

Domestication and foreignisation in film translation

Margherita Ulrych
SSLMIT, Università di Trieste

1. The illusion of transparency

It is a widespread belief that transparency is a basic feature of translation. Apart from expressions denoting sameness, or equivalence there are a variety of metaphors of translation that highlight this transparency: translation is said to be a reproduction, a copy, a replica, a mirror image of the original; or, it is a transparent pane of glass through which the recipients of the target text (TT) are able to gain access to the source text (ST). The transparent pane of glass conviction emerges most strongly in expressions like "Boris Yeltsin speaks through an Interpreter" (Hermans 1996: 23) or "I've read Calvino" spoken by someone who knows no Italian (Ulrych 1997). Both these statements carry the conviction that the target language (TL) discourse matches that of the source language (SL) and it is thus accepted "as constituting the equivalent of it, as coinciding with it, as being, to all intents and purposes, identical with it" (Hermans 1996: 24)

Clearly, this is an illusion since ST and TT can never be identical in any straightforward way. Translation literature is strewn with discussions related to the issue of equivalence with various authors arguing in favour of different kinds of equivalence, the most well-known being Nida (1964; Nida and Taber 1969) with his distinction between formal and functional or dynamic equivalence. More recently, historically-based perspectives on translation have opened the way to a greater relativity in approaching the whole concept of equivalence (Koller 1995: 196). Equivalence between ST and TT is viewed as depending on socio-cultural and historical factors as well as on the type of text that requires translating and the purpose for translating it. As Lefevere and Bassnett (1998: 2) have put it:

Today we know that specific translators decide on the specific degree of equivalence they can realistically aim for in a specific text, and that they decide on that specific degree of equivalence on the basis of considerations that have little to do with the concept as it was used two decades ago.

The concept of "refracted text" and "refraction" introduced by Lefevere (1985, 1992) provides a vivid image of the translator's mediating presence. While a

reflection evokes the idea of mirroring, of sameness, and thus a copy of an original, refraction involves changes of perception. Lefevere identifies the profound functional similarities that translating shares with other genres that have traditionally been kept apart such as editing, historiography, criticism, anthologising and the production of abridged or simplified texts and points out that they are in fact different forms of rewriting. All these types of texts, and translation is no exception, are processed for particular audiences and are, therefore, mediated for a purpose by the writer or translator.

Similar target-text based views of translation underlie functionalist approaches, which focus their attention on the aim or intended function of the translated (as opposed to the source) text and the nature of the intended addressees. As Roberts (1992: 7) states:

the justification for considering the functions of translation independently from the functions of the source text lies in the fact that the reasons for translation are independent from the reasons for the creation of any source text.

According to the "Skopostheorie" outlined by Vermeer (Reiss and Vermeer 1984; Vermeer 1998), it is the *skopos*, or ultimate aim of translating and translation which determines the translating strategy, with the translator acting as "co-author" (Vermeer 1994: 13). At times, or most of the time according to some authors (Nord 1991a), translators are called upon to recreate a partially new or entirely new text in the target culture (TC). Nord (1991a: 23) goes as far as to state that

Functional equivalence between source and target text is not the "normal" *skopos* of a translation, but an exceptional case in which the "change of functions" is assigned zero value.

Working along similar lines, Honig and Kussmaul (1982) propose function-retaining translation and function-altering translation as two equally acceptable ways of dealing with texts. In the latter case, it is again the target text function and receiving audience of the crosscultural communication that determine the process (Kussmaul 1995).

Research in various sectors of translation studies has therefore shown that all translated texts whether oral or written are subject to the mediating activity of the translator and that mediation generally involves some kind of manipulation. What is interesting, of course, is that manipulation may occur at a conscious or unconscious level. Translators can, on the one hand, "wittingly and willingly manipulate the source text to make it serve their own ends" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 4) or they may do so in order to adhere to the norms dominating their culture at any given point in history. On the other hand, they may be

unwitting, unconscious, "manipulators" because, as members of the target language cultural community¹, they are subject to the ideology that pervades their culture and language². The subtle ways in which ideology impinges on translation are clearly demonstrated by Mason (1992: 34) in his article entitled "Discourse, ideology and translation", which he ends by stating that the task of translation studies is "to trace generic, discursal, and textual developments which reveal ideologies and highlight the mediating role of the translator", in other words, to make visible the underlying ideological filter³. "Given that there is some element of ideology in all writing" Newmark (1997: 57) remarks, "the question is to determine to what extent the translator is exercising her sense of accuracy or submitting to her feelings, or is apparently merely the mouthpiece of the ideology of her time".

Translators themselves often provide important information and interesting insights in the prefaces to their works concerning not only their own thoughts on translation and their approach but also about how the source culture perceives the activity. This, in turn, gives an idea of the cultural and indeed ideological constraints underlying translators' work within particular socio-historical settings. It is, however, in the field of descriptive translation studies (DTS) in general and multimedia translation in particular that the most interesting and far-reaching findings have emerged. The ideological pressures to which a translator is subject and which are at work at different levels of the translation process have, for instance, been identified and grouped together under the concept of *patronage* (Lefevere 1992). The examples Lefevere gives of *patrons* at various

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- 1 In this context, translating into one's L1 is taken as the unmarked form of translation although increasingly, especially in specialised translation, it is customary for translation to be bidirectional, with translators going to and from their language of habitual use.
 - 2 Ideology is taken to mean "the system of imaginary representations within a society" that "impregnates a society's way of thinking, speaking, experiencing and behaving" and thus "a necessary condition for all action and belief within a social formation, and hence crucial in the construction of personal identity" (Giles 1983: 139-50). Ideology is thus used in its "neutral" or "value-free" and not "negative" or "value-laden" sense (Newmark 1997: 56).
 - 3 Naturally, as Fairclough (1989: 85) points out "ideology is most effective when its workings are least visible. ... And invisibility is achieved when ideologies are brought to discourse not as explicit elements of the text, but as the background assumptions which on the one hand lead the text producer to 'textualize' the world in a particular way, and on the other lead the interpreter to interpret the text in a particular way". Nevertheless, as Fairclough concedes, "If one becomes aware that a particular aspect of common sense is sustaining power inequalities at one's own expense, it ceases to *be* common sense, and may cease to have the capacity to sustain power inequalities, i.e. to function ideologically" (ibid.).

moments of history are individuals, such as the Medicis or Louis XIV; groups such as religious bodies or political parties; or institutions, such as publishing firms or school systems. And, we might add, dubbing agencies and the film industry.

The way translators react to these pressures can affect their work in one of two ways. On the one hand, cultural constraints, can curtail translators' freedom of action, as in the case of a text which commands a certain status in the source culture (SC): for instance, what Bassnett and Lefevere (1990: 7) have called a 'metanarrative' ... or 'central text' embodying the fundamental beliefs of a culture, thus a text which figures among the canonised works of a particular culture. On the other hand, dominant cultural norms can constitute the very reason for resistance and innovation (Bassnett 1994). Thus, two profiles of the figure of translator emerge from these two perspectives of the mediating process: one a servile and subservient scribe, following the dictates of institutionalised power systems (Lefevere 1985; Hermans 1998 and Venuti 1995, 1998) and the other, a "subversive scribe" emancipated from the secondary role of transparent filter (Levine 1991: 7). In the former case, translation leads to the acculturation or domestication of the source text in line with the dominant conventions and expectancies prevailing in the TC at any point in time and, more often than not, to the translator's effacement or invisibility. In the latter case, translators take a proactive stance in the act of crosscultural mediation and make themselves visible by choosing to foreignise rather than standardise or normalise the source text in the target culture.

2. Domesticating vs foreignising strategies

The issues related to the translator's visibility and those raised by domestication and foreignisation as a choice between accepting or rejecting TC social norms and constraints have been discussed in depth by Venuti (1994, 1995, 1998, 2000). The point of departure is mainly to be found in Schleiermacher's well-known notion of translation whereby, in the case of domestication, the translator "leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him", while, in the case of foreignisation, the translator "leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him" (Venuti 1995: 19-20). In Venuti's view, the latter strategy entails an emancipation from absolute obedience to target linguistic and textual constraints and highlights translators' visibility insofar as TC readers undergo a clearly "alien reading experience" (1995: 20). The term domestication holds negative connotations for Venuti (1995: 15) as the translation strategy entails adopting a fluent, transparent style in order to minimise the strangeness and foreignness of the ST for TL readers and makes the translator invisible. According to Venuti (1994:

19) domestication is the prevailing norm today and is not restricted to translation. In support of his claim, Venuti quotes the remarks of the poet, Charles Bernstein:

the fact that the overwhelming majority of steady paid employment for writing involves using authoritative plain styles ... is not simply a matter of stylistic choice but of social governance: we are not free to choose the language of the workplace or the family we are born into, though we are free, within limits, to rebel against it.

Such constraints, as well as the related concepts of domestication, or naturalisation, and foreignisation, are also of relevance to film translation. Whitman Linsen (1992: 125) points out that translators often receive

either suggestions or outright orders from "above" (distributor, dubbing studio, and the censorship agencies ...) to alter "foreign" elements and culturally unfamiliar items to make them more palatable and attractive (that is marketable) to the target language audience.

Domestication vs foreignisation underlie a country's decision of whether to opt for subtitling or dubbing as the mode for film translation. Subtitling, for instance, is the standard procedure for translating films in the English-speaking world, which would seem to indicate that these countries are more receptive to the presence and influence of the foreign culture. Yet, this is far from being the case in British and American cultures although it is undoubtedly true for the more "peripheral" cultures (Danan 1991). Arguments of whether or not English audiences are receptive to foreign cultures are greatly undermined by the very obvious fact that the largest share of the film industry is in English. Besides, research has shown that English is the leading exponent of a phenomenon that has come to be called international standardisation (Hermans and Lambert 1998: 117). Within the paradigm of international standardisation it is the culture and language with the greatest prestige and power that exerts the greatest influence on the selection of texts to be translated and on the way they are translated. Negotiation in translation "is, in the end, always slanted towards the privileged language, and ... does not take place on absolutely equal terms" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 4). Clearly then the decision to choose subtitling for the translation of films depends on historical and socio-economic motivations insofar as it "is often influenced less by preference than by custom and financial considerations" (Dries 1995: 26). In some geographical areas, such as Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Portugal and Greece, both subtitling and dubbing are used but for different audiences (Dries 1995). Dubbing is only acceptable for children's movies while subtitling is the norm for adult audiences (Koster 1999). Subtitling in such countries may be interpreted as a conscious choice not to

translate, to enable, that is, the audience to have access to the original language and to allow other cultures into one's own. Seen from this perspective, subtitling may be considered an extreme form of foreignisation.

Dubbing, as opposed to subtitling, originated in countries such as Italy, Spain and Germany as an overt government policy "in order to strengthen linguistic or political unity" or to protect "the purity of a language if it had already fulfilled a linguistic and political unifying role" (Ballester 1995: 159). In France, where great importance is still given to protecting the national language from foreign infiltration, the latter case is true even today. Although, on the surface, this line of action seems to signal a defensive attitude, it may in fact be interpreted in two very different ways. On the one hand, it indeed entails resistance to dominance by hegemonic cultures and languages, which are envisaged as a potential threat to the target culture's identity; on the other, however, it constitutes a hegemonic appropriation of "the other" by means of acculturation and domesticating strategies. In a study on dubbing norms in France, Goris (1993) found that both hypotheses are relevant, but whereas in the case of the dubbing of English films into French the former hypothesis is more probable, in the case of Flemish films dubbed into French the latter offers the most plausible explanation. The end result of both processes is nevertheless a form of local, as opposed to international, standardisation.

The choice of translation strategies is thus also to be seen in the light of how the target language and culture view "the other". In Spain dubbing was chosen as a means to translate foreign films as a defensive strategy based on the "attempt to keep the supremacy of the national language as the expression of cultural, political and economic power" (Camino Gutiérrez-Lanza 1997: 44). Its persistence today as the main translation mode depends not only on consolidated practice and audience preference but also on a renewed defensive attitude in relation to the overwhelming proportion of American films being imported (Ballester 1995: 175 and 178). The Italian situation differs in being rather more permeable to other languages and cultures both on and off the screen, especially in relation to Britain and/or America (Ross 1995). Nevertheless, the general dubbing policy is one of local standardisation, explicitation and naturalisation, and the creativity that characterises Italian dubbing performances (Bollettieri Bosinelli 1994) is done principally in the interests of acculturation and thus domestication.

Whether translators opt for domesticating or foreignising strategies depends on a number of variables and the resulting effect is very much a consequence of "ideological power ... a significant complement to economic and political power" (Fairclough 1989: 33). Undoubtedly domestication is the process through which power is most subtly exerted. Transparency not only entails the erasure of the translator *tout court* as he/she disappears behind the "voice" of the

source text forfeiting any claim to visibility or authority⁴, but also has a subliminal effect on receivers in the TC. Since the receiving culture tacitly accepts that the translator is "invisible", and is generally unaware of his or her discursive presence (Hermans 1996: 27), it has no power to withstand or be alert to any manipulation that is being exerted through the process of translation. The more transparent the text, the more willing the TC audience are to suspend their disbelief and accept the interpretation offered by the TT. If the TT works in the TC as an "original" (i.e. it complies with TC conventions) and is acceptable in that culture, then the translator has effectively, albeit invisibly, imposed his/her voice, or that of his/her patron, on the TC audience.

It would therefore seem to be desirable, for the sake of the status of the translator and loyalty to the audience, to have overtly visible translators openly exerting their claims to power by means of a foreignisation process. But here again the situation is far from clear-cut since foreignisation can take different forms, entail different configurations of status and power, and consequently have different effects. Although these factors pertain to all types of translation, some are particularly prominent in film translation, above all, as we have seen, in the very choice between subtitling and dubbing. Evidence indicates that foreignising strategies produce strikingly contradictory effects. Some types of foreignisation, related mainly to the visual medium, are fully accepted and tolerated by the TC; others cause either mirth or resentment as audiences are jolted out of their state of suspended disbelief and are forced to take stock of the fact they are not only witnessing an unfolding of fictitious events but also that their perception of things is mediated.

Let us now see how the concepts of domestication and foreignisation are linked to the translators' visibility and, in particular, to their textual and discursive presence in dubbed films.

3. The translator's presence in film translation

Decisions regarding which translation strategies to activate in producing an adequate and acceptable target text (Toury 1995) naturally take into account the discourse genre to which the source text belongs, the reasons that have initiated the translation, and the function that the target text is to fulfil within the target

4 The elements that contribute to the visibility or transparency of the translator's presence range from the omission of the name in the credits to the translation strategies used and the linguistic choices opted for. In relation to published translated texts Bassnett (1994: 11) argues that "by leaving out the name, the translator is rendered invisible, and the illusion is created that the translation process has no bearing on a reading of the text".

culture. Frank (1990: 12) has summed up the translation process as "the result of an act of transfer across lingual, literary, and cultural boundaries" which implies "considerations of the source side, the target side, and of the differences between them". In particular, it focuses on the translator's ability to reconcile the demands of four norm areas:

the source text as understood by the translator; the source literature, language, and culture as implicated in the text; the state of translation culture (which includes concepts of translation, previous translations of the same and of other texts, etc.); and the target side (for instance in the form of publisher's policies, local theater conventions, censorship, etc.)

In film translation a number of other factors and operations intervene to make it a rather more complex process, of which translation in the narrow sense of linguistic adaptation is only a part. Various semiotic levels interact and various codes are activated in film communication that go far beyond linguistic recoding (Delabastita 1989: 201, Galassi 1994: 63): literary codes (plot construction, narrative strategies, genres); verbal codes (dialects and registers); non-verbal codes such as proxemic and kinesic codes; and cinematic code (rules and conventions of the cinema). The simultaneous presence of all these semiotic levels makes foreignisation an intrinsic component of film translation: such foreign features of the source film (SF) as setting, costumes, proper names etc, remain in the target film (TF) and are, on the whole, well-tolerated by cinema audiences. They are accepted as being an integral part of the overall illusion. There are, however, other forms of foreignisation that break through the translational illusion (Herbst 1976). These forms are generally the result not of a conscious desire to bring the audience closer to the SC but rather the unwitting consequence of the film translation process and the status that the translator enjoys. Cattrysse (1998: 8) has stated that the overriding principle that characterizes film translation is that "linguistic communication cannot be studied *in abstracto* and that many non verbal elements surround the so-called linguistic communication". While this principle is an accepted fact within translation studies research, it still seems to have had surprisingly little effect on dubbing strategies in the world of film translation⁵. Translators are still expected to produce a rough working version of the script which is as literal as possible (Whitman-Linsen 1992, Herbst 1996) without having access to the film. This means they lack any contextual or visual clues as to what is actually going on. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that many polysemous or ambiguous items in the

5 Research projects carried out in cooperation with film translation professionals, such as the one at the Schools of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of Bologna/Forlì and Trieste are providing interesting results and will, it is hoped, lead to greater awareness and better quality.

SF dialogue are misinterpreted. These infelicities, as well as overtly literal translations, should in theory be spotted and corrected by the dialogue writer or dubbing director later on in the adaptation process⁶. What often happens, however, due mainly to restrictions of time and money, is that these features of the rough translation seep through into the finished version (Herbst 1996).

A further characteristic of dubbed texts is a kind of levelling out or normalisation of spoken language (Goris 1983) with the result that dialogues appear devitalised. According to Herbst (1991, 1996: 111)

it is often possible to tell whether a film is dubbed or is an original production by simply listening to it without even watching the lip movements.

This is an instance of local standardisation and domestication resulting, however, not in transparency but rather in unintentional forms of foreignisation or, at least, of artificiality. Other foreignising effects resulting from flaws and infelicities in the dubbing process which can lead to a breakdown in the translational illusion are due to inconsistencies in character portrayal and dramatic function. Both these aspects are closely connected to the cohesion and coherence of the TF even independently of the SF and to its overall macrostructure.

4. A case study in an Italian context

The general approach to the dubbing of a SF into a TF version is essentially top-down and functionally oriented towards the TC. Thus, any comparison of the SF and TF should be undertaken at the level of macrostructure, taking into account that microstructural shifts may have been introduced by the translating team (Delabastita 1990: 103). Such translational intervention performed on a single sequence of the SF will affect the whole text structure of the TF unless compensatory strategies are adopted, for instance to maintain character or plot coherence. Inconsistencies in dubbing strategies that alter overall cohesion and coherence will, as likely as not, also alter character portrayal and plot. The Italian dubbed version of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* illustrates such an effect. If we observe the TF alone, we will see that it represents a macrostructurally viable text within its sociocultural system. Moreover, given

6 Taylor (1998: 212) effectively demonstrates the crucial importance of the adaptation process by pointing out the pre-eminence of pragmatic function over linguistic form: "if the function of a line of dialogue is to be humorous or frightening or seductive, or whatever, it is the function that must be conveyed, if necessary at the expense of linguistic fidelity".

the Italian target culture's receptivity to other cultures, especially those belonging to the Anglo-Saxon world, audiences will not find the TF's configuration as a non-original film in any way distracting, especially as synchronisation of the linguistic code with the kinesic code as well as lip synchrony are well above average. Whether the TF is open to the same interpretation as the SF is another matter, however. At times, this is the result of domesticating strategies which may be attributed not so much to the translator's intervention but to that of the rest of the dubbing team (dialogue writer, dubbing actors and dubbing director), at others it is due to foreignising strategies, of which the translator may be the conscious or unconscious originator. Let us now examine these strategies in the English and Italian versions of the *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, a film which embodies a whole host of dubbing challenges in one single text⁷.

The French Lieutenant's Woman, in both its original form of a novel by John Fowles and the film adaptation by Harold Pinter, presents an interesting case study of narrative communication (Chatman 1990). The effect is intensified if the translated Italian film version is taken into account. The novel, published in 1969 but set in the years between 1867 and 1869, is written from a dual time perspective, a mid-Victorian and a modern one, and has two endings which are intended to be interchangeable. The two perspectives do not run parallel but constantly intersect and interact in a narrative style which gives rise to what has been called "its stereoscopic vision" (Fowles 1981: x). In the eleven years that elapsed between the time the book was published (1969) and the making of the film (1980) many directors believed that it would be impossible to produce in a visual medium what the author considered a pragmatically acceptable version of the novel (1981: viii). It was Harold Pinter who finally hit upon the solution of having two plots, the film and the film within the film. This also dealt very effectively with the thorny problem of the two endings. The cast and crew making the film are located in modern times while the film within the film is set in Victorian England. The two plots are increasingly juxtaposed on the screen so that the actors and the characters they play merge into each other. Indeed, at the very end Mike, the actor, calls his co-star Anna not by her real name but by her character's name, Sarah.

The juxtaposition of modern and Victorian scenes in the film as well as the numerous instances of "overt narration" (Chatman 1978: 219-276) push the narrator to the fore and disrupt the discursive flow of the narrative. At these

7 The SF contains various forms of dialect ranging from the temporal and social to the geographical and regional, which include difficulties related not only to accent but also to terms of address, intertextual reference and intersemiotic overlap between the visual and verbal codes. For a detailed analysis of these aspects see Ulrych 1996.

moments, especially at the beginning, the audience are forced to relinquish their willing suspension of disbelief. Gradually, however, they begin to be lulled back into suspending their disbelief as the plots become increasingly intertwined and they realise that what they are in fact seeing is two perspectives on the same relationship between two people – Anna/Sarah and Mike/Charles. This element is successfully carried over into the Italian dubbed version. On the other hand, domesticating strategies, like the conformity to prevailing SC acting conventions by the dubbing actress playing Sarah, lead to a distinctly different portrayal of the female protagonist whose character is fundamental to the interpretation of the film's theme.

In the SF Sarah Woodruff emerges as a very strong, independent and powerful character. She is also extremely enigmatic and remains a mystery to the end. Nevertheless, all her actions, contradictory though they may appear, have a precise goal and Sarah is very much in control not only of her own situation but also of her relationship with Charles Smithson, an aristocrat with a marked sense of duty and an attachment to Victorian conventions. Sarah, too, lives in Victorian times but she belongs to a low social class. Yet, she has set herself beyond the constraints of time and class. She is timeless, insofar as her manner of behaving and her views are projected towards the future. She is classless in that she has rejected a conventional place in society: she is too educated to feel at home in the class she was born into, but unable, given the Victorian social structure, to be accepted into a higher one. Sarah has chosen freedom and constantly challenges society's expectations by flouting convention. She dresses in black, has the habit of staring out to sea, thinks nothing of staring directly at Charles, a man and her social superior, and swishes her skirt provocatively in his presence. All Sarah's actions, gestures, body movements and speech attributes are semantically loaded and function as signposts for the audience in interpreting the overall theme of the film: Sarah's continuing search for freedom and self-realisation in an age when women's emancipation was still to be won, and her role in fostering Charles's evolutionary progress towards freedom away from the shackles of Victorian puritan morality and convention.

These aspects of Sarah's character are toned down in the TF. This may in part be ascribed to Italian dubbing practice. Dubbing actors in Italy adopt an expressive manner which is in keeping with an Italian acting code and thus of a domesticating strategy. As a consequence, the paralinguistic features of the actress dubbing Sarah are such as to portray her as a submissive, soft-spoken young woman in search of a rescuer. This clashes with the SF Sarah whose vocal characteristics enhance the semiotic messages that her body movements and manner of dressing convey. Even when she is ostensibly in need of help, she maintains her dignity, her independence and her control over any dyadic interaction, be it with an equal, an inferior or a superior.

While these inconsistencies between SF and TF pass unnoticed in the TC as the TF is consistent in its character portrayal of Sarah, the following example strikes a jarring note which even the most tolerant of audiences is bound to notice. Ernestina, betrothed to be married to Charles, is the very essence of Victorian demureness and propriety. This is an essential element of the film since Ernestina acts as a kind of foil to Sarah's unconventionality. While out walking together, at the beginning of the film, Charles and Ernestina see Sarah staring out to sea at the end of the Cobb, a pier jutting out to sea. Charles is, as yet, unaware of the woman's identity but is alarmed for her safety and asks Ernestina who she is. The following dialogue takes place:

ERNESTINA: "Oh, it's poor Tragedy."
 CHARLES: "Tragedy?"
 ERNESTINA: "The fishermen have a grosser name for her."
 CHARLES: "What?"
 ERNESTINA: "They call her the French Lieutenant's (*hesitates and lowers her voice*) Woman."
 CHARLES: "Do they?"

In the Italian TF the dialogue is as follows:

ERNESTINA: "Ah, è la povera Tragica."
 CHARLES: "Tragica?"
 ERNESTINA: "I pescatori la chiamano con un nome più colorito."
 CHARLES: "Quale?"
 ERNESTINA: "La donna del tenente francese, (*with the same tone*) la puttana."
 CHARLES: "Davvero?"

The explicit use of the word "puttana", the Italian translation of "whore", by Ernestina is totally out of character. It is, moreover, inconsistent with the visual channel since Ernestina hesitates in the English SF before mentioning the word "woman", whose even remote similarity to the unmentionable "whore" is enough to cause her embarrassment. Admittedly, this was not an easy scene to deal with: Italian syntax does not allow for the postponement of "donna" to end position and the need for lip synchronisation is foregrounded since this is a close-up shot. Nevertheless, one feels that a more felicitous translational choice could have been made. As it stands, the utterance has a totally different illocutionary force in the SF and the TF. The loss of the pause indicating uncertainty, given the longer duration of the Italian translation of the utterance as a whole, combined with the tone in which "puttana" is uttered conveys a forthrightness bordering on brazenness. In this instance, the translation strategy used neither enhances the audience's interpretation of the SF nor creates a transparent TF but rather has the

effect of highlighting the metalinguistic and translational elements of the dubbing process.

5. Conclusions

The most important goal of making a dubbed version is that it should be absolutely convincing to the audience. Dubbing should create the perfect illusion of allowing the audience to experience the production in their own language without diminishing any of the characteristics of the original language, culture and national background of the production. Any irregularities can destroy this illusion and will bring the audience back to reality. The work is well done when no one is aware of it. (Dries 1995: 9).

These words seem to indicate that domestication is what current dubbing strategies are to aim for. If "the work is well done", if domestication is fully effective, the receptors of the TF will believe that they have seen an "original". They will be under the illusion that just as the visual and non-verbal features remain the same, so the linguistic adaptation is a replica of the SF. Yet, as we have seen, this is by no means the case. Since "in normal intercultural communication, neither the initiator nor the recipient of the translated text is able to check on whether or not the TT really conforms to their expectations" (Nord 1991b: 94), domestication can conceal incongruities and inconsistencies in respect of the SF, without anyone, except those involved in the mediation process, being any the wiser.

Although film translation is very much a matter of teamwork, it is the dubbing director who, like "the publisher ... knows the kind of product that is likely to fit the intended audience" (Nida 1998: 135) and who has the ultimate responsibility for coordinating all the operations that enter into the process of transferring a film from the SC to the TC and of adapting it to fit TC conventions. Of all the participants who have a mediating function in the translation process, however, it is the translator who can be visible or transparent, who can, that is give rise to foreignising or domesticating effects over and above the individual contributions to the overall product.

In view of the pressures and constraints to which translators are subject, they cannot be held responsible for their invisibility nor are they in a position, given the medium, to adopt a policy of resistance in order to free the receiver of the translation, "as well as the translator, from the cultural constraints that ordinarily govern their reading and writing" (Venuti 1995: 303). The fact remains however, that "translators, not unlike the scribes of ancient or premodern civilizations, have always occupied subservient positions among the dominant professions of the cultural sphere" (Simeoni 1998: 7). In assuming and accepting such a

position, translators endorse the positive and negative effects of both foreignising and domesticating processes and do nothing to improve standards in the film translation industry. Perhaps, the most fruitful condition for translators to aim for is loyalty to the TC audience, loyalty, that is, in the sense used by Nord (1991b: 29) as "a moral principle indispensable in the relationships between human beings, who are partners in a communication process". This, as Nord (1997: 125) states, is not to be confused with the concept of fidelity or faithfulness, which is the "relationship holding between the source and target *texts* but is rather to be viewed as "an interpersonal category referring to a social relationship between *people*" (emphasis in the original). Both domestication and foreignisation can enjoy a positive role in the translation process if translators can strike a balance between the SC and TC by presenting an authentic and original TF which is at the same time loyal to the SF message and overall effect. Being aware of the transparent pane of glass fallacy does not necessarily need to detract from the enjoyment of film-going on the part of TC audiences.

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