Research Issues in Audiovisual Translation:

Aspects of Subtitling in Greece

Author: Stavroula Sokoli

Director: Patrick Zabalbeascoa

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INTRODUCTION

Watching subtitled television programmes was undoubtedly one of my first contacts with foreign languages and cultures which, at a later stage, aroused my interest in translation matters. This interest formed part of my motivation to take up research in audiovisual translation.

The aim of the present paper is twofold: to attempt to establish a theoretical framework, which will hopefully provide some conceptual tools for more fruitful research in audiovisual translation; and to make some tentative statements about what guides translators' decisions in the process of subtitling, as illustrated in the case of Greek subtitlers.

The theoretical aim will be pursued through specific steps, which form the first part of this paper. The starting point is an attempt to define the object under study and to place it in a wider context. The establishment of the characteristics that differentiate the audiovisual texts from other kinds of texts is expected to serve as a basis for a working definition of audiovisual translation. This in turn will help to justify a given research methodology. The premise is that prescriptive approaches have certain limitations which can be overcome by using descriptive tools.

The second part presents an attempt to find norms in subtitling. The case of Greece will be taken as a starting point, a country with a longstanding tradition in subtitling. It is assumed that there are regularities that characterise this activity, and that subtitling is not a completely random phenomenon. Another premise is that one way of discovering these norms is by using a questionnaire directed to subtitlers themselves. I hope to provide an answer to Fawcett's (1996: 67) who wonders "how we can integrate the authentic voice of the practitioner without attracting the disparaging accusation of anecdotalism".

Before the presentation of the questionnaire and its results, a contextualisation of the practice of subtitling in Greece is needed. Therefore, certain sociohistorical aspects will be examined. A brief study of the evolution of subtitling in Greece will hopefully give

possible explanations for the choice of subtitling as the main mode of audiovisual translation in this country. This is assumed to play an important role in the determination of the function of subtitles, which can be further established through its comparison to the role of subtitling in other areas where dubbing prevails. A final step of this contextualisation is a brief view at the steps of subtitling as found in the literature.

The fact that this paper is only a first approach to subtitling norms, justifies the choice of a qualitative kind of questionnaire. The aim is not to arrive at absolute truths but to find evidence of norms which can be used as a basis for further research.

PART ONE: The Framework

Chapter 1: The Interest in Audiovisual Translation

"Un genre encore largement inexploré" (Gambier 1996: 10)

"Un objet encore peu abordé"(Lambert & Delabastita 1996: 34)

The purpose of the above statements is to sum up the situation of research in the translation of films and television programmes. Similar observations are made by other authors, like Fawcett (1996: 65), who, after enumerating the relevant publications encountered, concludes that "very little work has been done in the field of film translation". Delabastita (1990: 97) also confirms that there is a "blatant discrepancy between the obvious importance of translation in the media and the limited attention it has so far been thought worthy of". This view is still echoed more recently by Díaz-Cintas (1998), who finds the academic marginality of this field surprising and paradoxical.

Indeed, a review of the mainstream journals on translation studies, such as *Babel*, *Meta* or *Target*, results in a relatively poor number of papers on audiovisual translation – hardly more than ten. We have to turn to other kinds of journals, on linguistics or film studies for example, to encounter some more on this subject, but still the amount does not increase significantly. The scarcity is especially noted before the '90s, where there are only two books on this subject, both of them about dubbing (Fodor, 1976 and Pommier 1988).

The lack of academic attention in this field is shown not only in the number of works published, but also in the limited points of view adopted in these publications. For the most part the articles are written by practitioners, who describe the specific procedures of their work, explaining mainly the difficulties it entails: constraints of time and space for subtitling, lip-synchronisation for dubbing[1]. They give examples of the way they have dealt with specific problems, often prescribing what the subtitler should do: "Il doit préparer un digeste sommaire de ce qui se passe à l'écran. Il doit se garder de

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[1] The constraints will be presented more extensively later in the paper.

tomber dans le *mot-a-mot*. Il doit éviter de changer l'ordre des phrases de l'original"
(Marleau, 1982: 278).

Despite the appeal and the undeniable contribution of these views to the understanding
of the practice, their lack of theoretical foundation is strongly felt. They are
predominantly intuitive, based on personal experience rather than scientific research, an
approach which, however useful, has its limitations. As Lambert & Delabastita (1996:
35) affirm, "les professionnels ont peu d'intérêt à se pencher sur des situations qui ne
sont pas les leurs". It is difficult for them to escape from the values and the conventions
that determine their everyday work, to detach themselves from the immediate needs of
the practice, in order to be able to identify the relationships between the activity and the
factors that guide it. Thus, we find comments concerning, for example, the supremacy
of the original in Marleau 1982; the faithfulness of the translation either to the sound (in
the case of subtitling) or the image (in dubbing) in Caillé 1960 and Gautier 1981; or
even the "snobisme" of that part of the public who will only watch films in original
version in Cary 1960. A corollary of these views is the traditional debate "dubbing
versus subtitling[2]" (e.g. Vöge 1977), with fervent supporters on each side, which will be
dealt with in section 3.3.

Of course, not all the publications are anecdotic or prescriptive. Scientific studies have
been carried out, from the perspective of various disciplines. Linguistics is used by
Fodor (1976) in the first book exclusively dedicated to audiovisual translation. He deals
mainly with the phonetic aspects of dubbing, even though its title also announces
semiotic, aesthetic and psychological aspects. This subject has also been studied within
the discipline of experimental psychology: d'Ydewalle (1985-1991) used experiments
to observe the eye-movements of viewers of subtitled films, in order to examine the
effects of subtitles on receivers. Nonetheless, research in dubbing and subtitling from
the point of view of translation studies has been almost inexistent until recently.

Why then this delay in studying audiovisual translation within translation studies?
Certainly, audiovisual texts are relatively new forms of text production, and so is their

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[2] According to Delabastita, this debate is fruit of "the immediacy of daily practice" which brings about
"the defence of certain translation practices" (1990: 97-98)

translation. However, their presence in everyday life has been significant since the '60s, as shown by the amount of translated emissions per year presented in Caillé (1960). The importance is not only quantitative, but also qualitative, considering the impact mass media have in culture, society and language. Fawcett attributes the lack of work on audiovisual translation to the difficulties that this kind of research entails: "material difficulties, the atheoretical nature of most existing studies, the scope of the field, the sync imperative which casts doubt on the theorisability of the subject, and finally what one might call the Quantum Mechanics problem" (1996: 66). However true his observations may be, these difficulties are not specific to this type of research. For example, finding an original manuscript could be a great material difficulty in studying the translation of medieval texts. As for the Quantum Mechanics problem, the fact that the observer and the process of observation influence the observed, holds for most kinds of research. Obviously, the existence of such difficulties in other fields has not impeded investigation in them.

A more satisfactory answer to our question might be provided by looking briefly at the evolution of the discipline of translation studies[3]. A bird's eye view is sufficient for our purposes, since it is not this paper's aim to study its evolution, which, at any rate, has been presented more than adequately by renowned scholars (e.g. Gentzler 1993). In the last decades translation theory has been developed within the framework of basically two schools (cf. Snell-Hornby 1995). On the one hand there is the linguistically oriented group of scholars, which adopts the aims and methods of Applied Linguistics, including scholars such as the ones belonging to the so-called Leipzing School (Kade, Jäger, Neubert), as well as Wilss, Reiss, Nida and Catford, among others. The other very influential group is the sometimes denominated "Manipulation School" represented by Lefevere, Lambert, Hermans, Bassnett and Toury. These scholars have a target-oriented approach and view translation studies as a branch of Comparative Literature.

For the first group, an essential component of any definition of translation is the concept of equivalence. Examples of such definitions are the ones given by Nida & Taber (1969: 12): "Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural

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[3] By *translation studies* I refer to the study and theory of translation, and not to the specific group of scholars, sometimes associated with this name.

equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style"; or by Koller (1979: 79), according to whom translation must fulfill "bestimmten Äquivalenzforderungen normativer Art". Obviously, under such definitions dubbing and subtitling are bound to be seen as adaptations rather than translations, since they do not fulfill the specific requirements of equivalence.

Indeed, this view is reflected in the works of authors such as the prominent subtitler Jan Ivarsson (1998: v), who emphasises that his book is "*about subtitling, not translation*", pointing out that "translation is a different art". A similar point of view sees subtitling and dubbing as specific operations, included under the concept of "language transfer" (Gambier 1995 & 1996 and Ganz Blattler 1995). For Rowe (1960: 110), the creator of a dubbing text is not essentially a translator, therefore – for lack of another term – he calls him a "dubbing writer". The view that subtitling and dubbing texts are not translations proper, could also be considered as a defensive stance against the heavy criticism they face, which involves arguments such as the lack of "equivalence" and "fidelity". A representative example is found in Papadakis (1997), who attempts to defend subtitling against the accusation that not everything heard is translated. In order to achieve that, he gives a thorough account of the constraints that subtitling involves, and concludes: "we hope that from now on you will watch a subtitled programme with a different eye" (my translation). At any rate, the implication is that these activities are not considered as genuine objects of translation theory.

The scholars of the other major group do not take equivalence as their starting point, but develop much broader definitions of translation, which can incorporate audiovisual translation too (details of these definitions will be presented in Chapter 2). Nonetheless, since these scholars depart from Comparative Literature, they start off studying mainly written texts, which fall into that discipline. Audiovisual texts were left on the side at least for the first two decades of the existence of this school. Snell-Hornby's (1993: 337) observation on translation for the stage could apply to all multimedia translation:

> "Greibare Forschungsergebnisse auf diesem Gebiet stamen allerdings hauptsächlich von den Philologen und nicht aus der Translationswissenschaft, und es ist deshalb nicht verwunderlich, daß die historische Perspektive und die rein sprachlichen Erscheinungen überwiegen."

The evolution of translation studies as an independent discipline, and not as a branch of Applied Linguistics or Comparative Literature, has been a slow process. One of the first efforts to define it as such goes back to 1972. In his article "The Name and Nature of translation studies", Holmes investigates the different parts of translation studies, and its relation to other disciplines including Linguistics and Comparative Literature. The claim for an independent discipline continued in 1980 by Susan Bassnett. It seems, though, that the need was still felt in 1987, as shown in the work by Mary Snell-Hornby, which has the indicative title *Translation Studies. An Integrated Approach.*

This development brought on an increase in the interest in audiovisual translation. The creation of departments of Translation in several universities lead to a growth in investigation, as well as its diversification. Relevant MA or PhD theses were written[4], and conferences dedicated to audiovisual translation were organised, bringing together theoreticians, practitioners, in addition to academics involved in audiovisual translation training. One of the first such conferences – although not completely dedicated to audiovisual translation – was held in Vitoria in May 1993, the papers of which were published under the title *Transvases Culturales. Literatura, Cine, Traducción*. More specialised conferences followed, especially in the last three years: the "International Seminar on Multimedia & Translation" (Misano, Italy, September 1997); the conference that took place in Forlì in April 1998, with the title *Traduzione Multimediale: Quale traduzione per quale testo?*; or the 5th Conference on Translation organised by the Universidad Jaume I *Audiovisual Translation in the 21st Century* (Castellón, October 1999) Another important sign of the interest in audiovisual translation is the creation of associations such as ESIST (European Association of Studies in Screen Translation) in 1995, and the Committee for Media Translators and Interpreters of FIT, which co-organised two conferences on *Languages and the Media* in 1996[5] and 1998 in Berlin.

As for publications in this decade other than articles, there are also several books exclusively dedicated to audiovisual translation. The majority are collections of papers,

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[4] Examples are the dissertations written by Zabalbeascoa (1993), Agost (1996), Díaz-Cintas (1997), Gottlieb (1997), Karamitroglou (1998) and others.

[5] The proceedings of this conference were published in 1998, under the title *Translating for the Media,* (ed: Yves Gambier)

either presented in conferences as the ones seen above, or, in the case of Gambier 1995 and 1996, written especially for these collections. Even though they are an important step forward, they are still characterised by the shortcomings of earlier publications. In *Les Transferts Linguistiques dans les Médias Audiovisuels* (Gambier 1996: 10) again "la majorité des auteurs sont des praticiens", whose prescriptive attitude is reflected in their descriptions of correct ways of subtitling and dubbing. The problem is not prescriptivism in itself, but rather its consequences: prescriptive approaches are characterised by a wish to recommend or condemn a practice without taking other factors into consideration (this point is further developed in 3.3).

The rest of the publications, include *Overcoming Language Barriers in Television* (Luyken et al.)*,* a very useful overview of the audiovisual landscape in Europe, and *Dubbing and Subtitling: Guidelines for Production and Distribution* (Dries 1995), both published by the European Institute for the Media. Izard's *La Traducció Cinematogràfica* (1992) concerns the history of subtitling and dubbing, as well as certain technical aspects. More information about the technical procedure of the two practices can be obtained in Ivarsson's *Subtitling for the Media: A Handbook of an Art* (1992 re-edited with the collaboration of Carroll and presented under the title *Subtitling* in 1998) and in Ávila's *El doblaje* (1997). These books also serve as guidebooks giving advice on problematic points, always according to the respective authors' preferences based on their personal experience. Among the most recent books on the subject are *The Semiotics of Subtitling* (de Linde & Kay 1999) and *Traducción y Doblaje: Palabras, Voces e Imagines* (Agost 1999). The first one deals mainly with questions of subtitling for the deaf, a practice with a different function to the one proposed to be observed here. Agost's study stands out for its sound theoretical basis, while at the same time it offers a practical view of the specificities of different audiovisual genres.

All the above manifestations of this growing interest are not only due to the evolution of translation studies. The advances in private, cable and satellite television in the '90s have had a great influence on the way audiovisual programmes are distributed. As Dries affirms "les chaînes satellitaires multiplient leurs émissions multilingues et même les compagnies nationales recourent à forte quantité de produits importés" (1996: 15). The amount of translation of audiovisual products has rapidly multiplied, in a way that could not remain without appropriate attention.

Nonetheless, this increase in interest has not implied a widening of perspectives. As we have seen, the limitations are still present, the attitude of many authors, apart from a few exceptions, is still prescriptive, and an adequate theoretical point of view is still missing. Even though some responses to the question "où en sont les recherches?" (Lambert & Delabastita 1996: 34) seem to be emerging, there is still a lot of research to be done.

Chapter 2: Research Issues in Audiovisual Translation

2.1. The Nature of Audiovisual Texts and their Translations

Before embarking on the investigation, the object of study needs to be defined and seen in its context, so that the most appropriate methodology and methods can be chosen. Going from the more general to the more specific, I will start from the definition of the audiovisual text, continue with audiovisual translation and the different modes of it, to arrive at the specific mode of subtitling.

2.1.1. Audiovisual Text

Our theoretical departure point is that a translating act is mainly an act of communication (cf Hatim & Mason, 1990), whose vehicle is the text. Being a communicative occurrence, according to the definition of de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), a text has to meet seven standards of textuality: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality and intertextuality. Hence, texts are not only written utterances, even though this is the connotation the word "text" has in everyday language. This definition also accounts for spoken utterances, as well as television and cinema products, which constitute our object of study. An increasingly accepted term used to refer to such products is "audiovisual texts". In order to establish what sort of texts they are, we need to see them in comparison to other kinds of texts. Their special characteristics and the factors that differentiate them from other texts can best be seen within a typology.

Typologies are an essential part of acquisition of scientific knowledge and the understanding of different phenomena. Organising objects or concepts in categories is also economical, as concepts which apply to one of the constituents of the category, can apply to all the rest. The parameters that establish the division of the elements are chosen according to the purpose of the classification, and the use that will be made of it.

There have been various text typologies[6] within translation studies, serving different purposes. Reiss's (1971) typology, for example, is meant as a guide to the translator's decisions. The parameter she uses for the classification of texts is the dominant communicative function, which gives three types: "inhaltsbetont" (informative), "formbetont" (expressive) and "appellbetont" (operative). To these she adds the "audio-medial" type which concerns texts "die zwar schriftlich fixiert, aber mit Hilfe eines nicht-sprachlichen *Mediums,* in *gesprochener* (oder *gesungener*) Form an das Ohr des Emfängers gelangen, wobei in unterschiedlich großem Ausmaß außersprachliche Hilfsmittel zur Realisierung einer literarischen Mischform beitragen" (1971:34). She adds that their characteristic is their dependence on "außersprachliche (technische) Medien und nichtsprachliche Ausdrucksformen graphischer, akustischer und optischer Art" (1971: 49). In a later publication, Reiß (1984) changes this term to *"multi-medial"* to also account for the interaction with the visual component. At the same time she specifies that multi-media texts do not form a separate text type at the same level as the other three, since a "multi-medial" text can have elements of the informative, the expressive or the operative type. Even though this fourth type is not classified according to the same parameter (communicative function) as the other three, its postulation is considered a necessity by Reiß. At any rate, her observation on the role of the nonverbal elements of the text, which together with the verbal elements form a "bigger total", is of great relevance to the study of audiovisual texts.

Snell-Hornby (1995: 31) refers to "basic text-types" in a diagram, part of which is presented below:

Literary Translation	General Lang. Translation	Special Lang. Translation
Bible Stage/Film, Lyric poetry, Modern literature, Cl. Antiquity, Literature before 1900, Children Literature, Light fiction	Newspaper/General Information texts, Advertising	Legal, Economic; Medicine, Science/Techn.

Table 1: Part of Snell Hornby's diagram (1995: 32) "Text-type and relevant criteria for translation"

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[6] Needless to say that we do not aim to examine all of them nor to do so in detail.

She acknowledges that there are many other text-types, along with numerous blend forms, which implies that it is not her goal to create an exhaustive list of text-types. Her classification of texts forms part of a diagram which presents a system of the relationships established between them and the crucial aspects of translation. The aim is to lay the foundations for a conception of translation studies "as an integrated and independent discipline that covers all kind of translation, from literary to technical" (ibid: 34-35). Even though this approach is very important for the development of translation studies, the parameters for the classification of the texts are not quite clear. She states that the items situated on the extreme left of the spectrum are the ones which traditional theory has concentrated on. To these she adds "Children's literature" and "Stage/film" as texts with special problems, whereas on the left we find texts classified according to the major areas of studies in the training institutes. The feature that these "text-types" seem to have in common is the fact that they are the main concern of the translator (or the translator theorist). As a result, since this classification is not made according to parameters having to do with the nature of the texts, it does not give us any insight into their definition.

Hatim and Mason (1990: 140) consider that "classifying texts according to criteria such as 'field of discourse' alone amounts to little more than a statement of subject matter", so that there is the risk of "ending up with as many text types as there are texts". They propose a classification of texts "in terms of communicative intentions serving an overall rhetorical purpose", and arrive at three basic text types: *argumentative*, *expository* and *instructional*. They look at text types from the translator's point of view, with the intention to examine the ways in which context determines the focus of any given text.

Taking as a departure point Hatim & Mason's communicative, pragmatic and semiotic dimensions of the text, Agost (1999) forms the criteria for a typology specific to audiovisual texts. According to these criteria, as well as the classification of genres that appears in cinema and television studies, she elaborates a classification of audiovisual genres, which she divides in four big groups *dramatic*, *informative*, *publicity* and *entertainment*. The aim of this typology is explicit: "el hecho de poder reconocer los diferentes géneros y tipos textuales puede ayudar al traductor a analizar y comprender mejor los textos en la lengua original y toda esta información la puede transmitir al

texto en la lengua de llegada" (1999: 24). Even though the terms "type" and "genre" in this case seem to be used indistinctively, this typology is very important, as it covers all the kinds of texts that appear on the television and the cinema. It includes not only films and documentaries, but also television series, filmed opera, interviews etc.

A useful typology for our study, however, is one that can define the audiovisual text by placing it in the context of other kinds of texts, written or oral. What distinguishes a film from a novel or a radio programme, for example, is that the former is perceived not only through the visual channel or the acoustic, but through both (cf. Delabastita, 1989). Images and sound arrive at the receiver simultaneously and as an inseparable whole. Another parameter differentiating between texts is the importance of the verbal and nonverbal code. Gottlieb (1997b: 309) distinguishes between "discourse expressed through a static, solely verbal medium: *the printed text,* whether fiction or non-fiction, and discourse expressed through a fleeting medium using a multitude of communicative channels simultaneously: the audiovisual text".

But is the printed text solely verbal? As Zabalbeascoa (1997) affirms, all texts contain a certain degree of nonverbal elements, since the message cannot be delivered without some sort of physical support. For example, despite the present text's high degree of "verbality", nonverbal elements such as size of letters, layout etc., also contribute to the delivery of the message: the words in smaller letters located at the bottom of the page separated by a line from the rest of the text signify that the idea expressed is explanatory or simply interesting but not as relevant, etc. In a film, however, the nonverbal element, either acoustic (noises, music, etc.) or visual (images, etc.), appears in a much higher degree than in the case of the present written text.

Taking these parameters in consideration, Zabalbeascoa (1997: 340) proposes a classification of texts "according to mode of perception and the verbal nonverbal distinction". The result is 6 types of text:

1. Read only, where nonverbal elements have very little relevance; e.g. a novel.
2. Read and seen (verbal and nonverbal visual signs); e.g. a comic book, or an entirely verbal text where layout, formatting and/or colours are highly relevant or meaningful (a frequent case in advertising).
3. Heard only (verbal and nonverbal sounds): e.g. a radio program.

4. Heard and seen (including verbal and nonverbal signs); e.g. a play performed on stage.

5. Heard and seen and read; e.g. a film with subtitles or with written messages in the original picture.

6. Seen and/or heard only (including only nonverbal images and sounds); e.g. a comic strip with no words, some silent films.

One reason why this classification is extremely valuable is that it sheds light on the nature of the audiovisual text in a systematic way, placing it in a wider context. In order to enhance the visualisation of this typology, I have tried to form a chart, according to the same parameters (mode of perception, verbal-nonverbal). Another advantage of the arrangement of these parameters in a chart, is that the distinction between verbal-nonverbal can be presented in the form of a continuum, rather than in a dichotomy, in order to account for "the amount of 'space' or time taken up by each type in the total 'volume' of a text" (Zabalbeascoa, 1997: 339). For reasons of economy of space I have included only the degree of presence of the nonverbal element, so that where there is less nonverbal presence, it is understood that there will be more verbal presence. After creating the table, I tried to situate Zabalbeascoa's text types in it:

Channels Codes	*Acoustic*	*Visual*	**Acoustic & visual**		
			(verbal in acoustic)	(verbal in visual)	(verbal in both)
- nonverbal ↓		text-type 1			
+ nonverbal ↓	text-type 3	text-type 2	text-type 4		text-type 5
nonverbal	(text-type 6)	text-type 6	(text-type 6)		

Table 2: Zabalbeascoa's (1997) text-types in the form of a table

It can be observed that, although Zabalbeascoa divides texts perceived through the visual channel into those that contain a insignificant degree of nonverbal elements ("read") and those that contain more nonverbal elements ("read & seen"), the same division is not applied to the texts perceived through the acoustic channel, or through

both channels. Indeed, it is rather a rare case to find "acoustic" or "acoustic & visual" texts where the nonverbal elements are of little relevance. Nonetheless, the degree of nonverbal elements is not the same in a radio play and in a talk show on the radio. In the first one, there are elements such as background noises or music, which entails that the radio play as text will be placed in the +*nonverbal* location of the chart, whereas the talk show on the –*nonverbal*. In the same way, an advertisement appearing in a newspaper which contains only text and no images will be placed closer to the top of this continuum than an advertisement comprising an image with a few words underneath. The same can be applied to films: Aki Kaurismaki's "The Match Factory Girl" (Tulitikkutehtaan Tyttö – 1990) with a dialogue list of hardly 4 pages is obviously less verbal than many films.

Going back to Zabalbeascoa's text types, texts with no verbal elements are placed in the same category (text type 6) whether they are "acoustic", "visual" or both. This lack of further consideration to them seems reasonable, since these texts do not undergo translation, in the conventional sense of the word, therefore they are not of interest for translation theory and research. At any rate, if examples are needed for more "locations" in the table, the following can be added:

Channels Codes	Acoustic	Visual	Acoustic & visual		
			(verbal in acoustic)	(verbal in visual)	(verbal in both)
- nonverbal ↓	talk show on the radio	novel with no illustrations	lecture	hypertext with sound	lecture with text projection
+ nonverbal ↓	radio play	comic book	play on stage	silent film with intertitles	film with subtitles
nonverbal	music without lyrics	comic strip without words	silent film without intertitles		

Table 3: Examples of texts.

At this point it has to be made clear that not all the texts included in the column "acoustic & visual" are under discussion here. Therefore, more parameters have to be included in order for the field of study to be defined exactly. One of these parameters is the medium: audiovisual texts appear on a screen be it big or small. However, nowadays films, for example, can be viewed not only on a television set and at the cinema, but also on computer screens. This calls for another delimiting parameter, which will define audiovisual texts as opposed to hypertexts, received through the same medium. The images in a hypertext, such as a web page, can be static or moving, whereas the audiovisual text always includes moving images. The difference between the two kinds of texts when they include moving images is that in the case of the latter, there is a predetermined succession of non-repetitive images in absolute synchrony with the verbal elements. Mayoral (1988:359) refers to this as *character synchrony*, "the harmony between the image of the character and his or her voice and words". Another decisive factor is interactivity: in the case of hypertexts the receiver decides the sequence of the elements, according to his needs, whereas the audiovisual text cannot be altered. The only possibility of intervention on the part of the receiver, is the case of a video-tape or a DVD (digital versatile disc) where the viewer can backtrack or "move" within the film.

The features that distinguish the audiovisual text can be recapitulated as following:

- Reception through two channels: acoustic and visual.
- Vital presence of nonverbal elements.
- Synchrony between verbal and non verbal elements.
- Appearance on screen – Reproducible material.
- Predetermined succession of moving images – Recorded material.

Table 4: Features of the audiovisual text

These features condition the translation of the audiovisual text, therefore taking them into consideration is fundamental for its study.

2.1.2. Audiovisual Translation

The term audiovisual translation shall be used for the translation of the audiovisual text, as defined in the previous section. The questions which arose for that definition, are relevant again: What are the special characteristics of audiovisual translation? What makes it different from print translation, interpretation etc? Its specific features have given this kind of translation other modifiers apart from "audiovisual".

One of these features is the medium, through which the translated products are distributed, that is, television and cinema as opposed to book, newspaper, radio, computer etc. Hence the terms *cinematographic translation* (Izard 1992 and Mayoral 1993) or *translation for the cinema and the television* (Cipolloni 1994). Another distinguishing characteristic is the carrier, i.e. the screen as opposed to paper. *Screen translation* is used in many publications as a synonym to *audiovisual translation* (Mason 1989, Zabalbeascoa 1997, Baker 1998). It has also been used in the naming of the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) and of relevant training courses such the one at the University of Wales (James 1995). On the other hand, Delabastita (1990) calls it *film translation*, with the specification that he employs the term *film* in an unusually encompassing sense, which also includes TV programmes. Most often, however, this specification is not made, as in the article "Translating Film" (Fawcett 1996). The terms *cinematographic, screen, film or audiovisual* translation can be considered synonymous. Nonetheless, the latter will be used here, for reasons of coherence and because it is the one that is gaining increasing acceptance in translation studies.

The discussion of dubbing and subtitling is also included in publications, collections of papers or conferences under the designation *(multi)media translation.* In this case, though, the term is not so clear, since it has been used in very different ways. In Lambert & Dembski (1998), for example, it is encountered meaning media *supported* translation. These scholars refer to the technological support in the process of translation, reminding us that writing also implies technology, in order to pose the question: "Is all translation (multi)media translation?". The following statements are indicative of the use of *media translation:*

> Since not many translators may be able to resist media support, the question of media translation stops being peripheral in the daily life of our average translator […]. There are strong chances that the more sophisticated kinds of media supported translation will be used in rich, large-scale and prestigious environments, and that "traditional" (human?) translation will appear to be peripheral.

An example of a completely different use of this term can be found in the collection of papers *Translating for the Media* (Gambier 1998) or in the article "Media Translation and Lesser-used Languages: Implications of subtitles for Irish Language Broadcasting" (O'Connell 1994). Here the denotation is translation *for* the media, where the word *media* takes the meaning it has in everyday language, that is, mass media, including newspapers, magazines, radio, television. In this sense, *media translation* cannot be considered a synonym to audiovisual translation, because it belongs to a different level. From a taxonomical point of view *media translation* encompasses audiovisual translation.

Yet another definition, is the one given by Heiss (1996: 14) who explains *multimedia translation* as follows:

> "la traduzione multimediale va intesa qui come traduzione di testi con collocazione multimediale, cioè traduzione di componenti linguistiche appartenenti ad un "pacchetto" di informazioni percepite contemporaneamente in maniera complessa. Intendiamo, cioè che l'impiego contemporaneo di diversi *media* per la realizzazione di un prodotto comunicativo implichi che il destinatario attivi simultaneamente almeno due canali di percezione (generalmente quello visivo e quello uditivo)".

The emphasis here is in the perception – similar to the definition of "audiovisual" given in the previous section – and *media* is used to mean signs, or semiotic systems[7]. In the effort to set the limits of this concept and in order to exclude other kinds of communication which could be considered multimedia, such as face-to-face communication, Heiss (ibid.) specifies that the *medium* has to be technical: "trasmissioni televisive, nastri video, CD-ROM video, programmi multimediali per

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[7] Similarly, Didaoui (1997) holds that "the term 'multimedia' may be taken to mean any way of conveying meaning by more than one semiotic system" and that "multimedia translation covers a wide range of subjects: mainly dubbing, subtitling, opera, theatre and music".

computer di diverso genere, videotelefoni, produzioni cinematografiche". Obviously, if *media* stands for the technical means of communicating a message, the term *multimedia* is unsuccessful, since the technical medium can only be one at a time (either television, or video, and so on). It seems that the choice of this term in the afore-mentioned publication, was due to the necessity to link theatre and film translation, since they both "involve a systematic interaction between oral, written and nonverbal communication" (Lambert 1994: 23). However, our definition of audiovisual text, presented in the previous section, requires its appearance on a screen. Therefore theater translation is not included in our sense of audiovisual translation.

Another note on the term *multimedia* involves its increasing association to a way of communication, where a very important element is the interaction between the receiver and the text. These ways of communication include the use of the internet, CD- ROMs and other computer-related technology. Therefore, for reasons of transparency, I would suggest that *multimedia translation* be limited to translation in this area.

A characteristic which has given another modifier to the translation of audiovisual texts is associated to the constraints imposed on the translator. Titford (1982) proposes the concept of *constrained* translation, in an article dealing with the description of the problems engendered by the physical limitations involved in the practice of subtitling. The concept of constrained translation is recovered by Mayoral, Kelly & Gallardo (1988: 356) and broadened to refer to "the translation of film scripts, drama, advertisements, lyrics, comic strip dialogues, etc." The focus, however, remains on the limitations, the difficulties: "in constrained translation the translator's task is complicated by the existence of different channels and media" (ibid: 351)

The discussion of the constraints, as elements that distinguish audiovisual translation, has been a recurrent theme in many relevant publications. One of the first scholars to write on dubbing, Caillé (1960: 104), affirms that the practice of dubbing is different from other translation practices because there are "toute une série d'obstacles á surmonter en s'aidant plus ou moins de lois phonétiques". Similarly Gautier (1981:102), points out "le handicap de la synchronization" in dubbing, and Minchinton (1992), concentrates on the technical limitations and restrictions in subtitling.

A key word for the definition of these constraints is synchrony. Fodor (1976: 10) describes the required levels of synchrony for dubbing as such:

> In the case when unity is achieved between the articulatory movements seen and the sounds heard, the result is *phonetic synchrony* […] A harmony between the sound (timbre, power, tempo, etc) of the acoustic (dubbing) personifier and the film actor's or actress's exterior, gestures and gait brings about *character synchrony* […]. The congruence of the new text version and the plot action of the original motion picture is *content synchrony*.

Special emphasis has been given to phonetic or lip-synchrony, as a necessary element to give credibility and naturalness to the translated film, the aim being to maintain the illusion created by the original. It is considered of utmost importance that there is no "dischrony" and that the spectator is not reminded of the translation.

Subtitling also requires synchrony, since the subtitles are conditioned by their synchrony with the acoustic element (words uttered, sounds music) on the one hand, and with the visual element (images) on the other. The required synchrony can be represented as an interrelationship of these elements in the following way:

| verbal acoustic (words uttered) | ←→ | verbal visual (subtitles) |
| nonverbal acoustic (sounds, music) | ←→ | nonverbal visual (images) |
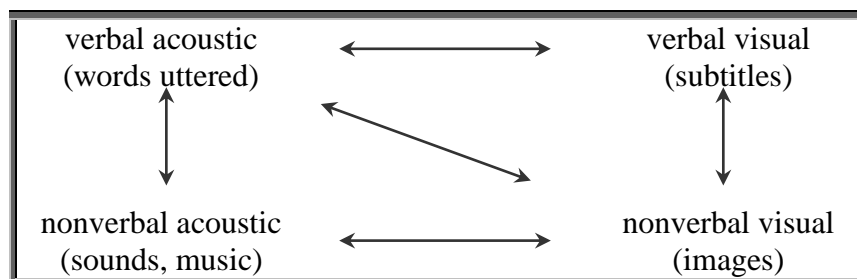
Figure 1: The interrelationships between the elements of a subtitled film or programme.

The constraints imposed by the requirement for synchrony are summarized by Luyken et al. (1991: 46):

The task of subtitling differs from literary translation and from language interpretation by virtue of the particular restraints relating to time and space which are imposed by the nature of television and film production. These include:

- the screen space available for the subtitle text
- the time available for and between subtitle exposures
- the timing of subtitle insertion and removal
- display and format of the subtitles.

The sources of the restrictions for subtitling are of different – apparently more technical – nature. According to Gottlieb (1992), they are due to the size of the screen combined with the size of readable letters (space factor) and due to the different speed of reception of the verbal message when it is oral and when it is written (time factor). This means, that, since the receiver cannot read as fast as he can listen, the original message has to undergo a degree of compression, allowing the viewer sufficient time to read the subtitles. Ivarsson (1998) argues on his part that most people can read a text much faster than if someone were to recite it to them, the only limit being the readers rate of comprehension. To this it could be added, that the screen of the television or the cinema is big enough to fit all the utterances, if they appear on all its surface. Naturally, this is not done, due to the importance of the nonverbal part of the audiovisual text, i.e. the image. Therefore only the lower part of the screen is reserved for the subtitles, to guarantee the minimum obstruction of the image. The most important consideration, though, is not only the lack of obstacles on the visual part, but also the assurance that the viewer has enough time to view the image as well as the subtitles. This is because "when you watch a subtitled film or television programme there is a great deal more for the eye (and the brain) to absorb than just the subtitles" (Ivarsson 1998: 65).

In the analysis of both subtitling and dubbing, these constraints have been considered of crucial importance for the choice of lexical items in the target text. The argument is often that the most "appropriate", "equivalent" or "faithful" rendering, which would be the first choice of the translator in other circumstances, often has to be discarded if it does not conform to the constraints. For example, if the result does not match the lip movements of the character (dubbing), or if it exceeds the 32 characters available per line (subtitling), the translator will have to look for other alternatives. In the same line of argument, the difficulty is increased due to the presence of additional hindrances. Apart from the problems "normal" translation entails, like the search of equivalents, idiomatic expressions and so forth, the translator has the extra burden of recognising and transferring successfully different levels of spoken language. Moreover, in the case of subtitling, there is the further complication of the shift of mode from oral to written.

But are these constraints exclusive to audiovisual translation? Let us take the constraint of space: in multilingual publications, like tourist brochures, the format of the original

has to be followed in the translations. In such a case, the translator might have to reconsider some of the choices made, if they exceed the space available. Explanations in the form of footnotes are as unfeasible here as in subtitling. Another example of non-audiovisual translation which includes the constraint of space, although from a different perspective, is the translation of poetry, where the selection of a word might be totally determined by its length and not by its meaning. It has to fit in a determined "space", e.g. the metre, the rhythm etc. As far as restrictions of time of output are concerned, they are also found in simultaneous interpretation. In this case, too, there is a limited time when the words of the interpreter are to be heard; even if his translation does not coincide absolutely with the utterances of the speaker, it cannot linger for too long after the speaker has moved on to the next phrase.

The presence of constraints – either similar to those presented here or other ones – in different practices of translation, leads to the conclusion that probably *all* translation is *constrained* translation. Thus, I cannot but be sceptical of the concept of *non-constrained* translation, which Mayoral et al (1988) propose to refer to prose translation, as opposed to advertisement, comic, song, subtitles and dubbing. Even though prose translation does not have to comply to content, spatial, time, or phonetic synchrony, there are other constraints which determine the final product. In the same way can be questioned the viability of Rabadán's (1991: 149) *traducción subordinada*, which includes "todas aquellas modalidades de transferencia interpolisistémica donde intervienen otros códigos además del lingüístico (cine, canción, cómic, etc.)". As seen in section 2.1.1, since all texts require a nonverbal element and codes apart from the linguistic interfere in all kinds of translation, the concept of *traducción subordinada* proves redundant. The key issue, again, is the degree to which the verbal part will be conditioned by the extralinguistic elements that accompany it.

The conclusion is that audiovisual translation is not different in a quantitative way, i.e. it does not involve *more* difficulties, restrictions, or constraints. Rather, the difference is qualitative, in that the constraints are *different* or of a different degree. The constraint of lip-synchrony, for example, is of a lower degree in films where there are few close-ups, whereas it becomes of more relevance in the cases where mouth movements are visible. Moreover, it differs from country to country. In Italy the requirement for lip-synchrony in translated films is not so high, because even in the home production, films were post-

synchronised until recently, therefore the viewers are accustomed to not absolutely synchronous image and sound[8].

Of course, it is not suggested here that the discussion of the constraints is irrelevant or of little use. On the contrary, it has shed light on many aspects of audiovisual translation, especially on the analysis and criticism of translated audiovisual texts. A comparison of a print-out of the subtitles with the original script is no longer considered a valid investigation. Even though what the translator renders in the other language is the verbal part of the text, it is not enough to examine it without taking into consideration the interaction with the image. Moreover, this discussion has had implications for translation theory in general. It has been illustrated, that in some cases the nonverbal elements are of greater concern to the translator (e.g. the pictures in a translated manual) and sometimes they are of less importance (e.g. in the translation of a contract). The higher the degree of presence of nonverbal elements (see Table 2), the more they interfere with the translator's decisions.

It seems, though, that these restrictions have monopolised the discussion on audiovisual translation. Undoubtedly, there are more aspects to be investigated, therefore it may more fruitful to limit the analysis of the constraints to the establishment of their nature. In this sense, I agree with Chaume's (1998: 17) affirmation that "any analysis of audiovisual translation mainly centred on synchronization is necessarily poor".

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[8] In the first decades of film production, the reasons for post-synchronisation, that is, the subsequent registration of the actors' voices in the studio, were technical (e.g. lack of equipment for sound recording in exterior shots). In Italy there was an additional, linguistic reason: many of the actors and actresses had undesirable regional accents, which were substituted by voices of dubbing actors who spoke "properly". (information provided by Alessandro Gori). Something similar happens in advertisements, with the suppression of the voice of a model who has "right looks but wrong voice".

2.1.3. Modes of Audiovisual Translation – Subtitling

"There are two clear distinctions in translating audio-visual material:
the replacement of the original language, the retention of the original language".

Minchinton (1992: 89)

In the section on the definition of audiovisual translation, we drew on examples of only two practices, namely subtitling and dubbing. These are the most common practices of the translation of audiovisual material in the cinema in the Western culture. In other cultures, translation for the cinema may include practices such as the narration by a person standing next to the screen, which, however, are not relevant to our present discussion. As far as television is concerned, on the other hand, there are more ways of presenting a foreign product, even though dubbing and subtitling remain the prevalent practices.

Gambier (1994: 275-7) proposes a typology of as many as ten modes of "multilingual transfer in audiovisual communication". The motive for which he presents this tentative typology is to go "beyond the current prescriptive standpoint". At the same time it is meant to broaden the scope of research, which "has mainly been concerned with the subtitling and dubbing of fiction films", a fact which "reflects the prevailing orientation in translation theory, which is still strongly dominated by literary translation".

Divided according to Michinton's (1992) distinction, the modes proposed by Gambier can be presented as follows:

Retention of original language	Replacement of original language
• *Subtitling* • *Simultaneous subtitling* • *Surtitling* (or supratitling) for the stage • *Interpreting* (*Consecutive*, often shortened interpreted renditions, on the radio, on TV. *Pre-recorded consecutive interpreting*. *Consecutive interpreting in duplex*, long-distance communication)	• *Dubbing* (lip-synchronisation) • *Voice-over* (simultaneous interpreting[9] of spontaneous speeches) • *Narration* (the original speech is prepared, translated and is then read by a journalist or an actor) • *Commentary* (adaptation of a programme to a new target audience) • *Revoicing* or multilingual broadcasting (the receiver selects a sound track with an appropriate language). • *Simultaneous translation* (sight translation from a script used in film festivals and cinematèques)

Table 5: A typology of modes of audiovisual translation (adapted from Gambier 1994: 275-7)

Obviously, the borders between these practices are not quite clear. Voice-over and narration, for instance, are similar from the viewpoint of reception, and "the only difference which is likely to occur between voice-over and a re-voiced narration is linguistic" (Luyken 1991: 80). In the first case, the original is bound to be spontaneous speech, whereas in the second, it is usually prepared in advance, having therefore a more formal grammatical structure. Diaz Cíntas (1997: 113) holds that for this reason voice-over and narration are "modalidades que merecen un estatuto particular". In my view, however, linguistic difference either of the original, or of the translation is not a sufficient parameter of differentiation, as it would lead to a great number of modes, ranging from the most 'faithful' ones to the more 'free', or from more 'formal' language to more 'spontaneous'. I suggest then the use of *voice-over* for this practice of

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[9] It has to be made clear, that the word *interpreting* in this typology is employed from the reception point of view and not in the traditional sense of the word. That is to say, the translation process takes place before emission (not at the same time) and the product is recorded.

audiovisual translation, leaving the terms *commentary* and *narration* to the different techniques of presenting material in the original language.

Compared with dubbing, voice-over is significantly different, and this difference lies partly in the process. Voice-over does not require lip-synchronisation, and there is normally one narrator, whereas in dubbing there are several actors playing out the corresponding roles. The reception, is also different: in a dubbed product the viewer receives only the target language, whereas if it is voiced-over, the source language is also present. Even though the viewers are not given the opportunity to listen clearly to the original language, they are constantly reminded of its presence. The aim here is to give the viewer a sense of authenticity, therefore voice-over is often used in documentaries. In dubbing, however, the aim is to make the translation 'invisible'. House's (1981) terms *overt* and *covert* translation have often been used to describe this difference.

Another point that deserves attention, is that Minchinton's (1992) distinction between the replacement and the retention of the original language becomes less clear. Dubbing belongs clearly in the first group, and subtitling in the second. The position of voice-over, though, is dubious, since in this case both the source and the target text can be heard at the same time. Technically, the original sound is allowed to be heard for several seconds at the onset of speech, fading away slowly and retained at a low level. Yet, only the target language can be fully received and understood. The case of subtitling differs in the sense that if the viewer has some knowledge of the source language, he can compare it to the subtitles. The 'suppression' of the original in voice-over entails its placement in the second group.

Not all the modes presented in that typology are relevant to our definition of audiovisual translation. As presented in the previous section, this definition does not account for theatre translation, therefore surtitling for the stage cannot be included in the modes of audiovisual translation. The same goes for interpreting on the radio or in duplex telephone communication, for the obvious reason that there is no visual component. Moreover, the last characteristic of the audiovisual text's notion presented in 2.1.1, namely 'recordedness', excludes modes that require simultaneous production of translation in live emissions. For the scope and aims of this study, it will be considered

that the simultaneous interpretation of a foreign politician's speech on the television, or a researcher's communication in a videoconference, does not have basic differences from the 'conventional' situation of simultaneous interpretation, either from the viewpoint of function, process or product. Audiovisual translation, as understood here, implies the previous production of the translation, i.e., there is synchronous delivery, but not simultaneous production.

This typological detour will not be further expanded, since its only 'raison d'être' is the contemplation of subtitling, our object of study, as a mode of audiovisual translation. It has served us, as a first step to the definition of subtitling.

The name *subtitle*, suggests according to the Chambers Dictionary:

a) an additional title under the main title (a use of which we saw in the introductory paragraph of section 1.1);

b) wording superimposed on a film or television picture, which can be either a printed translation at the foot of the screen of dialogue that is in a language foreign to the viewers;

c) other descriptive text similarly displayed.

Obviously the relevant meaning here is (b). According to this definition, subtitles in the form of *teletext* are not included, as they are not superimposed on the image. *Teletext* subtitles are characterised by the fact that they are optional; in other words, their presence depends on the viewer. This does not apply to subtitles, as defined here, which form part of the audiovisual text. However, not all the wording that appears on the screen falls within this concept. For the third notion presented above, Ivarsson and Caroll (1998: 4) suggest the term *caption* which "is used for the texts that have been inserted in the original picture by the maker of the film or programme". An example of this would be a caption in the beginning of a film, with the year and the place where the action is about to happen.

It has been argued that subtitling as a form of translation is characterised by the shift in mode from speech to writing which "requires that certain features of speech (non-standard dialect, emphatic devices, code-switching, turn-taking) be represented in the target text in written form" (Mason 1989: 14). According to de Linde (1995: 12) this "cross-over between oral and written genres" implies "the impossible task of rendering

the informative value of suprasegmental phonetic features, such as intonation, in writing". These statements, which are convincing and self-evident at first sight, need to be taken with caution, as the case of subtitling questions the dichotomy 'oral' vs 'written'. Mason (ibid.) holds that "the transfer from speech to writing of dialectal features and of the interpersonal relationship of participants […] imposes additional constraints on the translator". But this begs the following question: is the interpersonal relationship of participants really transferred from speech to writing?

Subtitles are indeed presented in a written form, therefore they have to follow the conventions of written language. As Fawcett (1996: 78) maintains, an unconventionally produced subtitle such as "Whadda ya doin'?" leads to an "increase of the decoding effort involved in mentally 'oralisng' a sound on the basis of the written script". It is also considered that the effect and the status of certain words or phrases is different when they are heard and when they are read. According to Ivarsson and Carroll (1998: 126), "swearwords and obscenities [...] seem to have a stronger effect in writing than in speech".

It cannot be denied, though, that subtitles share some of the dynamics of orality10. For example, expression in subtitles is additive rather than subordinative, as is oral expression. The reason is that complicated structures, such as a series of subordinate clauses, need time to be perceived, and they require the possibility of backtracking. Whereas in writing it is possible to go back and 'digest' the text piece by piece, it is not possible to do that in an audiovisual11 text. Moreover, the activity of watching the film's images, does not allow time for the processing of complex written elements.

Because of the lack of opportunity of retracing, oral discourse is also characterised by redundancy. This feature is not represented in the written component of the audiovisual

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[10] In his book *Orality and Literacy* Ong (1982) presents the characteristics of orally based thought and expression. Only the relevant characteristics are seen here.

[11] In the case video-recorded material, the spectator has the possibility to rewind the tape, but even when this option is made use of, it is not done with the same frequency or ease as in the case of written material, nor for the same purposes. It is much easier for readers to go back and forth in a page than for viewers of video. And if a viewer decides to rewind, this action is bound to be motivated by the desire to watch a scene of a film again, rather than to re-read a subtitle.

text, because of the constraints of space and time. The fact that the redundant elements, such as repetitions, vocatives, performative verbs etc. (cf. Torregrosa 1996: 83), are excluded from subtitles, has given rise to the idea that a "feature distinguishing subtitling from other forms of translation is the reduction in text" (de Linde 1995: 13). However, provided that the audiovisual text is seen as a whole, it is revealed that the necessary redundancy is supplied by the other elements of the text: the image and the sound.

The conclusion is that subtitles do not constitute an independent written text. They are one of the components belonging to the total of the audiovisual text. Therefore, an analysis of subtitles cannot be done on the same grounds as written texts. The simplification of the notion that there is a shift from oral to written, can pose severe limits to the analysis of this mode of audiovisual translation.

2.2. Rationale for the Choice of Research Methodology and Methods

Research in translation has often borrowed concepts and methods from other sciences (experimentation, search for laws). As mentioned previously, translation is viewed here as communication, a social phenomenon; the logical consequence of such a viewpoint is to study this phenomenon under the prism of the social sciences, which will provide the necessary tools and concepts for research.

At the outset, it would seem useful to clarify what is meant by theory here. Chesterman (1997: 42-46) provides us with an account of the meanings *theory* has been given to and the various conflicting views about what a theory of translation should look like. In order to disentangle the conceptual mess, he uses the Popperian view, according to which "a theory is a tentative answer to a question, a hypothetical solution to a problem" (ibid: 44). Within this concept, a theory which cannot be falsified, is not an empirical one, nor a scientific one. An example Chesterman gives of such a non-empirical theory is the view that "a translation is a reproduction of a work of art, a copy" (ibid: 44)

Rather than a distinction of empirical and non-empirical theories, the term *hypothesis* will be used here to refer to Popper's notion of empirical theory. Thus, the term *theory* will be kept to refer to the basic concepts underlying the perspective from which a phenomenon is viewed. These basic concepts may prove more or less useful but may not be falsified. What research attempts to test is one or several hypotheses and not a theory. Silverman (1993: 1) offers a useful account of the basic concepts in research, presented in the following table:

Concept	Meaning	Relevance
Theory	A set of explanatory concepts	Usefulness
Hypothesis	A testable proposition	Validity
Methodology	A general approach to studying research topics	Usefulness
Method	A specific research technique	Good fit with theory,

Table 6: Silverman's (1993: 1) Basic Concepts on Research

The definitions given so far in Chapter 2 form part of the set of explanatory concepts adopted in this paper. The rest of this chapter will present the methodology chosen and the method applied in conducting the research.

2.2.1. Aspects of the Study of Subtitling within Translation Studies

We have already had a look at some of the approaches to audiovisual translation, both in the brief review of the – relatively limited – existing literature (section 1.1), and also in the effort to provide a definition of the audiovisual text and its translation (sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). The present section will present a few more examples of studies which deal specifically with subtitling, looking at the advantages and shortcomings of the theoretical frameworks within which it has been investigated, in order to justify the choice of approach.

As mentioned previously in this paper, questions of subtitling and dubbing have often been seen under the prism of the concept of equivalence. This is not surprising, considering that this idea is among the most prevalent issues in translation. The realisation that total equivalence (something like absolute sameness) is not possible, has brought about its division into various types, often presented in the form of a binary opposition. A frequently quoted and used example is Nida's (1964) formal vs dynamic equivalence, the former focusing on the sameness of the form of the message and the latter on the sameness of effect. The application of this model to subtitling by O'Shea (1996: 251) leads this scholar to the conclusion that both forms of equivalence are difficult to achieve: "Dynamic equivalence is a difficult standard to aspire […]. Formal equivalence, however, is not a sufficient guide to the subtitling of statements of local origin". Moreover, it can be argued that formal equivalence is impossible to achieve, simply on the basis that the mode of the message is changed.

A further example of a work based in the notion of equivalence, from a different point of view, is presented by Brondeel (1994: 29). In an effort to establish "routines" of

teaching the technique of subtitling, he starts out from the following questions. They are arranged in three levels (informative, semantic and communicative) of equivalence:

> Has **all** the information been transferred to the TL? […] Has the meaning been transferred **correctly**? […] Does the subtitle also transfer the "communicative dynamism" […] as reflected in the prosody of the SL utterance? (emphasis original)

Obviously, if these questions are answered affirmatively, the good quality of subtitles is guaranteed. In my opinion, an inspection of existing subtitles would demonstrate that most of them are not likely to fulfil these requirements. Studies carried out (e.g. Kovacic 1999) have shown, for instance, that not *all* the information present in the original is also present in the subtitles. On the other hand, in Brondeel's study, subtitling is viewed as a set of specific linguistic (for the most part) operations. The process of the operations – borrowing terminology from computer science – looks something like this: *the SL message in SVO-order (subject, verb, object) is filtered through <INFO>rmation and <MARK>ed routines, undergoing a <CONV>ersion, which will lead to (often reduced SOV-) equivalent TL-structures*. This view, apart from the fact that it does not specify what "equivalent structures" mean, presents subtitling as a process where the translator decodes a message in order to recode it in a different form.

The influence of the equivalence notion is widespread, and explanatory metaphors abound. Díaz (1997) prefers Nida's metaphor borrowing from natural imagery. The labour of the subtitler is compared to "The action of a python, which, after killing an animal too large to swallow, squeezes it into a long thin form which can then be swallowed easily. The bones and meat are all there […] they are just in a different form". (Nida 1976: 75 quoted in Díaz 1997: 156). Diaz regards that this metaphor represents the struggle of the subtitler to be faithful to the original within the "limitaciones impuestas por el entorno físico" (ibid). Such a notion of translation might be a consequence of a general view of communication. Within this view, communication is seen as a pipeline where units of material (information) are transferred from one place to the other. Ong (1982: 176) presents it as such:

> My mind is a box. I take a unit of "information" out of it, encode the unit (that is, fit it to the size and shape of the pipe it will go through) , and put it into one end of the pipe (the medium, something in the middle of two other things). From the one end of the pipe the "information"

proceeds to the other end, where someone decodes it (restores its proper size and shape) and puts it in his or her own box-like container called a mind. *This model [...] distorts the act of communication beyond recognition* (my emphasis).

This conclusion can be extrapolated to translation as a communicative act: models which explain the act of translation in terms of a decoding-recoding operation lead to its distortion beyond recognition.

Apart from the fact that – even partial – equivalence proves to be a red herring, this concept undermines certain forms of translation, placing them at a "lower" level. An example of that is the term *traducción subordinada* (see section 2.1.2). Herbst (1995: 258), on his part, claims that "it is clear that as far as translational equivalence is concerned, subtitling has *obvious disadvantages*" (my emphasis). One of them, according to this scholar, is that paralinguistic features, such as intonation, cannot be retrieved from the subtitles. Inasmuch as different languages have different paralinguistic systems, "one must be very sceptical of any suggestion that listening to the original text in a language you do not speak yourself still enables you to get some idea of a character's personality". He argues, therefore, that these differences might lead the viewer "to totally wrong conclusions".

This may be true, but only to a certain extent. An important factor to be taken into consideration is the spectators' familiarity with the foreign culture and its paralinguistic system. Our familiarity with a culture does not necessarily depend on the physical distance that separates it from us. An example of difference combined with lack of familiarity, is found in a case of two neighbouring cultures. It is hardly known to Greeks that Bulgarians use the same gesture, a nod, accompanied by the same-sounding word */ne/*, in order to say exactly the opposite; the gesture plus sound which means "yes" in Greece, means "no" in Bulgaria. The help of subtitles would be crucial if a Bulgarian film containing such a scene was to be shown to a Greek audience. In this case, there might be a conflicting message coming from what the spectators see and hear (a gesture and a sound which mean "yes" to them) and the subtitle they read (which states "no"). A possible assumption is that the potential conflict would be resolved through the coherence of the whole audiovisual text (the understanding of the plot etc.). A more probable supposition, however, is that the subtitler would avoid such a conflict, an

assumption which needs to be verified. Nonetheless, the occasion of a Bulgarian film shown in Greece is hypothetical in the first place. The facts tell us that in Greece – as in most European countries for that matter – a high percentage of the audiovisual products exhibited, whether on the small or on the big screen, originate from English-speaking cultures (cf. Luyken 1991: 12-16)[12]. The latter are more familiar to the Greek audience, therefore the non-verbal manifestations of interpersonal relationships are not as obscure and the possibilities of subsequent conflicts between image and subtitles are reduced.

Mason (1989) uses discourse analysis to suggest that the practice of subtitling produces a difference in the way characters are depicted. His argument is based on a case study, whose aim is to examine "the nature of […] omissions, the significance of what gets lost in translation" (ibid: 21). In the subtitled dialogue studied, Mason finds that what inevitably gets sacrificed, due to constraints, is the illocutionary force (resignation, self-exoneration), as well as the down-toners and boosters ('well', 'perhaps', 'you know', 'surely', 'really'). This finding can be considered valid, despite the small amount of text analysed, because it coincides with the explicit recommendations made by subtitlers themselves, concerning the omission of elements. For instance, Ivarsson (1992: 93) states that "words whose main purpose is to keep the conversation ticking over ('well', 'you know'), tautologies and repetitions can safely be omitted" and Torregrosa (1996: 83) advises the exclusion, where necessary, of elements such as "verbos performativos: 'te digo que', 'insisto que', marcadores de discurso: 'oye, sabes' […], interjecciones, marcadores de la entonación" (see also section 3.4) The point which Mason (ibid: 24) raises is that the shift in illocutionary force may cause a character to be represented as more abrupt, and the loss of down-toners may make utterances sound more direct than in the original, even impolite. The conclusion is that "cumulatively, the absence of the politeness features […] cannot fail to convey a different idea of the personality of the characters on screen and of their attitudes towards each other". The implication is clear: subtitling cannot provide certain types of equivalence and nothing can be done about that. Even though Mason states that he is "not attempting to assess or criticise a particular set of translations" (ibid: 18), an indirect preference may be revealed, in the conclusion that "in the dubbed version, on the other hand, whatever the comparative

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[12] Even though Luyken's statistics on the amount of foreign language imports in various European countries are more than 10 years old, it is safe to assume that the situation has not changed dramatically

quality of the translation, there is room for a more systematic representation of this important feature of meaning" (ibid: 23).

Surely, the study of audiovisual translation as an instance of cross-cultural communication provides a broad, valuable framework. Moreover, the mere fact that subtitling is chosen as a ground for the investigation of discoursal effect is significant in itself, as it provides some insight into the problems involved in any mode of translating. However, a shortcoming in the afore-mentioned study might be fact that there are scarce references to the importance of the visual and the acoustic elements of the film and the possibility of message retrieval from these. Moreover, Mason believes that for subtitling "the translation is intended as an abridged guide to ST discourse, and not as a full translation" (ibid:21). This implies that the translation (product) is the set of subtitles and not the whole audiovisual product. The definition of the audiovisual text as an inseparable whole, comprising of various elements (visual, acoustic, verbal, nonverbal), entails that subtitles cannot be studied in isolation. Even the assertion that there is an interaction between subtitles and the image (cf. ibid: 15) can be misleading, inasmuch as it suggests that they are separate entities, separate texts which interact between each other.

The results of Mason's study are confirmed and further justified in Hatim and Mason 1997 (chapter 5). Here, however, it is explicitly stated that the image may be enough for the retrieval of interpersonal dynamics, and it is admitted that "our analysis cannot do full justice to the visual image which the subtitles are intended to accompany" (ibid: 89). The problem they identify, though, is the discordance created when the "indicators of politeness in the target text are at variance with those suggested by the moving image" (ibid), which may require too much processing time to resolve for the cinema audience. This sounds as if the spectator faced with such a conflict would stop and wonder which is right: the image or the subtitle. My intuition and experience of watching subtitled films leads me to believe that the absence of indicators of politeness in the subtitles does not produce conflict with the image. If a character looks and sounds polite, he/she will be perceived as such, despite the absence of relevant indicators in the subtitles. The view of the prevalence of the image is also supported by Dolç and Santamaria (1998:

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since then.

104). Their conclusion of the analysis of dubbed television series is that "en el món audiovisual de la televisió la imatge val molt més que mil paraules. Els personatges son creïbles pel seu aspecte físic i pel lloc on es desenvolupa la trama. Poc importa la seva manera de parlar – que ens aportaria informació sobre la seva personalitat". Nonetheless, in order to prove if this hypothesis is correct, studies in the reception of films will have to be carried out.

The search of kinds of meaning which tend to be omitted, even "losses" in translation, is also relevant to source-oriented approaches. These often involve the idea of the superiority of the original, the standards of which a translation can never reach. Its roots can be found in the movement of Romanticism and the main argument is that the original is a unique untouchable creation. The corollary for the practice of subtitling, apart from its being deficient because important levels of comprehension are lost, is that it spoils the original image through the insertion of subtitles which obstruct part of it. They are "an esthetically unjustified blot on its artistic unity (as if somebody were to print 'This is a sunflower' on Van Gogh's famous picture)" (Reid 1977: 426). Dubbing is not left out of this criticism either: the original voices are suppressed, and the original acoustic element is altered, causing an irremediable difference in the aesthetics of the film.

The seeming dead-end can be overcome with the help of a target-oriented approach and a broader notion of equivalence, which does not define in advance what the relationship between the source and the target text should be. Such a framework is provided by the theoretical principles of the group of scholars sometimes referred to as the "Manipulation School" after the publication *The Manipulation of Literature. Studies in Literary Translation* (Hermans, 1985). This group has also been referred to as "Translation Studies" because of their effort to promote this term proposed by Holmes ([1972] 1988). As stated before, though, this term is used here to refer to the study of translation in general. The theoretical proposals of scholars such as Lefevere, Lambert, van Gorp, Hermans, Even-Zohar and Toury were presented in a number of conferences in Belgium and Israel in the mid-'70s. Their basic assumptions are summarised by Hermans (1985: 10-11) as such:

a view of literature as a complex and dynamic system; a conviction that there should be a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies; an approach to literary translation which is descriptive, target-oriented, functional and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translations, in the relation between translation and other types of text processing, and in the place and role of translations both within a given literature and tin the interaction between literatures.

These views have their origin in the study of literary translation, even though some of them have proved useful to other areas. The "new paradigm" features applicable to translation studies in general are represented in the following diagram[13]:

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[13] This diagram is based on Hermans 1985, 1991 and 1999, Gentzler 1993 and Vidal 1995.

| Source-oriented | → | Target-oriented |

| Interlinguistic relationships | → | Intertextual relationships |

| Potential Translation
Ideal Translation | → | Finished Translation
Observable Product |

| Prescription | → | Description
(as a necessary condition for
explanation and prediction) |

| *Dichotomy between
theory and practice* | → | Interdependency between
theory and practice |

Basic questions:

- What is translation?
- Is translation possible?
- Is there enough equivalence between the two texts?
- Which is the ideal degree of equivalence?

→

Basic questions:

- What are the relationships between ST and TT?
- Why these relationships instead of other ones?
- Why are certain decisions taken?
- What types of decisions are taken?

Figure 2: The new paradigm

Delabastita (1990: 100) attempts "to sketch a methodology" for a possible application of these views to film translation. The overall aim is to describe the relationship between original and translated films through a series of questions regarding features "needed to understand both the variables and the constant factors in actual film translation" (ibid: 105). One set of questions deals with what Toury calls *preliminary norms* (see section 2.2.2) for example, what is the relative share of translated films in the total supply of the target system, etc. The next set has to do with aspects of the microstructure, with questions on the rendering of particular language varieties, literary allusions, wordplay, taboo elements, prosodic features, etc. The last set of questions relates to the systemic relations, for example, what is the position of the target and the source culture respectively in an international context, which genre the source film belongs to and if this genre exists in the receiving culture, etc.

To some scholars it appears that Delabastita's proposal consists of "lines for future research through sets of questions, rather than methodological steps" (Karamitroglou 1998: 96) and that it "lacks coherence and strategic planning" (ibid). Even though it is agreed here that not all questions are relevant to all kinds of investigation, the undeniable merit of this approach is that it places the audiovisual text in a much wider context. The focus ceases to be "what gets lost in translation" and centres on the translators' decisions and what guides them.

Delabastita mainly draws on the theoretical framework presented by Toury in 1980. In his book *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, and with the aim to uncover "the underlying concept of translation" (1995: 37), Toury proposes the following methodological steps:
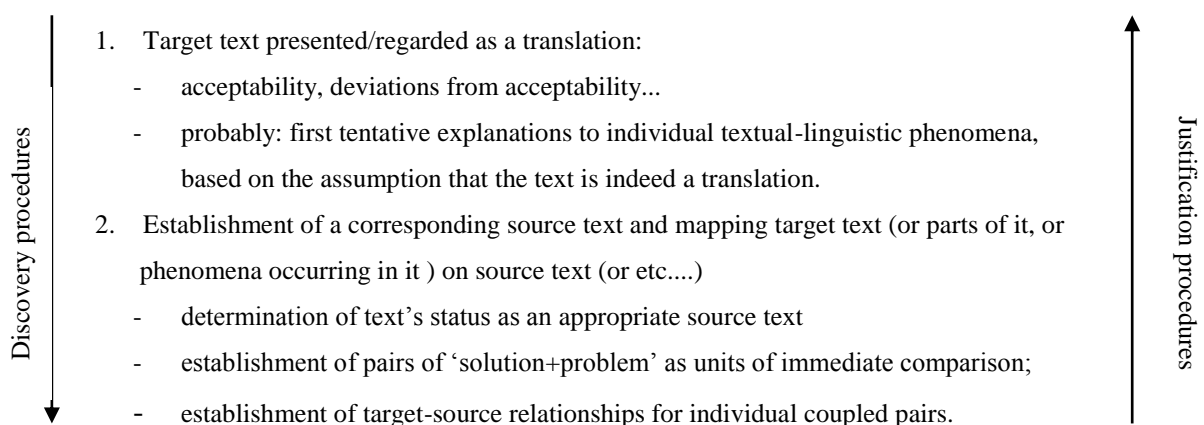
Figure 3: Toury's discovery vs. justification procedures for one pair of texts.

From the point of view of the present paper, not all of these procedures are relevant to or even necessary for the study of subtitles. Toury's point of departure are assumed translations[14], that is "all utterances which are presented or regarded as such within the target culture, on no matter what grounds" (ibid: 32).. More specifically, what is considered irrelevant for this study is the step concerning the establishment of the appropriate source text. Curiously enough, the example Toury chooses to illustrate the importance of this step, relates to subtitles. According to this scholar, "in cultures which resort to this practice, subtitles tend to be regarded as translated utterances" (ibid: 76). Normally it is regarded that the source text of these utterances is the spoken word. He argues, however, that "this would not be a premise for the *investigation* of subtitles as translation", because the spoken version "often turns out not to have served as an immediate source at all" (ibid). There can be other candidates for a source text, namely:

> a script in the language used for the spoken version, a previous text that the script itself drew on, a translation of that text into either the language used for the subtitles or any other language, a translated script and, of course, a combination of some (or all) of the above alternatives" (ibid)

Toury's view that the spoken version cannot be considered the original source text, is shared here, but for different reasons. However, his conception of "subtitles themselves as assumed translations" (ibid: 76-77) cannot be accepted, due to the definition of the audiovisual text given. The target text, the translation product, is not the set of subtitles but the whole film comprising of the visual verbal (subtitles) and nonverbal (image) elements, as well as the acoustic verbal (spoken word) and nonverbal (sounds, music) ones. If the target text is the subtitled[15] film as a whole, the source text will be the film before its translation, therefore the effort to establish the identity of the source text "for each case anew" (ibid) becomes redundant. Now, the material the translator uses to produce his translation is a different matter. As we shall see in section 4.3, subtitlers in Greece, in normal circumstances at least, use a script of the film in addition to the film itself. They may even draw on a previous text that the script itself is based on, or a

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[14] Apparently this idea springs out from the scholar's interest in "pseudotranslations", that is, original works presented in the target culture as translations and accepted as such, which are indicative of the notion of translation prevalent at the time.

[15] These considerations generally apply to translated audiovisual products, therefore to dubbed films as well. However, as we advance in the paper, the focus will be on subtitling.

translation of that text in Greek. In one of the interviews held in March 1999, Tsesmetzoglou explained that in order to subtitle Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993), he consulted a prestigious print translation of Shakespeare's famous play[16]. Undoubtedly, this is an important issue and it has to be taken into consideration if one is to investigate the process of subtitling of this film. This does not mean, however, that either this print translation or any of the 'texts' Toury points out can be considered as candidates for the source text.

Even though Toury's methodology does not seem quite applicable to this study of subtitling, the descriptive theoretical framework he proposes is not only suitable but also needed in a field where prescriptive notions of equivalence have sometimes lead to a dead end. Equivalence for Toury is "a *functional-relational* concept; namely that set of relationships which will have been found to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate modes of translation performance for the culture in question" (ibid: 86). Or as Hermans (1991: 157) explains it in simpler words, "equivalence is merely the name given to the 'translational relation' that exists between two texts, one of which is a translation of the other".

This notion of equivalence as any appropriate, norm-conforming relation, has even lead to the conclusion that the term is redundant. Chesterman (1997: 10) argues that this notion (or "meme" in his terminology) is in decline:

> One sign of this decline is the notion's gradual approach to apparent vacuousness. Some scholars appear to define translation in terms of equivalence and equivalence in terms of translation, so that any translation is equivalent by definition. A non-equivalent translation, on this view, is a contradiction (cf. Toury 1980: 70). If translation theory studies translations, and all translations are by definition equivalent, it would seem that we can dispense with the term altogether, and focus instead on the wide variety of relations that can exist between a translation and its source.

At any rate, the type and extent of this relation, whether we wish to call it equivalence or not, is determined by norms (cf. Toury 1995: 61). The study of what guides the

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[16] Among the books of references they keep at the subtitling studio Titrana, there is a complete series of translations of Shakespeare's plays, as well as the translation of the Bible, as they have found that there are often references coming from these sources in the films

translator's decisions in subtitling, will hopefully provide an answer to Fawcett's question of "what translation theory can make of such an aleatory phenomenon" (1996: 65). The notion of norms, which proves that this phenomenon is not aleatory, is presented in the next section.

2.2.2. Norm Theory

As we saw in the previous section, the increasing acceptance of translation as an act of communication and therefore as a form of social behaviour lead to the use of several concepts from the social sciences. The introduction of the concept of *norms* that guide the behaviour of the translator, was an important step in the effort to overcome the impasse translation theory had reached. According to Hermans (1991: 157), it was Toury who "simply turned the matter on its head", by shifting the focus of attention from the degree of desired equivalence to the factors that govern it. The present section aims to provide an overview of the relevant aspects of norm theory and the aid it can provide to the study of subtitling, rather than an exhaustive study.

According to Toury (1995: 54), the translator has to acquire a certain set of norms which will lead him towards adopting a suitable behaviour and help him manoeuvre among all the factors which may constrain it. Norms can be placed in the following continuum between "general, relatively absolute rules on the one hand, and pure idiosyncrasies on the other":

rules (objective)	→	norms (intersubjective)	→	idiosyncrasies (subjective)
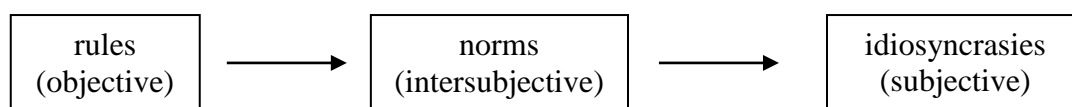
Hermans (1991: 161 and 1999: 79-85) distinguishes between conventions, norms and decrees according to their prescriptive force. *Conventions* are preferred courses of action, with no binding character, more like "open invitations to behave in a certain way". *Norms* grow out of successful conventions, and have to do with "correctness notions". They are not obligatory, and compliance with them results in "positive feedback". As the prescriptive force of norms increases, they may become *decrees*, often formulated explicitly in the form of directives by an authority which has the power to impose sanctions for non-compliance. It seems that *decrees* are more or less

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synonymous to Toury's *rules*[17], whereas *conventions* would be placed in the continuum somewhere between *norms* and *idiosyncrasies*.

Norms are positioned at an intermediate level between the options which *can* be selected, in other words competence, and the options that *are* selected, or performance. In this sense, they are seen as positive phenomena: they reduce the number of potential solutions, helping the translator in the decision making process (Hermans 1999: 80). Chesterman (1997: 56) also points out the positive aspect of translational norms, whose purpose is to facilitate communication, even though he states that they "may also be felt more negatively as constraints, as restrictions to be challenged or overruled".

Toury (1995 56-60) expects them to operate at every stage of the translating event and categorises them according to their manifestation in the translation product. He starts with the formulation of an initial norm and goes on to distinguish between preliminary and operational norms:

- **Initial** norm: It relates to the choice of the overall orientation of the translation, which can vary between adherence to source norms, which Toury calls *adequacy* and subscription to norms originating in the target culture, or *acceptability*. These two terms have been criticised both by Chesterman (1997: 64) and Hermans (1999: 77), mainly as being confusing, since they have been used extensively by other scholars to express different concepts (even the opposite ones). Hermans (ibid) proposes the replacement of the pair *acceptable* versus *adequate* with *source-oriented* versus *target-oriented*. The case of subtitling, however, involves more factors; as a text, a subtitled audiovisual product is unique, in the sense that there are no similar, parallel texts in the target language[18], to whose norms it would adhere to.

- **Preliminary** norms: They refer to the existence and nature of a *policy* of translation and the *directness* of translation. The policy is reflected in the selection of a film to be imported by the distribution agency. Directness involves the decision to translate

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[17] In fact in his reformulation of these terms in the publication of 1999, Hermans replaces the term *decrees* with *rules.*

[18] With the exception of subtitles for the deaf in the same language as the product, which Gottlieb (1997) calls intralingual subtitles. These texts, however, have a completely different function. Their reception is not audiovisual, but only visual, and the acoustic elements have to be incorporated in the subtitles. Therefore they cannot be considered as parallel texts.

directly from the original language or through another language. An example is whether a Greek film will be subtitled into Spanish using already existing English subtitles or if it will be translated directly.

- **Operational** norms: They direct the decisions made during the act of translation itself. They are divided between:

  (a) **matricial** norms: They concern the *fullness* of translation, i.e., the very existence of target-language material. Special attention should be paid to the investigation of fullness of translation in the case of subtitling, as seen in section 2.2.1. These norms also have to do with the textual segmentation of the linguistic material and their distribution. In the case of subtitling, segmentation is related to the *spotting* of the original script, its division into "chunks" to be translated. The distribution has to do with the *cueing* of the subtitles, that is the designation of their in and out times (see section 3.4).

  (b) **textual** norms: They govern the microstructure, the construction of the phrases, the selection of words, etc. Again, as in the initial norm, the assumption is that subtitles will follow a special set of textual norms, since similar non-translational text-production, with norms to be followed, does not exist.

Chesterman (1997: 64-70) proposes an analysis of translation norms covering the area of Toury's initial and operational norms, but viewed from a different perspective. He distinguishes between *expectancy* or more conventionally *product* norms on the one hand, and *professional* or *process* norms, on the other. Accommodating Chesterman's general terms to serve the present study – where *reader* becomes *viewer* and *type of translation* becomes *subtitling* – the definitions of these norms appear as follows:

- **expectancy** (or *product*) norms: They reflect the expectations of viewers of subtitled audiovisual products, concerning what the subtitled product should be like. They are formed by the prevalent subtitling tradition in the target culture, and by the previous viewing of subtitled films[19].

- **professional** (or *process*) norms: These norms regulate the subtitling process itself. They issue from the world of accredited, professional subtitlers, whose behaviour is regarded as norm-setting. Chesterman describes three potentially existing norms,

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[19] Chesterman here states that these expectations are partly governed by the form of parallel texts in the target language, but as we saw previously in there are no such texts in the case of subtitling.

stressing that they are not prescriptive in the sense that he would be laying down laws for translators to follow. He also notes that only the third one is translation specific:

(1) the *accountability* norm, which is an ethical norm, assumes that a translator owes loyalty to the original script-writer/director, to the commissioner of the translation (e.g. the distribution agency), to himself or herself and to the prospective viewers.

(2) the *communication* norm, which is social in nature, stipulates that the translator should act in such a way as to optimise communication, as required by the situation, between all the parties involved.

(3) the *relation* norm stipulates that an appropriate relation of relevant similarity should be established and maintained between the source and the target text. "Equivalence" or "optimal similarity" is only one of the possible kinds of relation. Other parameters are covered here, such as addition or omission of information, relation to accompanying channels, for example, synchronisation between speech (acoustic channel) and appearance of subtitles.

There does not seem to be a consensus as far as the terms norms, conventions, rules etc. are concerned. What Christiane Nord (1997: 53) calls *conventions* seems to coincide with Chesterman's expectancy norms. For her, conventions are "implicit or tacit non-binding regulations of behaviour, based on common knowledge and the expectation of what others expect you to expect them (etc.) to do in a certain situation". These conventions may refer to the "general concept of what a translation is or should be and what kind of relationship is expected to hold between a particular kind of source text and the corresponding target text in translation (perhaps in opposition to adaptation or version)" (ibid: 58).

One does not need to be a translation or norm theorist to realise the existence of norms. The subtitler Jan Ivarsson (1992: 115), writing from a prescriptive point of view, affirms the application of what he calls *rules*, which, however, fall into our definition of norms:

> a large number of rules, most of which have never been published, have been applied over the years, first in subtitling for the cinema and later for television and video too. The fact that they

have not been explained to the public does not mean that the public is not aware of them; indeed, they seem to operate by force of habit more than anything else.

What is of importance is the concept and not the name. As seen in this paper, norms are simply factors or notions that guide the translator's decisions. Of great importance is their descriptive value, at least in the framework adopted by the scholars (Toury, Hermans and Chesterman) cited here. An example of a possible misinterpretation of their descriptive character is the following: "las normas preliminares, postuladas por Toury son consciente y sistemáticamente ignoradas y así, en los créditos de películas, (...) ni la figura del traductor, ni la de los dobladores, ni la del director del doblaje, ni la de ninguna persona que ha tomado parte en esta ardua labor son mencionadas" (Diaz Cintas 1997: 141). The systematic absence of the translator's identity in the product forms a norm in itself, in other words, a statement like the above (that preliminary norms are systematically ignored) may result in an oxymoron. It can be argued, though, that in a wider context, there is a norm in written (literary) translation whereby the translator is always mentioned and that this norm is indeed ignored in the specific context of film translation.

Norm theory has proved essential for descriptive translation studies, as it includes "both a descriptive and evaluative element" (Chesterman 1993: 4). The mere description of translation behaviour for its sake, would not provide useful results. The study of norms, on the other hand, is bound to give insight to the intersubjective sense of what is 'proper' or 'correct' or 'appropriate', in other words the content of the norms (cf Hermans 1999: 82).

Even though norms are not directly observable, a possible approach to them can be through their manifestations. Toury (1995: 65) suggests two major sources of reconstruction of translational norms, namely textual and extratextual. The former concern the translated texts themselves, whereas the latter include "statements made by translators, editors, publishers, and other persons involved in or connected with the activity, critical appraisals of individual translations, or the activity of translator or 'school' of translators, and so forth."

Toury (ibid) shows a clear preference for the collection of evidence of norms through textual sources, by affirming that texts are "*primary* products of norm-regulated behaviour, and can therefore be taken as immediate representations thereof". Moreover, he regards normative statements as by-products, which, being partial and biased, should be treated with caution. There may even be contradictions between these statements and actual behaviour. On the other hand, neither do texts constitute a sufficient source of norms. As Hermans (1999: 85) observes, "tracing regularities in texts and reading them as the outcome of a translator's choices and decisions does not tell us *why* the choices and decisions are made". There is no obvious starting point – textual or extratextual – it rather depends on the case.

Norms as found in extratextual sources can be either explicit or implicit, in other words recorded or not recorded. *Explicit* or *recorded* norms are found in the form of guidelines issued in translation agencies, 'codes of conduct' created by translators' associations, textbooks used in translator training, etc. *Implicit* or *not recorded* norms are found in statements by the people involved in the activity. The present study aims at the study of these implicit norms, using a questionnaire as a method to achieve this.

2.2.3. Qualitative Research and Questionnaires

There seem to be two main schools of social science, associated with very different ways of research. One of the approaches is *positivism*, which seeks to test correlations between variables and discover laws using *quantitative* methods. The other approach is *interpretive social science* which is often concerned with observation and description as well as with generating hypotheses using *qualitative* methods (cf Silverman 1993: 21). In the attempt to discover what guides the translators' decisions, the approach which seems more appropriate is the qualitative one. After all, "understanding actions and meanings in their social context" (ibid: 24) is one of the criteria according to which qualitative research has been characterised.

Interviews are commonly used in both methodologies, but in a different way. There are two kinds of questionnaires, comprising either *fixed-choice* questions or *open-ended* questions, and it is considered that there is a preference for one or the other, according to the approach adopted. Fixed-choice questions (e.g. 'yes' or 'no') are usually

preferred in quantitative research because "the answers they produce lend themselves to simple tabulation, unlike open-ended questions which produce answers which need to be subsequently coded" (Silverman: 10). According to positivism, interview data give access to facts about the world and the primary issue is to generate valid and reliable data. On the other hand, qualitative research aims at gathering an 'authentic' understanding of people's experiences, therefore it is believed that "open-ended questions are the most effective route towards this end" (ibid).

Fixed-choice interviews are considered more reliable than open-ended ones because the results are standardised. Their analysis is simply a matter of counting the answers in order to find the most frequent ones. However, their preparation is more laborious, since the multiple choices have to be carefully formulated according to the presuppositions of what the typical responses will be. The researcher, in other words, has specific hypotheses about the answers – when they are not simply 'yes' or 'no'. The danger, obviously, is that there may be more choices than the ones the researcher had fixed. The other disadvantage is the mere existence of answers from which to choose. If there is an answer which the subjects expect to be considered the 'correct' one, they might opt for it even though they had not considered it before. Therefore fixed-choice questions are considered more appropriate for the eliciting of factual data rather than of opinions.

On the other hand, the method of open-ended questions is more flexible. They allow the subjects to express their opinions using "their unique ways of defining the world" (Denzin 1970: 125 in Silverman 1993: 94) without controlling or directing the subject by suggesting 'correct' answers. Moreover, it allows respondents to "raise issues not contained in the schedule" (ibid). Their analysis is more difficult and time-consuming however, which discourages researchers from using them in large samples. From a qualitative point of view, where the number of the interviewees is restricted, this problem can be overcome.

In the effort to have access to implicit norms guiding the subtitlers' decisions, as described in the previous section, open-ended questions seem to be the most suitable ones. However, the subjective data coming from these questions, cannot be analysed without taking into consideration the profile of the interviewees. Their background can be retrieved through fixed-choice questions, since factual data, such as years of

experience, educational background or working conditions, can be easily formulated in multiple statements to be chosen from. These data will hopefully be of help in the analysis of the results, as correlations can be made between factual and subjective data in order to find possible explanations for the findings.

PART TWO

Aspects of Subtitling in Greece: In Search of Norms

Chapter 3: The Socio-historical Context

This chapter will deal with some aspects relating to the context of the practice and the reception of subtitles. As the aim of this paper is not to give a full socio-historical account[20], only certain elements will be considered, namely the most relevant ones for this contextualisation.

3.1 Evolution of Subtitling in Greece

A necessary viewpoint in the study of the practice of subtitling in Greece, is a historical one. It will hopefully supply tentative answers to questions such as how the practice came about, and why subtitling prevailed in Greece.

The first films ever made were not audiovisual in the sense given in section 2.1.1. That is, the acoustic element was either non-existent or it was added during the screening of the film in the form of music, e.g. an orchestra accompanying the images. There was no verbal acoustic element, that is the actors' voices were not heard, but still there was a visual verbal element presented in the form of *intertitles*. These were written phrases shown between the scenes, mainly with a practical purpose: to help people understand the plot or to situate the action, e.g. "Meanwhile back at the ranch...". The translation of these verbal elements was simply a matter of changing the intertitle with an equivalent in the language required. This operation did not require a great amount of work and the cost was low (cf. Izard 1992). Still, in Greece foreign films were shown with French intertitles (Soldatos 1982: 21). It is safe to assume that the reason for this was the lack of basic equipment, necessary to remove the original title, create a new one, film it and insert it in the film.

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[20] For a more detailed history of subtitles see Izard 1992, Ivarsson 1992 and 1995, Danan 1991 and 1996 Ivarsson & Carroll 1998.

The public's acquaintance with this new form of art came through foreign films, French and Italian in the beginning, North-American later on. Domestic production[21] at that period was very low. The first short films were four comedies produced between 1910-14, with the first feature film appearing as late as 1915. These products were characterised by their poor quality (the producer was often the director, the script-writer and the protagonist) which was the reason for their lack of success. The small number of Greek productions and their poor quality can be accounted for on the basis of the political and economic situation of the country at the time: Greece was involved in the Balkan wars, then came the First World War, the episodes in Asia Minor and the problems caused by the subsequent mass immigration in 1922.

The relative prosperity of the years 1928-32, during the government of Venizelos and just before the international economic crisis, brought about an increase in the home film industry. Even though the number of films multiplied (about 30 films were made during these four years, whereas the previous average production was of about one film per year) the quality did not improve noticeably. The emerging Greek capital owners did not see any lucrative perspectives in the film industry, hence they were unwilling to sponsor it. The state did not assist in the making of the films, but it did not it intervene considerably either, excepting "general measures for the limitation of the spectacle according to the aims of the respective governments" (ibid: 35). This can be seen in contrast to the situation in Italy, for example, where a law was passed in 1929 prohibiting the projection of a movie in any language other thn Italian (cf. Nowell-Smith 1996: 59). The first laws concerning the film industry appeared in 1937, and dealt mainly with licences for the establishment and function of cinemas, the prohibition of entrance for the under-aged, etc. This lack of special attention could be attributed to the fact that the cinemas were few, only in Athens, therefore the public was still reduced. The film industry would not reach the levels of mass communication until the 1950s.

In 1929 the first foreign sound film appeared in Greece, a musical called *Fox Follies*. This was expected to threaten significantly the domestic industry, not ready to follow this big step, as sound-recording required too expensive equipment. However, it was the importation of foreign films itself which went in a crisis, because of the difference in

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[21] Information on the early Greek film production is drawn from Soldatos 1982.

language. The Greek historian Soldatos (1982: 33) regards that "it was difficult for the new invention to acquire a wider and permanent public because of the high levels of illiteracy" (my translation). An additional impediment was the language the subtitles were in. Due to the lack of interest of the Hollywood majors in such a small market, there was no effort on their part to translate the films in Greek. Nor could the subtitling of the films be undertaken in Greece, let alone dubbing, because of want of equipment. Obviously, this situation was very different from the one in countries like Spain, Germany and France described in Izard 1992. The solution then was to distribute the French subtitled version in the Greek cinemas, as happened with the intertitles. The reason for the choice of this language was different than in the case of other countries such as Holland or Portugal where German and Spanish subtitles were provided respectively, being considered "sister" languages. French was the language of diplomacy and culture, widespread in Greek schools. In short, it was the foreign language the educated Greeks could speak.

After a decade of silence caused by the Second World War and the following Civil War (1945-1949), Greek cinema started prospering in the 1950s, to reach its zenith in the 1960s. This was due to the improvements on the technical side, as well as the adoption of Hollywood prototypes and story-lines. By this time, there were more cinemas all over Greece and therefore more spectators from various backgrounds. Cinema-going ceased to be an activity for the few educated intellectuals, and became entertainment for the mass audience. Soldatos stresses the success of Greek films and the preference of the audience for domestic productions over foreign films, even though the latter were now presented with Greek subtitles. This historian attributes this again to the high levels of illiteracy.

These considerations may throw some light on the explanations given for the choice of one or the other method in other countries as well. In the case of Spain, for example, one becomes sceptical on affirmations about subtitles regarding "la inicial dificultad de su integración en el polisistema español debido a condicionantes externos como los niveles de analfabetismo de la población" (Díaz 1997: 17). Even though the levels of illiteracy in Greece were as high as (or even higher than) in Spain, the choice of mode of audiovisual translation was different. The reasons for this have to be found elsewhere, for instance in the difference of the situation in the domestic film industry: in contrast to

Greece, "France, Italy, Spain and Germany strongly encouraged their national film industry production through active government support loans and subsidies" (Danan 1991: 609). This included restrictions in the importation of foreign films with the establishment of "strict import quotas" (ibid: 608). Moreover, there were guidelines regarding the way the allowed foreign films would be distributed, and "dubbing was often imposed by law" (ibid: 611). Naturally, when the viewers had the choice between watching a film in a foreign language and a film in their own, they tended to opt for the latter. Therefore, in order for the foreign films to be able to compete with the local productions they had to be presented in the language of the viewers. In Greece, however, where the domestic industry was less significant and of lower quality, such competition was almost non-existent.

The first efforts for television broadcasting in Greece were made in the early 1960s. But the official birthdate of the Greek Television (EIR) was not until the 23rd February 1966. Its first steps coincided with the coup d'état only a year later[22], which in fact created a second channel controlled by the Ministry of Defence (YENED). Despite the rigorous censorship the military junta imposed and the strong nationalist ideology[23] behind it, there was no policy imposing dubbing. All the imported films had to meet the approval of the special censorship committees, but they were still subtitled. A tentative explanation could be that this case was different from the situation in other countries and in previous decades, where there was a certain "resistència europea a la dominació americana" (Izard 1992: 83). The United States was the allies of Greece at that time, and the "enemy" was represented by the Communists. American products sometimes did not even undergo complete control by the board of censors in charge, as happened with the series *The Axis Agents*[24]. The plot concerned "the activity of German secret agents in the United States during the Second World War, and the way they were successfully confronted by the Americans" (Moschonas, 1996: 15). Obviously, rather than suppressing such messages, there was a clear interest to promote them.

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[22] On the 21st April 1967 the government was overthrown by Colonels Pattakos and Papadopoulos who immediately rose to power.

[23] The motto of the junta was "Greece of Greek Christians".

[24] I back-translate the title of the series from Greek, as the source does not give the original title in English.

During these first years of Greek television, important assistance was provided by the film industry, which was more developed both on the economic and the technical side. The owners of Greek distribution agencies would offer foreign films, to be shown on the state television, since the latter could not afford to purchase or rent them itself (ibid: 14). Thus, the translated version for the television coincided with the one that had been previously projected on the big screen, that is, it included the same set of subtitles. It has to be noted that the total number of such programmes was limited (broadcasting would last only a few hours every evening) and there were no private channels until 1989. The translation of TV series was also done for many years by the cinema subtitling studios, even though later on, a translation department was created in ERT – the new name of the first national channel – which today employs fifteen translators. To the already existing studios, more were added because of the home video boom of the 1980s. Moreover, after the legislation of 1989 which liberalized the media and the subsequent appearance of private television channels, there was an important increase in the emission of foreign programmes. More subtitlers were needed, and since there were no training institutions, they received training from their more experienced colleagues. This boost affected the quality of the subtitles, which was soon criticised by the press (Papadakis 1998). During the past years however, these criticisms are directed more towards the quality of the programmes rather than their translation (ibid). As far as the training is concerned today, there is only one translation faculty, in the University of Corfu, which was created quite recently (1986). The only subtitling courses available are provided as in-house training in subtitling agencies.

Therefore, in the beginning, the establishment of subtitling in Greece was due to economic reasons and lack of technical equipment. Even though these first difficulties were overcome in the 1960s the practice still remained and was extended to television. Possible explanations for this development are that on the one hand people were already used to it and that there was still no explicit government policy. However, an additional reason for the lack of dubbed films in the Greek cinemas today, might be the policy adopted by the Hollywood majors, to allow dubbing only in certain languages, which will be illustrated in section 3.3 together with the issue of dubbing in television.

Further research in the history of the media in Greece is needed to provide more insight into the history of subtitling. Nevertheless, this section has demonstrated that subtitling

has had a longstanding tradition in Greece and it has attempted to give tentative explanations for its predominance. Obviously many factors have to be taken into consideration. The account that subtitling prevails in a certain country because of economic and technical factors seems insufficient. An example is Japan's option for subtitles, though dubbing would have been economically feasible in the densely populated country (cf Nowell-Smith, 1996). Nor does it seem enough to claim that the "character" of certain nationalities is responsible for this choice (tolerance towards other languages and cultures versus intolerance). A combination of these reasons seems more convincing, together with the policies to be described in the sections to follow.

3.2. Function of Subtitles

An important factor that has to be considered in the search of subtitling norms in a specific country or region, is the function of this mode of audiovisual translation. Different countries make different uses of subtitles.

In dubbing countries, like Spain, subtitling has been employed for non-commercial films and mainly in the cinema. In recent years, though, there seems to be a development, in the sense that in the big cities most films are also offered in a subtitled version. It is generally considered that there is a special public for subtitled films, comprising mainly young educated people with a knowledge of and interest in foreign languages. Díaz (1997: 162) observes that "el subtitulado está adquiriendo una importancia progresiva" which he attributes to "un mayor grado de educación de la población, el deseo de aprender idiomas y la volición de valorar un producto en su esencia original". These are only suggestions, however, and further research needs to be done in order to discover whether the educational background of the viewers plays a direct role to the choice between subtitling and dubbing.

In some cases, on the other hand, subtitling has been used in television programmes as a means of promotion of multicultural contact. An example of a conscious effort for this, can be found in Australia, a migrant nation, where 25% of the inhabitants are native speakers of languages other than English. Subtitling was introduced "in order for people of non-English speaking background to keep in touch with their first language and culture while allowing everyone else to enjoy programs in languages other than English" (Chalier 1998: 97).

A different use is encountered in minority language regions, such as Wales or the Basque region. In the former, the appearance of the Welsh-speaking channel S4C (Sianel Pedwar Cymru) in 1982 has played an important role "in the process of arresting language decline" (While, 1999). Some Welsh programmes have met with great popularity, therefore it was decided to broadcast them with English subtitles in order to satisfy the needs of bilingual families. Moreover subtitles would help the promotion of Welsh among the great number of inhabitants who have some knowledge of the language, but do not understand it completely. However, only the weekly omnibus of

the daily soap opera Pobol y Cwm, for example, is emitted with on-screen subtitles – the rest are available on the teletext service. This is due to the fact that "the mass English language audience increasingly rejects dubbed and subtitled foreign language products" (ibid)[25]. Eleri Lovgreen from the Welsh subtitling company Cymen informs that the feedback received from viewers on subtitling is that it is annoying and distracting.

A similar situation was presented in the Basque region, where the use of Euskera in the media was seen as an "instrumento de normalización de una lengua hasta entonces totalmente diversificada en dialectos muy diferenciados" (Etxebarria 1994: 192). In the beginning subtitling was applied simultaneously with dubbing in Euskal Telebista. That is, it was attempted to add Spanish subtitles on the programmes dubbed in Euskera, in order for the whole population to be able to follow the programme, including non-Euskera speaking audience. At the same time, it was thought that subtitling would be an instrument for linguistic improvement, as it would help the people with a low level in Euskera to follow the programme and increase their language level. This choice proved unpopular and was rejected in 1993.

No doubt, the function of subtitles in Greece is different from the above examples. The fact that even children's programmes are often subtitled (cf. Karamitroglou 1998) indicates that subtitles are taken for granted and that the audience is accustomed to viewing subtitled products from a very young age. Until recently there were no dubbed programmes on television, therefore there is no special status (art, non-commercial, for upper-class educated people) assigned to subtitled films. Watching subtitled films does not require, nor is it associated with understanding foreign languages. This is suggested by the fact that subtitled daily soap operas shown in the afternoon, such as "The Bold and the Beautiful", have been very popular among people who are not likely to have a knowledge of English (e.g. pensioners). The subtitles, then, are the only source of verbal information and not an additional one to the oral verbal message. It has to be noted, though, that English is indeed widely spoken or at least understood among young people.

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[25] This information is based on a study visit in Wales titled "The Welsh Language in the Media" organised by the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, April 19-24,1999.

3.3. Subtitling versus Dubbing Countries

The debate of subtitling versus dubbing, apart from being a favourite subject of conversation among film-viewers, has also dominated the literature on audiovisual translation. As we have seen, though, in the first part of this study, the prescriptive view favouring one or the other mode has been as sterile as the debate between free versus literal translation and other dichotomies in translation theory (cf Hatim and Mason 1997). Therefore, the debate concerning the advantages and disadvantages of one method or the other, which has been sufficiently studied, is not going to be further developed here. Rather, the status of Greece as a subtitling country is going to be seen.

The approach here is descriptive in the sense described by Hermans (1999: 77): it considers "the way in which norms and even 'normative laws' appear to operate in the world of translation, without necessarily wishing to recommend or impose them". From this point of view, there is no "correct" or "preferable" mode of audiovisual translation, nor is any mode to be condemned as "unacceptable". A heavily criticised mode is the voice-over in films used, for example, in Poland, where one narrator reads out all the parts of the actors whether male or female, while the original soundtrack can be heard below. This practice, which has also been called "half-dubbing", has been attacked as being badly made dubbing[26]. A characteristic comment is made by Ivarsson (1998: 37): "half-dubbing [...] is a variation we would prefer not even to discuss". Despite this criticism, it seems that Polish people prefer it to other modes. For them it combines the advantages of dubbing – no extra effort required to read subtitles – with the ones of subtitling – the original voices can still be heard[27].

Nor is it considered from this point of view that certain modes are to be preferred over other ones. The view that subtitling is "the intelligent solution" (Reid, 1977: 421) implies that other modes are 'unintelligent'. In such opinions, one can notice the kind of 'snobbism', of which Cary (1960) accused those who prefer subtitling.

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[26] Hayssam Safar (Université de Mons) in a seminar he held at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (January 24-26 2000), provided the example of this practice as an instance to be avoided.

[27] Information provided by Joanna Tenerowicz and Maciej Kudla.

In the European landscape, which is considered to be divided between dubbing and subtitling countries (cf. Luyken 1991), Greece belongs among the latter. In a research conducted in the years 1994-1996 (Karamitroglou 1998), it was found that, as far as the cinema is concerned, the only types of films that were released in a dubbed form during that period were children's cartoon feature films (*Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, etc.). Interestingly enough, "five out of these six products were actually double-releases, i.e. the same product was released with subtitles as well." (ibid: 166). In television, according to the same research, 91.4% of the foreign programmes shown on television were subtitled. The rest of the programmes included sports programmes delivered in free commentary, and documentaries combining narration and subtitling, as well as dubbed children's programmes.

There seem to be certain changes since that survey. In 1998-1999 the private channel SKAI introduced three dubbed soap-operas in its programme. These series of Mexican origin met with great success among the public, and the channel decided to broadcast another four in 1999-2000. Protopsaltis and Kambanellis (*Telecontrol* 1999: 6-7) responsible for the purchase of foreign programmes, give two reasons for this success in an article in a Greek magazine. On the one hand, they attribute it to the fact that these productions are based on simple plots, with recurring themes, such as a forbidden relationship between a man and a woman coming from different social backgrounds, hidden secrets etc. On the other hand, credit is also given to the fact that the series are dubbed, which "helps the elderly audience understand what they hear, without all the effort of reading the subtitles" (ibid., my translation). There are, however, certain doubts on the impact of this phenomenon, which might be just an ephemeral fashion. Moreover, it is still not known if dubbing will be adopted for the translation of other programmes as well. According to Protopsaltis the success of dubbing was partly due to fact that the original language was Spanish "which is unknown in Greece, unlike English, which the Greek audience would not change" (ibid., my translation).

Nevertheless, the immediate acceptance and success of certain dubbed products in a 'subtitling country' like Greece, does not necessarily falsify the evidence found in research that the attitude towards dubbing and subtitling is linked with cultural habits (cf. d'Ydewalle et al. 1991). The 'experiment' of dubbing Mexican soap-operas has not been applied in the case of English-speaking films with famous actors, because it is

considered that the public would not accept listening to the actors whose voices they recognise, with different voices. At least this is the opinion of the ones who take the decisions of the kind of translation to be made. However, a hypothesis could be that the reason is economic. The dubbing of these soap-operas is for the moment of very low quality (the translation, the actors etc.), which is partly proved by the low budget of dubbing allowed for each episode: approximately 1500 euros (Kambanellis 1999: 7). The supposition here is that if programmes of higher quality are to be dubbed, the quality of dubbing has to be equivalent, which would increase the cost, a price the channels might not be willing to pay. Research in the translation policy of the Greek channels will undoubtedly give interesting results concerning this issue.

The translation policy for the cinema, though, seems to be clearer. The ones who decide for the subtitling or dubbing of the films are the distribution agencies, which in turn are subject to the decisions of the Hollywood *majors* (Fox, Warner, United International Pictures, Buenavista International etc.), the multinational companies which control U.S. cinema. This policy was made clear in the case of Catalonia, Spain, when an effort was made to promote dubbed films in Catalan, which are normally released in Spanish. In September 1998, the Department of Culture of the Generalitat (the Autonomic Government of Catalonia) established measures of promotion of dubbed and subtitled films in Catalan, which included the obligation to dub in this language half of the copies of the films which are released with more than 16 copies (*El Mundo*, 16th December 1998). The negation of the multinational companies who have the rights over the films and the conditions in which they are exhibited, obliged the suspension of this decree (*El País*, 6th February 1999). The justification was that

> la política de estas multinacionales no es ni mucho menos la de traducir sus películas a todas y cada una de las lenguas minoritarias de los países en los que operan, sino que únicamente doblan a un número muy limitado de idiomas: sólo cinco, entre los que, eso sí, se encuentra el castellano. Ni en Dinamarca ven las películas en danés ni en Croacia en serbocroata (*El País,* 22nd January 1999).

Going back to the situation in Greece, the only survey on the preferences of the Greek audience was done more than 20 years ago. In that survey it was shown that in general there is a only a slight preference for subtitled programmes, with a percentage of 45.55% against the 42.70% in favour of dubbing. (Doulkeri, 1980: 113). The interest of these results lies in the division of the sample according to certain "differentiating

factors": gender, age, educational background, and profession. The survey suggests a profile of the people preferring subtitling, who seem to be men (50.34% prefer subtitling against 40.60% who prefer dubbing), young (60.15% against 19.36%), with higher or university education and who are employees in high positions or students. On the other hand, a preference for dubbed programmes is shown by women (44.80% in favour of dubbing against 39.76% for subtitling), the elderly (64.35% against 20.48%), with basic education and a professional profile that includes housewives, pensioners, workers and merchants (ibid: 114).

The comments included in the results of the survey are also of great interest. Housewives stated that they prefer dubbed emissions, in order to be able to engage in other activities (housework, knitting etc.). The elderly are in favour of this mode of translation because it is difficult for them to read subtitles; they even suggest that the subtitles be presented in big white letters and against a black background. The younger viewers on their part, explain their preference for subtitling because "it gives them the chance to practice their English" (ibid: 113, my translation). Moreover, the results of this part of the survey are coherent with those of another question involved, concerning preferences for Greek or foreign productions. The characteristics of those who prefer subtitled programmes seem to coincide with those who prefer foreign programmes; and the ones in favour of dubbing show preference for Greek films.

The fact that this survey is outdated, though, poses serious doubts on its validity today. In 1978 there were still only two channels to choose from, with limited emissions (see section 3.1). The increase of the presence of television in everyday life may imply that certain habits are established, which possibly will influence the preferences. A survey carried out today might show different results.

Nevertheless, the "differentiating factors" influencing the preferences cited above, seem to prove the hypothesis (see previous section) that the increase of the importance of subtitling in Spain is due to the higher education of the population and the wish to learn foreign languages. As confirmed in an article appearing in *El Mundo* (cf. 12th February 1999), the number of the viewers who opt for a subtitled film at the cinema has doubled in the past ten years – from 9% in 1989, the percentage of the viewers who chose the subtitled version increased to 18% in 1998 (ibid.)

From these two examples, it seems that the division between dubbing and subtitling countries is not as sharp as it has often been claimed to be. There are many factors intervening and simplistic all-inclusive statements concerning this division have to be dealt with caution, for example that "smaller countries, in particular where more than one language is spoken have a greater tendency to opt for subtitling" (Kelly, 1998: 202). Surely, at first sight it seems convincing to affirm that "since 1932 the world has been divided into nations that prefer dubbing and those that hate it and favour subtitling of films" (Nowell-Smith, 1996: 218). Nonetheless, at present there seems to be a merging in the use of these two modes. There is evidence that in the future the choice might become a matter of personal preference and kind of programme, rather than being a 'national' one.

3.4. The Steps of Subtitling

The process of subtitling has been more than adequately described in various publications including Ivarsson (1992 and 1998), Luyken (1991), Mayoral (1993) and Torregrosa (1996). There are certain common points for the description of this process, as well as recurring normative statements regarding the optimal way of subtitling. This section is going to present the subtitling process as described by these authors, with more attention to the steps that include suggestions for the 'correct' preparation of subtitles.

One of the first steps is the production of a *timecoded* copy of the programme to be subtitled. The timecode recorded on this copy consists of the hours, minutes, seconds and frames of the programme, and it is used to introduce the subtitles with greater accuracy than if they were to be introduced manually. The copy is normally accompanied by its script, which can be either *pre-* or *post-production*. In the first case the programme needs to be viewed in order to identify possible changes and to locate captions or other elements not included in the pre-production script. On the other hand, the film may be accompanied by a *Spotting/Subtitle List* which is an abridged English version of the original, containing the in and out times of the subtitles (see Appendix A, and section 4.3.1.2). In this case the following step (spotting) can be omitted. If, however, there is no script, a transcription of the programme will have to be done.

Spotting involves marking the script with slashes (see Appendix B) while watching the programme, in order to divide the dialogue into pieces which will form the subtitles, in other words to produce the framework of the subtitles. It is stressed that each subtitle "should form a coherent, logical and/or syntactical unit" (Ivarsson 1998: 90).

Almost all of the authors describe the next step as *translation/adaptation*, and stress that there cannot be 'verbatim' translation. This stage "presupposes an ability to condense, omit and paraphrase" (Smith, 1998: 141). There are regularities regarding the suggestions for reduction, which mostly include the substitution of long words with shorter synonyms, merging short dialogues and the omission of elements. The latter

poses a problem, which is addressed either by general normative statements such as "all non-essential information must be omitted yet extreme condensation is also undesirable" (Luyken et al. 1991: 55) or by specific suggestions such as the ones given by Torregrosa (1996: 83):

- Parlamentos excesivamente cortos y no informativos.
- Verbos performativos: "Te digo que", "insisto en que..."
- Marcadores del discurso: "oye", "sabes"...
- Vocativos.
- Todo tipo de repeticiones.
- Redundancias en relación con la imagen.
- Interjecciones, marcadores de la entonación.
- Modalizadores en general: "En mi opinión", "si quieres que te diga la verdad", "para serte franco"...
- Signos de puntuación, interrogación, exclamación

Other recommendations concerning the composition of subtitles include the level of difficulty of the vocabulary and grammar. According to all the authors cited in the beginning of this section, the subtitles must be clear and simple comprising familiar rather than unusual words. This means that "complex sentences, abbreviations, unnecessary punctuation, incomplete sentences and ambiguities must be avoided" (Luyken et al. 1991: 56). Moreover, the viewers' knowledge of the source language must be taken into consideration. Further recommendations can be found in the "Code of Good Subtitling Practice" proposed by Ivarsson (1998 – see Appendix C).

The final steps involve the revision and the insertion of the subtitles, or cueing. The subtitle text and display instructions generated by the previous steps are combined with the programme so that the subtitles appear and disappear at the intended times. If the in- and out- times have already been fixed at the spotting stage, potential changes are made here. If, on the other hand, there is no TCR (Timecode Recording) available, the subtitles may be inserted manually, pressing the relevant button of the character generator every time they are to appear.

Luyken provides a comprehensive summary of these steps presented in the following figure[28]:

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[28] Not all of the steps proposed by Luyken have been described in this section. Technical details have been avoided, as it was preferred to include only the steps relevant to our study.

Figure 4: Steps involved in the preparation of traditional subtitles[29] (Luyken 1991)

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                 │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 1.  REGISTRATION              │       │
│         │ - of Programme Information    │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 2.  VERIFICATION              │       │
│         │  −   of Master                │       │
│         │  −   of Dialogue List         │       │
│         │  +                            │       │
│         │      TRANSCRIPTION*           │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 3.  PRODUCTION OF             │       │
│         │     TIMECODED                 │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 4.  SPOTTING                  │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 5.  ADAPTATION /              │       │
│         │     TRANSLATION /             │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 6.  INSERTION                 │       │
│         │  −   onto working copy        │       │
│         │  −   onto a master copy       │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 7.  REVIEW CORRECTION         │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 8. APPROVAL                   │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                        │                        │
│                        ▼                        │
│         ┌───────────────────────────────┐       │
│         │ 9. TRANSMISSION               │       │
│         └───────────────────────────────┘       │
│                                                 │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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───────────────────────
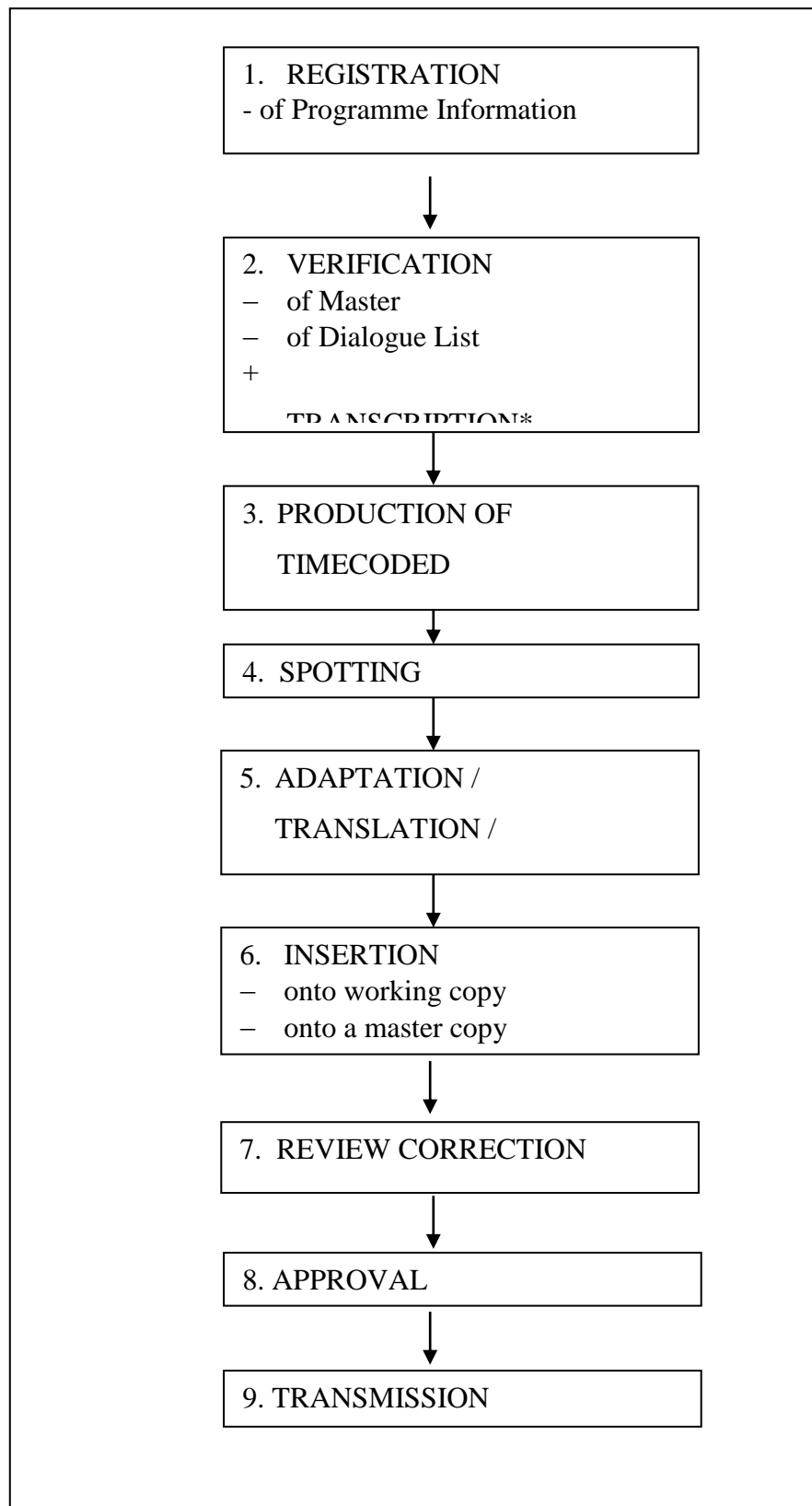
[29] Not necessarily carried out in this order

Chapter 4: Norms as shown in the questionnaire

4.1. Aims and Preparation

The questionnaire comprises three parts, and combines two widely used interviewing methods: open-ended questions and fixed-choice statements, according to the kind of data pursued (see section 2.2.3).

The primary aim of the questionnaire is to attempt to discover what guides the translator's decisions in the practice of subtitling in Greece. This can be achieved through questions defined before-hand, which will be repeated to all the subjects, in order to make the comparison and analysis of the answers possible. The qualitative nature of the research (see section 2.2.3) permits the use of open-ended questions, in the form of an interview. The hope is that the interviewees will be motivated to express their opinions in a free way, so that interesting aspects are more likely to come to the fore. At the same time, the predefined structure of the questions will serve as a guide to the interview. Thus, a balance is achieved: on the one hand, the danger of excessive digression and the subsequent impossibility of analysis are avoided; on the other hand, a certain degree of flexibility is assured, an element which is normally absent in a fixed-choice questionnaire due to the strict limits it imposes. Moreover, the use of a fixed-choice questionnaire does not necessarily guarantee valid answers. The fact that the interviewee is presented with certain choices might orient her/him towards answers that she/he might not have considered before.

First part: **OQ – Open-ended Questions (subjective data and factual data)**

Before getting to the kernel questions, it is decided to begin with two questions on the subtitling process and its participants. The establishment of this process, will serve as an explanation of the opinions to be given later. Moreover, these questions open the way for the interview by contextualising the discussion to follow.

3. 1. What are the stages of the subtitling process?
   2. Who takes part in the subtitling process?

After the questions on factual data, follow the questions on subjective opinions, related to the primary aim, i.e. the eliciting of norms. A direct question, such as "what guides your decisions?", is rejected, as it is considered unclear. Therefore, I opted for a formulation relevant to the everyday preoccupations or discussions among the subtitlers.

4. What are the qualities of a good subtitler?
5. What are the most important characteristics of good subtitles?
6. What do you consider the major sources of difficulty in subtitling?

Questions 3 and 4 are meant to trigger directly normative answers of the type "a good subtitler/good subtitles should/ought to etc." Question 5 is not apparently of a normative nature. However, it is regarded that the most important aspects, the ones which require the most attention, will be potentially presented as the most difficult ones. Therefore the answer to the major sources of difficulty will highlight the aspects which the subtitlers consider of greatest significance. At a first sight, the interviewees are going to give their personal opinions, in other words, the data obtained will be *subjective*. However, if there are regularities in the answers, they will acquire the status of *intersubjective* data. As seen in section 2.2.2, these are placed between objective rules and subjective idiosyncrasies. Hopefully, from these data *expectancy* norms will be elicited (Chesterman 1993 and 1997), i.e. correctness notions based on the expectations of what a subtitled audiovisual product should be like. In other words, the intention is to discover the notions the subtitlers have, regarding the way they are expected to perform their task. Indirectly the data might also give some insight into what Toury (1995) calls the *initial* norm, that is, the choice between a source-oriented or a target-oriented tendency.

The next questions aim at looking at the way subtitlers manoeuvre within the time and space constraints imposed by the medium.

7. Do you have special techniques of reducing the original?
8. Are there specific elements you normally omit in the subtitles?

Regularities here will shed light to some *professional* norms (Chesterman 1993 and 1997), i.e. methods and strategies of the translation process. As far as *operational* norms (Toury 1995) are concerned, only features regarding "fullness" of translation will be seen. This is because it is considered that *matricial* norms (distribution, segmentation and selection of linguistic material) are better retrieved from textual sources, that is the texts themselves.

Questions 8 and 9 deal with the reception of the subtitles by the audience, as seen from the subtitlers' point of view. The aim here, is to see the importance given to the prospective reception, and how much it guides the translator's decisions. Moreover, the intention is to infer the importance given to the subtitles themselves.

9. Does the public have specific expectations from subtitling? If so, what do they involve?
10. Do you think the quality of the subtitles affects the success of the product?

Second part: **FS – Fixed-choice Statements (factual data)**

The opinions retrieved from the OQ, cannot be analysed without taking into consideration the profile of the interviewees. Therefore, the second part of the survey seeks to establish certain factual data, which are considered relevant or might bear some influence on the subjective data. This time, instead of questions, the interviewees will be presented with statements which have multiple-choice endings, from which one or more is to be chosen. This is done in order to economise the collection of the data, as it is expected that the time conceded for the interview is going to be limited. Thus, the interviewee will only have to tick off answers, which saves considerable time. Moreover, the retrieval of factual data through a fixed-choice questionnaire is considered reliable, unlike subjective data which are bound to be influenced by the presence of suggested answers.

The first facts to be established deal with the engagement of the subtitler, the languages and the medium involved, as well as the kind of products translated:

1. *I am a* full-time subtitler / part-time subtitler

2. *I translate from* English / German / French / Italian / Other   *into* Greek / Other

3. *I translate for* Television / Cinema / Video

4. *My work consists mainly of* Films / Documentaries / Soap-operas / News-items / Children's programmes / TV-series / Other

5. *I translate more than one product at the same time:* Never / Sometimes / Often

6. *I do non-audiovisual translations:* Never / Sometimes / Often (*Please specify*: Literary / Technical / Legal / Other)

One of the aims is to seek possible sources of the determination of norms, in other words, where the correctness notions come from. A possible source of norms is an educational institution, such as a university, therefore information on the educational background of the interviewee might have a direct correlation to the norms inferred in the open questionnaire. A subtitler with university training is expected to have adopted norms deriving from the educational institution. On the other hand, in-house training may influence the notions of correctness in a different way. The following data to be retrieved will inform us on the relevant educational background of the interviewee.

7. *I have attended translation courses:* No / Yes

8. *Special training for subtitlers*: No / Yes. (*Please specify*: in-house / university course)

In order to establish the position of the subtitler in the company, statements concerning revision of subtitles are included. If the interviewee revises other subtitlers' work, she/he is also expected to form part of a "norm-determining authority" (cf Chesterman 1997: 66).

9. *I revise other subtitlers' work:* No / Yes

10. *My work is revised by* another subtitler / a special revisor / the client / noone.

A final set of factual data which may be relevant to the decisions taken by the subtitler, has to do with the working conditions. Working at the company's office implies a tighter relationship and control on the part of the employers, or influence by fellow subtitlers.

11. *I work at* home / the company's office

12. *I use a computer* No / Yes (*Please specify*: my own / provided by the company)

13. *I usually have access to the script* No / Yes (pre-production/post-production)

This part of the questionnaire is finished with a direct question regarding an additional source of norms. The presence of explicit guidelines established by the company is expected to influence the subtitlers' decisions.

14. *There is a set of guidelines for subtitling established by the company*: No / Yes (*Please specify if it is* written / oral)

***Third part*: FS – Fixed-choice Statements (subjective data)**

The choice of the method of open-ended questions for the retrieval of subjective data was justified on the grounds that the presence of fixed choices might lead the interviewee towards certain answers. This part of the questionnaire aims at testing this assumption. Therefore, the three kernel questions concerning correctness notions, which were presented in the first part, are repeated here. This time, however, they are submitted as statements followed by elements to be placed in order of importance. The formulation of these elements (qualities of a good subtitler, etc.) is inspired by the research in the literature on subtitling (e.g. Reid 1987, Minchinton 1992, Ivarsson 1993, Torregrosa 1996, Smith 1998, etc.). The elements are deliberately presented in a mixed-up order, i.e., not the order of priority expected. Statement 1 is expected to give evidence of the initial norm (source-oriented vs target-oriented approach). The subtitling-specific ability of language-compression is expected to be given priority.

1. *The qualities of a good subtitler – in order of importance – are:*
   - excellent knowledge of the language of the original
   - excellent knowledge of Greek
   - ability to compress language
   - awareness of the clients' demands
   - other

Before the sources of difficulties, the informants are asked to compare the difficulty between subtitling and other kinds of translation. This is in line with one of the aims of the questionnaire, which is to establish the self-perception of the subtitlers:

2. *I consider subtitling more difficult than other forms of translation*: No / Yes

As far as the sources of difficulties are concerned, there are two subtitling-specific difficulties (space restrictions, oral-to-written transference) and two general translation problems (linguistic and cultural differences) as well as a difficulty which has to do with the working conditions (tight deadlines). It is expected that subtitling-specific features are not going to be regarded as the most important difficulties, on the basis of the assumption that experienced fulltime subtitlers will have developed methods and strategies to overcome problems posed by time and space restrictions:

3. *In my opinion, the most important sources of difficulty – in order of importance – are*:
- difference in syntactic structures between the foreign language and Greek
- space restrictions (compression of the original)
- transference from oral to written mode
- cultural differences
- tight deadlines
- other:

The next statement aims to see whether the notion of translation is source-oriented or target-oriented. If priority is given towards faithfulness to the original, certain orientation towards the source text/language/culture will be demonstrated. On the other hand emphasis on the reception of the subtitles will show loyalty towards the target text viewer:

4. *The most important characteristics of good subtitles are*:
- faithfulness to the original
- easy readability
- linguistic correctness
- general understanding of the story/plot/argument
- other:

The final question adds to the insight provided by questions 8 and 9 of the first part, namely, if and how much audience expectations guide the subtitler's decisions. As we saw in 3.1 the function of the subtitles may be different depending on the knowledge of the foreign language, in other words they be either the main source of information (no knowledge of SL) or an additional one (some knowledge of SL). Here it will be seen if this is taken into consideration.

> 5. *When I translate, I have a specific audience in mind:*
>   No, I normally translate in the same way.
>   Yes. *My decisions depend on (in order of importance):*
>   - the genre (documentary, action movie, film classic, sports programme)
>   - the medium (TV, cinema, video)
>   - the viewers' knowledge of the original language
>   - the viewers' knowledge of the foreign culture
>   - the viewers' age
>   - other

The results of the third part of the questionnaire can be compared with the ones of the open-ended questions of the first part. Thus, it is possible to see whether a fixed-choice questionnaire is valid and if its results are reliable. This finding will be useful for a possible future quantitative research with more subjects included. If the results of the open and the closed parts differ substantially, it may be proved that this method is not reliable.

The third part described above acquires an additional function, if a personal contact with some subtitlers cannot be achieved. If the open-ended interview cannot be performed, the second and the third parts can be handed out and returned with the answers marked on paper. Thus, subtitlers may be included who do not dispose of the necessary time to give a complete interview.

4.2. Choice of Interviewees and Presentation

In order to fulfil the main aim of the research presented in the previous section – to seek the norms that guide subtitlers' decisions in Greece – there had to be a criterion for the selection of the sample to be interviewed. According to Chesterman (1997:67),

> Professionals are the people who are largely responsible for the original establishment of the expectancy norms, in fact, for the products of their work naturally become the yardsticks by which subsequent translations are assessed by the receiving society. Their translation behaviour, in other words, is accepted to be norm-setting

Therefore, only full-time subtitlers were chosen to be interviewed, i.e., people whose main occupation and source of income is subtitling. It was decided to include subtitlers with more than 5 years of experience, as well as owners of subtitling studios, since they are bound to belong to that group of "experts", within the society (of subtitlers in this case).

> Within any society, there is a subset of members ('experts') who are believed by the rest of the society to have the competence to validate such norms. This authority-validation may do no more than confirm a norm that is already acknowledged to exist in the society at large: in this sense, the norm-authorities genuinely 'represent' the rest of the society and are presumably trusted by the other members to do so (Chesterman 1997: 66).

Following this line of thought, the more experienced the subtitlers, the more likely they are to constitute 'norm-authorities', and to be acknowledged as such by the rest of the subtitling community, and therefore a more reliable source of these norms. In order to have a relatively representative sample, however, also translators with less than 5 years of experience were included, which might show possible differences and similarities.

In Greece there are about ten subtitling studios, all located in Athens, three of which (Filmopress, Flash, and Titlotyp) are specially equipped to produce subtitles for the cinema. The rest of the studios are responsible for the translation of programmes shown on private TV stations (even the ones situated in other parts of Greece) and for the translation of video releases. Of the three state channels, only ERT has its own translation department (see section 3.3.1) with 15 permanent subtitlers.

The companies approached were: Filmopress, a private subtitling studio for cinema with its own subtitling equipment and external collaborators/translators; Titranna, a private subtitling agency for cinema and video with 4 permanent translators; SPK, a private subtitling and dubbing studio for television with external collaborators/translators; Lumiere; private subtitling studio for the only cable TV channel called Filmnet, with 8 employees; and ERT, a state TV channel with its own subtitling department and 15 permanent translators.

There are no official data supplying the exact number of the people working in this field. This is partly due to the absence of an association of translators for the media, contrary to the situation in other countries, for example the Netherlands (cf Hempen 1998). According to unofficial sources, the number of full-time subtitlers is calculated to be approximately 45-50.

Since the present research constitutes a pilot study, it was considered sufficient to include a third of the total number of full-time subtitlers. Therefore, 16 full-time subtitlers were contacted, 10 of whom were interviewed personally and completed all the parts of the questionnaire. The others were handed the two parts of the questionnaire which included the fixed-choice questions. The interviews took place in March and April 1999, and almost all of them at the work environment of the interviewees. This was in line with a characteristic of qualitative research which shows preference for 'natural' settings for the collection of data (cf. Silverman, 1993: 27). The subtitlers contacted were generally willing to concede an interview and present their views, even though this activity meant spending precious working time. Initially, they were asked for half an hour of their time, but sometimes this exceeded the hour (in one case the interview lasted four hours). Some of the subtitlers expressed a positive surprise at the fact that subtitling was chosen as a subject of academic research.

Effort was made to conduct all the interviews in as much the same way as possible, both in the presentation of the questions, as well as in giving clarifications where needed. The procedure normally started from a telephone contact, where the time and the place of the interview were specified. The aim of the present study was briefly explained, emphasising its descriptive nature and academic character. This implied the positioning

of the interviewee in the role of an expert giving an account of his knowledge and experience, rather than that of a subject under scrutiny and interrogation.

In the beginning, the interviewee was asked for permission to have the interview recorded, which was possible in all the cases. Recording the interviews allowed the researcher to concentrate on the content of the interview without missing potentially useful details in the process of note-taking. The first part of the questionnaire, that is, the open-ended questions, was conducted in Greek even though the original questions were in English; a conversation in a language other than the native of both the parties, would have created an unnatural situation. Nevertheless, the purpose was to ensure a similar formulation of the questions.

The second and the third parts, i.e. the fixed-choice statements, were handed out at the end of the interview, and the subjects were left to tick off their answers – in the second part – or put their choices in order of priority – in the third part. This was normally a silent operation, so there was no need for further tape-recording. The occasional comments of the interviewees while they were completing the questionnaire were taken note of. The written fixed-choice statements, which occupied two pages, was presented as follows.

Name:

Subtitling Company/TV Station:

Please tick off your answer

1. *Position in the company:* • owner / • employee / • collaborator

2. *Years of experience*: • 1-5 / • 5-10 / • >10

3. *I am a* • full-time subtitler / • part-time subtitler

4. *I translate from* • English / • German / • French / • Italian / • Other   *into*

    • Greek / • Other.

5. *I translate for* • Television / • Cinema / • Video.

6. *My work consists mainly of* • Films / • Documentaries / • Soap-operas / • News-items /

    • Children programmes / • TV-series / • Other:

7. *I translate more than one product at the same time:* • Never / • Sometimes / • Often.

8. *I do non-audiovisual translations:* • Never / • Sometimes / • Often (*Please specify*:

    • Literary / • Technical / • Legal / • Other)

9. *I have attended translation courses:* • No / • Yes

10. *Special training for subtitlers*: • No / • Yes. (*Please specify*: • in-house / • university

    course)

11. *I revise other subtitlers' work:* • No / • Yes

12. *My work is revised by* • another subtitler / • a special revisor / • the client / • noone.

13. *I work at* □home / □the company's office.

14. *I use a computer* • No / • Yes (*Please specify*: • my own / • provided by the company).

15. *I usually have access to the script* • No / • Yes (*Please specify*: • pre-production / • post-

    production).

16. *There is a set of guidelines for subtitling established by the company*: • No / • Yes

(*Please specify if it is* • written / • oral)

1. *The qualities of a good subtitler – in order of importance – are:*
   - excellent knowledge of the language of the original
   - excellent knowledge of Greek
   - ability to compress language
   - awareness of the clients' demands
   - other:

2. *I consider subtitling more difficult than other forms of tra*nslation: • No / • Yes

3. *In my opinion, the most important sources of difficulty - in order of importance - are*:
   - difference in syntactic structures between the foreign language and Greek
   - space restrictions (compression of the original)
   - transference from oral to written mode
   - cultural differences
   - tight deadlines
   - other:

4. *The most important characteristics of good subtitles - in order of importance - are*:
   - faithfulness to the original
   - easy readability
   - linguistic correctness
   - general understanding of the story/plot/argument
   - other:

5. *When I translate, I have a specific audience in mind:*

   • No, I normally translate in the same way.

   • Yes. *My decisions depend on (in order of importance):*
   - the genre (documentary, action movie, film classic, sports programme)
   - the medium (TV, cinema, video)
   - the viewers' knowledge of the original language
   - the viewers' knowledge of the foreign culture
   - the viewers' age.
   - other:

4.3. Analysis of the Results

In order to contextualise the results of the interviews, first the factual data are going to be presented, despite the fact that they were not the first to be retrieved.

4.3.1. Factual Data

4.3.1.1. The Interviewees' Profile

Position in company: Two of the subtitlers are also owners of subtitling studios (Filmopress and Titranna), one collaborates with the private subtitling and dubbing studio SPK, and one is working freelance for an US-based company (Softitler – DVD subtitling) Softitler as well as for the Greek National Television Channel (ERT). The rest are permanent employees – 6 work internally for ERT and 6 work for the private subtitling studio Lumiere. One of the latter is also the supervisor of Lumiere's subtitling team.

Years of experience, language and medium: They are all full-time subtitlers. Six of the subjects have been working as subtitlers for more than 10 years, five between 5-10 years, and the remaining five between 1-5 years. All – except for one who translates only from French – translate from English. However eleven of them also translate from French, three from Spanish, one from Portuguese and one from Italian. All of the interviewees work for television, whereas three of them also subtitle for cinema and video. One of the interviewees translates products presented in the form of DVD.

Products usually subtitled, and translation of non-audiovisual texts: They all work with almost all kinds of audiovisual products, however their main amount of work consists of films. Most of the interviewees translate more than one product at the same time, and half of them also do other kinds of translations, mainly technical and legal texts. In addition, three of the subtitlers also do translation for the theatre.

Translation and subtitling courses: Only nine subjects have attended university translation courses, of whom one has received special training for subtitlers. As we saw in section 3.1, in Greece there is only one university with a translation faculty – founded in Corfu quite recently (1986) – and there are still no subtitling courses available. The

recent introduction of translation courses is reflected by the fact that the six subtitlers who have been working for more than 10 years are the ones with no training in translation.

Policy of revision: The only interviewees who revise other subtitlers' work are the two owners of the subtitling studios, as well as four of the subtitlers who work for Lumiere (subtitling for cable channel). In the public channel ERT there is no policy of revision, therefore its employees and collaborators are neither revised nor do they revise.

Working conditions: All interviewees but one work at the company's office, use a computer and have a post-production script at their disposal.

Guidelines: In Filmopress and Titranna there are no guidelines. The subtitler who collaborates with the SPK informed the researcher that she had composed these guidelines herself, being the most experienced subtitler, in order to help the newcomers. The awareness of guidelines in ERT and Lumiere varies significantly among the subtitlers. In the first case, four employees affirm that there is a set of guidelines diffused orally, whereas two of them state that there are no guidelines. In Lumiere, half of the subtitlers are aware of the presence of written guidelines, whereas the rest seem to have received them orally.

The following table offers an inclusive view of the interviewees' profile.

Subtitler	S.STA.	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	Y.M.	G.A.	S.STE	A.S.	T.M.	M.KO.	M.KA.	A.V.	I.K.	V.P.	B.K.
Parts answered	all	all	all	all	all	2 & 3	all	2 & 3	all	all	all	2 & 3	2 & 3	2 & 3	2 & 3	all
Position in company	Owner Collab/or	Owner Collab/or	Collab/or	Owner Collab/or	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Employee	Supervisor
Years of experience	+ 10	5-10	5-10	+ 10	+10	5-10	+10	5-10	+ 10	+10	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	5-10
Fulltime	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language[30]	E, F, I, S	E, F, P,S	E, S	E	F	E, F, I	E,F	E, F, I	E	E	E, F	E, F	E, F	E, F	E, F	E
Medium	Cinema, TV	TV,cinema DVD	TV	TV,cinema video	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV
Product	Films, Tvseries	Films, documen	Soap-opera	All kinds	All kinds	All kinds	All kinds	All kinds	All kinds	Films	Films	Films	Films	Films	Films	Films
Parallel commission	No	S/times	No	Yes	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times	S/times
Other kinds	No	Yes	No	S/times	No	No	No	No	No	No	S/times	Yes	Yes	S/times	S/times	No
Translation courses	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Subtitling courses	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Revise	Cinem-Yes TV – No	DVD – Yes TV – No	S/times	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Be revised	No	DVD-Yes TV – No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Work-place	Home Office	Home Office	Home	Office	Office	Office	Office Home	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office	Office
Use of computer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Script	Yes	Yes	Yes	Cine-Yes Video-No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guide-lines	No	DVD-Yes TV – No	Yes	No	Oral	Oral	No	No	Oral	Oral	Written	Oral	Oral	Written	(not answered)	Written

Table   7:   Results   of   second   part   (fixed-choice)   of   the   questionnaire: The   interviewees'   profile

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[30] E = English, F = French, I = Italian, S = Spanish

4.3.1.2. The Subtitling Process

The subtitling process and its participants vary according to the medium. The subtitlers interviewed are responsible for all stages of the process, even though this does not reflect the general situation in Greece; for instance, part-time subtitlers do not do the cueing as we shall see. The process at the studios and the channel visited, is the following.

A. Cinema

When the distribution agency assigns the translation of a film to the studio, it usually provides a videotaped copy of the film, as well as the post-production script that accompanies it. Sometimes, however, the copy of the film is not supplied, because of lack of time to record it[31]. In certain cases, this is due to the fact that agencies, wanting to have absolute control over the product they have purchased, do not allow copies to be made of it. Therefore, when the reproduction is allowed, it is done in such a way that the time-code occupies a big part of the screen, so that the copy is rendered useless for commercial use.

Another opportunity for the translator to watch the film before translating it, is the case where the distribution agency disposes of a projection hall (e.g. a cinema hall). In that case, it can arrange a special projection for the translator, who watches the film and records the sound on a normal tape-recorder. This is used during the process of the translation in order to "catch the rhythm" of the speech. At the same time, notes are taken concerning specific problems, for example captions which are included in the picture but not in the script (a sign, a letter, a newspaper fragment), which also need subtitling.

However, the above being the exception rather than the rule, more often than not the translation has to be done directly from the script, without any previous viewing of the film. This is feasible because of the nature of the script: apart from the transcribed dialogue of the film – "Combined Continuity" – it also includes a Master

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[31] According to Tsesmetzoglou, even in the cases that it is possible for the agency to make a copy, they make no effort to do so, with the excuse that the job is done anyway.

Spotting/Subtitle List[32]. The latter is an abridged English version of the original, which contains notes of the in and out times of the individual subtitles. Even if the film is in a different language this kind of masterlist is done in English to help subtitlers in all languages. The task of the translator, then, is to translate the model subtitles from English into Greek, and there is no need for *spotting* (division of the script into units).

The translation is done on a special subtitling programme called VDPC. This programme, which is quite simple, does not allow more than 29 strikes to be typed on each line (extra letters are overtyped), and includes the time in and time out codes. Most of the interviewed subtitlers who use this programme, pointed out the shortcomings of this programme: it is too old, sometimes subtitles are lost, there is no spell-checking or other aids. This is especially relevant with the answers some subtitlers gave as far as the sources of difficulty are concerned.
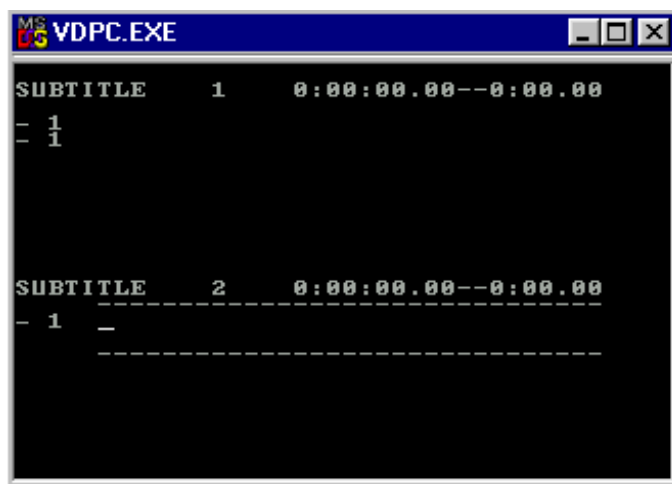
Figure 5: The subtitling programme VDPC

The finished translation is saved on a floppy disk, and then transferred to the computer connected with the editing/viewing table. This is when the *cueing* is performed, that is, the definitive insertion of the in and out times, which is done on the basis of the feet and frames of the film. At that stage eventual changes and corrections are made, which usually have to do with misunderstandings due to the impossibility of viewing the film while translating. The insertion is quite exact but the process is time-consuming, as the editing/viewing table is used manually to backtrack or forward the film. The final

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[32] These scripts are prepared by companies such as Gelula & Co. For a sample see Appendix A.

technical stage includes the printing of the subtitles on small copper plates in a special laboratory. Back to the studio, the subtitles are introduced onto the film through a photochemical process[33].

The process described above (except the production of the copper plates) involves only one person. However, an external collaborator is often asked to do the part of the translation proper. The modification in the process is that the script is sent directly to the translator who forwards the file with the subtitles by modem to the subtitling studio. The reason given to explain why the translation and the cueing is done by two different persons is that it saves time. Another justification is that an experienced technician is needed to do the cueing, who has the skills to use the equipment. This professional tends to hold a permanent position and in the case of the Greek subtitling studios, it is the owner of the studio[34]. The subtitlers responsible for the cueing, said in the interview that the more experienced the translator is, the less corrections and amendments have to be made.

The subtitling process for the cinema often takes place under great time-pressure. Sometimes, especially when the film is expected to be a box office success (e.g. awarded films) the time between the purchase of the film and its release has to be minimal. Therefore, there are bound to be errors (translation, typeset or insertion errors) which cannot be amended for the specific copy of the film, since the insertion of the subtitles is permanent and irrevocable. An example given during the interview with Tsesmetzoglou, was the film "La vita è bella" by Roberto Benigni, whose translation was done in one night. The fact that it was translated through English (with a Master Spotting/Subtitle list) and without viewing the film caused an important error: a wasp bite was translated as a scorpion bite, which contradicted the image. When it was realised, it was too late (the copper plates need half a day to be printed), therefore it had to be projected as such at the first performance, and amended in the rest of the film copies. The first defective copy is sent to be projected in "less important" provincial cinemas.

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[33] This final technical stage is exhaustively described in Ivarsson and Carroll 1998: 12-15.

[34] In FILMOPRESS and TITLOTYP the owner is a translator. In the case of FLASH it is a technician with some knowledge of English but who does not translate himself.

B. Television

In the case of the Greek National Television (ERT) the translator receives the script, as well as a copy of the film on videotape. During the first viewing of the film, the script is *spotted*, i.e., it is separated in units, each of which is going to form a subtitle[35]. At this point the translator decides if the subtitles are going to be comprised of one or two lines. The translation process is similar to the one for cinema subtitling. The cueing is done manually by the translator with the help of a special character generator (ASTON), and the insertion is done in real time by pressing a button every time a subtitle is to appear. At the same time the previous and the next subtitle can be seen on the computer screen next to the monitor where the film is viewed, so that the subtitler can control the existence of coherence between them. What differentiates this process from the cinema is that eventual errors can be corrected at any point of the process, even at the last moment.

The above process holds for all the studios for television subtitling, except Lumiere. The difference lies in the subtitling programme used (WIN2020) which is Windows-based.

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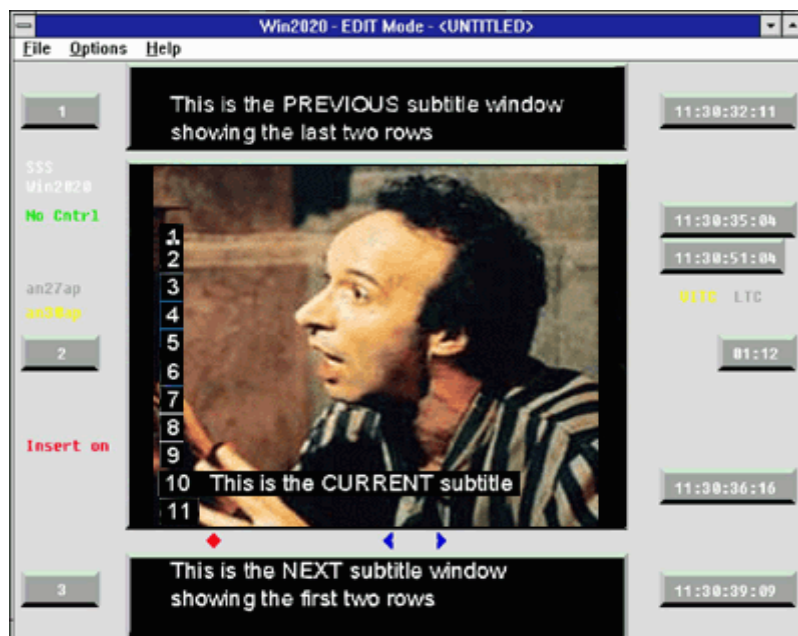
[35] See appendix B.

Figure 6: The subtitling programme Win2020

The film is viewed on the computer screen together with the subtitles, and is controlled directly from the PC. This is achieved because this programme *caches* the video, audio and timecode from the VCR as a JPEG file. This accelerates the process, as there is no need for the translator to pause and shuttle the tape to establish the cueing points, or to check and review the oral part. Other timesaving features this programme offers involve "the ability to read timecode from the video and associate it with each subtitle as in- and out-cues" (*Screensubtitling,* 1999), suggestions for the optimal time-length according to the length of the subtitle and spell-checking.

C. Video

The rights for the video-release of the film are usually bought by the distribution agency who already owns the rights for the cinema-release. Therefore, the subtitling for video is assigned to the same studio and subsequently the same set of subtitles are used, with certain adaptations where needed. When the studio is not the same and the film has to be translated anew, the translator is often faced with an additional problem: the absence of a script. After the first translation of the film (for the cinema), the studio is theoretically obliged to return the script to the distribution agency together with the translated film. This does not always happen, however, and the scripts often end up in piles or even thrown away. In that case the film has to be transcribed before its translation, the rest of the process being the similar to the one described above.

D. DVD (Digital Versatile Disk)

This is a relatively new process and only one of the subtitlers interviewed had experience with DVD subtitling. Here, there is no intermediary Greek distribution agency, and the film on disk arrives by normal mail to the subtitler straight from the producer. A file accompanies the film, including ready spotted subtitling spaces, the same for all the languages. It has to be noted that a DVD has the capacity to include subtitles in various languages as well as dubbed versions, to be selected by the viewer. The advantage of the ready spotted file is that it accelerates the translation process. The shortcoming, however, is that different languages may require subtitles of different length, or different division (whether one- or two-line subtitles are going to be used). The subtitler's task is to "fill up" the spaces provided and send the file to an appointed

editor for correction. The eventual amendments have to be approved by the original subtitler, who is responsible for the final decisions.

The following table summarises the processes at the different media:

Process A (cinema)	Process B (public TV)	Process C (video)	Process D (DVD)
I. Reception of spotted script	I. Reception of script & copy of film	I. Reception of film (& script)	I. Reception of DVD & script
II. Translation on disk	II. Viewing & spotting	II. (Transcription)	II. Translation into the ready spotted subtitle spaces on DVD
III. Cueing & editing	III. Translation on disk	III. Viewing & Spotting	III. Editing by another subtitler
IV. Photochemical Insertion	IV. Cueing & editing	IV. Translation on disk	IV. Approval of corrections by the original subtitler.
		V. Cueing	

Table 8: The process of subtitling according to the medium

4.3.2 Subjective data

This section presents the subjective data, retrieved from the first part of the questionnaire (*OQ – Open-ended Questions*) and the third part (*FS – Fixed-choice Statements*). First, the 3 questions that coincided in both parts are going to be seen in comparison, in order to verify the validity of the FS as well as the coherence in the subtitlers' statements. For this comparison, however, it has to be taken into consideration that the FS were answered by six more subtitlers. Therefore, if those six subtitlers' answers vary considerably from the rest, this may influence the cumulative results.

The sum of the data are found at the end of this section in tables 13 (Open-ended Questions) and 14 (Fixed-choice Statements). Moreover, the results of the fixed-choice statements are also presented in separate tables in the course of their analysis (tables 9-12). The difference in the presentation lies in the fact that the separate tables include the number of interviewees who placed the elements at the specific places of the hierarchy, whereas the table in the end contains the details of the answers of each individual subtitler.

Qualities of a good subtitler: In the OQ (Open-ended Questions) the quality prevailing in the answers is good knowledge of Greek, i.e. the Target Language (eight out of ten subtitlers).

The ability to compress language is also considered an important asset (four subtitlers).

Other qualities mentioned but without regularity are the art to produce plain and unadorned speech, personality characteristics such as being perceptive and punctual, as well as enjoying watching films. One of the subtitlers stressed as a quality the ability to do non-literal translation.

Table 9: Data from Fixed-choice Statements – The qualities of a good subtitler.

	a: SL Knowledge	b: TL Knowledge	c: Compression ability	d: Awareness of the clients' demands
1st place	4[36]	11	1	0
2nd place	11	3	2	0
3rd place	1	2	13	0
4th place	0	0	0	6
Irrelevant	1	0	0	10

[1] The numbers indicate the number of interviewees who placed the specific answer at the specific place in the hierarchy.

The FS (Fixed-choice Statements) confirmed the findings of the OQ. As shown in the table above, priority was given to linguistic knowledge, the most important being TL knowledge.

The third quality chosen by most of the interviewees was the ability to compress language, whereas the professional awareness of the clients' demands was considered irrelevant. This could be explained by the fact that most of the subtitlers are employees, therefore they only have to be aware of the guidelines of the company, without worrying about the demand of clients, such as distribution agencies.

Characteristics of good subtitles. The characteristic most frequently quoted in the answers of the OQ is comprehensibility which has also been expressed as clarity and simplicity (half of the subtitlers). There was special emphasis on the use of uncomplicated sentence constructions and avoidance of 'difficult' words.

The next element which presents a relative frequency is appropriate style (four subtitlers), in the sense that the personality of the characters has to be reflected in the language of the subtitles.

Other features of good subtitles mentioned, are good cueing and rhythm (three), complete meaning in every subtitle (three), correctness (three), coherence (two), invisibility of the subtitles (one) and succinctness.

Table 10: Data from FS – Characteristics of good subtitles:

	a: Faithfulness to the original	b: Easy readability	c: Linguistic correctness	d: Understanding of the plot
1st place	2	6	2	6
2nd place	3	1	7	4
3rd place	1	4	6	3
4th place	8	3	1	1
Irrelevant	2	2	0	2

The results of the FS presented in table 10 partly coincide with the OQ ones. Here, the predominant characteristics of good subtitles are that they be easily readable and that they contribute to the understanding of the plot, as a total of twelve subtitlers opted for these two choices as their first priority.

The second most chosen option was linguistic correctness.

Faithfulness to the original which was not mentioned by any subtitler in the OQ, was placed by most of the subtitlers in the last place or considered irrelevant. However, five subtitlers place this characteristic in the first two places in the hierarchy. It has to be noted, that four of these five subtitlers had not answered the OQ. If they had, they might have mentioned faithfulness, which would have influenced the results of the OQ. This is only speculation, however. Another divergence is that characteristic "appropriate style", which was one of the answers with relative frequency in the OQ, was not included here.

Sources of difficulty in subtitling: Half of the subjects answered that the need for compression of language caused by time and space restrictions, constitutes an important source of difficulty. On the other hand, one of the subjects explicitly stated that he did not have difficulties with having to reduce the utterances.

Four subtitlers consider that the difficulty depends on the genre of the product. The genres highlighted were documentaries and comedies. The latter because of the different kind of humour, puns and cultural differences in general. Documentaries are considered difficult to subtitle, because they require more investigation in reference works, such as encyclopaedias, in order to look for or verify names of

cities, famous people, flora, fauna, etc. Terminological difficulties are also underlined by two more subtitlers.

Another difficulty pointed out concerns bad working conditions, caused by the insufficiencies of the computer programme they have to use (VDPC – see section 4.3.1), as well as the absence of a script and bad sound of the original.

An interesting comment by one of the subtitlers concerned the difficulty created by the fear of criticism on the part of viewers. The fact that most Greek viewers can partly understand the English original, makes the subtitler hesitate to use an "equivalent" word or expression which does not correspond literally to the original.

Table 11: Data from FS – The most important sources of difficulty

	a: Difference in syntax	b: Space restrictions	c: Transfer: oral to written	d: Cultural differences	e: Tight deadlines
1st place	1	8	0	4	3
2nd place	1	4	6	4	0
3rd place	4	2	3	5	0
4th place	4	0	3	1	3
5th place	2	0	0	1	6
Irrelevant	4	2	4	1	4

The major source of difficulty was confirmed in the FS. The choice "space restrictions" was placed in the first two positions by most of the subtitlers.

The difficulty of cultural differences which was also relatively frequent in the OQ is also positioned in the first three places. Here, a correlation is found with the factual data: the subtitlers who placed cultural differences as the most important source of difficulty, are all graduates from a university course in translation. It could be argued that the fact that they had translation training has provided them with a greater

awareness of cultural differences. This is not to say that those differences have been neglected by the rest of the interviewees, as they occupy the second and third place in the hierarchy of difficulties.

As far as tight deadlines are concerned, the option occupies the bottom of the hierarchy, whereas three of the subtitlers have given it a priority. This can be explained again by the fact that few of the subtitlers work for the cinema, where there is a greater time-pressure for the preparation of the subtitles (see section 4.3.1 – cinema).

Differences in syntax occupy the last places of the hierarchy, or they are excluded from constituting difficulties. This result is coherent with the OQ, where these differences were not mentioned at all.

A divergence from the OQ is encountered, which concerns the difficulty "transfer from oral to written": as many as six subtitlers placed it as the second most important difficulty, whereas it was only mentioned by one of the subtitlers in the OQ. This may confirm the drawback of the method of fixed-choice questions, namely that it may lead subjects to choose an answer which might not be the first one to turn up if they were simply asked without being given options.

Since the rest of the questions belong either to the open or the fixed-choice part, they are going to be seen separately, starting from the rest of the results of the open-ended questions.

Techniques of reducing the original utterances: The answers given by the subtitlers were quite recurring. The techniques which were more often referred to, are:

1. Choosing the most important element.

Its importance seems to be measured according to its contribution to the understanding of the argument of the film.

2. Merging of dialogues.

For example:

– Did you visit him? – No. – Why not? – Because I didn't feel like it.	becomes	– Why didn't you visit him? – I didn't feel like it.
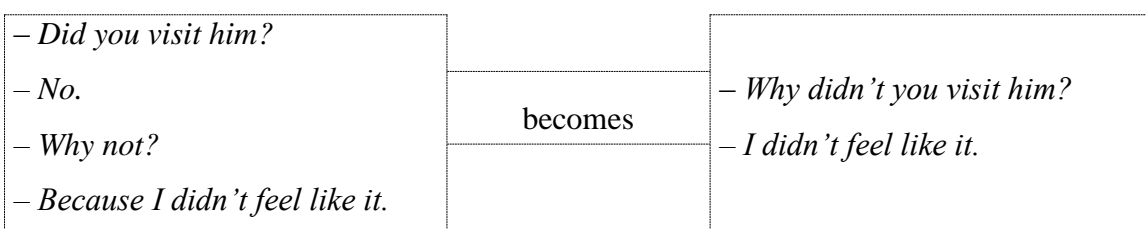
3. Replacing a word by a shorter synonym.

4. Choosing one of the adjectives when more than one is used to describe something.

5. Replacing a subordinate clause by an adjective.

   For example: – *They live in a village, which is far away* becomes

   – *They live in a remote village.*

Elements normally omitted: Again there were recurring answers. The elements mentioned are short answers like *yes, no,* or *OK*, and the justification given was that these words are understood by the viewers, who can retrieve the meaning from the acoustic and visual part of the message. Names that are called are normally omitted after the beginning of the film, when the characters' identity has been established. One of the subtitlers, however, noted that this should not be done in the case of soap-operas, where it is important to maintain the names in the subtitles, for viewers who have not seen other episodes of the product. Songs are only subtitled when the lyrics are relevant to the plot, or are intended for a specific purpose. Announcements in the background, which are not relevant to the plot, are also omitted, for example announcements at a hospital or an airport, whose only purpose is to create an appropriate atmosphere. Finally, repetitions are not reflected in the subtitles.

The public's expectations: The answers to this question were also quite homogeneous. Most of the interviewees stated that the main expectation of the public is to understand the film, or the audiovisual product in general. They also consider that what the viewers expect is to have time to read the subtitles while watching the film, i.e. not to spend too much effort to retrieve the message. A different formulation of this idea was that the viewers' wish is to watch unobtrusive, invisible subtitles. These answers correspond to the characteristics of good subtitles given above. Simple and clear subtitles are faster to read and easier to understand. Other isolated opinions were that in the case of television the viewers have no expectations, or that the subtitles are expected to appear at the same time as the speech, in other words, that they be well-cued.

Influence of subtitles in the success of the product: Most of the subtitlers thought that the quality of the subtitles does not affect the success of the product in the case of the cinema, justifying this opinion by stating that commercial films will be successful no matter the quality of the translation. It was also pointed out that nowadays the quality of the subtitles is not so low so as to influence the success of the film. However, it was

indicated that in the case of television, subtitles do influence the viewing rates. If the subtitles of a soap-opera are too long or incomprehensible, the viewers will not be keen to watch the following episodes. Watching television implies changing channels, which means that subtitles have to be good enough to attract the viewers' attention. In general, it is considered that if subtitles influence the success of a product this is only done in a negative way.

Finally, the rest of the results of the fixed-choice questions are as follows.

Difficulty of subtitling compared to other kinds of translation: This question was only included in the FS, as a simple yes/no question. Nine of the sixteen subjects answered that subtitling is not more difficult than other kinds of translation. Interestingly enough, of the seven subtitlers that stated that subtitling is more difficult, six do not do other kinds of translation (see table 7).

Consideration of a specific audience, and factors that determine the subtitler's decisions:

Table 12: Data from FS – Factors that determine the subtitler's decisions

	a: the genre	b: the medium (TV, cinema, video	c: the viewers' knowledge of the SL	d: the viewers' knowledge of the culture	e: the viewers' age.
1st place	10	1	0	1	3
2nd place	4	1	0	1	5
3rd place	0	1	2	1	1
4th place	0	1	2	0	1
5th place	0	1	0	2	1
Irrelevant	1	8	9	8	2

Only one of the sixteen subtitlers stated that she does not take a specific kind of audience into consideration, and that she translates the same way. Some stated that in the case of television, it is difficult to have a specific kind of viewers in mind, as it is a

medium with an unpredictable and unlimited audience. However, they do take the audience in consideration in the case of children programmes, therefore they have placed the choices "genre" and "the viewers' age" in the highest positions of the hierarchy. Some subtitlers also mentioned that the quality of the product also affects their decisions, in the sense that they are reluctant to spend too much time and effort for the translation of a product of low quality. The kind of medium, and the viewers' knowledge of the original language and culture does not seem to influence the subtitlers' decisions.

Subtitler	S.STA.	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	G.A.	A.S.	T.M.	M.Ko.	B.K.
Process	A or B	A or B or D	B	A or C	B	B	B	B	B	B
Qualities of subtitler	Art of plain unadorned speech	TL knowledge Enjoy films Plain speech	TL knowledge Perceptive Punctual	General knowledge TL knowledge	TL knowledge Compression	TL knowledge	No literal tr/on No explicitation TL knowledge Compression	TL knowledge Compression	TL knowledge	Compression
Good subtitles	Plain Appropriate style Coherent	Well-cued Invisible	Clear Correct	Correct Simple	Short and succinct Complete meaning	Comprehensible Easy to understand Style, rhythm	Complete meaning Style No taboo words	Well-cued Duration Well-timed Style (more than information)	Correct Coherent Complete	Well-cued
Sources of difficulty	Terminology Comprehension difficulties Cultural differences	Tight deadlines Genre (docs) Inadequate technical support	Inadequate technical support No script Genre (docs) Fast speech	Genre (comedies)	Space restrictions	Space restrictions Oral to written Genre (docs)	Space restrictions Terminology	Space restrictions	Subtitles open to criticism	Space restrictions
Reducing techniques	Merge dialogues	Short synonym Less adjectives	Compress verb-types Choose the most important	Choose the most important	Short synonym Subordinate clause becomes adjective	Short synonym Choose the most important Merge dialogue	Two negations become one affirmation Subordinate clause becomes adjective Short synonym	Merge dialogue	Short synonym Merge dialogue	Less adjectives

Elements normally omitted	«Yes-No» Names called Repetitions	Names called Songs	«Yes- No» Names called Unknown words	«Yes-No» Names called Songs/"Off"-announcements	No omissions	If question with 3 parts, one is chosen	Names called Repetitions	(not answered)	«Yes-No» Names called Songs	«Yes-No-OK»
Public's expectations	To understand	Well-cued (speech - subtitle simultaneously)	To have time to read (case of TV - no expectations)	To watch unobtrusive s/es	(not answered)	To understand To have time to read	To have time to read To understand Not to be shocked	To understand To have time to read	To understand	To understand To watch unobtrusive s/es
Subtitle quality affects success	No (commercial films will be successful)	No (there are not such bad s/es	No	Cine - No TV - Yes (series)	Yes	No (people are not interested in quality)	Yes (viewing rates of soap-operas)	No	No	No

Table   13:   Subjective   data   (first   part   of   the   questionnaire).   OQ   (Open-ended   questions)

Subtitler	S.Sta[37]	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	Y.M.	G.A.	S.Ste	A.S.	T.M.	M.Ko.	M.Ka.	A.V.	I.K.	V.P.	B.K.

1. Qualities of a good subtitler:

SL = Knowledge of Source Language   TL = Knowledge of Target Language

Comp = Ability for Compression

Client = Awareness of the Clients' Demands

	S.Sta	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	Y.M.	G.A.	S.Ste	A.S.	T.M.	M.Ko.	M.Ka.	A.V.	I.K.	V.P.	B.K.
1st	TL	TL	SL	TL	TL	TL	TL	TL	TL	TL	SL	TL	SL	SL	TL	Comp
2nd	SL	SL	TL	Comp	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	SL	B	SL	Comp	TL	SL	SL
3rd	Comp	Comp	Comp	SL	Comp	Comp	Comp	Comp	Comp	Comp	Comp	Comp	TL	Comp	Comp	TL
4th	Client		Client								Client	Client	Client	Client		

2. Subtitling more difficult than other forms of translation:

	S.Sta	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	Y.M.	G.A.	S.Ste	A.S.	T.M.	M.Ko.	M.Ka.	A.V.	I.K.	V.P.	B.K.
	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

3. Sources of difficulty: Syntax = Difference in Syntax   Restr = Space Restrictions   OW = Transfer – Oral to Written

Cult = Cultural ifferences   Deadlin = Tight Deadlines

	S.Sta	I.P.	A.L.	I.T.	R.A.	Y.M.	G.A.	S.Ste	A.S.	T.M.	M.Ko.	M.Ka.	A.V.	I.K.	V.P.	B.K.
1st	Restr	Restr	Deadlin	Deadlin	Restr	Restr	Restr	Restr	Deadli	Syntax	Cult	Cult	Cult	Cult	Restr	Restr
2nd	OW	OW	Restr	Cult	Cult	Cult	Syntax	Cult	n		Restr	OW	OW	Restr	OW	OW
3rd	Syntax	Cult	OW		Syntax	Syntax	OW		Restr		Syntax	Restr	Restr	OW	Cult	Cult
4th	Cult	Deadlin	Cult		OW	OW	Deadlin		Cult		OW	Deadlin	Syntax	Syntax	Syntax	
5th	Deadlin	Syntax				Deadlin	Cult		Syntax		Deadlin	Syntax	Deadli	Deadlin	Deadlin	

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[37] The initials of the subtitlers in bold letters indicate that these interviewees also answered the Open-ended Questions

4. Characteristics of good subtitles: Faithful = Faithfulness to the Original Readable = Easy Readability Correct = Linguistic Correctness

Underst = Understanding of the Plot

1st	Underst	Correct	Readable	Readable	Readable	Faithful	Readable	Underst	Underst	Correct	Underst	Faithful	Readable	Underst	Readable	Underst
2nd	Correct	Underst	Correct	Underst	Underst	Correct	Correct	Correct	Faithful		Readable	Underst	Correct	Faithful	Faithful	Correct
3rd	Faithful		Underst	Correct	Correct	Readable	Underst	Readable	Readable		Correct	Correct	Underst	Correct	Correct	Readable
4th	Readable		Faithful	Faithful	Correct	Underst	Faithful	Faithful	Correct		Faithful	Readable	Faithful	Readable		Faithful
					Faithful											

5. If a specific audience is taken into consideration, the decisions depend on: the Genre the Medium V-SL = the Viewers' Knowledge of the SL

V-Cult = the Viewers' Knowledge of the Culture V-Age= the Viewers' Age

1st	Medium	Genre	V-Age	Genre	V-Cult	Genre	Not considered	Genre	Genre	Genre	Genre	Genre	V-Age	Genre	Genre	V-Age
2nd	Genre	Medium	Genre			V-Age			V-Age	V-Age	V-Cult	V-Age	Genre	V-Age		Genre
3rd	V-Cult										V-SL		Medium	V-SL		
4th	V-SL	V-Age									V-Age		V-SL	Medium		
5th	V-Age										Medium		V-Cult	V-Cult		

Table 14: Subjective data (third part of the questionnaire). FS (Fixed-choice Statements) in the order of priority given by the subtitlers.

4.4 Evidence of Norms

The regularities found in the answers the subtitlers gave both to the fixed-choice questions and – more significantly – to the open-ended questions can be considered as a proof of the possibility to elicit norms through this method. It has to be noted though that this has been only a first step towards this end. What the research provides is evidence of norms, which has to be verified with research in the texts themselves.

Evidence of the initial and expectancy norms

As far as *initial* norm is concerned, there seems to be a general target-oriented approach in the practice of subtitling in Greece. Emphasis is given to the knowledge of the target language as a quality of a good subtitler. The orientation towards the target text/language/culture is also shown by the fact that comprehensibility is given priority over faithfulness to the original. However, this initial norm seems to be specific to subtitling rather than governing traditional, written forms of translation. The subtitlers interviewed, made a clear distinction between subtitling and other kinds of translation, pointing out that subtitling is 'adaptation' or 'version' and not translation[38]. As we saw in section 1.1 this can be viewed as a defensive stance against the accusation of the lack of 'fullness' in subtitling. This in turn is based on the conception of subtitles as the translation of the oral original (see 2.2.1) and not of the film as a whole, which is the view adopted in this paper. The demand for 'fullness' is indicative of the concept of what translation in general should be like. In this case the indications are that the correctness notion of translation involves loyalty to the original. Nevertheless, this is only a hypothesis about the initial norm governing (written) translation in Greece, which requires further investigation if it is to be verified.

The correctness notion that seems to guide the subtitlers' decisions in Greece, in other words what they claim is expected from them, is reflected in the results of the questionnaire. They consider that they are expected to help the viewer understand the audiovisual product, by producing simple, clear subtitles which can be easily read. According to them, viewers expect to dispose of the appropriate amount of time to

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[38] An example of this view is that the Greek word *parafrasi* (paraphrase) is more adequate than *metafrasi* (translation).

receive the subtitles. In Chesterman's terms, this forms part of the *expectancy norms*. In fact, his hypothesis concerning the value behind norms seems to be proved in this study. For this scholar, "the value governing the *expectancy norms* is that of clarity, simply because clarity facilitates processing" (1997: 175). Easy processing is precisely the crucial point in subtitling. In the subtitlers' comments, it is often pointed out that the time restrictions in subtitling increase the need for clarity, and again Chesterman's assumption is confirmed: "a message has clarity to the extent that the receiver can, *within an appropriate time*, perceive the speaker's intended meaning, the speaker's intention to say something about the world and/or to produce some effect in the hearer" (ibid: 176, emphasis added).

Evidence of operational and professional norms

Operational and professional norms are directly influenced by the initial and expectancy norms. In other words, the norms governing lexical choices made during the process of translation are conditioned by the correctness notions of the translators. In the case studied here, it seems that the norms of clarity and understanding lead to the preference for simple words and uncomplicated structures whose reception is more immediate and requires less time and effort by the receiver. At least this preference is announced by the subtitlers. It remains to be seen through the study of texts, if there are regularities of behaviour that confirm these pronouncements.

The application of the expectancy norms is impeded by the space restrictions, which are subsequently viewed as the most important source of difficulty. This is because clarity often requires verbal explicitation. Restrictions do not only prohibit explicitation in the subtitles but they also require omission of elements. The ones chosen are the elements which are not indispensable for understanding (adjectives, background announcements, songs, repetitions), or the ones that are retrieved from the nonverbal visual and verbal acoustic part of the audiovisual text (names that are called, short answers like 'yes', 'no', or 'OK'). The other parts of the text, apart from the visual verbal one, also contribute to the achievement of clarity. Subtitlers do not explicitly define the audiovisual product as a text comprising verbal, nonverbal acoustic and visual elements (see section 2.1.1). There is evidence, however, that this is the underlying concept, because they always refer to the image and the sound to justify and explain their choices.

Establishment of norms

Norms of subtitling in Greece are not established from an educational institution. As we saw in the factual data few subtitlers have had training in translation courses and almost none of the interviewees have attended subtitling courses. The norm-determining authority seems to be the more experienced subtitlers, who are the ones to train new-comers (see section 3.1). The fact that written guidelines are an exception and even when there are, their existence is not necessarily known, confirms this point.

Self-perception of subtitlers

An unexpected result was the fact that almost half of the informants consider that subtitling is more difficult than other kinds of translation. It was assumed that experience would provide strategies in order to overcome the difficulties. The fact, however, that the interviewees who gave this answer do not perform other kinds of translation may indicate the subjectivity of this opinion, or the wish for the subtitling work to appear difficult, therefore important. The message here may be that for those with no experience subtitling is difficult. The sense of importance of their work is partly confirmed in the results of the data on the influence of subtitles in the success of an audiovisual product. It is thought that subtitles do influence the success of audiovisual products shown on the television where the competitiveness among the channels is high (see the example of soap-operas given in the previous section). However, this is not considered to apply to commercial films shown in the cinema. There seems to be an acceptance that these films will be successful in any case. A perception seems to prevail that bad subtitles will be criticised whereas good subtitles will not be praised.

CONCLUSIONS

Until recently, research in the translation of films and television programmes has been quite limited. The publications encountered mainly consist of anecdotal accounts based on personal experience and often defending one of the two main practices. This is not to say that systematic studies do not exist, but their number is limited. Moreover, the majority of them have been carried out within the framework of disciplines other than translation studies (e.g. linguistics or experimental psychology). Surely, audiovisual texts are relatively new forms of text production compared with oral or written texts and so is their translation. However, the lack of academic attention within translation studies is quite surprising given the amount of audiovisual translation carried out. Its importance is not only quantitative, but also qualitative, considering the impact of the mass media in culture, society and language.

A possible explanation for this delay can be found in the prevailing concept of what translation should be like. The definitions of translation are often based on the concept of required levels of equivalence. From this point of view, it has been argued that, since subtitling and dubbing do not fulfil these requirements, they are forms of adaptation rather than translation. This idea has been sustained by the practitioners themselves, who have tried to defend this practice against accusations of lack of fidelity and fullness by proclaiming that subtitling is not translation. Whatever the reason behind this view, the implication is that dubbing and subtitling have not been likely candidates for translation research.

Another relevant issue is the fact that translation studies evolved as a branch of linguistics or comparative literature. This has influenced the choice of subjects to be studied, which were mainly written texts and their translations. The development of translation studies as an independent discipline, and the subsequent broadening of the definition of translation, brought about an increase in attention to other modes of translation. As far as the interest in audiovisual translation is concerned, its growth can be seen in the increasing number of relevant research papers written, conferences organised and works published during the last decade. Yet, a significant number of them

is still characterised by the same limitations as their predecesors: lack of theoretical basis and an excessive focus on the restrictions posed by the medium.

The need to define this paper's object of study has lead to the conclusion that there are certain basic features that distinguish the audiovisual text from other kinds of texts. These involve their reception through the acoustic and visual channels and a vital presence of nonverbal elements in synchrony with verbal elements. The importance of the presence of nonverbal elements is stressed, because they are not exclusive to audiovisual texts. It has been proved that all texts contain certain nonverbal elements, since the message cannot be delivered without some sort of physical support. The difference lies in the degree of their presence, which can be represented along an axis moving from texts with a lesser degree of nonverbal elements (e.g. a novel) to ones with a higher one (e.g. a film). Another differentiating factor is that audiovisual texts appear on a screen and are characterised by a predetermined succession of moving images. Finally, the feature which distinguishes them from other texts that appear on the screen, is that they are presented as recorded material which can be reproduced in the same form.

The definition of the audiovisual text as a whole consisting of various elements has a direct effect on the approach to its translation. In general, there is a tendency to regard subtitles as translated utterances, whose source text is the spoken word. However, this view would not be a premise for their investigation. Within the framework of the present research, the target text is taken to be the translated film or programme as a whole, whereas its source text is the film or programme before its translation. Therefore, a set of subtitles, being an inseparable part of the target text, cannot be studied as an independent written text, nor can it be considered as the translation of the original 'oral text'. This may seem quite obvious, but there are a lot of studies which have not taken this aspect into consideration. Such analyses often arrive at the assumption that important elements are missing from subtitles. These include paralinguistic features, such as intonation, as well as politeness features whose absence distorts the discoursal effect. Even non-prescriptive analyses whose aim is to describe the effects of subtitling without condemning it, seem to imply that subtitles are inevitably deficient. In other words the losses in subtitling and the lack of fullness are unavoidable, an argument

which takes the discussion on translation back to the sterile debate concerning the impossibility of translation.

Undeniably, there are certain time and space restrictions which condition the translation of audiovisual texts. These constraints are due to the need for synchrony of the verbal acoustic element (words uttered) with the verbal visual one (subtitles), as well as the synchrony between them and the nonverbal acoustic (sounds, music) and visual ones (images, lip-movements). The focus on them has dominated the study of audiovisual translation, and has even led to its denomination as constrained translation. However, it can be proved that all kinds of translation are constrained in a certain way, a fact which renders the term constrained redundant. The conclusion is that a shift of focus is needed from the constraints themselves, to the way the translator manoeuvres among them.

This paper's aim has been to take a first step towards establishing the norms which guide the subtitlers' decisions in Greece. In other words, there has been an effort to approach the correctness notions according to which the choices among the infinite number of potential solutions are made. This has been done on the basis of a notion of equivalence which does not define in advance what the relation between the original and its translation should be. From this point of view, the set of relationships which distinguish appropriate from inappropriate translation is determined by norms.

It was considered that a prolific first approach to achieve this aim, would be the study of extratextual sources. More specifically it was assumed that evidence of norms could be found in the statements made by the people involved in this activity, through the use of a questionnaire. However, an indispensable step prior to this survey was the study of relevant socio-historical aspects of the practice in Greece, because of the need to contextualise it.

Possible explanations for the choice of subtitling as the main mode of audiovisual translation in Greece were found by looking at its evolution. Initially, economic factors together with the lack of technical equipment played a crucial role. Nevertheless, there were other relevant factors, including the low domestic film production, the policy of the foreign production and distribution companies combined with the lack of an explicit policy by the Greek government. Another possible reason can be found in the

establishment of the practice in the cinema which passed on to television without any basic changes. This argument is in line with evidence found in relevant research that the attitude towards dubbing and subtitling is linked with cultural habits. The recent introduction and success of dubbed soap-operas of Mexican origin in Greece seems to question this argument. However, the 'experiment' of dubbing has been applied only to this audiovisual genre and has not been extended to, say, English-speaking films, precisely because of the belief that it will not be accepted by the audience.

The example of the introduction of dubbed films in Greek television together with the increasing audience of subtitled films in Spain seems to cast doubt on the traditional division between dubbing and subtitling countries. This notwithstanding, at the moment there are still predominant practices, a fact which justifies the characterisation of Greece as a 'subtitling country'. The corollary is that subtitled films are not associated with any particular status, nor does the activity of watching them require understanding of foreign languages.

The above socio-historical factors were taken into consideration both at the preparation of the questionnaire as well as at its analysis. The conclusions arrived at in the second part of the paper concern the validity of the method itself and the choice of the most adequate type of questionnaire (open-ended versus fixed-choice questions). More significantly, though, they concern the evidence of norms.

The regularities encountered in the subtitlers' answers to the open-ended questions have been taken as a proof that norms can indeed be elicited through this method. Moreover, it was confirmed that fixed-choice questions constitute a viable method, because the results basically coincided with the ones of the open-ended questions. This observation points towards the possibility of conducting a quantitative kind of research, using a fixed-choice questionnaire for a larger sample of interviewees.

Evidence of norms was found at various levels. The overall orientation of the subtitling practice in Greece (initial norm) seems to be characterised by subscription to norms originating in the target culture. There are indications, however, that the correctness notions concerning written translation in general are of a different, source-oriented nature.

The correctness notions (expectancy norms) seem to be determined by the values of simplicity and clarity. In other words, what subtitlers state that is expected from them includes the production of simple, clear subtitles which can be easily processed. The importance given to the immediate perception of the subtitles is justified by the fact that the viewers must have sufficient time to read them as they watch the film.

The norms of clarity and understanding have a direct effect on the choices made during the process of translation (operational or professional norms), at least as shown in the statements of the subtitlers. There is a recurring preference for simple and familiar words, as well as for uncomplicated structures. Also there are regularities in the choices of omissions: they include elements whose absence will not hinder understanding, and elements that can be retrieved from the nonverbal visual and acoustic parts of the film or programme. This norm confirms the definition of the audiovisual text presented in the first part of this paper, as all its elements are taken into consideration during the process of subtitling. Moreover, the operational norms found through the questionnaire partly coincide with the normative statements found in the relevant literature.

It is stressed again that the above conclusions involve only evidence of norms. Further investigation needs to be done, if these norms are to be corroborated. A possible way to do this is the application of the questionnaire to a larger sample of interviewees. Other extratextual sources can be investigated, such as explicit (or recorded) norms found in written guidelines of the subtitling practice, which exist in some cases in Greece. Finally, the data found in this research can be contrasted to data elicited from textual sources, i.e. the subtitled films themselves.

A possible line of research includes the search for comparable norms in other countries, for instance a country with no subtitling tradition like Spain. It is assumed here, that they might be of a different nature, since the expectations of the audience may differ. Another hypothesis is that since there is no tradition in subtitling, there may be fewer regularities found in the subtitlers' statements.

The kind of conclusions presented are indicative of the present research paper's qualitative and descriptive nature. Rather than laws or absolute truths, possible

explanations have been proposed and more hypothesis have been generated, which in turn may serve as a basis for future research. The results emerging at various stages of this process could be used not only for the explanation and prediction of the way subtitles are manifested, but also in the training of subtitlers. Making the trainees aware of the existence of norms, as positive phenomena which will guide them in their decisions, can certainly prove to be of great help in the learning process.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Sample of Script: Combined Continuity and Spotting/Subtitle List

TITLE & REEL MASTERMINDS 1AB	P/26	SPOTTING LIST FOOTAGES & TITLES			
COMBINED CONTINUITY & DIALOGUE	**TITLE NO.**	**START**	**END**	**TOTAL**	**TITLE**
SCENE 127 - (CONTINUED) HELEN We will discuss this later. 532-11	1-44	530.9	532.11/	2.2	(HELEN TO OZZIE) (We'll discuss this later)
SCENE 128 - CS - HELEN MOVES L., EXITING, AS CAMERA TILTS DOWN ON MELISSA TURNING FG. HELEN Your dad (off) has the biggest deal of his life today. Let's help him. MELISSA Don't mess with the master, Captain	1-45	533.4	537.6	4.2	(HELEN TO OZZIE) (Your dad has a big deal today. Let's help him.) (a big deal : i.e., 'an important business transaction')
Moron. 541-11	1-46	537.10	541.10/	4.0	(MELISSA TO OZZIE) (Don't mess with the master, Captain Moron) (mess with the master : i.e., 'try to fool or trick the expert' - referring to herself) (Captain Moron : Mel's nickname for Ozzie)
SCENE 129 - MFS - OZZIE AS CAMERA DOLLIES IN ON HIM. OZZIE Hey...I'm boiling Babe for dinner. Deal with it. 548-08	1-47	543.10	548.6/	4.12	(OZZIE TO MELISSA) (I'm boiling Babe for dinner. Deal with it) (Babe : referring to a stuffed toy pig from the 1995 movie of the same name) (Deal with it : I.e., 'Cope with that situation')
SCENE 130 - INT. PAXTON HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY - MS - LOW ANGLE - JAKE, OZZIE'S FATHER, FINISHES A CUP OF COFFEE WHILE TALKING ON A MOBILE TELEPHONE. CAMERA CRANES UP AS HELEN ENTERS BG., FONDLING JAKE'S SHOULDERS. MT #16 FADES IN: (over above bg.) Casting by ANDREA STONE MT #16 FADES OUT. ANNOUNCER (over television) (low and indistinct - continues under following scenes and dialogue)					LABORATORY: THE FOLLOWING TITLES #1-48 THROUGH #1-64 ARE TO APPEAR IN THE UPPER ONE-THIRD OF THE FRAME TO AVOID DOUBLE-PRINTING WITH CREATIVE CREDITS.
JAKE (into telephone) Mm. That's a final bid. Yeah.	1-48	549.8	551.6	1.14	(JAKE INTO TELEPHONE TO WOMAN #1) (That's a final bid.)
					1AB - (26)

Appendix B

Sample of Script: Spotting

                    NORMAN
It comes with the territory, I'm
afraid. Uh, could I get a cup of
coffee or.../

                    ANGELA
I was in the hospital all day
yesterday and a policeman told me
that my apartment was a crime scene./

                    NORMAN
Yes, I understand. /

                    ANGELA
What do you do when a man beats your
sister for two years, then comes over
and tries to attack you?/

                    NORMAN
I don't know. /

                    ANGELA
Mary's grateful. My sister. That's
the part nobody knows. She's grate--/

                    NORMAN
Don't finish that sentence. It's
more information than I need. /

                    ANGELA
Yes, of course. I understand./
Please, Mr. Keane, tell me what to
do. /I'm lost. /

                    NORMAN
Would you mind waiting here a moment?
There's someone I'd like you to meet. /

                    ROY
Why me?

                    NORMAN
The woman needs some help, Roy. /

                    ROY
I can appreciate that, but I thought
you'd toss me a D.U.I., maybe a shop-
lifting charge on some rich guy's
daughter./ I mean, this is--

                    NORMAN
This is a shot at building your
practice.
                    (more)

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Appendix C

Code of Good Subtitling Practice by Jan Ivarsson

Subtitle Spotting and Translation

1. Subtitlers must always work with a (video, DVD, etc.) copy of the production, a copy of the dialogue list and a glossary of unusual words and special references.

2. It is the subtitler's job to spot the production and translate and write the subtitles in the (foreign) language required.

3. Translation quality must be high with due consideration of all idiomatic and cultural nuances.

4. Straightforward semantic units must be used.

5. Where compression of dialogue is necessary, the results must be coherent.

6. Subtitle text must be distributed from line to line and page to page in sense blocks and/or grammatical units.

7. As far as possible, each subtitle should be syntactically self contained.

8. The language register must be appropriate and correspond with the spoken word.

9. The language should be (grammatically) "correct" since subtitles serve as a model for literacy.

10. All important written information in the images (signs, notices, etc.) should be translated and incorporated wherever possible.

11. Given the fact that many TV viewers are hearing-impaired, "superfluous" information, such as names, interjections from the off, etc., should also be subtitled.

12. Songs must be subtitled where relevant.

13. Obvious repetition of names and common comprehensible phrases need not always be subtitled.

14. The in- and out-times of subtitles must follow the speech rhythm of the film dialogue, taking cuts and sound bridges into consideration.

15. Language distribution within and over subtitles must consider cuts and sound bridges; the subtitles must underline surprise or suspense and in no way undermine it.

16. The duration of all subtitles within a production must adhere to a regular viewer reading rhythm.

17. Spotting must reflect the rhythm of the film.

18. No subtitle should appear for less than one second or, with the exception of songs, stay on the screen for longer than seven seconds.

19. The number of lines in any subtitle must be limited to two.

20. Wherever two lines of unequal length are used, the upper line should preferably be shorter to keep as much of the image free as possible and in left justified subtitles in order to reduce unnecessary eye movement.

21. There must be a close correlation between film dialogue and subtitle content; source language and target language should be synchronised as far as possible.

22. There must be a close correlation between film dialogue and the presence of subtitles.

23. Each production should be edited by a reviser/editor.

24. The (main) subtitler should be acknowledged at the end of the film or, if the credits are at the beginning, then close to the credit for the script writer.

25. The year of subtitle production and the copyright for the version should be displayed at the end of the film.

Technical Aspects

1. Subtitles should be highly legible with clear lettering and a font which is easy to read. The characters should have sharp contours and be stable on the screen.

1. The position of subtitles should be consistent, e.g.
   a) centred for film applications;
   b) left-justified or centred for TV and video applications; *
   c) two-person dialogue in one subtitle should be left justified or left-centred; individual speakers should be indicated by a dash at the beginning of each line.

2. In video applications, character clarity can be enhanced by a drop shadow or a semi-transparent or black box behind the subtitles.

3. In laser subtitling, sharp contours and removal of residual emulsion can be achieved by precise alignment of laser beam focus and accurate adjustment of power output.

4. In laser subtitling, the base line must be set accurately for the aspect ratio of the film.

5. The number of characters per line must be compatible with the subtitling system and visible on any screen.

6. Due to the different viewer reading times and the different length of lines for TV/video/DVD and film subtitles, TV/video/DVD subtitles should be adapted for film application and vice versa.

* With the globalisation of broadcasting, subtitled television and video programmes are often shown not only on domestic channels. Many broadcasting stations world-wide still transmit their programmes with a logo in the lower left-hand corner, which inevitably covers the first couple of characters of all left-justified subtitles. Furthermore, at video festivals video productions are usually projected on large screens. It is easier to read subtitles on large screens if they are centred rather than left-justified.

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