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Audiovisual translation and media accessibility in language learning contexts

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## **Audiovisual translation and media accessibility in language learning contexts**

An Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Marina Manfredi, Catia Nannoni and Rosa Pugliese

University of Bologna

### **1. Setting the scene**

Over the past decades, younger generations have been increasingly relying on audiovisual (AV) media for the scope of their entertainment and education. Similarly, AV communication technologies have had a profound impact on their lives. Educators have long used AV media in the foreign language classroom, although frequently with a passive engagement of learners and without their active creation of contents. The integration of audiovisual translation (AVT) in its multiple forms (i.e., interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic, Jakobson 1959) and modes (revoicing and subtitling), with a key focus on multimodality, have found their way more recently in the foreign language education (FLE) context. After a seminal work on the didactic value of AVT that dates back to the late 1980s (Vanderplank 1988), the issue is by no means a new one (see, e.g., Díaz-Cintas 2008; Talaván 2013). However, the past few years have seen a growing body of research into the pedagogical benefits of applying AVT practices in language education, to enhance language competence and complementary skills, and this contributed to the

development of theoretical and applied research (e.g., Lertola 2019; Talaván 2020, to name a few). The state of the art in the field may be found in the articles featured in this volume.

This special issue of *Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts (TTMC)*, which lies at the interface of translation studies (TS), media accessibility (MA) and language acquisition (LA), brings together a selection of studies representative of current research strands in this area of enquiry. It comprises five contributions, which are mostly experiment-based and practice-related, and deal with a plurality of perspectives, a variety of AV modes, a range of learning and teaching contexts, a scale of language levels and different language combinations. Significantly, the contributions focus on still under-researched areas, such as the involvement of alternative AV modes to dubbing and subtitling, the most recent integration of MA practices such as subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) – in its less common interlingual mode –, and audio description (AD) addressed to visually impaired audiences, along with more traditional subtitling practices albeit with a metalinguistic value (mainly sociolinguistic and pragmatic) and the less common use of so-called reverse subtitles. Furthermore, many of the activities proposed by the authors are action-oriented tasks, in which learners are actively involved in creating AVT material, also thanks to the most recent free software applications. Technology plays a major role in some of the contributions, as well as the multi-faceted learning and teaching

environments of current educational settings, including not only face-to-face but also e-learning and distant learning experiences.

In a previous special issue of *TTMC*, entitled *Audiovisual Translation in Applied Linguistics: Educational Perspectives* and guest-edited by Incalcaterra McLoughlin, Lertola, and Talaván (2018), the editors expressed their fervent hope that “debates, studies and proposals” on this field might “lead to the mainstreaming of AVT in language education” (Incalcaterra McLoughlin, Lertola, and Talaván 2018, 1). Although in the past few years the academic interest in AVT as a tool in FLE has undergone rapid growth, “the teaching of AVT practices [...] is still far from becoming mainstream in the FLE classroom” (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo, this issue). This volume aims to proceed along that path and offer further insights for experimenting and validating novel activities and consolidating the practice of “didactic translation” (Laviosa 2014), or more specifically “didactic AVT” (Talaván 2020).

## **2. Audiovisual translation in language learning**

Several works published in the last fifteen years give comprehensive historical overviews of the pedagogical use of AVT in FLE, going back to the first studies centred on the potential of intralingual subtitling (milestones such as Vanderplank 1988 and Danan 1992). In a volume about *The Didactics of Audiovisual Translation* edited by Díaz-Cintas (2008), a section is devoted to the use of AVT for language learning and teaching and, unsurprisingly, it

entirely deals with subtitling, which is undoubtedly the most researched AVT mode from a didactic perspective. The contributions in this section recall the studies that have shown “the benefits of same and foreign language subtitled audiovisual products on language acquisition” (Pavesi and Perego 2008, 216), and point out that the efficacy of the various types of this translation procedure has been investigated in formal and informal language learning, both for children and adults, in incidental as well as intentional language learning (Gambier 2007; Díaz-Cintas and Fernández Cruz 2008; Pavesi and Perego 2008).

The great potential of subtitling has also been highlighted by Incalcaterra McLoughlin and Lertola (2011, 2014), who summarise the main aspects of this practice and offer a theoretical framework along with an illustration of methods and procedures which can be extremely valuable in methodological terms for teachers wishing to familiarise with this pedagogical instrument.

A book edited by Gambier, Caimi, and Mariotti in 2015 gathers studies from the main specialists in the field of didactic AVT and explores the findings of past and recent research on the passive or active use of (interlingual, intralingual and reverse) subtitles as foreign language learning tools. The articles encompassed in this book describe teaching and learning experiences carried out by university scholars and school teachers, in controlled or unguided foreign language learning contexts from the early eighties up to 2013. They also provide reports about projects on subtitling and language learning funded by the European Commission and applied in several

countries to promote multilingualism, such as Subtitles and Language Learning (2009-2012) and ClipFlair (2011-2014, also described, along with other similar projects, by Bolaños and Ogea Pozo; Hornero, Gonzáles-Vera, and Buil Beltrán; Navarrete, this issue). The importance of these European projects in giving a sort of “social relevance” (in sociolinguistic, sociocultural and educational terms) cannot be underestimated (as Gambier 2007 underlined commenting on the very first initiatives by the European Commission in 2005; see also Media Consulting Group 2011). The perspective of teachers using AVT as a didactic resource and their need for training is also taken into account in the literature (see, e.g., Lertola 2015) and still represents an important current issue in this field, as Navarrete acknowledges (this volume).

If subtitles and subtitling remain a hugely discussed topic in their pedagogical application (see Díaz-Cintas and Wang 2022), over recent years studies about didactic AVT have definitely enlarged their scope and come to comprise the various AVT techniques that can be used in the classroom as a motivating booster of language learning, since, especially in active practices, the learner is really at the centre of his/her learning process. Motivation is also linked to participative learning and team work, which are commonly related to AVT tasks, as noticed by Incalcaterra McLoughlin and Lertola (2011).

The learner’s full engagement is also due to the technological advancements occurred in the last decades, which have enabled students not

only to create their own translation or to edit others’, but also to reach successful self-learning.

Current research on didactic AVT shares the premises that this kind of translation is beneficial not only as a complex problem-solving activity triggering integrated skills as well as critical thinking, but also as a multisensorial and intersemiotic experience demanding a holistic approach, which fosters sociopragmatic competences and intercultural awareness in learners (Incalcaterra McLoughlin, Lertola, and Talaván 2018). Adams and Díaz-Cintas (2022, 11) insist on the role of AVT in the last versions of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR, Council of Europe 2018, 2020), where it is presented as a key factor to develop mediation skills which are crucial in nowadays globalised world, proving its “educational added value”. Two articles in this issue (Navarrete; Bolaños and Ogea Pozo) delve more deeply into this aspect.

As Incalcaterra McLoughlin, Lertola, and Talaván (2018, 1) point out, research into didactic AVT in the last years has created “a lively network of methodological intertextuality, cross-references, reviews and continuation of previous trials”, a trend the following articles perfectly exemplify, since they are not only representative of the major challenges encountered when working in didactic AVT, but they are also in dialogue with each other.

### **3. Media accessibility in language learning**



In the past twenty years, one of the most innovative and promising fields within AVT has been MA research and practice, in line with the urgent need of providing accessible and inclusive services to all members of society (Díaz-Cintas, Orero, and Remael 2007). The great potentials of MA tools, including SDH and AD addressed to the aurally and visually impaired audiences respectively, also started to attract the interest of scholars in AVT in language learning.

SDH, permitting access to any information conveyed through speech, also includes the special challenge of rendering paralinguistic information otherwise not accessible to deaf people (sounds, music, etc.), thus representing a type of intersemiotic translation that requires further abilities on the part of language learners. AD, which consists in a verbal description of visual elements that seeks to facilitate accessibility to blind or partially sighted users, offers learners the opportunity to practice with a form of intersemiotic translation that encompasses rendering images into words, while taking into account the constraints posed by this specific AV mode.

Admittedly, studies on the introduction of SDH in the language classroom are still limited. After being proposed as a passive resource useful to develop listening skills especially in informal education environments and self-learning (Vanderplank 2016), SDH started to be investigated as an “an innovative pedagogical tool” to enhance L2 skills, in particular writing and listening production, through active tasks (Talaván 2019).

AD has attracted greater attention over the last decade, although the first studies concerned receptive AD, whereby learners were involved in using the mode essentially to boost their vocabulary acquisition (Martínez Martínez 2012) or improve their lexical and phraseological competence (Ibáñez Moreno and Vermeulen 2013). Only more recently, scholars have inquired into the even greater potential of productive AD tasks, which engage learners in producing their audio described material (Ibáñez Moreno and Vermeulen 2015, 2018; Talaván and Lertola 2016; Navarrete 2018, to name a few).

Although limited to small size experiences, specific contexts and selected languages, projects on the integration of AD in language learning have flourished. They include, for example, the ARDELE Project (2010-2013), developed at The University of Ghent and involving Dutch-speaking Belgian students of Spanish and the ADAS Project (Audio Description for lLanguage didacticS), carried out at the University of Cordoba in 2021-2022 and involving Spanish students of English. With the same language combination, the teaching innovation AUDIOSUB Project combined the potentials of both didactic SDH and AD in FLE and was presented within a recent *TTMC* issue (Talaván, Lertola, and Ibáñez Moreno 2022).

Experimental studies on applications of AD to LA contexts showed its great potential of enhancing speaking skills, integrated or intercultural skills and, even beyond language competence, media literacy and transferrable skills, such as problem-solving and team work, among others. Ultimately, MA may also be said to have a key social role in that it raises awareness of

the inclusion value in contemporary society. Two articles of this thematic issue (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo; Navarrete) will offer, from novel perspectives, further insights into AVT and MA for language learning.

#### **4. Contents**

From the point of view of the two broad categories of AVT and MA, both are well represented in the contents of this special issue.

The first three articles are based on the TRADILEX Project (<https://tradi.uned.es/en/proyecto-tradilex-2/>), a project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation in which several Spanish universities take part (2020-2023). It aims to establish how foreign language (mainly English) learning process can be positively affected by the use of AVT as a didactic tool, including different AVT modes. The researchers involved conduct quasi-experimental research, as will be shown by each study related to TRADILEX.

The article entitled “Becoming a techie and improving your English with audiovisual translation: The two-for-one formula offered by TRADILEX”, written by **Ana María Hornero Corisco, Pilar González-Vera, and Paula Buil Beltrán**, presents the findings of a course held at the University of Zaragoza. The team involved in this project works on the pedagogical use of AVT in the teaching/learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in an online environment. Before describing their experience, the authors propose

a thorough state of the art of the studies about the application of AVT to EFL and to foreign language learning (FLL) in general. They recall the development of the use of AVT resources for didactic purposes, highlighting the benefits of each mode, from subtitling (the first to have been researched and applied) to dubbing, ending up with voice-over and accessibility modes, claiming the validity of the incorporation of two or more AVT modes in foreign language learning and teaching. This is what the authors carried out between October and December 2021 in their experience with a group of students of Engineering and Architecture who had a B1 level of English, according to the CEFR. Students were offered a series of didactic activities, in ascending order of difficulty, using five different AVT modes, namely subtitling (here defined “standard subtitling” to be distinguished from SDH, despite the fact that in the scientific literature this name is normally employed when L2 speech is translated into L1 written text), voice over, dubbing, AD and SDH. All these activities dealt with intralingual translation (in English) and required the use of technological tools, which are of paramount importance in FLL nowadays, not to mention in AVT – a field that, according to Díaz-Cintas (2008, 5), “shares an umbilical relationship with technology, which to a large degree determines it”.

The scholars show how students were guided through different steps and tested at the beginning and at the end of this course to assess their areas of improvement, which are precisely detailed in the article through an accurate statistical analysis. Tests and feedback from the students themselves

confirmed that overall communicative and oral skills gained the most significant benefits. The authors draw interesting conclusions from this project, arguing for the fact that AVT modes, especially when combined and integrated, tend to enhance self-learning in students and could be extended to other educational settings, public and private, at the level of Secondary or even Primary Education. Moreover, their experience has shown the potential of accessibility modes in raising social awareness and making teachers and students reflect upon inclusion.

The following two contributions are also part of the TRADILEX Project and call for a more comprehensive use of AVT and MA tasks in FLE.

**Alejandro Bolaños-García-Escribano and María del Mar Ogea Pozo's** article, entitled "Didactic audiovisual translation: Interlingual SDH in the foreign language classroom", focuses on the modality of AVT typically addressed to deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences. The authors argue that, although "didactic SDH" was advocated by Talaván (2019), its pedagogical benefits are still under-researched. Furthermore, the use of SDH in language education has been traditionally explored from an intralingual perspective; conversely, the paper featured in this thematic issue originally focuses on interlingual SDH. After presenting the general structure of the TRADILEX Project and the resulting lesson design, the authors report a pilot experiment focusing on an activity of interlingual SDH (from Spanish into English) practice involving over a hundred undergraduate B2 learners (from two groups, namely from translation and interpreting, and from film studies) in

producing intelligible captions in their L2. The authors offer a detailed description of the didactic sequence, a full account of their experimental study and a subsequent discussion of findings. Their activity is proposed as an instance of Action-oriented Approach (AoA), with the goal of introducing the practice of interlingual SDH in the language classroom and establishing its pedagogical values while raising awareness about MA practices. In the proposed activities, learners are asked to provide relevant non-verbal information conveyed acoustically or along the visual, thus to mediate between the clip and its audience when translating music, sound and “aural triggers” into words.

According to the authors, their proposal may arguably be applied to both face-to-face and e-learning environments in a context beyond higher education. They posit that this type of activity requires transdisciplinary skills, i.e., fluency in a foreign language, understanding of the multiple codes of meaning involved, cinematographic literacy and awareness of practice-specific conventions (among others). Pedagogical benefits mainly consist in enhancing language competence and translation skills, while raising awareness of the importance of analysing multimodal texts with their visual, acoustic and paralinguistic information. Although AoA shares many common points with previous communicative approaches, mediation plays a special role for language learners, given that the learner will be constantly faced with a form of “constrained mediation”. As members of the TRADILEX Project, the authors also suggest new categories and descriptors for the CEFR and the

incorporated *Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (CV) (Council of Europe 2020). A practical advantage of the didactic experiment is certainly the use of an open-source subtitling software; furthermore, the fact that a professional project is simulated seems to raise motivation. The authors acknowledge that results from this experimental study need validation and data collection among FLE tutors.

An AoA is also at the heart of **Marga Navarrete**'s contribution, entitled "Training the trainer: The art of audio describing in language lessons", which lies at the interface of language teaching and learning, AVT and MA. The paper aims to show how AVT modes, and in particular AD and SDH, can be fruitfully integrated into the context of AoA and the CEFR CV. It focuses on "didactic AD", more specifically on screen AD. In the language learning environment, this intersemiotic modality is proposed as an active hence productive practice entailing the insertion by the language learner of a narration into the original soundtrack of a clip, with the goal to describe visual information for the benefit of blind and visually impaired users. The paper argues in favour of AD in FLE for being a creative, intersemiotic and mediation practice. As a creative activity, it encourages learners to develop strategies to cope with the challenge of putting images into words; as an intersemiotic practice, it forces to tackle the multimodal nature of the product to audio describe; finally, as a mediation tool, AD considers language learners social agents with a concrete role to play.

After providing a precise record of recent empirical studies on didactic AD – dealing with different contexts, language levels and languages – and summarising their most relevant insights, the paper moves on to the illustration of a lesson plan sample, drawn from the TRADILEX Project and addressed to adult students of English (B1 level). The AV material, in line with learners’ age and interests, and thus source of involvement and motivation, is the film *The Right Way* (Zobak 2016), on which activities are proposed and carried out. Navarrete offers a detailed account of lessons design, ranging from introducing the general professional AD guidelines to adapting a clip from an L1 and the L2 until creating an AD. As the author explains, learners should also be asked to deliver “additional and explanatory information about actions, facial expressions and scenery” and aim to produce them verbally. Practical activities include work on lexical fields, grammar-related issues and tasks with communicative purposes, whereas assessment relies on lexical accuracy, grammatical precision, reformulation techniques (such as summarising and rephrasing), fluency, pronunciation and intonation, along with technological mastery.

The paper contributes to academic research while also providing a concrete stimulus for language trainers, who are directly addressed in a devoted section with practical and methodological suggestions. As the author acknowledges, the experiment needs a validation process before the design of new categories and descriptors is confirmed. However, at the present stage, it shows the multiple advantages that such an approach may bring to the



language classroom, developing in particular writing and non-spontaneous speaking skills, and also beyond language competences. First, students learn techniques. Second, such an approach may be exploited in different learning environments, i.e., face-to-face and online format, thanks to user-friendly software. Third, learners are motivated by being immersed in media that potentially represent their interests. Finally, a real-life experience can raise motivation in language learners, who feel involved in a concrete activity. In doing so, given the specific medium under issue, a social value such as inclusion is also fostered and may lead to wider discussion of crucial themes in society at large.

While the articles presented up to now concern university learning settings, the subsequent contribution by **Mariacristina Petillo**, entitled “The use of subtitles in foreign language teaching: Exploring some sociolinguistic, cultural and translation features”, envisages high school contexts, by referring to Italian learners of English in their last two years of instruction. The article’s focus is on pedagogical translation applied to subtitles, here viewed specifically from the angle of sociolinguistic variation, in terms of its rendering and comprehension, to varying degrees.

Starting with considering wider societal, research and educational factors correlated with the pervasive spread of AV devices, which in fact trigger a due new attention to subtitles, the author firstly recalls a remarkable literature on this media-teaching tool and its advantages in fostering both language learning and motivation to learn a language, also by facilitating

comprehension of varied communicative contexts, all the more in the face of current multilingualism and processes such as translanguaging. Against this backdrop, as well as in line with authors who advocated for further developments of AVT as a pedagogical tool, Petillo then presents a teaching proposal aimed at promoting metalinguistic activities on sociolinguistic variation, through translation involving a selected corpus of subtitled AV products, i.e., films and an opera libretto. While examples taken from the first type of products (one film in English and the other two in Italian – and its geographical and social dialects – in their original version) are suitable for reflection on sociolinguistic variables according to the diamesic, diatopic, diastratic and diaphasic dimensions, the opera libretto and the production of surtitles in contemporary language fit with those related to the diachronic one. Thus, the second part of the article is articulated along these dimensions of variation and the illustration of their peculiarities, through an analysis of the subtitling strategies adopted to render several facets of the spoken language. In addition, the analysis offers some beneficial insights into geographical, historical, inter- and intra-cultural relevant aspects, to be observed during class activities.

The paper by **Valentina Ragni**, “Reverse subtitles in foreign language learning: Noticing and memory”, deals with an underdeveloped but highly promising area in AVT studies applied to FLE, that is the didactic use of reverse subtitling (i.e., with the audio in the L1 and subtitles in the L2), which entails watching rather than creating reverse subtitles and focuses on

interlingual translation. This article starts with providing a literature review of theories about noticing and other related key concepts in second language acquisition (SLA), such as memory, attention, orientation and detection and then presents the findings of the author's experimental research, an eye-tracking study aimed to investigate the processing and mnemonic retention of reverse subtitles in learners of Italian as a Foreign language (IFL) at the university of Leeds in 2014-2015. These 26 English L1 native speakers, advanced (CEFR B2+) students of IFL, watched an English video with Italian subtitles in two translation versions, one strictly literal (the author speaks in terms of "formal similarity"), the other non-literal (defined as "formal discrepancy"). During the video watching process, students were observed through the eye-tracking method in order to measure attentional mechanisms, and later they were asked to answer questions designed to examine recognition and recall through a verbatim recognition test and an explicit report task.

Results revealed that reverse subtitles have acquisitional potential for advanced IFL learners, being an effective tool for mnemonic retention which facilitates learning in that it enhances self-awareness and develops metalinguistic reflection. Findings also suggest that formal similarity or dissimilarity between L1 and L2 have some psychological role in the mind of the learner, since they can affect both recognition (the more a L2 item is formally close to the L1 input, the more easily it will be recognised) and spontaneous recall (the most recalled words or phrases in the report task were

the most surprising, because unfamiliar and unexpected). This experiment also shows the benefits of reverse subtitling in stimulating a translational awareness in students, who are led to reflect on their own translation skills, which could be useful for further activities.

The author draws the conclusion that reverse subtitles – the advantages of which had already been underscored by Danan (1992) – could be more profitably exploited in FLL contexts and encourages future investigation into this topic.

## **5. Common threads**

Whether they bring an experimental SLA study or more didactic initiatives grounded on learning experiential approaches, the contributions of this special issue document several pieces of – and collectively add to – the increasingly growing overall picture of the pedagogical potential of AVT in language learning. While shedding light on diverse aspects of this potential, both in on line sessions and on-site lessons, all authors, as representatives of a field which is in itself an intersection of two domains (language learning and AVT), rely on an integrated perspective, i.e., on a combination of the following: technologies, language skills and AVT typologies (Hornero, González-Vera, and Buil Beltrán), distinct research areas, such as AVT and MA, on their application side for language learning (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo),

varied methodological didactic approaches for an effective usage of an AVT mode (Navarrete), as well as contemporary and past AV products as objects of a unitary teaching proposal (Petillo), or even different analytical methodologies for the acquisitional study carried out (Ragni).

This integrated view appears to be a common thread underpinning the five articles. Within its frame, how learning can be enhanced – or rather how learning progress can be boosted – by AVT and the more recent MA is emphasised throughout the issue, by referring to both specific linguistic levels of competence (from vocabulary to morphology, from grammar to sociolinguistic variation and communicative skills, etc.), and to the cognitive processes involved in their development.

A broader scope than these already substantial advantages of AVT and MA on the language learning ground can be seen as another underlying aspect that draws together the contributions in the issue. Featured prominently in each article, these advantages are in fact complemented by a distinguishing characteristic that goes beyond them. It is not just about the technological skills, which are a key element – combined with language skills – in Hornero, Gonzáles-Vera, and Buil Beltrán’s article, but also about an ‘awareness raising’ concerning, by turns, different issues across the papers: from reflecting on social inclusion, thanks to the use of accessibility modes (Hornero, Gonzáles-Vera, and Buil Beltrán), to gaining a better understanding of semiotic codes (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo) or of a transposition of one code into another in intersemiotic modes (Navarrete) as

well as film literacy (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo), from increasing one's own appreciation of intercultural differences and thus laying the ground for achieving an intercultural competence (Petillo) to thinking about one's own translational skills while *only* watching reverse subtitling in an experimental study (Ragni).

By drawing on these less central but constant references to awareness raising as another common aspect across the issue's empirical articles, we are driven to envisage the versatility of AVT and MA as its further added value. Students are not only engaged in 'learning by doing' translation but also involved in other fields of endeavour whose learning potential is undeniable, although it presents some challenges (with respect to AD, see for example Bausells-Espín 2022) and requires appropriate guidance to be achieved in the context of pedagogical uses, for the main purposes of language learning. This last remark leads us to consider some future perspectives about AVT as a vibrant research and applied area, now innovatively combined with MA, whose fruitfulness is made evident in the issue by means of its main facets.

## **6. Conclusions and future perspectives**

If all the papers contribute to depict 'where we are' in AVT as a tool for language teaching and learning, nonetheless they point to further needed developments. As regards 'where we (need to) go', teacher education – and

its corollary covering supporting guidelines, didactic materials, etc. – is featured in Navarrete’s article, but can be also seen in the underlying implications of the other articles as one of the future areas to be examined. This parallels, after all, the same need in the professional media translation where innovative training for AV translators is called for (Nikolić and Bywood 2021).

On the research side, and in view of its potential to inform practice, another area likely to be explored is identifiable in “informal” learning or “unguided” educational contexts, according to current formulations covering both the situations, previously mentioned as “out of classroom”, and their different nature with respect to the formality of institutional settings. The English language is particularly concerned with that, given the multiplication of learning affordances for it in naturalistic settings by means of media as widespread sources of input in its acquisition, which also encompass “exposure to subtitled audiovisual input” (Pavesi and Ghia 2020, 56). While the unplanned or “incidental” beneficial effects of this exposure on language learning have been studied (for a review, see Pavesi and Ghia 2020), those derived from an informal collaborative subtitling or fansubbing (Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz Sánchez 2006) were surveyed – as for the perceptions of young people involved in these spontaneous practices or “errant modes of screen translation” (Dwyer 2017, 3) –, but they fall short in empirical and extensive explorations of the dynamics of translation activities.

Another possible avenue of research regards the broadening of the geographical point of view and of the choice of the language pairs involved in investigation about didactic AVT. If the use of AVT – in particular of subtitles – in FLE has been examined by scholars at an international level in the last few decades, Europe has long been a pivotal centre of this research field, also thanks to the investment of the European Commission in the promotion of projects related to AVT in educational contexts (see Díaz-Cintas and Wang 2022, 32). It is high time to go beyond the European perspective and to explore other contexts and less studied language combinations.

Interestingly, the lesson design of two (quasi)experimental studies presented in this issue (Bolaños and Ogea Pozo; Navarrete) also includes a preliminary activity focused on taking into account the specific professional guidelines of the SDH and AD sectors. This seems to reflect the on-going process of blurring the traditional opposition between the polar extremes of ‘pedagogical translation’ and ‘professional translation’, which has already been raised in TS (see Floros 2020).

Moreover, as Borghetti (2011, 120) argues for subtitling (although her statement could similarly be applied to the other AVT modes), the authenticity of the active tasks assigned in teaching and learning with AVT allows the simulation in the classroom to replicate the main features of the “complex socio-professional framework” in which they normally take place in real life. This experience is even closer to the professional practice – and



therefore even more motivating – in projects that entail an actual commissioner and an effective use of the AV translated product, such as in showings in film festivals (as far as French as a foreign language is concerned, see Starobová, Podhorná-Polická, and Fiévet 2012; Bricco et al. 2014; Nannoni 2016).

In line with Bolaños and Ogea Pozo’s proposal of exploiting the less common interlingual SDH, it is argued that AD might also be tackled from an interlingual perspective, as has already been suggested with respect to translation training (Perego 2021; Bartolini and Manfredi 2022).

In sum, learning a language by learning to translate, as well as by reflecting on translation(s) through media resources, has certainly gained a specific status in the ongoing “new relationships” between translation and contemporary language teaching (Koletnik and Froeliger 2019). However, while a lot has been achieved in AVT, there is much still to explore and learn.

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