

De Rosa, Gian Luigi, Bianchi, Francesca, De Laurentiis, Antonella and Perego, Elisa (eds) (2010). *Translating Humour in Audiovisual Texts*. Bern: Peter Lang, pp. 533, £79. ISBN 978-3-0343-1555-5.

As Delia Chiaro states in her preface to *Translating Humour in Audiovisual Texts*, “at the turn of the twenty-first century the subject of humour and matters that relate to it [...] have become a popular topic in the media” (15). Similarly, the investigation of humour-related facts of language and translation has become increasingly popular over the past years. The volume edited by De Rosa *et al.* bears witness to this surge of interest, bringing under the spotlight studies on humour and its transfer into, and from, many a language. The latter is probably the most interesting and innovative aspect of this book: drawing together case studies involving different language combinations, it provides reference and inspiration also for scholars outside anglocentric audiovisual translation research.

The book opens on a foreword by Elisa Perego, which focuses on audiovisual translation studies from a diachronic perspective and then discusses the appearance of research on humour within this field of research. The foreword, although obviously brief, provides a good introductory framework for the essays which follow, and ought to have avoided repetition of basic concepts in a fair number of them. As a matter of fact, the variety of contributors’ backgrounds, in linguistic and sub-disciplinary terms, is an advantage but also a tricky issue for the volume, leading to theoretical and methodological overlaps.

Perego’s foreword is followed by a well-structured and extremely insightful preface by Delia Chiaro, one of the most prominent scholars in humour and audiovisual translation studies. Chiaro’s articles and books are the most widely quoted by contributors to this volume, thus providing an unusual, but fascinating, form of cohesion.

Patrick Zabalbescoa’s introduction in Spanish is also very interesting, thorough and stimulating, although it might have benefited from the use of English to ensure more coherence with the overall volume.

Section 1, on “Humour and Cartoons”, has the merit of featuring two studies of the same films (i.e. the *Shrek* saga and *Rio*), with several languages and methodological approaches involved. The two articles focusing on *Rio* as a case study are particularly interesting, in that they focus on the same aspect (sociolinguistic variation) with different language pairs as sources of examples.

Section 2, on “Translating Transcultural Humour”, opens on an interesting article by Brigid Maher, who reflects on the Italian translation of an Australian film from the point of view of an Australian native. Maher’s

contribution also has the merit of drawing a comparative analysis without resorting to the frequent, lengthy pairs of examples from source and target version. The section continues with a variety of case studies, some of them containing too many examples and perhaps lacking sound theoretical frameworks.

Section 3 – “Dubbing Humour” – is introduced by an interesting article by Juan José Martínez Sierra, which draws up a comparative evaluation of humour in the dubbing and subtitling of the same texts, but also, perhaps more significantly, offers a classification of humorous elements. The following article by Giovanna Di Pietro illustrates interesting statistical data, although the theoretical framework is repetitive, if compared to the contributions preceding it. Claudia Buffagni, writing in Italian, offers an intralinguistic study of German subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) for the film *Die Friseurin*. It might have been better placed in the next section, devoted to subtitling, just like the essay by Valeria Tocco, which follows.

In Section 4, dedicated to “Subtitling Humour”, the opening essay by Thorsten Schröter moves away from the methodologies and theories applied by most previous authors to resort to Grice’s principles for a pragmatics-based analysis of Swedish subtitles. The essay which follows focuses on subtitles for songs, offering a specific point of view and analysis, whereas the final contribution by Francesca Bianchi is indeed one of the most valuable, introducing insights on cognitive processes and an all-new theoretical perspective.

The fifth and final section features two contributions on humour in video game translation, indeed a relatively unexplored field for an increasingly practised translation activity.

Indeed, the volume makes a valuable contribution to the study of humour-related aspects of audiovisual translation and will hopefully enhance further research in all the linguistic domains evoked in the 22 articles it contains.

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