FILMS, ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract: The world of movies offers a more authentic approach to communication than traditional learning materials. The movies are a rich source of everyday expressions that can be used in the student/student environment; and they can also increase motivation to complete a task by making the flow of the lesson more engaging and enjoyable, thus generating more meaningful and communicative participation. According to an article published by the journal Theory and Practice in Language Studies, students who explore movies are more motivated, which enhances their learning in four aspects: language skills, authenticity, autonomous learning, and culture. Participants in the study demonstrated significant gains in fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary, including improvements in their writing skills through the use of subtitles (Albiladi and Abdeen, 2018). Thus, films are an authentic representation of how a language is used in real life, because they show language as it is spoken in everyday situations.

Keywords*:* traditional learning, movie, motivation, authenticity, culture

1. Introduction

The world of films offers a more authentic approach to communication than traditional learning materials. Movies are a rich source of everyday expressions that can be used in the university/college environment; and they can also increase motivation by removing the 'obligation' to complete a task and making the flow of the lesson more engaging and enjoyable, thus generating more meaningful and communicative participation.

With a long and complex history, films have succeeded in capturing the public's interest from the moment they first appeared, not only as a form of entertainment, but also as cultural and linguistic ambassadors of their countries of origin.

That is why in the present study we considered it essential to make a brief incursion into the defining moments of this multivalent art and its didactic role that it has gained over time, being considered a relevant educational support.

2. From the history of movies

The advent of cinema was a world first. In 1895, the Lumière brothers pioneered the art and presented what was the first movie in the history of cinema in Paris. Although it was a simple, everyday scene of workers leaving the factory, it captured people's interest with its novelty: the absence of actors on a stage like a theater, in natural settings. It was the beginning of a great discovery that would gradually become a great entertainment industry present in our daily lives.

Although for a long-time cinematography meant presenting images of actors without sound, they succeeded in conveying to the audience and capturing their attention and interest in the new art that was to develop steadily. Actors such as Charlie Chaplin, for example, maintained the standard of silent cinema, so that viewers laughed at the movies until they could accompany the images with sound.

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Figure1. A Dog's Life (1918)

To establish the emergence of sound cinema, history has imposed a conventional date October 6/1927, the day of the premiere of The Jazz Singer, as the beginning of a new era. But the truth is that the use of sound began many years before. Of course, Edison was one of the first to use a phonograph, another of his inventions, to accompany images, although the result was far from convincing.

In 1902 Gaumont was already using the chronophon as a synchronization system, and in 1921 Lee de Forest developed the phonofilm, which was exhibited as a curiosity at traveling fairs. In 1926, Warner patented the vitaphone (the process used to reproduce the soundtrack in movies consisted of recording separately on disks), which he used to set Don Juan to music, and a year later he went a step further with The Jazz Singer, which was in reality still a silent film with spoken and musical intervals.



Figure 2. The Jazz Singer (1927)

All these attempts and, of course, successes, as we have the current testimony, led to the emergence and at the same time to the development of the sound movie, which was to become the most common form of entertainment for both children and adults.

3. Films during the communist period in Romania

In our country, during the communist period, television broadcasting time was quite short, especially for foreign films. That's why the public was looking forward to the program called Telecinemateca to be able to enjoy once a week movie produced in other countries such as France, America or other productions, which in addition to unique images could delight the audience with foreign languages rarely used and heard then commonly.

However, it was only after the 1989 revolution that it was confirmed what many may have guessed, that television censorship was an essential element far more important than the coherence of the audiovisual images to be broadcast.

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The censorship applied at that time affected the translation of foreign audiovisual texts, of course, but also the work of professionals in this discipline and constituted a strong ideological network which, beyond the prohibition of broadcasting programs with a taboo subject, tried, and almost succeeded, to indoctrinate the Romanian population.

Of all types of censorship, audiovisual censorship has an enormous impact, given the large number of potential viewers of audiovisual texts, both original and translated, and all the more so when the country has only one television channel manipulated by political power, as has happened in Romania. Therefore, it can be considered a powerful tool to achieve the goal that the institutions and agencies that adopt the role of censors set themselves.

Romania is a country that uses subtitling for the translation of foreign films. In this type of audiovisual translation, censorship affects the quality and verisimilitude of the target text, as well as the professionalism of the translator in front of the viewer who knows the original language. Moreover, due to the viewer's ignorance of the translation process and rules, the "guilt" of everything that differs from the source text and the translation is attributed to the translator.

In the last period of the dictatorship considered after 1970, there were specific guidelines for the content of the films that were decided to be televised or screened in cinemas, and an exhaustive control was exercised over them, as the translator and film critic Irina Margareta Nistor stated for *Adevărul* newspaper (Iulia Roșu, 2013) " All that opulence was disappearing. In Dallas, for example, the pool scenes were shortened and family conflict was emphasized. "

In this way, distorting the story of the movie and the translation by omitting or reducing scenes, the viewer was conveyed the possible negative influences of other value systems, completely changing the message of the movie.

In general, this manipulation is almost always visible, especially in the case of subtitling, since it is a more vulnerable form of audiovisual translation than dubbing (Díaz Cintas, 2003: 43-44), as the viewer is confronted with the original version and the translated text.

On the other hand, the territorial isolation affected not only the viewers who benefited from the finished audiovisual translation product, but also the professionals who carried out the translation process, as they often had to translate some words using the images of the movie, due to the lack of direct linguistic contact with native speakers of other languages.

Thus, Irina Margareta Nistor (2013) tells an anecdote when she found the word chopper in a movie and had to use her intuition and the image of the scene, because it was a term she could not find in dictionaries “... I learned other languages without being able to leave the country, unlike nowadays when young people in this profession can travel, hear and compare different expressions. "

Mayoral's (1999: 91) statement perfectly reflects and describes the particular situation of the audiovisual translator during the communist regime:

> En los antiguos países del Este de Europa se produjo por parte del poder una manipulación de la traducción y de interpretación por la cual se desvirtuaban los contenidos originales y las intenciones de los autores originales cuando éstos no se consideraban favorables a los intereses de la causa (…). La ideología que se construyó para justificar esta práctica fue que, al no darse una equivalencia entre las culturas correspondientes a clases sociales diferentes, al ver la realidad con ópticas diferentes las diferentes clases/ideologías, una traducción fiel había de producir interpretaciones diferentes de los mismos hechos; se

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> imponía, por tanto, cierta modulación de clase social que ayudara a evitar la distorsión producida por las diferencias ideológicas. Esta situación colocaba a los profesionales de la traducción en estos países en una situación ciertamente peculiar en relación con otros compatriotas de otros países.

On the other hand, the small number of foreign television products has led to the use of a small number of audiovisual translators forced to work until exhaustion. Possibly due to this situation, both the field of audiovisual translation research and the study of this mode of translation has unfortunately slowed down, which is why there are not many courses with this specialization in Romania at present. Such courses could help future audiovisual translators to better understand the requirements and specificity of this type of translation.

4. Films in actuality

After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the broadcasting of foreign audiovisual products changed radically.

If before, the cinema was the only place where you could watch a movie as an outside movie, the emergence of a considerable number of new television channels has led to the loss of a very large number of spectators and as a result to the disappearance of many cinemas. The variety of products offered by the new television channels led to major changes in audience preferences, but also in the use of foreign languages, as a wide range of languages was opened up, many of which had not previously been used in the audiovisual environment.

Thus, Latin American soap operas become the favorite product of a considerable part of the public, especially women.

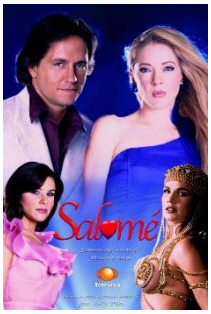


Figure3. Inocente de ti (2004)

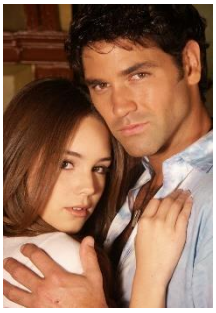


Figure4. Peregrina (2005)

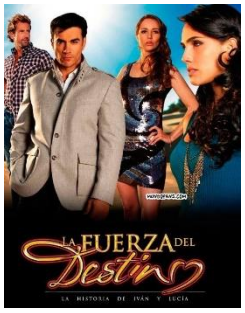


Figure5. La fuerza del destino (2011)

These were joined a few years later by Turkish and Korean, which delighted the public, but at the same time opened up the prospect of studying new languages.

This change not only increased the audience for the new channels, but also helped considerably in their study and use in the new society that was emerging after the fall of the communist regime. Spanish, Turkish and Korean joined the ranks of foreign languages such as English, French and Russian, which had been widely used until then.

As mentioned earlier, the first beneficiaries of learning foreign languages through movies were the viewers themselves, who were especially attracted by the melodious words of Spanish. Subtitling has played an important role in this process of learning

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without having to do so, as it provides the viewer with both the original version of the spoken version and the translation into the target language at the bottom of the screen, which facilitates both understanding and pronunciation of the audiovisual product in the original language. Thus, subtitling as opposed to dubbing can lead to an increase in the number of speakers of a foreign language, as is the case in Eastern European countries.



Figure 6. Asmalı Konak (2002)



Figure 7. Lost years (2008)



Figure 8. Mistress of the heart (2009)

Fortunately, nowadays, and largely thanks to globalization, foreign languages can be studied with the support of the natives, given that the borders of states are free and people can enjoy not only seeing new landscapes, but also coming into direct contact with the language and culture of other peoples.

Films, on the other hand, have acquired multiple roles, being used both as a form of entertainment and as a teaching aid in the study of foreign languages and, implicitly, in the in-depth study of audiovisual translation.

5. Films as a language learning tool

According to (Pallares, 2007:9) movie images should not appear as copies of reality, but rather as selections of fragments of reality. So, movies can be used for educational purposes as it has many benefits for students as stated by García (2007:1):

> El cine desde sus orígenes ha tenido una vocación didáctica y moralizante, más que una función lúdica. Desde sus inicios, no solamente los directores así lo entendieron, sino que numerosos colectivos fundaron productoras y salas de proyección para exponer sus puntos de vista a través del cine.

This is very important for translators in general, but it is essential for audiovisual translators, given the fact that, as mentioned in previous studies, most of them have only philological studies as their professional training, which they later complement with the experience they acquire in the actual process of audiovisual products. A correct translation of movies leads to a correct study of the new language, especially for those who choose to learn a foreign language on their own.

According to Sánchez (2002:78), movies can fulfill various functions in the classroom, but it is essential that the accuracy of the translation (if subtitling is used) is of a high degree in order not to mislead the learners.

> El cine llevado al aula puede servir de punto de partida y de estrategia de trabajo por lo que tiene de lúdico y creativo por una parte y por lo que posee de técnica, lenguaje, planificación, contenidos e investigación por otra. El lenguaje vivo del cine permite presentar a los alumnos estrategias que les pueden llevar desde la percepción global, pasando por el

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> análisis y la síntesis, hasta la creación de algo distinto, la verdadera síntesis creativa. El trabajo con el cine convierte las actividades del aula en algo significativo, tangible y experimental.

On the other hand, according to research conducted by Albiladi and Abdeen (2018), the use of movies in language classes can bring numerous benefits such as fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary, including improving their writing skills through the use of subtitles.

As we have mentioned in our previous studies, most audiovisual translators have studied philology, which is fundamental to the profession, but often not sufficient due to the particularities of this type of translation. Thus, we will mention some of the skills that students can acquire by using this linguistic medium.

Listening comprehension

One of the biggest challenges when studying a new language is developing real-time comprehension of the spoken language. Movies provide an excellent opportunity to improve this skill as they expose different accents, speech rhythms and situational contexts.

Vocabulary

Watching movies in the language of study is an effective way of expanding vocabulary in context, of understanding words efficiently, as they are accompanied by images that can explain the context in which they are used. Thus, the meaning of the word used is much easier to understand, as it is used in a concrete situation.

Cultural contextualization

Understanding a language also involves understanding the cultural context in which it is used. Films immerse viewers in the cultures in which the language is spoken, providing a rich context that textbooks in many situations cannot provide.

Visual and contextual reinforcement

Learning through movies is particularly effective because it combines auditory and visual scenes. Observing the gestures, facial expressions and actions of characters as they speak reinforces the meaning of words and phrases. This visual context can help us understand how language is used in specific situations.

Boost motivation

Studying a foreign language can be a difficult task, but when movies are incorporated into the study routine, the process becomes more enjoyable and motivating by quickly capturing attention and interest thanks to the narrative thread provided both visually and aurally.

Thus, all these skills needed by later learners, especially audiovisual translators, can be acquired during language studies and could facilitate their work in the translation of audiovisual products.

7. Conclusions

Having become an ambassador for the different cultures it represents, film has over time acquired a variety of functions in society, from entertainment to the study of foreign languages and cultures.

Films can thus be an effective tool in education, providing an interactive and entertaining way to learn. They can improve memory performance and understanding of complex subjects by combining information with visual and narrative elements.

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At the same time, films have the ability to evoke a wide range of emotions, from joy to empathy, facilitating and inspiring positive changes in thinking and behavior, not only for language learners but also for viewers in general by being an easy and fun form of learning.

Therefore, through the complexity of the perspectives it offers, the movie can be used as a didactic resource to complement the study of a foreign language, and its use gives pupils/students the opportunity to develop multiple skills both in the foreign discipline itself and in the disciplines adjacent to them, contributing as we could observe not only linguistic but also cultural knowledge, so necessary for a deep knowledge of a language.

Thus, the movie today has acquired multiple values that enrich the culture and knowledge of those who watch them given the variety of genres and the multiple messages it can convey, both to children and adults. The invention of the Lumiere brothers has conquered people by offering them not only entertainment, but also new ways of studying, becoming a messenger of culture, traditions and foreign languages that a few hundred years ago seemed impossible to listen to, but especially to learn.

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