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Review

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Audiovisual translation (AVT) as a sub-field under Translation Studies has received increasing scholarly attention over the past several decades. *Linguistic and cultural representation in audiovisual translation*, edited by Irene Ranzato and Serenella Zanotti, provides new insights and makes an important contribution to a deeper understanding of this emerging area of research. Included within the Routledge Advances in Translation and Interpreting Studies series, this edited volume is based on a collection of academic papers presented at an international conference of the same title in Italy in 2016. This review provides a brief introduction to each chapter of this volume before discussing its merits and demerits.

This book is structured into six parts. It begins with a preface by Marie-Noëlle Guillot as well as an introduction by the editors, which gives a general overview of the linguistic and cultural representation in AVT and outlines the content of the succeeding chapters.

Part I deals with the representation of linguacultures in AVT, focusing on three key language features (formulaicity, metaphors and politeness) respectively. The first chapter, by Maria Pavesi, addresses the situation of translational routines as various types of calques in the dubbing of audiovisual dialogues, drawing examples from the Pavia Corpus of Film Dialogue. Chapter 2, by Jan Pedersen, explores how subtitlers employ various strategies to skilfully render culture-specific metaphors in the British sitcom *Yes, Prime Minister* into Swedish subtitles, bypassing several major constraints. The subsequent chapter, by Monika Woźniak and Agata Hołobut, scrutinises how forms of address in

English-language films set in the Tudor period are treated by their Anglophone scriptwriters and rendered by translators into their Italian and Polish versions.

Part II goes on to survey professional practices across different modes of AVT, and encompasses two chapters on subtitling and one on game localisation. Chapter 4, by David Katan, investigates the usage of several types of abusive subtitles and pop-ups in AVT, including both verbal and nonverbal visuals, through a reception study and an eye-tracking experiment. In the next chapter, Al-Adwan and Yahiaoui analyse how Arab subtitlers manipulate translations of taboo sexual references in the American sitcom *Two and a Half Men* through various strategies and self-censorship. Silvia Pettini's Chapter 6 discusses representations of gender in game localisation, focusing on the case study of the localisation of female protagonist FemShep from the video game *Mass Effect 3* into Italian.

The third part covers the representation of others in AVT. Chapter 7, by Gaia Aragrande, adopts a corpus-based approach to the representation of migrants in a self-built audiovisual corpus of newscasts from four TV channels (*Rai Uno*, *Rainews24*, *Euronews* and *BBC One*) during the 2015 European migrant crisis. In Chapter 8, Pietro Luigi Iaia analyses the representation of foreign speakers in TV series (*The Simpsons*, *Family Guy* and *Outrageous Acts of Psych*) and the influence of translators' linguacultural background on the renditions of their humour discourse in source scripts.

Part IV, on representing multilingualism in AVT, consists of Patrick Zabalbeascoa's chapter, which lays out the theoretical dimensions of binary branching and offers various solutions to translation problems of metaphors and humour in multilingual films and TV series, and Sofia Iberg's chapter on the use of subtitles for invented languages in the TV series *Game of Thrones* and its German version.

The fifth part examines the representation of voice in AVT. In Chapter 11, Irene Ranzato explores how characters with an upper-class British accent are portrayed, linguistically and culturally, in a series of contemporary British and American films and TV shows. Chapter 12, by Silvia Bruti and Serenella Zanotti, moves on to consider the representation of stuttering, a specific type of speech disorder, in a corpus of English-language films and literature and the different strategies deployed to render its phonetic and prosodic features in subtitles.

The last part of this volume concludes with Carol O'Sullivan's chapter on the representation of translation per se in film paratexts, through which AVT

enjoys an increasing degree of visibility, particularly with the advancement of DVD technology.

This scholarly collection showcases a wealth of cutting-edge AVT research which is interdisciplinary and multidimensional in nature (Díaz Cintas, 2009), bridging the gaps between Translation Studies, media studies, film studies, linguistics, cultural studies, game studies and gender studies. This collection examines the representation of language and culture in the context of AVT, and Guillot notes in the preface that this is “a theme that has become increasingly prominent in research over the last few years and increasingly topical in its societal ramifications” (viii). Ranzato and Zanotti also state in the introduction that “[t]he main assumption underlying this volume is that telecinematic texts have been and still are chief players in the construction of linguistic and cultural identities” (1). Studies contained in this volume are conducted not only from the perspectives of linguistic features in AVT such as metaphor, humour, taboos and politeness, but also extralinguistic factors including culture, ideology and censorship. The book gives a comprehensive account of AVT, including not only dubbing and subtitling (both intralingual and interlingual subtitling), two prominent modes of AVT, but also some innovative practices such as fansubbing and subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing. Scholarly inquiries into this AVT research feature multiple modes including text, image, and sound in various genres of multimedia cultural artefacts such as films, video games, TV series and news broadcasting.

Despite its merits as mentioned above, this volume has several minor deficiencies. The chapters collected in this volume have pretty much focused on the actual translated audiovisual products, whereas process-oriented aspects exploring psychological factors of translators during the translation process, such as Katan’s empirical study of pop-ups using eye-tracking, remain scarce in AVT research (Pérez-González, 2020). The empirical studies in this volume tend to focus on one or two modalities of audiovisual products (subtitles, voice, or image) rather than exploring the multimodal relationships between different modes. This could be explained by the methodological challenges facing AVT research. As Gambier and Ramos Pinto (2018: 3) pointed out: “a truly multimodal framework of analysis has still not been developed within AVT”. The research findings of some studies in this book may have been generated from a small sample. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see a number of corpus-based studies of audiovisual products in this volume (e.g. Aragrande, 2018; Bruti and Zanotti, 2018; Pavesi, 2018), which identify patterns in relation to translation strategies. A more comprehensive selection would include empirical

research and reception studies conducted from a large audience instead of being limited to local surveys. Another potential pitfall of this publication is eurocentrism. Only one chapter in this volume (Al-Adwan and Yahiaoui, 2018) is based on research conducted in the context of non-European countries. This might, however, be due to the geographic location of the conference and the number and type of papers it received.

In summary, this edited volume reviewed here sheds new light on our understanding of AVT from linguistic and cultural perspectives and offers significant implications for future research in this area. It makes essential reading for teachers and students on media and audiovisual translation courses, professional audiovisual practitioners, as well as scholars and researchers in the field of Translation Studies and neighbouring disciplines.

References

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