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The Italian Audiovisual Translation of Game of Thrones: A Comparison of the Dubbed and Subtitled versions

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Dedicata a te papà, che mi hai insegnato
a non mollare mai.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of my dissertation is to explore the Italian audiovisual translation in the American TV series *Game of Thrones* (dir. Benioff, Weiss, 2011). I decided to opt for this topic because I wanted to combine two topics that have always fascinated me: audiovisual translation and cinema. In particular, I wanted to investigate the differences between the Italian dubbed and subtitled versions and the original counterparts by comparing them and analysing the translation choices employed to adapt the show to the Italian audience.

Through a corpus-based study of some episodes of the show, I will attempt to identify the elements that are translated or transcribed differently and explore the reasons behind these translation choices. This approach will shed light on the translation strategies used in dubbing and subtitling, as well as the challenges that arise when translating audiovisual products. The whole corpus consists of three episodes from the series, each analysed in relation to its Italian dubbed version and the automatic subtitled versions offered by YouTube.

The first Chapter will explore the features of audiovisual translation, with a particular focus on the different types of screen translation and the translating strategies. Furthermore, it will investigate the challenges that can arise when translating audiovisual content, addressing issues such as cultural references, loan words and the translation of taboo words. I will then focus on the two primary methods of audiovisual translation, dubbing and subtitling, highlighting their distinctive features and the varying practices across different countries. Lastly, this first chapter will discuss dark humour and the way that it is handled in the dubbing process.

The second Chapter will turn a focus to *Game of Thrones*, introducing the complex world of Westeros and the main characters. Furthermore, the historical inspirations for the series will be explored, shedding light on the connections between the fictional world and real historical events.

The third and last Chapter will present the corpus analysis, providing a detailed examination of the translation choices made in the dubbed and subtitled versions of some selected episodes from the series. A comparative study of the dialogues from three episodes will be included, where some scenes from the original version will be

compared with the Italian and subtitled versions. It will then examine the titles of some episodes along with some recurrent terms throughout the series, with a particular focus on the Dothraki language, a constructed language created specifically for the television series, and the way it is rendered in the target dubbed version. Being an artificial, structurally complex language, it almost always has no direct equivalents in the original language (English), thus forcing translators to employ adaptation strategies.

The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the findings, summarising the key differences between the Italian versions and the original episodes and the reasons behind these translation choices.

Chapter 1: AUDIOVISUAL LANGUAGE

1.1 Features of audiovisual translation

The term translation refers to the entire process of translation-adaptation and acting. In terms of dubbing it is a collective operation, consisting on several phases: it starts with a 'literal translation' of the source dialogues, which is followed by an adaptation or rewriting adapted to the constraints of the various codes, and it ends with the dubbers acting under the guidance of a dubbing director. Based on the Russian linguistic, semiologist and translator Roman Jakobson, translation can be divided into: endolingual translation, i.e. rephrasing within the same language, interlingual translation, which concerns the interpretation of messages from one language by another language, and inter-semiotic translation, in which linguistic signs are interpreted by non-linguistic signs or vice versa (Pavesi, 2005: 20-21).

When translating for dubbing, various factors must be taken into consideration, especially the performance of the actors, the locations, the background and gestures, around which the new verbal text will be then moulded. In audiovisual translation, the translator is a figure who with the help of a verbal code, reformulates what has previously been expressed through speech. Whereas in other genres they only deal with the language, in dubbing they also have to consider and deal with the uneditable aspect of the film, on which he cannot intervene. Audiovisual text requires a dual channel of communication, one verbal and one visual, capable of displaying realistic situations in which the two planes are well integrated so as to reproduce the overall sense of the work (Minutella, 2009: 36).

The definition of audiovisual translation has changed through the years. The complexity of audiovisual products, a combination of verbal signs and images or sounds, made their translation even more problematic. On audiovisual translation, there are various definitions: some studies devoted to the translation of audiovisual products refer to it as "film translation", a type of translation focused on films, but which does not include TV programmes or other materials (Minutella, 2009: 4-8).

In the 1990s the term Language Transfer was introduced, to refer to a film or television programme that has been adapted and marketed to a Target audience who is not familiar with the language of the original version/in which the original was produced. It can be either visual or aural: the first one is referred to as subtitling and the text is overlaid to the image, while the second one concerns the process of replacing the original voice track of the film or TV programme with a new one and is known as dubbing.

Language Transfer is a form of translation which only affects the verbal part of the original work, altering the content by shortening the source text and, sometimes, by adding irrelevant information.

Another fundamental term related to films is audiovisual translation, or ATV, which deals with the translation of dialogues from film, television and video media. The term *screen translation* is used to denote all the products displayed on a screen (TV, cinema or computer screen). On the other hand, the term Multimedia translation, introduced by the British-Austrian translator Snell-Hornby (1996: 29-45), includes a wide range of products (theatre, comics, videos, TV, cinemas, web pages). Multimedia texts can be considered as a sub-group of texts written with the purpose of being spoken (e.g. political speeches, academic lectures, songs, plays for the stage and film scripts) but can also include visual texts.

Several scholars in film translation regard dubbing and subtitling as an adaptation of the source text rather than a translation. The difference between translation and adaptation has always been a subject of debate among experts in the field, but no conclusion has ever been reached to a conclusion. Whenever or not consider dubbing and subtitling as a type of translation depends on the meaning one gives to the term translation: they would be excluded if we consider it in a restrictive sense, whereas they can be considered translations if we interpret the latter as an act of interpretation and manipulation which involves both the original text and the culture and target audience.

Audiovisual translation is more transformative, as it involves cuts, changes and substitutions, depending on the medium and target audience. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to use the term adaptation, as the word translation generally pertains to processes that aim to achieve equivalence and to replicate the semantic and syntactic

components of the source text. This stance is subject to criticism for several reasons. Firstly, translation choices are often led by extra-linguistic reasons. For instance, translation of film titles is mainly driven by commercial reasons rather than linguistic accuracy. Secondly, numerous interlingual translations do not conform with the traditional definition of translation, but are still considered as such.

1.1.1 Types of screen Translation

There are different types of audiovisual translation. Gambier (2003:172-178) identified fourteen types of screen translation, making a distinction between “dominant” and “challenging”. By dominant he refers to the most common types of audiovisual translation, while by challenging to those types who are less common and more difficult.

Among the ‘dominant types’ we find:

- **Dubbing or lip synchronization:** the original dialogue spoken by the characters is replaced with one in the target language. It implies a synchronization between the dubbed voice and the lip and body movements of the actor.
- **Interlingual subtitling:** a written translation of the dialogues is added to the original spoken dialogue, which remains unchanged.
- **Voice over or half dubbing:** it is usually used for the translation of documentaries or interviews as it is cheaper than dubbing. It consists in turning down the volume of the original language and adding its translation dubbed by an actor. It demands a certain degree of reduction, as the translated text starts after and finishes before the original one. There is no need for lip synchronization.
- **Free commentary:** it is usually used in the translation of children’s programmes or documentaries and it dwells in an adaptation for a new

audience through additions, omissions and comments. synchronization is achieved through the projection of screen images rather than the soundtrack.

- **Simultaneous or sight translation:** A script or subtitles already prepared in another language serve as a source text. In this translation the input is visual rather than oral. It is a technique adopted in film festivals and 'breaking news' on television.
- **Intralingual dubbing:** the original voices of the dialogue are replaced with other voices in another language using a different accent or vocabulary, whatever the original one is too difficult to understand. It was used with the film Harry Potter, which was dubbed into American English for American kids.

The 'challenging types' include:

- **Intralingual subtitles** (or closed captions): transcription of the dialogues, in the same language, that aim to explain to the deaf what the characters are saying to each other. They can also be inserted in Italian films where dialects are spoken.
- **Surtitles:** they are common for the translation of operas and foreign languages theatre performances.
- **Audio description:** it is a double dubbing for the blind and visually impaired that involves the reading of what is going on on the screen (actions, facial expressions, costumes, etc.) and the sound track of the dialogue, with no music effects.

1.1.2 Film Spoken Dialogue

Film language aims to recreate a spontaneous conversation or a real and authentic use of language. Scripted dialogues are intended to appear authentic, but they usually conceal a planned discourse. The scriptwriter manages to replicate a spontaneous, unplanned

conversation. According to Minutella (2009: 30), three criteria can be adopted to distinguish film language from other types of text: the first is that film language is intended to be heard, not listened; its discourse is planned and carefully constructed (as opposed to spontaneous conversation) and the communication between the characters is not natural, because it takes place between the director and the audience. Film dialogue belongs to “written to be spoken”, or “written to be spoken as if not written” variety of language.

Film language aims to recreate a spontaneous conversation or a real and authentic use of language. The issue of the shift between spoken and written mode becomes particularly relevant in subtitling, as it implies a change of mode from the spoken to the written form. This implies a synthesis, as the original dialogue is adapted according to the space and time available on screen and in the scene. During this process, typical elements of spoken language (such as repetitions, hesitations, false starts, intonations and stress patterns) are often the first to be eliminated or reduced. It is essential to analyse in subtitling which aspects are modified and the reasons for these changes. In the case of dubbing, on the other hand, the oral mode of the source text is retained and the conversation of the dubbed version must appear spontaneous. However, dubbed dialogue often lacks spontaneity. Some of the terms used in dubbing lack credibility in informal conversation and are characterised by peculiar lexical choices. First versions of Italian dubbed films were characterised by the use of a formal Italian (considered ‘correct’), imposed by government laws; regional dialects were prohibited and censorship also imposed the cut of some scenes and words from dialogues. Films intended for the public favoured a flat and overly formal linguistic style, avoiding slangs, colloquial expressions, swear words and regional and social variations of the source language. However, in recent times, the language in Italian dubbed films has evolved and become more natural, both syntactically and lexically.

Filmic translation is influenced by synchronism and jokes that limit the adapter’s freedom of action based on the visual context, which remains unchanged in the process. Filmic translation, as any type of translation, analyses both the source and target language through different approaches. The source language is at the basis of every translation choice, as its impact on the final product is greater than the target language.

A first approach is the descriptive one, which considers the translated text as part of the target culture, comparing it with other works, original or translated, from the same culture. The translation process may consist of the literary translation of the source, but also translation routines can be employed. Another approach focuses on the source language, in particular on its features and how they occur in the translated text, assessing the degree of adherence between the translated text and the source one (Pavesi, 2005:61).

1.1.3 Translating Strategies

The translator-subtitler's choice of which strategy to adopt depends on five main factors: the type of source text, the genre of the audiovisual product, the audience, which languages are involved and the distance or closeness that exists between the source language and culture and the target language and culture. Henrik Gottlieb has identified the most used translating strategies among professionals (Cimini, 2016: 19-22):

- **Expansion:** it is used where it is necessary to provide further information to the viewer, thus enabling them to grasp extralinguistic and extracultural references unknown to him.
- **Paraphrase:** consists of modifying the source text, whose message is displayed to the viewer in a different way. Although both expressions, the original and the translated one, differ in both form and content, the message is conveyed through situational equivalence. This strategy is mainly adopted for the translation of idiomatic expressions where the original does not find a perfect correspondent in the target language.
- **Transposition:** corresponds to faithful translation (word for word). In this case the two messages, that of the source text and the translated one, are equivalent. This strategy is used exclusively when there are no particular limitations of space and time.

- **Limitation:** consists of the literal replication of sentences from the original product in the translated version. Limitation may concern proper names, allocutive formulas, greetings, foreign song texts and quotations in other languages. It is effective if only adopted if one wants to reproduce a particular effect of the original version or to fulfil a specific function.
- **Transcription:** this strategy is used to translate non-standard source language expressions, dialects and puns. It requires creativity but also caution from the translator-subtitler to avoid inappropriate choices that could result in misplaced or unnatural expressions.
- **Dislocation:** concerns the translation of communicative phenomena of a particular visual or acoustic nature. It is a translation influenced by the context and constructed from it.
- **Condensation:** strategy in which the message is reworked and synthesised. The form changes but not the content.
- **Reduction:** the message is summarised in terms of both form and content. Only information considered essential for understanding is retained.
- **Deletion:** consists of eliminating some parts of the source text (usually repetitions, unnecessary words or information not deemed essential for understanding the action).
- **Omission:** concerns the complete omission of parts of the source text. The translator-subtitler uses this strategy when it is not possible in any way to translate the original.

1.1.3.1 Translation Routines

Adaptors often make use of catchphrases and repetitive formulas, the so-called translation routines, which allow them to lexically render colloquial or sub-standard speech of the source language through slang expressions. These are ‘cinematic linguistic

stereotypes', terms that are also reproduced in dubbing independently of the source text. The most common calques include (Pavesi, 2005: 49):

- *Assolutamente* ("absolutely")
- *Bene* ("well" meaning "ecco")
- *Ci puoi scommettere* ("you can bet" for "*puoi starne certo*")
- *Fare la differenza* ("make the difference" for "*essere importante*")
- *L'hai detto* ("you said" meaning "*proprio così*")
- *La sai una cosa?* ("you know something?" for "*sai che ti dico?*")
- *Scordatelo* ("forget about it" for "*non importa*", "*lascia stare*")
- *Sì signore* ("yes sir", "no sir" meaning "*sì*", "*no*")
- *Stai scherzando?* ("are you joking/ you must be joking/ are you kidding?" instead of "*scherzi/ dici sul serio*")

In some cases, there are overextensions of routines to cases where the translation of the term is unjustified in the original dialogue.

1.1.3.2 Standardisation

Italian dubbing is characterised by the use of a number of strategies, including standardisation (or normalisation), which is reflected most on vocabulary and morphosyntax. The standardisation law involves the replacement of textual relations in the original text with more common and obvious relations in the target language. Different translation approaches are adopted, depending on the type of audiovisual product and the way in which it is broadcast and shared: for prestigious works, the translation will be more easily adapted to conventional models, while for less successful works it will tend to follow established repertoires of the target language.

1.1.3.3 The Interference law

In translation there is a tendency to transfer phenomena concerning the structure and the layout of the source text to the target text, which may manifest themselves as negative interference when they lead to deviations from the source text, or as positive interference when they increase the frequency with which a phenomenon occurs in the target language. Interference is a default process, resulting from the continuous transition during the translation process from source code to target code.

1.2 Translation challenges and problems in audiovisual translation

1.2.1 Cultural references

The source dialogue may contain words and expressions that refer to specific aspects of the culture of the source language, often completely unknown in the target culture, raising problems in translation. Cultural reference can concern the fields of food, social costumes, religion, politics, measurements or names of places and people. It is an aspect of the text that is particularly significant in film translation, specifically in dubbing, where explanatory notes cannot be included and a certain directness is required. When a translator is confronted with such words or expressions, they are not always able to understand the reference and will therefore have to carry out research to understand what the source text is referring to, resorting to dictionaries, Internet and eventually native speakers. Once the meaning has been identified, the translator will have to make a choice: retain the element or modify it, replacing it with one that is more familiar to the target audience. A commonly adopted strategy in dubbing is that of cultural substitution. For instance, in the film *Dirty Dancing* (dir. Emile Ardolino, 1987) *sweet gherkins* are reduced to “*cetriolini*” and “*brownies*” are turned into “*miele*”. In the film *Ghost- Fantasma* (dir. Jerry Zucker, 1990) the request “can I have a little more cream?”, which refers to the fact that Americans put cream in their coffee, is adapted to the more Italian habit of putting milk in coffee “*scusa, mi puoi passare il latte?*”.

Other examples of cultural reference and of cultural substitution in the dubbed version can be found in the film *Notting Hill* (dir. Roger Mitchell, 1999). In a scene (see Figure

1), the protagonist, William, is talking to his work colleague in their bookshop. In the conversation “*Ringo Starr*”, the drummer of the Beatles, is mentioned as an example of a famous person he had seen. In the Italian dubbed version, the reference is turned into the actor Roger Moore, who played James Bond (Minutella, 2009: 75-76).

MARTIN Would be exciting though, wouldn't it, if someone famous came into the shop? Do you know -- this is this is pretty amazing actually -- but I once saw Ringo Starr .	Sarebbe eccitante, però, non trovi? Se uno famoso entrasse nel negozio. Hu?...lo sai? E' una cosa davvero strabiliante, ma una volta ho visto Roger Moore .
WILLIAM Where was that?	E dove stava?
MARTIN Kensington High Street. At least I think it was Ringo . It might have been that man from 'Fiddler On The Roof,' you know Toppy .	A Kensington High Street. O almeno credo fosse Roger , poteva anche essere quel tizio di... 'Il gioiello del Nilo', sai, Devito .
WILLIAM Topol .	No, Devito .
MARTIN Yes, that's Top- Topol .	Sì, quello quello, Devito .
WILLIAM Mm-hmm. Actually Ringo Starr doesn't...doesn't look at all like ... Topol .	Ah ah... In effetti Roger Moore non somiglia affatto a De Vito .
MARTIN Yes but he was... he was quite a long way away from me.	Sì ma era, era piuttosto lontano da me.

Figure 1: Dialogue from *Notting Hill* (dir. Roger Mitchell, 1999)

Another reference in the film is to the “Cookie Monster” (Figure 2), a muppet character in the TV show *123 Sesame Street*, which is replaced with “*Spice Girl*” in the Italian version.

more popular, <i>Spice Girl</i> .	
WILLIAM The radical hair-dressers where everyone comes out looking like the Cookie Monster , whether they want to or not...	I parrucchieri radicali, dove tutti quelli che escono sembrano una delle Spice Girl in versione 'i capelli sono miei e me li gestisco io'.

Figure 2: Dialogue from *Notting Hill* (dir. Roger Mitchell, 1999)

In some cases, the reference may be retained in the dubbed version. Names of people, places and objects are usually subject to different translation strategies that adapt them to the target audience.

1.2.2 Loan Words, Anglicisms and calques

Languages have always influenced each other through culture and language contact. In particular, the Italian language has been influenced by English for decades, to the extent that when observing contemporary Italian, one can notice that many words come from or have been borrowed from English. Borrowings are foreign words that are inserted in the vocabulary of a language; they can be divided into two broad categories: loanwords (in our case Anglicisms) and calques.

Anglicism is a form of borrowing in which an English word which has become part of the vocabulary of the borrowing language and the source word maintains its original linguistic form or can be partially adapted. There can be different types of Anglicisms: direct anglicisms (the English linguistic form is retained), adapted anglicisms (the original linguistic form either orthographically or morphologically modified or adapted). Some examples of direct anglicisms are: bed and breakfast, penny, okay, airbag, babysitter, scooter, computer; adapted anglicisms include: *scellino*, *sportivo*, *manageriale*, *dollaro*. Anglicisms are extremely popular in Italian, including in dubbing, in some specific fields such as: information technology, sport, advertising, music, fashion and economics and among young people. They often occur in films intended for a young audience, as they are more likely to use English words in everyday conversation. An example of anglicism can be found in the film *Four Weddings and a funeral*, when the waiter asks the protagonist: “a drink, sir?”, which in the Italian version is translated as “*un drink, signore?*”. In dubbed films calques are also frequent. As noted by Minutella (2009: 81), calques are less faithful copies of the English linguistic item, as they do not reproduce completely the external features of the original, but they adapt the foreign word to a greater extent. Calques contribute to making dubbed dialogue sound unnatural. They can be lexical, syntactic or pragmatic. Lexical or semantic calques take place when a word in the target language adopts a new meaning based on the foreign word (e.g. the verb *realizzare* means *rendersi conto* from the English “to realise”). On the other hand, structural calques occur when target language elements are used, but the structure remains that of source language expressions (e.g. *fine settimana* from weekend or *buon fine settimana* from *have a nice*

weekend). The use of semantic and structural calques may be indicative of a dubbed dialogue.

Some of the most common calques in the language of dubbed films, which have become translation routines:

- *Piove a catinelle* (from the expression “it’s raining cats and dogs”)
- *È un gioco da ragazzi* (“It’s a piece of cake”)
- *Gettare la spugna* (“throw in the towel”)
- *In bocca al lupo* (“break a leg” meaning “good luck”)
- *Tirare le cuoia* (“kick the bucket”)
- *Nessun problema* (“no problem” for “*non fa niente*”)
- *Dacci un taglio* (“cut it out” rather than “*smettila, piantala*”)

1.2.3 Translation of taboo words

Since the 1950s, the use of profanity in films has increased. Modern British and American films feature a significant number of curse words, particularly in casual dialogue and informal contexts, including instances of slang. Swearwords have two functions: expressing hostility or rage and conveying familiarity or intimacy. They pose problems when translated, especially if the target culture rejects specific terms or references.

The translation of taboo and irreverent language in American films, known as Turpiloquy, tends to be often toned down or left out in dubbed versions, either due to forms of censorship or because of the translation difficulties involved. As in dubbed versions exclamations such as “Oh God/Christ!”, “For God’s/Christ’s sake”, “bloody hell”, commonly occurring in English films, may sound too rude or blasphemous when translated into Italian, they tend to subject a shift towards more guarded registers, opting for euphemisms or unusual expressions that deviate from customary usage (e.g. “It’s a goddamn shame” is usually translated into Italian as “*È davvero una vergogna*”). Many stereotyped Italian swearwords are directly influenced by the vocabulary used in dubbed movies. Typical examples are the words “*fottuto*” or “*fottiti*”, which translate the English “fucking”, or “fuck you” (Pavesi, 2005: 47).

The translator's choice in Italian dubbing is crucial, but can be limited due to the smaller repertoire compared to that of the mother tongue, often leading to repetitive and predictable choices (e.g. the expletive "son of a bitch" is often translated in Italian versions as both "*figlio di puttana*" and "*maledizione/maledetto*"). Turpiloquy does not necessarily require a translation faithful to the source text, as it merely highlights moods, attitudes and feelings. The translator might decide to omit the word retaining the meaning of the utterance or to use their creativity making up new insults, taking into account the constraint of lip synch (for example "bitch" can be rendered as "*stronza*").

The choice of an appropriate Italian equivalent for a taboo word or expression in English will depend upon several factors, among which of primary importance are the target audience and censorship. If the film is to be shown on television, or it is for a young audience, swearwords are more likely to be adapted and rendered less vulgar (Minutella, 2009: 87-89).

1.3 Dubbing and Subtitling

Dubbing and subtitling are two forms of translation that should not be seen as opposites from a translating and linguistic point of view. Subtitling is the only form of audiovisual translation that contributes to the spontaneous acquisition of foreign languages. Linguistically speaking, subtitling guarantees access to the original dialogues for the most widely spoken languages as long as these are known to the audience. Dubbing, on the other hand, offers a homogeneous discourse, replacing the original dialogue with an oral one in another language, preventing the viewer from dividing his visual attention between the images and the subscribed language. The choice of translation form depends on linguistic, but also economic and cultural-historical reasons. The advent of sound in Italy since the 1930s inevitably led to the choice of dubbing. However, the costs for dubbing are significantly higher than for subtitling. As a result, the practice of dubbing is more widespread in rich and densely populated countries, where the process can be economically supported. Only recently, subtitling has started to be used on DVDs as well, and these often offer both translation options.

Dubbing represents a target-oriented translation strategy used to reduce or eliminate the foreign elements of the source text. On the other hand, subtitling is a source-oriented translation, as it preserves the linguistic features of the original version and provides a concise written translation of the dialogue. Subtitles promote the spread and use of foreign languages and, unlike dubbing, make the viewer aware of the foreign origin of the film (Pavesi, 2005: 20).

Díaz Cintas (2001: 49-50) has identified some advantages and disadvantages of dubbing and subtitling, which are summarised in the following table in Figure 3:

Dubbing	Subtitling
- expensive - there is a loss of the original dialogue - it is more time-consuming and difficult - it pretends to be a domestic product, as it hides the foreignness of the film - the voices of dubbing actors may be repetitive (the same dubbing actor may dub several different actors) - it respects the image and polysemiotic nature of the original - it is more suitable for younger children and less educated people - it implies a minor reduction of the original dialogue - it allows different actors to speak at the same time - the audience can focus on the images	- cheap - it respects the original dialogue - the procedure is quite fast - it favours foreign language learning - original voices are retained (less repetitive) - it does not respect the image and the polysemiotic nature of the original - it is more suitable for the deaf and hard of hearing, and for immigrants - it implies a major reduction of the original dialogue - it does not allow different actors to speak at the same time - the audience's attention is divided between images, written word and original dialogue - original dialogues are difficult to manipulate - viewers cannot follow the story if they do not read the subtitles - it is constrained by space and time limits - it uses two linguistic codes, which may lead to confusion in viewers - passage from oral to written mode, therefore diasemiotic nature of the translation. Its semiotic composition is: Speech + Image + Music and Effects + Writing
- it allows a greater manipulation of the dialogue - viewers can follow the story even if they get distracted from the image - it is constrained by lip synchronization - it uses only one linguistic code, i.e. the target language - it retains the oral mode of the original i.e. isosemiotic nature of the translation. Its semiotic composition is: Speech + Image + Music and Effects	- original dialogues are difficult to manipulate - viewers cannot follow the story if they do not read the subtitles - it is constrained by space and time limits - it uses two linguistic codes, which may lead to confusion in viewers - passage from oral to written mode, therefore diasemiotic nature of the translation. Its semiotic composition is: Speech + Image + Music and Effects + Writing

Figure 3: Advantages and disadvantages of dubbing and subtitling

1.3.1 Dubbing and subtitling countries

Europe has been divided into two groups according to the mode of audiovisual translation they prefer. Scholars state that dubbing is more widely used in larger countries (like France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Austria and Switzerland), while smaller countries, usually in the South and North of Europe (like Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Wales), prefer subtitling. In many countries dubbing

and subtitling coexist (e.g. Greece and Italy, both of which are dubbed countries but it is also possible to find subtitled films or programmes). The position of Great Britain, meanwhile, seems to be more complex and ambiguous. England ranks neither among the dubbing or subtitling countries, but chooses the translation mode according to several different factors. In this case few cinematic products need to be translated, as most films or programmes are produced within the country or come from America. Generally, British cinemas and TV channels tend to use subtitles; However, few foreign programmes and films are broadcast on British television, and when they are, they are late at night with subtitles.

Nowadays, viewers often have the opportunity to choose the type of audiovisual translation they prefer (the dubbed or subtitled version). Film Festivals always opt for screen subtitled versions, as do some television channels, e.g. MTV, who broadcast some programmes with subtitles.

From a historical point of view, the adoption of dubbing or subtitling has depended upon economic and political factors. Smaller countries with a high number of imported products and a small audience tend to opt for subtitling, while bigger countries with a large audience and a wide range of internal films, favour dubbing. From an economic point of view, subtitling is cheaper than dubbing, which is why it is preferred by countries with restricted markets. Other determining factors in the choice between the two types of audiovisual translation concern habit and custom: audiences tend to prefer the type of audiovisual translation they are most accustomed to, and criticise the other one.

Dubbing and subtitling differ in the way they elaborate these channels: in dubbing all the four semiotic channels maintain a balance, as they carry the same amount of semantic content as the original. In subtitling, on the other hand, the balance is shifted from the verbal audio channel to the verbal visual one.

Therefore, subtitling is more faithful to the original film than dubbing, as it maintains the original dialogue and voices of the actors.

These two types of screen translations differ in semiotic terms and wording. In the former case dubbing uses a spoken substitutional mood (it substitutes the original spoken dialogue with another one in the target language), while subtitling uses written supplementary mood (it adds written text to the original dialogue/film).

1.3.2 Dubbing

Dubbing involves replacing the original audio with a voice track that strives to match the timing, phrasing, and lip movements of the original dialogue as closely as possible. Gottlieb (1992: 31) characterises it as a spoken, not additive, immediate, synchronous and polymedial translation. In the dubbing process, the translated script must align with the mouth and body gestures of the actors while also adhering to time limitations, meaning the dubbed version must be shorter than the original. Given that films and television shows possess a polysemiotic nature, translators need to take into account four channels during the translation process:

1. The verbal audio channel (dialogue, voices, songs), 2. the non-verbal audio channel (noises, music, sounds effects), 3. the verbal visual channel (captions and written signs) and 4. the non-verbal visual channel (images, pictures in composition).

In the early 1970s, national dubbing was marked by the use of formal and literary Italian, with strict oversight on vocabulary and grammar, lacking diversity from a sociolinguistic perspective. In contrast, contemporary dubbed films and television shows have adapted to reflect the national language more closely, incorporating a range of colloquial expressions, variations of low to medium Italian, and regional dialects. Recently, a more innovative approach has emerged, aiming not only to blend different sociolinguistic forms but also to recreate fictional languages from movies, such as Elvish in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and Dothraki in *Game of Thrones*.

As Minutella (2009: 46-48) notes sociolinguistic variation can occur in modern British and American films, especially through the linguistic traits that differentiate characters based on their geographic background and social standing. While dubbed versions often overlook accent variation, these differences can still be somewhat reflected in the choice of words and sentence structures; This includes the use of colloquial expressions, slang, some ungrammaticalities and repetitions. Some examples of non-standard Italian colloquial forms and ungrammaticality in dubbed versions of films containing social dialect are: the use of the indicative rather than the subjunctive, the masculine singular pronoun “gli” used also for feminine and plural nouns, the use of the pronoun “ci” instead of “gli” (e.g. “*Ci vuoi parlare?*”), the use of dislocations (e.g. “*Io l’ho presi dai*

miei risparmi questi soldi”). An instance of loss of geographical variation can be found in the film *Billy Elliot* (dir. Stephen Daldry, 2000), which takes place in Northern England. In the original film, Billy’s father distinguishes himself from the rest of the mineworkers because of his Scottish accent; However, in the Italian dubbed version he speaks in a manner similar to everyone else.

Vocabulary represents another crucial but also vulnerable aspect of dubbing, as the choice of words defines the spontaneity of the conversation. Many of these decisions result from a literal translation from English and mimic the structure of the source language. In the lexicon, it is also possible to identify elements on a sociolinguistic level that deviate the dubbed version from the national filmic speech. It has been observed that dubbing often results in a loss of the stylistic connotation of the lexicon, as colloquial words or expressions that belong to slang in the source language are neutralised (e.g. mug and crummy become 'face' and 'miserable'). Furthermore, the choice of the vocabulary impacts the overall tone of the text, resulting in an unwarranted rise of the register, through the use of an excessively formal or technical lexicon.

The operation of dubbing consists in a complex operation which is characterised by different phases (translation, manipulation and adaptation) and all are fundamental to reach the goal. In Italy, the “*adattatore dialoghista*”, or translator, concentrates on the movie and its script. The next step is realised by the figure of the dubbing director, who controls the dialogues of the film and indicates the actors, giving them useful indications for the recording. In some cases, the first film script is given to a translator who has to get a literal translation starting from the written dialogues, then these ones are improved thanks to the dialogue writer. In Italy, it is more correct speaking of adaptation, instead of translation, in the field of dubbing; indeed, the target language writer is better described as “*adattatore dialoghista*” because the translation is simply one step of the process. The aim of screen translator is to renovate the vital connection between words and images, as well as the linguistic and cultural elements. As a consequence, they must consider the paralinguistic scheme that is the base of the plot, also the temperament and the characteristics of the characters or examine their dialectic

and how they express themselves. To clarify, they must build a sense between words and physical actions.

Dubbing is also subject to some technical constraints. The dialog writer must take in account several elements, such as the speaker's facial expressions, body and lip movements and sentence length. The latter is crucial, as dubbing is the only type of translation in which the length of the target text has to match that of the source text. If the translation were longer than that of the source text, it could turn out to be 'false' and the translator will have to work to make the dialogue more believable and balance it (e.g. by adding elsewhere elements or meanings that are omitted in one part of the text).

1.3.2.1 Lip Synchronization

Synchronization is one of the key factors that distinguish dubbing from other types of translation, ensuring that the film appears and sounds authentic, thus preserving the illusion of reality for the audience. It occurs when the dialogue in the target language matches the gestures and body movements of the performers, as well as when the spoken words and pauses in both the source and target languages correspond. Three types of visual synchronization can be identified: Lip synchronization, Isochrony or synchronization between utterances and pauses and Kinetic synchrony.

Lip synchronization consists in the correspondence between the movements of the original actors' lips and mouth with the spoken sounds in the dubbed version. The use of lip synchronization depends on the type of images and sounds uttered; It is crucial when there are close-up shots (the camera focuses on the face of the actor) or in detailed lip shots, in scenes where the lips of the actor speaking can be clearly seen. It is also needed with some consonants, such as bilabials (/b/, /p/, /m/), labiodentals (/f/, /v/) and open vowels. In these situations, the translator has to choose words that have comparable sounds or those that involve a similar mouth movement when pronounced (Minutella, 2009: 37-38).

Isochrony, or visual synchrony, refers to the necessity for correspondence between the duration of spoken phrases and the quantity and rhythm of syllables within those phrases, to get as result that the visually perceived sentence matches the uttered one.

Visual synchrony is a fundamental aspect of dubbing; its absence can be distracting and frustrating for the viewers, as it undermines the perception that the characters on-screen are actually speaking in the target language, therefore breaking the illusion of reality.

In Isochrony, if a concept is expressed using more words than in the source version, changes must be made: if the translation is more concise than the original, additional words, fillers, or pauses may be inserted, or longer synonyms might be used; Conversely, if it is lengthier, it will need to be shortened in some way. An example of translation choice dictated by isochrony can be found in the film *Romeo + Juliet* (dir. Baz Luhrmann, 1996). After the two protagonists share their first kiss, Juliet remarks to Romeo “You kiss by the book”. In many Italian translations, this line is rendered as “*Baci secondo le regole*”. However, in the original version the actress’s lip movements emphasise the bilabial /b/ sounds in the words “by” and “book”; therefore, a literal translation would not synchronize with the visual cues, making “*Baci come un Dio*” the optimal translation, as the bilabial and dental sound is maintained and resemble that of the English version (Minutella, 2009: 38-39).

Lastly, Kinetic synchrony occurs when the dialogue matches the physical movements of the actors (gestures, facial expressions and body language). Some of these movements often coincide with the pronunciation of stressed syllables, known in linguistics as nuclei. Isochrony and Kinetic synchrony are more important to achieve than synchronization, which can always be subjected to adjustments.

Pavesi (2005: 13-16) distinguishes between two other types of synchronism, all of which are relevant in film translation: articulatory synchronism and paralinguistic synchronism.

Articulatory synchronism is articulated into quantitative articulatory synchronism and qualitative articulatory synchronism. The former acts on the speed of speech and is based on the number and the length of syllables of words, which may vary from the source text to the translated one. An evident example is to be found in the overly fast translations of many English or American films, where the fast pace of the original dialogue is not adequately rendered in Italian (such as in the New York dialect). Quantitative articulatory synchronism represents one of the main constraints of filmic translation as the audience easily notices inconsistencies between the beginning and end of sentences and the actor's lip movements on screen. On the other hand, qualitative

articulatory synchronism concerns the compatibility of the sounds emitted in dubbed speech with the visible articulatory movements. It involves the volume of the voice and imposes itself in close-ups, while often being neglected in those shots in which the actors' faces are not clearly visible. Traditionally, two groups of sounds are identified whose distinct articulation must also be reflected in dubbing: vowels and labial consonants. In the first case, the degree of opening of vowels such as [a] and the rounding of the lips, concomitant with back vowels such as [u] and [o], require attention. The articulation of the bilabial consonants [m], [b], [p] and labiodental [v] and [f] can also be clearly observed on the screen through lip and tooth movements. However, in these cases it is possible to replace the deaf consonants with sound consonants, as in the translation of "*figlio di puttana*" (English "son of a bitch"), where a deaf [p] in Italian replaces the sound [b] in English.

Paralinguistic synchronism, also known as Expressive synchronism, emphasises the importance of maintaining a harmony between spoken words and the body movements, gestures and facial expressions that accompany words, helping to reinforce the message during communication. It is also referred to as 'nuclear synchronism', as there is a correspondence between the actor's facial expressions and the pronunciation of accented syllables, called nuclear. Recently, the importance of synchronism has been downgraded according to the amount of close-up shots compared to those in the distance or from behind. Dubber-adapters do not always have to respect different types of synchronism with the original. The degree to which synchronism is constrained is determined by the conventional rules of semiotic realism, which may differ depending on the context and country.

The impact of synchronization on translation choices differs from one film to another and even between scenes, depending on the camera movement. Narrative-driven texts that seek to draw the audience into the story require a greater level of synchronization compared to those who are purely informative. Cartoons and documentaries fall into the category that exhibit a minimal need for synchronization, as in the former the characters usually do not speak in synchrony with their lip movements, whereas in the case of documentaries the voice-over technique is preferred.

synchronization is not always essential, as long as the combination of gestures, lip movements and dialogue appears natural and believable.

1.3.2.2 Dubbing in Italy

In Italy the majority of people opt for the dubbed version, as they are used to and it requires less effort. On the other hand, satellite televisions favour subtitles when translating a programme for the first time, because it is cheaper than dubbing.

The preference for one translation method instead of another has also been affected by political and historical factors. This is what happened in Italy, Germany and France, who began dubbing foreign films in the early 1930s. During the silent film era in the late 1920s, foreign films would often include short titles used between scenes that required translation. The introduction of “the talkies raised” resulted in a translation problem. To facilitate comprehension of the dialogues, captions with explanations in the target language were introduced. Another solution was to have actors perform in other languages. This was the strategy adopted for the film *Muraglie* (Pardon Us, 1931, dir. James Parrot). Up 1932-33 some American film companies started producing multiple language versions of the same film, with different actors. In Joinville, near Paris, Paramount studios were established. This technique, however, was quickly abandoned as it was extremely expensive. Europe was split between dubbing and subtitling countries. Until after World War II, the European cinema market was dominated by American films. Larger countries such as Italy, Germany and Spain tried to defend themselves by passing protectionist laws that limited the number of foreign films who could have been admitted to the country. In these countries domestic film productions were promoted through government support, in order to express and reinforce the national identity.

According to several studies, the birth of dubbing is strongly linked to dictatorships, which took control over the national film production between the 1930s and 1940s (Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany and Franco’s dictatorship in Spain); non-dubbed films were banned and sound films were used as tools to influence the masses.

In Italy, Mussolini founded the film school *Centro Sperimentale* and the *Cinecittà* Studios, which are still the heart of Italian cinema. The introduction of laws prohibiting the screening of foreign films in Italian cinemas led to the adoption of dubbing as a mode of audiovisual translation. In 1930 Mussolini passed a law which forbade any

foreign language in films. Fascist government imposed dubbing of foreign films in Italian in order to control the purity of the Italian used. In 1932 films started to be dubbed by actors who spoke proper Italian than Italian immigrants in the USA.

Italian dubbing uses syntactic traits of spontaneous informal speech in order to result more realistic. This emerges in the structure of the utterance, in particular in the relationship between main and subordinate sentences and in the use of the subordinating conjunctions “*che*”, “*se*” and “*quando*”, whose frequency is close to that found in national speech. Translation can completely eliminate the sociolinguistic variation, resulting in a standardised Italian, or use other elements, such as colloquial speech, to mark the diastratic variation.

1.3.3 Subtitling

Subtitling, or captions, are transcriptions of film or TV dialogues that are projected on the screen simultaneously. It usually consists of two lines for a maximum length of 35 characters. It can be defined as “a written, additive, immediate, synchronous and polymedial translation” (Gottlieb, 1992: 162-163). They add verbal material to the source language dialogue, without altering it, and are projected simultaneously on the screen through several different mediums or channels (images, spoken dialogue and written translation).

1.3.3.1 Distinctive features of subtitling

Subtitling is affected by some formal factors: the space factor, which limits the number of characters on the screen to 35 per line, for up to two lines. The “time factor”, on the other hand, limits the number of lines that can be screened and determines their duration. It depends on the reading speed of the viewer, which is lower than the talking speed. The time and space factors reduce the source text, cutting up the 30% of the original dialogue. As far as wording is concerned, subtitles tend to reduce the original film dialogue significantly. Moreover, their position at the bottom of the screen prevents viewers from watching and following the film, as they spend half of the time reading subtitles; people who are familiar with the source language are usually find subtitles

intrusive, while those who doesn't know it are may find difficult to learn the language as they will rely on the subtitles.

1.3.3.2 Machine subtitling and Fansubbing

Machine subtitling and fansubbing are two different phenomena yet closely linked to the world of audiovisual translation, both of which contribute to make the audiovisual content accessible to a wide audience.

Machine subtitling refers to subtitles generated by software and algorithms, such as Google Translate, DeepL and other AI translation services which provide a fast and cheap translation of dialogues. According to Varga (2021: 1) Machine Translation (MT) systems provide rapid linguistic solutions, allowing users to avoid linguistic barriers. These systems are also used by professionals and companies specialised in translation to enhance their productivity. From a functional point of view, online automatic subtitling platforms are not always so effective and accurate, as each operates differently. Research conducted by Varga (2021: 2-6) on nine online subtitling platforms showed that 30 % of them failed to provide an answer on the first attempt and that only 60% operated correctly, without any errors or technical problems. A frequent error in machine translation is the tendency to translate literally; such mistranslations can negatively affect how the translation is perceived as well the overall impact of the film. Other automatic subtitling issues can concern: punctuation, line length and segmentation of a subtitle. As far as the latter is concerned, automatic subtitling machines may not always account for the linguistic context, resulting in the splitting of a regular one-line subtitle into two different ones, such as in the following example: I mean, when I order a coffee, I / want it filled six times, six times (Varga, 2021: 10). Although translation machines provide an innovative, technological and rapid method, they are not sufficiently calibrated; consequently, post editing is essential for a translation to present a high level of quality, especially in unfamiliar languages.

On the other hand, over the past few years, subtitling has faced some considerable problems due to the market crisis that has mainly affected professional translators. According to a study published by the European Commission, one of the main causes of

the crisis is the phenomenon of fansubbing, which has had a strong impact on translation theories and strategies, revolutionising the audience's perception of subtitling (Massidda, 2012: 37-38).

The term fansubbing, or fan translation, refers to a practice carried out by groups of fans who translate dialogues of audiovisual content without any remuneration. This phenomenon emerged in the 1980's in Japan, when Japanese animations, known as 'anime', were banned or censored by the United States due to their content being deemed inappropriate (Massidda, 2012: 41). This led fans to create their own clubs to translate and spread their favourite TV series.

Before the advent of digital applications, fansubbers used to work through the 'SASE system', a system that allowed fans to receive the translated audiovisual product by email free of charge. With the emergence of Internet and software programmes capable of editing videos, the SASE system was replaced by digital fansubbing or digisubbing. The latter was much more effective and quicker, as it did not require the active involvement of fans in the physical distribution of the product, which was now available on dedicated web pages.

As far as Italy is concerned, two main fansubbing communities have emerged as a form in opposition to dubbing: ItaSA and Subfactory. ItaSA was founded in 2006 and is a larger and more recent community than Subfactory, with a staff of people aged between sixteen and thirty. Subfactory, on the other hand, was founded in 2003 and is considered the first Italian fansubbing community; it is a smaller, less popular community, which has, however, achieved a great success thanks to social media, such as Facebook and Twitter (Massidda, 2012: 51-53). The main difference between the two communities lies in their approach to translation: Subfactory tends to favour a more accurate translation that sticks to the original dialogue, while ItaSA allows more creative freedom to the translator (Magazzù, 2018: 3-4).

Fansubbing can be conceived as a pyramid consisting of various subdivisions, each of which corresponds to a specific task. A team of fansubbers is involved in the process, interacting and working together through a forum. Before the episode is broadcast in the United States, the reviser ensures that the team is available. Once everything is confirmed, the team gets to work. The English subtitle file is uploaded to a private section of the forum together with a subdivision of the tasks and the final deadline. The

team then starts adapting and adjusting the subtitles, according to the soundtrack and images as well. Once the Italian version is ready, each subber sends their part to the reviser, who will then merge them (Massidda, 2012: 56-57).

1.3.4 Foreignization and Domestication

Dubbing and subtitling can also be seen in terms of domestication and foreignization strategies. “Domestication” is defined as the process by which the text is adapted to the target language and culture, cutting out some features of the source text. It implies the adaptation of the source text to the target language, culture and values. “Foreignization”, however, retains the features of the source text and emphasises its foreignness. Domestication is more target culture oriented, as opposed to foreignization which favours the source culture (Minutella, 2009: 22-23). It can be found in film adaptations of literary texts (e.g. Baz Luhrmann’s film *Romeo + Juliet*, in which the tragic story of the two lovers is set in the 1990’s Mexico City, retaining the language of Shakespeare); or in the translation of film titles, to clarify the theme of the film and make it more appealing to the target. For instance, the film *Intolerable Cruelty* (Joel Coen, 2003) was translated into Italian as *Prima ti sposo, poi ti rovino*. On the other hand, foreignization avoids the translation of some film titles to highlight the sense of “otherness”. Some examples are *Shark Tale* (Bibo Bergeron, Vicky Jenson, 2004), *Pretty Woman* (Garry Marshall, 1990) and *Notting Hill* (Roger Michell, 1999). In audiovisual translation, dubbing is associated with domesticating translation, as the original dialogue is replaced by the one in the target language and the feature of foreignness is lost. Subtitling, on the contrary, corresponds to the foreignization translation, as the source text remains unchanged. When correctly done, dubbing results convincing in the eyes of viewers, who even might think they are watching the original version. However, it may diverge from the meaning of the source text and it precludes a comparison between the latter and the target text (Minutella, 2009: 23-25). The choice between domestication and foreignization in film translation is mainly dictated by two factors: the type of audiovisual translation adopted by the country and the producer’s intent to make the film more appealing and familiar to the viewers.

1.4 Dubbing Dark Humour

In contemporary television productions, there is a significant presence of dark/black humour, a form of humour particularly common in North America and British cinema. This style of humour is characterised by the use of cynical and provocative jokes, which mock the values and institutions on which society is based. In a country like Italy, where cinema favours family-oriented production, this type of humour is heavily criticised and difficult to convey, therefore is usually adapted for the Italian audience.

Defining dark humour is not so easy, as there is no universally accepted definition for the term. Over the years, several related definitions have been collected, some of which were influenced by a 1960's literary trend known as black humour. Nevertheless, none of these definitions are able to capture the essence and complexity of this phenomenon. Black or dark humour consists of a combination of humour about death and 'sick humour' and it is often used to refer to African-American comedy. On the basis of these two considerations, Bucaria (2008: 4-5) defines dark humour as "the more or less explicit and sacrilegious representation of humour that has as its aim that of making fun of situations usually regarded as tragic, such as death, sickness, disability, and extreme violence, or of the people involved or subject to them". It also identifies several categories of dark humour, illustrated in Figure 4:

Non-verbal DH:	1. Non-verbal visual – NV-VIS
	2. Non-verbal acoustic – NV-AC
Verbal DH:	3. Verbal-acoustic – V-AC:
	a. Purely linguistic – V-AC (PL)
	b. Culture-specific – V-AC (CS)
	c. Linguistic and culture-specific – V-AC (PL+CS)
	d. Nn-sp VEH – V-AC (Nsp VEH)
	4. Verbal-visual – V-V:
	a. Verbal humour + visual elements – V-V (V+VE)
	b. Verbal humour + visual anchor – V-V (V+VA)

Figure 4: Categories of dark humour (Bucaria, 2008)

Non-verbal dark humour concerns the one that focuses on the visual content projected on the screen, such as graves, dead bodies or blood; these elements are not usually associated with comic situations but take an ironic tone when placed next to contrasting elements. In the case of verbal dark humour, on the other hand, it is conveyed through

dialogue. This category is divided into four subcategories: purely linguistic dark humour, culture-specific dark humour, linguistic and culture-specific dark humour and non-specific verbally expressed dark humour. The first subcategory is language-driven and includes puns, rhymes or alterations of predefined sentences. The second one is characterised by lines or jokes alluding to cultural elements, such as food, famous people and so on; Linguistic and culture-specific dark humour is a fusion of the two previous categories. Finally, non-specific verbally expressed dark humour makes use of witty jokes instead of cultural references (Bucaria, 2008: 8-9).

Four stages can be adopted for the translation of dark humour: complete omission (the dark humour element is deleted and replaced with a neutral comment), weakening (the dark humour element is substituted with one of a lighter tone in the dubbed version), close rendering (the dark humour content retains its essence in the target version) and increased effect. In this case, the dark humour element is even more disturbing once translated in the target language, most likely as a result of misinterpretation (Bucaria, 2008: 12).

Italian film versions tend to ignore, and thus omit, dark humour content, favouring instead wordplays or figurative expressions.

1.4.1 Translating humour, wordplays, creative language

Humour is a challenging aspect of translation, which cannot always be adequately conveyed, as it is mainly linked to the source language and culture. In film dialogue the translation of wordplay becomes even more problematic due to the presence of visual elements that may restrict the use of puns. When translators are faced with humour they have four options: a) retain the pun in its original language; b) replace the source pun with a pun in the target language; c) replace it with an idiomatic expression which may capture some aspect of the source pun's core meaning (for example the expression "dead on time" could be rendered in Italian as "*puntuale come la morte*"); d) completely overlook it (Minutella, 2009: 93-94).

The first three options almost never occur in films and often the translator opts for the omission of the pun, either by his own choice or because they were unable to recognise

it in the source dialogue. An example of omission can be found in the movie *High School Musical* (directed by Kenny Ortega, 2006). In the final scene, one of the main characters, Sharpay, congratulates her rival by telling her “break a leg”. This expression literally implies an injury but it is commonly conveyed as wishing someone good luck. However, the wordplay is lost in the translation and it is replaced with the straightforward expression “*in bocca al lupo*”. When a pun is omitted in the dubbed version the translator can adopt two strategies: introduce a new pun in a different part of the dialogue that wasn't included in the original, or include references from the target culture, thus preserving the humour of the film (Minutella, 2009: 95).

The use of creative language or rhyming language in the original represents a further problem of translation, especially if concerning poetry or films for children. Translating poetry is particularly complex because its essence relies on the interplay of words, sounds, rhythm, and the use of metaphors. Although poetry is not commonly found in films, creative language that often involves wordplay is frequently encountered in films aimed at children. For example, in the animated film *Shark Tale*, the Italian translator builds a very humorous, creative language which plays on typical Italian expressions that are adapted to the world of fish (e.g. “Holy mackerel! Did we get that?” / “*Porca murena! Hai ripreso tutto?*” or “I’m gonna keep it real” / “*restiamo con le pinne in acqua*”).

Chapter 2: THE SUCCESS OF GAME OF THRONES

2.1 Introduction to Westeros

Game of Thrones (Got) is an American fantasy drama based on George R.R. Martin's best-selling series "A song of Ice and Fire". The show, produced by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss and broadcast on the HBO network for eight seasons, has been one of the most renowned shows of all time. The story is set on two fictional continents called Essos and Westeros, which is divided into Seven Kingdoms, seven formerly independent realms unified under a king, who sits on the Iron Throne. The series follows the adventures of some members of the nine great houses of Westeros, who vie for the Iron Throne among deceits, alliances and conflicts. *Game of Thrones* won more Emmy nominations (159) and awards (59) than any other drama series in Emmy history, becoming a cultural phenomenon.



Figure 5: Map of Westeros (Pinterest)

2.1.1 The Great Houses of Westeros

The main prestigious houses of Westeros are:

House Stark

House Stark is the royal house who controls the North. They live in Winterfell and their coat of arms is a grey Direwolf, which is also their animal guide. Before the Targaryens came to power, the Starks held the title of King of the North. Their prestige is attributed to their founder, Brandon, who built the Wall, a massive fortification that extends for 100 leagues, separating the North from the wilderness. The Starks are cold and tough people, but are also valiant and loyal, especially towards their people. The motto of their house is “Winter is coming”, as their main purpose is defending the North from the coming of winter. The Lord of Winterfell is Eddard Stark, who has five children by his wife Catelyn Tully: Robb, Sansa, Arya, Bran and Rickon. He also has a bastard son, Jon Snow, who is actually the secret son of his sister Lyanna and Prince Rhaegar Targaryen.¹

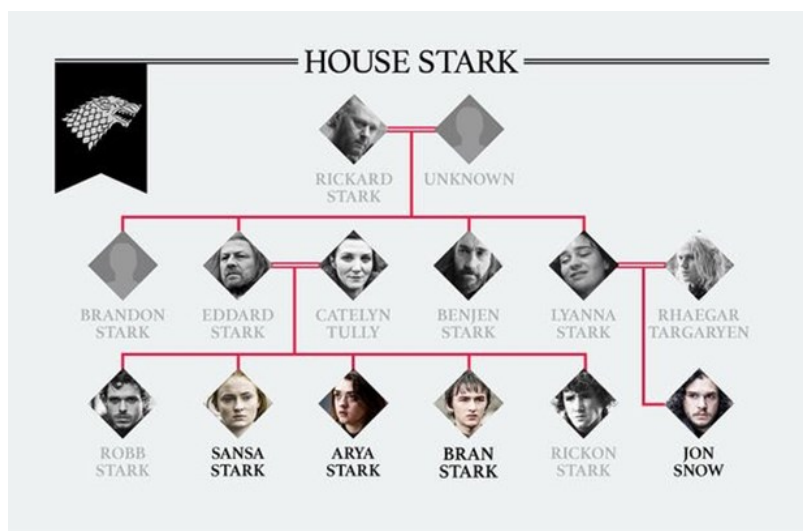


Figure 6: House Stark family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Lannister

House Lannister, whose coat of arms is a golden lion rampant, is the main house in the Westlands and one of the oldest on the continent. Their seat is the fortress of Casterly

¹ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

Rock, under which gold mines, the main source of wealth for this house, lie. Although their official motto is “hear me roar”, the most famous remains “a Lannister always pays his debts”. The house is headed by Tywin Lannister, who has three children: Cersei, Jaime and Tyrion, born of his wife Joanna, who died giving birth to their last child.²

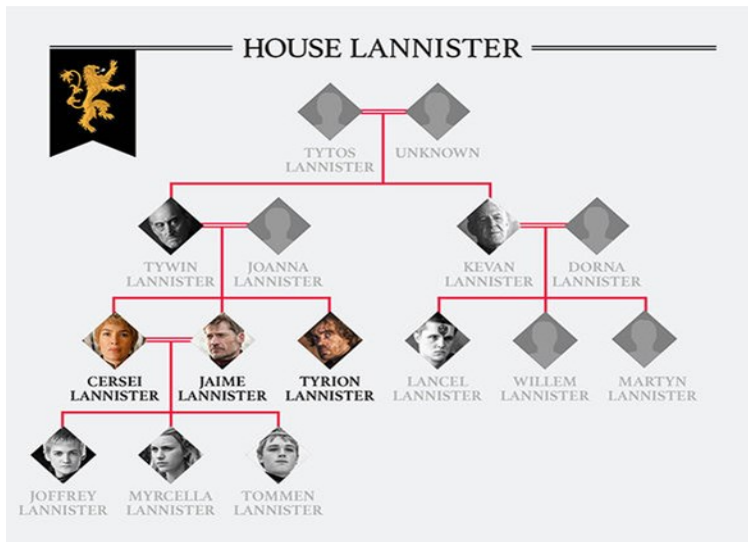


Figure 7: House Lannister family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Baratheon

House Baratheon of Storm’s End is the ruling house of the Stormlands, on the eastern coast of Westeros, and the one who holds the Iron Throne. Their seat is Storm’s End and their coat of arms is a crowned black stag salient. Robert Baratheon was the one who led a rebellion against King Aerys II Targaryen, dethroning the Targaryens and becoming the new king of the Seven Kingdoms. He married Cersei Lannister. Robert has two brothers: Stannis, Lord of Dragonstone, and Renly, Lord Paramount of the Stormlands. After the death of its members, House Baratheon regains prestige with

² Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

Robert's bastard son Gendry, who was legitimised by Daenerys Targaryen. The motto of House Baratheon is "Ours is the Fury".³

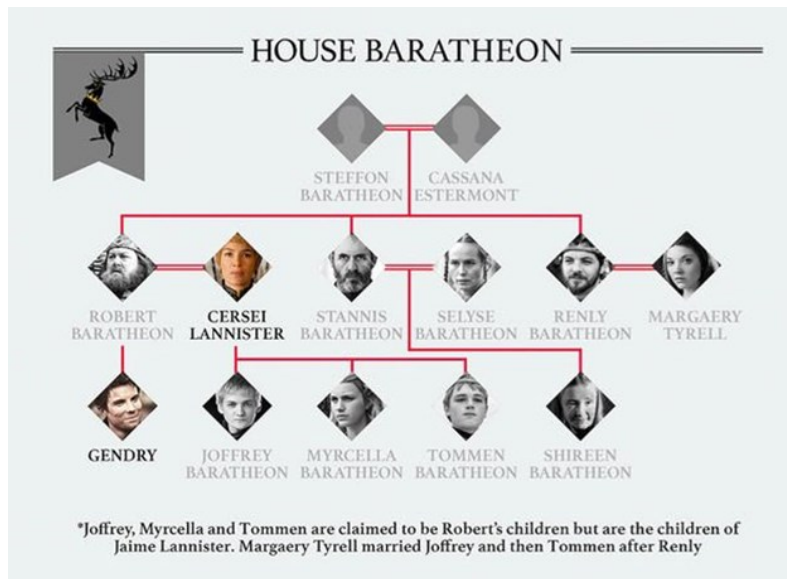


Figure 8: House Baratheon family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Targaryen

House Targaryen of Dragonstone ruled over Westeros for almost three hundred years. It originates from the free fortress of Valyria and is mainly known for the ability of its members to control dragons. The birth of the Seven Kingdoms is due to one of its members, Aegon I Targaryen, who conquered and unified the different lands of Westeros. The so-called "Rebellion of Robert Baratheon" put an end to the Targaryen dynasty, who were dethroned and killed. King Aerys II's eldest son and heir, Rhaegar Targaryen, was defeated and killed during the rebellion by Robert Baratheon; Aerys' wife, Queen Rhaella Targaryen, was escorted with her son Viserys to Dragonstone where, during a stormy night, died giving birth to her only daughter, Daenerys. Viserys and his sister were hidden in the Free Cities, in Essos. The coat of arms of House

³ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

Targaryen is a three-headed dragon, symbolising Aegon I and his sisters, on a black background. Their motto is “Blood and Fire”.⁴

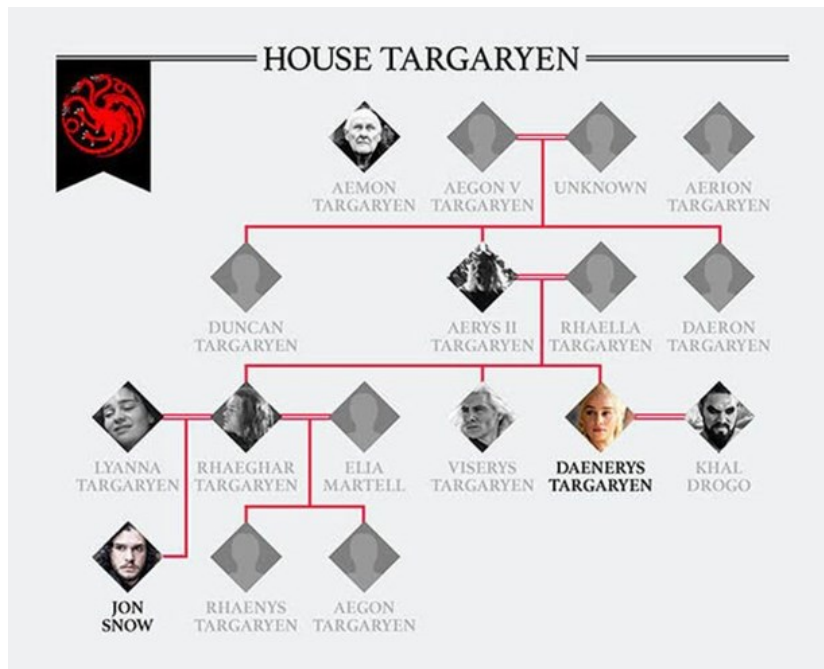


Figure 9: House Targaryen family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Greyjoy

House Greyjoy of Pyke rules over the Iron Islands, on the west coast of Westeros. Their seat is the castle of Pyke and their coat of arms is a gold kraken palewise on a black field. The house is headed by Balon Greyjoy, the Lord Reaper of Pyke. Their motto is “We Do Not Sow”. With the so-called “Greyjoy’s rebellion”, seven years after “Robert’s rebellion”, Lord Balon Greyjoy declared the independence of the Iron Islands. However, the rebellion was immediately repressed by king Robert. Balon was forced to surrender and obtained the sovereign's pardon, retaining his noble position and titles. In return, his youngest surviving son, Theon, was sent as a hostage to Winterfell and placed in the custody of Ned Stark. During the conflict known as the “War of the Five Kings”, Balon made a second attempt at separation by invading the North. His

⁴ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

dominance was short-lived, as he was killed by his brother Euron Greyjoy, who became the new ruler of the Iron Islands. From that moment on, House Greyjoy is divided between Euron and Balon's two children, Theon and Yara.⁵

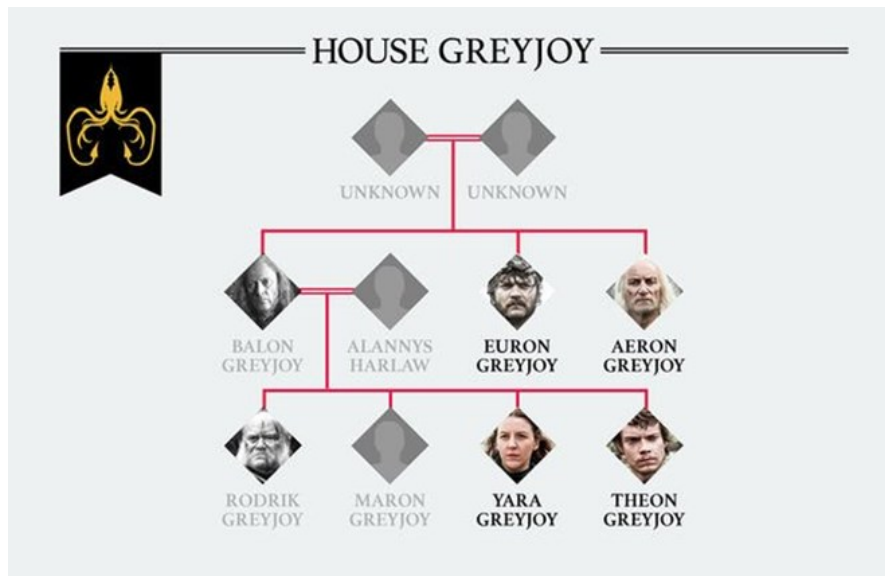


Figure 10: House Greyjoy family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Tyrell

House Tyrell of High Garden ruled the Plateau for centuries from his seat, the Highgarden Castle. After House Lannister, it is the wealthiest house of the Seven Kingdoms. During the Conquest War, Aegon Targaryen, known as Aegon 'The Conqueror', appointed them Protectors of the South and entrusted them the dominion of the Plateau, in exchange for the submission of House Tyrell to House Targaryen. During Robert's Rebellion, House Tyrell remained loyal to King Aerys Targaryen, defeating Robert Baratheon at the Battle of Ashford. After Robert's ascension to the throne, Mace Tyrell, Lord of Highgarden, had to swear allegiance to House Baratheon, who recognised them as sworn vassals. In the show, House Tyrell became extinct after Olenna Tyrell's death, Mace's mother and the last surviving member of the lineage. The

⁵ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

coat of arms of House Tyrell is a golden rose on a green background, and their motto is “Grow strong”.⁶

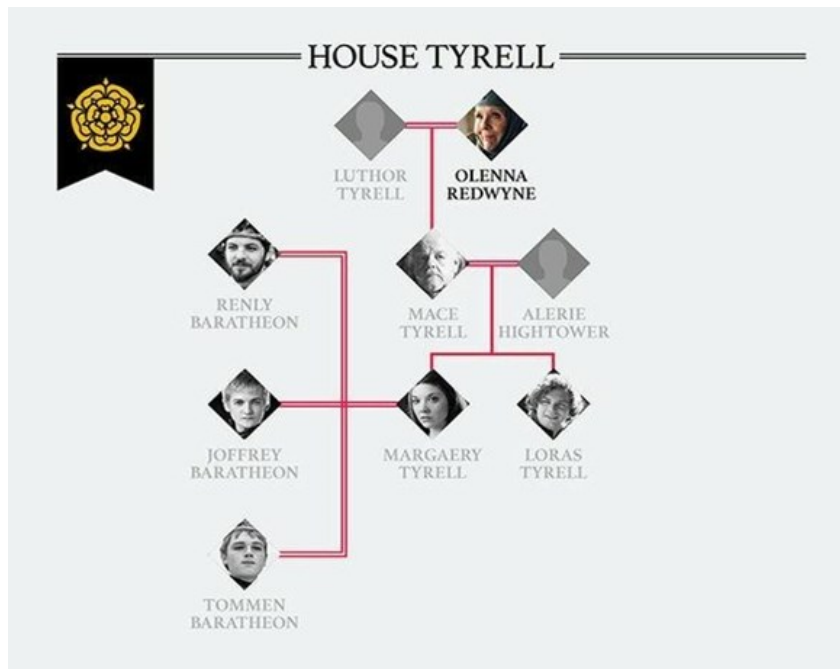


Figure 11: House Tyrell family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Martell

House Nymeros Martell of Sunspear is the great house that rules over the principality of Dorne, in southern Westeros. Dorne is the only kingdom that has remained independent and hostile to the Iron Throne for decades. The ruler of Dorne is Prince Doran Martell, who suffers from a serious disease. He has two siblings: Elia and Oberyn. Elia was betrothed to Rhaegar Targaryen, but during the Tourney at Harrenhal, he proclaimed Lyanna Stark as queen of beauty and love. Rhaegar’s escape with Lyanna aroused the wrath of Robert Baratheon who, also being in love with Lyanna, started a rebellion against the Targaryens. The moment they discovered that the Lannisters were holding Elia and her two children captive in the Red Keep, the Martells sided with Aerys II Targaryen. After the fall of King’s Landing, Elia and Rhaegar’s two sons were brutally

⁶ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

killed by two Lannister guards. The coat of arms of House Martell is a red sun pierced by a gold spear palewise on an orange background. Their motto is “Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken”.⁷

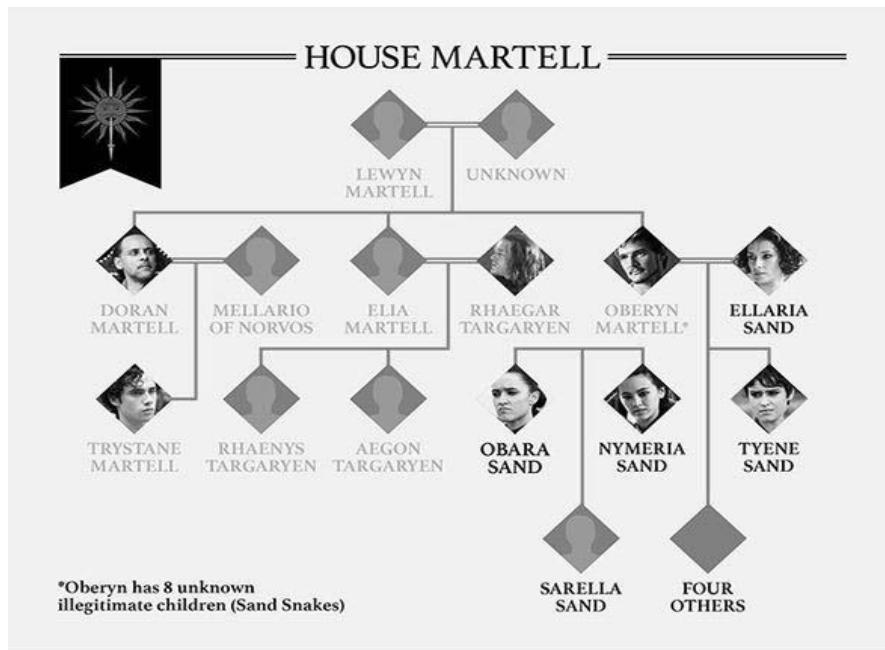


Figure 12: House Martell family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Tully

House Tully of Riverrun is the house that rules over the Riverlands. At the time of Targaryen’s Conquest these lands belonged to House Greyjoy but, after their liberation at the hands of Aegon “The Conqueror”, they were placed under the control of the Tullys. The house is currently headed by Lord Edmund Tully, Lord Hoster Tully’s son. He has two sisters: Catelyn and Lysa. Lord Hoster also acquired a protégé, Petyr Baelish (nicknamed “Littlefinger”, due to his short stature and his birthplace, the Fingers), whose father was a Lord of the Fingers. Hoster’s eldest daughter, Catelyn, is betrothed to Brandon Stark, son and heir of Lord Rickard Stark of Great Winter. During Robert’s rebellion, following Brandon and Rickard Stark’s death at the hands of King

⁷ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

Aerys II Targaryen (also known as “the Mad King”), Lord Hoster decided to take part in the rebellion and arranges a wedding between Catelyn and Brandon’s brother, Eddard Stark, and between Lysa and Lord Jon Arryn. The seat of the house is Riverrun and their coat of arms is a leaping silver trout on a red and blue background. Their motto is “Family, Duty, Honor”.⁸

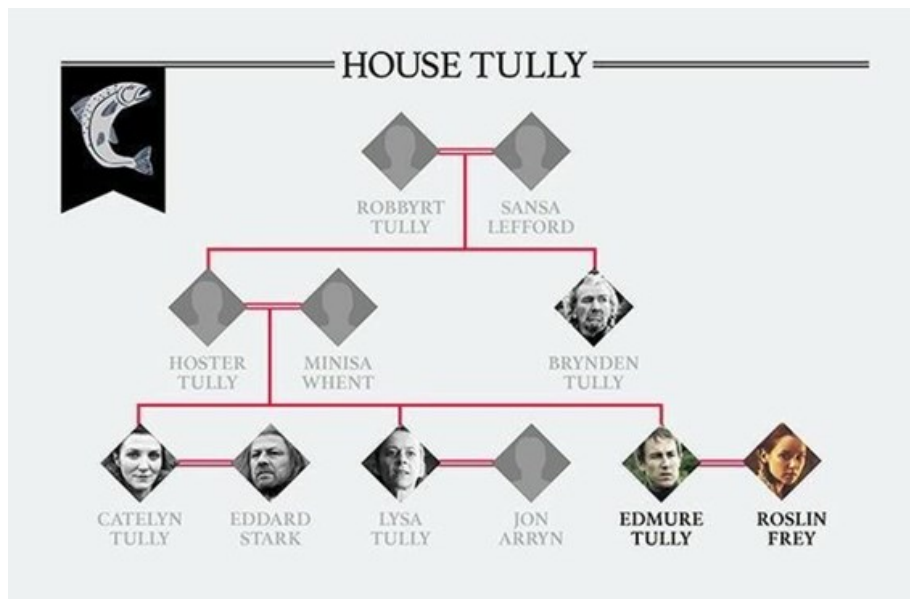


Figure 13: House Tully family tree (Debnath, 2020)

House Arryn

House Arryn of the Eyrie is the main noble house of the Vale of Arryn, which was the last of the Seven Kingdoms to be conquered and subdued by Aegon “The Conqueror”. The Arryns descend from the people of the Andals and were among the first families to side with Robert Baratheon following the outbreak of Robert’s rebellion. Jon Arryn, Lord of the Eyrie, formed an alliance with House Tully by marrying Lysa Tully, the youngest daughter of Lord Hoster Tully. Their son, Robert Arryn, is the current Lord and Protector of the Vale of Arryn. Their seat is the Eyre, and the coat of arms of the

⁸ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

house is a hawk and a white crescent moon on a blue background. Their motto is “As High as Honor”.⁹

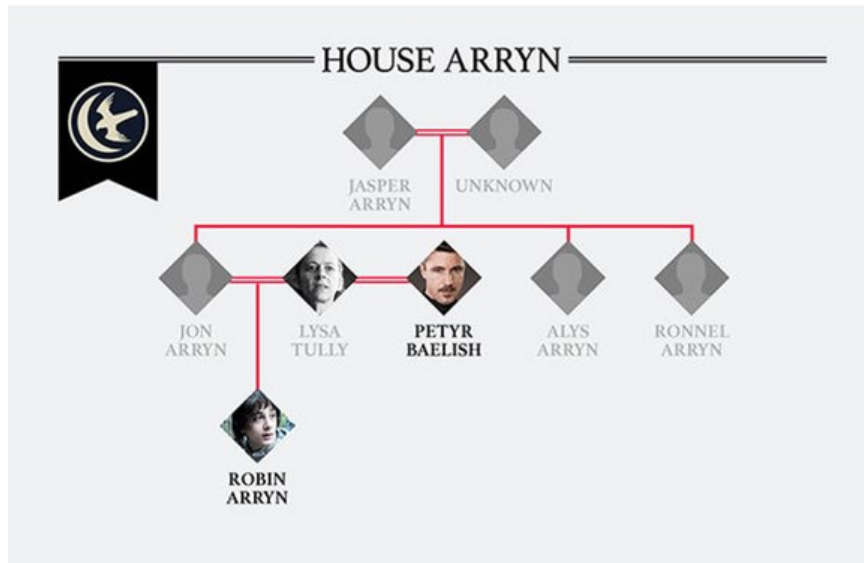


Figure 14: House Arryn family tree (Debnath, 2020)

2.1.2 The main characters: A Psychological analysis

Daenerys Targaryen

Daenerys Targaryen, also known as “Dany” or “Khaleesi” (term denoting a queen in Dothraki language), is the youngest daughter of Aerys II Targaryen. Daenerys stands out from the very beginning of the show for her noteworthy determination and ambition; her main goal is conquering the Iron Throne as the last surviving heir of House Targaryen. The first season shows Daenerys as a woman who conforms to gender stereotypes, since she is submitted to the will of her brother, who instructs her to be docile and obedient. It is only when she gets to know and confront with his husband, Khal Drogo, that she acquires a greater assertiveness, which prompts her to rebel against her brother. The death of Khal Drogo and the loss of a child in the first season finale mark a key moment in Daenerys’ personal growth, as it forces her to abandon her

⁹ Wiki of westeros. Fandom. (n.d.). https://gameofthrones.fandom.com/wiki/Wiki_of_Westeros (last visited on 12th November 2023).

previous conformity to gender roles, paving the way for a significant transformation that will lead her to become what she is destined for: the Mother of Dragons. Another significant aspect of this character is her unique bond with her three dragons, whom she considers as her children and who have symbolised the power of House Targaryen for centuries. They influence her decisions and affect her personal safety. Despite her desire to show her closeness to her people and to be accepted as their queen, the “Khaleesi” frequently feels a sense of isolation and loneliness, which makes her vulnerable. Although initially presenting herself as a liberator, she gradually develops autocratic inclinations and an obsession with power in her goal to conquer Westeros. This triggers conflicts and raises questions about her suitability for the throne. Throughout the show, the character of Daenerys undergoes a significant personal growth from a young and inexperienced princess to a strong and determined leader (Benioff, Weiss, 2011).



Figure 15: Emilia Clarke as Daenerys Targaryen, Game of Thrones (2011)

Jaime Lannister

Jaime Lannister is the first male son and heir of Lord Tywin Lannister. From the very first episode, Jaime emerges as a very self-confident, irreverent, impulsive and sarcastic character, who enjoys making fun of the people around him. Although in the eyes of the

people of Westeros he appears only as a “kingslayer” and a dishonourable knight, over the years Jaime begins to show an attitude of indifference to those social opinions and begins to accept this image of himself, almost taking pride in it. He is also a capable warrior, even though the matters he takes seriously are few.

Despite the complex relationship with his family, Jaime has his goal clear since he was a boy: achieve glory and be remembered. This is probably one of the main reasons why he decided to join the Kingsguard (as well as to remain close to his sister, with whom he has an intimate and morbid relationship), thereby giving up his own life and titles.

During his days as Kingsguard, Jaime experiences many traumas: he witnesses king Aerys' madness, watching him brutally kill and torture innocent men and hearing him beat and rape the queen. It all happens in front of his eyes and he cannot avoid or tell anyone about it. Therefore, another defining aspect of the character is a post-traumatic disorder, which leads him to relive past experiences, more precisely the killing of Aerys, which he committed when he was only seventeen years old and that bestow him the nickname “Kingslayer”. Though Jaime states on several occasions to not appreciate the appellation, he never tries to prove to everyone otherwise or justify his behaviour. Throughout the seasons, the character undergoes a growth, especially when he loses his sword hand. That is when he not only loses his hand, but also everything that once made him invincible (i.e. his fighting ability and his pride).¹⁰

¹⁰ My Little Thought Tree. (2022, September 17). *Psychology of Jaime Lannister: Therapist breaks down game of thrones ASOIAF character*. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/Z3XuFxAFKgw?si=iUHvoy4FVVZZJeh-> (Last visited on 21th November 2023).



Figure 16: Nikolaj Coster Waldau as Jaime Lannister, Game of Thrones (2011)

Cersei Lannister

Cersei Lannister is the only daughter of Lord Tywin Lannister and Jaime's twin sister. Her character is one of the most complex and enigmatic figures in the overall show. Although on the outward appearance she presents herself as a quiet woman with self-control, behind her cold smile hides a ruthless, narcissistic and manipulative woman, ready to do whatever it takes to get what she wants and to protect her children; it is her thirst for power and lack of remorse that makes her one of the most feared and empowered women in Westeros. As a woman, Cersei spends most of her life being ignored and submitted to the will of powerful men, such as her father and, later, her husband. This is something that marks her strongly and prompts her to gain respect and influence through more subtle ways and to build a perfect image of herself. Only from the sixth season onwards does she acquire full power and her cruel and tyrannical nature is fully revealed. Despite her temperamental attitude, Cersei shows a pathological attachment to her three children, a feeling that often leads her to make questionable choices in an attempt to preserve her family's power and ensure their safety.

Another distinctive aspect of the character is her bond with her twin brother Jaime, with whom she has an incestuous relationship. It partially reflects a rivalry that the Lady of

Casterly Rock has developed towards her brother, who has received the attention and influence that she has always been unable to obtain. Cersei's path is, therefore, moulded by a sequence of traumatic events and by the ongoing battle for control in a politically unstable and patriarchal context.¹¹



Figure 17: Lena Headey as Cersei Lannister, Game of Thrones (2011)

Tyrion Lannister

Tyrion Lannister is the youngest son of Lord Tywin Lannister and Cersei and Jaime's younger brother. He is sarcastically referred to as "The Imp" because of his dwarfism condition. Due to his nature, he is often the object of derision, humiliation and dehumanisation, appearing in the eyes of others as a repulsive and shameful creature. Compounding this is the hatred and disgust his father and sister feel towards him, blaming him for his mother's death. Therefore, Tyrion grows up with the belief of being a monster. Despite his outwardly mocking demeanour, he is an extremely wise and clever man; his use of humour and sarcasm are merely a means of coping with

¹¹ My Little Thought Tree. (2022, October 15). The psychology of Cersei | Therapist analyzes Game of Thrones/ASOIAF. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNbvm2ohR5k&list=PLIrZsx9CxcvFZT1UMwGT1y3yK4t5AbjuS&index=4> (Last visited on 20th November 2023).

difficulties and hiding his pain. The only member of his family who seems to show affection and compassion towards him is his brother Jaime, who on several occasions offers him his help and support, without judging or marginalising him. Notwithstanding the lack of consideration from his family, Tyrion shows great compassion towards the weak and the marginalised/outcasts, as he identifies with them. Furthermore, his political prowess and bright personality make him one of the most reliable and cunning counsellors in Westeros.¹²



Figure 18: Peter Dinklage as Tyrion Lannister, Game of Thrones (2011)

Sansa Stark

Lady Sansa Stark is the eldest daughter of Lord Eddard Stark and Lady Catelyn Tully and sister of Robb, Arya, Bran and Rickon. In the first few seasons she comes across as a sweet, naive and graceful-looking girl. She is very careful about respecting all those social conventions and qualities expected of a lady like her. Because of her submissiveness, Sansa envisions her future as a fairy tale with a happy ending, apparently not facing the real challenges of life. Throughout the show, she undergoes a

¹² My Little Thought Tree. (2022, August 27). Psychology of Tyrion Lannister: Therapist Breakdown Game of thrones/ASOIAF character. YouTube. https://youtu.be/Jjf4QhAZWOY?si=Uj4egX_iJAdLh0Sl (Last visited on 20th November 2023).

significant process of growth and maturation. All the painful and traumatic experiences that she faces, especially her father's death (who is beheaded before her eyes), leads her to acquire a greater cunning and awareness that enables her to survive in a ruthless world. Despite this, the Lady of Winterfell shows a great inner strength and resolution; she learns over time to comprehend the complex political dynamics and to astutely juggle manipulations and alliances (Benioff, Weiss, 2011).



Figure 19: Sophie Turner as Sansa Stark, Game of Thrones (2011)

Jon Snow

Jon Snow, born as Aegon Targaryen, is the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark. In order to keep his identity secret and protect him from Robert Baratheon, he is raised by Lord Eddard Stark, Lyanna's brother, at Winterfell as his bastard son. Despite this, Jon never experiences a real sense of belonging to the Stark family. His conditions, exacerbated by the contempt that Lady Catelyn Tully feels towards him, lead him to feel a strong sense of isolation that drives him to constantly seek his place in the world. The search for his identity represents a key factor in the evolution of the character, who goes from being the bastard son of Lord Eddard Stark to discovering he is the rightful heir to the Iron Throne. Following Ned's appointment as Hand of the King, Jon decides to join

the Night's Watch, a brotherhood committed to the defence of the Wall; he shows determination, courage and a great sense of justice from an early stage, aspects that make him a true leader and which, over the course of the show, contribute to his rise as Lord Commander. His compassion towards the outcasts and his moral integrity contribute to making Jon Snow one of the most tormented but, at the same time, acclaimed characters of *Game of Thrones* (Martin, 2022).



Figure 20: Kit Harington as Jon Snow, Game of Thrones (2011)

2.1.3 Echoes of History: The Inspirations behind Game of Thrones

George Martin has reiterated several times in various interviews that he was inspired by various conflicts and historical events for the creation of the saga, specifically by: The Wars of the Roses (1455-1485), the Hundred Years War (1337-1453), the Tudor Period and the Roman Empire. During a 2013 interview for Austin Chronicle, Martin expressed his thoughts on the connection between the saga and history:

“People have pointed out that probably the main influence on Ice and Fire is the War of the Roses, and that’s certainly true. I’ve also read about a lot of other mediaeval conflicts. The Hundred Years War was another huge influence, the Crusades and the Albigensian Crusade, and a lot of details from Scottish history, which was particularly bloody. So, you take events from real history, but I don’t believe in just transcribing

them. Like, taking something that happened to Henry the Eighth and having it happen to my characters in the same way, just change the names? To my mind that's cheating, that's too easy. You take a bit of this, you take a bit of that. You combine them, you rethink them. You add new twists that maybe even a student of history doesn't see coming, and you add fantasy elements to make everything bigger and more colourful"(Facchini, 2017: 10).

In this section I will review some historical events with the aim of providing a background to the event in the series.

The Wars of the Roses

The Wars of the Roses was one of the most famous conflicts in British history, fought between 1455-1485 between the two main branches of the ruling house of the Plantagenets: the Yorks (whose emblem was a white rose) and the Lancasters (whose seal depicted a red rose). In *Game of Thrones*, these two houses are incarnated by House Stark as the Yorks, and House Lannister as the Lancasters. The seeds of conflict were sown following the demise of Edward III in 1377, who was succeeded by his grandson Richard II, as his son Edward, commonly known as the "Black Prince", had passed away prior to him. However, the Black Prince's brothers were still alive, and the skipping of their generation in the line of succession caused tension. The Lancaster retained power until the start of the war in 1455, during Henry VI's reign (Llabrés Font, 2019: 7).

Henry VI was a weak monarch, which is why both factions made several attempts to take over and control him. His French wife, Margaret of Anjou, placed some of her supporters and allies within the court. In many ways, the wife of the British monarch resembles the character of Cersei Lannister. Both queens distrust the king's trusted advisor (Ned Stark in Cersei's case and Richard III in Margaret's) and are willing to do anything to get what they want. In the same way that at the beginning of the series Ned Stark confronted Queen Cersei questioning the legitimacy of her children, Richard of York criticised Margaret of Anjou's elected supporters and the way the war against France was being handled (Llabrés Font, 2019: 7).

Richard III was sent to Ireland, but later, in 1455, he returned to England with an army and defeated the Lancasters troops in the First Battle of Saint Albans. After Henry VI became mentally unstable, he was appointed Protector of the Realm. Another aspect that he shares with Ned Stark is the tragic ending: Richard died in 1460 in the Battle of Wakefield, while Ned was accused of treason and beheaded by the Lannisters.

Their children also show similarities: in 1461 Richard III's son ascended the throne as Edward IV, establishing the York faction as the dominant faction. Similarly in the show, Robb Stark, the heir to the head of house Stark, following the death of his father, was crowned king in the North and declared the independence of his kingdom. Moreover, both Kings lost allies by refusing an arranged marriage (Llabrés Font, 2019: 8-9).

King Robert Baratheon recalls the figure of Edward V of York, as both were capable leaders who in time turned into hedonistic womanisers. Moreover, similarly to what happened to Robert, Edward died under mysterious circumstances during a fishing trip (Wired, 2014).

Joffrey Baratheon, son of Cersei and King Robert, shows some similarities with Prince Edward of Lancaster, son of Margaret of Anjou. Both were illegitimate children and suffered from certain mental disorders: it seems that Prince Edward took pleasure in using the sword in order to behead and mortally wound his friends and companions (Pellegrini, 2017).

In contrast, Theon Greyjoy bears many similarities with George Duke of Clarence, as both are hostages who are removed from their respective families against their will and find themselves choosing between loyalty to their father or brother (adoptive in Theon's case).

Hundred Years' War

The Hundred Years' War, the mediaeval conflict fought between the Kingdom of England and France between 1337-1453, provided the inspiration to Martin to create the atmosphere of the saga. The battle that lasted one hundred and sixteen years (excluding various interruptions) took place during a short ice age (Wired, 2014). At the beginning

of the show, Ned Stark mentions several times the coming of Winter after mild years, which historically correspond to the so-called “Mediaeval Warmth” period (9th to 14th century).

Tudor period

The Tudor period was one of the most significant periods in English history, beginning in 1485 with Henry VII and ending in 1603 with the death of Elizabeth I.

Daenerys Targaryen would seem to be inspired by the figure of the latter, as both are strong and independent women who conquer and rule kingdoms. Primarily, however, the ‘Khaleesi’ seems to be based on and influenced by Henry VII. Both were compelled to and raised in exile, being sheltered in foreign lands (Daenerys resided with her sibling in Pentos, whereas Henry Tudor was taken in by Duke Francis of Brittany). Their inadequacies in the royal throne race and their geographical isolation from their ancestral homes led them being disregarded in their earliest years (although by not everyone, as some conspired against them). Furthermore, both were betrayed by one of their most trusted advisors in exchange for the King's appealing propositions (Llabrés Font, 2019: 9-11):

Jorah Mormont, the trusted advisor and friend of Daenerys, initially approached her seeking a royal pardon from King Robert. In return, he promised to keep the king informed about Daenerys' whereabouts and plans. In a contrasting situation, Duke Francis temporarily betrayed Henry Tudor by agreeing to exchange him for military and economic support. As time went by, both Daenerys and Henry gained new allies, including some who had previously supported Richard III but were now disappointed (Llabrés Font, 2019: 11).

As far as the Lannister family is concerned, Jaime Lannister seems to be based on Richard Neville, an English leader known as “The Kingmaker”; on the other hand, Tyrion's dwarfism and cunning draw inspiration from Richard III, the last ruler of the York dynasty, whose deformity is referred to by Shakespeare in his eponymous tragedy (Pellegrini, 2017).

Lord Baelish, known as “Littlefinger”, recalls the Manipulative Prince, a controversial figure in Medicean Florence.

Bran and Rickon Stark are inspired by the infant princes Edward V of England and Richard of Shrewsbury, sons of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville; following the death of their father, they were imprisoned and murdered in the Tower of London by their uncle Richard of Gloucester (Wired, 2014).

The priestess Melissandre and Maria I Tudor, better known as “Bloody Mary”, both took a strong interest in the power of fire, condemning those who opposed their religious faith (Pellegrini, 2017).

Brienne of Tarth resembles in many ways the figure of Joan of Arc, the French heroine who took part in the Hundred Years’ War and became an emblem of courage and patriotism in French history. Both are courageous, strong and devoted women, who show a predilection for armour and arms (Pellegrini, 2017).

Further sources of inspiration relate to the geographical configuration of Westeros, which shows strong similarities to the outlined shapes of Britain and Ireland (inverted). According to Martin, the Wall draws inspiration from the Hadrian’s Wall, a massive stone fortification that delineated the border between the Roman province of Britain and the region corresponding to present-day Scotland (Caledonia).

The Unsullied, the army liberated by Daenerys, could take inspiration from different sources. A possible reference is the Spartan soldiers, with whom they share similarities in military training, the ability to endure fatigue and pain, and in the abandonment of their name; Despite this, unlike the Unsullied, the Spartans were free men. A further source of inspiration are the Mamluks, Persian slaves warriors trained by eunuchs. A third possible origin could be identified in the Turkish Janissaries, slaves soldiers in the service of the Ottoman Empire, usually kidnapped in the Balkans and subjected to harsh training (Wired, 2014).

Meanwhile, the barbarian Dothraki people are reminiscent of the Huns, the nomadic people from the steppes of Central Asia that invaded Europe between the 4th and 7th century A.D.

Chapter 3: ANALYSIS

This chapter starts with the analysis of the titles of some episodes, the adaptation of some recurrent terms in the series and of the “Dothraki” language. It then moves on to some scenes from three episodes of the series I grouped according to the way they were translated.

3.1 The titles of the episodes

An initial analysis of the titles of some episodes of the series reveals a significant discrepancy between the original and the Italian versions. This is a very common phenomenon, known as localisation (or adaptation), whereby the translator decides to adapt the title to the cultural and thematic context of the audiovisual product, maintaining its essence and making it more familiar and appealing in the eyes of the audience. Table 20 shows the titles of some episodes and their Italian translations and also some notes I added about their use:

SOURCE TEXT	ITALIAN VERSION	DUBBED	NOTES
Cripples, Bastards and Broken Things	Il Giuramento		“Cripples, Batards, and Broken Things” is a compound noun phrase that in the Italian version is conveyed into a straightforward noun phrase that denotes a specific concept (the Oath). The title “ <i>Il Giuramento</i> ” underlines the two main themes of the episode: Loyalty and Promises.
You Win or You Die	Il Gioco dei Troni		The original title consists of two independent clauses (“You win” and “You die”) but, in the Italian version, it is translated as a noun phrase. This translation

		emphasises more the theme of War and Strategic Alliances, both recurrent throughout the series.
The Pointy End	La Guerra è alle Porte	The noun phrase “The Pointy End” is transformed into a clause in the translated version. The Italian translation captures the sense of impending conflict and danger that resonates throughout the entire episode.
Baelor	La Confessione	Both titles are nouns and refer to a specific moment of the episode when some of the characters face the consequences of their action. “Baelor” is the temple where the confession takes place.
Home	Uomini di Ferro	In the Italian version, the simple noun phrase “Home” is rendered as a noun phrase. This translation tries to reflect the main theme of the episode: the sense of belonging and the story of the great house of Greyjoy, known as the “Ironborn” (“ <i>Uomini di ferro</i> ”).
The Door	Il Tempo è Giunto	The original title is a noun phrase but is transformed into a clause in the Italian version. The translation suggests the dramatic nature of the episode, the crucial moment when something when a change is imminent.

The Broken man	Alleanze	“ <i>Alleanze</i> ” is a noun and highlights the importance of bonds and alliances between the characters. The adapter decided to focus on the message of the episode rather than “The Broken man”, which is a noun phrase and refers to one specific character of the series, whose story is explored in the episode.
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Table 20: Titles of some episodes and their Italian translated version

In all the cases, the Italian translation enhances some of the central themes of the episode. For instance, the title “Cripple, Bastards and Broken Things” is translated as “*Il Giuramento*”, as it highlights two main topics of the episode: Loyalty and Promises. “You Win or You Die” is turned into “*Il Gioco dei Troni*” in the dubbed version and emphasises the topic of War and Strategic Alliances, both of which are recurrent throughout the series.

It can also be noted that two of the seven titles analysed (“The Pointy End” and “The Door”) are noun phrases that are transformed into clauses in the target version. This decision may be due to the need to adapt the titles to the context, as clauses are able to provide greater clarity and expressiveness than a noun phrase, making the conversation more transparent to the target language audience. Although noun phrases tend to be more concise than clauses, the latter express a complete thought rather than simply modify or detail the subject or action.

All these changes help to ensure that the final product is engaging for the audience and coherent with the original version.

3.2 Adaptation of some recurrent terms and the “Dothraki” language

Adaptation can be observed in the translation, and thus dubbing, of some terms used in the series (mainly names of places and characters), coined by the author of the books on which the series is based, George R.R. Martin. For instance, the name ‘White Walkers’, which refers to the ice creature that threaten Westeros, becomes “*Estranei*” (English “stranger”) in the Italian dubbed version. This choice is mainly due to the need to adapt the term “White Walkers” and make it more comprehensible to the Italian viewer, while evoking the idea of a mysterious creature from the original. Moreover, a literal translation (“*Camminatori Bianchi*”) would have sound strange and unnatural. The same thing happens with the term “The Wall”, which is translated as “*La Barriera*” (instead of “*Il muro*”). This translation underlines the fact that it is not just a simple wall but an imposing construction, which marks the boundary between two separate worlds: the civilised one and the wild one.

Another interesting feature of the TV series is the use of “Dothraki”, the language spoken by the eponymous people in the series. In several episodes, there are entire scenes in which the characters converse using this invented language. Table 21 shows some examples of use of the language with its translations into English and Italian:

DOTHRAKI	ENGLISH SUBTITLES	ITALIAN SUBTITLES
<i>Illyrio: Athchomar chomakaan, zhey khal vezhven.</i>	<i>Illyrio: Respect to one that is respectful, great khal.</i>	<i>Illyrio: Athchomar chomakaan, zhey khal vezhven.</i>
<i>Daenerys: Khal anni...Shekh ma shieraki ...Drogo. Drogo: Sajo anni... Cohollo: Qoy qoyi. Drogo: Vos, anha'th dothrak.</i>	<i>Daenerys: My lord...My sun and stars...Drogo. Drogo: My horse... Cohollo: Blood of my blood. Drogo: No, I must ride.</i>	<i>Daenerys: Mio signore...Mio sole-e-stelle...Drogo. Drogo: Il mio cavallo... Cohollo: Sangue del mio sangue. Drogo: No, devo stare in sella.</i>
<i>Qotho: Jini'th vos eo. Jini'th vos eo. Daenerys: Jini vee.</i>	<i>Qotho: This must not be. This must not be. Daenerys: This must be.</i>	<i>Qotho: Non dovevi farlo. Non dovevi farlo. Daenerys: Dovevo, invece.</i>

<u>Qotho</u> : <i>Maegi.</i>	<u>Qotho</u> : <i>Witch.</i>	<u>Qotho</u> : <i>Strega</i>
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Table 21: examples of use of Dothraki language and its translations into English and Italian

Being a case of creative language, in most versions these dialogues are not dubbed into the target language but only provided with subtitles, as it can be observed in Table 21. In the third instance, Qotho, one of the dothraki's warriors, reproaches Daenerys for trying to bring her husband, Khal Drogo, back to life. The sentence he utters in dothraki language "*Jini'th vos eo. Jini'th vos eo*" is transcribed as "This must not be" in the English subtitles and as "*Non dovevi farlo*" in the Italian subtitles. In this case, the adaptor decided to avoid a literal translation in favour of a version that better conveyed the emotional load of the scene.

3.3 Analysis of the dubbed versions of selected episodes

For this dissertation, I analysed three episodes of the series, taken from different seasons. In this section I examine their dubbed version to identify which elements are translated differently from the original version. Furthermore, I attempted to understand and discuss the motivations behind these translation choices.

3.3.1 Episode 9 season 6

From the analysis of the dubbing of the ninth episode of the sixth season, entitled "The Battle of Bastards", some of the translation strategies identified by Gottlieb are applied in order to adapt the dialogues and make them more comprehensible to the Italian audience.

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<u>Tyrion</u> : <i>He would have burned every one of his citizens, the loyal ones and the traitors, every man, woman, and child. That's why</i>	<u>Tyrion</u> : <i>Avrebbe bruciato tutti i suoi cittadini, quelli leali e i traditori, ogni uomo, donna e bambino. Per questo Jaime lo uccise.</i>

<i>Jaime killed him.</i> <u>Daenerys</u>: <i>This is entirely different.</i> <u>Tyrion</u>: <i>You're talking about destroying cities. It's not entirely different. (beat) I'd like to suggest an alternate approach.</i>	<u>Daenerys</u>: <i>Ora le cose stanno in modo diverso.</i> <u>Tyrion</u>: <i>Parli di distruggere intere città. Io non credo sia tanto diverso. Ti suggerirei un'altra tattica di approccio al nemico.</i>
<u>Ramsey</u> (to Jon) : <i>He's good! Very good!</i> <i>Tell me: will you let your little brother die because you're too proud to surrender?</i> <u>Sansa</u>: <i>How do we know you have him?</i>	<u>Ramsey</u> (a Jon): <i>È astuto, davvero astuto!</i> <i>Lasceresti morire tuo fratello perché sei troppo orgoglioso per arrenderti?</i> <u>Sansa</u>: <i>E se ci stessi mentendo?</i>

Table 22: Examples of paraphrase in episode 06x09

In the first scene Tyrion and Daenerys are discussing how to deal with the Slaveholders while the city is under attack. Daenerys is resolute to adopt an aggressive approach, but Tyrion reminds her what happened when long ago her father, the Mad King, destroyed the capital of the Seven Kingdoms. To Tyrion's accusation, the ruler responds with "This is entirely different" which in the Italian version is paraphrased as "*Ora le cose stanno in modo diverso*". The two expressions are phrased differently but they both express the same message.

A case of slight expansion can be observed in the subsequent line, which does not alter the message of the scene. The viewer is able to understand to whom the character is referring simply by following the dialogue and the context in which it takes place.

Another instance of paraphrase occurs a few scenes later, when Jon faces his enemy, Ramsay Bolton, before the upcoming battle. The choice to translate "good" as "*astuto*" shifts the focus on the cunning rather than the skill of the character. On the other hand, Sansa's line is paraphrased but retains the sceptical tone of the original version.

In the same scene a case of localisation (and particularisation) can also be observed. Ramsay, after Jon refuses his surrender's terms, threatens him and his allies, confident he has the victory in his grasp.

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<i><u>Ramsay</u> (to Jon): She's a fine woman, your sister. I look forward to having her back in my bed. And you're all fine looking men. My dogs are desperate to meet you. I haven't fed them in seven days. They're ravenous! I wonder which parts they'll try first. Your eyes? Your balls? We'll find out soon enough.</i>	<i><u>Ramsey</u> (a Jon): È una donna in gamba, tua sorella. Non vedo l'ora di riaverla nel mio letto. E voi siete tutti stupendi! I miei mastini vogliono conoscervi al più presto. Non mangiano da una settimana. Sono famelici! Chissà per prima quale parte assaggeranno. I vostri occhi? Le vostre palle? Presto lo sapremo.</i>

Table 23: Example of localisation in episode 06x09

Among the subtle threats he makes to Jon and his allies, he says he will throw them to his dogs. The term “dogs” is quite general, but in the Italian version it is translated as “*mastini*”. This change is made out of a need to adapt to the cultural context. The hyponym “*mastini*” usually refers to large, guard dogs, just like those mentioned by the character. On the contrary, the general term “*cane*” reflects more the faithful nature of the animal. Therefore, this option better captures the cultural context and meaning of the scene.

In the instance below in Table 24, an obvious case of reduction is observed.

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<i><u>Davos</u>: The crucial thing is to let them charge us. They've got the numbers. We need the patience. Ramsay wants to destroy us. He wants to show the North he's the only true power. (demonstrating on map) If we let him buckle our center, he'll pursue. And we'll have him surrounded on three sides.</i> <i><u>Tormund</u>: Did you really think that cunt would fight you, man to man?</i>	<i><u>Davos</u>: Direi che è fondamentale lasciare che ci attacchino. Loro hanno i numeri, noi avremo la pazienza. (Mostrando la mappa) Se lasciamo che sfondi il nostro centro, è in trappola. Noi lo accerchieremo su tre lati.</i> <i><u>Tormund</u>: Credevi davvero che quel vigliacco ti avrebbe affrontato da uomo a uomo?</i>

Table 24: Example of reduction in episode 06x09

During a meeting where Jon discusses the strategy to adopt in the battle, one of his advisers, Davos, suggests the best tactic to follow. The part where he says “Ramsay wants to destroy us. He wants to show the North he’s the only true power” is not included in the Italian version, as it is not essential for the comprehension of the dialogue and the scene. Probably the adapter opted for this strategy in order to make the conversation smoother and less redundant, since the concept reiterated several times by the character throughout the exchange. By contrast, the second expression used by Tormund, is a clear example of transposition. The word ‘cunt’ has different meanings: it can indicate weakness and meanness, but can also be used offensively when referring to a woman. In this case, the adapter avoided a literal translation, adapting the term to the context of the scene and used “*vigliacco*” to render it.

In two other scenes, two cases of deletion can be noted. These are reported in Table 25 below:

ORIGINAL VERSION	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<u>Tormund</u>: <i>So what do you do all night?</i> <u>Davos</u>: <i>I walk. Think and walk, think and walk. Until I'm far enough away from camp that no one can hear me shitting my guts out.</i> <u>Tormund</u>: <i>Happy shitting!</i>	<u>Tormund</u>: <i>Cosa fai tutta la notte?</i> <u>Davos</u>: <i>Cammino. E penso. Cammino e penso finchè non sono così lontano da non essere sentito mentre svuoto l'intestino.</i> <u>Tormund</u>: <i>Svuotalo bene.</i>
<u>Theon</u>: <i>I didn't murder the Stark boys. But I did things that were just as bad, or worse.</i> <u>Yara</u>: <i>And he paid for them.</i>	<u>Theon</u>: <i>In realtà non li ho uccisi. Ma ho fatto cose altrettanto brutte o peggiori.</i> <u>Yara</u>: <i>E le ha pagate.</i>

Table 25: Examples of deletion in episode 06x09

In the first scene, Davos and Tormund, an ally of Jon, are chatting in the night before the battle. In the answer given by Davos to the question how he used to spend the night before a fight, the words “walk” and “think” are repeated several times. In the Italian

dubbed version, the adapter decided to synthesise the message, removing the repetition. On the other hand, the second scene shows Theon Greyjoy and his sister Yara asking Daenerys for her help. The adapter opted for deletion in order to highlight Theon's sense of guilt, thereby enhancing the emotional impact. However, both changes could also have been made to streamline and clarify the sentence.

3.3.2 Episode 5 season 6

The analysis of the fifth episode of season six, entitled “The Door”, reveals several cases of deletion as well as an obvious case of expansion, reported in Table 26 below:

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<u>Sansa</u>: <i>I don't believe you anymore. I don't need you anymore. You can't protect me. You won't even be able to protect yourself if I tell Brienne to cut you down. And why shouldn't I?</i> <u>Littlefinger</u>: <i>Do you want me to beg for my life? If that's what you want, I will. Whatever you ask that is in my power, I will do.</i>	<u>Sansa</u>: <i>No, io non ti credo più. Di te non ho più bisogno. Non sei in grado di proteggermi. Neanche proteggeresti te stesso se dicessi a Brienne di farti a pezzi. E perchè non dovrei?</i> <u>Ditocorto</u>: <i>Risparmieresti la mia vita? Vuoi che ti supplichi? Bene, lo farò. Qualunque cosa tu creda sia in mio potere, io la farò.</i>

Table 26: Example of expansion in episode 06x05

In this scene, Sansa confronts Littlefinger, Master of Coin of the Seven Kingdoms, and recounts the abuses she endured at the hands of Ramsay Bolton, to whom she had been given in marriage with the false pretence of being protected. In the Italian dubbed version, the line was expanded by including the question “*Risparmieresti la mia vita?*”, which may have been used to further highlight Littlefinger's vulnerability or to better adapt the scene to the target audience.

On the other hand, Table 27 shows an interesting case of adaptation, which significantly altered the meaning of the scene.

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<i>Meera (Voice Outside): Hold the door!</i> <i>Young Hodor: Hold the door! Hold the door!</i> <i>Hold the door! Hold the door! Hold the door!</i> <i>Hold the door! Hold the door! Hold the door!</i> <i>Hold the door! Hold door! Hold door! Hold</i> <i>door! Hold door! Hodor! Hodor! Hodor!</i> <i>Hodor! Hodor! Hodor! Hodor!</i>	<i>Meera (voce fuori campo): Trova un modo!</i> <i>Giovane Hodor: Trova un modo! Trova un</i> <i>modo! Trova un modo! Trova un modo!</i> <i>Trova un modo! Trova un modo! Trova un</i> <i>modo! Trova un modo! Trova un modo!</i> <i>Trova un modo! Trova un modo! Trova un</i> <i>modo! Hodor! Hodor! Hodor! Hodor!</i> <i>Hodor! Hodor! Hodor!</i>

Table 27: Example of adaptation in episode 06x05

The scene in point reveals the truth behind the trauma experienced by one of the characters, Hodor, which is also the only word he has ever been able to pronounce. The latter is later revealed to be the crasis of the sentence “Hold the door”, uttered by Meera (a secondary character in the show) to save Bran from the White Walkers. The stable boy of House Stark starts obsessively repeating the sentence until it turns into the word “Hodor”. In the dubbed version, it has been translated as “Trova un modo”, thus losing the pun of the original. This is due both to a factor of sonority but above all lip synchronization. To ensure the character’s lip movements matched the audio, it was necessary for the sentence to consist of three words in order to maintain a logical sense in the narration.

3.3.3 Episode 7 season 7

The dubbing of the seventh episode of the seventh season, entitled ‘The Dragon and the Wolf’, is mainly characterised by a literal translation of the dialogues. However, it also makes use of certain translation strategies, particularly deletion, to better suit the Italian audience. Therefore, it is clear that the dialogues have been linguistically adapted, with paraphrases created to preserve the rhythm, meaning and intensity of the original.

The use of deletion is recurrent throughout the entire episode, as it can be observed in Table 28:

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<u>Tyrion</u>: Do you remember when we discussed dwarf jokes? <u>Theon</u>: His wasn't even good. <u>Tyrion</u>: He explained it at the end. Never explain, it always ruins it.	<u>Tyrion</u>: Ricordi che ti dissi delle battute sui nani? <u>Theon</u>: La sua è pessima. <u>Tyrion</u>: La hai anche spiegata. Mai spiegare le battute.
<u>Jon</u>: This is serious. I wouldn't be here if it weren't. <u>Cersei</u>: I don't think it's serious at all. I think it's another bad joke.	<u>Jon</u>: È una cosa seria. Non sarei qui se non lo fosse. <u>Cersei</u>: Io credo che sia solo un'altra pessima battuta.
<u>Cersei</u>: You killed our father. <u>Tyrion</u>: After he sentenced me to death for a crime I didn't commit. (beat) Yes, I killed him. Hate me for it if you want. I hate myself for it, in spite of what he was, in spite of what he did to me. <u>Cersei</u>: Oh, poor little man. Your papa was mean to you. Do you have any idea what you did when you fired that crossbow? You left us open. You laid us bare for the vultures and the vultures came and tore us apart.	<u>Cersei</u>: Hai ucciso nostro padre. <u>Tyrion</u>: Mi aveva condannato a morte per un delitto che non avevo commesso. Sì, lo ho ucciso. Odiami se vuoi. Anch'io mi odio, nonostante quello che era e nonostante quello che lui aveva fatto a me. <u>Cersei</u>: Oh, mio povero piccolino. Papà è stato cattivo con te. Hai idea di cosa hai fatto quando hai scoccato quella freccia? Ci hai lasciati esposti. Ci hai esposti agli avvoltoi che sono arrivati e ci hanno ridotto a brandelli.

Table 28: Examples of deletion in episode 07x07

In the first three scenes Jon, Daenerys Tyrion and their allies meet Cersei in King's Landing to discuss the looming threat of the White Walkers. When Euron Greyjoy,

Theon's uncle, makes fun of Tyrion's dwarfism, the latter along with Theon responds to him with equal wit. His remark "Never explain, it always ruins it" (translated to "*La hai anche spiegata. Mai spiegare le battute*"), suggests a tone of sarcasm alongside a hint of wisdom; this is preserved in the Italian version, despite the deletion of the latter part of the sentence. In the second dialogue, Cersei's line "I don't think it's serious at all" is not kept in the target version. A few scenes later, Tyrion faces his sister alone, in an attempt to persuade her to join their cause. During their exchange, Cersei reiterates how Tyrion, by killing their father, has endangered the whole family. Her statement "You laid us bare for the vultures and the vultures came and tore us apart" is translated into Italian as "*Ci hai esposti agli avvoltoi che sono arrivati e ci hanno ridotto a brandelli*", omitting the repetition of the word 'avvoltoi'.

In all cases, the decision to employ deletion stems from a need of synchronization, as well as aspects concerning the fluency and conciseness of the dialogue, as a faithful translation would have resulted in redundant and unnatural constructions.

In the same episode, some cases of transposition can be observed, whereby the message is adapted to the target language audience, without altering the meaning and the emotions of the original (see Table 29).

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<u>Hound</u>: <i>I left this shit city because I didn't want to die in it. Am I going to die in this shit city?</i> <u>Tyrion</u>: <i>You might.</i>	<u>Mastino</u>: <i>Ho lasciato questa dannata città di merda perchè la odiavo. Ed ora mi tocca morirci.</i> <u>Tyrion</u>: <i>Può darsi.</i>
<u>Theon (to Jon)</u>: <i>What you did in King's Landing... what you said... You could have lied to Cersei. About bending the knee to Daenerys. You risked everything, to tell an enemy the truth.</i> <u>Jon</u>: <i>We went down there to make peace. And it seems to me we need to be honest with each other if we're going to fight together.</i>	<u>Theon (a Jon)</u>: <i>Sai ad approdo del re sei stato sincero...Avresti potuto mentire a Cersei a proposito della tua sottomissione a Daenerys. Hai rischiato dicendo la verità al nemico.</i> <u>Jon</u>: <i>Eravamo lì per un accordo di pace. Sono convinto che per combattere insieme bisogna essere onesti gli uni con gli altri.</i>

<i><u>Tyrion:</u> You spoke with her.</i>	<i><u>Tyrion:</u> Le hai parlato?</i>
<i><u>Jaime:</u> At her. Until she kicked me out. She thinks I was an idiot to trust you. A lot of people seem to think that, actually.</i>	<i><u>Jaime:</u> Ci ho provato. Mi ha sbattuto fuori. Dice che sono stato un idiota a fidarmi di te. E a quanto pare sono in molti a pensarlo.</i>

Table 29: Examples of transposition and expansion in episode 07x07

In the three scenes in Table 29 above, the adapter decided to opt for a translation that emphasises the sense and emotional load, that is, the intensity of the original version.

In the first dialogue, the Hound, who has just arrived in King's Landing with the rest of the group, states: "I left this shit city because I didn't want to die in it", expressing his strong aversion to both the city and the idea of dying there; in the Italian version the sentence is changed to "*Ho lasciato questa dannata città di merda perché la odiavo*", highlighting the contempt the character feels rather than the fear of having to die there.

The second instance shows the moment when Theon, back in Storm's End, talks to Jon about the latter's behaviour in the capital. The line he utters "What you did in King's Landing... what you said..." underlines the subject of their conversation: Jon's genuine nature. In comparison, the adapted version, "*Sai ad approdo del re sei stato sincero...*", appears clearer and more straightforward.

In the last dialogue, on the other hand, an example of expansion can be observed, where the adapter decided to rework and expand the meaning of the line. Jaime, when asked by Tyrion if he had spoken to Cersei, replies "At her" (which translates literally to "*Con lei*"). In the dubbed version, this is transformed into "*Ci ho provato*", emphasising the unsuccessful nature of the attempt.

A different scenario can be noted in the scenes in Table 30, where Jaime and Cersei discuss the impending war and the possible victory of the dead.

ORIGINAL SCENE	ITALIAN DUBBED VERSION
<i><u>Cersei:</u> And then we rule.</i>	<i><u>Cersei:</u> Regneremo.</i>
<i><u>Jaime:</u> When the fight in the north is over,</i>	<i><u>Jaime:</u> Quando la lotta nel nord sarà finita,</i>

<i>someone wins. You understand that, don't you? If the dead win, they march south and kill us all. If the living win and we've betrayed them, they march south and kill us all.</i>	<i>qualcuno avrà vinto. Te ne rendi conto, vero? Se vincono i non-morti, verranno a sud e ci stermineranno tutti. Se vincono i vivi e li abbiamo traditi, verranno a sud e ci uccideranno tutti.</i>
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Table 30: Example of adaptation in episode 7x07

The term “dead” refers to the army of zombies created by the White Walkers. These zombies are dead beings brought back to life through dark magic. In the Italian translation, they are referred to as “*non-morti*”. More specifically, the noun “dead” belongs to the category of non-gradable antonyms, complete opposites without an intermediary and, as such, cannot be used in comparative forms (Almanna, & House, 2023). By translating the term as “*non-morti*”, it emphasises that these entities are not completely lifeless, but not human either.

3.4 Analysis of subtitling in the examined episodes

As far as subtitling is concerned, I chose to analyse the three episodes by comparing some scenes from the source version with those that have been automatically subtitled in Italian by YouTube. One of the issues that arose concerns the difficulty of recognising certain terms or proper names, which were transcribed incorrectly by the automatic transcriber, as it can be observed in Figures 31 and 32:

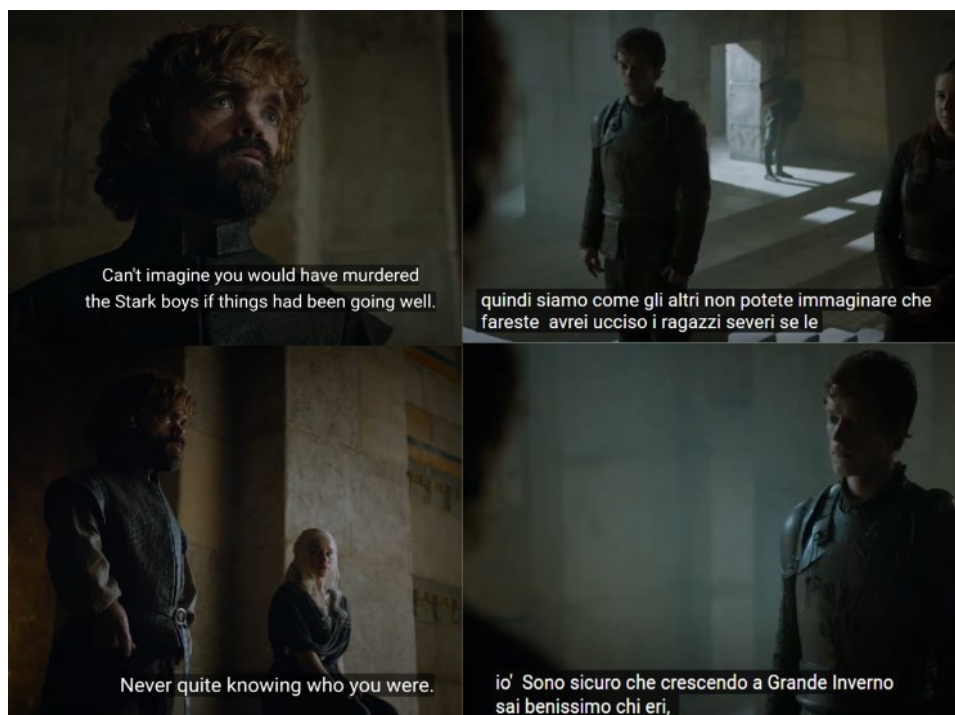


Figure 31: Comparison between the original scene and automatic subtitled version (*Best movie highlights, 2017*)



Figure 32: Comparison between the original scene and automatic subtitled version (*Nisen Renden, 2017*)

In Figure 31, from the ninth episode of season six, Theon meets Daenerys and Tyrion. During the conversation, the latter shows scepticism towards Theon, pointing out his past crimes against House Stark. In Figure 32, from the seventh episode of season seven, Jaime learns of Cersei's true intentions regarding the upcoming war and turns against her. In both cases, there is not only a delay in the display of the automatic subtitles, but also some difficulties in transcribing specific terms and names.

Figure 31 shows that the word "Stark boys" is translated to "*ragazzi severi*", whereas the sentence "never quite knowing who you were" ("*non sapendo chi tu fossi*") takes on a completely opposite meaning, being rendered as "*sai benissimo chi eri*".

Another instance of mis-subtitling is illustrated in Figure 32 where, in the subtitled version, the word "the dead" ("*non morti*") is incorrectly transcribed as "debt" ("*debito*"); the latter part of the dialogue is completely altered, changing "You plotted with Euron Greyjoy" into "*sei un vantaggio ma sei una grande gioia*".

In both scenes, these transcription errors are linked to a voice recognition problem. These algorithms sometimes fail to accurately recognise words or sounds, misinterpreting their pronunciation (especially if there is background noise or fast dialogues). Some words, like "dead" and "debt" have a similar pronunciation and thus create linguistic ambiguity. The same happens with the noun "Greyjoy" which if pronounced with a certain intonation and accent can be perceived as "great joy" ("*grande gioia*").

Likewise, in Figure 33, the name of one of the main characters, "Lady Sansa", is erroneously transcribed as "*Lady mani*" in the Italian subtitled version. This transcription mistake arises from a vocabulary limitation factor, as the database of the software used to generate automatic subtitles does not always include specific terms or proper names, thus leading to an inaccurate translation.

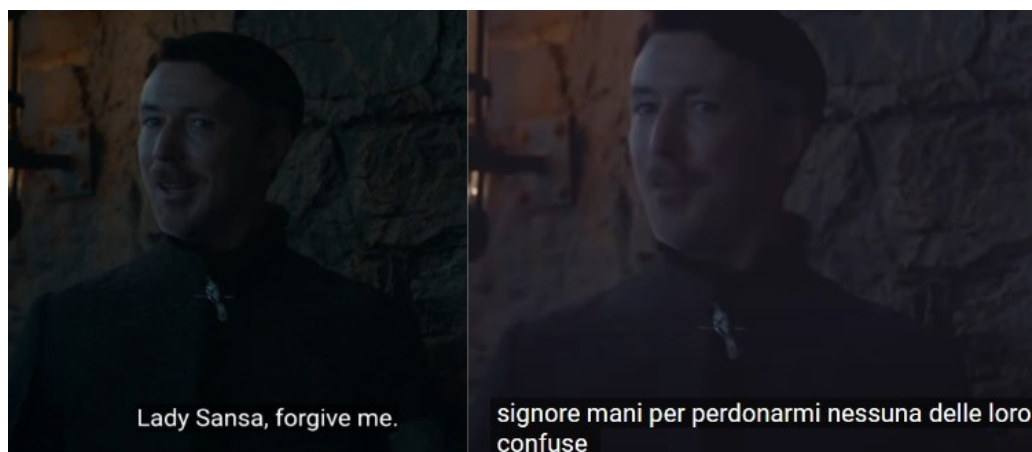


Figure 33: Comparison between the original scene and automatic subtitled version (*Best Scenes India*, 2019)

An instance where automatic subtitles match the source version can be observed in Figure 34. The expression has been translated literally as “*Tieni la porta!*”. Although the wordplay on the character’s name is lost (“Hold the door” to “Hodor”), it can still be understood by paying attention to the audio.



Figure 34: Comparison between the original scene and automatic subtitled version (*GameofThrones*, 2018)

3.5 Discussion of the results

In all the episodes analysed, it can be clearly observed that specific translation techniques were employed in the Italian dubbed version to adapt the dialogues to the target audience. In particular, the use of deletion is apparent. It aims to make the conversation more natural and fluent while maintaining the same emotional impact and

meaning of the original scene. This technique was mainly used in sentences in which a given concept is reiterated several times or when it is not essential to understand the scene. As a literal translation would have resulted in heavy and redundant constructions, it was opted to delete superfluous words or sentences.

Other recurrent translation strategies throughout the two episodes are localisation and transposition, which were used where it was necessary to clarify the message and make it more familiar to the Italian audience. Likewise, the titles of some of the episodes were paraphrased and adapted in the target version, resulting in significant changes; most of them, originally noun phrases in the source version, were turned into clauses.

This is not only a matter of cultural localisation, but it has also to do with linguistic aspects, such as rhythm or space constraints. Clauses tend to be less concise than noun phrases but tend to express the concept clearly, simplifying it.

As far as subtitling is concerned, an initial analysis revealed that the automatic subtitles were inaccurate in some parts of the dialogues, both with regards to grammar and timing. In all the scenes examined, the subtitles displayed on the screen after the voices of the characters, often disregard pauses, overlap dialogues and cut sentences.

A considerable challenge in identifying some specific terms or proper names was also observed, resulting in incorrect transcriptions. This issue stems from the limitations of voice recognition technology, as automatic subtitles are generated by algorithms that are not always able to accurately perceive certain sounds (and words), due to variations in accent or the speed of pronunciation. In addition, the presence of background noise or unfamiliar terms, not included in the algorithm's database, makes it difficult to identify and transcribe the entire dialogue.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion to this dissertation, it is evident that audiovisual translation is a complex process that involves many different aspects and takes various forms, including dubbing and subtitling. The analysis conducted on the Italian dubbed and subtitled versions of the American TV series *Game of Thrones* highlighted the opportunities but, above all, the numerous challenges that characterise audiovisual translation. The comparison between the Italian and source versions revealed the considerable differences that exist between dubbing and subtitling, not only on a linguistic level but also on a cultural level. These reflect the needs of the Italian audience and the technical features of these two translation methods. The Italian dubbed version shows a clear attempt to adapt the dialogues to the target audience, making them smoother and more straightforward. However, dubbing is a process that inevitably entails losses and changes, both for lip synchronization reasons and for the need to adapt some historical-cultural references in the series, sometimes at the expense of faithfulness to the source text.

As a matter of fact, although functional in the linguistic context, some of the expressions used in the dialogues do not render the same emotional load as the original. Several translation strategies, in particular adaptation ones, were employed taking into account linguistic features but also cultural dynamics.

On the other hand, the analysis of the versions that were automatically subtitled in Italian revealed that the subtitling is more literal and faithful to the original than the dubbed version, even though inaccurate in some parts of the dialogues. In fact, although the subtitles are more faithful to the source text, they have limitations in terms of synthesis and ease of reading. The space-time limits imposed by subtitling, require condensation choices and, therefore, the loss of some linguistic and stylistic nuances in order to be in synchrony with the original audio. When considering automatic subtitles, the issues become even more evident, as there are also problems related to voice recognition technology. These types of subtitles are automatically generated by algorithms that perceive sounds and words, which means they are often unable to recognise and correctly transcribe certain terms due to variation in the accent, the speed of pronunciation or because they are not included in the algorithm's database.

To conclude, we can say that the comparison between the dubbed and subtitled versions of *Game of Thrones* represents an interesting example of how audiovisual translation is not a neutral process, but rather a complex one which involves making technical and cultural decisions. Although both versions have their advantages and disadvantages, they offer different ways to watch one of the most renowned series of the last decades, making the product as engaging and familiar as possible for the target audience.

My study offers an insight into the Italian audiovisual translation of *Game of Thrones*, focusing on a selected number of episodes from the series. As a result, these findings are not representative of all TV series. It is important to underline that every country operates under their own constraints when it comes to dubbing and subtitling, and that the expectations and the needs of the audience differ considerably from one culture to another. To have a complete view of audiovisual translation, it is therefore essential to observe and analyse different fields and audiovisual products from different cultural and geographical settings.

This study suggests that further research could be conducted on other audiovisual products to explore the various nuances of the translation process. Other TV series of various topics and genres as well as movies could be analysed to find out about the various translation strategies adopted to transpose their contents into another language.

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RIASSUNTO IN ITALIANO

Per traduzione audiovisiva, o ATV, si intende la traduzione di dialoghi presenti film, programmi televisivi e video mediatici. Considerata la complessa natura dei prodotti audiovisivi, i quali sono il risultato di una combinazione tra segni verbali e di immagini, la definizione di ATV ha subito delle variazioni nel corso degli anni. Alcuni studiosi preferiscono utilizzare il termine “traduzione filmica” (film translation), riferendosi esclusivamente alla traduzione di film, escludendo invece programmi televisivi ed altri materiali.

Altro termine frequentemente utilizzato è “screen translation”, o traduzione su schermo, riguardante tutti i prodotti proiettati su uno schermo, come televisioni, cinema o computer. Nonostante ciò è più appropriato utilizzare il termine “adattamento” piuttosto che “traduzione”, in quanto si tratta di un processo volto a ottenere l’equivalenza e replicare il contenuto semantico e sintattico del testo di partenza. L’adattamento richiede pertanto una profonda conoscenza e comprensione delle differenze linguistiche e culturali tra le lingue di partenza e di arrivo.

Sono state identificate quattordici diverse tipologie di traduzione su schermo, distinguendole tra “dominanti”, ovvero le più comuni, e “sfidanti” (“challenging”), che comprendono quelle meno diffuse e più complesse. Nella prima categoria rientrano: il doppiaggio (o sincronizzazione labiale), la sottotitolazione interlinguistica, il voice over (o mezzo doppiaggio, solitamente utilizzato per la traduzione di documentari o interviste), il commento libero, la traduzione simultanea o a vista e il doppiaggio intralinguistico. La seconda categoria, invece, include: la sottotitolazione intralinguistica (o didascalie chiuse), i sopratitoli e la descrizione audio.

Un elemento chiave della traduzione audiovisiva è rappresentato dal linguaggio filmico, il quale funge da connettore tra il testo di partenza e la sua rappresentazione visiva e sonora. Il suo obiettivo principale è quello di ricreare una conversazione che risulti spontanea agli occhi dello spettatore. I dialoghi dei film appartengono alla categoria del cosiddetto linguaggio “scritto per essere parlato”. Nel sottotitolaggio di dialoghi avviene pertanto un passaggio dalla forma scritta a quella parlata, che richiede una sintesi e un adattamento sulla base dei limiti spazio-temporali imposti dallo schermo e dalla scena. Al contrario, nel caso del doppiaggio si osserva una mancanza di spontaneità nelle conversazioni.

Il linguista danese Henrik Gottlieb ha identificato dieci principali strategie traduttive maggiormente utilizzate dagli esperti: espansione, parafrasi, trasposizione, limitazione, trascrizione, dislocazione, condensazione, riduzione, cancellazione e omissione.

Inoltre, spesso i traduttori, o adattatori, si servono di alcune formule ripetitive, note come routine traduttive, per tradurre il parlato colloquiale o espressioni gergali.

La presenza di riferimenti culturali specifici della lingua di partenza, di prestiti linguistici e del linguaggio tabù costituiscono alcune delle sfide che l'adattatore deve affrontare per rendere il prodotto più comprensibile al pubblico di arrivo. Il problema dei riferimenti culturali risulta particolarmente significativo nel doppiaggio dove è necessaria chiarezza e immediatezza, non essendo possibile inserire delle note esplicative. Per prestiti linguistici si intendono parole straniere che sono diventate parte del vocabolario di una lingua. Esistono due categorie di prestiti: gli anglicismi (come penny, okay, babysitter) e i calchi (come l'espressione "piove a catinelle" dall'inglese "It's raining cats and dogs").

Un ulteriore ostacolo è rappresentato dal turpiloquio, ovvero dalla presenza di un linguaggio scurrile, tipico dei film americani. Tenzialmente questa tipologia di linguaggio viene attenuato o completamente omesso nelle versioni doppiate, sia per la censura sia per le difficoltà traduttive che implica. Il traduttore può anche decidere di utilizzare la sua creatività e optare per degli insulti più fantasiosi (ad esempio "bitch" può essere tradotto come "stronza"), sempre considerando i limiti imposti dal sincronismo del labiale.

L'umorismo rappresenta invece uno degli aspetti più complessi e delicati da gestire nella traduzione audiovisiva, in quanto è spesso legato a dei riferimenti culturali e linguistici che non sempre trovano un equivalente nella lingua di arrivo. Quando ciò occorre, l'adattatore opta per una omissione del gioco di parole, sia per volontà propria o poiché non in grado di identificarlo e comprenderne il significato. Se l'umorismo gioca su temi tabù, come la morte o la malattia, la traduzione si complica ulteriormente.

Due delle principali tecniche di traduzione audiovisiva sono il doppiaggio e il sottotitolaggio.

Il doppiaggio è un processo attraverso il quale le voci degli attori originali vengono sostituite con quelle in un'altra lingua, prende in considerazione diversi aspetti, in particolare la lunghezza delle frasi e la sincronizzazione del labiale. Il sincronismo è uno dei fattori che distingue il doppiaggio dagli altri tipi di traduzione e può riguardare l'allineamento tra i movimenti del corpo dell'attore, ma anche tra le parole pronunciate e i movimenti delle labbra. Il doppiaggio è una strategia orientata verso la lingua di arrivo e consiste in tre fasi differenti: traduzione, manipolazione e adattamento.

Il sottotitolaggio consiste invece nella proiezione, in simultanea con l'audio, dei dialoghi sullo schermo sotto forma di testo scritto. Solitamente consiste in due linee, per un massimo di 35 caratteri. Al contrario del doppiaggio, è una pratica orientata verso la versione di partenza, in quanto fornisce una traduzione fedele al testo di partenza.

La scelta tra queste due forme dipende da ragioni linguistiche, ma anche economiche e storico-culturali. Il doppiaggio è una pratica principalmente diffusa nei paesi ricchi e densamente popolati (come Francia, Germania, Spagna, Austria e Svizzera), dove vi è sufficiente denaro per portare avanti il processo. I paesi più piccoli e meno popolati (come Belgio, Cipro, Danimarca, Paesi Bassi, Portogallo, Norvegia e Galles) prediligono invece il sottotitolaggio. In alcuni paesi, come Grecia ed Italia, doppiaggio e sottotitolaggio coesistono. Per quanto riguarda quest'ultima, il doppiaggio è generalmente preferito dal pubblico, mentre il sottotitolaggio è principalmente utilizzato dalle televisioni satellitari quando un programma è tradotto per la prima volta, per via della sua economicità.

Due fenomeni distinti ma strettamente connessi alla sottotitolazione sono la sottotitolazione automatica e il fansubbing. Entrambi svolgono un ruolo importante nell'ampliare i contenuti audiovisivi ad un pubblico più vasto.

La serie americana *Game of Thrones* (in italiano "Il Trono di Spade") rappresenta un esempio significativo di traduzione audiovisiva italiana, in cui l'intero prodotto è stato adattato al pubblico italiano sia nel doppiaggio che nel sottotitolaggio. *Game of Thrones* è una serie fantasy creata da David Benioff e D.B. Weiss, basata sui libri della saga "Le Cronache del Ghiaccio e del Fuoco" dello scrittore statunitense George R.R. Martin. La serie, mandata in onda dal 2011 al 2019 sul canale di HBO, è ambientata nei continenti immaginari di Essos e Westeros e segue le vicende di alcuni membri delle nove

principali casate del continente, che lottano per il controllo del Trono di Spade, oggetto simbolo del potere assoluto del regno.

La serie, costituita da otto stagioni, ha ottenuto diversi premi, tra cui gli Emmy e vari Awards, contraddistinguendosi non solo per la qualità della produzione e per l'interpretazione degli attori, ma soprattutto per la sua sceneggiatura intricata e ricca di colpi di scena.

Un ulteriore aspetto particolarmente interessante di questa serie è che si basa su alcune figure e vicende storiche del passato, tra cui la Guerra delle due Rose.

Con lo scopo di comprendere le principali differenze tra la versione di partenza e le versioni doppiate e sottotitolate in italiano, ho analizzato tre episodi della serie, concentrandosi sulle rispettive versioni e cercando di comprendere le motivazioni dietro a determinate scelte traduttive. In entrambi i casi sono emerse delle differenze sia sul piano linguistico che culturale. Nel doppiaggio si osserva un chiaro tentativo di adattare dei dialoghi al pubblico locale, attraverso specifiche tecniche traduttive, in particolare la localizzazione, la cancellazione e la trasposizione.

Questo processo comporta inevitabilmente una serie di perdite e di modifiche, sia per ragioni di sincronizzazione del labiale sia di adattamento culturale, risultando pertanto in una minore fedeltà all'originale rispetto alla versione sottotitolata. D'altra parte, i sottotitoli generati automaticamente da YouTube hanno messo in evidenza come la sottotitolazione automatica presenti delle limitazioni in termini di qualità, sintesi e facilità di lettura.

In conclusione, la traduzione audiovisiva si configura come un processo neutro e complesso allo stesso tempo, incentrato su una serie di decisioni tecniche e culturali. Entrambe le versioni, nonostante presentino ciascuna degli svantaggi, offrono due alternative diverse per fruire di una delle più celebri serie televisive dell'ultimo decennio, preservando lo stesso carico emotivo della versione originale.

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