Dealing with Multilingualism in TV Series

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A Descriptive and Multimodal Analysis

By

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ABBREVIATIONS

AVT	Audiovisual Translation
BT	Back-translation
CM	Code-mixing
CS	Code-switching
CP	Camera position
D	Distance
DTS	Descriptive Translation Studies
DV	Dubbed version
ECR	Extralinguistic Cultural Reference
EFA	European Film Awards
FOTB	Fresh off the Boat
IMDb	Internet Movie Database
JSL	Japanese Sign Language
JTV	Jane the Virgin
MLV	Multiple Language Version
OB	Orphan Black
OV	Original version
RUL	Recurrent use of languages
SL	Source language
ST	Source text
SUL	Sporadic use of languages
SV	Subtitled version
SDH	Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
TL	Target language
TC	Target culture
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Target text
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
VEH	Verbally Expressed Humour

INTRODUCTION

In the film *The Godfather 1* (*Il Padrino*, Francis Ford Coppola, 1972)[1], Michael Corleone goes to Sicily to embrace his roots and his culture. There he meets Apollonia, and he asks her father's permission to court her. In the following scene, Michael asks his bodyguard Fabrizio to translate what he says. In the original version, Michael speaks English and asks Fabrizio to play the role of the interpreter to translate the dialogues into Sicilian dialect, which is reasonable since the scene is set in Sicily and Apollonia's father only speaks dialect. Inexplicably, in the Italian version, Fabrizio does not act as an interpreter, since he paraphrases what Michael says. With this memory in mind and with the desire to deepen the study of AVT, the idea arose to investigate what factors (textual and extra-textual) influence the translation of multilingualism into a coherent corpus of audiovisual texts. This book analyses a corpus of three television series and collects information about the process of translation into Italian.

1. Research territory and gap

Although multilingualism has always existed, its increasing visibility can be regarded as a sign of our times. Situations of multilingualism and language contact have pervaded and expanded in all spheres, territories, and situations. Thus, the traditional monolingual organisation of our world is becoming less sustainable, and people, societies, and research fields are

[1] In this book the filmography is mentioned following the style norms of the scientific journal *Cinema e Storia*. The first occurrence of a film contains the original title, in italics. In parentheses, the title is reported in Italian (if it is a foreign film that has been distributed in Italy with another title), the name of the director and the year of production. In the case of television series, the Italian title, the company and the period of duration of the series are reported. In subsequent references, the information in brackets is not repeated. Available at: http://www.cinemaestoria.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Norme-Cinema-e-Storia.pdf. With the purpose of speeding up the reading, the consultation date does not accompany the hyperlinks (All the URLs included in this book were active in February 2022).

demanding more efforts to adapt to this widespread reality. The literary and film industries are two of the sectors that progressively and globally reflect this current multilingualism. Indeed, more and more filmmakers embrace a more realistic attitude towards foreign languages. This, in turn, has awakened the interest of scholars, particularly within the field of Translation Studies (TS). However, the different natures of literature and film inevitably force a different study approach. In fact, as Carol O'Sullivan argues, "[t]he polysemiotic nature of film is able to integrate the use of foreign languages to a degree impossible in print fiction" (2011: 114). As a result, recent studies within the Audiovisual Translation (AVT) discipline have slowly turned their efforts to investigate the translational implications of the presence of various languages in audiovisual products. The term plurilingualism or multilingualism refers to the "[c]oexistence of several languages in a country or territory."[2] In this thesis, I focus on the study of the translation of "multilingual discourses" (Bleichenbacher 2008), i.e., audiovisual texts in which linguistic diversity has a narrative and expressive function (Wahl 2005; 2008)[3].

With the advent of sound films, a production system known as multilingual versions or double versions emerged, which "was to shoot one film in different languages simultaneously or very close in time" (Chaume 2004: 48). Between the 50s and 70s of the twentieth century, the number of European co-productions with an international cast, called polyglot or Babylonian (Betz, 2009) films, increased. When the shooting languages multiplied, the director had to decide whether to tell an international story in which each actor or actress spoke their own language – like in *Ultimo tango a Parigi* (Bernardo Bertolucci 1972) – or, on the contrary, ignoring

[2] Laponce, J. A., et al. "The Multilingual Mind and Multilingual Societies: In Search of Neuropsychological Explanations of the Spatial Behavior of Ethno-Linguistic Groups [with Commentaries]." *Politics and the Life Sciences*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1985, pp. 3–30.

[3] In this book, I use the adjectives "plurilingual" or "multilingual" intercheangeably to describe the texts written in several languages. I avoid the term polyglot (Wahl 2005; 2008) because of the film genre associated with it. I also rule out the term polylingual (Sternberg 1981) because of its slight impact on the academic field, and the term heterolingual (Grutman, 1997, 2006; Meylaerts 2006; Vermeulen 2012) because the same academics who proposed it do not use it in their last works on the translation of multilingualism (Grutman 2009a; Meylaerts, 2010; 2013).

the multilingualism of the cast by recording the images without sound and then registering all the dialogues (in one single language) in a dubbing studio, as in *Le carrose d'or* (*La carrozza d'oro*, Jean Renoir 1952) – (Betz 2001).

Neither multilingual versions or the first European coproductions represent the area of investigation in this work. In this thesis, the translation of multilingualism is studied in works of fiction, in which narrative and expressive linguistic diversity functions (Wahl 2005, 2008) are given. It delves into a coherent corpus of television series where linguistic diversity has the primary function to reflect reality (Delabastita 2002; Wahl 2008; O' Sullivan 2011); specifically, the multilingual reality of immigrant communities.

The issues and problems originating from the presence of several foreign languages in films have aroused the interest of AVT scholars in the form of case studies and more comprehensive research such as Corrius' (2008) on multilingualism as a textual restriction and de Higes' (2014) on the treatment of the language of immigrants in the UK through dubbing and subtiling. What these studies have in common is their focus on films displaying what Corrius defined "third language (L3), i.e. any *secondary* language that coexists with a main language (L1) in a film" (2008: 217).[4] In many cases, this approach has condemned languages to an essentially 'textual restriction' constraining the translators' work. Nonetheless, films where it is impossible – or rather difficult – to establish a difference between L1 and L3 in terms of language quantity have not been approached. Therefore, the dismissal of these films necessarily provides a restrictive perspective to multilingualism in film translation. After all, these films might not include an L3 as defined above, but do include various languages. Similarly, their recurrent presence of various languages is likely to pose problems transcending textual matters.

[4] See chapter 2 for an overview of the so-called L3 model by Corrius and Zabalbeascoa.

2. Research aims and objectives

This book applies a descriptive and multimodal methodology for the analysis of multilingual tv series with recurrent use of foreign languages with the aim of (1) examining the role of multilingualism in the audiovisual products analysed, and (2) exploring whether and how dubbing affects the plot and characterisation of original tv series. These two foci are divided into the following research questions:

(Q1) What AVT modalities are used to deal with foreign languages, and what is the reasoning behind this decision?

(Q2) What microtextual problems arise after the selection of an AVT modality or combination of them, and how does cinematographic language influence translation solutions?

(Q3) How neutral and/or standardised are the dubbed versions of multilingual tv series?

(Q4) What are the potential consequences of dubbing a multilingual tv series in relation to plot and characterisation?

Q1 is assessed through empirical observation regarding the treatment of languages. It is here that the constant presence of foreign languages brings to light a series of issues related to the subject of language quantity. Q2 and Q3 are thoroughly examined through the design of multimodal transcription sheets. Drawing on Chaume's integrated model of analysis (2004a), the multimodal analysis is complemented by Baldry and Thibault's (2006) multimodal transcription and Bonsignori's guidelines (2009) for prosodic transcription. As a result, the multimodal sheets encompass all the relevant aural and visual elements for translation purposes while collecting micro-textual translation issues and any characterisation techniques at syntactic, lexical, pragmatic and phonetic levels. On this matter, the selection of tv series where various languages are used recurrently allows for the incorporation of a high number of issues. Finally, to account for the potential effect of dubbing on a film (Q4), this study adopts Vanoye's distinction between horizontal and vertical dimensions (1985), i.e. it compares information between fictional characters and/or fictional

characters and domestic and target audiences. Undoubtedly, the data extracted from Q4 can only be regarded as illustrative.

3. Corpus[5]

The purpose of this research study is the translation of multilingualism in a corpus of concrete texts, contemporary American television series distributed in Italy between 2009 and 2019. Overall, the corpus of analysis consists of the following three tv series (listed alphabetically):

- *Fresh Off the Boat* (2015)
- *Jane the Virgin* (2014)
- *Orphan Black* (2013)

4. Structure

This book is divided into four chapters, after which a final chapter is devoted to conclusions.

This book is informed first by the approach of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS, Holmes 1988; Toury 1995), whose aim is to liberate the translators and the study of translation from the prescriptiveness that implies quality assessments on the side of the Translation Studies (TS) scholar. Descriptiveness also opens a window onto more general statements, as observing and comparing numerous cases allows the hypothesising of generalisations concerning translation, which have been called "translation universals" (Baker 1993) or "laws" (Toury 1995). Chapter 1 presents a general overview of the existing literature in film studies and audiovisual translation studies on the topic of multilingualism. After a brief outline of audiovisual translation practices in the Italian context, with particular emphasis on dubbing and subtitling, the chapter discusses the complex nature of multilingualism and its multiple functions in films. Following Delabastita (2002, 2009), a tv series is considered multilingual if it incorporates not only official languages but also dialects, sociolects and ethnolects. Chapter 2 focuses on the central issues and challenges involved

[5] See chapter 3 for details about the corpus

in the translation of multilingual tv series. In order to study this phenomenon, the concept of third language (L3) proposed by Corrius and Zabalbeascoa (2011) is introduced. Following this model, the term L1 is used to refer to the main language spoken in the original product, L2 to refer to the main language used in the translated version, and L3 to refer to any form of linguistic diversity in the source and target texts.

Chapter 3 proposes a framework for the descriptive study of multilingual tv series and their translation. It shows the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and the need to reconsider translation theories that are based on binary oppositions (e.g. source language versus target language) or that do not take into account the complexity of audiovisual texts. The chapter discusses the polysemiotic nature of audiovisual texts, namely how different semiotic modes give meaning to a product. Furthermore, the study is based on the broad assumption that tv series display representations of identities, since they build fictional worlds where characters use various resources – including language – to define their identity (Kozloff, 2000). After considering the complex relationship between language and character portrayal in film, the nature of film language in terms of realism and fictionality is discussed. The chapter also introduces the descriptive approach which demarcates the in-depth procedure followed in selecting the corpus under investigation. Finally, it presents and exemplifies the different stages of the methodology designed, to illustrate its usefulness for the AVT field.

Chapter 4 begins with a comprehensive taxonomy of the techniques detected through the descriptive and multimodal analyses. The remaining two sections analyse micro-textual issues and the influence of cinematographic elements in decision-making, whilst stressing other limitations related to professional and economic means. This is followed by a classification of linguistic cues exploited in dubbed versions.

The Conclusions revisit the primary aims and research questions of this thesis and assess the results obtained through the different analytical chapters. Critically evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed methodology in relation to the dubbing process and its effect on the perception of tv series, the conclusions go on to propose avenues for future research.

CHAPTER I

AUDIOVISUAL TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

This section is dedicated to the polysemiotic nature of audiovisual texts to justify the need to approach the translation of multilingual tv series from both a translation and a cinematographic perspective. Section 2.1 introduces dubbing and subtitling, paying particular attention to their conventions and limitations. Although this book focuses solely on the dubbed versions (DV) of multilingual tv series, subtitling is also examined since it is the only AVT method that can intermingle with dubbing in film translation. Finally, section 2.2 briefly examines the elements of film language to then discuss the cinematographic approaches incorporated in AVT.

1.1 Audiovisual translation modalities: dubbing and subtitling

This section deals first with the nature of audiovisual products, more specifically with the possibilities as well as the restrictions it imposes on translation agents. Secondly, dubbing and subtitling are described in terms of practice, restrictions, as well as the conventions and possibilities they offer for polyglot films. Thirdly, the factors considered when selecting AVT methods are explained to better understand the reasons as to why particular audiovisual transfer methods are chosen. Next, Italy as target culture (TC) is examined, with specific attention paid to screening habits and knowledge of foreign languages to examine the influence of these factors on the final translated product. Finally, the concept of translation technique is introduced and defined to thereupon discuss the major techniques employed in dubbing and subtitling.

1.1.1. The specificity of audiovisual texts

In contrast to other texts, audiovisual material is of a complex nature for it consists of verbal- iconic texts that convey information through two channels: visual and acoustic. Information is transmitted not only linguistically but through a wide variety of signifying codes that create meaning. Consequently, in AVT the relevance of the linguistic code is partial, as it does not work in isolation but in conjunction with other aural and visual information.

Although voice-over is used for multilingual products, no examples have been identified in dubbing countries as it compromises credibility through voice-off translating dialogues (Martínez Sierra et al. 2010: 24). The same reasoning applies to other AVT methods such as simultaneous interpreting, narration, half-dubbing/partial dubbing, free-commentary or sight translation. Consequently, these have not been contemplated.

Delabastita (1989: 199, cf. Gottlieb 1994: 265) puts forward four different types of film sign provided by the visual and aural channels that translators need to act upon to create a coherent story:

- verbal signs transmitted acoustically (dialogue, background voices, lyrics)
- non-verbal signs transmitted acoustically (music and sound effects)
- verbal signs transmitted visually (captions and written signs)
- non-verbal signs transmitted visually (picture composition and flow)

This polysemiotic nature has two main consequences for screen translators. Firstly, translators are asked to implement translation techniques that convey the information provided by every channel, but also the meaning originating from this interaction. This is what Michel Chion termed ‘added value’ (1993: 5). Secondly, translators need to achieve all this while intervening merely at the verbal level, as the other semiotic codes remain untouched. The translation of audiovisual material is therefore subordinated to the image. Consequently, the creation of coherent translated audiovisual texts requires mechanisms of cohesion between visual and verbal narration.

The combination of various systems of communication has led researchers to adopt the term 'constrained translation' (Titford 1982; Mayoral et al. 1988) to refer to the translation of audiovisual material[6]. These constraints have been further examined in relation to the conventions and restrictions posed by different audiovisual methods, particularly dubbing and subtitling. These two language transfer methods are characterised by different limitations and standards of acceptability. For example, within dubbing, attention revolves around types of synchronisation while for subtitling, space and time restrictions are always at play. Consequently, a translational analysis of films should account for the information provided by all the semiotic codes together with the conventions and restrictions imposed by the medium. In what follows, dubbing and subtitling are examined as processes governed by norms. Particular attention is paid to their constraints, conventions, strategies as well as their potential implications for multilingual products.

1.1.2. Dubbing

Dubbing can be defined as the process of translating and adjusting the original soundtrack of an audiovisual text into a different language. To do so, the original voices of the actors are replaced with the voices of dubbing actors in the TL. Gottlieb considers dubbing as isosemiotic, as information is transmitted through the same semiotic channels as the original (2005: 4). Although initially used as an ideological tool for censoring and manipulating the content of films (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 36; Díaz Cintas 1999: 36), the use of dubbing is nowadays more linked to financial considerations and its use has also spread to traditionally subtitling countries (section 2.1.4).

Regarding its drawbacks, replacement of the soundtrack hinders comparison between the original dialogue and its translation (ibid.: 34) while also disrupting the body/voice coherence of original actors. Similarly, films can be censored through dubbing to conform to morals and political ideas without viewers' awareness (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 36). Among the

[6] In practice, numerous factors previous to the translation task also influence and determine translation itself.

advantages of dubbing lies the possibility of grasping the sense of a film instantly and enjoying it without any processing effort. On this matter, Danan states that dubbing attempts to conceal the foreign origin of a film by making viewers believe that the characters express themselves in the language of the target audience (1991: 612). It could be argued, however, that the origin is never completely hidden as the image always reminds the audience of the film's original culture and social environment. As with original audiences (section 1.2.1), dubbing audiences accept this discrepancy between image and sound by applying what Coleridge coined the "willing suspension of disbelief" (in Delabastita 2002: 307)[7]. An aspect that deserves further investigation then is whether and how dubbing affects a film diegesis. This is particularly relevant in the case of polyglot films where languages are completely homogenised. While the image can, to some extent, supply information to the audience, this thesis analyses whether certain messages essential to the story line are hidden by the neutralisation of foreign languages.

1.1.2.1. Conventions for dubbing

Dubbing is a complex process that requires the collaboration of different agents (translators, dialogue writers, dubbing directors, dubbing actors, technicians, etc.). These agents apply a series of conventions which work in unison when translating and which determine, to a certain extent, the final translated product. Chaume specifies a set of standards performed by different agents at different stages of the dubbing process: credible and realistic dialogue lines, coherence between images and words, a loyal translation, acceptable lip sync, acting, and clear sound quality (2012: 15-20). The non-compliance with any of these conventions might be perceived negatively by the target audience and consequently, affect the commercial success of the film.

Screen translators are generally in charge of merely providing a rough translation of the dialogues. This task is constrained by two requirements. Firstly, translations need to be coherent with what is happening on screen

[7] Interestingly, although this distortion of accuracy applies to both original and dubbing audiences, until recently the 'unrealistic original' did not tend to be questioned as much as its dubbed counterpart.

as well as in relation to the plot. Secondly, this rough translation is further restricted by the language of audiovisual material which is "written to be spoken as if not written" (Gregory and Carroll 1978: 42). The challenge for screen translators lies then in translating fictional dialogues that mimic everyday conversation despite having been carefully planned. This prefabricated orality (Baños 2009) needs to sound credible and natural to the target audience. To do so, screen translators select "specific features of oral discourse that are widely accepted and recognised as such by the audience" (Chaume 2012: 81)[8]. This tacit agreement can problematise the implementation of a series of techniques for polyglot films when portraying characters at the linguistic level as the target audience might regard these strategies as non-credible or even satirical. For example, the recurrence of a word or an accent to denote a character of a particular nationality may not match the idea that the target audience has of that particular nationality, thereby compromising the credibility of the dialogue. Similarly, the tendency of so-called dubbese towards neutralisation and standardisation [see Goris (1993); Pavesi (2008)] should also be researched as a potential reason for language homogenisation.

Furthermore, a translation often needs to be loyal to the source film, i.e. to its content, its effect and its intention. As Gottlieb (1994: 265) and Chaume (2012: 17) state, the chief aim of AVT is to provide the target audience with the experience they would have had if they already knew the foreign language in question. For polyglot films the problem originates in the aforementioned narrow viewing of translation as the replacement of one language with another, as gathered from Gottlieb and Chaume (section 1.1.2). Consequently, if the original audience is confronted with several languages and the target audience is not, the experiences of both audiences necessarily differ. Therefore, the consequences of neutralising multilingualism in polyglot films inevitably raise questions of loyalty, in Nord's terms (1991a), towards its original creator and the original content of the film, but also in terms of dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964) as to a films effect.

[8] Several recent studies have focused on the language of dubbing. For instance, Baños Piñedo (2009) analysed the spontaneity of this prefabricated orality both in foreign and Spanish national productions, while Romero Fresco (2008) concentrated on the naturalness of the language of dubbing by focusing on discourse markers.

Therefore, this book intends to explore these issues while analysing the effects of dubbing on plot and characterisation. Despite the relevance of these conventions, producers, movie buyers etc. are aware that the success or failure of a film largely depends on synchronisation. Synchronisation is defined as "the process of recording a translation in any given TL in a dubbing studio, matching the translation with the screen actors' body movements and articulatory movements" (Chaume 2004b: 42). The responsibility for synchronisation lies with dialogue writers and flexibility largely depends on the TC (ibid.: 41). Within AVT, three types of synchronisation are at play.

Firstly, there is lip synchrony (also known as phonetic synchrony (Fodor 1976)), according to which the translated text must match actors' lip movements. This convention deals with the harmony of the articulation of vowels and consonants. Here, dialogue writers make use of certain cinematographic codes like the planning code and mobility code to decide on the level of flexibility (see section 2.2.3.2). For example, in dubbing countries, lip synchrony is only required in close-ups and extreme close-ups, where audiences are confronted with a clear frame of actors' mouths. Here the main hurdles are bilabial and labio-dental consonants and the most open and closed vowels. Secondly, a translated film should achieve kinetic synchrony, i.e. translations are adapted to the movements of the characters so as to convey the conventional meaning(s) transmitted by these signs. Hence, if a character nods, his/her utterance cannot be negative to avoid incongruity between image and dialogue. Generally, this synchrony is only needed when a kinetic sign is accompanied by a linguistic explanation. Thirdly, isochrony refers to the timing of a character's utterances, i.e. it deals with the need to extend or reduce a character's interventions so that they fit with lip movements. Dialogue writers can make use of amplification or reduction techniques to accommodate dialogues to this temporal restriction.

These synchronisations all impose a visual restriction on dubbing. To adapt to these conventions, different cinematic codes can help to decide on the level of synchrony needed (section 2.2.3). It could be said then that synchronisation aims to hide from the target audience the fact that they are watching a translation. However, the degree of synchronisation is highly

dependent on the audiovisual genre; films require the highest level of synchronisation, while cartoons are more flexible because of their young audience, who are more likely to miss such aspects (Chaume 2004b: 46).

Other scholars such as Mayoral et al. (1988), Whitman-Linsen (1992), Agost (1999) also consider content synchrony and character synchrony as types of synchronisation. Content synchrony means that the message cannot contradict the sense transmitted by other signals (Mayoral et al. 1988: 359). Following Chaume (2012: 70), this synchrony is directly related to the aforementioned standard of coherence between the translated text and the action on screen and it should not therefore be considered a type of synchronisation. However, it is relevant to note the problems that might arise, content-wise, for the translation of polyglot films, mostly if monolingual dubbing is selected. The need to create a coherent translated text may justify the implementation of particular AVT methods to maintain content or to adjust the dialogue to prevent the audience from noticing incongruities. This justifies why scholars such as Agost call for the use of a combination of AVT methods to maintain the synchronism of content for films containing several languages (1999: 132).

Dubbing directors are in charge of character synchrony (or the standard of acting), which deals with the harmony of the voice and intonation of the dubbing actors[9] and their appearance and gesticulation. Chaume maintains that character synchrony does not concern translation operations but the dramatisations of dubbing actors and as such should not be considered a type of synchronisation (2012: 70). However, this statement is not completely accurate, as the translation can still undergo changes at this stage (section 2.1.2.2). The question of voice matching can however be of paramount importance for polyglot films where characters speak two languages, but only one language is dubbed. This deserves particular

[9] Although the terminology to refer to this agent is very muddled, with terms such as ‘voice actor’, ‘voice artist’, ‘voice talent’, ‘dubbing actor’, ‘dubbing artist’, ‘dubber’, the reasons why ‘dubbing actor’ is preferred are twofold: the word ‘actor’ embraces a more complete definition of the acting techniques this agent requires at work, which unmistakably surpasses voice qualities. Similarly, the addition of ‘dubbing’ clearly differentiates between voice actors for animation and actors whose task involves replacing the original voice of real actors.

attention when one of the languages matches the language of the target audience. As viewers are confronted with the original actor's voice in some parts of the film, the voice of the dubbing actor should be similar so as not to distort the audience's cinematographic illusion. Likewise, the possibility of denoting the foreignness of character(s) through different phonic nuances is considered and decided by dubbing directors. The last stage, although not concerned with translation in a direct way, involves sound engineers, who are mainly devoted to manipulating and delivering a clear sound quality. Sound engineers are responsible for recording the interventions of dubbing actors, reassembling the tracks with actors' interventions, mixing them with the soundtrack and other sounds to create a realistic effect that matches the technical and aural conventions of dubbing (Agost 2001a: 15).

In light of the above, the process of dubbing can be considered a complex chain of conventions and tasks performed by different agents, who aim to hide the foreign nature of a film: as Danan observes, "[d]ubbed movies become, in a way, local productions" (1991: 612). The question remains whether the DVs of polyglot films comply with this goal when a mixture of audiovisual methods is applied, as target audiences are exposed to a certain amount of foreignness. In the next section these conventions are linked to the different stages of dubbing to analyse both the role and influence of agents and how the process might affect the translation of multilingual products.

1.1.2.2. The dubbing process

Considering the standards with which dubbing is required to comply, the dubbing process is complex and entails the collaboration of numerous agents performing one or more tasks. Although this process varies slightly from country to country, it can generally be split into the following stages:

The process starts with a TV station or distributor wanting to market an audiovisual product in a particular territory and commissioning the whole dubbing process to a dubbing company, which organises and searches for the remaining agents. At the first stage, translators are contacted to provide a rough translation. According to Castro Roig, a good screen translator "should be a balanced combination of linguist, orthographer and cinephile"

(2001: 268, my translation), to offer a translation halfway between translation and interpreting. However, Chaume states that the functioning of the translation market normally forces translators to produce merely a literal translation of the script with annotations explaining metaphorical and connotative use of puns, idioms, jokes, etc. (2012: 29). Despite this literal translation, translators attempt to search for precise sentences of the same length as the original ones, to adapt the language to different registers and contexts, to consider extralinguistic elements (gestures, intonation, silence, etc.) and to translate from the meaning provided by the images (Fontcuberta i Gel 2001: 309-310). As the only language expert in the dubbing process, the translator pays particular attention to cultural variations, accents, dialects, presence of different languages and graphic elements (Agost 1999: 63-64). On this point, Agost stresses the general tendency for translators to add nuances to portray characters so that viewers can perceive differences between them (ibid.).

The aforementioned impossibility of producing a more natural translation is partially due to the material translators have at their disposal: a script (also known as dialogue transcripts, dialogue lists, etc.) and, copyright permitting, sometimes the images[10] . This is further aggravated by the tight deadlines translators are required to stick to. To these professional constraints, this thesis adds two interesting considerations that impact upon dubbed polyglot products. Firstly, the number of translators involved in the process according to the number of foreign languages in the film, and secondly, the language(s) of the script that a translator receives. This brings up the possibility of using intermediate translations as starting material (see section 3.1.2). The influence of these considerations on translated polyglot films helps to investigate resources and strategies translators might be compelled to use when translating.

Once a translation is complete, the dialogue writers' task is to rewrite the translation so as to sound fresh and natural within the limitations of the

[10] Chaume also stresses the importance for translation of both the quality and the type of script provided. 'Pre- production scripts' used before the shooting of the film do not include changes during the shooting and are therefore incomplete. 'Post-production scripts' consist of the final dialogues shot by shot (2012: 121-122). However, the source text (ST) is always the screen, not the script (ibid.).

aforementioned prefabricated orality. This rewriting is conducted while complying with all synchronisation requirements (lip synchrony, kinetic synchrony, isochrony). To adapt to these types of synchronisation, words are altered, sentences are lengthened or reduced, the order of sentences is changed, etc. Dialogue writers – and in some countries, dubbing assistants – also segment scripts into 'takes', i.e. fragments of text of a maximum of 10 lines, and insert dubbing symbols, all of which are then interpreted by dubbing actors (Agost 1999: 67; Chaume 2012: 35-36). The dubbing actor's task is facilitated by the notes translators include given that dialogue writers do not normally know the original language or culture. Hence, it is not surprising that within the AVT field, academics widely recommend that translators and dialogue writers be the same person (Agost 1999: 61; Fuentes Luque 2001: 148). This explains why screen translators are increasingly being trained as dialogue writers. As Chaume puts it, the execution of both tasks by a language specialist would provide a final solution coherent with the text and the image without betraying the original text (2000: 63).

Finally, the dubbing director selects dubbing actors and instructs them as to their phonetic and artistic interpretation, paying attention to voice projection and diction (Agost 1999: 74). As dubbing actors barely get to see the film, dubbing directors prepare a guiding outline of the film to help with dramatisation. Even at this stage, the translation can be modified if necessary. Besides the importance of voice matching for polyglot films, this phase can reveal key information regarding characterisation at the phonetic level through the use of accents, for instance. Although dubbing tends to standardise language, the reasons as to why and when dubbing directors decide to use accents remains largely under-researched. Thus far, AVT research has only acknowledged their potential use, with only a few briefly discussing their implications (e.g. Agost 2000; Heiss 2004; Martínez Sierra et al. 2010). The investigation of accents should also be examined in relation to professional constraints, not only time-wise, but also as to the language skills of dubbing actors. Finally, sound engineers are in charge of editing and reassembling the takes, adapting the volume of music, soundtrack, noise, and sound effects to achieve the final product. They then work closely with dubbing directors once the final takes are accepted.

The dubbing process also features characteristics that influence the final dubbed product. Translation professionals and academics acknowledge the negative impact of tight deadlines and insufficient material(s) agents are provided. However, a generally disregarded factor has to do with the lack of communication between agents. Accordingly, it is not uncommon for translators to have no contact with dialogue writers. Many translators are even unaware of the changes their translations go through before the product is released. Communication between the two parties could only have a positive effect on the final product. Considering this lack of 'collaboration', in the strictest sense, it would seem more appropriate to define the process of dubbing as a process comprised of the independent efforts of different agents (Chaume 2000: 64) rather than one comprised of 'teamwork'. Viewed in this light, the dubbing process reveals the workings of the audiovisual industry: one that is ultimately profit- oriented and that, as such, pushes quality into the ground, dismissing the relevance of a good quality translation. This is reinforced by the fact that translators, the only language specialist involved in the process, do not receive the same economic benefits or recognition as the remaining artistic agents. What is worse, translators are not even considered part of this artistic circle (Chaume 2012: 28). It is dialogue writers that enjoy copyright privileges, as their translations are considered the final 'valid' versions, while the translator's 'rough' version, without which the dubbing process would not be possible, is completely dismissed. Sadly, this invisibility of translators seems to be in line with the main aim of dubbing: to hide from the spectators the fact that they are watching a translation. The next section introduces the main features of subtitling in relation to multilingual products.

1.1.3. Subtitling

Before delving into the intricacies of subtitles, it should be noted that subtitling will be analysed in combination with dubbing, i.e. the focus is not on subtitled versions (SV) but on the mixing of subtitling and dubbing in DVs. Subtitling comprises the recounting, in written form, of character dialogue as well as information contained in the discursive elements (e.g. signs, messages) and soundtrack (e.g. songs). Given that the translated film uses different channels of communication from the original, Gottlieb

considers it an example of diasemiotic translation (2005: 4). Following the polysemiotic nature of audiovisual material, a subtitled film consists then of the spoken word, the image, plus the superimposition of written text, i.e., the subtitles (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 9).

Unlike in monolingual dubbing, subtitling always reminds viewers that they are watching a translation. This continuous presence of both soundtrack and subtitles provides linguistically-talented viewers with the possibility of comparing and analysing incongruities (Shochat and Stam 1985: 48-49; Díaz Cintas 1999: 34)52. This explains the pedagogical value of subtitles in the learning of foreign languages and its promotion of the target audience's interest in other languages and cultures. Considering this didactic approach, it is not surprising that subtitles are also used to revive and teach minority languages, and to improve mother-tongue literacy and teach official languages (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 2). In artistic terms, subtitling disrupts neither the cultural/linguistic nor the body/voice coherence of the original film (Delabastita 1990: 105). However, subtitling demands a high level of literacy and greater cognitive effort, since spectators need to simultaneously read the subtitles and look at the on- screen images so as to decode the information therein.

1.1.3.1. Conventions for subtitling

Professional subtitles follow a series of standards according to their technical conditions. The two main restrictions imposed by the medium are related to spatial and temporal constraints. Other standard subtitling practices have to do with what has become appropriate within professional subtitling (i.e. colour, position, etc.). Drawing mainly on Ivarsson and Carroll (1998), de Linde and Kay (1999) and Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007), the following conventions appear to be at play in subtitling[11].

Isochrony, although less strict than in dubbing, is also an important rule in subtitling. The process of determining when a subtitle should appear and

[11] Studies on subtitling conventions seem to be divided in a more descriptive branch [de Linde and Kay (1999); Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007)] and a more prescriptive one [Ivarsson and Carroll's code of good subtitling practice (1998) or Karamitroglou's guidelines towards a standardisation of subtitling practices in Europe (1998)]. The objective here is to describe, not to instruct as to what should be done.

disappear is called spotting (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 30). Given this slight flexibility, subtitles can appear a few frames before the actual dialogue and remain on screen for some brief additional time after the dialogue is over. Simultaneously, the information provided by subtitles needs to be accommodated in the space allowed by the width of the screen. This space largely depends on the medium, with cinema and DVD allowing for the highest number of characters with a total of 40 characters per line in a maximum of two lines (de Linde and Kay 1999: 6; Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 84).

The possibility of comparing the ST and the TT has led Díaz Cintas to describe subtitling as 'vulnerable translation' (2003: 43). Within the professional world, people refer to this as the 'feedback effect' (Gottlieb 1994: 268) or 'gossiping effect' (Törnqvist 1995: 49 in Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 55).

Spatial and temporal restrictions explain the general tendency of subtitles to condense information. However, two further reasons support the need for such reduction. Firstly, there is the fact that individuals' processing of written text is more time consuming than that of spoken dialogue. The audience's reading behaviour is also determined by a series of factors, such as level of literacy, subject matter and the genre of a programme/film (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 65). Secondly, "there is a great deal more for the eye to absorb than just the subtitles" (ibid.: 64). From a semiotic perspective then, it is clear that leaving no time for the audience to roam the screen not only hinders the audience's enjoyment but also hampers the possibility of obtaining information aurally.

Other conventions have to do with position, colour and font. Subtitles are normally positioned on the lower part of the screen, as this part is normally less relevant regarding the action of the film (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 8). Within conventional subtitling, these are only moved to the top or middle of the screen if essential information is already provided at the bottom. Concerning colours and fonts, white and yellow are generally accepted and fonts without serifs tend to be prioritised (ibid.: 130/84). As noted in section 2.4, the use of polychrome features is still mainly considered a device used for SDH and fansubbing. In relation to this, digital technology has opened

a new world of possibilities by allowing the selection of different colours, fonts and font size (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 32; Georgakopoulou 2009: 22).

Besides these technical constraints and conventions, subtitling practice is restricted by the transposition of a spoken SL to a written TL. This rendering of speech in writing together with space and time restrictions determines to a certain extent the elements that need to be 'sacrificed' to convey the main message, while leaving the audience time to contemplate the action on the screen. The next section aims to explore notions associated with subtitling as well as the use of orthotypographic devices to discuss their relevance regarding multilingual products.

1.1.3.2. Restrictions and the use of orthotypographic devices

The translational approach adopted for this thesis makes it necessary to consider (1) a series of notions traditionally associated with subtitling together with (2) further limitations/possibilities of the medium. The reason behind this lies in the direct impact of these notions and limitations on the translation of polyglot films to suggest potential explanations regarding translational solutions.

One of the limitations of subtitles is closely connected to the view that "subtitles serve as a model for literacy" (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 157). As a result, subtitling reproduces an impeccable grammar even when errors are intentionally introduced in the original dialogue. Díaz Cintas argues, however, that the value of these mistakes needs to be examined in terms of characterisation to decide whether their reproduction is appropriate or not (2003: 284). This consideration seems to be of paramount importance for polyglot films, where fragmented language, grammatical/lexical mistakes, etc. are likely to affect the way characters are perceived. This can lead to risky strategies that, far from characterising, might end up complying with stereotypes, e.g. the transposition of 'r' and 'l' to portray Chinese characters.

The 'foreignness' of characters can also be conveyed by leaving words or expressions untranslated. Kovačič suggests that this strategy might help audiences to differentiate between languages (1991: 409 in Georgakopoulou 2009: 26). While this is true to some extent, the degree of recognition largely

depends on the language combination, with typologically close language pairs allowing a greater level of understanding (section 1.4). Otherwise, following Shochat and Stam, the audience might find itself "adrift on an alien sea of undecipherable phonic substance" (1985: 41). This limitation has more to do with language relation and should not therefore undermine the power of subtitling to promote interest in other cultures.

The aforesaid tendency to reproduce 'spotless' subtitles should also be examined in relation to the general standardisation employed in subtitling. Similarly, this standardisation is inevitably linked to the rendering of speech in writing, where numerous features of oral discourse are sacrificed. Within AVT, this neutralisation has been mainly approached concerning intralinguistic differences such as dialects and sociolects, where scholars have acknowledged the limitation of the medium to reproduce the dialectal, idiolectal and pronunciation features that contribute to the moulding of screen characters (Rosa 2001: 216; Georgakopoulou 2009: 26). Some of these flaws seem to be equally applicable to interlingual differences. A key concern is with accents and pronunciation, which are extremely difficult to reproduce through subtitles. However, as Díaz Cintas and Remael argue, subtitlers can benefit from the fact that accents normally go hand in hand with vocabulary (2007: 194), thus facilitating the depiction of a character's origin through lexis. All in all, the audience is left to rely on the soundtrack to perceive these oral tinges.

Another debated strategy is the use of a pseudo-phonetic transcription for pieces of dialogue. Phonetic transcription can be regarded as viable for sporadic words. However, it is generally opposed for longer dialogues because, as Georgakopoulou puts it, "it would hinder the readability of the text by adding to the reading time of the subtitle, and also hinder the comprehension of the message by obscuring the style" (2009: 26). Similarly, and using French as an example, Fawcett goes as far as to add that:

> Although one could again denounce the imperialism of supressing the Other, the reader with no French is spared the misery of trying to read words in a language they can't pronounce, which is no small mercy in a subtitling context (2003: 155)

Conversely, mainstream subtitling makes use of orthotypographic devices that aim, among other things, to denote the 'otherness' of certain elements. These seem to be mainly restricted to quotation marks, inverted commas and italics and are of limited use. Despite this and the apparent lack of general agreement as to their use in subtitling, the usefulness of these devices for polyglot films is pertinent to this study and they are therefore, discussed below.

First and foremost, the use of these devices should be analysed according to the level of presence of foreign elements in a film, be it recurrent or occasional in the form of sentences or isolated foreign words. If a foreign dialogue is to be translated, Ivarsson and Carroll recommend quotation marks or italics to denote the presence of another language (1998: 115). Without mentioning it specifically, these authors – together with the few that have dealt with multilingualism and subtitling (e.g. Díaz Cintas 2010) – seem to refer only to films where a second foreign language is used marginally. As pointed out in section 1.4, only a few scholars, such as Bartoll (2006), have briefly touched upon the more constant presence of foreign languages in films. Here, the use of homogenising subtitling seems to prevail, although the Spanish DVD versions of Monsoon Wedding (Nair 2001) and the more recent Un Prophète (A Prophet, Audiard 2009) can be regarded as more innovative in that they constantly combine italics and normal letters for cases of intrasentential CS and change between languages.

In films with minimal foreign language presence, there is more agreement as to the use of italics and quotation marks, although they sometimes overlap. Italics are generally used for words and expressions that the target audience can recognise (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 118; Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 125). For foreign elements not fully integrated in the TL, opinions differ. Díaz Cintas and Remael recommend that foreign words or expressions be transcribed in italics (2007: 125), while in practice professionals are divided between those supporting the use of quotation marks and italics. Regarding quotation marks, Ivarsson and Carroll (1998), Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) and Miernik (2008) point out the following uses: to denote invented words, incorrect expressions, deliberate mistakes, words belonging to marginal registers, plays on words, words pronounced incorrectly or in a particular way or words/expressions used ironically or