

Audiovisual film translation: ‘Jamaican English’ to Italian¹

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ABSTRACT

*The aim of this paper is to investigate how Italian subtitlers cope with the translation of a non British or American variety of English among the many ‘New Englishes’ in the world; in this case ‘Jamaican English’, or rather, the language spoken on the island of Jamaica which is mainly Jamaican Creole. Examples are provided from the recently restored DVD version (2006) of the 1972 film *The Harder They Come*. The author focuses in particular on exploring cultural aspects as well as generic indicators to determine to what extent Jamaican values and cultural identity traits are linguistically and visually transferred through speech and song (reggae) to an Italian audience. Detail of research methodology is reported with exemplification of translation strategies taken from the discourses in a multimodal conceptual framework.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The polysemiotic nature of feature films is one of several areas of study being undertaken within a research unit in a two-year Italian national research project on socio-discursive practices.² Within this unit the author is continuing

- 1 Revised version of a paper presented at the Convegno Nazionale AIA 2009, *Challenges for the 21st century: Dilemmas, Ambiguities, Directions*, Università Roma Tre, Rome, 1-3 October, 2009.
- 2 Progetto di ricerca PRIN 2007 prot. 2007JCY9Y9, (2007-2009), *Tension and Change in English Domain-Specific Genres* coordinated by Professor M. Gotti (University of Bergamo). See

research along the lines of previous work by focussing on the sociolinguistic features contained in films transferred from speech to subtitles for the Italian Deaf Community (Kellett Bidoli 2008, 2009a, b, c). However, this particular paper explores the subtitling strategies adopted in a film centred on the Jamaican music industry and is thus essentially of interest to hearing people. The reggae soundtrack is probably better known than the film itself. The film in question is the newly restored DVD version of the 1972 cult film *The Harder They Come* (THTC), produced and directed by Perry Henzell and is the story of an aspiring reggae singer who turns outlaw. The film was released at the time of the rise in popularity of reggae music and helped spread it world wide. The interesting feature of this particular urban-crime drama is that the dialogues reflect the speech of Jamaica which some scholars consider a particular variety of English spoken in the world, namely Jamaican English. Cassidy & Le Page produced a *Dictionary of Jamaican English*, first published in 1967, but the language in their dictionary and that spoken in Jamaica today reflect a complex linguistic legacy. It is the result of the colonization of Jamaica by the British and has evolved along a linguistic interface between English and the African languages spoken by imported slaves, firstly to create a pidgin contact language, which later developed into Creole, or more precisely, Jamaican Creole (JC). The source language (SL) in the film THTC is JC, a linguistic variety infrequently encountered in Europe outside London, thus creating a particular challenge for European subtitlers, as do all other films of non-European origin containing a wide variety of New Englishes from all over the world. In order to translate such films directly into a foreign language like Italian, subtitlers must be able to understand the original discourse and SL culture, or, as is suspected to have happened with the restored version of THTC, first provide captions in Standard English (SE) to enable a ‘translation relay’ to take place to a third language (in this case from JC to Italian through English).

The film, shot on location in the suburbs of Kingston in Jamaica in 1972 in a decade of violence and economic uncertainty, vividly portrays life in the deprived neighbourhoods of the capital. It tells the story of Ivan Martin (played by the reggae singer Jimmy Cliff) who arrives in the capital from the countryside with the sole wish to fulfil his dream of becoming a reggae star, which turns out to be a far-flung illusion. As the story unravels, inspired by a 1940s real life outlaw Rhygin,³ Ivan becomes involved in the criminal underworld of the *ganja* trade, but by having recorded the song *The Harder They Come*, gains popularity despite his criminal association and the killing of several policemen. From penniless ‘country boy’ he ends up a gunman on the run, but a local hero of the poor who is eventually gunned down.

<<http://www.unibg.it/cerlis/progetti.htm>>. The Turin unit, coordinated by Professor G. Cortese, is dealing specifically with *Genre Migration: Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity across Media*.

3 <<http://www.reggaezine.co.uk/perryhenzell.html>>

Conflicting statements over the existence of a screenplay abound and are clarified by Collins (2003: 49) who was able to examine Henzell's original working script, "a dramatically different portrait of the disenfranchisement of Jamaican ghetto youth" compared to the film as it was later revised and adapted by Trevor Rhone. Though no screenplay is to be found today, in an interview Rhone has said he still has copies of his revised script.⁴ There is also convincing evidence of improvisation during shoots (Warner, cited in Collins 2003: 46-47). Henzell often called locals on the set and thus many 'actors' spoke spontaneously and never saw a script. In Henzell's original script, "He clearly desired to orchestrate a work that would register and comment on the range of competing social voices and forces of 1970s Jamaica" (Collins 2003: 55). Realism was a principal intent in the film as Henzell himself explains in the commentary in the Extra DVD provided with the restored version of the film. He depicted life in the poorest neighbourhoods of West Kingston, not only through vivid shots of derelict zinc-fenced 'yards', mean streets, rubbish dumps, and scenes of everyday life, but also and more importantly with Trevor Rhone, through the language of the people, the Jamaican Creole or patois (patwa). The local vernacular was spoken by a handful of Jamaican actors following (and improvising from) Rhone's script, but most 'actors' as mentioned, were locals taken off the streets and filmed in their authentic locations "in actual rum shops, jukebox joints, and ganja haunts" (Collins 2003: 60). The patwa is occasionally so fast that it is impossible for non-Jamaican, English native speakers, to understand it. Thus, the Standard English optional subtitles provided for English-speaking audiences are indispensable for following most of the conversations. Deaf viewers can follow the film subtitles too, but most likely this is not a film that would interest or attract them owing to the extensive musical soundtrack and no sound indications or translation of lyrics provided.

2. JAMAICAN CULTURE

An essential requirement of translators, apart from an obvious linguistic proficiency in both source and target languages, is a deep understanding of source text culture in its many vestiges, and in the case of non contemporary films, knowledge of major socio-political events and cultural manifestations at the time portrayed. In *THTC* four cultural manifestations can be identified, mainly through non verbal modalities, but also, to a lesser degree, through language: reggae, Rastafarianism, Rude Boy culture, and *ganja* trading.

Reggae as part of Jamaican culture is a latecomer among the island's musical traditions. Distinctive Jamaican rhythms were introduced by the first slaves on sugar plantations and fused over time with European and other Caribbean sounds to create new forms (Ferrari 2002: 5) such as calypso and mento. Ska which evolved from mento in the 1960s was played in the Kingston ghettos in

4 Mervyn Morris, cited in Collins (2003: 71).

response to the chaos, deprivation and crime caused by mass migration from the countryside (Ferrari 2002: 6) after independence was granted from the United Kingdom in 1962. It spread with other music forms, such as jazz and blues, through the Jamaican 'sound systems' which were mobile discotheques in dancehalls that took music into the poorer areas (White 1996: 26). The Jamaican record industry was born through competition to provide the best 'sound' by competing producers (bosses) who decided which sounds to play in their 'sound systems'. This explains the focus in the film on 'big boss' Mr Hilton, a record producer, and several scenes with deejays. Reggae entered the international scene in 1968 with the song by Toots and the Maytals, *Do the Reggay*. Reggae continued to explore the social tensions that exploded in Jamaica in the late 1960s and early 70s, at the time Henzell directed this film. It diffused a sense of solidarity in the disillusioned youth and sent strong ideological messages in its lyrics, made world famous by Bob Marley and the Wailers (White 1996). As Collins points out, "Part of the lyrical force of *The Harder They Come* was obviously derived from its engagement with sound system culture and its sound track" (Collins 2003: 55).

Reggae also became popular because of its association with Rastafarianism (or Rasta), partly through Marley's fame. Rastafarianism was founded by a Jamaican poet and preacher Marcus Garvey in the U.S.A. in the 1920s, who prophesied the arrival of a black king (later recognized in Ras Tafari crowned Haile Selassie I Emperor of Ethiopia), who one day would call all descendents of the slaves back to Africa (White 1996: 27). Hence, Zion or Mount Zion refers to the Promised Land in Ethiopia (and by extension Africa) and *Babylon* to modern, white society and oppression (Barrett 1997: 10). Rasta individuals reject the power of oppressive *Babylon* by following a path to truth through the 'Earth's Rightful Ruler' called *Jah* who resides within them, thus, connecting each of them directly to God.⁵ Reggae lyrics spread the word of *Jah*, the hopes and suffering of the black Jamaican community and are very skilfully semantically interwoven within the scenes of the film. Jimmy Cliff (Ivan) wrote four songs himself: *You Can Get It If You Really Want*, *Sitting In Limbo*, *Many Rivers To Cross* and *The Harder They Come*. The rest of the soundtrack features classics such as The Slickers' *Johnny Too Bad* and Desmond Dekker's *007*, all carefully chosen by Henzell,⁶ who matched the music to the visuals⁷ and blended it "seamlessly into the film text, commenting on the action (often ironically) and setting the tone for many scenes".⁸

One of the immediate distinguishing symbols of the Rastafarians is their hair which is plaited into rope-like 'dreadlocks' and said to represent the Lion of Judah in stark contrast to white man's hair. This is the only evident Rastafarian cultural trait perceived from images of the dreadlocks and turbans worn by Pedro, a *ganja* trader, and his young son Rupert.

5 < <http://ezinearticles.com/?An-Introduction-to-Rastafarianism&id=1002498>>

6 <<http://www.reggaezine.co.uk/perryhenzell.html>>

7 < <http://criterioncollection.blogspot.com/2008/03/83-harder-they-come.html>>

8 < <http://www.qnetwork.com/index.php?page=review&id=368>

Another Jamaican cultural feature of the 1960s and 70s was Rude Boy culture. The Rude Boys or Ruddies were rebellious, unemployed youths caught up in the socio-economic tensions of Kingston who emulated gangster culture, living on the fringes of the law and beyond. This 'culture' is portrayed in the lyrics of Desmond Dekker's 007 (*Shanty Town*) and when Ivan listens to The Slickers' *Johnny Too Bad* on the radio. At the very beginning of the film, Ivan's first impact with the 'big city' is when he waves from his coach at a Rude Boy and girls driving past in a white convertible. Throughout the film he will try to 'better' his position in life by aiming at easily sought wealth and eventually become a Rude Boy himself. This is memorably portrayed in two shots when, as an outlaw, he drives a stolen luxury white convertible across a golf course and when he poses to be photographed in tight pinstripe trousers, leopard spotted shirt and cap. A prediction of his fate is offered early on in the film when, while listening to *Johnny Too Bad* on the radio, Longa likens him to Johnny by saying "You only need a gun now to look like Johnny", which indeed he sadly procures later on.

Lastly, marijuana or *ganja* 'culture' is associated with the island and is commonly smoked by Rastafarians in a ritualised form (and as medicine) which many claim as the 'holy' herb mentioned in some translations of the Bible.⁹ It is smoked in large pipes called chalices (portrayed in the film), in 'reasoning sessions' to find truth and come closer to *Jah*. In most countries of the world, including Jamaica, laws have been enacted to prevent or control the cultivation, consumption and trading of *cannabis sativa*. In the film, the illegal *ganja* traders work with the full complicity of a local Police Detective. In the second half of the film Henzell focuses on this trade which seems to offer the only solution to making a livelihood among the poor and deprived of Kingston, where no lucrative legal alternative is to be found.

3. LANGUAGE IN JAMAICA

The language spoken in Jamaica today is the result of centuries of linguistic and cultural contact between different ethnicities. First the Spanish arrived in the XVI century and turned the imported Africans and indigenous Arawaks to slavery. Only a few Arawak loanwords have survived in place names, food and words associated with nature (Lalla & De Costa 1990: 50-51). One of these is the name Jamaica itself, from *Xaymaca* 'land of wood and water' (Pryce 1997: 238).

The British arrived in 1655, introducing English to the island. It was picked up by the predominantly African slaves to form an English-based pidgin for contact purposes derived from many British dialects (Lalla & De Costa 1990). Pidgins stem from the lexis of economically and socially dominant languages (Thomason 1997: 76), in this case English. The pidgin began to develop its own grammatical and lexical foundations to become what is known as Jamaican Creole

9 <<http://ezinearticles.com/?An-Introduction-to-Rastafarianism&id=1002498>>

(JC) or patois and spoken today on the island alongside the official Standard Jamaican English. Creoles are often considered inferior to the standard variety because they are not used in administration, trade, politics and education (Hellinger 1986: 54). Standard English was and still is considered the language of the authorities and elite. It is only over the past 30 to 40 years that some linguists have begun recognizing JC as a separate language belonging to a people with their own culture and identity (Sebba 1993: 30).

Parallel to JC, with the advent of Rastafarianism, 'Rasta talk' became the language spoken by its followers, also called 'dread talk', 'soul language', 'ghetto language' or 'hallucinogenic language' (Barrett 1997: 143). It evolved to create a 'slang' not based on European language norms. At first a secret language developed:

It seems that the language was intended to be secret [...] This particular intention was, however, short-lived: the language of Rasta soon moved into the youth culture of Jamaica. Jamaican Creole and other creoles have themselves functioned as languages of secrecy. (Pollard 1986:157-158)

Rastafarians do not communicate through the 'rational conversations' of *Babylon*. All negativity is excluded from Rasta talk and furthermore, Rastas believe that no person is beneath another no matter whether they speak Creole, English, or dread talk (e.g. 'understood' becomes *overstood*). The most important word is *I*, or *I and I*, when referring to themselves, to include the presence of God, which also substitutes some other personal pronouns. Sacredness is ensured through its combination with certain words such as 'unity' and 'human' to produce *I-nity* and *I-man* (Nicholas 1996: 39). Understanding Rasta talk is further complicated by its philosophical level of thought transmission, as well as the scarcity of subject-object opposition and verbs (Barrett 1997). Many terms from Rasta talk have since entered JC through reggae. In the film, no 'pure' Rasta talk is detected but some Rasta-related terms and expressions are used in the dialogue and reggae lyrics.

JC differs very much from Standard British English (SBE) in its pronunciation, intonation, stress patterns, grammar and lexis.¹⁰ JC is not a single, clearly defined creole variety spoken throughout Jamaica but varies considerably within what a number of linguists describe as the Creole Continuum which is composed of a variety of speech forms contained between two extremes of a linguistic spectrum with most speech falling in between (Adams 1991). At one end lies the basilectal dialect, the more conservative Creole, historically related to archaic creoles. At the other extreme lies acrolectal English, the language of the highest social standing (i.e. Jamaican English "conceived as a dialect of international English") and between these two extremes lies a wide and complex variety of mesolectal dialects (Patrick 1999: 5-6). In the film a variety of speech styles can be detected in a continuum down from the acrolects of the radio presenter,

10 See: Cassidy and Le Page ([1967]1980); Adams (1991).

radio reporter, affluent housewife, and preacher, to the urban mesolects of Ray, Hilton, Elsa, Pedro and Jose, in descending order of comprehension for the non-Jamaican ear. Native English speakers, if they listen very carefully, can follow the gist of the JC lects that lean towards the acrolect, and many may erroneously think it is Jamaican English they can hear. This is because JC has the majority of its roots in English (Sebba 1993: 1). As Patrick (1999: 17) states: “the standard and lexifier language in a creole-speaking society exerts a very powerful influence on the development and structure of the creole at all stages” and even in the process of decreolization, the linguistic processes which transform creole varieties.

The population of Kingston in early times was composed of a racial mix: African and local-born black slaves; ‘Creoles’ or ‘coloureds’ who were born locally of mixed African and European origin; free locally born whites and unfree indentured whites of predominantly English, Scots and Irish origin: as well as some Jews, Chinese, Lebanese and East Indians, but today blacks make up the majority of the rural and urban population of Jamaica (Patrick 1999: 24-26). “The main contact of the Negro slaves was [...] indentured servants and poor whites, who acted as book-keepers, and overseers on the plantations, rather than with the planters themselves” (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980: xxxxi). Thus, the English that the earliest slaves heard and picked up was influenced by a variety of seventeenth and eighteenth century dialects of poorly educated whites mainly from the north and west of the British Isles. This has left its mark on JC vowel sounds and also the (KYA) variable which is the palatalization of the velar initials /k/ and /g/ with a glide before low vowels, a remnant of seventeenth century speech (Patrick 1995: 329). In the film, several such British sounding segmentals can be detected by native speakers of English.

For the untrained ear, understanding JC phonology is further complicated by JC intonation and stress patterns far removed from SBE and most likely originally influenced by West African language prosodies such as Twi, which include tones to denote certain grammatical elements.

As a result the relative prominence of syllables in JC tends to be very level. The *schwa*-vowel does not normally occur, nor is there the same loss of vowel quality in unaccented positions as in RP.¹¹ [...] Isolated words, or words in declarative utterance-final position, normally have rising intonation in place of the falling intonation of RP, although not rising as high as that of interrogative utterance-final elements. (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980: xxxxiv)

The morphosyntax of JC is likewise marked by much deviation from SBE such as copula absence (see Rickford 1995). The few examples below, taken from the film source dialogue but spelt in Standard English (patois follows different rules of spelling with no agreed standard form), serve to illustrate some of the most evident differences:

11 RP – Received Pronunciation

- implicit plurals in the singular form: *You ask too much question* (You ask too many questions);
- personal pronouns: *Where is him?* (Where is he?);
- possessives: *You have him tune over there* (You can hear his tune over there);
- verb forms:
 - That red light, man that mean stop* (that means);
 - She bury already* (she has already been buried);
 - Pressure don't reach him yet* (...has not reached...);
 - I stop chasing Ivan now* (I have stopped chasing Ivan);
 - I's the one who taking the risk* (I am the one who is taking the risk);
 - Me not sure if this work* (I am not sure if this will work);
- interrogatives: *Who it go to?* (Who did it go to? / Who got it?);
- negatives: *Pedro no say nothing?* (Didn't Pedro say anything?);
- copula absence: *He not here all the time* (He is not here all the time).

In *THTC*, although JC pronunciation, prosody and morphology are all constant indicators of Jamaicanness perceived through the auditory channel, at the lexical level there are surprisingly few Jamaican culture-bound terms to cause problems in translation. No items of exotic food and drink are found, apart from the universally known mango, and no references are made to Jamaican institutions or place names, except for Milk Lane and one incomprehensible Kingston location in a news report.

4. SUBTITLES

Films are multimodal¹² entities composed of various simultaneously occurring semiotic modalities which transfer meaning to audiences through both visual and auditory channels:

- dynamic or static images;
- graphics in the form of displays (billboards, headlines etc.);
- graphic representation of spoken dialogue (captions);
- diegetic sound (from visible sources e.g. Kingston traffic, clucking chickens etc.);
- non-diegetic sound (from non-visually detectable sources; normally musical compositions);
- spoken dialogue.

Although in *THTC* non-diegetic sound in the form of the reggae soundtrack is a major component of the film, the main focus of this paper is on the subtitles, the third of the visual modalities listed above. Commonly today (though not in

12 Cf. Baldry & Thibault 2006; Kress & Van Leeuwen 1996, 2001.

this film), subtitles may extend beyond the spoken language dialogue to convey information on diegetic and non diegetic sound to the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Likewise, spoken dialogue and images may be supplemented by audio description for the blind or sight impaired when access to the visual channels is compromised or absent.

Audiovisual translation is a particular form of interlingual translation, consisting either in oral voice-to-voice translation (source language (SL) dialogue to target language (TL) dubbing) or written script-to-script translation (screenplay to subtitles) of what is heard (aural perception) related to what is seen (visual perception). The translation provided by the subtitles of the 2006 renovated version of *THTC*¹³ is indeed interlingual from Jamaican Creole into Standard English (SE) and Italian. It must have involved voice-to-script translation (SL dialogue to subtitles) as no screenplay is available. In this film much dialogue is ‘authentic’, i.e. obtained from local ‘actors’ speaking in real life settings and situations rendering the JC particularly fast, colloquial and difficult to follow. Therefore, it can be assumed that the translator/s must have been fluent in JC or worked with JC speakers. Subtitling is a complex activity which requires excellent linguistic skills, cultural knowledge and technological know-how. According to Gottlieb (2001: 50):

A good subtitler needs the musical ear of an interpreter, the no-nonsense judgment of the news editor and the designer’s sense of aesthetics. In order to present the subtitles in a synchronous manner, the subtitler must also have the steady hand of a surgeon and the timing of a percussionist.

In order to analyse the subtitles provided with *THTC*, it was first necessary to create a written version of the original JC dialogue. With no screenplay available, as explained above, the text was transcribed manually (dialogue to written text) to create a written corpus of 7,156 tokens containing 1,079 types. Subsequent manual transcription of both the English and Italian subtitles led to the generation of three parallel corpora (see Table 1) that were aligned for comparison.

	Tokens	Types
JC source text	7,156	1,079
English captions	6,498	1,047
Italian captions	6,238	1,468

Table 1: Comparison of lexical data in *The Harder They Come*

Because of the technical constraints of time and space in subtitle production, a substantial reduction of the source dialogue usually occurs (Blini and Matte Bon 2006: 318) through the elimination of repetitions, fillers, hesitations etc. Such a reduction is clear in Table 1 regarding the number of tokens, but the Italian cap-

13 Restored in 2006 by Xenon Pictures and Westwind Pictures and distributed by Mondo Home Entertainment S.p.a for the Italian market.

tions contained a wider lexical range indicated by a larger number of types than in either the JC or English text. The reduction in tokens from JC to English was mainly achieved by the elimination of repetitions, and the reduction or elimination of the informal JC expressions 'man' and 'you know'. 'Man' meaning 'fellow' or 'friend' (for both sexes), is an informal form of address (e.g.: *He say you have the money, man*), and is the most frequently occurring noun in the source text with 69 occurrences compared to 53 in English and 23 in Italian (translated as *amico* – friend). 'You know' was uttered 82 times in JC but reduced to 33 occurrences in the English captions and omitted in Italian. 'All right' was found 44 times in JC, reduced to 32 occurrences in English and substituted 23 times by *d'accordo* in Italian.

Before translating from JC into English, the subtitler/s would have had initially to make the important choice of whether to shadow the original *patwa* and thus, maintain JC word order, morphology and lexis with SBE spelling, or render the general meaning by following the correct rules of SBE. There is no official standardized way to write in Creole, yet writers have published in it, including poetry. Cassidy and Le Page ([1967]1980) offer several dialect spellings for single entries in their dictionary. Modified Standard English is the base for most written Creole. There is no agreement on whether it should follow the coloniser language (English) system or if an entirely new one should be created. Some people feel that a spelling system based on the SE spoken and written in Jamaica may have negative repercussions by strengthening the perception that Creole is an inferior form of English (Sebba 1993). This is a problem, common throughout the Anglophone Caribbean islands, because although various creoles have similar features, each has its own unique characteristics owing to its different historical, cultural and linguistic heritage (Roberts 1988: 16) making it difficult to satisfy all parties.

Without a screenplay to follow, it is presumed that the subtitler/s chose to maintain the Jamaicanness of the original film by shadowing the patois but keeping an SBE spelling. Presuming that more than one translator was involved, they must have been native Jamaicans who first listened to the original spoken JC dialogue. This would explain why the *patwa* spelling *wha'ppen?* (What happened?), *thyefin* (thieving), *trustin* (trusting) and several omissions of capital letters were found in an otherwise standard English spelt text. Several spelling mistakes were noted, mostly linked to the erroneous substitution of the 't' key with the 's' e.g.: 'musical intstuments', 'foolithnets', 'tend you to jail', 'a teriet of raidt', 'at beautiful at can be', 'thooting', 'hit clothes', 'Jote Smith' and 'suckt'.

English subtitles closely followed the original JC discourse in most cases and only superfluous phrases, expressions and repetitions were omitted. However, surprisingly, there is one example of miscomprehension of the JC into English (small caps) when Ivan asks Pedro where the *ganja* trade money goes, which is further distorted in Italian:

JC: Ivan: Who it go to?

SE: Who it go to?

I: *E allora a chi vanno?*

JC: Pedro: You ask too much questions, man. Where it get you?

SE: You ask too much questions. AREN'T YOU GETTING THROUGH?

I: *Tu fai troppe domande. ALLORA VUOI SBRIGARTI?*

[You ask too many questions. So, hurry up!]¹⁴

JC: Ivan: Well, so far.

SE: Well, so far.

I: *Be, se è così.* [Well if you put it like that.]

The JC '*Where it get you?*' means 'where will it lead you' (implying 'don't ask questions if you don't want to get into trouble'), to which Ivan replies that he has been doing fine up till now in his life asking questions. The English in this context 'aren't you getting through?' presumably means 'aren't you doing just fine?', however, it could also mean 'don't you understand?'. The Italian subtitler, by probably comprehensibly misunderstanding the connection translated in the English captions, added a substitution 'hurry up!' to maintain some form of coherence not found in the original leading to Ivan's 'Italian' response.

In the Italian subtitles, the language used is not specific to that of the 1970s but typical of the Italian used in present day cinematic crime dialogues. Standard Italian in a rather neutral register is adopted probably for the sake of clarity, but it is more formal (small caps) than the language spoken by the original characters in JC (bold, spelt in SBE):

Ivan: Hey! The guy over there sent me for his money. He say you have the money, man.

SIGNORE, dai i soldi a quest'uomo! [SIR, give the money to this man.]

Signore would not be used to address a penniless street urchin.

Mother: Ivan. All right, come inside.

Ivan. Entra, ACCOMODATI. [Ivan. Come in. PLEASE TAKE A SEAT]

Accomodati is a polite verb form not used spontaneously with next of kin.

Mother: And when she goin' to bury?

E quando ci sarà LA SEPOLTURA? [When will THE BURIAL take place?]

'*Quando la seppelliscono?*' [When is she going to be buried?] could have been a more natural solution.

Ivan: That is all we are getting this week? After we pay Jose, we don't have anything left.

È IL GUADAGNO di questa settimana? [ARE THESE THE EARNINGS THIS WEEK?]

14 Square brackets in the chapter indicate the author's 'very literal' translation into English to reflect the Italian used.

In the informal exchange between Ivan and his fellow *ganja* trader Pedro, a more informal translation could have been ‘*questo è quanto ci FACCIAMO questa settimana?*’ [Is this all we’re GETTING this week?]. Several calques from JC can be identified in the Italian, for example:

- **Big funeral** – *grande funerale*.

Mother: Then she took all the money for have a big funeral, and I didn’t even get to go?

Ha speso tutti i suoi soldi per avere un grande funerale, e io neanche c’ero?

‘*Gran funerale*’ or ‘*bel funerale*’ would have added a connotation of importance or grandeur.

- **To have an idea** – *avere un’idea*

Hilton: Come on, you must have an idea. What do you think it’s worth?

Andiamo, devi avere un’idea.

The calque above is possible, but ‘*devi esserti fatto un’idea*’ sounds more Italian in this context where Mr Hilton is asking Ivan how much he thinks the record he has cut is worth.

- **A pen and a paper** – *una penna e un foglio*.

Ivan: Lend me a pen and a paper

Mi presta una penna e un foglio? [Lend me a pen and a sheet of paper]

This is an example of the English calquing the JC indefinite article, transferred directly to the Italian. Though grammatically correct, the natural Italian collocation is ‘*mi presta penna e carta?*’ [Lend me pen and paper].

- **You know the way...?** – *Sai qual è la strada...?*

Ivan: You know the way to Milk Lane?

Sai qual è la strada per Milk Lane? [Do you know the road/way to Milk Lane?].

Here Ivan is asking directions to some local men playing dominoes in the street. Though the Italian is correct, in this context one would probably ask ‘*sai come si va...?*’ [do you know how to get to...?]

Occasionally, the Italian shadows the English word order. Examples are:

Elsa: No, I’m tired. I’ve been walking and looking for work all day.

No, sono stanca. Ho camminato per cercare lavoro tutto il giorno.

(Instead of – *No, sono stanca. Ho camminato tutto il giorno per cercare lavoro.*)

Ivan: Tell me something. Haven’t I seen you with Jose somewhere before?

Dimmi una cosa. Non sei tu che ho visto con Jose prima da qualche parte?

(Instead of – *Non ti ho già vista da qualche parte con Jose?*).

In the Italian captions apart from several punctuation errors (mainly missing full stops or question marks), there were some grammatical errors and repetitions (small caps):

- *QUESTO L'unico modo per far tornare le cose come prima.* [THIS THE only way to make things turn back to normal]
- *Chi è CHE CHE ci guadagna tutti questi soldi?* [Who is it WHO WHO is making all this money?]
- *Ricordi di tutte LE VOLTE LE VOLTE che sei venuto qui?* [Do you remember ALL THE TIMES, ALL THE TIMES you were here?]

Spelling mistakes included 'sempreche', (*sempre che* or *sempreché*), 'finchè', (*finché*), 'Dovel'hai comprata?' (*Dove l'hai comprata?*), 'avere una idea' (*avere un'idea*), 'un occhiata' (*un'occhiata*), 'Si' (*Si*), 'Imparada questo' (*Impara da questo*). When Ivan Martin gives his name to Mr Hilton for his record contract, it is captioned twice correctly as Ivanhoe and once as Ivanohe. Or should it have been Ivan O. Martin as found in Collins (2003)?

One Italian caption was found to be incomplete:

JC: Ivan: Well, I think that be about 200 dollars, you know, sir.

SE: I think at least about 200 dollars, sir.

I: *Io penso almeno.* [I think at least]

Miscomprehension of the English could explain the following mistranslation of 'the boat taking Ivan to the quay' instead of 'picking him up from the quay' during his attempt at escaping to Cuba. Or maybe the translator meant to implicitly indicate that a boat would take Ivan to a ship waiting at a quay, which was Pedro's original plan:

JC: Pedro: Go down on the coast tomorrow, and wait there and the boat WILL PICK YOU UP at the quay.

SE: Go down on the coast tomorrow, and wait there. The boat WILL PICK YOU UP at the quay.

I: *Domani vai sulla costa e aspetta lì. La BARCA TI PORTERÀ al molo.*

[Tomorrow go down to the coast and wait. The boat WILL TAKE YOU to the quay]

Despite occasional inaccuracies or mistranslation, most of the meaning in JC is transferred correctly into Italian, but all 'Jamaicanness' conveyed through the original phonology, prosody, morphology and lexis is inevitably lost in translation. However, a Jamaican 'feel' is still conveyed to an Italian audience through the images of life in Kingston and the sounds of reggae music. The following specifically JC terms and usages, all found in Cassidy & Le Page ([1967]1980), have acceptable Italian equivalents, but unavoidably lose their Jamaican cultural connotations:

- **Dead** (12 occurrences)

1. to be dead, to die, used with ellipsis of the verb 'to be':

... the folks where you live always come to town and get dead, you know.

...voi ragazzi di campagna venite in città e vi fate ammazzare.

[...you country boys come to town and get killed.]

2. 'for sure', 'for certain':

dead him dead (i.e. he's sure to die)

sarà un uomo morto [he's a dead man]

• **Lick** (1) – commonly used in Jamaica for 'to hit', 'to strike':

You want me lick him again?

Volete che lo colpisca ancora? [Do you want me to hit him again?]

• **Rude** (3) – more forceful in JC than in SE or Italian, meaning 'bold' 'impertinent', 'wild', 'violent', 'reckless' (hence the 'Jamaican Rude Boys'):

The rest of boys too rude.

La maggior parte dei ragazzi sono molto maleducati. [Most boys are very bad mannered].

• **Run** (1) – to drive somebody away:

And I run you yesterday.

Ti ho mandato via ieri. [I sent you away yesterday].

• **Yard** (4):

1. the land around and including a dwelling;

2. a piece of property;

3. the dwelling.

This term has a special cultural meaning among Jamaicans, and those living abroad refer to Jamaica as "down in the yard". It is translated as 'isolato' [block], 'nella mia proprietà' [on my property], or avoided through deixis 'sei venuto qui' [you came here]:

I don't want it in my yard.

Non lo voglio sentire nella mia proprietà. [I don't want to hear it on my property].

In the following examples, JC terms were substituted by solutions that distorted or changed the original meaning (small caps):

• **Dodge** – to hide from someone, especially so as to watch somebody else while remaining unseen:

You know how long that bitch owe me money? Him nah dodge me today.

Lo sai da quanto tempo quel bastardo mi deve dei soldi? LI AVRÒ OGGI STESSO.

[You know how long that bastard owes me money? I'll get it back today]

• **Control** – to take care of things:

You control till I come back, right?

NON MUOVERVI finché non torno [Don't move till I come back]

• **Move** – In the sense of social and economic upward mobility:

You move up.

ANDIAMO di là. [Let's go over there]

and:

Moving up, yes.

MUOVIAMOCI. [Let's go]

- **Propaganda** – 'Pure propaganda' meaning 'just talk/gossip' as in:

Ivan: I hear some people saying they catch me.

Pedro: No news, man. Propaganda. Pure propaganda.

Ho sentito qualcuno che dice che mi prenderanno.

Non ci sono notizie. PUBBLICITÀ. SOLO PUBBLICITÀ.

[I heard someone say they'll catch me.

There's no news. Publicity. Only publicity]

Particular JC forms of greeting were found:

- **Love man** – a term of greeting from the hippy culture of the 1960s was translated by the informal *salve amico* but in this context Jose was saying 'thanks, goodbye'.
- **Cool dread** – a Rasta greeting uttered by the Rasta Pedro on meeting his son, was mistranslated as *Accidenti che paura!* (meaning 'how fearsome'/'you look scary').
'Cool' means (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980):
 1. 'Cool' from U.S. 'Jive talk' of the 40s.
 2. a term of approval;
 3. a complementary racial term meaning 'dark but clean-cut';
 4. referring to dark skin colour in a positive way.'Cool' in combination with 'dread' becomes a Rastafarian term of greeting to whoever wears dreadlocks, the uncut plaited hair worn by Rastas. In other words, 'Hi Rasta you're looking good'.
- **Waa! Waa!** – (What! What!). A JC exclamation of great excitement or amusement (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980), uttered twice by Jose, but eliminated from the captions.

Expletives in the film are surprisingly sparse compared to the frequency expected in the vernacular of predominantly male characters subsisting at the low socio-economic level portrayed by Henzell. In the film the common English F-word was used only twice. The translation of expletives depends firstly very much on socio-cultural factors and secondly, on their function in a sentence. The function may be associated with negative emotions such as anger, contempt and disdain, or positive emotions like surprise and affection. Expletives may be emphatic or simply act as interjections such as exclamations and fillers devoid of any semantic meaning and often used to reinforce social identity within a group as part of the general 'slang'. The literal translation of some words or concepts used in one culture might be considered taboo or offensive in another, such as those related to food, drink, religion, body parts and sexuality. Translators need to develop an intercultural awareness of the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of expletives in translation. Thus, according to their individual pragmatic (but

often subjective) intercultural sensitivity and the function of the term in the SL expression or concept, they must decide whether to translate literally, find a substitution or delete. Deletion is often the most practical solution adopted that solves the translation dilemma and saves on space and time. In the case of translation of JC and English expletives into Italian, when a taboo term had no particular function in the utterance other than to add emphasis and stylistic ‘colour’, it was mitigated by substitution with a less offensive common Italian term or omitted altogether as happened in the translation of two common JC expletives:

- **Backside** (2 occurrences):

Then what the backside you hiding him for?

E allora qual è il motivo per cui lo stai coprendo?

[And so what is the reason you are hiding him for?]

Fitz, so quiet...Backside!

Fitz... Come mai così tranquillo... Cavolo!

[Fitz... How come you are so quiet?... My goodness!]

- **Raas** (4 occurrences) – “very vulgar term for ‘buttocks’, probable metathesis of ‘arse’, or metanalysis of your-arse> you-rarse. Used in an exclamatory way to show strong opposition; scorn, anger, impatience” (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980):

Raas, him cut me!

Aiuto, mi ha ferito!

[Help, he’s wounded/cut me]

This raas boy. When will he come from? Give him a bike. Give him money. Give him a place to live.

Guarda che ingrato. Gli dai una moto, dei soldi, un posto dove vivere.

[How ungrateful. You give him a motorbike, money, a place to live.]

‘Raas’ was mistranslated in the following context where it acted as a strong affirmative in JC. When Ivan is wounded and in hiding, Pedro offers him a way to escape to Cuba by ship. Ivan exclaims almost in ecstasy **‘Yes. Revolutionary to raas’**, meaning ‘Revolutionary. Hell, yes’ or ‘Revolutionary, yes, man’. In Italian the phrase became *Certo. Rivoluzionari e rasta* [Yes. Revolutionaries and Rastas] which added a Jamaicanness, but was semantically wrong.

As mentioned above, the reggae soundtrack is an essential element throughout the film with the lyrics of each song hand picked to fit the plot, action and atmosphere. The lyrics of the song *The Harder They Come* sum up Ivan’s ideals in a nutshell:

I’d rather be a free man in my grave,
 Than living as a puppet or a slave.
 So as sure as the sun will shine,
 I’m gonna get my share of what’s mine.

Film song lyrics, unless essential to the meaning of the plot, are rarely captioned into a foreign language. In this film the JC lyrics are to a large extent comprehensible to an English speaking audience but not an Italian one. The only translation provided (in English not Italian) is the first lines of *Johnny Too Bad* by The Slickers heard playing on a radio:

Walking down the road with a pistol in your waits,
Johnny, you're too bad...

It is relevant to the dialogue that follows, where Longa likens Ivan to the Johnny in the song. No translation is provided in Italian for a brief radio advertisement for Chantelle Olive Oil Pomade nor for a radio deejay saying “El Numero Uno has arrived!... Beethoven of DJs...”

In translating film discourse subtitlers must choose to either domesticate the target text pragmatically to fit the target culture in order to facilitate comprehension, or foreignise it by maintaining culturally marked features of the source text (cf. Venuti 1995). Since hardly any specific linguistic culture-bound references are found in this corpus, there is little evidence of domestication except for ‘Babycham’, the trade name of a British alcoholic beverage made of pear juice popular in the 1950s and 60s translated by *aperitivo* (aperitif) and ‘Tamarind switch’ *verga di tamarindo* [rod made of Tamarind]. No foreignisation was detected but rather the use of loans from English that today are well understood Anglicisms in Italian: ‘hit parade’, ‘beat’, ‘boogie woogie’, ‘twist’, ‘DJ’ and ‘jukebox’.

5. GENRE

Genres can be considered as ‘conventionalised forms of texts’ that reflect the functions and goals involved in particular social occasions (Kress, cited in Hatim and Mason 1990: 69), or in other words, they are text types determined by their communicative purpose (Swales 1990). The film under examination belongs to a particular multimodal film genre, the urban crime drama, a discursive event (spoken dialogue) textualised by several linguistic genres. As Fairclough (2003: 34) states, “The relationship between texts and genres is a potentially complex one: a text may not be ‘in’ a single genre, it may ‘mix’ or hybridise genres.” Indeed several textual genres are detected in the JC source text (ST) reflecting the semiotics of several different ‘social occasions’, namely the church sermon, court judgement, radio news report, music industry encounters and *ganja* trader discourse. Genre and discourse are closely interrelated. Certain discourses are appropriate only in certain genres. Accordingly, all translation must be “governed by considerations of genre” (Hatim and Mason 1990: 70). In the translation process genre is adapted to a different set of linguistic conventions by passing from one language to another. During this transfer an intercultural/linguistic migration takes place across two different semiotic systems leading to an inevitable adaptation or hybridisation of the genre represented. Normally, intertextual hybridisation occurs “when, in subtle and highly intricate

ways, a text is shifted to another type and made to serve another purpose without completely losing at least some of the properties of the original type” (Hatim and Mason 1990: 147). However, by migrating from one language to another, the type of text or genre may remain essentially, semantically the same, but gain new lexical, morphological, or rhetorical properties and thus hybridise to fit the linguistic patterns of the target language and also culture through ‘domestication’ of the text via “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” (Schleiermacher, cited in Venuti 1995: 20). Below are exemplified some instances of interlinguistic, intersemiotic, generic migration from spoken to written mode (spoken JC dialogue to Italian subtitles).

5.1. THE CHURCH SERMON

The language of the Christian church can be identified as a genre of which the sermon is a subgenre. In *THTC* it is mainly restricted to two Baptist church sermons where high register spoken SE is used in the source dialogues with a particular choice of lexis:

Preacher 1: Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you. O ye of little faith? Brothers and sisters, before you leave, I’d like to inform you that you won’t be able to pick up your records for the rally today. The master record has not arrived from America. I’ll let you know about that during the course of the week. Now, let us stand, and sing, and praise.

Pensate ai gigli nel campo, a come crescono: non fanno alcuna fatica, non si affannano. Eppure vi dico, che neppure il re Salomone in tutta la sua gloria splendeva come questi fiori. E quindi se Dio si occupa di rivestire così l’erba del campo, che oggi c’è e domani viene buttata via, come farebbe Egli a non prendersi cura di voi. Oh, voi esseri di poca fede? Fratelli e sorelle, prima che ve ne andiate, volevo informarvi che oggi non potete ritirare i vostri dischi per la riunione. Il disco master non è arrivato dall’America. Vi farò sapere in settimana. E adesso tutti in piedi, cantiamo e preghiamo.

Preacher 2: When nothing else could help, then love came down. It rescue the perishing, care for the dying snatch us in pity, rises from the grave. Tonight, here is love. Praise God. We say it is a gift of God. Amen! Tonight the wages of sin is not come, instead it’s damnation, it’s derogation, while here is the love of God. Love’s work has no end, love may cast out evil, love never goes unexamined, not easily provoked, breaks bonds. Bless you, thank, you Jesus! Let’s hear hallelujah.

Quando niente sembra andare bene, è proprio allora che interviene l’amore. Salva i sofferenti, si prende cura dei morenti, ci avvinghia nella pietà, si erge dalla tomba. E stasera, è una sera d’amore. Lode al Signore. Noi lo accogliamo come un dono di Dio. Amen. Stanotte le ombre del

peccato non ci avvolgeranno. Fuori c'è la dannazione, e la condotta indegna, mentre qui c'è l'amore di Dio. L'operato dell'amore non ha fine, l'amore riesce a scacciare il male, l'amore non può passare inosservato, non si rompe facilmente, spezza le catene. Che Dio vi benedica, grazie, Gesù.

Both sermons are delivered in church by a preacher considered a leader of the congregation and thus expected to use a specific style of language, though JC verb forms creep into the second sermon. Congregations of all Christian denominations even if composed of individuals of humble background, are used to hearing the language of the church and Bible, which they are encouraged to read. The communicative function of both these speech acts is directive, seeking to influence the congregation's thought and direct it towards the love and praise for God. In the first sermon an additional informative function is added (about records for the rally). Imperatives are used to direct the thoughts and actions of the congregation such as 'consider', 'let us stand', 'praise', 'let's hear' and are maintained in the target text (TT). This is reinforced especially in the second example by prosodic elements such as emphatic intonation, pitch and loudness of the voice as well as non-verbal signs conveyed through the body language and facial expression of the preacher. He moves his arms rhythmically up and down and begins to forcefully beat his hand upon the pulpit and Bible in exhortation. High register terms are used like 'toil' (work), 'arrayed' (dressed), 'cast' (thrown), 'perishing' (dying), and the archaic forms 'wherefore', 'unto' 'O' and 'ye'. The archaic conditional with 'so' and 'shall' is present and archaic word order e.g. 'shall He not much more clothe you'. Figurative language includes 'the wages of sin' (requit) and metaphorical reference to 'people' and 'death' is obtained through 'the lilies of the field', 'God so clothes the grass of the field' and 'cast into the oven'. Common religious phrases include 'let us stand, and sing, and praise', 'Amen!', 'the love of God', 'cast out evil', 'Bless you', 'Let's hear hallelujah' and 'thank you Jesus', all normally used in strictly religious contexts. In Italian the language in the two sermons is rather different from that used in the rest of the film. It mirrors the rhetoric typically used in convincing believers at Italian religious events but has a less archaic 'feel'. The ST high register terms are translated by less formal equivalents: '*non fanno alcuna fatica*' ('they do not tire themselves' for 'toil'), '*splendeva*' ('shone' as a substitute for 'arrayed'), '*buttata via*' ('thrown away' for 'cast'), '*sofferenti*' ('suffering' for 'perishing'). Archaic biblical forms are lacking.

An example of migration of the antiquated 'religious' genre into gossipy conversation among girls in the preacher's house is found in the following example:

Elsa's friend: And the Lord say, "Go ye forth and multiply", and Preacher don't multiply yet.

E il Signore dice "andate e moltiplicatevi" e il pastore non si è moltiplicato.

Even Ivan uses a Biblical reference when talking to Elsa:

Ivan: Always talking about milk and honey in the sky. Well no milk and no honey in the sky. Not for you, not for me.

Parli sempre della terra del latte e del miele lassù in cielo. Non esiste nessuna terra del latte e del miele, né per te né per me.

5.2 THE COURT SENTENCE

When Ivan is arrested for assault and grievous bodily harm, the Judge (heard but not seen), firstly states what has been done to help him but then changes his speech act into a verdictive one by passing judgement in clear, grammatical, Jamaican English, faithfully captioned in English, containing no specialized legal terminology as would be expected in real life legal genre. An explanation could be that Jamaican judges are used to sentencing poor wrongdoers for petty crime and accordingly might accommodate their speech to that of the accused by using low register expressions such as ‘it will bring you down to earth’ (*mettere i piedi a terra*). Conversely, Henzell may not have wanted to diverge into legal genre in such a short sequence but rendered the formality of the situation through the use of regular SE which sets the Judge’s voice apart. One culture-bound term the ‘tamarind switch’ is used but is clearly understandable from the images of beating and explained in Italian by the use of ‘verga’ (rod):

Judge: You’ve had every chance to make good, you’ve been taken into the church and given a chance to lead a good Christian life, and instead of that you’ve gone and filled your head with foolishness and violence. Since this is your first offence, I’m not going to send you to jail, I’m going to give you a chance to come to your senses, and it will bring you down to earth once and for all, or there’s little hope for you. Eight strokes of the tamarind switch.

Hai avuto tutte le possibilità per comportarti bene. Sei stato accolto come membro della chiesa, e hai avuto la possibilità di condurre una onesta vita cristiana, e invece di farlo sei fuggito e montato la testa con stupidaggini e violenze. Poiché questo è il tuo primo reato, non ti condannano alla reclusione. Ti darò l’opportunità di tornare in te stesso, e farò in modo che questo ti farà mettere i piedi a terra una volta per tutte. C’è sempre speranza per te. Otto frustate con la verga di tamarindo.

Divergence from the ST is found in the mistranslation of ‘you’ve gone and filled your head with...’ by ‘*sei fuggito e montato la testa*’, [you escaped and have become big-headed]. ‘*Altrimenti non ci sarà speranza per te*’ [otherwise there is no hope for you] would have been an acceptable translation of ‘there’s little hope for you’, which instead was inaccurately translated as ‘*C’è sempre speranza per te*’ [there is always hope for you], with the opposite meaning. Regarding register, the subjunctive form ‘*che questo ti faccia*’ would be used by a judge instead of ‘*che questo ti farà*’.

5.3 RADIO NEWS REPORT

Radio was still a dominant medium in the 1970s and the principle way to divulge news. After Ivan has shot and killed a policeman, the news is reported by the following short item which follows the conventional pattern of this genre, the Five Ws + H rule: who committed the crime, what he did, where, when, why and how he did it. Images of ‘paper boys’ selling newspapers on the streets of Kingston highlight the rapid spread of the latest news on Ivan while the reporter is heard speaking in SE, shadowed correctly in the Italian with minor omissions (small caps) that do not alter the overall sense of the ST. Additional information is provided in the Italian by ‘*dal quale è fuggito*’ [from which he escaped]. Ivan’s name and the place where he committed the crime are incomprehensible (X):

Radio reporter: ...shooting of a motorcycle policeman three days ago. Last night, AFTER ESCAPING IN X (place name). X the wanted man held up a pedestrian and took away his clothes. EARLY THIS MORNING he went to the house of Jose Smith, whom he suspected of informing on him. Not finding Smith, he shot and wounded a woman whom he found in Smith’s room. Police SOURCES have identified her as the same woman who was with the fugitive in the hotel room when police tried to apprehend him.

... tre giorni fa ha sparato a un poliziotto in motocicletta. Ieri notte il ricercato ha fermato un passante impossessandosi dei suoi vestiti. Poi è andato a casa di Jose Smith, l'uomo che sospetta di averlo tradito. Non trovando Smith, ha sparato e ferito una donna che ha trovato nella sua camera. La polizia dice che si tratta della stessa donna che stava nell'hotel dal quale è fuggito quando la polizia ha provato a prenderlo.

5.4 MUSIC INDUSTRY DIALOGUES

As explained above, the music industry in 1970s Jamaica was an important part of the economy and everyday life. Dialogues among workers in the industry can be considered to form a particular genre as they can be distinguished from JC or SE by the use of specialized terminology, expressions and slang exemplified below (small caps), of which ‘boss’ the Jamaican musical culture-bound term (explained above) was mistranslated or omitted:

I HAVE A BOSS SONG – *Ho una canzone davvero forte*
The sound of [...] BIG BOSS COUNTRY – (omitted)
We’ll ROLL again – (omitted)
When it going to be RELEASED? – *Quando verrà distribuita?*
You’re on Hilton’s LABEL? – *Appartieni all’etichetta Hilton?*
Next time you CUT A RECORD – *La prossima volta che fai un disco*
Get your HITS – *Comprate i grandi successi*
I don’t want to BUILD HIM UP – *Non voglio farlo diventare qualcuno.*

A brand new MUSICAL BISCUIT – *Una delizia musicale*

It's IN THE CHARTS – *È nella scaletta*

In the next example of an advertisement on the radio, spoken in Standard RP, alliteration is present and partially maintained in the Italian translation:

Get your hits from Hilton's. See Hilton's for records, record players, radios, musical instruments and every SOUND AROUND, from BEAT TO BACH AND BACK. Hilton's has everything in music.

Comprate i grandi successi da Hilton. Da Hilton troverete cassette, registratori, radio, strumenti musicali, e ogni tipo di musica, dal BEAT FINO A BACH. Da Hilton troverai qualsiasi cosa per la musica.

But not in:

Pre recorded Radio voice: El Numero Uno SUCKS THE SOUND of living SOUL!

Ecco il suono grandioso di "El numero uno"!

The following radio deejay dialogue, a particularly complex subgenre, is full of pitfalls for the translator. Since the only way to transmit information on competing radio stations is through the auditory channel, deejays have to liven up their speech with exclamations (e.g. 'Hey!', 'Wow!'), use exaggerated intonation and stress, onomatopoeia, slang and expressive 'colourful' language, as well as rhyming sentences and a fast pace. No rhyming alternative is offered in the Italian. Much source dialogue is omitted (small caps), sometimes necessarily so for the caption time factor. For example, 'I hear my little ring-a-ling' is an onomatopoeic way of saying 'my phone's ringing', but as it can be heard in the film anyway, it is omitted in the captions. The remaining ST is clearly shadowed by the Italian but, unfortunately, the 1960s/70s deejay slang was mistranslated to create a new 'hybridised' text:

DJ: HEY! Good evening, everybody! Welcome to the big T Show. I'm back IN MY home where the sweet soul sisters ROAM, my mojo working, and my soul cooking and smoking. LOOK, I SAY the T thing goes for four hours long, and it's the sound of soul AND BIG BOSS COUNTRY right here. HEY! I HEAR MY LITTLE RING-A-LING, so let's see what's going on outside in radio land. ... [*Answers the phone*] Hi, hello, good evening SUGAR BOO. You want to hear that song again? HEY, YOU KNOW SOMETHING? All the other jocks been getting this call all day, for this BIG BAD song here by the runaway guy. YOU KNOW, I wonder what he's doing. He's getting his thing together TOO HUH! ANYWAY we'll play it. WOULDN'T YOU BELIEVE that's the same one I had for you. HERE YOU GO. We're gonna do it for you right now. So, turning the nation over. Getting everybody... Wow. I got it for you here. So, it goes SOMETHING like this. Dig it, huh?

Buonasera a voi tutti! Benvenuti al grande T Show! Sono tornato a casa. Dalle mie dolci sorelle. Io sono ancora in piedi, e la mia anima ruggente sta scalpitando. Il mio programma va in onda per quattro ore, per portarvi direttamente il meglio della musica soul. E adesso andiamo a vedere che succede fuori da questa radio. Salve, buonasera. Come va? Vuoi sentire di nuovo quella canzone? Non è uno scherzo sentire che per tutto il giorno la gente richiede la canzone

del fuggitivo. Mi chiedo cosa stia facendo adesso. Se sta prendendo tutte le sue cose. Su vostra richiesta. Ecco la canzone che volete sentire. La mandiamo in onda subito. Sconvolgendo l'intera nazione. Ecco per voi tutti...Eccola qui solo per voi. Comincia così... tenetevi forte, ok?

- **Mojo**

My mojo working (My magic's at work)

Io sono ancora in piedi [I'm still standing]

- **Sugar boo** (darling – referring to a female caller to the show) was misunderstood in the English caption as 'How are you?' and thus translated 'Come va?' [How are you?]
- **Jocks** ('thick' but amiable guys i.e. the other deejays)

All the other jocks been getting this call all day for this big bad song

Non è uno scherzo sentire che per tutto il giorno la gente richiede la canzone

[It's no joke hearing that all day people have been asking for this song].

Here the translator misunderstood the term 'jock' for 'joke' and wrote a plausible caption.

- **Getting one's thing together**

He's getting his thing together too huh! (i.e. He's thinking things out/making plans)

Se sta prendendo tutte le sue cose. [He is getting all his things/belongings together]

- **Dig**

Dig it, huh? (You like it don't you?)

... tenetevi forte, ok? [Hold tight, ok?]

5.5 LANGUAGE OF THE DRUG TRADE UNDERWORLD

Throughout the second half of the film when Ivan gets caught up in the *ganja* trade, JC terminology adapts to this context in several scenes.

- **Ganja** (5 occurrences) – from the Hindi for hemp plant. The leaves of the plant *cannabis sativa* are smoked or chewed as a narcotic; it also has medicinal properties. It was introduced to Jamaica in the 19th century by East Indians, and the word has entered into local combinations (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980):

An informer in the ganja trade.

Un informatore del traffico marijuana.

- **Grass** (1) – In Jamaica plants in general (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980), but specifically marijuana in the film.

Detective: She had grass on her?

Aveva dell'erba? [Did she have grass?]

- **Spliff** (1) – From U.S. slang to spifflicate (to make drunk, to bewilder, to confuse) meaning a smoke of ganja or a ganja cigarette (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980).
- **Stick** – Stem stalk of various plants (Cassidy & Le Page [1967]1980), in this case of *ganja*.

Detective: No more ganja coming into this town, do you hear me? Not a stick. Not a spliff. Not even a puff.

Questa settimana in questa città non circherà marijuana. Non una piantina, né una foglia, neppure un singolo tiro.

[This week in this town there will be no more marijuana around. Not a little plant, nor a leaf, not even a single draw]

- **Protection money** (1) – Money paid to criminals for fear of damage to one's property or person (in this case paid to the trader Jose).
Here there is a mistranslation of 'protection' as a verb instead of part of a noun group:

Jose: But the traders pay me protection money, and one of them got shot.

Ma gli spacciatori mi pagano per proteggere i soldi, e uno di loro è stato ammazzato.

[But the traders/pushers pay me to protect the money, and one of them has been killed.]

- **To handle big money** – to buy or sell goods which are very lucrative.

Jose: You think you can handle big money?

Tu pensi di riuscire a fare un sacco di soldi?

[Do you think you will manage to make loads of money?]

Technically the translation is possible but does not transfer the implied illegality conveyed through the context in an alley where Jose, turned Rude Boy, offers Ivan a 'shady' job after he has learnt that he is broke and desperate.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The film *The Harder They Come* is a discursive event textualised by several domain-specific genres that create generic interdiscursivity and intertextuality manifest in several text types, containing stable and familiar generic configurations. Analysis of three parallel multilingual corpora has enabled investigation of the intersemiotic 'migration' of the JC source text from its oralisation into a written mode (subtitles) in Standard English and Italian, and ensuing cross linguistic hybridisation. The principal strategy employed and achieved in the translation was transfer (full expression and adequate rendering) but with occasional substitution or removal of ST elements through paraphrase, decimation and deletion (Gottlieb 1992: 166) in the variety of generic semiotic codes encountered, creating a generic hybridisation especially in the Italian text.

A prerequisite of any audiovisual translator is proficiency in both source and target languages and familiarity with geographical, socio-cultural and historical realities related to films, television series, documentaries or other programmes. In the case of the translation of *THTC*, the translator/s from JC to Standard English were most likely Jamaican and the Italian counterparts seem to have closely shadowed the English subtitles owing to the evident difficulties entailed in following the original JC dialogue as no screenplay would have been available. As may happen in translation, mistakes and imprecision occur as illustrated above. Many could have been avoided through careful editing of the caption scripts and prior research into Jamaican lexical items, urban slang and domain-specific terminology particularly in the case of the music industry dialogues. Of course this takes time and time is the enemy of subtitlers on contract.

When *THTC* was shot, it was one of a very small number of ‘foreign’ films depicting reality outside the United States or Europe. *THTC* is an early rare example of a film containing dialogues spoken in a non-standard variety of English. It is a film from a country where English is indeed the official language but not spoken in the home and on the streets. The major difficulty for translators of such films is dealing with unfamiliar foreign cultures, varieties of English and creoles. Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the making of foreign films of non European or American origin containing Englishes from all over the world is on the rise and they will certainly pose a growing challenge for European subtitlers of all language combinations.

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