RECEPTION STUDIES and AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION: CONCEPTS and METHODS [i]

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Abstract: For a long time, the focus in Translation Studies has been on the product (translation) and then on the process (translating). But the production cannot be separated from the distribution and the reception of the output, especially in a target-oriented perspective of translation. How to deal with the reception of audiovisual translation (AVT) when so many variables and parameters must be taken into consideration? Concepts and methodological tools have recently been developed to cope with the diversity of settings and viewers. Different empirical/experimental studies bring new insights in reception, whatever their shortcomings are.

Keywords: accessibility, AVT, censorship, quality, reception the 3 Rs.

1. Introduction

Audiovisual translation (AVT) has been studied so far within a pragmatic or sociological perspective, sometimes with a political, historical angle, very rarely from the point of view of the history of cinema, and now within a psycho-cognitive approach thanks to reception.

Audiences have always held a prominent position in debates − theoretical, methodological, pragmatic − related to texts and their enjoyment. This has been especially true of texts conceived for specific readership, such as drama plays, children's books, advertising material, tourist brochures and, more recently, audiovisual products. From issues of comprehension to appreciation, critique, and taste, and from the age of Cicero – a Roman politician and lawyer and a famous orator and prose stylist (106BC-43BC), to the days of social media and viral content, audiences have been truly pivotal. However, studies on audience reception in relation to translation, especially within the realm of media, have only recently started to develop on a regular basis. Audiences are, in themselves, indeed difficult to define, let alone identify. More precisely, media audiences often cannot be seen at all, as consumption of media texts very frequently happens in private settings that can hardly be handled for research purposes.

The definition and the study of audiences are thus influenced by several factors, including modes of consumption, fast-changing technology [ii] (soliciting more and more our attention), ever-shifting viewing habits (associated with cultural attitudes, expectations, values, assumptions, empathy), small to huge audience composition, etc.

Changes in modes of consumption and technology have led, over slightly more than a decade, to an unforeseen surge in agency and interactivity on the part of audiences. Having generally been passive spectators, whose reaction to, and reception of, media content often remained on a small-scale level, today viewers can express their opinions on social media in a matter of seconds, and thus determine the success or

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failure of a film, TV programmes, web series, etc. Moreover, the advent of on-demand television and online streaming services, for instance, has radically changed the mode and time of media consumption and has steadily placed agency and creativity in the hands of users. Today, media content can be created, shared, modified, customized and, of course, it can also be translated. Individuals or entire communities of fans have increasingly engaged in volunteer forms of AVT, for example by fostering the use of online, collective platforms for translation production.

Thus, the empowerment of end users, in all its forms, has shaken and stirred the very notion of audience, with an increasing difficulty in marking the boundary between media and translation producers and consumers.

2. A dynamic research field: Audiovisual translation (AVT)

For a better understanding of the place and the challenges related to AVT, let us draw a map of the development of AVT over the last three decades. Reception here falls under "accessibility", assumed in its broad meaning, i.e., aiming at all kinds of audiences and not only people who experience disabilities (see section 2.1).
Few explanations are now needed:

1) "*Products*" refers to publications focusing on "problems" (humour, swearwords, terms of address, discourse markers, language register, cultural items, etc.) and/or "constraints" (impact of the oral code, genres, space, and time constraints, etc.)
2) "*Process*" includes studies on strategies, norms, conventions, the translator's voice, technical constraints, from script writing to dialogue, interplay visual/sound/verbal, etc.
3) "*Technology*" in AVT has changed and is changing the AV landscape: many research projects deal now with automation and its impacts on productivity and quality, on working conditions, fees, ethics, copyrights, etc. but also on digitization and transformations in production, distribution, broadcasting, etc.
4) Under "***effects***", we refer to studies on reading skills, reading habits, language learning, stereotypes, etc.

The four different subfields in the figure imply certain types of research approaches and/or tools. Thus, *Language policy* can offer historical, political, economic, commercial perspectives while *Descriptive studies* means linguistic, pragmatic, narratological, cognitive, multimodal, imagological perspectives and case studies. With *Accessibility,* we have ea. socio-cultural, ethnographic perspectives. And *Applied Research* means technical, professional, legal, educational perspectives.

Nevertheless, and despite the amount of the studies, there are "holes" in the map; in other words, certain aspects are still missing or are underdeveloped:

- ❑ Corpus
- ❑ Psychosomatic approach of the subtitler
- ❑ History of AVT
- ❑ English as a pivot language
- ❑ Sociolinguistic role of the translator
- ❑ Processing images
- ❑ Theoretical references/frameworks

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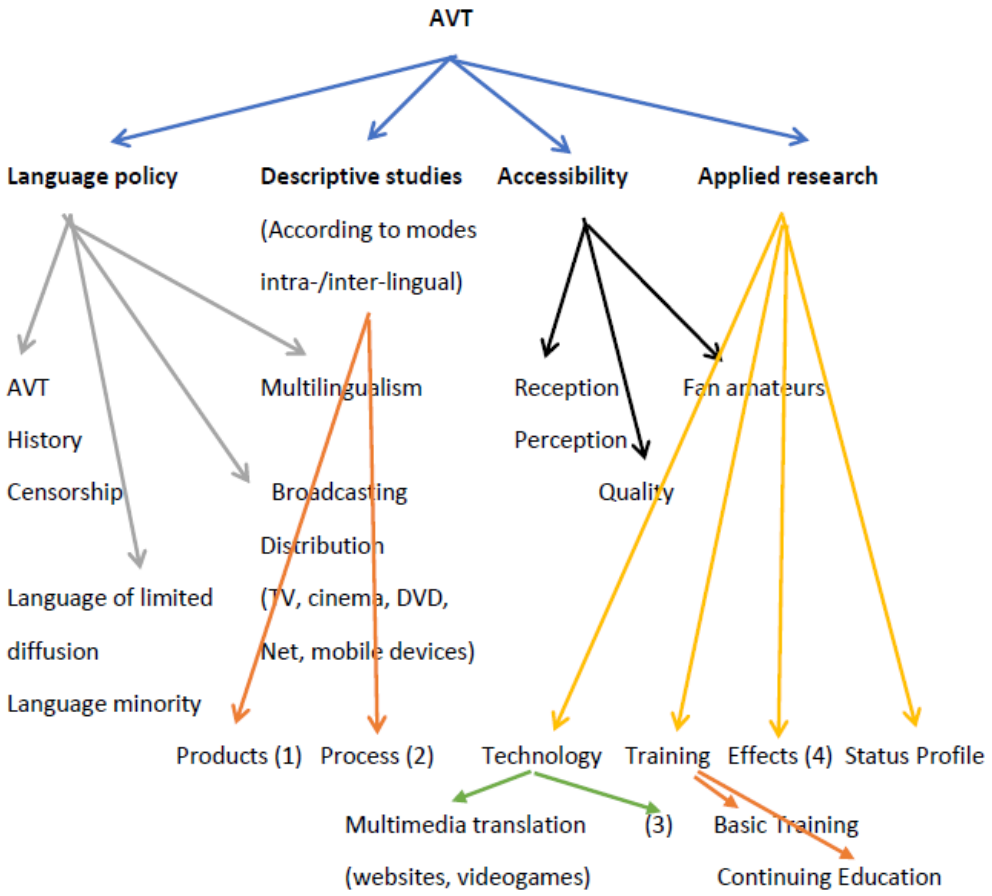


Figure 1: A map of AVT

Now, if we consider the practice of AVT, the past decade has brought about incredible changes besides those mentioned above: the total digitalization of working materials, to mention but one, has led to tighter deadlines, increased precision, new competences. New modes of consumption for translated media, along with end users' empowerment as has been outlined above, have also led to variations in the distribution of AVT techniques worldwide, for example by making the traditional division between dubbing and subtitling countries increasingly blurred and insufficient to account for today's complex consumption map. Suffice it to think of videogames, where revoicing and subtitling are frequently combined, or the multiple versions simultaneously available of the same product in different translated versions across platforms.

Notwithstanding all the variables in the production and consumption of translated and accessible audiovisual products today, reception is steadily coming to the fore in academic research. Although still relatively young and unsystematic, reception studies in AVT have already been contributing to the expansion and maturity of the

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discipline. AVT research has increasingly aimed to explore the *before* and *after* of audiovisual products, i.e., the linguistic, socio-cultural, and cognitive processes involved in the creation of these products as well as the forms and modes of consumption and reception.

The study of AVT reception does not aim to analyse viewers' response with commercial interests in mind. Rather, it is an endeavour to understand why a given film shot in a precise setting, a national or international TV series, a culture-bound video game – all translated in several languages – are understood, appreciated, dismissed by local audiences across the globe.

In order to better encompass what is done today in reception of AVT products, we will define the basic concepts of AV programmes, the ambiguities of perception and reception, and the concept of audience and viewer before proposing a three-type model of reception. The final section examines adjacent concepts that may shed light on reception in AVT.

3. Reception and AVT

This section aims at framing AVT: some basic concepts are recalled, namely the types of viewers, the kinds of settings, formats and genres, and accessibility. Finally, a more precise definition of reception is proposed in relation to AVT.

3.1 Types of viewers and settings

The complexity of an AV product must be kept in mind when you want to study reception. The meaning of a film, a TV program is made of a set of interrelated semiotic signs (Gambier, 2013). Besides, what about the viewers? Let us consider two specific groups, first the deaf and hard of hearing who may have access to audiovisual content by means of intralingual subtitling (or closed caption). There are different types of hearing impairment. The deaf are not a uniform, homogeneous group. The extent, type, and the age of onset of deafness vary widely among individuals. This means that different groups of deaf consumers have very different language and communication needs which must be understood and taken into consideration. We can differentiate between deafness in one ear and in both ears, temporary deafness, profound deafness and partial deafness, deafness by birth, by accident, because of medicines (hearing loss due to prescribed drugs) or certain diseases, because of a degenerating process and age. As people continue to live longer, the problem is here to stay. All these explain why the deaf and hard of hearing do not have the same command of language, or the same development of speech. Some become deaf after they have acquired an understanding of spoken language and they retain some speech ability; some have learnt how to read well before they became deaf or hard of hearing; some have poor reading skills but a good command of a sign language. In other words, some can do lip reading, others finger reading, sign reading, reading a moving text (that is, captioning), or a static text (print). We could add to the deaf people those who have tinnitus (ringing or buzzing in the ears), which creates hearing problems. What do the deaf and HH want when they watch TV, a video, or go to the cinema? It has been found that some of the deaf and hard of hearing could not tolerate complex background noise such as applause; some stated that signing distracted them from reading subtitles; others said that breakdowns and freezes in the subtitles were too frequent. Technology (DVD, teletext, DVB and the Internet) allows for changes and a better service adapted to specific audiences. But how do providers of such services make decisions relating to intralingual subtitling when there are different

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subgroups of the hearing impaired, with specific needs and expectations? Sometimes intralingual subtitles are a straightforward reproduction of what is said, as if the hearing impaired can be assumed to read faster than "ordinary" viewers. The second group, the sight-impaired, faces similar challenges.

Audio description is a kind of double dubbing in interlingual transfer for the blind and visually impaired: it involves the reading of information describing what is shown on the screen (action, body language, facial expressions, costumes, etc.), which is added to the sound track of the dubbing of the dialogue, with no interference from sound and music effects. By analogy, we have the oral comments given through a headset to the blind attending a theatre performance. Who can benefit from audio description? The term 'blind' is widely used to imply a total loss of vision, but the blind can have some sight, depending upon the nature of the disability which gave rise to their visual impairment. This can range from loss of central vision due to muscular degeneration, to tunnel vision due to glaucoma, retinal detachment, diabetes, etc. The blind and visually impaired need different levels of detail and content in audio descriptions. Most forms of visual disability occur through a progressive degeneration of sight; in this case, the blind have a visual memory. People born blind have no such visual memory to draw upon; hence, they have little or no interest in the colour of someone's hair, description of their clothing, etc. Elderly people can find that audio-description helps them to better understand the plot. There is, therefore, a variety of backgrounds among blind audiences: some will remember TV and films and may be familiar with cinema terminology; others will have no experience of the audiovisual media, the describer for them being a storyteller; many will not understand terms like close-up, mid-shot, long shot, back angle, etc. Some surveys reveal that some genres such as drama, movies, wildlife programmes and documentaries benefit more from the provision of audio-description than news and game shows which have sufficient spoken content to allow the blind and visually impaired to follow what is happening without assistance. Just as with sighted audiences and the deaf and hard of hearing, the needs and wishes of the visually impaired are not homogeneous. Again, technology can offer a better and more versatile range of services.

Having described two groups (the hearing and sight impaired), it is easy to realise that different variables related to viewers are to be taken into consideration if and when reception is to be studied: age, sex, education background, reading skill, reading habits, reading rate, oral and reading comprehension in one's mother tongue, frequency and volume of AVT consumption, AVT habits (opinion and preference), command of foreign languages, degree of hearing loss, age of onset of hearing loss, type of language of daily use, etc. This list does not include the multiple types of viewers: children, teenagers, students, middle-aged people, elderly people (all classified according to age), young educated adults, intellectuals, managers and professionals, employees and workers with different levels of qualifications, the middle classes (according to socio-economic parameters), monolingual or multilingual viewers, migrants (according to language proficiency), etc. Also to be added here are fans who, in an unsolicited way, subtitle films and TV series that they want to watch as soon as possible after they are released: fansubbers or user-centred participants are blurring the lines between consumers, users and fans, in other words both using and creating the content online and therefore shaping "expectancy norms" (Chesterman, 1993) at the same time as they produce their own translation (Jiménez-Crespo 2017).

Two further elements are worth mentioning. One is the different kinds of settings and AV formats that AVT can be used in cinemas for feature-length and short films,

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television channels (including specialised, thematic, local and regional and international channels [iii]), outdoor screens, DVDs, the Internet (websites, You Tube, etc.), mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets, theatres, museums, etc. Video-streaming, video on demand, podcasting and portable players (mobile phones, iPods, etc.) are creating new demands and new needs, such as new formats, an example being very short films lasting only a few minutes (we already have *mobisodes*, or series for mobile phones lasting one or two minutes). These new formats could place more emphasis on the role of close-ups and soundtrack, thus granting more importance to dubbing. The fourth element is the variation of AV genres (news, interviews, fiction, documentaries, docudramas, TV series, sitcoms, animation, cartoons, children's programmes, drama performances, operas, musicals, advertising, commercial videos, trailers, video-clips, computer games, webpages, etc.). When variables such as age, education and types of AV formats and genres are crossed, one generates complex grids: cinemagoers are usually young, educated and computer literate, while TV viewers can be children as well as elderly people.

The final concept to refer to is accessibility. For a number of years accessibility has been a legal and technical issue in various countries and for the European Union [iv], with a view to ensuring that disabled persons can enjoy physical access to transport, facilities, and cultural venues. Recently, accessibility has also become an important issue in the computer and telecommunications industries and in information technology, the aim being to optimise the user-friendliness of software, websites, and other applications.[v] Accessibility allows anybody to achieve specific goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specific context of use, and allows communication to go beyond any social, cognitive, age, gender divide and mental, sensory, physical impairment. The distribution of AV media is also involved in this trend, since it is important to cater for the needs of user groups such as the deaf, older people with sight problems, etc. (Di Giovanni 2011). Advances in language technology mean that audiobooks, set-top boxes, DVDs, tactile communication, sign language interpreting and other systems are now complemented by more recent introductions such as voice recognition, and oral subtitles (subtitles read by text-to-speech software). This social dimension of AVT services demands a better knowledge of viewers' needs, reading habits, and reception capacity. Accessibility is a key word in AVT, not only as a legal and technical issue but also as a concept that shakes up the dominant way of assessing the quality of a translation (see section 3). It may cover a variety of features, including:

- **Acceptability**, related to language norms, stylistic choices, rhetorical patterns, and terminology.
- **Legibility** defined (for subtitling) in terms of font, position of the subtitles and subtitle rate.
- **Readability**, also defined for subtitling in terms of reading rates, reading habits, text complexity, semantic load, shot changes and speech rates, etc.
- **Synchronicity**, defined (for dubbing, voice-over, and free commentary) as appropriateness of the speech to lip movements, of the utterance in relation to the non-verbal elements, of what is said to what is shown (pictures), etc.
- **Relevance,** in terms of what information is to be conveyed, deleted, added, or clarified in order not to increase the cognitive effort involved in listening or reading.

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3.2 Reception: the 3 Rs

Before clarifying the concept of reception, a few words must be written on the pair of terms 'audience'/ and 'viewers'. The 'audience' is a collective entity, out there; it can be local, national, or transnational. It is identifiable and elusive, imaginable, and unpredictable (Brooker & Jermyn 2003; Staiget, 2005; Takahashi, 2010; Nightingale, 2013). Cinema right from the beginning in 1895 was considered to be a collective public event: that is, it has its own characteristics as a show in front of an audience. Before the brothers Lumière created cinema, there were already technical devices able to show animated images but only for one or two persons. The concept of 'audience' includes different types of viewers: citizens, consumers [vi], fans, users, retired people, children, gays, females, etc., all with different viewing practices [vii]. There are different models of audience influenced by social classes, ethnicity, national culture, age, gender, and/or linked to global formats or local content. Audience research (first in TV studies) focused on the influence or effects of certain features, for example the impact of violence on young audiences, the material conditions of reception, etc. It also studied, and still does, audience ratings, box office figures, statistics of distribution flows, considering the audience as a kind of market, as if the audience was only consuming and being influenced by TV's outputs in a social environment. Interest here has typically been motivated by the need to support programme planners and to attract advertisers. Today, audience studies have enlarged their scope, and include, for instance, audience interest and attitude towards TV series across different cultures (see the journals: *Participations*; *Reception*).

Viewers (or spectators) are embodied individuals, or a group of individuals, with their subjectivities and personal identities, impacted by the aural, visual, and emotional elements of a film or TV programme. Studies can be carried out on their satisfaction (in relation to the quality of translation) and their evaluation (in relation to their comfort). From this perspective, cinema is more an individualised experience, taking place in various temporal, geographical, social and technical settings. Today, the boundaries between public and private, local and global, digital and real worlds are becoming increasingly blurred. The data collected from viewers raise the issue of their representativeness: How do we go from viewers' beliefs and comprehension to those of the audience's attitudes? Further, it is difficult to assign a single cause to viewers' behaviour and audience reaction since many factors can have an influence in contextualised studies.

What about the pair of terms 'perception' and 'reception'? Perception could be defined as what is impressed on the eyes when watching a film and the way in which viewers represent the viewing act: how they think they watch a film, how they believe they apprehend the viewing process. Perception is made of opinions and impressions and varies over time. Studying reception means to investigate the way(s) in which AV products/ performances are processed, consumed, absorbed, accepted, appreciated, interpreted, understood and remembered by the viewers, under specific contextual /socio-cultural conditions and with their memories of their experience as cinema going. See, for instance, De Linde & Key 1999, Caffrey 2009, Künzli & Ehrensberger-Dow 2011, Lavaur & Bairnstow 2011, Tuominen 2012, Romero 2015, Perego 2016, O'Hagan & Sasamoto 2016, Miquel Iriarte 2017, etc. In other words, reception studies in AVT seek to describe and explain what viewers do with the AV products that they are watching or that they have watched, and also the role that AVT plays in the circulation of foreign-language films or how the presence of AVT influences choices about film viewing and

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cinema attendance. Do translations direct reception and how? But how should one understand and measure reception with such a broad variety of recipients?

Reception must be clarified because there are differences, for instance, between the impact of a translation upon reception and the effects (i.e., the response of the viewers) of the translation. Three types of reception (3 Rs) can be differentiated (Kovačič 1995; Chesterman 1998: 219-222 and 2007:179-180; Gambier 2009):

1. ***Response*** or the perceptual decoding (legibility of conventional and creative or aesthetic subtitling (Fox 2016)) So far, the "response" has been mostly investigated by experimental psychologists, who have given answers to questions such as: How is attention distributed between images and subtitles? Do we read subtitles word-for-word? Can viewers avoid reading subtitles? When do they start re-reading the subtitles?
2. ***Reaction*** or the psycho-cognitive issue (readability): What shared knowledge must be assumed by all the partners to allow efficient communication? What is the inference process when watching a subtitled programme? To what extent is there comprehension of the translation, for example the condensed information in subtitles? The answers to these questions have consequences for translation strategies. The greater the viewers' processing effort, the lower the relevance of the translation (Kruger, 2017).

– ***Repercussion***, understood both as an attitudinal issue (what are the viewers' preferences and habits regarding the mode of AVT?), and the sociocultural dimension of the non-TV context which influences the receiving process (what are the values, the ideology transmitted in the AV programmes?)

3.3 Empirical research in AVT reception

What kind of research and methodology can be used for response and reaction? Different variables (Chesterman 1998: 204-208) must be taken into account:

– Sociological variables (population to be tested): age, gender, level of education, reading aptitudes, command of foreign languages and hearing /sight difficulties (see section 2.1)
– AV variables (corpus): broadcasting time, types of TV channels (public/commercial), film genre and interplay of images/dialogue.

These variables could be correlated with a range of features, such as:

– The space-time characteristics of subtitles: lead times (in/out time) or presentation speed, exposure time, subtitle rate, lag or delay between speech and subtitles, number of shot changes, position (left/centre justification), length, type and size of font.
– Textual parameters (semantic coherence, syntactic complexity, text segmentation, lexical density and lexical frequency).
– Para-textual features (such as punctuation).

The focus of research could be on the viewers: What are the cognitive processes activated at the moment of watching an AV product? (Kruger & Liao, 2022). Surveys using questionnaires, interviews, group discussions or keystrokes can be used to elicit viewers' feedback and assessments related to opinions or perceptions of subtitled programmes. An experimental method can also be used to better control the medium's variables (by manipulating the subtitles), in order to obtain data on the effects of particular subtitling features on reading speed, time lag, attention distribution, etc.

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(Greco, Jankowska & Szarkowska, 2022). For instance, what are children's reactions to reading pace? Is the complexity of a subtitle in relation to programme type? What are the consequences of speed watching (the viewer can watch more series in less time). A third approach is possible: controlled experimental procedures – to control both the medium and the form of the viewers' response. Such procedures are designed to record actual motor behaviour and then analyse optical pauses, pace of reading, line-breaks, presentation time, re-reading, degrees and types of attention (active/passive, global/selective, linear/partial), depending on whether the focus is on the image (iconic attention), on the plot (narrative attention) or on the dialogue (verbal attention). Here, pupillometry (pupil dilatation), eye tracking, Ikonikat [viii], and bio-logging (heartbeats) are useful.

The focus of research might be on the translator (subtitler) as a key viewer. There are at least three possibilities.

- ***Observation*** (in situ): What is the behaviour of the translator while producing (performing) subtitles (the somatic dimension of the work, since rhythm is a key element in subtitling: rhythm of the action, rhythm of the dialogues and rhythm of the reading). The risks are the researcher's own subjective judgment, the difficulty scale and measuring what is observed.
- ***Interviewing*** **and/or** ***questionnaires,*** to investigate personal attitudes (to obtain data about translation decisions, the personal representation of the targeted audiences, etc.)
- ***Think aloud protocol*** (TAP) and/or ***eye tracking*** (combined or not).

If the focus of the research is on the output, the following can be used:

- ***Corpus design***: still rare in AVT because of the problem of compilation (need for high memory capacity), the problem of representativeness, the problem of copyright, and the problem of transcription: a tool such a Multimodality Concordance Analysis (MCA) has so far been more useful for video clips and still images (ads) than for feature-length films.
- ***Content analysis***: for example, the study of different translations into the same language, different translations of the same film into different languages or for different media (TV, DVD); analysis of certain emotions (anger, fear, disgust, sadness, etc.), culture specific items, linguistic variation, humour, etc.; and possible regularities in the dialogues: if there are predictable elements, their translation could be automatised.

To sum up, quantitative and qualitative approaches or a multimethod approach can be used, with a combination of sources, data, and possible triangulation.

4. Reception and adjacent concepts

In a model of communication in which there is a constant, direct or indirect interplay between senders and addresses, some adjacent concepts should not be forgotten. Three connected concepts can shed light on reception in relation to AVT research.

Language policy**:** for sociolinguists, language policy has been relevant in understanding language change, language rights, language minorities and language processes such as creolisation and language standardisation. In the past, 'policy' has been understood in the narrow sense of language status and corpus planning, in relation to state authorities managing language education, linguistic laws, terminology, spelling reforms, etc., as if native speakers and language users have nothing to say about this.

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Today, besides language managements, language policy would include language practices, language beliefs and (overt or covert) translation policy. This means that to cope with a multilingual setting, different strategies are possible, beyond translation and interpreting: we can learn foreign languages, use active or passive bilingualism, switch or mix languages, resort to a lingua franca, etc. In any case, the solution is not top-down but a negotiation between participants (Who decides what? Who calls for interpreters? Who pays? etc.) Language and translation policy are not reduced to official public domains. They also structure international meetings, media, publishing houses, business firms and cultural events. Thus managers, organisers and planners need to know both sides of the communication – headquarters and subsidiaries, vendors and consumers, local workers and expatriates, artists, and spectators, etc. Languages are not only discrete tools but also, and primarily, allow social activities in which different stakeholders are involved with their needs, interests, and expectations.

Censorship and self-censorship also play a role in the reception of any translated event, especially if censorship is not limited to the suppression or prohibition of speech or writing by a political or religious institution, on behalf of sexual morality, political orthodoxy, racist considerations, etc. Censorship can depend on ideological, cultural, and economic circumstances (Gambier, 2002; forthcoming) – when explicit criteria or implicit norms impose what is acceptable or unacceptable to read, watch, or translate. Often, translators, according to their options or different types of pressure from the publisher or the film distributor, exercise an indeterminate series of self-censorship(s) (or betrayals?) in order to safeguard their status or their socio-personal environment. In an era of globalised fake news, and viral rumours, self-censorship is not set to disappear, along the lines of an individual ethics and attitude towards religion, sexuality, (in)decency, (im)politeness, truth, family, disability, drugs, etc. Self-censorship can include forms of elimination of insults/blasphemies/and taboo words, distortion, downgrading, paraphrasing, mis-adjustment, biased translation and omission of swear words or sex-related terms. The manipulation may result from preventive or repressive censorship or self-censorship (in the media or on the Internet) at the hands of a censor, translator, editor, or reviser. Translation and (self-) censorship have been the topic of several conferences and publications in the last twenty years. Again, what is worth mentioning here, in relation to reception, is that self-censorship can apply to verbal or non-verbal elements (tobacco and drinks omitted in certain films) and require decisions regarding the interaction between senders and viewers.

The third concept is the ***quality of a translation***. If the focus is not exclusively on the authors' intentions and the text, but also encompasses the readers, the quality of the output can no longer be defined only by a comparison of the target text with the source text. The same applies to the multi-functional and multimodal nature of AV texts in the complexities that derive from context and reception (see section 2.1). Translation quality assessment in TS has been considered through many different lenses: with error analysis, in a retrospective (comparing with the ST) or prospective way (measuring the effect), by lateral assessment (comparing with non-translated parallel texts or against expectancy norms), or according to international standards, such as ISO 17100 (2015), which sets up a quality control system for the process which involves different participants: the client, the language service provider, the translator, the reviser, etc. In that respect, quality is neither based solely on textual features nor on the translator alone. It is the result of a network of committed stakeholders (Abdallah, 2012). In AVT, that means the quality of subtitles (for instance) is linked, among other criteria, to the

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working conditions, the purpose of the work and the targeted viewers, with their reading habits and expectations. In their real or virtual network, commissioners (be they private local or multinational AVT companies, public TV broadcasting companies, non-governmental organisations, associations, private firms, or festival events), distributors, freelance or in-house translators, and viewers are in an asymmetrical relationship, with different competences, objectives, resources and interests, where trust is at stake, involving delays, costs, and codes of good practices.

5. Concluding remarks

There is a risk in a too strong recipient-oriented practice: the product or performance may become so domesticated that the output is like that with which viewers are already familiar. If the needs, expectations, and preferences of the targeted viewers shape the adaptation of the source text (including images, which can be technically manipulated as well) into complete domestication, going as far as censoring dialogues, changing parts of the plot to conform to target-culture ideological drives and aesthetic norms, what is then the function of the translation, the role of the translator? If to translate is to reproduce, imitate fully the target norms and conventions and become a tool of the protectionist use of culture, erasing traces of the foreign voice, why translate at all?

Remaking is an intriguing case in this perspective: if a film is completely recontextualised according to the values, ideology, and narrative conventions of the new target culture, do we have a translation or a local production which has sucked the lifeblood from a foreign production? From *La cage aux folles* to *The birdcage*, from *Trois hommes et un couffin* to *Three men and a baby*, from *Les fugitifs* to *Three fugitives,* from *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis* to *Benvenuti al Sud*, are we facing a translation process or a new production derived from another one – as creation has always been: a hybrid process with different influences and filiations? Does translation promote conformism or open us up to differences? With the democratisation of knowledge and practice via the Internet intertwined with existing social demands, the question is not neutral. It is a socio-ethical challenge.

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[i] Sections of this paper were previously published in E.Di Giovanni and Y. Gambier (eds): *Reception Studies and Audiovisual Translation*, J. Benjamins, 2018. I acknowledge the publisher who kindly granted me permission to reproduce parts of the article.
[ii] The technology impacts as well the different settings where we can watch AV products: cinema theatre, computer, TV, DVD, mobile device/smart phone, museum, theatre, etc.
[iii] Thematic channels on history, finance, etc., use specific terminology and rhetoric. Local and regional channels might use dialects. International channels, such as TV%, BBC4, Deutsch Welle, RT (ex-Russia Today), Euronews, Arte, are aiming at various audiences either speaking the same language or sharing the same interests; they often broadcast 24-hour news; their audiences do not necessarily constitute simple interpretive communities.
[iv] Between 1985 and 2017, the EU, which has signed the United Nation's Convention on he Rights of Persons with Disabilities, has provided several texts on accessibility (the most recent being ECA 2017-Destinations for All (ECA stands for European Concept for Accessibility). A European Disability Strategy has also been adopted for 2010-2020.
[v] The first and best-known movement to co-ordinate a set of guidelines for accessibility for the Web is the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).
[vi] Consumption is not necessarily confined to reading. The consumers may move on a variety of levels (Bourdieu 1971, 1979): they can consume integral literary texts or excerpts directly. They can also consume indirectly, such as literary fragments digested and transmitted in an anthology, a selection of texts, idioms, allusions, etc., or during an autograph session, a book fair or festival.
[vii] Platforms, such as Netflix, tend to use consumers (instead of audience), content (instead of programmes), amount of minutes in front of the screen (instead of success/failure).
[viii] With Ikonat, viewers are asked to show the area of a picture on a tablet which have drawn their attention. The viewers are active, without using language.

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