

Audio-visual Translation in Practice

By:

Fereydoon Rasouli

AVT

- ▶ Audio-visual translation describes the process of translating products like tv shows and films
- ▶ Most popular forms are subtitling ,dubbing and voice over.
- ▶ Preferences vary by country and language

Subtitling

- ▶ Plays are translated and then the translation is superimposed onto the film (or overlaid using digital software)
- ▶ General translation policy:
 - ▶ 3 seconds of screen time per line
 - ▶ No more than two lines at once
 - ▶ One line should not exceed 37 characters

Sample of downloaded subtitle in SL

Incredible 2 production year :2018

```
Incredibles.2.2018.1080p.WEB-DL.DD5.1.H264-CMRG - N
File Edit Format View Help
1
00:00:00,050 --> 00:00:35,666
<b><font face="Rockwell" color="#FFFF00">
<b><font face="Rockwell" color="#966FD6">
<b><font face="Rockwell" color="#00FFFF">
2
00:00:51,794 --> 00:00:54,394
File 82-712.
3
00:00:54,396 --> 00:00:56,563
Agent Rick Dicker
interrogating.
4
00:00:56,565 --> 00:00:57,934
State your name, please.
5
00:01:01,003 --> 00:01:03,940
Uh, Tony. Tony Rydinger.
6
00:01:06,976 --> 00:01:08,575
Tell me about the incident.
7
00:01:08,577 --> 00:01:11,812
well, there's this girl,
um, in my class.
8
00:01:11,814 --> 00:01:13,446
```

Subtitling

Pros

- ▶ Does not need to match lip movements
- ▶ Enables viewer to hear original voice track
 - ▶ Original acting
 - ▶ Helps foreign language learners
- ▶ Cheaper

Cons

- ▶ Limited amount of room
- ▶ Distracts from image
 - ▶ Harder to pick up on non-visual cues
 - ▶ Words blend into image
- ▶ Exhausts viewer*
- ▶ Bi-modal translation: language to language and spoken to written
- ▶ Requires more attention
- ▶ Harder for children

Dubbing

- ▶ Using a script, translations are performed and then voice actors read the translations
- ▶ General translation policy:
 - ▶ Match lip movements (as best as possible)

Dubbing and Synchronizing :

- Lip synchronizing

To match lip movement of the person seen on the screen with sound track.

- Facial and body expressions should be compatible with dubber's voice

Dubbing

Pros

- ▶ No need to read
- ▶ Nothing covering the original image
- ▶ Closer to actually spoken language
- ▶ Less active
 - ▶ Requires less attention

Cons

- ▶ Mis-matched lip movements
- ▶ Words chosen to match lip movements/dialog length
- ▶ Bad voice actors
- ▶ More expensive

General Problems

- **Cultural references**

E.g.: references to celebrities, government leaders, historical events, etc.

See: [Lincoln](#)

- **Made up words in science fiction/fantasy**

Wookiee, ewok, tauntaun, stargate, mind meld, tribble, muggles, Ravenclaw, etc.

- **Dialects and accents**

➤ How would you translate what an accent/dialect entails (e.g. stereotypes, misconceptions, origin [Boston, Alaska, Texas] etc.)?

➤ **Lost**: Hurley has no accent, so we can tell he was born and raised in the US, but his father's accent shows he is an immigrant (a fact that isn't outwardly stated in the series, but is supposed to be inferred)

Translation Strategies and Method of analysis

Omission

Literal Translation

Borrowing

Equivalence

Replacement

Adaptation

Which is better?

- ▶ Based on some studies there is no differences in audiences' enjoyment of the two, but still it depends on the purpose of watching movies, which one you prefer.
- ▶ Varies from person to person, country to country and language to language
- ▶ Up to YOU and what is available

Selected bibliography

- ▶ [Antonini, R.](#) (2005). The perception of subtitled humor in Italy. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research*, 18(2), 209-225. doi:10.1515/humr.2005.18.2.209
- ▶ [Caffery, C.](#) (2008). Viewer perception of visual nonverbal cues in subtitled TV Anime. *European Journal of English Studies*, 12(2), 163-178. doi:10.1080/13825570802151439
- ▶ [Caron, C.](#) (2003). Translating trek: Rewriting an American icon in a Francophone context. *Journal of American Culture*, 26(3), 329-355. doi:10.1111/1542-734X.00095
- ▶ [Diaz-Cintas, J.](#) (1999). Dubbing or subtitling: The eternal dilemma. *Perspectives: Studies in Transatology*, 7(1), 31-40.
- ▶ [D'Ydewalle, G., Praet, C., Verfaillie, K., & VanRensbergen, J.](#) (1991). Watching subtitled television: Automatic reading behavior. *Communication Research*, 18(5), 650-666.
- ▶ [González-Iglesias, J. D., & Toda, F.](#) (2011). Dubbing or subtitling interculturalism: Choices and constraints. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 27, 2.