as "preacher" or "deacon" to refer to churchmen who appeared in American Westerns were translated, respectively, with the equivalent *predicador* or, in the latter case, surprisingly with the Latin term *páter*. However, in Spanish Euro-Westerns, where local censorship had a more direct access to the creative work of Spanish scriptwriters, a new term was incorporated to clearly specify that the members of the clergy portrayed in them belonged to a different religion, *pastor*, perhaps because this typology of character eventually became more dubious in the sub-genre.

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Pastor can be found for the first time in *Brandy*, where it was normatively translated twice into English as "reverend"; there is one occurrence of *reverendo* in this film as well, expectedly with the same translation. However, in the tenth film of the corpus, *Quince horcas para un asesino* (1969, *Fifteen Scaffolds for a Murderer*), we can also find "pastor" in the dubbed version into English:

> (20) No, antes los ahorcaremos y después ya serán juzgados, **pastor** Ferguson. (00:27:16) *No, first we hang them, then we can judge them,* **pastor** *Ferguson.*

As this typology of characters became more and more extravagant, played by major European stars such as Franco Nero (*¡Viva la muerte...tuya!*; 1973, *Long Live...Your Death!*) and Francisco Rabal (*En el Oeste se puede hacer... amigo*), the need to specify that they had no connection with the Catholic church became more relevant, as we can see in an extract from the former film:

> (21) - Nuestro padre es ciego y está muriéndose. Necesita un sacerdote para confesarse
> - Por desgracia, hijitos, yo no puedo confesarle. Soy un pastor protestante. (...) Soy un pastor.
> - Pues vuelve con tus ovejas. (00.02.52)
> - *Our father is blind, and he is close to dying. He wants a priest to hear confession.*
> - *Unfortunately, I don't hear confession. I'm a protestant* **minister***. (...) I'm a* **pastor***.*
> - *Go back to your sheep.*

This is the only time that the normative Spanish word *sacerdote* appears in either corpora of versions dubbed into Spanish or original Spanish scripts; it would be considered acceptable here, since it is used to provide a positive perspective when compared with the clergy of a different faith. As for *pastor*, it also appears in the dubbed version into English of this and other successive Euro-Westerns. Finally, it must be pointed out that the customary meaning of *pastor* in Spanish, *shepherd*, leads to a polysemic joke that does not translate so well into English; it is a recurrent resource also used in *En el Oeste se puede hacer... amigo*. The conclusion would be that the strict censorship of Franco's regime also had linguistic consequences in the canonical lexis

of Westerns in English-speaking countries, since the dubbed Euro-Westerns incorporated terms which cannot be found in the corpus of original American Westerns.

Overall, the alleged main aim of dubbing Euro-Westerns into English to avoid the alienating effect of watching a Western with dialogues in Spanish may not have been totally fulfilled. The use of lexical elements which were practically non-existent in original American Westerns, such as "pastor" or "revolver," would have produced an unexpected *semantic noise* (Jakobson, 2000) and, consequently, a linguistic alienation in the new target context as well as the issue of the noticeably imperfect dubbing (Hughes, 2010; Newbould, 2019) which might have taken English-speaking audiences aback. The *speech community* (Spolsky, 1998) of the genre in English-speaking countries had its own norms, standardized diachronically by American Westerns; and if the versions dubbed into English of Euro-Westerns disrupted them in any way, the alienating effect would be unavoidable.

Results

In addition to the translation pairs that result from the two parallel corpora mentioned in the section devoted to the corpora, whose analyses reveal a non-normative influence of the lexis of the source texts on the dubbed versions (far more numerous in the Spanish target context), a comparable corpus between versions dubbed into Spanish of American Westerns and original Euro-Westerns in Spanish enables us to verify how scriptwriters of the latter took a step forward in the development of the artificial *dubbese*, moving further away from the norms of usage of their source language.

Moreover, another comparable corpus bringing together original scripts of American Westerns and Euro-Westerns dubbed into English has finally enabled the verification of how the Spanish *dubbese* pervaded, to a lesser degree, the English canonical lexis of the original genre because of the influence of calques and of censorship restrictions in the Spanish sociocultural context. The results have been proven

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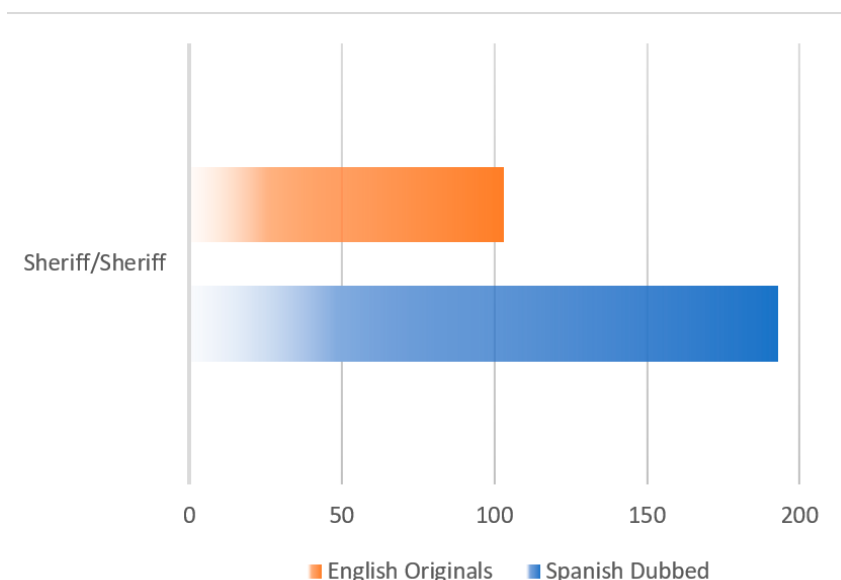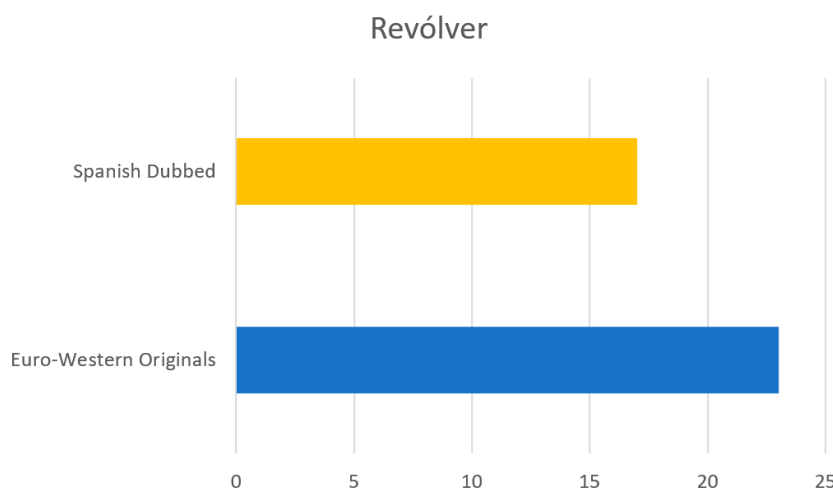**Figure 6** Occurrence of the Word Sheriff in American Westerns and in their Versions Dubbed Into Spanish

Figure 7 Occurrence of the Word *Revólver* in Versions Dubbed into Spanish of American Westerns and in Euro-Westerns

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with the alignment of source and target texts developed throughout the analysis of the corpora.

In order to illustrate these results, some sample diagrams are presented (see Figures 6 to 9). For instance, Figure 6, which makes use of the parallel corpus of American Westerns and their versions dubbed into Spanish, will contribute to understand the overwhelming popularization of the Anglicism *sheriff*, even though a Spanish equivalent such as *alguacil* could have been used.

The far more recurrent use of *sheriff* in the versions dubbed into Spanish is due to the fact that other figures of authority such as "marshal" or "deputy" were also translated with that term, which would explain the results. The fact that the former term was coined *marshal* by Spanish scriptwriters as a local word and

Figure 8 Occurrence of Terms which Refer to the Semantic Field of Liquors in Euro-Westerns and in Their Dubbed Versions Into English
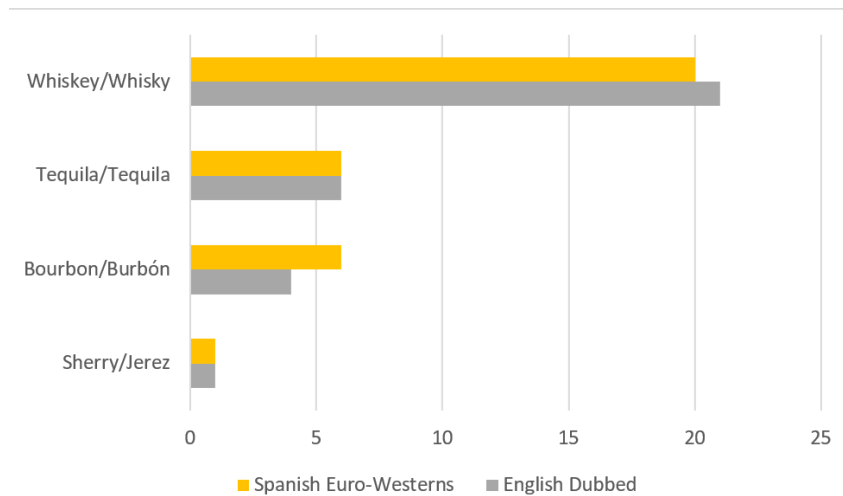

Figure 9 Occurrence of Terms which Refer to Churchmen in American Westerns and in Dubbed Versions into English of Euro-Westerns
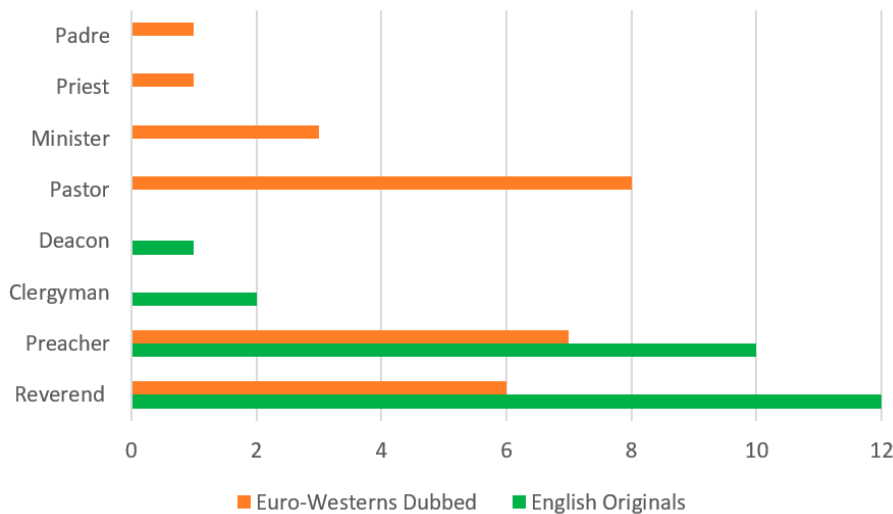
finally had an influence on Spanish dubbing translators, who started incorporating it to their target texts, would be a further confirmation of the foreignizing intention in the Spanish cultural context.

Figure 7 shows a result of the analysis of a comparable corpus made up of versions dubbed into Spanish and original Spanish scripts of Euro-Westerns, where it can be observed how an Anglicism, which was practically non-existent in the source texts of American Westerns, was developed in Spanish translations with a subsequent effect on Spanish screenwriters who contributed to expand it.

The most outstanding issue here is to analyze the evolution of Anglicisms developed solely in the Spanish cultural context, since "revolver" does not appear a single time in the source texts which make up the corpus of fifteen American Westerns. The fact that this term did eventually appear in the

dubbed English versions of Euro-Westerns would also confirm the influence of the *dubbese* present in the original Spanish scripts upon the English translations for dubbing.

Consequently, the use of a parallel corpus made up of the Spanish original scripts of Euro-Westerns and their versions dubbed into English (Figure 8) also enables the analysis of how other words found their way into what could be considered an English *dubbese*.

The presence of *tequila* is justified in Figure 8 by the inclusion of archetypical Mexican bandits in Euro-Westerns; but the fact that the calque *burbón* generated the presence in dubbed English versions of "bourbon," non-existent in the corpus of American Westerns, must also be noted.

Finally, the analysis of a comparable corpus between the original American Westerns and the versions of Euro-Westerns dubbed into English (Figure 9) can also give an account of how previously unusual or non-existent terms in the lexical canon of the genre seeped into the dubbed versions, in this case, indirectly allowing the Spanish censorship to have an influence upon the versions dubbed into English.

The dominant presence of "pastor" in the target context as a result of the dubbing of Euro-Westerns would prove that Franco's censorship had exerted a linguistic effect beyond Spanish borders upon established democracies. On the other hand, the reverse effect would be that these Spanish productions dubbed into English and released uncensored abroad allow us to discover, even nowadays, the original content of the Spanish scripts that were modified by Franco's regime.

Conclusion

The foreignizing tendency appreciated in Spanish dubbing translations and scripts of Westerns would also have an effect to a lesser degree on English dubbing translations of Euro-Westerns due to their use of uncommon terminology concerning the genre in the form of English normative terms that had

not been used in the corpus of American Westerns. This did not seem to be an intentional approach, but rather the opposite.

In what initially seemed to be an attempt to naturalize Euro-Westerns by dubbing them into English, mainly for the American film market but also for other markets, the fact that terms were used in English-dubbed versions that cannot be found in American Westerns would be due to an unsuspected influence of the lexis used in the original Spanish scripts upon the target context language. The *dubbese* found in the English versions of Euro-Westerns would then be a consequence of a partial unawareness of the canonical language of the original American genre, which can be verified observing the presence of Anglicisms from the Spanish linguistic canon of the genre which are non-existent in the corpus of American Westerns. A further inclusion of more productions to the current corpora in due course will contribute to narrow and specify the generalized observations included in this article.

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Theoretical Articles

Title: Alocacias
Technique: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 79 cm x 119 cm
2008

English Dubs: Why are anglophone viewers receptive to English dubbing on streaming platforms and to foreign-accent strategies?

Doblaje al inglés: ¿Por qué son receptivos los espectadores anglófonos al doblaje al inglés en plataformas de streaming y al uso de acentos extranjeros?

Doublage anglais : Pourquoi les spectateurs anglophones sont-ils réceptifs au doublage anglais sur les plateformes streaming et a l'utilisation des accents étrangers ?

Dublagem ao inglês: por que os espectadores anglófonos são receptivos à modalidade da dublagem ao inglês nas plataformas streaming e ao uso de sotaques?

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Abstract

Accents are often utilised in fictional audiovisual products to determine the creation of character identity. This is due to the set of cultural connotations typically associated with any given accent in any given language community. However, is there really one monolingual target audience anymore? In the age of streaming platforms, and at the rate the localisation industry is creating subtitles and revoiced versions, the target audience for many products has become multilingual. The English 'dubbing revolution', pioneered by streaming giant Netflix, perfectly depicts the broadening of target audiences in global distribution. The subject of this article is the popularly termed 'foreignisation' strategy, as it features in English dubs. The strategy is explored in relation to the novelty of (English) dubbing for most viewers as well as the ubiquity of foreign varieties of English in everyday life in the Anglosphere and, consequently, in English-language original fiction. Theoretical insights are also offered on the unique acceptance of English dubbing, in general, and of foreign accents as a dubbing strategy, in particular. The case of the Castilian-Spanish dubbing industry is also explored for contrastive purposes, elucidating the characteristics of (im)mature dubbing audiences: their habits, preferences, and (in)flexibility. The conclusions present a set of hypotheses drawn from the article's discussion that provide plausible answers to the questions posed in the article's title.

Keywords: English dubbing, foreign accents, Netflix, foreignisation. revoiced versions, AVT, English subtitles

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Resumen

Los acentos suelen utilizarse en los productos audiovisuales de ficción para establecer la identidad de los personajes. Esto se debe al conjunto de connotaciones culturales que se asocian por lo general a cada acento dentro de una comunidad lingüística particular. Sin embargo, ¿puede afirmarse que sigue existiendo una audiencia objetivo monolingüe? En la era de las plataformas de *streaming* y a la velocidad a la que la industria de la localización está produciendo versiones subtituladas y con *revoicing*, la audiencia objetivo de muchos productos se ha hecho multilingüe. La revolución del doblaje al inglés, iniciada por el gigante del *streaming* Netflix, muestra a la perfección la ampliación de las audiencias en la distribución mundial. Este artículo trata sobre la estrategia conocida como "extranjerización", tal como se utiliza en el doblaje al inglés. La exploración de esta estrategia obedece a la novedad del doblaje al inglés para la mayoría de los espectadores, así como a la ubicuidad de las variedades extranjeras del inglés en la cotidianidad de la anglosfera y, por lo tanto, en los textos de ficción creados en lengua inglesa. Se ofrecen perspectivas teóricas sobre la singular aceptación del doblaje al inglés, en general, y de los acentos extranjeros como estrategia de doblaje, en particular. También se explora, con el fin de establecer un contraste, el caso de la industria de doblaje al castellano o español, lo que elucida las características de las audiencias de doblaje (in)maduras: sus hábitos, preferencias e (in)flexibilidad. En las conclusiones se presenta un conjunto de conclusiones extraídas de la discusión del artículo, las cuales ofrecen una posible respuesta a las preguntas planteadas en el título del artículo.

Keywords: doblaje al inglés, acentos extranjeros, Netflix, extranjerización, versiones dobladas, TAV, subtítulos en inglés

Résumé

Les accents sont souvent utilisés dans les produits audiovisuels de fiction pour déterminer la création de l'identité des personnages. Cela est dû à l'ensemble des connotations culturelles typiquement associées à chaque accent dans une communauté linguistique particulière. Cependant, existe-t-il encore un seul public cible monolingue ? À l'époque des plateformes de streaming et au rythme où l'industrie de la localisation crée des sous-titres et des versions avec de *revoicing*, le public cible de nombreux produits est devenu multilingue. La « révolution du doublage » vers l'anglais, initiée par le géant du streaming Netflix, illustre parfaitement l'élargissement du public cible dans la distribution mondiale. Le sujet de cet article est la stratégie de « étrangéisation », comme on l'appelle souvent, telle qu'elle apparaît les doublages vers l'anglais. Cette stratégie est étudiée en relation avec la nouveauté du doublage vers l'anglais pour la plupart des spectateurs, ainsi qu'en relation avec l'omniprésence des variétés étrangères d'anglais dans la vie quotidienne de l'anglosphère et, par conséquent, dans les fictions originales en langue anglaise. On présente aussi des aperçus théoriques sur l'acceptation unique du doublage vers l'anglais, en général, et sur les accents étrangers en tant que stratégie de doublage, en particulier. Le cas de l'industrie du doublage vers le castillan ou espagnol est également exploré à des fins contrastives, élucidant les caractéristiques des publics de doublage (im)matures : leurs habitudes, leurs préférences et leur (in)flexibilité. Les conclusions présentent une série d'hypothèses tirées de la

discussion de l'article qui apportent des réponses plausibles aux questions posées dans le titre de l'article.

Mots-clef : doublage vers l'anglais, accents étrangères, Netflix, étrangéisation, versions reenregistrés, TAV, sous-titres anglais

Resumo

Os sotaques são frequentemente usados em produtos audiovisuais ficcionais para estabelecer a identidade dos personagens. Isso se deve ao conjunto de conotações culturais que tem-se associado geralmente a cada sotaque em uma determinada comunidade linguística. No entanto, pode-se argumentar que ainda existe um público-alvo monolíngue? Na era das plataformas de streaming e da velocidade com que o setor de localização está produzindo versões legendadas e dubladas, o público-alvo de muitos produtos se tornou multilíngue. A revolução da dublagem em inglês, iniciada pela gigante do streaming Netflix, ilustra perfeitamente a ampliação do público na distribuição global. Este artigo trata da estratégia conhecida como "estrangeirização", usada na dublagem em inglês. A exploração dessa estratégia é motivada pela novidade da dublagem em inglês para a maioria dos espectadores, bem como pela onipresença de variedades estrangeiras de inglês no cotidiano da anglosfera e, portanto, em textos ficcionais criados no idioma inglês. Em seguida, são oferecidas perspectivas teóricas sobre a aceitação singular da dublagem em inglês em geral e dos sotaques estrangeiros como estratégia de dublagem em particular. O caso do setor de dublagem espanhol também é explorado para fins de contraste, elucidando as características de públicos de dublagem (in)maduros: seus hábitos, preferências e (in)flexibilidade. As conclusões apresentam um conjunto de conclusões extraídas da discussão do artigo, que oferecem uma possível resposta às perguntas feitas no título do artigo.

Palavras chave: dublagem para o inglês, sotaques estrangeiros, Netflix, estrangeirização, versões dubladas, TAV, legendagem para o inglês

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Introduction

English dubbing has been booming and blossoming on streaming platforms since late 2016. Soon thereafter, Chaume (2018, p. 87) remarked upon the emerging trend on Netflix to dub non-English-language content into English, which has been observed as a marketing strategy to attract viewership of 'foreign' content and termed 'the dubbing revolution' (Moore, 2018, as cited in Ranzato & Zanotti, 2019, p. 3). 'Revolution' is a notably apt term used to describe English dubbing, given its disruptive as well as cyclical meaning. That is to say that the novelty of dubbing as a mode of localisation, or audiovisual translation (AVT), for the into-English directionality is in fact illusory. What is actually in question is the resurgence and revamping of a practice. Whereas subtitling has long been the norm for localising live-action fiction into English, dubbing was in the limelight at the dawn of the talkies from the 1930s to the 1970s, over the course of which time it was often used for European cinema, Kung Fu films, and Spaghetti Westerns (Hayes, 2021). Dubbing did not disappear with the rise of subtitling, however. Rather, it became and remains to be the preferred mode of localisation for specialised (mostly animated) products such as cartoons and videogames (though animations involve [re]voicing more generally); ads, aka commercials, are sometimes dubbed too (Chaume, 2012, p. 10).

Despite these past and present realities, anglophone viewers tend to be less familiar with the dubbing mode or are, at least, unaware of their exposure to it, as dubbing is camouflaged in animation and live-action dubs are generally far removed in time and not often revisited. Many viewers are, therefore, watching English dubs on streaming platforms aka subscription video-on-demand services (SVoDs) for the very first time. Furthermore, many of these viewers are not only newcomers to dubbed versions but to localisation of live action in general. This reality arises from the pre-eminence of Hollywood on the one hand and distribution distortion on the other. Distribution distortion arises from foreign-language live-action films being screened away from the mainstream in art-house cinemas and foreign TV not being broadcast on any readily available channels in anglophone countries.

This distribution process has brought about a pseudo-reality for anglophone viewers wherein subtitles and dubbed versions are how Other language communities consume English originals and wherein English subtitles constitute an exception for high-brow viewers attending film festivals or alternative cinemas. However, as streaming platforms have gained ground in media consumption as an alternative to TV or cinema, 'foreign' (hereinafter understood as non-English) products and their localised versions have entered the mainstream. In turn, the anglophone gaze has taken a 180-degree turn. Meanwhile, the novelty of localisation and dubbing for many viewers has played a pivotal role in the evolution of English dubbing; therein lies the subject of this article. It sets out to answer the questions posed in its title, exploring and explaining native-anglophone viewer acceptance of English dubbing as a mode of AVT and of foreign accents as a dubbing strategy. Drawing from the discussion throughout the article, arguments that could plausibly answer the questions posed are presented in a series of hypotheses in the concluding remarks.

The Evolution of Mainstream (English) Dubbing

Netflix has been the streaming trailblazer of English dubbing, with 82 live-action Castilian-Spanish series and films dubbed into English in under five years, from 2017 to mid-2021 (Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022), not to mention its English dubs of originals from other varieties of Spanish, from other source languages altogether, or indeed voiceovers of non-fiction. It comes as no surprise, then, that English dubbing has suddenly attracted scholarly attention in the

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field of translation studies (at the time of writing, these include Hayes, 2021; Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021; Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a; Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b; Hayes, 2022a; and Hayes and Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022). Much of this scholarship on English dubbing to date has either centred around or at least acknowledged accent strategies employed. The reasons English-dubbing accent strategies have aroused such attention are that (i) there were somewhat shoddy beginnings and (ii) creative accent strategies have emerged that diverge from practices in other more established dubbing industries.

Standard-Accent Strategies

As regards the first point, many early English dubs in 2017 opted for standardisation, which involved the use of either real-world accents recognised as standard due to their pervasiveness or artificially standardised accents that do not exist in a real-world context (see Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022, pp. 215–216). Audiences winced at the standardised accents and found their artificiality jarring. What followed were streams of invective on the matter (see, for instance, Fredette, 2017). The lack of authenticity in many of the voice actors' renditions is the product of their careers in the ilk of videogame dubbing (Hayes, 2021a, p. 19). Netflix responded to popular criticism in 2019 by reforming its standardisation strategy and even redubbing the first two seasons of its most ever watched foreign series on Netflix to that date—*La casa de papel* (Pina, 2017–present), or *Money Heist* in English, whose redub has drawn the attention of journalists and scholars (see, for instance, Goldsmith, 2019; Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021; or Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a, 2021b).

The redub mostly involved the replacement of artificially standardised accents with more authentically standard ones; however, reformulations also are also a feature; but as they are often not at the service of lip-sync or idiomacy (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021, p. 187), anti-plagiarism and

originality seem more likely motivations. It should be acknowledged that, while real-world accents lend a better sense of authenticity to English dubs, they do not render the 2019-generation of English dubs immune from any artificiality whatsoever. As with all fictional dialogue, and especially with studio-performed dialogue (e.g., even original-version cartoons), dubbed dialogue often falls prey to the negative by-products of "prefabricated orality" (Chaume, 2004; Baños-Piñero & Chaume, 2009).

Prefabricated orality is the affected spontaneity in planned speech, which is typically fictional and written with the aim of reflecting natural speech (see Gregory & Carroll, 1978, p. 42). Oftentimes, a hypercorrection of speech spontaneity arises from the prefabricated orality of fictional texts, and voice actors of dubbed versions are most prone to these forced performances. This is partly due to the attention these actors must give to fulfilling lip-sync and synchrony of paralinguistic elements (e.g., sighs, gasps, panting, or laughter) as well as the ideological clash they must overcome when revoicing actors whom they can see are other and whose mouth articulations they can hear belong to another language entirely.

Castilian-Spanish Dubbing

Furthermore, the consolidation of dubbing industries can create a self-perpetuating system insofar as artificial speech becomes a feature of dubbese that is required to meet audience expectations. This is perhaps best illustrated by the Castilian-Spanish dubbing industry wherein a homegrown dubbese prevails. It can be termed *doblenguaje*, reminiscent of the *doppiaggese* in Italian dubs (see Gatta, 2000 and Pavesi & Perego, 2006). *Doblenguaje* is a play on the words *doblaje* [dubbing] and *lenguaje* [specialised language or jargon]. The pronunciation of *doblenguaje* is somewhat cumbersome and requires slower-than-normal speech in order to be enunciated correctly. The term therefore aims to reflect the inauthenticity or artificiality

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and premeditated nature of the enunciation and speech pace in *doblenguaje* itself.

One of the most salient characteristics of *doblenguaje* is its unnatural prosody, which in Spanish has been termed *doblajitis* (Wasabi & García, 2014), translating into 'dubbitis' (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2017, p. 324), and some of its traits being speech tension, dramatic intonation within individual words and across utterances, repetition of vowel sounds by shifting one's pitch, and groan-like hesitations at the beginning of words or sentences. These final two traits are also referred to as 'elongation' (Baños-Pinero, 2009, my translation; Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b) or 'dragging' (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2020). Clear diction and decelerated speech are other traits of *doblenguaje*, with the latter often brought about by the slower pace of English and other languages vis-à-vis Spanish. Together, these features lead to a dubbing-take on a Central Peninsular Standard Spanish accent, which many industry practitioners claim is neutral, though it really differs only in *doblenguaje*. The term also accounts for atypical lexis and grammar, often termed dubbese (see Romero-Fresco, 2006); but as prosody pervades all speech, it constitutes a larger part of *doblenguaje*.

Despite its inauthenticity, Spanish audiences anticipate *doblenguaje* when watching dubs, to the extent of rejecting dubs that do not feature this speech variety particular to Spanish dubs. A case in point was the voicing of Spanish anime series *Memorias de Idhún* (*The Idhun Chronicles*) (Ruiz de Austri, 2020–2021). The series in question is an original version; but given that dialogues for animation are recorded in a studio and that in Spain these tend to be performed by voice actors rather than screen actors, this (re)voicing practice is often linked to dubbing. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the anime genre, normally imported from Japan, is usually dubbed into Spanish emulating the dramatic exclamations and high pitch of voices in the original. The creator of the series at Netflix decided to break the

mould and use actors specialised in screen acting rather than voice actors, with the exception of one actress (Michelle Jenner) who has expertise in both. This meant that both *doblenguaje* and genre-specific features were absent in the dub.

The result caused a furore among viewers in Spain, including a viral video addressed to Netflix by a Twitter user and voice actor in which he combined the original dub with a demo of his own voice dubbing the same scene in line with *doblenguaje*, and he appealed to Netflix for more consideration of its subscribers, which could be achieved by showing some respect to voice actors (he acknowledged Jenner as an outlier) (El Confidencial, 2020). The author of the books that were adapted for this series also expressed dismay at the portrayals by screen actors, having been involved in the selection of voice actors herself (Solà Gimferrer, 2020). There was also journalist coverage in relation to the series that acknowledged artificiality as a preference over naturalness for Spanish viewers when watching dubs and alluding to speech tension, affected or overacted laughter, clarity in the voice or diction, as well as unidiomatic instances (i.e., dubbese) as necessary evils in Spanish dubbing (Terán, 2020).

Domestic-Accent Strategy

Given that the conventions of the Spanish dubbing industry are so deeply entrenched in Spanish TV and cinema culture, Spanish viewers are resistant to change; cult followings of the likes of anime are especially fanatic about conventions. Conversely, in the absence of tradition, viewers do not generally have expectations for English dubs, which enables experimentation. This trialling of techniques has surpassed the standardisation reformation and manifested in creative dubbing strategies using regional and/or foreign accents in English. As regards the former, localisation company VSI London has used domestication strategies availing of different varieties of British English for characterisation, such as in *Hache*

(Fernández, 2019–2021) and the redub of *How to Sell Drugs Online (Fast)* (Kässbohrer & Murmann, 2019–2021). Many such dubs use blanket domestication such that native and foreign accents in the original become native-English ones in the dub. However, some emulate the foreign and even reuse the original dialogue track where multilingualism is present (see Hayes, 2021a regarding *Hache*). Thus, one can observe that overarching strategies like domestication are not always clear-cut and can involve another micro-strategy.

Foreign-Accent Strategies

A third strategy to emerge in Netflix's English dubs is fully fledged 'foreignisation', or the use of foreign accents in English derived from the language of the original. Examples are the original cast of Norwegian series *Ragnarok* (Hagedorn, 2020–present) revoicing their characters in Norwegian-accented English and a new cast of Hispanic voice actors dubbing Spanish series *La catedral del mar* (*Cathedral of the Sea*) (Frades, 2018). It is interesting to note that *How to Sell Drugs Online (Fast)* originally had a US dub using the original actors' German-accented English, made by VSI Los Angeles, but it was redubbed into British English at VSI London, which could be indicative of Netflix measuring the success of different accent strategies.

Hybrid Accent Strategies

A fourth and final English-dubbing strategy on Netflix is a hybrid one. This can be heard in the English dubs of *Alguien tiene que morir* (*Someone Has to Die*) (Caro, 2020–) and *La valla* (*The Barrier*) (Écija, 2020), in which older-generation characters speak a Spanish-accented English while younger ones speak in standard American English, and the Otherness of the likes of an Argentine accent in Spanish is conveyed by a standard British English accent against the US standard. In most cases, there is no regional variation between youth and mature characters' Spanish in the original versions of these series. Where regional variation does occur, it is overridden by age, e.g., a Mexican accent by a young character in *Alguien tiene que morir* (*Someone Has to Die*) is dubbed into American English but a more mature character's Mexican traces become Spanish, or foreign, instead.

For many Scandinavian series on Netflix, the original actors dub themselves, so the foreign accents tend to be authentic. However, a dialect coach, Lia Evans Schulman, worked on the English dub of *Ragnarok*, which suggests some actors may have needed direction. This might owe to the fact that many Scandinavians have native-level English with convincing accents. On the other hand, voice actors working on the English dubs of Spanish originals do not tend to receive voice coaching or direction on their renditions beyond the need to sound Hispanophone (Hayes, 2022a). The use of the original's actors in dubbing is the paragon of body-voice synchrony or coherence (i.e., the likeliness of a voice to emanate from a body type due to its being appropriately feminine or masculine, old or young, deep or high-pitched, etc.; for more on this type of sync, see: Fodor, 1969, p. 70, 1976, p. 72; Martínez Sierra, 2012, p. 78; and Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a, p. 12, Whitman-Linsen, 1992).

Choosing a foreign-accent strategy creates a space for original actors to dub themselves. Another worthy example of this strategy is in the English dub of *Pinocchio* (Garrone, 2019) for which the director sought to preserve the Italian identity of the story and his production and asked for an Italian dubbing director; three main characters dubbed themselves and the remainder of the cast was portrayed by Italian voice actors (Bruti & Vignozzi, 2023). Actor competences also weigh in on the feasibility of the strategy and the preparedness of the individual to self-dub. Against the backdrop of an overarching standardisation strategy in the English dub of *La casa de papel* (*Money Heist*), including for Serbian-accented Spanish (character *Helsinki*), one polyglot actor with experience in voice acting, Luka Peroš (as *Marsella*

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or *Marseille*), dubbed his Croatian accent into English, among other languages (López, 2021).

It is worth acknowledging that both self-dubbing and the non-dubbing of multilingualism can bring about optimum body-voice matching. It is also worth mentioning that there are many English dubs directed by dubbing directors native in the source language because they come from consolidated dubbing industries and boast years of experience and that such situations can facilitate or indeed lead to the use of foreign-accent strategies; however, native-anglophones have also employed these strategies and non-native-anglophone directors have equally directed native-anglophone voice actors (see Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022, for insight on the variables that influence accent strategy in English dubs).

Regarding the efforts made by dubbing casts composed entirely of voice actors, Spanish voice actress Susana Ballesteros (2018) rendered Spanish-accented English in her performances in the English dubs of *Fariña* (*Cocaine Coast*) (Sedes & Torregrossa, 2018), *La catedral del mar* (*Cathedral of the Sea*), and *La valla* (*The Barrier*) and noted that there is an increasing demand for such accented dubbing. Ballesteros[1] (2020) also gave the insight that she allowed herself to emulate the Galician intonation when dubbing *Fariña*, although her own Spanish is from Madrid. Other voice actors performing in the same series stated that they did not pay attention to geographic specificity (see Hayes, 2022a), and many were matched to characters who spoke a different variety of Spanish to their own (see Table 1).

Furthermore, there were no instances of Galician Spaniards dubbing Galician characters. For many of the actors, their acting involved the use of their natural accents in English, and for others it meant relaxing their speech in English or exaggerating their natural accent (Ballesteros, 2020). In the case

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1 Email and Instagram-messaging correspondence with Susana Ballesteros. 18 September 2020.

of Hispanic American voice actors, these drew on their knowledge of Spanish-accented English in the US and gave generic renditions based on that. The result is a medley of pan-Hispanophone accents used to dub all characters in an indiscriminate manner, and no distinction is made between varieties of Spanish nor between Galician and Spanish, where diglossic code-switching occurs (Hayes, 2022a). Foreignisation strategies have also been used by other streamers, like in the English dubs of predominantly Spanish (Arabic also features) series *El Cid* (*The Legend of El Cid*) (Arranz & Velasco, 2020–present) and the aforementioned Italian film *Pinocchio* (Garrone, 2019) on Amazon Prime Video.

Terminological Conundrum

When delving into why anglophone viewers accept an alternative to the standardisation strategy with no more criticism than usual and with any complaints tending to revolve around the dubbing mode more generally, rather than specific accent strategies (e.g., Fredette, 2017), the foreignisation strategy was chosen as a case in order to analyse the question. It is important to establish that the terms 'domestication' and 'foreignisation' have been availed of in line with their popular usage among Translation Studies scholars, that is, in relation to translation strategies rather than Venuti's (1995) coinage of the terms to describe translation ideologies and a translation's textual identity. This distinction is important insofar as dubbing is generally understood to be inherently domesticating as a mode of AVT (Chaume, 2012, p. 41), irrespective of the likes of accent strategies. That is to say that dubbing strives to be a diegetic form of AVT that hides the source text's origins, whereas if the aim were to highlight those origins in a Venutian foreignising approach, the text would be subtitled instead. On the other hand, the imperfect lip-sync inherent in dubbing and the use of a language visibly foreign to the characters or setting could also make for an argument that dubbing is actually a type of foreignisation. Nevertheless, for want of less debated terminology, the term 'foreignisation' has been used to

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Table 1 Actors and voice actors of main characters in *Fariña* (*Cocaine Coast*) and their origins

Character (Original)	Character's Origin	Actor/ Actress	Actor/ Actress's Origin	Voice Actor/ Actress	Voice Actor/ Actress's Origin
Sito Miñanco	Galicia, Spain	Javier Rey	Spanish: Galician	Bayardo De Murguia	Hispanic American-Mexican Roots*
Manuel Charlín	Galicia, Spain	Antonio Durán	Spanish: Galician	Diego Diment	LatAm— Argentine*
Nieves	Galicia, Spain	Marta Larralde	Spanish: Galician	Susana Ballesteros	Spanish — Madrid
Roque	Galicia, Spain	Tamar Novas	Spanish: Galician	Masato di Santo	LatAm-Ecuadorian/ Argentine*
Terito	Galicia, Spain	Manuel Lourenzo	Spanish: Galician	Jordi Caballero	Spanish-Catalonian
Oubiña	Galicia, Spain	Carlos Blanco	Spanish: Galician	Gerardo Prat	LatAm-Argentine*
Esther Lago	Galicia, Spain	Eva Fernández	Spanish: Galician	Susana G. Esteban	Spanish-Catalonian
Sargento Darío Castro	Galicia, Spain	Tristán Ulloa	Spanish: Galician/ French	Sergio Macián	Spanish-Andalusian
Camila Reyes	Panama	Jana Pérez	Spanish: Catalonian*	Rebeca Badia	Spanish-Valencian*
Ballesteros	Colombia	Juan Pablo Shuk	Colombian	Unknown**	—

Notes: * These are actors and voice talents that portrayed characters of the other variant of Spanish (i. e., voice talents with Peninsular Spanish portraying Latin Americans and vice versa).
**Due to missing information in the dub card in Netflix's credits for the series and fruitless further research, the voice actor(s) who portrayed the character Ballesteros remain an enigma. It should nevertheless be noted that in the first episode of the series, two voices with notably different timbres can be heard in character Ballesteros' speech in the English dub, with the second taking over from the first in the same scene, 59 minutes into the episode, and whose higher pitch ruptures acoustic synchrony.

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discuss the use of foreign accents throughout a dubbed version.

Considering that domestication and foreignisation exist in a continuum, rather than being mutually exclusive as their often-dichotomous usage would suggest, 'standardisation' has been included as a third point of intersection in the continuum (see Hayes & Bolaños-García-Escribano, 2022, for further musings on terminology attributed to accent strategies).

The Dubbing Trinity

Prior to analysing the specific case of how native-English speakers experience English dubs, it is necessary to consider how viewers experience dubbed versions, irrespective of the language of the dub. This experience can be described as 'the dubbing trinity' and is composed of the following threefold mechanism (as first described in Hayes, 2022a, p. 191).

1. The diegesis: In an effort to be diegetic, dubbed dialogue replaces the original track in a 'horizontal' (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 104) translation that preserves the 'semiotic structure' (Bosseaux, 2015, p. 85) of the audiovisual text intact, thereby creating a cinematic illusion and keeping the viewers within the narrative of the text. As dubbed dialogue strives to be diegetic, it is aided by (a) efforts at lip-sync and isochrony, (b) a 'credible display of prosodic (and paralinguistic) traits' (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2020, p. 33), and (c) dialogue manipulation where narrative and/or visuals require it for coherence (i.e., kinesic or visual-verbal synchrony). Beyond these technicalities, the willingness of the viewers is another factor that contributes to the diegetic effect of dubbed dialogue: 'what dub lovers value is less an accurate translation of the foreign original than the obscure integrity of the cinematic narrative space. These spectators feel a fatal attraction to that sublime immersion in the film's diegesis' (Nornes, 2007, p. 228). For viewers to enter the diegesis of fictional texts, they must enter a 'willing suspension of disbelief' (Coleridge, 1817). This willingness is a function of habituation.

2. The dubbing effect: Romero-Fresco (2020, p. 31) coined the term 'the dubbing effect' to describe the optical illusion generated by the innate genius of the brain. The illusion in question is brought about by viewers of dubbed versions paying approximately 95% of their attention to characters' eyes and 5% to characters' mouths, whereas their attention distribution when watching originals is approximately 75% and 25%, respectively (Romero Fresco, 2020, p. 31). In other words, viewers subconsciously avert their gaze from characters' mouths to avoid the eyesore of asymmetries, whether subtle or salient, in mouth articulations.

3. The suspension of linguistic disbelief: The 5% of attention that escapes the dubbing effect, allowing viewers to direct their gaze at characters' mouths, means that they may focus on imprecise lip-synchrony, a contradiction between the setting and the language, or any other incongruences. Nonetheless, viewers manage to see past the diegetic danger zone existing in this 5% margin as they enter a subconscious agreement known as the 'suspension of linguistic disbelief' (Romero-Fresco, 2009, p. 49), which allows the harmonious coexistence of a foreign narrative in a domestic language. If viewers did not reconcile the cognitive dissonance triggered by dubbed dialogue tracks played over original visuals, it would otherwise be too psychologically demanding for them to suspend their disbelief of the narrative's fiction.

Habituation to Mode and Strategies: (Im)maturity of the Market

In the burgeoning English-language dubbing industry, dubbing is often referred to as 'lip-sync dubbing' (see zoo Digital, 2022, for instance). The term is tautological and seems to serve a didactic purpose insofar as it highlights to native-English speakers that dubbing involves lip-synchrony, whereas their knowledge of AVT would generally have been focussed on subtitles prior to the dubbing surge. Furthermore, given the specialised distribution of subtitled products in anglophone countries, 'subtitles' have often been considered synonymous with foreign films in general with the reality of the practice not always grasped—hence the need to signal that dubbing is the type with lip-sync and therefore involves voices rather than written text. It is worth adding that viewer unfamiliarity also owes to the fact that elements of dubbing such as lip-sync often went unnoticed in pre-streamer dubs because dialogues in the likes of Kung Fu films or Spaghetti Westerns are few and far between—few utterances of brief duration and often occurring far into the distance (i.e., long shots). As for animation, visuals are generally neither convincingly domestic nor foreign (save the likes of ultra-sophisticated CGI) and mouth flaps have traditionally been simplistic and non-language specific, thereby concealing the dubbed nature of the text.

The novice status of native anglophones as viewers of dubbed versions has a knock-on effect on their experience of the dubbing trinity. Whereas audiences accustomed to watching dubbed versions willingly suspend their (linguistic) disbelief when watching dubs as they would with original fiction, anglophone viewers are unlikely to do so until they have become accustomed to the AVT mode. The willing suspension of disbelief is a function of habituation and is facilitated by early-age exposure (Romero-Fresco, 2020, p. 19). After all, 'audience research has shown that people tend to prefer whatever form of [audiovisual] translation they grew up with' (Nornes, 2007, p. 191). Studies are required to establish the point at which assuefaction is achieved (e.g., over the course of watching an episode, upon having watched an entire series, or after three weeks of watching dubs daily, based on the assumption that it takes three weeks to form a habit).

Habituation-based preferences can be illustrated by Netflix's endeavour with dubbing in Poland, where viewers rejected the company's Polish dubs, forcing them to revert to Polish voiceovers which is their conventional mode of localisation (Rodríguez, 2018). It is thought that introducing a new mode into a consolidated industry like this would be more successfully done with cartoons for children and live action for teenagers, as the viewing habits of these groups for foreign content may not be set in stone just yet. Anglophone viewers were not generally accustomed to any mode of localisation for live action prior to Netflix's English-dubbing campaign and being accustomed to no mode is a preference in itself. This can be illustrated by the fact that viewers in the US surveyed by Netflix claimed they would be unlikely to watch a product not in English; however, data revealed that when they did watch a foreign series on Netflix, more chose to watch the dubbed version rather than the original with subtitles and the viewers of the dub proved more likely to finish watching the series (Bylykbashi, 2019).

This disparity between a viewer's perception and reception ultimately serves to substantiate the claim that viewers prefer the AVT mode they are used to, and this theory extends into a logical hypothesis that if viewers are *not* used to a set mode of AVT nor will they have a preference *for* or aversion *to* any one mode over another. What can be added, however, is that watching a dub is closer to the experience of watching an original version. This is because original and dubbed versions offer a leisurely or passive viewing experience compared with the cognitive effort required to read subtitles, and to the diegetic endeavours of dubbed dialogues to the point of narrative manipulation, as illustrated in Table 2, compared with subtitles rupturing that disbelief, which can be justified in their being visibly non-diegetic albeit conveying the dialogues.

When it comes to dubbing strategies, the novice status of viewers is crucial to the acceptance of non-standard accents. Unlike the consolidated Spanish dubbing industry wherein viewers recoiled from the dubbing strategy devoid of dubbitis, the English dubbing industry is currently fluid because of the quasi-absence of precedent and viewers' lack of habituation to the mode or to any existing precedent. As viewers are not conditioned to have

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Table 2 *Vivir sin permiso* (*Unauthorized Living*) (Gabilondo, 2018: Season 1 Episode 2)

Original Version (Castilian Spanish)	Back Translation	English Sub	English Dub
Es que quería que aprendiese inglés.	She wanted me to learn English.	Yes, she wanted me to learn English.	She wanted me to be fluent in French.
Viajes a Inglaterra…	Trips to England…	In England…	Trips to France…

expectations when watching English dubs, it seems they are malleable to different accent strategies. Nevertheless, given anglophone viewers are accustomed to watching original versions in English, they do prefer hearing authentic linguistic varieties (also suggested by Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a, p. 6). This would explain their aversion to the accent specific to videogames used in Netflix's earlier dubs in contrast to virtually no comment made on the authentic accents used thereafter.

The use of authentic accents does not mean renditions in these latter dubs are exempt from displaying features of prefabricated orality; however, any telltale signs are *almost* as subtle (i.e., there is some overacting at play, typical of studio-recorded performances) as those in original versions, and significantly more subtle than the artificiality of videogame speak. Spiteri Miggiani (2021a, pp. 13–14) has noted 'flat intonation' and 'unclear' pronunciation in English dubs as quality issues; however, they could also be attributed to speech reflective of that which occurs spontaneously and is echoed in originals. English dubs do, however, display the clear sound quality characteristic of dubs (Chaume, 2012, p. 18) rather than the muffled reality of originals (see Pearson, 2022).

The fact that the novelty of dubs to anglophone viewers has allowed the introduction of creative accent strategies has far reaching effects on their viewing experience. Indeed, Spiteri Miggiani (2021a, p. 22) has referred to the 'newness' of English dubbing as a 'silver lining' (vs. the inexperience of practitioners also associated with its recent arrival). The use of authentic linguistic variation in English dubs leads to complex characterisations, allowing viewers to sooner suspend their linguistic disbelief and, in turn, be lured into the fiction.

Familiarity with Foreign Accents

The position of English as the de facto lingua franca worldwide, propelled by globalisation, technology advancements, and the culture of social media, has given rise to an enormous population of non-native speakers of English. With 1.35 billion speakers, English is currently the language with the highest number of speakers worldwide (Szmigiera, 2021), despite ranking third—after Chinese and Spanish—when only native speakers are taken into account, amounting to a speaking population of 379 million (McCarthy, 2020). English is also the most used language on the internet by a large margin (Johnson, 2021). Bearing in mind these data, it comes as no surprise that foreign accents (i.e., accents belonging to the phonology of other languages) pervade the English language. Given that these accents have phonetic repertoires distinguishable from any other variety of English and the characteristics of the repertoires are identifiably linked to the speakers' native-language community (e.g., Spanish-accented English), they can be considered ethnolects (a speech variety associated with an ethnic group that originally used another language, e.g., Italo-American English or African American Vernacular English).

These accents can also be considered features of non-dominant pluricentric varieties of English (see Edwards & Fuchs, 2019 on this concept regarding Dutch and German varieties of English). This is an alternative to considering foreign accents as a characteristic of 'Bad English' (see Peterson, 2020). Foreign accents are in fact—and arguably the most salient—part of foreign varieties, which are also replete with dialect in terms of both lexis and grammatical constructions. In fictional texts, however, both native and non-native varieties are rendered with diluted or no dialect for intelligibility purposes (see, for example, Díaz-Cintas, 2011; Hodson, 2014; Corrius & Zabalbeascoa, 2019; Ranzato, 2019; Chiaro & De Bonis, 2019; and Minutella 2020). This can be observed in the likes of the Norwegian and Hispanic varieties in Netflix's English dubs exhibiting flawless grammar and idiomacy and emphasising instead the phonetic and phonological characteristics of the variety (i. e., accent).

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Anglophone viewers are accustomed to watered-down representations of foreign accents from watching both original-version live-action fiction and voiced over non-fiction. As regards the former text type, foreign accents are ubiquitous in English-language originals, to the extent of films set in foreign places using accents native to the setting throughout. Examples are German-accented English in *Schindler's List* (Spielberg, 1993) and Colombian-Spanish-accented English in *Loving Pablo* (León de Aranoa, 2017). As for foreign accents in non-fiction, these are often heard in the voiceovers of foreign news reporters or interviewees on the BBC (Filmer, 2019) and in documentaries. The use of foreign accents in both original and dubbed versions presupposes the validity of those accents as recognisable varieties of English.

The mere fact of creating a fictional representation of a German accent in English means that the accent has already been indexed, or recognised, as a linguistic repertoire (see Silverstein 1976; 2003 on indexicality) within the English-language community. Repertoires can be further indexed or enregistered (see Agha, 2003, 2007 on enregisterment) with social meaning, as seen in Netflix series using hybrid accent strategies wherein older generational characters speak Hispanic-accented English. By attributing heavily accented English to characters with traditional values and in an older demographic, it seems attitudes in the US towards Spanish as a language of immigration are echoed, and the dubs in question were indeed created in the US. This is a timely reminder that the values indexed by (foreign) accents differ across the Anglosphere.

In terms of the specificity with which native anglophones perceive accents in English, Wells (1982, p. 33) observed that spatial distance reduces interpretational specificity. Wells' example was that an Englishman might recognise a working-class Liverpudlian accent whereas a Chicagoan may perceive it as British without further diatopic or diastratic connotations. It seems this Wellsian observation can be extended beyond spatial distance given that perceptual specificity also declines with *linguistic* distance. The latter observation on linguistic distance is the fruit of findings from a questionnaire carried out on how to sound Spanish in English (Hayes, 2022b), in which 126 native-English speakers were surveyed on different accents. There are two findings from the questionnaire particularly relevant to the extension of the Wellsian observation. The first is that the degree of perceptual specificity for foreign accents in English is reduced to language communities, whereas there was a greater level of specificity given for native-English accents. This means that where a native accent was perceived as being from Ireland (second-degree specificity) in particular and from Dublin (first-degree specificity), more specifically again, Hispanic accents were matched to the correct country at best, but the greatest level of specificity generally achieved was in indicating that the accents belonged to a Spanish-speaking country (third-degree specificity), with little or no distinction made between Spain and Latin American or between Latin American countries.

According to this finding, it may not be necessary to sound Peninsular Spanish in English in order to be perceived as Spanish; rather, it is sufficient to sound Hispanic, generally. In this context, 'Hispanic' is understood as encompassing the entirety of the Hispanophone world—not just Latin America. The other finding was that four phonetic realisations were perceived as iconic Hispanic characteristics and even their scattered presence could lead to a Hispanic perception by a native-anglophone viewer. These were the voiced dental fricative [ð] realisation of dental plosives (/d/ and /t/), the uvular fricative or *jota* realisation of /h/, the /s/ realisation of /z/, and the tapped and alveolar trill or rolled /r/.

Vague perceptions combined with iconic pronunciations serve to justify and explain the acceptance of the indiscriminate dubbing of

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Galician, Colombian, and Panamanian accents in the English dub of Netflix series *Fariña* (*Cocaine Coast*) via the conflation of all Spanishes into one pan-Hispanic variety of English. Furthermore, the key consonant realisations elucidated by the questionnaire and their ability to trigger a Hispanic perception further explain why these took precedence over any features particular to Galician Spanish, like its intonation. Intonation can, however, be a defining feature of other foreign varieties of English, such as in Italian and Scandinavian accents. Although viewers do not require authenticity and nuancing in renditions of foreign accents, they may still benefit from actors rendering the specificity of an accent as it can aid performance and character creation. Dialect coach Brendan Gunn[2] and actor Jack Gleeson[3] (2020) highlight the importance of accent in performance. This can explain why the likes of Spanish actress Penélope Cruz and actor Javier Bardem received dialect coaching on Colombian Spanish for the aforementioned film *Loving Pablo* instead of rendering their natural Castilian-Spanish accents in English (Castillo, 2018).

English Dubbing: A Unique Environment

It is worth calling into question what impact foreign-language varieties of English might have on the dubbing trinity. It seems reasonable to posit that foreign accents pertaining to the language and setting of the original may tally in the psyche of a viewer more easily than accents native to English, as the former are more likely to emanate from the actors. In turn, the foreign accents could lend verisimilitude to the text, thereby helping the viewer to suspend both linguistic disbelief and disbelief at the fictional nature of the narrative. Given the lesser degree of perceptual specificity for foreign accents, any subtle discrepancies across the voice cast's renditions would likely go unnoticed, and

this unawareness might act as a safety net for the suspension of linguistic disbelief—our ignorance is bliss. Whereas foreign accents would likely ring cacophonously in the ears of viewers in a consolidated dubbing industry, one can hypothesise that the lack of precedent or viewer exposure to dubs is responsible for anglophone viewers' acceptance or at least indifference towards foreignisation.

Furthermore, it seems reasonable to call into question whether native-anglophone viewers of English dubs also experience the dubbing effect (Spiteri Miggiani 2021a, p. 4) due to both their lack of habituation to dubbed-version consumption and to the range of dubbing strategies being used in English-language dubs. If a dubbing effect is experienced, it would be interesting to discern to what degree, especially when a foreignisation strategy has been employed. The dubbing effect has been tested using standardised Spanish and Italian dubs (Di Giovanni & Romero-Fresco, 2019) as well as with standardised Polish voiceover (see Flis et al., 2020). In all cases, the original was an English-language film.

While standardisation and domestication strategies require viewers to reconcile the fact that foreign visuals (people, settings, and mouth articulations) are accompanied by their language being spoken natively, it can be postulated that foreignisation might lead to a less psychologically demanding watch. In turn, it can be hypothesised that if mouth articulations created by foreign accents are not expected to mirror the target language as spoken by natives, the brain's demand for synchrony might be reduced, thereby narrowing the attention-distribution gap observed under the dubbing effect. This hypothesis is speculative and requires exploration in eye-tracking. This strategy could also allow awkward syntax and lexis—as a feature of foreign varieties of English—to go unnoticed, thereby creating more room for manoeuvring lip-sync.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that technological changes in dubbing might remove the question of whether foreignisation or other accent strategies

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2   Zoom Interview. 14 December 2020.
3   Jack Gleeson, WhatsApp voicenote correspondence, 11 June 2020.

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English Dubs: Why are anglophone viewers receptive to English dubbing on streaming platforms?

impact the dubbing effect. For instance, Polish videogame developer CD Projekt has begun using technologies that alter mouth articulations in videogames, such as in their game Cyberpunk 2077 released in 2020, so that lip-sync is removed from the equation entirely (O'Hagan, 2021). In relation to three other games, Chaume (2019, p. 111) has noted this practice of facial modelling and synthesising mouth articulations based on audio input and has acknowledged that it would be most readily extended to non-fiction cartoons (see Baños, 2023).

As for live action, it is possible that a similar technology will be used, which is often associated with deep fakes (Vincent, 2021); however, it is of paramount importance that we note lip-sync is not the only cause of cognitive dissonance and that a whole new host of ideological issues could arise from using synthesised mouth articulations. For example, that of viewers needing to reconcile a famous anglophone actor from Hollywood apparently speaking Spanish or Italian accompanied by Anglo-Saxon body language and a foreign narrative. This issue of course arises with traditional dubbing also, but the incongruity might be exacerbated if viewers are not able to at least subconsciously register those mouth movements that do not match as a way of recognising the foreign nature of the text, consequently accepting traits of dubbing like overacting or *doblenguaje*. On the other hand, the general lack of familiarity that anglophone viewers have with film-industry celebrities in other language communities might reduce this cognitive clash.

In any case, there is a question mark over whether mouth articulations would look physiologically natural and synchronously convincing in terms of their belonging to the character's face (i.e., visual or corporal synchronisation). It may be for these reasons that such technologies are currently limited to head-on shots (see Yang et al., 2020) in non-fiction content. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that traditional dubbing will be done away with for fiction very soon, and this is echoed by universities (e.g., the University of Bristol and University

College London), dubbing studios (e.g., VSI London), and localisation companies (e.g., ZOO Digital), providing—whether internally and/or through partnerships or invited speakers—workshops and courses on script adaptation for English dubbing, which deal with lip-sync among other core concepts within the practice.

Conclusions

The pseudo-novelty of English dubbing has been the necessary condition for introducing anglophones to (i) dubbing, as an unfamiliar mode of audiovisual translation and (ii) creative dubbing strategies that diverge from using standard(ised) accents. The most salient observations and hypotheses formulated in this article can be summarised in ten points:

1. Anglophone viewers have demonstrated a preference for dubs over subs when watching non-English content because they are not accustomed to watching 'foreign' fiction and dubs are diegetic, enabling a more leisurely viewing experience via the dubbing-trinity phenomenon than that of watching a foreign product with subtitles and which is ultimately closer to their experience of watching an English-language original.

2. Practitioners in the English dubbing industry have been able to experiment with dubbing strategies because the industry is scant on conventions and because most viewers are unfamiliar with any pre-existing ones.

3. Anglophone viewers are malleable to different dubbing strategies because of their lack of prior exposure to live-action English dubs and/or a lack of awareness of their exposure to English dubs of animation. This, in turn, means their viewing is not shaped by expectations for an English dubbese akin to *doblenguaje* or *doppiaggese*. Conversely, accents diverging from the standard would likely be rejected by viewers in consolidated dubbing industries.

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4. Comparing the English-language dubbing industry to the consolidated dubbing industry in Spain informs our understanding on the agency of novelty in English-language dubbing, both regarding industry practices and viewer experiences.

5. English has been propelled into the unique position of de facto lingua franca on the back of globalisation, technology advancements and the culture of social media, and this has given rise to the pluricentricity of the language, including foreign varieties of English that are characterised largely by accent. The use of these accents in fictional texts validates their status as varieties of the English language.

6. Anglophone viewers of English dubs accept foreignisation strategies because foreign accents are familiar to them (whether their origins can be perceived to greater or lesser degrees) in addition to the fact that foreign accents are conventionally used in mainstream fiction, documentaries and news broadcasts in English. Foreign accents may therefore meet viewers' demands for authenticity.

7. Generic renditions or a mixture of accents pertaining to a foreign variety are acceptable to anglophone viewers as they tend to find their nuances imperceptible because they perceive foreign accents to third-degree specificity. This means that the iconic traits of a foreign variety featuring notably across a cast's varying renditions should be sufficient to contribute to a top-down cultural identity by viewers.

8. Lower degrees of perceptual specificity help to keep viewers' disbelief suspended, in the face of inconsistent renditions by a voice cast.

9. The use of non-native accents in English dubs, as a foreignisation strategy, might reduce the brain's demand for lip-sync, thereby leading to a more relaxed viewing experience closer to the consumption of an original version with no audiovisual translation whatsoever and possibly closing the attention-distribution gap as observed under the dubbing effect with standardisation strategies. Where lip-sync needs to be prioritised, foreign accents could allow for this as there is reduced demand for native-English syntax and idiomacy.

10. Netflix lays store by accents in creating high-quality English dubs, as illustrated by their reformation of the standardisation strategy and redubbing using different accent strategies.

In future empirical research, it will be important to analyse the process of habituation as well as the impact of accent on native-English speakers' viewing experience of English dubbed versions, and eye-tracking technology will be crucial in doing so. It would also be worthwhile to contemplate the ideological soundness of different accent strategies in relation to theories on translation and textual identity. The hypotheses made in this concluding section are necessarily speculative and intended to encourage research that might validate or challenge them. The overarching aim of the article has been to provide a sound argument that lends legitimacy to the existing strategy of using foreign accents in English dubs, so that it might proliferate or, at least, continue to be practised.

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Engaging English Audiences in the Dubbing Experience: A Matter of Quality or Habituation?

Atraer a la audiencia anglófona a la experiencia del doblaje: ¿Cuestión de calidad o de hábito?

Attirer le public anglophone vers l'expérience du doublage : une question de qualité ou des habitudes ?

Captar o público de língua inglesa para a experiência de dublagem: uma questão de qualidade ou hábito?

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Abstract

Although dubbing has traditionally been associated with the so-called dubbing countries, the advent of digitalisation and streaming is nowadays encouraging the consumption of dubbed content across territories unaccustomed to watching foreign fiction with dubs, such as the Anglophone market. Despite the effort put into drawing in a wide and satisfied audience in these countries, an unfavourable response from some viewers has called into question the quality of English dubbed versions and the odds of forging a consolidated dubbing industry in such regions. The main aim of this article is to offer insights into how poor quality and the lack of a long professional tradition might compromise engagement and cinematic illusion and into how the lack of exposure to this mode might have a negative impact on the way the dubbed content is received and enjoyed by English users. The article also intends to discuss the many ways in which quality and habituation affect the dubbing experience. This is done by exploring both the potential constraints that impair the final version and the factors that encourage an amenable attitude to this mode amongst the audience, despite their inexperience as dubbing consumers. The conclusions stress the need to enhance English dubbing quality at different levels and the importance of habituation to make dubbing work from a cognitive, linguistic, and prosodic standpoint.

Keywords: dubbing into English, quality of dubbed content, habituation, Netflix, English-speaking viewers, spectatorial comfort

Resumen

Aunque el doblaje se ha asociado tradicionalmente a los llamados países de doblaje, la llegada de la digitalización y el *streaming* está fomentando hoy en día el consumo de contenidos doblados en territorios poco acostumbrados a ver ficción extranjera doblada, como es el caso del mercado anglófono. A pesar del esfuerzo
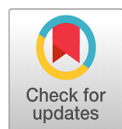
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realizado para atraer a un público más amplio y satisfecho en estos países, la respuesta desfavorable de algunos espectadores ha puesto en tela de juicio la calidad de las versiones dobladas al inglés y la posibilidad de forjar una industria del doblaje consolidada en dichas regiones. El objetivo de este artículo es evaluar cómo la falta de calidad y de una larga tradición profesional puede comprometer el compromiso y la ilusión cinematográfica, y de cómo la falta de exposición a esta modalidad puede repercutir negativamente en la forma en que los usuarios ingleses reciben y disfrutan los contenidos doblados. El artículo también pretende debatir las múltiples formas en que la calidad y el hábito afectan a la experiencia del doblaje, explorando tanto las posibles limitaciones que perjudican a la versión final como los factores que contribuyen a que el público se muestre más receptivo a esta modalidad, a pesar de su inexperiencia como consumidor de doblaje. Las conclusiones subrayan la necesidad de mejorar la calidad del doblaje en inglés a distintos niveles y la importancia del hábito para que el doblaje funcione desde un punto de vista cognitivo, lingüístico y prosódico.

Palabras clave: doblaje al inglés, calidad del contenido doblado, formación de hábitos, Netflix, espectadores anglófonos, comodidad del espectador

Résumé

Bien que le doublage soit traditionnellement associé aux pays dits de doublage, l'avènement de la numérisation et du streaming encourage aujourd'hui la consommation de contenu doublé dans des territoires peu habitués à regarder des fictions étrangères avec des doublages, tels que le marché anglophone. Malgré les efforts déployés pour attirer un public plus large et satisfait dans ces pays, la réaction défavorable de certains spectateurs a remis en question la qualité des versions doublées en anglais et les chances de créer une industrie du doublage consolidée dans ces régions. L'objectif de cet article est d'évaluer comment une qualité médiocre et l'absence d'une longue tradition professionnelle peuvent compromettre l'engagement et l'illusion cinématographique et comment le manque d'exposition à ce mode peut avoir un impact négatif sur la façon dont le contenu doublé est reçu et apprécié par les utilisateurs anglais. L'article vise aussi discuter des nombreuses façons dont la qualité et l'accoutumance affectent l'expérience du doublage en explorant à la fois les contraintes potentielles qui nuisent à la version finale et les facteurs qui aident le public à être plus réceptif à ce mode, malgré leur inexpérience en tant que consommateurs de doublage. Les conclusions soulignent la nécessité d'améliorer la qualité du doublage anglais à différents niveaux et l'importance de l'accoutumance pour que le doublage fonctionne d'un point de vue cognitif, linguistique et prosodique.

Mots-clef : doublage en anglais, qualité du contenu doublé, habituation, Netflix, téléspectateurs anglophones, confort du spectateur

Resumo

Embora a dublagem tenha sido tradicionalmente associada aos chamados países de dublagem, o advento da digitalização e do streaming está atualmente incentivando o consumo de conteúdo dublado em territórios não acostumados a assistir ficção estrangeira com dublagem, como o mercado anglófono. Apesar do esforço para atrair um público mais amplo e satisfeito nesses países, a resposta desfavorável de alguns espectadores colocou em questão a qualidade das versões dubladas em inglês e as chances de criar um setor de dublagem consolidado nessas regiões. Este artigo visa avaliar como a baixa qualidade e a falta de uma longa tradição

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profissional podem comprometer o envolvimento e a ilusão cinematográfica e como a falta de exposição a esse modo pode ter um impacto negativo na maneira como o conteúdo dublado é recebido e apreciado pelos usuários ingleses. Outro objetivo deste artigo é discutir as diversas maneiras pelas quais a qualidade e a habituação afetam a experiência de dublagem, explorando tanto as possíveis restrições que prejudicam a versão final quanto os fatores que ajudam o público a ser mais receptivo a esse modo, apesar de sua inexperiência como consumidores de dublagem. As conclusões enfatizam a necessidade de aprimorar a qualidade da dublagem em inglês em diferentes níveis e a importância da habituação para que a dublagem funcione do ponto de vista cognitivo, linguístico e prosódico.

Palavras chave: dublagem para o inglês, qualidade do conteúdo dublado, hábito, Netflix, público anglófono, conforto do espectador

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Introduction

The global success of streaming platforms and the growing demand for localised content have substantially increased the availability of audiovisual products translated into multiple languages. Streaming has brought about the decentralisation of the US film industry and has expanded the reach of non-English language productions around the world. In fact, many of the latest most-watched on-demand series come from non-English markets such as Korea (*Squid Game*), France (*Lupin*), or Spain (*La Casa de Papel*).

Although the import of foreign content into Anglophone territories is not new, the recent bias in favour of English dubbing can be seen as an interesting turnabout. Until now, the practice of dubbing has been associated with the so-called dubbing countries, where viewers are exposed to dubbed versions on a daily basis and where dubbing is a solid and full-grown audiovisual translation (AVT) modality. In the past few years, however, platforms such as Netflix have been actively promoting English-language dubbing as part of their international strategy to try to captivate a bigger audience. As a result, the number of foreign productions dubbed into English as well as the consumption of dubbed material in English-speaking markets, where the dominant transfer mode for non-local shows has usually been subtitling, have risen exponentially (Ampere Analysis, 2021). This AVT modality is now expanding amongst an audience coming from non-dubbing backgrounds and with limited exposure to translated content.

Netflix is nowadays one of the leading subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) platforms worldwide. Its vast catalogue of audiovisual material has led the streaming service to become a dominant global distributor by offering millions of users the possibility to access local and non-local content *à la carte*. The company's latest moves clearly evince that it is a staunch advocate of mainstream dubbing (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021). The platform has been implementing several strategies to promote this practice in historically non-dubbing countries (e.g., Finland, Sweden, or Poland, without much success thus far) and is determined to make it succeed amongst an audience traditionally averse to dubbing. Netflix has spotted a niche in Anglophone markets such as the US. Their own data confirm the apparent triumph of English dubbed versions amongst a major share of US subscribers who decided to watch foreign shows such as *Money Heist* (*La Casa de Papel* in the original; Pina, 2017-2021), *Dark* (bo Odar & Friese, 2017-2020), or *The Rain* (Kainz & Arthy, 2018–2020) with English dubs instead of with subtitles (Goldsmith, 2019).

Although Netflix's language settings, which stream the dubbed versions of foreign titles by default, might be partly responsible for such an upward trend, there are grounds to believe that the new generations of viewers are apparently more amenable than ever to watching non-English shows (Roberts, 2021) and gradually consuming more dubbed content (Newbould, 2019). No official figures, however, have been released by the platform so far.

On the downside, dubbing does not seem to be captivating everyone in the public and continues to be a source of controversy in Anglophone territories, where most viewers are being exposed to this AVT mode for the very first time. Dubbed dialogues have received a negative backlash from several users, who have referred to dubbing as "a strangely dislocating and downright weird experience" with characters sounding like "a malfunctioning Alexa" (Watkins, 2021). The fact that target viewers are demanding more quality in dubbed versions has brought pressure to bear on streaming platforms such as Netflix, since high quality holds the key to making their international strategy successful in English-speaking markets.

In this article, the concept of quality is brought to the fore and evaluated as far as viewer engagement is concerned. Negative comments call into

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question the level of quality of English dubbed versions and, at the same time, pave the way for exploring in more detail the connection between an unfavourable response on the part of the audience and their lack of habituation to this mode (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b). Due attention is therefore devoted to the relationship between (under) exposure and how dubbing is received and perceived by this "novel" viewership as well as to the impact that an unconsolidated background in English-language dubbing might have on both quality and engagement.

The Dubbing Experience Through the Lens of English Viewers

Viewers exposed to dubbing for the first time will find this practice rather bizarre. The original soundtrack has been removed and replaced by dialogues translated into a different language and reenacted in synchrony by voices not belonging to the on-screen characters. An article published in *The Spectator* (Watkins, 2021) recently complained about the "dislocating" experience of listening to a French actor such as Omar Sy in the TV drama *Lupin* (Kay & Uzan, 2021) speaking in a marked American accent while he is strolling across the Seine. The piece points out the difficulty of fitting a language such as English into the fast-pace French mould and concludes by urging English audiences to watch the non-local series with subs instead of with dubs if they really wish to enjoy the authentic and stylish Parisian show.

Netflix, for its part, is convinced that dubbing can increase audience engagement even amongst reluctant users; but its success, or lack thereof, is very often attributed to the quality of the dubbed product. Shoddily dubbed versions of Asian and European films in the past may still linger in the minds of many viewers. Though still on the path to consolidation, English-language dubbing appears to be trying to learn from past mistakes. Greg Peters, chief product officer at Netflix, admitted in an interview that quality dubbing will be the key to attracting a wider and satisfied audience in

Anglophone markets (Bylykbashi, 2019); and, as put by Chris Carey, the managing director of one of the most recognisable localisation and media companies in the world (Iyuno-SDI Group), "a good dub has a higher consumer retention, so high engagement", whereas "a bad dub will lower audience engagement" (O'Falt, 2020). Some of the aspects that could compromise the quality of the dubbed version and, therefore, prove detrimental to engagement are unnatural translated dialogues, overacted performances, and recurring mismatches between the characters' words and their lip movements (Hayes, 2021; Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021; Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a).

Audience engagement, understood as "the cognitive, emotional, or affective experiences that users have with media content" (Broersma, 2019, p. 1), has always been a major concern in the film industry. Filmmakers and producers seek to keep viewers engaged in the audiovisual content they create and in the story they tell (Piazza et al., 2011). Fresno (2017) explains that in order to facilitate the filmic experience of users, it is paramount that they comprehend what they are watching and get immersed into the plot. This requires, in turn, the receiver's willingness to take part in the fiction and his/her interest in the audiovisual material, which translate into "a desire to keep watching and discover the twists and turns that await throughout the plot" (p. 14). Even if spectators are fully aware that what they are watching is not real, they can still be transported into the fictional world and become completely absorbed by it thanks to a series of cognitive processes stimulating immersion, namely presence, transportation, character identification, flow, and perceived realism (Raffi, 2020), which can vary according to the fictional content and the spectatorship.

Although there is no empirical evidence to date that dubbing increases audience engagement, research conducted by Palencia Villa (2002) demonstrated that those viewers used to consuming dubbed content were successfully transported into the fictional world and perceived on-screen

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characters as credibly and authentically as the viewers who watched the original version. Almost two decades later, however, a reception study by Raffi (2020) has shown that language transfer can compromise or partly reduce involvement in the fiction and that original products seem to report a higher degree of immersion than dubbed versions. In her research, the author found that English participants watching an original clip from *Game of Thrones* (Benioff & Weiss, 2011–2019) managed to reach a higher level of immersion in terms of perceived realism, character identification, enjoyment, and transportation than Italian participants watching the dubbed version of the same clip.

Other studies comparing the impact of dubbing and subtitling on audience engagement have revealed that both modalities are equally effective from a cognitive and evaluative point of view (Wissmath et al., 2009; Perego et al., 2015; Rader et al., 2016; Matamala et al., 2017; Perego et al., 2018). Nevertheless, more recent research by Riniolo and Capuana (2020) has provided evidence on how viewers unaccustomed to consuming dubbed fiction tend to report greater enjoyment when watching the subtitled version of a particular program. Their results indicate that media preference is commonly culture-bound on the grounds that subtitling was selected as the preferred AVT method in primarily English-speaking countries with limited exposure to foreign audiovisual content. These findings are in line with those obtained in an extensive survey conducted by the European Commission (2012) about viewing preferences and with another survey conducted by Netflix (Moore, 2018), in which a clear bias in favour of subtitling was identified amongst mainstream US subscribers. Despite this, the company later admitted a misalignment between viewer behaviours and preferences, as their statistics suggested that dubbing was outpacing subtitling as users' preferred way to consume non-local productions in this country (Hayes, 2021).

Admittedly, the lack of a deep-rooted subtitling industry in Anglophone markets and the increase in the number of non-local offerings, which were few and far between before the advent of streaming, might be helping to tip the balance in favour of this AVT modality. The positive trend towards dubbing and the fact that Anglophone users appear to be more amenable to this mode given their novice condition as consumers of dubbed content (Hayes, 2021) are opening up a golden opportunity for Netflix to keep developing its international strategy in these territories and to persuade viewers to embrace more dubbed material. However, the company's intention to stimulate the consumption of English-language dubbing could become sullied by a not-so-favourable reception amongst many of the users who have expressed their dissatisfaction with the poor quality of dubbed versions in terms of synchronisation, naturalness, and performances.

Given the "novel" status of this translation mode, the dubbing experience of English viewers could obviously be affected by multiple challenges posed by the absence of a solid dubbing tradition and consolidated guidelines leading the way in professional practice (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b). In this light, the aim of the subsequent section is to explore the potential flaws associated with the perceived low quality of the target text as well as the strategies implemented by the streaming giant to satisfy English viewers' demands and make the most of their dubbing experience.

In Pursuit of Quality Dubbing

Prior to the streaming era and contemporary digital cultures, viewers were deemed as passive consumers of media content, more conformist or simply less demanding. New approaches to viewing experience, however, has led present-day audiences to move from "the traditional role of consumers to an active role of prosumers" (Orrego-Carmona, 2018, p. 322) or, as described by Casarini (2014), "pro-active re-mediators who are highly proficient in program appraisal and directly interact

with the shows they watch" (p. 1). On a social level, this interaction surpasses the screen and becomes a powerful tool that brings together subscribers from all over the world while sharing their impressions on social media sites about the original or translated content they consume. The receivers' standpoint tends to be followed closely by distributors and localisers, who interpret users' feedback – either positive or negative – as a valuable source of information about their preferences and expectations. Even though in the eyes of spectators the most exposed and vulnerable AVT mode has traditionally been subtitling, owing to the ease with which the source and target dialogues can be compared (Díaz Cintas, 2003), the possibility of switching almost effortlessly between different linguistic versions on SVoD platforms has currently left dubbed products more prone to comparisons and judgements than ever before.

Placing the focus back on English as a target language, it is commonplace to find instances of criticism from lay viewers over translation choices and overall quality. Recent cases in point are the English subs in *Squid Game* (Dong-hyuk, 2021), accused of changing the meaning and tone of the Korean show, and the English dubs in the Spanish drama *Money Heist* (Pina, 2017–2021) or in the German series *How to sell drugs online (fast)* (Käßbohrer & Murmann, 2019–ongoing), accused of lacking naturalness and authenticity. Although such discussions on social networks and fora can contribute to raising awareness about the role and intricacies of audiovisual translation, most complaints arise from non-experts in the field. Despite this, their views are generally taken very seriously and often used as a yardstick to measure quality levels.

The top three most vilified aspects of dubbing by English-speaking target audiences are precisely related to some of the fundamentals of dubbing, namely lip sync, voice performance and natural dialogue, generally perceived as "too dubby". The so-called "dubby effect" has been described as a type of poorly synchronised dialogue which sounds artificial, distracting, and defies the viewers' cinematic experience. Since making English-language dubbed content sound less dubby is a priority for streaming platforms such as Netflix (Goldsmith, 2019) and, as acknowledged by the company itself, its subtitles and dubbing "are good but not yet great" (Weiss, 2021), what follows will focus on the most criticised aspects by viewers as a means to identify the potential constraints that might be impairing the quality of dubbed products and reducing English users' engagement.

Lip Sync

Acceptable lip sync – often used in real practice as an umbrella term to refer to both phonetic synchrony and isochrony – is singled out by Chaume (2007, 2012) as one of the quality standards that should be met in dubbing. In essence, synchronisation makes dubbing work by tricking viewers into believing that audio and image stem from the same source, a phenomenon described as a form of "ventriloquism" by Altman (1980). Phonetic synchrony involves matching the translated dialogue with the articulatory movements of the character's mouth by mirroring open and closed vowels and bilabial and labio-dental consonants, especially in close-ups and extreme close-ups.

As for isochrony, it concerns the temporal correspondence between the in- and out-times of the source and target dialogues. Complying with the principle of isochrony also means to avoid empty mouth flaps when the character's lips are moving or to utter sounds while closed, a particularity that Spiteri Miggiani (2021a) prefers to associate with a new type of synchrony named "rhythmic synchrony" (p. 6). According to Chaume (2012), isochrony deficiencies are very often at the bottom of complaints about a bad dubbing, because "this is where the viewer is most likely to notice the fault" (p. 69). Indeed, lip synchronisation (and rhythmic synchrony) adds realism to the diegetic construct and "promotes the strategy of invisible editing" (Magnan-Park, 2018,

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p. 219), whereas obvious discrepancies between the dialogue track and the image can severely disrupt the receiver's cinematic experience.

Some of the complaints posted by fans and reported by mainstream media concern unmatched lips in English dubbing, where inaccuracies in the length of the source and target utterances and in the characters' mouth movements have been perceived quite frequently. Target viewers have been using several adjectives such as annoying, distracting, off-putting, unsettling, upsetting, or simply bad to describe the lip sync of dubbed voices in non-local series and movies, especially those on Netflix (Salvi, 2020; Phillips, 2021; Pollard, 2021). Needless to say, this alleged defective or inadequate lip sync contributes to maximising the dubby effect, which threatens the integrity of the dubbed text and disturbs the viewer's suspension of disbelief.

Spiteri Miggiani (2021b) explains that the quality of lip synchronisation is sometimes reduced for the sake of naturalness in speech and tempo. On many occasions, prioritising natural-sounding dialogues as well as natural-sounding speed rate implies a less accurate text in terms of phonetic synchrony and isochrony. In fact, English might become more demanding as a target language due to its conciseness and slow pace in comparison with other languages such as French, Spanish, or Italian. A study by Pettorino and Vitagliano (2003) showed that, when dubbing from English into Italian, articulation rates were deliberately modified to abide by lip sync. Voice talents used to decrease pause durations by starting to dub a fraction of time earlier and finishing a fraction later, thus reducing the total number of original pauses by 7% and increasing articulation rates by around one syllable per second in the target version. In terms of translation, condensation techniques were also prioritised. The reverse strategies could thus be needed when dubbing from any of these languages into English to fine-tune asynchronous mouths and make it easier for viewers to become immersed in the dubbed film

without compromising their engagement and enjoyment.

Although the recurrence of imperfectly synchronised mouths can lead spectators to feel disconnected from the audiovisual material and divert their attention away from the storyline (Smith et al., 2014), an absolute match between the lip movements and the words enunciated is almost impossible to achieve and is, in Herbst's (1997) words, even "unnecessary" to maintain the illusion of lip synchronisation (p. 293). As suggested by Kilborn (1989), Herbst (1997), and Sjöberg (2018), viewers are prepared to accept and compensate instances of slight delays and occasional mismatches, which are seen as a natural and inevitable side effect of the dubbing process. However, it is also true that the lack of regular exposure to dubbing could accentuate this gap and prevent receivers from ignoring the imperfect mismatch between lips and audio. In this case, the inexperience of English viewers when watching dubbed fiction could lead them to pay too much attention to the character's lip movements, thus remaining more vulnerable to the lie behind dubbing and more sensitive to asynchronous mouths. This (un)conscious eye bias has been explained by the presence (or absence) of the so-called "dubbing effect" (Di Giovanni & Romero-Fresco, 2019; Romero-Fresco, 2020), which will be explored more deeply below.

Voice Performance

Another quality standard to be reached in dubbing is the use of realistic voices and credible performances on the part of dubbing actors (Chaume, 2007, 2012). One of the keys to a favourable dubbed version is precisely the voice cast, which is generally selected according to a number of criteria such as acting skills, professional competence, vocal tessitura, diction, technical and linguistic abilities, and the characters to be dubbed (Pena Torres, 2017). Delving into the Anglophone context, Spiteri Miggiani (2021a) observes that physique, gender, character role, and age tend to

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be prioritised in the selection of a suitable English voice for a character. Complete unity between the voice we hear and the body we see on screen is of utmost importance for credibility and authenticity. The voice gives a sense of individuality and different nuances to dialogues and characters (Kozloff, 2000). It also plays a foremost role in preserving the identity and personality of characters and needs to meet the expectations of viewers in terms of body-voice correspondence (Bosseaux, 2019). The character's voice also constitutes a great source of paralinguistic information through intonation, loudness, rhythmicality or tension, adding meaning to the denotative or purely linguistic content of the speaker's words. In fact, as stated by Kozloff (2000), vocal features are a powerful tool for listeners to judge emotions and recognise emotional states.

A questionnaire distributed to Spanish dubbing actors (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2020a) provided useful input on the most important skills that should be demonstrated when dubbing a character in the studio. Respondents unanimously placed acting skills at the top of the chart, which makes perfect sense considering that making a scripted and read-aloud dialogue sound credible and authentic is much more difficult to achieve if dubbers are not good enough at acting. Along with a satisfactory performance, proficiency in pronunciation and good diction were also identified as fundamental for successful dubbing essentially because a clear and correct pronunciation and diction are necessary skills to produce an intelligible and well-articulated oral dialogue (Wright & Lallo, 2009). Synchronisation also ranked highly for most dubbing actors, even if occasional blemishes in synchrony can be amended by the sound engineer in the last stage of the dubbing process. Mimicking the original actor's prosodic cues and reflecting the speaker's attitude were also included as two of the most important factors for dubbing a character successfully.

Issues pertaining to voice and performance were also rated high as the most expected quality standards by lay viewers of Persian dubbing according to a reception study with Iranian audiences (Ameri et al., 2018). Results showed that the consistency of voices through a whole series, the body-voice adherence (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b), and the accuracy of original pitch and tone in the dubbed version were at the top of the list for participants as the main factors to preserve quality in dubbing and preceded other important aspects such as fluent and natural translations.

When assessing the credibility of voice performances in the Anglophone context, it is not uncommon to find negative comments by users and mainstream media complaining about flat, exaggerated, artificial, unrealistic, and poor deliveries in dubbed dialogues as well as about the notable differences found between some original and dubbed voices in terms of vocal qualities and intonation (Goldsmith, 2019; Salvi, 2020; Pollard, 2021; Watkins, 2021). For instance, an article published in *Telegram & Gazette* (Phillips, 2021) lauded actress Ludivine Sagnier's natural voice in the French original version of *Lupin* while lambasting the dubbing actress' vocal qualities in the English version, which points once again to the vulnerability of dubbing in the streaming era:

> Sagnier's natural speaking voice, for example, is wonderful: warm, brisk, wholly distinctive. [...] Without Sagnier's actual voice, her first scene in the café renders the character colder, blunter and, in terms of intonation and vibe — hate to say it — far more of a scold.

The above falls in line with Spiteri Miggiani's (2021a) findings, reporting a general tendency towards flat speech melody and deflated intonation in English dubbing. The author also detects instances of unclear pronunciation and articulation, perhaps motivated by the faster pace adopted in English dubs for synchrony reasons. Such perceptions are at odds with the modulated melody and slower tempo typifying English language but are consistent with the results obtained by Kogan and Reiterer (2021) in their auditory analysis. Drawing on their study, which demonstrates a clear trade-off between pitch and rate in most

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languages, it may be possible to argue that the faster pace in English dubbing might be preventing the voice talents from resorting to a natural and fluctuated delivery, since these authors' data reveal that the faster the speech rate in a language, the less pitch is modulated. As a result of this pattern, flatter voice performances instigated by temporal and visual limitations might be maximising the dubby effect and impairing the quality of the English dubbed version.

The choice of accents could also prove detrimental to voice performance and the reception of the dubbed content. Hayes (2021) explains that the absence of proper guidelines has led platforms like Netflix to "experiment" (p. 3) and take arbitrary decisions on the type of accents and language varieties to be used in English dubs, sometimes ending in contrived and overacted performances. As noted by Mereu Keating (2021), the variety of accents and voice talents' sociolinguistic differences were already open to extensive criticism in the first films dubbed (from Italian) into English, where dubbed voices were accused of sounding "incongruously absurd" (p. 266).

The lack of a long-established and large dubbing industry in Anglophone territories has stunted the growth and development of a skilled and experienced school of dubbers such as the one cultivated in traditionally dubbing countries. Instead, English voice talents have carved out a niche in other professional markets like anime, advertising or animation, which also require a myriad of vocal techniques and specific competences but fairly different from the ones expected in the dubbing practice (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2015). This can obviously bring new challenges to voice performance, firstly, because the number of trained dubbing actors still might not be enough to satisfy the current demand and, secondly, because there is no standard or point of reference against which voice talents can compare their oral delivery (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b). Likewise, the new viewership will have to set its own tolerance threshold (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a) to eventually get used to the way dubbed dialogue sounds,

which might considerably differ from the "melody" of domestic productions or spontaneous discourse they are familiar with. In this regard, prosodic features become paramount to help to distinguish between what sounds natural within the context of dubbing and what sounds natural in fictional and non-fictional speech (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2020a).

Natural Dialogue

One more requirement for quality dubbing is the translated dialogue itself, which should sound realistic, be plausible, and achieve an acceptable and culture-specific oral register (Chaume, 2007, 2012). In the same way that set designers and scriptwriters bring into being true-to-life settings and dialogues that can trick the audience into believing that what they are watching and hearing looks real, translators/dialogue writers need to produce a translation that sounds natural within the context of dubbing. The language used in dubbing (also known as dubbese) must thus camouflage its prefabricated and written origin while giving the impression of "real realism" (Pérez-González, 2007, p. 7), conveyed by natural and convincing translated dialogues that are "widely accepted and recognised as such by the audience" (Chaume, 2012, p. 81).

Despite the above, dubbese has very often sparked controversy in dubbing countries, even if viewers are habituated and familiarised with dubbed speech. The main reason is that the language of dubbed dialogue imitates some features of spontaneous discourse but also coexists with a very normative and artificial fictional language (Baños-Piñero & Chaume, 2009; Romero-Fresco, 2009), thus widening the gap between dubbed and naturally occurring speech. Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that naturalness is not necessarily derived from the resemblance between the language used in dubbing and the language used in spoken discourse but rather from "what spectators recognise as the legitimate, acceptable language of audiovisual dialogue", which is ultimately embraced as "a

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variety of their language repertoire" (Pavesi et al., 2014, pp. 13–14).

The significant role that the credibility of the dubbed dialogue plays in the enjoyment of the media content has been highlighted by Pavesi et al. (2014), who conclude that viewer enjoyment "is strictly bound to plausibility as audiences become immersed in the fictional representation through realistic characters and settings, but also, we may add, credible dialogues" (p. 11).

Along with asynchronous lips and unrealistic voice performances, English dubbed dialogue has been accused of lacking naturalness with words and expressions that sound too dubby in the target language (Goldsmith, 2019; Miller, 2021). Several comments in the American social forum Quora have wondered why the dubbed versions of foreign-language films and series tend to sound so artificial and unnatural in English (Lavarini, 2020; Writes, 2021; Whitehead, 2021; amongst others). Fans of *Money Heist*, for instance, have cast doubt on the quality of dubs by complaining about jarring and stilted dialogues. This series is a very interesting case study, for Netflix decided to redub the first two seasons of the Spanish drama in order to cater to viewers' desires. In other words, redubbing was seen as a problem-solving technique to minimise the perceived dubby effect. Not only did the company hire a new dubbing studio and recruit a different voice cast, but they also retranslated the script for the sake of naturalness and idiomaticity. As shown in Sánchez-Mompeán (2021), the changes introduced in the retranslated version of the series were mainly based on reformulations, omissions, additions, or re-expressions of the previous translated lines with the purpose of making English dialogues sound more natural and truthful. Hints of literal translation were also recurrent in the redubbed script, a strategy curiously associated with low quality when the focus on the literal sense of the words implies rejecting a more functional and meaning-based translation.

Reflecting on the language used in English dubbing, Spiteri Miggiani (2021a, 2021b) points to less standardisation and a bit more over-domestication in an effort to sound as spontaneous as possible in the target language. This clearly diverges from the normative use characteristic in other dubbing cultures, such as Italy or Spain, but reflects the relative freedom Anglophone territories can certainly enjoy in profiling their own dubbese. Spiteri Miggiani (2021a) explains that English-language dubbing might "choose to distance itself by seeking customised strategies, while being aware of the norms that usually govern dubbing elsewhere" (p. 151). Public reception and engagement with the dubbed fiction could facilitate the gradual development of its personality by striking a balance between quality assurance and the constraints imposed by the mode itself. But, most importantly, the audience must end up accepting the way dubbing sounds and be ready to compromise with this "new" naturalness within the context of dubbing, which despite imitating spontaneous-like dialogue will inevitably stem from a pre-planned and prefabricated source.

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In sum, the dubby effect perceived by several English users might be reinforced by the presence of potential mismatches between the character's lips and the audio and between unrealistic deliveries and unnatural translations. Due to the importance of viewers feedback and the commitment of streaming services like Netflix to improve their subscribers' immersive experience in the (dubbed) content they consume, several strategies are being put into effect to guarantee high-quality levels in English dubs (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021).

In terms of production, the company is expanding its physical presence transnationally, which means that it now has production facilities in several countries around the globe. It has also optimised both its infrastructure by creating a separate division focused exclusively on dubbing innovation and its network of professionals. In fact, Netflix has added a number of professional

roles to the dubbing process such as the Director of International Dubbing, the Creative Dubbing Supervisor, and the Creative Manager of English Dubbing. Their tasks include supervising the recording and mixing sessions, preparing guideline documentation for localisation partners, collaborating with dubbing studios, and providing casting notes, preserving the creative intent of filmmakers throughout languages, and ensuring consistency between the different stages of the dubbing process, amongst others. The company is also investing in the centralisation of work by drawing up practical guidelines and templates to help practitioners deal with translation and recording issues. Quality control processes are also in force to guarantee that the company's standards are met across different languages.

The deliberate efforts made by Netflix to assess and enhance the quality of English dubbed versions could prove insufficient as long as audiences do not fully familiarise themselves with the dubbing mode. Although there is little doubt that poor quality certainly put viewers off the dubbed product, the novel profile of English-speaking users as dubbing consumers and their lack of exposure to this AVT practice could also exert a negative impact on viewer response and on their immersive experience. Against this background, as will be discussed in the next section, the dislike of many English viewers towards dubbing might not necessarily be based solely on quality reasons but also on their lower threshold of tolerance as compared to more accustomed audiences.

In Pursuit of Spectatorial Comfort

As acknowledged by Debra Chinn, Netflix's Head of International Dubbing, the company's intention is to create a new audience in Anglophone territories, one that is potentially more lenient towards dubbing (Goldsmith, 2019). Continuous and long-term exposure to dubbed content might be an essential step in attaining this goal. As a matter of fact, viewers play a significant role in making dubbing work. Evidence shows that in

traditionally dubbing countries dubbing works not only because it complies with a number of conventions that make it succeed, but also because viewers become immersed in the fictional world by activating several cognitive processes that make it work. These could certainly contribute to minimising the dubby effect (in terms of lip-sync, realistic performances and natural dialogue) while allowing for extra spectatorial comfort.

One of these processes is related to gaze behaviour, according to Di Giovanni and Romero-Fresco (2019) and Romero-Fresco (2020), who discovered the existence of a dubbing effect, that is, an unconscious eye movement performed by viewers accustomed to dubbing that leads them to accommodate their eyes and direct their gaze to those parts of the screen that can preserve their cinematic illusion and help them forget the "lie" behind dubbing. Spanish participants in the experimental study spent 95% of time looking at the eyes and 5% looking at the mouths when watching the dubbed version of a scene from *Casablanca* (Curtiz, 1942), whereas English participants watching the same clip in the original version spent 76% of the time looking at the eyes and 24% looking at the mouths. This "prevails over the natural way in which they [dubbing audiences] watch original films and real-life scenes" (Romero-Fresco, 2020, p. 17), confirmed by the viewing pattern of the Spanish group watching a scene from an original Spanish (76 % on eyes and 24% on mouths). It could then be argued that viewers usually exposed to dubbed products have developed a particular attention bias by habit and unconsciously so as to avoid being distracted by occasional mismatches between the words uttered by the characters and their lip movements.

Another process activated by viewers to make dubbing work is the suspension of disbelief, a notion first used by the literary critic Samuel T. Coleridge (1817) to explain the way readers can become immersed in the fictional universe of a book and accept the parallel world created in the story. This could help spectators disregard those instances of

unnatural delivery both from a linguistic and prosodic point of view. The suspension of *linguistic* disbelief refers to "the process that allows the dubbing audience to turn a deaf ear to the possible unnaturalness of the dubbed script while enjoying the cinematic experience" (Romero-Fresco, 2009, pp. 68–69). The author explains that the audience does not compare what they are hearing to what they would hear in a similar real-life conversation but to "their memory of that sound", determined by what they are used to hearing in other dubbed products. The more accustomed viewers are to this practice, the easier it is for them to preserve their cinematic illusion (Díaz Cintas, 2018). Due to the fact that their threshold of permissiveness is necessarily raised to enjoy and engage with the dubbed material, their degree of tolerance to potential inconsistencies, including the potential unnaturalness of the translated dialogue, is also higher.

By taking this idea a step forward, it could be assumed that viewers could also disregard whether or not the prosodic delivery adopted by dubbing actors in their performances can be equated with that of naturally occurring speech. The suspension of *prosodic* disbelief involves "accepting that how onscreen characters say what they say may not necessarily sound as they would sound in a similar real-life situation, but as on-screen characters usually sound in dubbed products" (Sánchez-Mompeán, 2020b, p. 296). Whilst watching dubbed content, spectators tend to associate the way characters speak within the dubbing context with their memory of the prosodic patterns recurrent in other dubbed dialogues rather than with the way spontaneous speech really sounds. In the pursuit of spectatorial comfort, they necessarily turn a deaf ear to the potential unauthenticity of dubbing voices and prosodic delivery (e.g., intonation, speed rate, loudness, rhythm, or tension). Once again, the more accustomed viewers are to "the melody of dubbing", the easier it will be for them to preserve their cinematic illusion and enjoy the fiction.

Although, as discussed above, mismatches between sound and image could be disregarded thanks to the dubbing effect, the unnaturalness of the translated dialogue could be reduced thanks to the suspension of *linguistic* disbelief, and unrealistic voice performances could be attenuated thanks to the suspension of *prosodic* disbelief, there are obviously other important factors that can determine audience response and wield a direct influence upon their enjoyment and engagement with the dubbed fiction (see Figure 1).

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Figure 1 Factors Contributing to Spectatorial Comfort in Dubbing
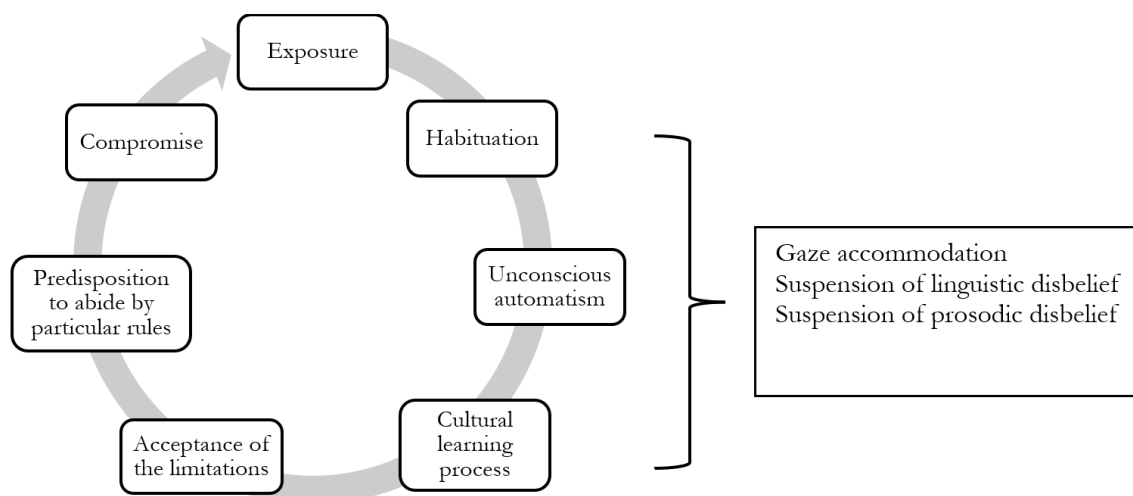
The lack of exposure of Anglophone viewers and, by extension, their lack of habituation and inexperience as consumers of dubbed content might leave them more vulnerable to the uncanniness of dubbing and less open to naturally engage with this mode, an opinion also held by Spiteri Miggiani (2021b). On the contrary, viewers accustomed to dubbing and exposed to it from an early age tend to find it easier to suspend (linguistic and prosodic) disbelief while unconsciously accommodating their gaze for the sake of enjoyment in the same way as they familiarise themselves with the filmic experience (Romero-Fresco, 2020). Even if dubbese is a type of prefabricated language and ordinary people do not really speak like dubbing actors (Whitman-Linsen, 1992), they seem to imagine that they do in the same way that they try to imagine that what is happening on screen could be perfectly real. Once they have internalised the natural processes activated to engage with the dubbed fiction as an intrinsic part of their cultural learning process (Garncarz, 2004), they are more willing to accept the limitations of the medium itself (Chaume, 2013), are more predisposed to abide by the rules of this practice, and feel ready to compromise with the dubbed fiction to help preserve their cinematic illusion.

These processes contribute to spectatorial comfort in dubbing but cannot be held fully accountable for audience engagement and satisfaction in Anglophone territories. It is true that the lack of exposure and habituation of many English-speaking viewers increases their scepticism about dubbing, but quality also plays a fundamental part in this equation (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a). The aim is to find the right balance between the aforementioned processes and a dubbed product with enough quality to make it easier for viewers to habituate to this AVT mode and be more lenient towards it. Although, by tradition, English-speaking audiences have been the least willing to consume non-local content and the least tolerant to embrace dubbing (Rowe, 1960;

O'Halloran, 2020), nowadays English viewers are potentially more amenable to new practices and formats (Hayes, 2021) – certainly a step in the right direction to eventually become accustomed to and accept English dubs.

Conclusions

Streaming platforms have enjoyed a rapturous international reception since they landed in our mediascape, bringing with them a huge demand for translation services and, in some cases, defying established norms and conventions. The rise in dubbed content consumption in non-dubbing countries is a direct consequence of this changing global industry, where users are being given the chance to access more foreign fiction than ever before. Platforms like Netflix are investing heavily in dubbing and making inroads into the Anglophone market, traditionally less amenable to consuming translated material in general and dubbed content in particular. Determined to shape viewing habits and engage novel users in the dubbing experience, this strategy comes with more openness to listening to consumers' needs and expectations and an increasing willingness to offer high-quality English dubs. Nonetheless, despite the efforts put into drawing in a wider and more satisfied audience in these territories, an unfavourable response on the part of the general public on social networks and fora and reported in the press has called into question the quality of English-language dubbed versions and the possibility of consolidating a dubbing industry in Anglophone countries.

Taking English end users' reactions and comments about dubbed products as a starting point, this paper has addressed the relationship between quality and engagement by focusing on lip sync, voice performance, and natural translated dialogues, generally disapproved and perceived as too dubby by the public. These constraints, accentuated by the lack of a solid professional industry and dubbing tradition (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021b), exert a negative impact on the quality of the final version and stand in the way of full audience engagement.

Although quality plays a foremost role in eliciting a positive response from viewers, habituation can also be regarded as a determining factor in how they engage with and become immersed in the dubbed fiction (Spiteri Miggiani, 2021a, 2021b). By activating several cognitive processes stimulated by exposure to the dubbing mode, end users might gradually adopt a more lenient approach while raising their threshold of tolerance towards the dubbing environment. Engaging is thus a matter of both quality and habituation, which can be seen as two interrelated forces working together in favour of enjoyment and spectatorial comfort and which are essential to minimise the dubby effect perceived in dubbed versions.

Whilst this article tackles important issues relating to audience engagement and their expectations as novel consumers of dubbed content, it would be interesting to delve further into the rationale behind viewer complaints and the interplay between users' age and reactions towards this AVT modality. Reception studies could contribute to a deeper understanding of English viewers' preferences and real performance and how these affect their engagement with the dubbed fiction. This paper also has practical implications for professional development to attract a target audience more open to foreign content and more predisposed to dubbing. Creating a high-quality product in terms of synchronisation, delivery, and translation is obviously necessary to engage and satisfy spectators, but higher exposure and habituation can also hold the key to making English users welcome dubbing more positively and enjoy a similar experience to original viewers.

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Author Guidelines

Title: Frailejones en los cerros bogotanos
Technique: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 1.26 m x 1.26 m
1995

Author Guidelines

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With the aim of making room for diverse voices and languages, and looking to maintain conformity with international standards in scientific journals, *Íkala* advises authors to follow the guidelines below, which are designed to make file uploading easier, and get a prompt review of your manuscript.

General Guidelines

To guarantee a transparent editorial process for authors, editors, reviewers, readers and indexing systems, *Íkala* uses the online Open Journal System (ojs) publishing platform, which follows international standards for scientific journals. Before uploading your manuscript to this platform, please note the following:

1. *Íkala* publishes original and unpublished material related to research, practice, and reflection in the areas of language and culture, linguistics, literature, translation, and language teaching and learning. Manuscripts that do not fall within this scope or those that have been previously published in other journals, in part or in full, or are in the process of being published elsewhere, will be rejected regardless of the channel used for publication.

2. Manuscripts submitted for consideration to a regular or special issue must meet the highest standards of academic excellence, advance theoretical knowledge, address current and cutting-edge topics in applied linguistics, and contribute to or stimulate current discussions in the field, while offering new and original interpretations on issues within the focus and scope of *Íkala*.

3. Regardless of the type of manuscript, authors are expected to demonstrate rigor in the collection and analysis of data; present interesting results, discussions and conclusions; display a great depth of analysis; and write with sophistication, precision and conciseness, avoiding biased or prejudicial language.

4. *Íkala* publishes articles in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. Authors

of manuscripts written in other languages or those with sections using non-Romance languages will not be accepted, as the journal does not have the human and technological resources to evaluate and publish content in those languages.

5. *Íkala* only accepts empirical studies, literature reviews, theoretical articles, methodological articles, case studies and book reviews. Manuscripts that do not fall within these categories (e.g., reflections, pedagogical experiences, and translations), will not be accepted.

6. Manuscript reception does not imply its acceptance or publication. Following the criteria of the refereed scientific publications, journal editors will be in charge of judging the relevance of the submitted manuscripts according to their field of knowledge. After a preliminary editorial review, the manuscripts that they consider not publishable (outside the scope of the journal, with serious methodological flaws, etc.) will be rejected and returned to the authors. Only those manuscripts that conform to the characteristics described in this section will be submitted to a double-blind peer review process.

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10. Authors who do not agree with the changes will have the opportunity to discuss these with the journal Editor. In any case, they are expected to return the manuscript within a maximum period of two weeks. If the corrections are not received in the indicated time, the manuscript may be published in a later issue, other than the one previously agreed upon.

11. *Íkala* follows the Committee of Publications Ethics (COPE) guidelines, and, in accordance with these, rejects all forms of plagiarism. This is why when the peer review process is completed, but before copy-editing, the accepted manuscripts are run through a similarity detection software called Crosscheck (based on iThenticate). Manuscripts with a similarity percentage greater than 25% will be rejected and this decision will be final. So will be manuscripts that appear to be redundant or duplicate publications, even if they are written in a different language.

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13. Changes in the number or order of the authors will only be accepted in the first phase

of the submission and review process, and must be duly justified and supported. Authors who have published an article in Íkala must wait two years to be published again, unless they aspire to publish in a special issue.

Style Guidelines

The writing style of manuscripts submitted to *Íkala* is reviewed several times in the publication process: when initially received, during peer review, and during copy editing and layout. To ensure that your manuscript passes the first review, consider the following:

1. All manuscripts must be anonymous. That is, not include the names of the authors anywhere. The manuscript must also be sent in an editable file, such as OpenOffice, Microsoft Word or in rich text format (.rtf).
2. Manuscripts must fall within one of the following categories: empirical study, case study, literature review, methodological article, theoretical articles, and book reviews.
3. All manuscripts, with the exception of literature reviews and book reviews, should be between 8,000 and 8,500 words, including the abstracts in three languages and the references. Literature reviews should be no longer than 11,000 words long, with no less than 50 bibliographic references. Book reviews should be in the range of 2,500 to 3,000 words and must be about recent scientific publications (publications made within the last two years) related to the profile of the journal.
4. Titles should be maximun 15 words long and include one or two key words. They should also feature the most specific part of the article at the beginning so that the topic of the article is the most visible part.
5. Abstracts must be written in the original language of the manuscript and in the other three languages declared by the journal. However, at the time of submission only the abstract in the original language is required. The abstracts in

the other three languages should be included after acceptance of the manuscript, during the copyediting stage.

6. The abstract included in the manuscript must have a maximum of 200 words and must be structured according to APA 7 norms.
7. Keywords must be a minimum of five words or phrases and follow the guidelines provided on the journal platform.
8. The line spacing must be 1.5. The font size must be 12 points.
9. The italic font attribute should be used instead of underlining (except in URLs) and only to denote terms written in languages other than the main text, or terms on which you want to draw attention.
10. All manuscripts must include a title, an abstract, five keywords and a list of references. In addition, empirical or case studies must include clearly defined introduction, theoretical framework, method, results, discussion and conclusions sections.
11. The references must be sufficient, relevant, current, and reliable, and follow the norms proposed by *APA Publication Manual (7th Ed., chapter 9).*
12. All illustrations, figures, and tables must be inserted in the text (body of the manuscript), not at the end of it or separately, and follow APA guidelines for presentation.
13. Footnotes should be used instead of endnotes. However, as suggested by the *APA Publication Manual* (chapter 2, 2.13), these should not include complicated, irrelevant, or nonessential information, or be used to provide bibliographic references because all these can be distracting to readers. Also, they should convey just one idea and be less than a paragraph.
14. The headings must present a clear hierarchy that accounts for the structure of the manuscript according to its type and the required sections. They should not be numbered. Due to the length and type of texts published in

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Íkala, three levels of subordination for headings should be sufficient to develop the authors' ideas. However, there may be exceptions.

15. Paragraphs should be well structured (develop an idea, have a logical connection with the previous paragraph and the one that follows, use logical connectors to show the relationship between sentences, etc.) and keep the format as simple as possible. This mean without indentation, unless there are direct quotations with more than 40 words; and without bullets, page breaks, justification, or enumerations, since the journal has its own style sheet.

16. Self-citation must not exceed 10 percent of total number of citations in the manuscript.

17. If the article is derived from a thesis or dissertation, you need to: (a) make sure this is not published in any open access database, unless the focus of the article is different enough so that this is not considered a duplicate publication; (b) state that the article derives from a thesis in the "Source" slot of the article's submission metadata.

18. If the project from which the article is derived received funding, this must be specified in the article's metadata as well under "Supporting agencies."

19. Authors' names should be written on the platform the way the authors wish for them to appear on the article.

20. Not required categories such as author's affiliation, country and bio statement of maximun 60 words should be filled as well and the ORCID link must be double clicked so that the organization can send you a validation message.

21. If there are any acknowledgments, these should be written in the slot "Comments to the Editor" and occupy a single paragraph of no more than 100 words. In this, authors should clearly identify contributors, including funding sources or editing services, and briefly describe their role (e.g., research design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, preparation of the manuscript).

Guidelines for Writing Specific Sections of the Manuscript

Writing the Title, Abstract, and Keywords

The title, abstract and key words are the most visible parts of an article. They are used by abstracting and indexing services to cross reference. As such, they must be written carefully and strategically.

The Title: The title is perhaps the most important part of an article, as it acts as an advertisement for the article, can lead readers interested in the topic to your article, and can help them predict its content. (*How to get your Research Published... ...and then Noticed,* Elsevier). Therefore, when writing their manuscript's title, please to take into account the following:

1. Ensure that it accurately reflects the content of the manuscript so that readers can easily identify if it is of relevance to them or not.
2. Make sure that it is clear, specific, brief, and where possible, complete.
3. Avoid unusual abbreviations or jargon.
4. Refrain from using phrases such as: "a study of", "investigations of", "observations on".
5. If it is becoming difficult to write it, identify the research problem and start from there.
6. Try to make it interesting, attractive and ingenious so that people are motivated to read the article (*How to Get your Research Published......and then Noticed- Elsevier, and APA Publication Manual-American Psychological Association*).

The Abstract: The abstract plays a vital role in effectively cataloging research in many online databases accessible to scholars around the world such as *Google, PubMed, Academic Search Premier, Thomson Reuters* (now *Web of Science*), EBSCO *Host*, and many others. These databases allow work to be more easily discovered, read, used, and cited by scholars who might not otherwise be able to reach it. Therefore, it is very important to be strategic when writing this section. When doing it, please remember to:

1. Include many, if not all, of the keywords associated with the manuscript;
2. Use accessible language that is easily understood by a wide audience and avoid both non-standard abbreviations and citations;
3. Highlight the most interesting elements of your work;
4. Use numbers, not their names, except for numbers at the beginning of a sentence;
5. Use double parentheses and the letter (a), if they include lists in English; and a single parenthesis and number, if they include lists in Spanish, French or Portuguese;
6. Faithfully represent the article, so that it can be used by indexing and documentation services, and other stakeholders in the field of scientific publication;
7. Summarize the problem, state the purpose of the research, clearly define where and with whom it was done, the methods of data collection and analysis employed, the main results and implications of the study, if it is part of a research article;
8. Be accurate and detailed (i.e., express, where, how, with whom, when, for what purpose) so that readers can easily decide whether or not to read the entire article.
9. make sure it is written in a single paragraph and is self-explanatory since abstracts are often separated from the article (*APA Publication Manual,* Chapter 3, 3.3).

To learn more about how abstracts are written, depending on the type of article, you can consult the *APA Publication Manual,* Chapter 3, 3.3.

The Keywords: They are important words that, along with those in the title, capture the essence of the article effectively and are used by abstracting and indexing services to make cross references. Therefore, choosing the correct key words can increase the chances that other researchers will find your article. In general, when writing your keywords, please remember that these should:

1. Be specific and avoid general terms such as "philosophy" or "philology," plural terms, and multiple concepts (for example, "and", "of").

2. Include only abbreviations that are firmly established in the field (e.g., EFL, ESL, SFL).

3. Number at least five, be written in small caps, in any order, and separated by semi-colon.

For more information about how to define the keywords of a manuscript, authors can consult the following sites which provide lists of terms used for retrieving documents and publications in different academic field: *Unesco Thesaurus* and ERIC *online* (http://vocabularies.unesco.org/browser/thesaurus/en/ and https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=all)

Writing the Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Results and Discussion, and Conclusion Sections

The Introduction: In research articles, in general, the introduction begins with a broad topic that narrows as the reader progresses. Then, it presents the following aspects in a clear and concise manner: (a) the research problem, (b) the importance of the research for the field (c) the research or theoretical gap), (d) the research purpose and question, (e) the context, the type of study and the participants, and (f) a preview of the following sections.

The Theoretical Framework: In research articles, this section clearly outlines the perspective(s) from which the research is being done, and the specific theories and key concepts on which it is based. In addition, it includes a synthesis of similar studies conducted on the subject in the context of the study and around the world, and a summary of the main issues surrounding the topic under discussion.

The Method: In Íkala, all research articles must include a Method section. In general, this Method section includes a brief description of the following: (a) the research tradition or type of study that was conducted, (b) the participants of the study, if any, and (c) the data collection and analysis procedures used (e.g.,, what, when, how, how often, how many, from whom and for what purpose). Besides,

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following guidelines from APA, which state that "Authors [should] be required to state in writing that they have complied with APA ethical standards in the treatment of their sample, human or animal, or to describe the details of treatment." (APA *Certification of Compliance with APA Ethical Principles)*; the section should also include this note.

The Discussion and Conclusion: In Íkala, these two sections can be presented together. Whether they are presented together or separately, they should contain: a summary of (a) the results obtained and the main arguments and a statements made, (b) the inconsistencies between the results presetned and those of other studies, and (c) possible causes for this. Besides, this section should contain an explanation of the following: (a) how the study clarifies, expands or contradicts what others have done; (b) the meaning of the results or the "so what?"; (c) the value or contribution of the results for the field; (d) the theoretical or practical consequences or implications for professional development, research, or language policies, etc.; (e) the limitations of the study, if any; and (f) the questions for futher research stemming from the findings.

The Editorial Process

Once your manuscript is received, *Íkala* will follow several steps which can be divided into five key stages: reception, peer review, editorial preparation, publication, and post-publication. It is important that you are familiar with these stages and follow them on the platform OJS, as this will indicate if the article has passed through any of them.

Reception

This stage includes the following steps:

1. The journal editor does a preliminary reading of the manuscript to verify that it meets the minimum requirements in terms of content, format, number of words, etc.

2. If the manuscript does not meet the minimum requirements, it will be rejected and the author(s) will be notified via email.

3. If the manuscript meets the minimum requirements, the editor will do an initial review to decide if it meets the journal's criteria for selection. The editor can take up to two weeks to do this review, depending on the number of new submissions.

4. If after the initial review, the editor considers the manuscript not worthy of a peer review, it will be rejected and the author(s) will be notified by email.

Peer review

If the manuscript is deemed worthy of a peer review, the following steps will be taken:

1. The editorial team will search for scholars who are considered experts in the topic to do the review and notify the author(s) that the process has begun. This process may take up to four weeks. If peer reviewers are not ensured within this time, the author(s) will be notified to decide whether to continue waiting or to withdraw the manuscript.

2. Peer reviewers who receive an invitation will be given three weeks to complete the review.

3. If one of the peer reviewers does not complete the peer review within this time, the manuscript will be sent to a third peer reviewer.

4. If, when both peer reviews have been submitted, a contradictory recommendation is noticed, the editorial team will search for a third reviewer. However, the final decision could be made by the editor based on the available reviews and the editor's academic judgement.

5. If the manuscript is accepted by the two reviewers, and at least one of them suggests modifications, the manuscript will be returned to the authors for correction. They should follow the suggestions and send a revised version of their manuscript along with a letter to each reviewer explaining the modifications

made. A period of three weeks is usually provided for this.

6. If the revisions are accepted by the two peer reviewers, the manuscript will be sent for copyediting.

7. If the manuscript is accepted without modifications, it will be sent straight to copy editing.

Editorial Preparation

The duration of this stage depends on the number of manuscripts accepted for publication. As *Íkala* publishes issues four times a year (quarterly), it must prioritize the manuscripts that will be published first. In general, this stage includes the following steps:

1. Before sending the manuscript to copy editing, the editor will do a second review of the manuscript, and then, she will send it to copy editing.

2. The copy editor will ensure that the manuscript conforms to APA publication standards and may ask that the authors to make some corrections related to the following aspects: content (to complete or clarify a passage); grammar (punctuation, use of passive and active voice, verb tenses, syntactic organization of sentences); lexical (use of some words or expressions, referents); textual (cohesion, coherence, flow of ideas, construction of paragraphs, etc.); para- and extra-linguistic features (italics, bold, exclamation marks, citations, footnotes, titles, subtitles, citations, references, acknowledgements, figures, tables, etc.). These corrections will follow the norms of the language in which the manuscript was written. At this stage, authors will only be allowed to correct aspects suggested by the editor or by the copy editors.

3. After all the suggested corrections have been made, the manuscript will be sent for layout design.

4. Once the layout is done, the editor will make a final review of the manuscript and send it to the authors for their approval, along with the Assignment of Rights and Declaration of Authorship form, which must be signed by all authors.

Publication

Once all the authors have signed the Assignment of Rights and Declaration of Authorship, the manuscript will be ready for publication in the corresponding issue.

Post-Publication

After the article is published, it is necessary that the authors take several steps to guarantee its diffusion through media and that their work reach a wide audience.

Some of these steps are the following:

1. Upload your article to ResearchGate.net and Academia.edu. These two networks are designed to help researchers increase their readership and citations which are two key aspects of measuring the impact of their work. Having the information and articles on these websites is very easy and it takes only a few minutes. Also they are free. If you already have an account, you just have to upload the article. If you don't have one, click on the links below to register and share your work.

   https://www.researchgate.net/signup.SignUp.html
   https://www.academia.edu

2. Obtain an Open Researcher and Contributer ID (ORCID ID) if you don't have one. ORCID is an open and independent registry that helps identify and connect researchers around the world. It provides researchers with an ID number so they are clearly identifiable by others. Sharing this ID number with colleagues around the world will enable them to track your work. Also, journals can connect your publication DOI to your ORCID account, omitting the need to upload anything. To

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create an account in this registry, go to the following link: https://orcid.org/login

3. Share your article in the following spaces and media:

- At conferences
- In a classroom for teaching purposes;
- With your colleagues

- On your personal blog or website
- In the institutional repository
- In a subject repository (or another non commercial repository)
- In academic collaboration networks such as Mendeley o Scholar Universe
- On social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.

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