

AYONGHE LUM SUZANNE

Fundamentals of Subtitling

Concepts, Theory and Practice

Éditions CLÉ
Yaoundé
2021

© 2023 Les Editions CLE en coédition avec Nouvelles Editions Numériques Africaines (NENA)
ISBN numérique : 978-2-37918-670-7

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ISBN : 978-9956-0-9519-3

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Foreword

The digital turn in the late 1990's and the rapid spread of fast Internet connections have left a permanent mark on contemporary society. One important effect of technological advancement is evident in the dramatic increase in the production and worldwide circulation of audiovisual materials, which has promoted the wide scale access and consumption of tele cinematic products for entertainment, leisure, information gathering, and, more recently, language learning. Audiovisual translation too has benefitted from the introduction of digital technologies and, at the same time, has contributed substantially to this societal change by fostering the dissemination of foreign languages and cultures through subtitled and dubbed products.

In the context of today's multimedia society, audiovisual translation (AVT) is gaining great visibility and relevance as a means of fostering communication and dialogue in an increasingly multicultural and multilingual environment. AVT is the umbrella term used to refer to the translation of programmes in which the verbal dimension is only one of the many shaping the communication process. The concurrence of different semiotic layers through the visual (images, written text, gestures) and audio (music, noise, dialogue) channels makes the translator's task particularly challenging in this field. Of the several modes available to translate audiovisual programmes (Gambier 2003), subtitling is arguably the most commonly used because it is cheap and fast. Other professional practices are interpreting, voiceover and dubbing

The main assumptions underlying research in this emerging field include the rich contextualised language input offered by original and translated audiovisual material and the motivating context. This context is fostered by multimodal texts, capable of entertaining and engaging learners in classroom activities, thus lowering their affective filter (Krashen, 1985) and facilitating second language acquisition.

This book, *Fundamentals of Subtitling: Concepts, Theory and Practice* will momentarily help in the implementation of learner-centred tasks based on interactive audiovisual translation activities to be carried out both individually and in groups, under the guidance of the teacher or independently to promote autonomous and cooperative language learning.

The main objective of the present volume is to systematically review the empirically-based experimental studies in the conceptualization, theorizing and practice of Subtitling, in order to offer a detailed and comprehensive picture of the state of the art. The book is organised in nine chapters followed by a concluding critical discussion of the main issues and some suggestions on promising strands for future research.

The first chapter obliges as an introduction to screen translation and subtitling in particular. Such an introduction was considered necessary because of the degree to which screen translation depends on moving images themselves. From the moment it came into existence, cinema brought about the creation of a completely new language, which involves three aspects, namely image, sound and words. The problem of translation is how to cope with this threefold creative relationship without losing the viewer at the same time. The chapter is dedicated to a thorough analysis of the history of screen translation methods (subtitling and revoicing) from the very beginning of their existence, which coincides with the birth of cinema as a medium, their subsequent growth and development, up to the final stage in

which they are today. The whole process of subtitling in particular has been broken down into stages and examined in detail, from the moment a job is assigned by the distributor/client to a subtitling vendor up until the moment the film is screened or broadcast. The advantages and disadvantages of subtitling have also been analysed, as they are important from a subtitler's point of view, in order to stress the advantages and constraints of this translation genre that differentiate it from any other and adapt the translation strategies used in it accordingly.

The main aim of chapter two was to present a critical discussion on literacy, AL and ALP with specific reference to the sometimes opaque and overlapping nature of issues usually associated with these terms. It further situated the current AL intervention at the UB within the context of recent studies on AL development. An overview of languages (English, French and CPE) and ALP in the Cameroonian context was presented, as well as a critical analysis of the use of subtitling in tertiary academic contexts. The methodologies used in what were considered important studies were analysed and any limitations identified. Possible strategies to avoid such weaknesses or gaps in the current study were highlighted. It should be noted that this study intends to determine the impact of subtitling on AL levels, but also to establish whether specific aspects of AL ability are improved significantly by exposing students to subtitled audiovisual material.

The first section is devoted to captioning, a general term used to indicate a wide range of writing activities on the screen, including "interlingual subtitles. Experimental studies focusing on a variety of linguistic aspects have been carried out involving procedures of standard interlingual subtitling (from L2 to L1), the most developed line of research to date, but also reverse interlingual subtitles (from L1 to L2), and intralingual subtitles (from L2 to L2). Positive outcomes of learners' improvements are reported on incidental vocabulary acquisition, idiomatic expression retention, development of pragmatic awareness, listening comprehension skills, and writing and translation skills.

The third chapter revisits the pedagogic imperatives of subtitling. It is evidence that pedagogical translation has a complicated and complex history. Various approaches and methods have different attitudes towards this activity. Scholars all over the world addressed a lot of advantages and disadvantages of using translation as a means of teaching a foreign language. However, there is no definite answer whether it should or should not be used for this purpose. The supporters of modern teaching methods managed to push it away after the grammar-translation method faded out. A number of new approaches disapproved of using mother tongue in foreign language teaching which automatically resulted in the disappearance of pedagogical translation, as well. Krashen's theory of language acquisition (as cited in Šamalová, 2012, supported this conviction that mother tongue is undesirable.

The main aim and objective of chapter four is to explore both theoretical and practical aspects of subtitling quality. The chapter seeks to call courtesy to the factors influencing the quality of subtitles and also to provide suggestions to improve the state of affairs within the subtitling industry in terms of quality. In order to examine the potential factors that influence the perception of subtitling quality, particularly in the professional context, two rounds of online surveys were conducted to establish the working conditions of subtitlers. This book chapter provides a systematic analysis of the numerous parameters that have an impact on the quality of subtitling, both in theory and in professional reality, and offers a

detailed insight into the working environment of subtitlers. At the same time, it endeavours to draw attention to the need to ensure decent working conditions in the industry.

The fifth chapter reignites, Scholarly attention within Translation Studies is increasing and several studies on non-professional subtitling have been published over the past decade. In these publications, scholars have considered issues related to quality, politics, translation guidelines, and social implications. Interest has grown among researchers due to several reasons: on the one hand, scholars and professional subtitlers are concerned about the expansion of non-professional subtitling practices, and on the other, successful crowdsourcing initiatives have shown the possible impact of these models on the translation market. This reinforces the influence of user-generated content on translation flows and on the way, *translation* is conceived as an object of study.

Chapter six presents a more recent strand of experimental research combining captioning and revoicing tasks, and pays attention to studies on combined reverse interlingual subtitling and, to a lesser extent, on combined intralingual captioning and revoicing (from L2 to L2). With its systematic, comprehensive and up-to-date review of experimental studies, this volume constitutes a valuable reference book both for researchers who approach this area of study for the first time and for scholars who have already worked on audiovisual translation as an instrument for language learning. Audiovisual translation research has been and still is primarily focused on analyzing the linguistic code (see e.g., Gambier 2013 and 2016, Sanz Ortega 2011 and Zabalbeascoa 2008), omitting the role and influence of the non-verbal elements. The complexity of the network of elements and mechanisms involved in the processing and the intricacy of the process of reception itself still needs to be addressed, as it would be important to define not only the relationships between the different codes but also the purpose they fulfill. In order to achieve such knowledge, more reception and empirical research is demanded to investigate, among other factors: patterns and habits of viewers in terms of reading, watching and overall processing behavior and their perception on subtitling strategies.

The seventh chapter re-echoes Subtitling manufacturers' main objective being productivity, their research efforts are geared to shore up their subtitle preparation suites. Innovative versions integrate new user interfaces with time-saving tools that free up the subtitler by handling automatically some of the subtitling tasks, like sound and shot detectors, automated media transcription, assisted translation tools and extraction of dialogue from scripts. In this sense, the wider breadth and scope of genres being distributed audiovisually corporate videos, scientific and technical documentaries with a high level of lexical repetition – justifies the incipient use of corpora, translation memory systems and automated translation in subtitling, a promising development albeit in need of further scrutiny. Thus, the assertion that today's communication landscape is deeply rooted in and reliant on the potential offered by audiovisual technology would come as no surprise to anyone. The breakthrough in the late 1920s of coalescing moving images and sound, in what has been traditionally known in the cinema industry as the 'talkies', signaled the start of massive developments in the way information is produced, transmitted, shared and consumed audiovisually.

On the issue of Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, focused is on one of the main modalities of accessibility: subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (**SDH**). There are two main types of hearing loss: conductive and sensorineural. When there is a conductive loss,

the cochlea functions normally but the sound information is not properly conducted to the inner ear. However, immersive content is not always accessible to all, and research is needed on how to cater for the needs of different kinds of users. There is little doubt that, nowadays, audiovisual products lead the way we access and consume culture and information from an early age, and as such, are essential to how oral and written language is acquired and developed. Audiovisual products are multisemiotic constructs that convey information through auditory and visual channels in the form of verbal (e.g., dialogues) and non-verbal signs (e.g., facial expressions), and codes. Spoken (and written) language—the linguistic code—is therefore only one of the many signifying codes in audiovisual products, and interacts with other signs and codes to create audiovisual meaning.

The last chapter on Interlingual and intralingual dynamics of subtitles in the second language classroom, sought to provide a brief, systematic review of recent studies that address language learning aspects aided by the instructional/experimental use of subtitled and captioned materials. This synthesizes the relevant and groundbreaking literature in the field of SLA that interfaces with subtitling and captioning, while outlining their goals and main findings. It also aims to unveil which topics have merited scholar attention the most in the past years. Finally, some considerations are made as to possible avenues for future research, taking into account the existing literature and under-investigated issues.

The present book is also a useful point of reference for teachers who are willing to introduce innovative teaching practices in education, as it accurately describes a variety of tasks successfully implemented in different learning settings, including face-to-face, online, and blended contexts. It offers pedagogical models, guidelines, and suggestions, while at the same time it does not conceal the limitations and drawbacks inherent in audiovisual translation tasks.

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Preface

The book *Fundamentals of Subtitling: Concepts, Theory and Practice* is a nine-chapter volume that views the basics of subtitling from the conceptual, theoretical, and practical perspectives. The book is enthused by the poor recognition of subtitling as an audiovisual translation mode, the absence and lack of application of subtitling in primary, secondary and tertiary education. In concrete language policies, the book is aimed at easing and/or facilitating the implementation of subtitling. The chapters have been sequentially arranged to facilitate a flow of thought from one section to another. Since most African countries continue to suffer from borrowed colonial languages, usually known as “official languages”, which have been inherited together with the colonial customs and ways of thinking of the colonial masters, it is probable that the use of subtitling, together with adequate and concrete language policies put in place, could pave the way for teaching and learning national languages. This situation therefore necessitates the use of subtitling in schools, colleges, universities, television stations, at home, etc.

Thus, the book has been designed for use by people of all categories (normal persons, the hearing-impaired, and disabled persons) in an attempt to curb misunderstandings and consequently conflicts among all groups of people as a requisite to reduce conflicts and bring peace in all communities. The book is therefore of significant connotation to young and old scholars, and researchers in general. It is intended to serve all those who are interested in: translation and interpretation, audiovisual translation (subtitling, dubbing, voice-over), audio-description, education and special education, academic-literacy, linguistics, languages, colonial languages, official languages, indigenous languages, national languages, film and film studies, conflicts, bilingualism, multilingualism, multiculturalism, cross-culturalism and interculturality, and for the deaf and hard of hearing, as well as for those who are still interested in forging ahead on the subject especially at the tertiary level of the educational system. Thus, emphasis has been placed on the interlingual and intralingual dynamics of subtitles in the second language classroom, on the theory, practice, and research, and on the professional realism of the subject, as well as on its pedagogic imperative, based on examples of the utilization of subtitling drawn from case studies aimed at obtaining systems that are tailored specifically for the growth and development of African countries in general.

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List of Abbreviations

NPS : Non-professional subtitling	GCE : General Certificate of Education
ADEA : Association for the Development of Education in Africa	IELP : Intensive English Language Programme
AG : Akademiese Geletterdheid	IL : Indigenous Language
AL : Academic Literacy	IQ : Intelligence Quotient
ALCAM : Atlas Linguistique du Cameroun	L1 : First Language
ALP : Academic Language Proficiency	L2 : Second Language
AngE : Anglophone English	LEP : Limited English Proficiency
ASTI : Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters	MIMCULT : Ministère de la Culture
AV : Audiovisual	MINCOF : Ministère de la Condition Féminine
AVT : Audiovisual Television	MINEDB : Ministère de l'Education de Base
AVT : Audiovisual Translation	MINEFI : Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances
BBC : British Broadcasting Corporation	MINJEUN : Ministère de la Jeunesse
BICS : Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills	MINREST : Ministère de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique
CABTAL : Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy	NACALCO : National Association for Language Committee
CALP : Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency	NCI : National Captioning Institute
CamP : Cameroon Pidgin	OL : Ordinary Level
CCTV : Closed Captioned Television	PE : Pidgin English
CIRC : Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition	PROPELCA : Operational Research Programme for Language Education in Cameroon
CPE : Cameroon Pidgin English	SE : Standard English
CRTV : Cameroon Radio and Television Corporation	SIL : Summer Institute of Linguistics
DVD : Digital Versatile Disc	SLS : Same Language Subtitling
EAL : English as an Additional Language	SPSS : Statistics Package for the Social Sciences
EAP : English for Academic Purposes	STV : Spectrum Television
EBL : English as a Base Language	TALL : Test of Academic Literacy Levels
EFL : English as a Foreign Language	TV : Television
EOP : English for Occupational Purposes	UB : University of Buea
ESL : English as a Second Language	UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
ESP : English for Specific Purposes	

Chapter One

Conceptualising subtitling and its historical foundations

Introduction

A plethora of academics advocate the use of subtitling in language learning. Díaz Cintas (2001) foresaw the potential of subtitling in foreign language learning by recognising subtitling as a new and motivating exercise for language learners. It is imperative for teachers to incorporate subtitling into their teaching routine since it can enhance vocabulary acquisition and cultural awareness. Subtitling also involves learners in a critical reflection on the linguistic aspects of TV or film products and helps them become acquainted with tools pertaining to much of the professional world in general, such as videos and the PC, which they will most probably use in their future careers. Vermeulen (2003) and Wagener (2006) also suggest the potential of subtitling as a pedagogical tool. Vermeulen proposes subtitling as a motivating exercise for learners thanks to the involvement of video and translation. Focusing on the use of digital laboratories to develop independent learning skills, Wagener presents subtitling as an exploitable resource.

Talaván (2006a), proposes the production of standard and reverse interlingual ‘*ad hoc* subtitles’ as a beneficial way of learning a Second Language (L2) for adolescents and adults of all levels, as “it provides learners with the opportunity to negotiate meaning, to notice language, to become motivated, and to enhance most language learning areas, especially those related to the spoken language, that are typically among the most challenging to teach and acquire” (p. 45). She highlights the active role played by learners in subtitling since it takes place in a motivating context fostered by the multimodal input. The methodological approach respected in Talaván’s (2006a) subtitling production proposal is communicative language teaching in combination with task-based learning and teaching.

To this repute, Talaván (2010) defines the language learning activities of reading subtitled material and producing subtitles. He refers to *subtitles as support* and *subtitling as a task*. This precise terminology clearly helps distinguish the two pedagogical applications in language research. Underlining the development of oral comprehension skills, Talaván identifies a number of advantages in applying subtitling, such as the possibility for learners to benefit from authentic multimodal input and to produce a tangible output that can also be shared

with peers. Finally, she proposes combining subtitling and subtitles in a single task to create the best impact on foreign language learning.

Lertola (2015) ponders the use of subtitling as a pedagogical tool in the L2 classroom from a teacher's perspective. The author discusses the concepts and practice of subtitling, examining its potential advantages and disadvantages in line with Talaván (2013). This book "*fundamentals of Subtitling*" equally focuses on how teachers can integrate interlingual subtitling as a language learning task in their teaching routine. To this end, an adaptation of professional subtitling norms for pedagogical purposes is proposed. Learners should be made aware of these basic norms:

- 1) The subtitling task generally requires a certain amount of translation quality,
- 2) The translation should respect linguistic and cultural elements of the original dialogue,
- 3) Subtitles should be syntactically and semantically self-contained (distributed on a maximum of two lines).

In order to produce effective segmentation of the original dialogue into subtitles, learners should be able to identify sense units in L2. This can prove quite challenging to learners and previous training is encouraged. In addition, it could be useful to provide learners with examples of correct segmentation (e.g. do not split articles or adjectives from nouns, etc.). Bearing in mind that this task is aimed at language learning and not at professional training,

Lertola (2015) provides general guidelines for subtitle synchronisation. While synchronising, it could be quite useful to invite learners to employ the professional habit of condensing the message through partial or total reduction in order to respect space and time constraints. This practice can also enhance the above-mentioned identification of sense units in L2. Professional linguistic and technical assessment criteria for evaluating learners' subtitled videos are also adapted for language learning purposes. These criteria are divided into five main categories translation, linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence, and technical skills which are further divided into subcategories.

Ragni (2018) acknowledges the value of the experimental studies on the pedagogical applications of subtitling, which she defines as 'didactic subtitling', and draws attention to the need for a clearer theoretical framework to support subtitling activities in the foreign language classroom. To this end, she considers a number of theories, from second language acquisition literature and cognitive psychology, that support interlingual subtitling in foreign language learning. After examining how subtitling can be applied within task-based language teaching, she argues for the integration of subtitling and form-focused instruction. Subtitling is recognised to have specific characteristics that make it an appropriate task to be used in communicative language teaching. However, Ragni (2018) claims that:

"the subtitling task alone, despite the rich and meaningful multimodal environment, may not always result in the internalisation of the [foreign language]. In some cases, therefore, having a more explicit FonFs [Focus on Forms] phase might be necessary. In such a phase, formal instruction is given, language is treated as the object of study rather than communication tool, and students relate themselves to the language as learners rather than users" (pp. 22-23; emphasis in original).

Audiovisual translation (AVT) has been neglected by Translation Studies scholars for many years. Until recent times translation experts mostly centered their investigations on the differences between dubbing and subtitling and whether the former was better than the latter. Nowadays the things have changed, and more and more Translation Studies scholars have entered this field. AVT is now one of the fastest growing areas in the field of Translation studies (TS). Subtitling is different from other types of translations in many ways. First of all, it does not only consist in translating a text from a source language into a target language but it also involves a shift from oral to written language. In other words, there is a shift from one semiotic system to another.

History of Subtitling

With the discovery of sound films, in 1927, viewers could hear actors and that is why titles between the sequences of the film were removed. Producers decided to replace intertitles with subtitles and inserted them directly into the picture. This technique was quite cheap (much cheaper than dubbing) and became of common use in countries like Netherlands. “The first attested showing of a sound film with subtitles was when *The Jazz Singer* (originally released in the US in October 1927) opened in Paris, on January 26, 1929, with subtitles in French. Later that year, Italy followed suit, and on August 17, 1929, another Al Jolson film, *The Singing Fool*, opened in Copenhagen, fitted with Danish subtitles.” (Ivarsson, 2004: 2) New techniques were emerging in order to improve the quality of the final result. The optical method was the next step. They tried to copy the photographed titles directly on the film copy. However, the original film negative was usually not available so they had to re-copy the whole film in order to obtain a new negative. That is why there was a “consequent loss of focus and substantial increase in the noise level” (Ivarsson, 2004:3).

The mechanical and thermal process were not efficient either. In 1930, Leif Eriksen, stamped the titles directly on the images of the film strip. What he did first was to moisten the emulsion layer to soften it. Then he proceeded by typesetting the titles, printing them on paper and photographing them in order to produce very small letterpress type plates for each subtitle. In 1935, O. Turchányi, heated the plates to a very high temperature in order to melt away the emulsion on the film without the need for a softening bath. However, both these processes had bad results with poorly defined letters (Ivarsson, 2004:3).

The chemical process was patented in 1932 by R. Hruska. He invented a new method for impressing the titles directly on the film. What he did was to apply coating of wax or perhaps paraffin to the emulsion side of the finished film copy. The printing plates were placed in a printing press and the plate was fed and heated to a temperature of nearly a hundred degrees and one by one pressed against the paraffin coating at the bottom of the frame which corresponded to the beginning of the dialogue line. The paraffin under the letters melted and was displaced, exposing the emulsion. This process was repeated with all the frames on which this subtitle was to appear, corresponding to the duration of the speech. After the printing process the film was put through a bleach bath, which dissolved the exposed emulsion, leaving only the transparent nitrate or acetate film. The etching fluid and the paraffin were then washed away. This process produced clearly legible white letters on the screen. Later on, this process too was automated by means of a counter, which fed the plates forward, counted the frames

on the roll and ensured that the subtitles came in the right place and were of the right length. This kind of process is still used in many countries (Ivarsson, 2004:4).

The laser subtitling was the most efficient development in this field. Thanks to this method typesetting and plates became unnecessary. A computer controls a laser beam, and it takes less than a second to write a subtitle of two lines. Laser method is the cheapest method but requires a very good equipment (Ivarsson, 2004:5).

However, subtitling for television was something different. The experts realized very soon that the prints used for the cinema caused a number of problems. The picture of a tv set has a narrower contrast range than that on a cinema screen and the subtitles were almost illegible. Furthermore, the ability of the audience to read subtitles on a TV screen is much slower than on a cinema screen. The first subtitled TV film was the German full-feature film *Der Student von Prag* broadcast by the BBC in 1931 (Ivarsson, 2004:5). The making of the subtitles was done by separate people.

Firstly, the spotting was done by a technician who had no knowledge of the source language. Indeed, he just marked the in times and out times of every utterance into a dialogue list. Secondly, these times were converted to a specific number of characters. Afterwards, a translator had to fit his translation in this limited space and usually he didn't even see the film. Later on a technician had to type the subtitles onto the type plates and some years later onto computer disks from which they were transferred to the film. The final result was usually full of errors. From the 1980s the things changed drastically. Translators were able to do all the work on their own thanks to advances in computer technology and new subtitling programmes. Timing, translation and revision were done by the same person and that is why the possibility to make a lot of errors decreased (Ivarsson, 2004:7).

Audiovisual Translation

Audiovisual translation is a “branch of translation studies concerned with the transfer of multimodal and multimedial texts into another language and/or culture” (Gonzalez, 2009, p. 13). This specific branch deals with various multimedial texts, with movies being one of these mediums. Globalization and technology breakthroughs have resulted in the mass distribution of movies, documentaries, music, TV series, and other forms of media among people of different languages and cultures (Cintas & Anderman, 2009, p. 2). Different approaches were adopted during the transfer process, and one of these approaches is subtitling, where “They (subtitlers) present their translated rendition of whatever is spoken at the precise moment when it is said, and any viewer with a grasp of the original language is able to make an instant connection” (Skuggevik, 2009, p. 197).

Gambier (as cited in Munday, 2008, p. 184– 185) lists these approaches as follows: interlingual subtitling, bilingual subtitling, intralingual subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, surtitling, and audio description. Interlingual subtitling is available for the cinema and video in two options, either “open,” i.e., they cannot be removed from the audiovisual material, or “closed,” meaning the audience has the option of seeing them or not. Bilingual subtitling is available in countries like Belgium, where the subtitles in two TT versions appear simultaneously on the screen. Intralingual subtitling is for the hard of hearing. Dubbing, which covers both

lip-synchronization and lip-sync, is when the SL voicetrack is replaced by a TL voice-track. Surtitling consists of subtitle appear above the stage at theatres or operas. Whereas, audio description is mainly an intralingual commentary on the accompanying action in film or on stage. The reasons for each of these approaches are various, ranging from economic grounds to political motives and others (Ariza, 2004).

The Pros and Cons of Dubbing and Subtitling

The two methods mentioned above are the most prevalent methods used in most countries worldwide. Both of these adaptations have its advantages and disadvantages. However, it is important to stress that neither of them is better than the other: not only translators, but also viewers are accustomed to the method that is used in their country. On the one hand, the main reason why one country chooses to dub its programmes is because they think it is easier to follow a story if they do not have to read while viewing. On the other hand, countries that choose the subtitling method claim that this way of adaptation is more natural and realistic. Thus, Subtilling and dubbing have different information processing, the relation with images and learning effects.

Images and Subtitling

Usually, domestic programmes, are more popular than foreign products. However, this does not mean that dubbed programmes are seen as less attractive just because of the adaption. Subtitling programme is seen as more real because the original spoken text is intact.

On the contrary, in dubbed programmes the original spoken text is entirely removed. In fact, dubbing is often criticized because popular actor's voices are known worldwide and that is why these kinds of films sound less real than subtitling programmes (Koolstra et al, 2002:335). As far as the familiarity is concerned dubbed programmes may seem more familiar than the subtitling programmes. Viewers can identify easily with the actors and they also may think that everything that happens on the screen is normal just because the actors speak in their own language (Koolstra et al, 2002: 336). One important disadvantage as far as film producers are concerned is that subtitles overlap the picture. Film producers work hard in order to present aesthetically attractive images and that is why the criticize this adaption method (Koolstra et al, 2002: 336). Another disadvantage of subtitling is the fact that the artistic unity of picture and sound is not respected. This cause the viewer's attention to split. On the contrary, this is definitely not the case of dubbing programmes (Koolstra et al, 2002:337).

One of the disadvantages of the dubbing programmes is that due to lip synchronicity the translation work becomes even harder. The translated sentence should begin when the speaker starts speaking and should end when the speaker is finished. Moreover, the sound of the spoken words should be congruent with the lips movement of the speaker. That is why sentences sometimes are shortened or lengthened and the choice of the words and the tempo must be adjusted to the lip movements. In the dubbing countries such as Italy or Germany the precision in this field is of great importance. However, Germany stays more faithful to the lip-synchronicity while Italy prefers paying more attention on the translation (Koolstra et al, 2002:338). Subtitling programmes have translation problems too and they are caused by

the space and time limits imposed by the medium. Translators have to put their translation in the two line subtitle and that is why sometimes the translation is not optimal. One of the ways to solve this problem with compound past tense words is to substitute them with simple past tense words (Koolstra et al, 2002:338).

Learning Effects

While watching television viewers acquire information that the producers of the programmes wanted to convey. Nevertheless, watching television may also develop other skills that are not closely connected with the content of the programme. Watching subtitled programmes implies reading. I still remember my mother reading the subtitles while me and my sister were listening and watching what was happening on the screen. At the age of 6 I was capable of reading the subtitles with almost no difficulty. My experience is only one of many that can testify that this kind of activity can improve children's reading skills. When the viewers are watching the non-subtitling programmes (including the dubbed programmes) they are listening the actor's words and watching the pictures that support those words. In this way they also can acquire new vocabulary by watching the programmes in their own language.

Rice and Woodsmall's (2015), study proved that children from three till five years old learn two to five new words after watching a 15-minute television programme. Moreover, children's listening to tv programmes can be compared with the children's listening to other people talk in everyday life (Koolstra et al, 2002: 341). In subtitling programmes foreign language can be heard, in other words the original spoken language is intact. In this way people can hear the actors speaking, for example in English and read the translation in the subtitles, for example in Dutch. In fact, more than one-third of Dutch adolescence are convinced that their foreign language knowledge benefits from watching subtitled programmes.

Moreover, the majority of them is convinced that they are learning more by watching television or listening to the radio than at school. Series of studies conducted on students in Belgium proved that after watching a 15-minute cartoon in a foreign language with subtitles in their own language word meanings were learnt. It is interesting to underline that the languages used for this experiment were not only the most common foreign languages such as English or German; unfamiliar languages such as Chinese or Hungarian were used too. The comparison between the familiar and unfamiliar languages showed that both type of languages were learnt equally well (Koolstra et al, 2002: 342).

Studies were conducted on children too. Children from Grades 4 and 6 watched a documentary about bears in three versions: a) with English spoken text and Dutch subtitles b) In Dutch without subtitles c) with an English spoken text without subtitles. The results were surprising. They learned plenty of new words with the first method and they also managed to understand some words with the third method. These two studies proved that both adults and children can learn the meanings of foreign-language words just by watching a short part of a subtitled programme. Moreover, watching foreign-language subtitling programmes also improves the viewers' pronunciation (Koolstra et al, 2002). Even if the benefits of these subtitled programmes for language learning are extremely evident some people do not consider it a very good idea to broadcast these kinds of programmes. These kinds of people are the

so-called language purist. In fact, they are afraid that subtitled programmes could contaminate their mother tongue. To prevent that, some local television such as the Basque channel in Spain prefers to dub the foreign programmes (Koolstra et al, 2002: 343).

What Is Subtitling

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) define subtitling as a translation practice which “consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavors to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, [...]), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off).” They highlight the importance of three main components of each subtitled program. These components are the spoken word, the image and the subtitles. They are inseparable and together constitute the subtitled audiovisual work. None of them must contravene the others. The subtitles must be of suitable length. They appear on the screen long enough so that the viewers can read them. They must appear on the screen and disappear at the right moment because they must be in synchrony with the image and dialogue. Plus, the subtitles must “provide a semantically adequate account of the source language dialogue.” (Díaz-Cintas, Remael, 2007).

As for a working typology of this post-production activity, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007: 14) classify subtitles into three main categories based on linguistic parameters:

- a) Intralingual subtitles,
- b) Interlingual subtitles, and
- c) Bilingual subtitles.

Intralingual subtitling, also called vertical subtitling by Gottlieb (1998) and known as (closed) captioning in American English, refers to the variety of subtitling that “involves a shift from oral to written, but stays always within the same language” (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007). Interlingual subtitling, also called diagonal subtitling by Gottlieb (1998), refers to the variety of subtitling that “involves a shift from one language to another along with a change of mode, from oral to written” (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007: 17). As for bilingual subtitling, subtitles in two different languages are simultaneously provided at the bottom of the screen, a practice mostly seen in bilingual countries or regions (e.g., Belgium, Finland, Switzerland, Jordan, Israel, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, etc.) and very often in international film festivals where bilingual subtitles are used to attract a wider audience.

From the perspective of the technical processes involved in the production of subtitling, subtitles can also be classified as either ‘open’ or ‘closed’. The former is transmitted together with the film sound and images as an inseparable part of the film, whereas the latter are traditionally transmitted via teletext and can be activated at the discretion of the viewers (Gottlieb, 1998: 247). According to this distinction, film subtitles that are an integral part of the film, and are usually laser engraved, belong to the category of ‘open subtitles’, whilst DVD and Blu-ray subtitles, which are stored in a digital format and transmitted via a separate coded channel, fall under the category of ‘closed subtitles’.