

Revisiting the Use of Audiovisual Translation in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract

For years, the translation method was disparaged in language teaching on the basis that it did not focus on communication. More recently, translation has made a return as scholars have come to realize how and why translation in the foreign language classroom might prepare students for the use of language in real communicative situations. The fact that translation and audiovisual translation (AVT) are now established disciplines with acknowledged linguistic benefits for language learning is both a cause and consequence of this paradigm shift. This article, first, begins with a revision of the different language teaching methodologies explored during the 20th century. We then proceed to focus on the different modalities of AVT and to present a critical analysis of best didactic practice in relation to this typology. Finally, it hones in on subtitling and dubbing, focusing on the variety of opportunities that both can offer in the field of language teaching.

Keywords: translation; audiovisual translation; foreign language teaching and learning; FL didactics

Resum. *La tornada de l'ús de la traducció audiovisual en l'ensenyament de llengües estrangeres*

Durant anys el mètode de traducció va ser menyspreat en l'ensenyament d'idiomes perquè no es dedicava atenció a la comunicació. Recentment, la traducció ha tornat: els acadèmics han vist com i per què la traducció podria ajudar a aprendre un idioma en situacions comunicatives reals a l'aula de llengua estrangera. El fet que la traducció i la traducció audiovisual (AVT) siguem ara disciplines establertes amb reconeguts beneficis lingüístics per a l'aprenentatge d'idiomes no és només una causa, sinó una conseqüència d'aquest canvi de paradigma. Aquest article comença amb una revisió de les metodologies d'ensenyament d'idiomes explorades durant el segle XX. A continuació, se centra en les modalitats de TAV per presentar una anàlisi crítica de les millors pràctiques didàctiques en relació amb aquesta tipologia. Finalment, s'aborden la subtitulació i el doblatge, i se centra en la varietat d'oportunitats que poden oferir en el camp de l'ensenyament de llengües.

Paraules clau: traducció; traducció audiovisual; ensenyament i aprenentatge d'una llengua estrangera; didàctica de la LE

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1. Introduction

Language teaching methodologies and approaches have evolved considerably over time, often involving shifts in the activities that were considered to facilitate learning. Translation is one of those language activities that, for a considerable number of years, has been purposely absent from the language teaching curriculum.

When employed for teaching and learning a foreign language, translation, in general, has had many detractors. This has been well illustrated by Maley in the foreword of Alan Duff's book *Translation* (1989):

Translation has long languished as a poor relation in the family of language teaching techniques. It has been denigrated as “uncommunicative”, “boring”, “pointless”, “difficult”, “irrelevant”, and the like, and has suffered from too close an association with its cousin, Grammar. Along with its other traditional cousins Literature, Dictation, Vocabulary, Reading Aloud, etc. it has been pushed into the methodological lumber room. (Duff 1989: 3)

For decades, language teaching professionals have excluded translation activities from the foreign language classroom in attempt to steer clear of the grammar translation method, anathema to the communicative approach. But there are also commercial and political reasons, as pointed out by Cook (2010: 18) when analysing the direct method approach, which advocates the exclusive use of target language and was adopted by language schools such as Berlitz. Teaching exclusively in the target language obviously favours institutions which set up centres around the World such as Berlitz, but also the Goethe Institut (German), the Instituto Cervantes (Spanish), the Institut Français (French) and the like. However, in a non-immersive environment, it is not difficult to imagine that there is a common language (not necessarily the students' L1) for students with which to implement a multilingual approach involving translation and other mediation techniques. This would be especially beneficial at lower levels. Furthermore, although not explicitly mentioned, the benefits of bringing together the target language and the student's own language fits well with Kumaravadivelu's postmethod pedagogy, in which local linguistic, sociocultural and political particularities are paramount (2001: 537). Certainly, the ethnocentric communicative language teaching exported from the United States and Europe has not worked as a one-size-fits-all method and several voices have been vocal about this.

In turn, audiovisual translation (AVT) has experienced an exponential growth as far as teaching a foreign language is concerned as a result of the advances achieved in the field of translation with didactic purposes. AVT is a modality of translation that originated in the early 20th century with the intertitles (text printed between scenes in silent movies) and can be defined as a technical method that makes the linguistic transfer of an audiovisual text possible. In addition, the interest in new technologies has increased during the past decades and AVT has grown rapidly, parallel to these changes, and has secured a place as a teaching approach.

On the whole, the last few years have witnessed the revival of translation in language teaching as can be found in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which includes mediation (in particular translating or interpreting) as one of the four key communicative language activities (CEFR 2001: 14). After a consultation period, the recently published CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe 2018) expands on the concept of mediation and provides thorough descriptors for its teaching and assessment.

The aim of this study is, first, to revise the methodologies associated to language teaching that originated in the 20th century to, then, connect them with the rise of translation for learning and teaching purposes. Next, we shall describe the various modalities of AVT and analyse the most salient ones from the pedagogical viewpoint, dwelling on the two most popular ones, namely subtitling and dubbing.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Translation in Language Learning*

Approaches to language teaching have experienced a history of constant change, always hand in hand with the dominant language theories and views on learning. Pedagogical decisions such as whether to focus on form or on meaning, emphasizing written versus oral skills or even choosing the language of instruction were heavily motivated by the beliefs and theories underpinning each approach.

The grammar-translation method (GT), used widely in the 19th century and inspired by the teaching of Greek and Latin, focused on reading and writing. The emphasis was on learning grammar rules, which were taught deductively and in the students' mother tongue or common language (L1). A Reform Movement in Language Learning led by Wilhem Viëtor brought about the demise of the GT method and the advent of other approaches that emphasized speaking in the foreign language (FL), such as the Direct Method (Kelly and Bruen 2015: 151). In this vein, the direct method shifted towards the opposite end of the spectrum by focusing on oral expression. This method was based on the belief that foreign/second language learning occurs similarly to first language acquisition; as such, the explicit teaching of grammar was to be avoided and only the target language was used for instruction (Hummel 2014).

The audiolingual method was influenced by the language teaching techniques used by the American military during WWII. This method focused on oral skills and drew on structuralism and behaviourism (Ellis and Shintani 2013: 38). Lan-

guage learning was thought to result from creating habits, and those habits were believed to be best developed mechanically, through repetition. This was the age of language labs, drills and memorised dialogues.

The 1960s brought about the so-called humanistic approaches, such as suggestopaedia or community language learning, concerned with creating an anxiety-free learning environment and using feelings and relationships for learning. The Total Physical Response emphasized listening comprehension and made a point of letting students speak in the target language only when they felt ready for it. It is based on the use of physical actions to show comprehension in reacting to the teacher's commands (Atienza *et al.* 2008).

Finally, communicative language teaching came along in the 1970s, with a focus on communicative competence, favouring authentic and spontaneous use of language and in which the study of form is secondary to the message. This approach is still the most widely used at present, although it has had various ramifications. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is one of them, based on the design of authentic and engaging tasks aimed at creating an end product, for which the use of the target language is essential (Hummel 2014).

2.2. *New approaches: pedagogical translation*

As aforementioned, traditional translation practices have not been well received by language practitioners focusing on communication, even though this is a task that we perform naturally in multilingual contexts and when learning a new language (González-Davies 2017: 125). The result has been “an arid period in the use and development of TILT (Translation in Language Teaching), and serious detriment to language teaching as a whole” (Cook 2010: 156). Decades of approaches that gave prevalence to the spoken word and relegated form-focused activities behind focus on meaning contributed to the downfall and perennial exclusion of translation (Kelly and Bruen 2015: 152). The arguments provided over time by scholars against the use of translation for language teaching purposes are many. Cook (2009, 2010) and other authors such as Duff (1994) provide a comprehensive review, and some of those arguments have been reproduced below.

However, as also stated by González-Davies (2017) in a plurilingual approach, translation is seen as a “learning strategy to advance language learning and plurilingual communicative competence” (2017: 1), which implies that translation is used as a pedagogical tool to learn a foreign or second language and not only as a sheer instrument for professional translation purposes.

Translation, thus, is perceived to encourage students to learn and understand the L2 through their L1. As explained by Newson (1998), in a translation-based approach, students are led to believe in a word-to-word equivalence between languages; translation may also lead to interference from the students' mother tongue when using the FL, therefore adding a further barrier to the learning process and hindering the development of native-like competence in the FL; translation is written, not oral, and therefore it is not perceived (however unfairly) to be a communicative activity.

Despite all the criticism, the revival of translation in language teaching is attested by countless publications where the benefits of translation activities for language learning purposes have been proven. Lavault's concept of pedagogical translation (*traduction pédagogique*), defined as "La traduction en didactique des langues étrangères" (1985: 9) is now more relevant than ever. A similar idea lies behind Cook's translation in language teaching, TILT (2010) or González-Davies' translation for other learning contexts (TOLC) (2017: 129). These approaches are grounded on the belief that appropriately curated and designed translation activities, bearing in mind the students' levels, learning styles and suitability of materials can effectively be constructed as communicative activities.

Hurtado (1994) points out that, traditionally, translation was not appropriately used for language learning [for instance, using decontextualised lists of translated vocabulary, texts that were not in accordance with the students' level in the L2 or indistinct use of direct and reverse translation]. Hurtado emphasizes that a process of pedagogical reflection must take place to decide how to use translation for language teaching. For instance, the skills involved and the competence required when translating into the L2 (reverse translation) are completely different to those required in direct translation (that is, from L2 to L1); translating a literary text will have a different level of complexity to that of an informative text, and so on. In a similar vein, Cook (2010) highlights that different translation activities need to be used for different types of learners in terms of their level, learning styles and preferences.

As pointed out by González-Davies, translating involves a range of activities that are highly valued in the communicative approach, such as "learner autonomy, peer work, meaningful learning, learning to learn, decision-making and student-centred classes" (Gonzalez-Davies 2004: 3). The act of translating entails a number of steps, each of which can benefit language students; first of all, the L2 must be understood in order to be able to relay the message correctly; secondly, an equivalent expression must be found in the L1; and finally, students must focus on meaning to be able to rework the expression in the L1 (Machida 2011: 742). Translation also includes opportunities to complete focus on form activities (Machida 2011: 742), as it requires learners to think carefully about every single word that they choose and why they select that option in detriment of others. Translation has also been described as an activity that is conducive to linguistic fluency and accuracy and it promotes language awareness (Snell-Hornby 1985). It also helps to develop style and understanding of how language works (Schaffner 1998).

In addition, several studies have been conducted in recent years with an aim to prove empirically the advantages purported by fellow academics but so far untested. Sánchez Cuadrado (2017: 138), for instance, proved in a study conducted with three groups of learners of Spanish in Higher Education in Spain that the use of scaffolded translation activities, including focus-on-form activities and cooperative learning, were as effective in terms of improvement in written production and grammatical competence as monolingual tasks designed specifically for the Spanish as a foreign language class (2017: 150). In addition, Laufer and

Girsai's study (2008) showed a significant difference when acquiring new vocabulary after completing translation activities in the language class.

If there is one type of translation that has been used pedagogically in language teaching in the last decades more often than any other this is undoubtedly audiovisual translation in all its modalities.

3. Audiovisual Translation for Language Learning

The technological developments that have occurred in recent decades in the field of video storage and manipulation, as well as learning and teaching tools, have offered the possibility to explore new teaching methods inside and outside of the classroom in a language-learning context. Videos, smartboards, language laboratories and free software have proven to be highly motivating and effective tools to teach a foreign language in the past four decades, and "they look set to add value to foreign language learning and teaching for another forty years" (Vanderplank 2010: 1).

This digital revolution has forced educators and researchers to adapt and to use it as an exciting pretext for developing new ways of learning and teaching a foreign language. In this manner, AVT has gained a place in this technological environment since – as a combined approach – it can be employed as a resource for the development of language learning and, in an analogous fashion, can be an effective pedagogical technique, for instance, to acquire new vocabulary in the foreign language class, as well illustrated by Van Lommel (2006), Neves (2004), and Čepon (2011). When AVT is used pedagogically, students are not asked to learn endless vocabulary lists or to work individually and/or in silence in the classroom, but to use active and passive AVT translation methods and strategies as a learning resource; it clearly has the potential to be an additional and repurposed tool. Moreover, by introducing an authentic audiovisual component, the practice becomes communicative, engaging, exciting, useful and relevant for students of the L2.

Besides, audiovisual material introduced in the classroom can help develop good strategies to compensate the lack of motivation and passivity as illustrated by Sokoli (2006: 1). ICTs do not involve a dramatic change in teaching and learning per se but they can act as motivating instruments to promote language learning. Students and the youngest and/or more innovative teachers already use new technologies outside the classroom; the difficulty lies in deciding whether to integrate them into the classroom and how to do it.

It is worth mentioning here the product of two collaborative transnational projects funded by the European Commission and used by teachers predominantly around Europe in the last fifteen years: the LeviS project or "Learning via Subtitling" was a subtitling software specifically created for educational purposes in foreign language teaching. This was a European Commission-funded project which ended in 2008. Both students and teachers can use it to design exercises on subtitling for clip or videos, news, and documentaries. The many uses of LeviS range from working with fill-in-the gaps activities to placing combined subtitles

in the correct order. A more recent project, and arguably an improvement on LeviS is Clipflair. Although it ended in 2016, teachers and students can still access and reuse the materials created. This user-friendly software that was developed within the European lifelong learning programme is a platform that aims to cater for language learning through elementary captioning (i.e., interlingual subtitling and subtitling for the hard of hearing) and revoicing (i.e., dubbing, voiceover, audio-description). After creating the activities, the teachers can make them available for other teachers and learners to use. The platform currently stores hundreds of activities in eighteen different languages (the most popular being subtitling followed by dubbing).

3.1. Modalities of Audiovisual Translation

Of the various modalities of audiovisual translation, subtitling and (to a lesser extent) dubbing are the two most popular for language-learning purposes and the ones which have understandably received wider academic attention. However, lesser known disciplines such as audio-description, voiceover and narration, to name a few, are beginning to attract attention because of their undeniable pedagogical potential, and others such as simultaneous interpretation, narration, half-dubbing or partial-dubbing, free commentary, sight translation, and respeaking are worth exploring as pedagogical tools in future research.

3.1.1. Subtitling

Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) define subtitling as

a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off). (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 8)

Thus, subtitling consists of the embedding of a written text (captions or subtitles) onto a screen image. Subtitles can be inserted on films, clips, sitcoms, or documentaries among others and are used as an inexpensive form of language transfer for maximum impact (for clips uploaded to YouTube, for instance). Taking into account the languages involved, subtitles can be classified into intralingual (i.e. the subtitles are in the same language as the original soundtrack, originally intended for the deaf and the hearing-impaired), interlingual (when there is language transfer between at least two languages), and bilingual subtitles (when subtitles in two languages appear at the same time). Intralingual subtitles are typically used for the benefit of the hard of hearing but teachers and learners are increasingly using intralingual subtitles in the L2. In the modality of interlingual subtitles there is a change of languages: we talk about standard or direct interlingual subtitles when the audio is in L2 and the text in L1; and of reverse subtitles when the audio is in L1 and the subtitles in L2; this combination

seems to be used exclusively for language learning. Lastly, bilingual subtitles are used in countries such as Belgium, where there is more than one official language (Díaz Cintas 2012: 99-101) or for cinema festivals (typically one of the languages being English and the other that spoken in the country of the festival taking place).

Among the many characteristics of subtitling inside and outside of the classroom, we would like to highlight the following: (1) it is cheaper than dubbing; (2) it respects the dialogue and original voices; (3) it is beneficial for other groups such as the hearing-impaired people and immigrants; (4) it has two simultaneous linguistic codes (audio and written); and (5) it encourages L2 learning (Talaván 2013: 65; Burston 2005: 6).

Subtitling was obviously not originally conceived as a pedagogical tool but to overcome a linguistic barrier either for speakers of other languages (interlingual subtitling) or for the hearing impaired (intralingual subtitling); however, there is ample evidence that teachers have used it in their classes and scholars such as Vanderplank, Danan, Díaz Cintas, and Talaván have written extensively about its benefits for language learning, anecdotally or empirically. Furthermore, Lertola (2013) has proven empirically that this modality of AVT “has the potential to improve language skills (listening, reading and writing) and transferable skills (such as digital literacy), facilitate mnemonic retention, and raise awareness of cultural and intercultural issues as well as pragmatic aspects of communication” (2013: 2). Aside from what was posed by Lertola, the motivation value of subtitling, corroborated by Talaván (2013), cannot be disregarded. Lertola has very recently (2018) provided a summarised account of subtitling used for language learning purposes.

Subtitling can provide students with task-based practice to work on vocabulary and grammatical structures, both essential for effective learning; tuning into real dialogues and different accents is a central part of listening practice that can be achieved with this AVT modality; and the visual stimulus helps develop not only the student’s media skills but makes them aware of paralinguistic (i.e., body language), pragmatic and cultural issues about the language being learnt. Because subtitles are written, attention to form is key: this is a very adequate task to focus on achieving accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation, for example. Besides, at higher levels of subtitling literacy, because there are constraints such as length of subtitle lines (i.e., around 38 characters per line) and reading speed (i.e., 180 words per minute), students might learn useful reduction techniques such as omission, condensation, and paraphrasing. These are key mediation microskills.

Subtitling, thus, offers a wide range of benefits to the foreign language learner such as to strengthen vocabulary acquisition; to promote digital literacy; to boost motivation and, thus, students become more enthusiastic; to improve both L1 and L2 syntax; and to improve writing skills (Soler Pardo 2017: 170).

Of all the audiovisual translation modalities, subtitling is the only one that maintains the original soundtrack intact, meaning that it is the only modality that can be used in a merely passive way by its users. We have focused so far on the literature on experiments and projects taking place in formal education, but Van-

derplank (2016) mentions several pieces of research that suggest there is a huge amount of users not in formal education benefiting from subtitling (namely intra-lingual subtitles) in different ways. To understand how people use subtitles and learn with them (the emphasis here is learning and not teaching) is certainly a vast undertaking which deserves more attention from scholars but so far we know that generally speaking, learners with lower L2 levels use subtitles as a ‘necessary tool’ and those with higher level as “back up” (2016: 231).

For the reasons we have explained, subtitling has been recently considered an innovative tool that encourages foreign language learning as well as transferable skills, such as ICT skills. In fact, subtitling relies heavily on technology, and it cannot exist without it. Although Kerr (2014: 114) states that subtitling a video clip “is a very simple operation and costs nothing”, the projects reviewed are testament to the fact that, although widely enjoyed by students, subtitling requires a certain degree of ICT skills and is a time-consuming activity, both for students and teachers. However, we agree with Kerr (2014: 114) that there are many free and readily available programs: Subtitle Workshop is a user-friendly application that allows the student to add, edit and save files that contain subtitles onto a clip or video which has been previously downloaded by the user. Both its interface and tools are customizable. It allows the teacher/student to adjust the time and check spelling. Aegisub is a free application platform that allows the student to create and modify subtitles in many different formats. It is easy and quick to use and supports styles tags for the subtitles. It has a translation assistant integrated too, and for that reason the student will be able to rely on the translation to work on the foreign language. In addition, the user can also create advanced karaoke effects or any type of manipulation over the subtitles with this software. Pocket-DivXEncoder is a program that allows to add or paste subtitles into a clip or video of your choice. It supports .srt files and any kind of video format. These are just a few tools at the disposal of both students and teacher to create subtitles with pedagogical purposes and add them to any video of their choice. To embed subtitles, Virtual Dub is a free video capture and video processing that works well with Microsoft Windows.

3.1.2. Dubbing

Practically all the benefits of subtitling listed above can be applied to dubbing, the second major form of AVT in language learning. Although subtitling for language learning purposes has attracted more attention from practitioners and scholars (it is arguably easier to implement), dubbing has proven to be equally if not more successful when used in the language classroom.

In commercial terms, dubbing is the replacement of the original soundtrack with a new soundtrack. It is the technique used globally for animated films and series intended for children, even in countries where subtitling is the standard form of AVT (very young children, after all, cannot read). Furthermore, in some countries such as Brazil, China, Italy, as well as French, German and Spanish-speaking countries, dubbing is the most widespread form of AVT, so students in these countries are generally very familiarised with it.

As opposed to the voiceover technique, for instance, where the original language can be heard under the translated soundtrack, in dubbing there is absolutely no residue of the original language and this absence of sound is key: whereas in subtitling the original soundtrack cannot be altered and is always present, in dubbing the original soundtrack is noticeably absent and thus highly manipulable. Consequently, the possibilities of this AVT method in language learning are endless, depending of what the aim of the activity is: students can dub interlingually from L1 to L2 (Duff 1989; Kumai 1996; Shevchenko and Blanco-Arnejó 2005; Wagener 2006; Danan 2010; Chiu 2012; Martínez Sierra 2014; Talaván and Ávila-Cabrera 2015), from L2 to L1 (Zohrevandi 1994; Navarrete 2013), from L2 to L2 (Burston 2005; Martínez Sierra 2014), and even disregard the original language to dub from mute to L2 (Burston 2005; Sánchez Requena 2016). Depending on the aims and outcomes, the activities designed around dubbing can vary from rather receptive exercises such as analysing (focusing on translation) samples of professional dubbing products and comparing them to the original clips (Taylor 1996) to very realistic multi-faceted projects, where students not only translate in a way that is idiomatic and natural but take into account at least some of the professional constraints of dubbing (such as isochrony and lip synchrony), record their voices, post edit the video and soundtrack to produce a complete dubbed clip.

We have said earlier that all the benefits of subtitling can be applied to dubbing but that is an understatement. Burston's dubbing project (2005) proved that with dubbing the four main language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), can be worked at several levels. Because mediation (either interlingual, between two languages; or intralingual, when the original image is mute, for instance) occurs too, dubbing is arguably the most complete AVT activity. Unlike subtitling, dubbing is primarily an oral activity, so it lends itself to oral activities with which to practise pronunciation, intonation, stress, rhythm and other prosodic features (Chaume 2012: 82). Furthermore, dubbing is a complex activity that consists not only of translation or transcreation of a script but involves a certain degree of acting, not entirely dissimilar to traditional role plays in the language classroom – this might appeal to many students, although anecdotal evidence tells us it does not appeal to all. It can also have a strong technical component (recording, mixing and editing sound and image); fortunately, our digital era means that students have unprecedented access to technology and computer programs. They can operate for free in their own time in the comfort of their own homes, which means they can learn autonomously, to which dubbing lends itself, and indeed they do, as attested by Danan (2010) in her experiments with American military students learning Dari and Farsi.

All the dubbing activities covered in this literature review are collaborative (in other words, small groups are set up to carry out dubbing projects) but as we have said earlier, the task is inductive to independent learning too. Either because it is seen as a meaningful, real activity (that falls in the definition of 'task' by Nunan) or because students embrace the use of technology and do not mind spending hours on it, as reported by Danan (2010), or because they simply enjoy

the audiovisual product and ‘playing’ with it, the truth is that literature on dubbing tells us practitioners and students coincide in the fun, motivational nature of the dubbing activities, although some report frustration too (Danan 2010), possibly to do with technical problems.

To design a successful dubbing activity is clearly a long and thoughtful process that needs to take into account the language ability and interests of the students, the technical requirements and the time needed. Both Burston (2005) and Danan (2010) warn about the dangers of technology taking precedence over language and the need for instructors and teachers to have at least basic video editing skills and to have technical support when carrying out this activity.

Selection of clips is also critical. Danan (2010) alerts about the dangers of student-led choices, and Navarrete (2013) about selecting an appropriate scene for the language (dubbing is after all not an end in itself, but a process around which to build the necessary linguistic activities (listening comprehension, pronunciation, idiomatic expressions, etc.). Burston (2005) is even more specific and proposes to look for clips specifically with frontal shorts, if working on lip synchronisation, or without, to be able to produce a more ad lib translation. In terms of length, there is an agreement that the clips must be “short”; Burston suggests no more than five minutes, but the clips in the projects carried out by Kumai (1996), Danan (2010) Chiu (2012) are ten minutes long.

With regard to the technology used, apart for headphones, microphones, computers, tablets, iPods, and phones, the literature review mentions digital sound recorders (such as Windows XP, a two-track digital recording system such as Dartmouth Language Recorder, and digital language lab programs such as SANS, SANAKO, CAN-8, Genesis; to synchronise speech to video students need to use a media player such as Windows Media Player, Quicktime, Real Play), and, for final editing, they might choose between ULEAD Videostudio and SONY Screenblast, MAGIX Music Maker 2004 and, the most popular, Windows Movie Maker. Navarrete (2013) also mentions the Clipflair platform although most of her experiment is carried out with Windows Movie Maker.

3.1.3. *Other AVT modalities*

Commercially, voiceover (where the original voice can be heard underneath the translation) is the preferred method of language transfer for fiction products in some European countries such as Russia, Latvia, and Poland, as well as some children’s programmes in Scandinavia (Pedersen 2007: 34, cited in Matamala 2008: 115), and it would be plausible to expect teachers of those countries to use this for language learning purposes. It is also used to provide voiced translation to non-fictional programmes in most countries (2008: 116). However, apart from evidence found in the platform Clipflair, where teachers across Europe have created their own activities, there seems to be negligible scholarly activity about its use for language-learning purposes, although its potential is clear: the voice-over process is very similar to dubbing and, similar to subtitling, the original voices can be heard.

A similar case would be that of narration, typically used for documentaries worldwide, where the dialogue of the original soundtrack is muted; in this sense

it is not dissimilar to dubbing when using mute videos, so similar benefits are expected to be reported if used in the classroom. Furthermore, because there are less constraints (i.e., no need to synchronise the dialogue with lip movements), it can be used in a very creative way (i.e., students could create any story as long as it is suitable to the images).

There are other audiovisual modalities as stated by Chaume (2004), like simultaneous interpretation (the interpreter translates the film in the same room with a microphone simultaneously); partial-dubbing, which involves the translation and pre-recorded interpretation of the film; free commentary, where the commentator adds information, opinion and interpretation of the film; translation at sight (or multilingual diffusion), done directly from the text at the time the film is being projected. As with voice-over and narration above, all of these modalities have the potential to be used pedagogically in the language classroom.

Gambier (2003) includes audio-description as a form of audiovisual translation. Remael, Reviere and Vercauteren (2015) state that audio-description (AD) “offers a verbal description of the relevant (visual) components of a work of art or media product, so that blind and visually impaired patrons can fully grasp form and content”. Audio-description could also be defined as a semiotic translation (as the transfer occurs from images into words, not between languages or within the same language) with a well-defined audience: the blind and the visually impaired. Although best practices differ between countries, an AD script (which follows certain guidelines) is generally recorded on top of the original soundtrack without impinging on the original dialogues nor any other key auditory information (i.e., a plot-relevant piece of music). Audiodescription has started to gain interest from scholars in the last few years and there have been a few publications, such as those of Moreno Ibáñez and Vermeulen (2013, 2015), Herrero and Escobar (2014), Martínez Martínez (2012), Talaván and Lertola (2016), Herrero, Sánchez-Requena and Escobar (2017). Because of its very nature, the grammar and syntax of an AD script tend to be very basic: the use of present tense is overwhelming, sentences are short, and connectors are of the simplest kind; so it can be used in the classroom from a very early stage in the learning process. Because of the time constraints, the lexis needs to be very precise to express maximum content, meaning it is a very appropriate activity to build up vocabulary; and because it has an oral component, it is an activity that lends itself to practise oral aspects of the language production such as pronunciation, intonation, and speed.

Despite EU legislation (the European Accessibility Act), deriving from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, only a few countries (notably the UK) have implemented AD in their public televisions at the required levels but as the general public is more aware of this discipline, we believe that its enormous potential from a language learning point of view will increasingly reach the language classrooms. The same can be applied to the other key audiovisual translation modalities, which are grouped as “accessibility” modalities: pre-recorded subtitling for the hard of hearing (also known as intralingual subtitling, and touched upon in the subtitling section) and live subtitling or respoken for the hard of hearing, which is arguably the newest form of AVT and has not

seen any scholarly interest so far with regard to language learning, probably because subtitles are not completely synchronised with the spoken word and are thus “distracting” and offering “much less potential for language learners” (Vanderplank 2010: 8) but anecdotal evidence show us they might be potentially useful in improving pronunciation and punctuation, amongst other skills.

4. Conclusion

As described in this paper, translation has long been regarded as an outcast in language teaching. Since language teaching methodologies moved away from the grammar-translation method, practitioners have generally excluded this activity from language teaching curricula until very recently. The publication of the new companion volume to the Common European Framework, which takes a focus on mediation and multilingualism, amongst other aspects, has reclaimed the pedagogical value of translation in language teaching, therefore bringing about a revival of this activity. Indeed, translation in general and AVT specifically can make a valuable contribution to language teaching practices. It offers authentic, motivational, and collaborative activities that can help students improve their L2 at many different levels. From subtitling through to dubbing, audiodescription or voice-over among other modalities, learners can develop their listening comprehension, grammar competence, speaking ability while working with engaging and real products. Further research is required into the pedagogical value of new modes of AVT, such as respeaking and accessibility in general, for language teaching practices. There is also still scope for improvement: more projects researched, especially if they rely less on self-reporting by students, will provide more measurable achievements.

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