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Interlingual subtitling for the young deaf and hard of hearing: a case study

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Introduction

Today Audiovisual Translation (AVT) is a growing topic of interest in the field of Translation Studies and more research on audiences needs, preference and on accessibility has been done in Europe. But it is not enough, and viewers are not always satisfied with the audiovisual services they enjoy.

The general background of this dissertation is AVT, but the focus will be on subtitling, in particular on subtitling for a specific audience: the deaf and hard of hearing. Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) is a variant of standard subtitling, in which time and space constraints are adapted to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing viewers. This topic was chosen because interest towards hearing impaired people's needs is growing, but the differences among the members of the deaf and hard of hearing community are not given enough attention. However, the quality of audiovisual products, in particular when dealing with viewers with disabilities, is satisfying only if audiences are satisfied.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters, going from the broader field of AVT to the more restricted sub-field of SDH. Chapter One considers AVT in general: a definition of AVT is given, along with a general description of some AVT modes, namely dubbing, subtitling, SDH, voice-over, audiodescription (AD) and live subtitling. Then AVT is taken into consideration in the context of Translation Studies, with its linguistic and cultural issues. The following sections of the chapter focus on audience reception and media accessibility in Europe, with particular reference to Italy and the UK.

Chapter Two examines subtitling, giving information about its evolution from the past up to now and proposing a classification into different types of subtitles. Moreover, the technical and linguistic constraints of the subtitling process are described.

Chapter Three focuses on a specific type of subtitling, that is SDH, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing. After a definition of SDH and a distinction between intralingual and interlingual SDH, another issue, which has often been underestimated, is taken into account. Indeed, the deaf and hard of hearing tend to be considered as a single group with the same needs. However, in this group different sub-groups exist, depending on the level of deafness of each member and on their social and educational environment. A medical classification of these different types of deafness is given, with the aim to

highlight how the linguistic and reading skills and the level of comprehension of deaf and hard of hearing viewers can vary depending on their degree of deafness. Different skills involve different needs, therefore the ideal, but probably utopian, solution would be to create different versions of SDH depending on the different sub-groups mentioned above. After a brief history on SDH and its legislation in Europe, the situation of SDH provision in Europe is described, which is based on the EFHOH (European Federation of Hard of Hearing People) 2015 Report. Then, SDH constraints are recognized, which are often different from the constraints of “regular” subtitling for hearers. Special attention is given to the role of sound effects and music in films/programmes and on how it is important to convey them to deaf and hard of hearing audiences. Moreover, ten false beliefs on SDH are listed, which are related to ten obstacles in creating accessible SDH. In the last part of this chapter, an SDH proposal is presented: Italian SDH of a short episode of the American talk show *The Ellen Show* (available on YouTube) were created and the video was shown to 32 students of ISISS ITC A. Magarotto, a high school for deaf and hard of hearing students in Padua. The students also filled-in a questionnaire about the video. The video and the questions were created specifically for these students, basing on the information about their characteristics, level of deafness and skills given by the head mistress of the school. The video was subtitled using the software programme VisualSubsync. The subtitles were translated from English to Italian using translation strategies and respecting the technical and linguistic constraints presented in the theory.

The results of the case study were quite successful. Its positive outcome could be considered as an example of how paying attention to audience’s needs makes an audiovisual product accessible.

Chapter One

Audiovisual Translation

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a definition of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) will be given, together with the explanation of how it can be included in the broader context of Translation Studies. Some modes of AVT will be described, focusing on dubbing, subtitling and voice-over. Then, two concepts that are becoming very important and discussed in research on AVT will be taken into consideration: the accessibility of audiovisual products and their reception.

1.2 Audiovisual Translation: a definition

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is the term used to refer to the transfer from one language to another of the verbal components contained in audiovisual works and products. Feature films, television programs, theatrical plays, musicals, opera, Web pages, and video games are just some examples of the vast array of audiovisual products available and that require translation. (Chiaro 2013: 1)

AVT is a translation mode that in the past included “media translation”, “multimedia translation”, “multimodal translation” and “screen translation”. These different terms referred to the interlingual transfer of language when it is transmitted and accessed both visually and acoustically, usually through the screen of an electronic device (Chiaro 2009: 141). “What is particular about audiovisual translation is that the verbal component will tend to be highly dependent on the visuals, and while the translator operates on the verbal level alone, the translational process will be frequently constrained by the visual code” (Munday 2009: 170). According to Orero (2004: VII), “much is to be done to put Screen Translation, Multimedia Translation or the wider field of Audiovisual Translation on a par with other fields within Translation Studies. A step forward would be to agree on a generic name to define the multiple and different modes of translation when the audio (radio), the audio and the visual (screen), or the written, the audio and the visual (multimedia) channels are the source text”. She also considers radio as part of this field, because she has translated voice-over for more than 15 years for the radio, and she considers the process very similar to that of voice-over for TV. Orero (2004: VIII)

considers “Audiovisual Translation” a term that includes all translation in any media or format and also the emerging areas of media accessibility, such as SDH (subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing) and AD (audiodescription for the visually impaired). The term “Screen Translation” would exclude translations for theatre or radio, while “Multimedia Translation” is considered to refer only to information technology.

1.3 Translating audiovisual products: some AVT modes

After the first talking pictures were launched in the 1920s, the need to translate film dialogues and make films accessible to speakers of all languages arose, becoming the main issue for North American and European film directors (Chiaro 2009: 141).

Translating audiovisual material means transferring verbal and non-verbal language both visually and acoustically, therefore it is very different from translating a written text, which is only meant to be read. Audiovisual products function simultaneously on different levels: they are polysemiotic because they are composed of different elements, which work together to create one final effect. These elements are divided into visual and acoustic elements and both can be verbal or non-verbal, as shown in the table below (ivi, p. 142).

	VISUAL	ACOUSTIC
NON-VERBAL	<p>SCENERY, LIGHTING, COSTUMES, PROPS, etc. Also: GESTURE, FACIAL EXPRESSIONS; BODY MOVEMENT, etc.</p>	<p>MUSIC, BACKGROUND NOISE, SOUND EFFECTS, etc. Also: LAUGHTER; CRYING; HUMMING; BODY SOUNDS (breathing; coughing, etc.)</p>
VERBAL	<p>STREET SIGNS, SHOP SIGNS; WRITTEN REALIA (newspapers; letters; headlines; notes, etc.)</p>	<p>DIALOGUES; SONG- LYRICS; POEMS, etc.</p>

Figure 1: The polysemiotic nature of audiovisual products (Chiaro 2009:143)

1.3.1 Dubbing

Dubbing is a process by which dialogues in the source language are replaced by dialogues in the target language, trying to follow the original timing, phrasing and actors' lip-movements as much as possible (Chiaro 2009: 144).

In the early 20th century, the spread of talking films and the rise of Hollywood led producers to deal with the issue of offering their products in different languages. Initially, producers added short dialogues in the target language within the English dialogues, but because of audiences' dissatisfaction, they began producing multiple-language versions of the same film. Paramount Pictures, for example, set up a large studio in Joinville, France, dedicated to the production of these multiple-versions, but it proved to be economically unsustainable. The idea of dubbing films in other languages is generally attributed to Jakob Karol, the Austrian film producer who, in 1930, realized that the technology to do this was already available. At the beginning, dubbing into European languages was carried out principally in the USA, but by the early 1930s European countries had begun to set up their own dubbing industries (Chiaro 2013:3).

There are four main stages in the dubbing process (Chiaro 2009: 145):

- 1- the script is translated;
- 2- the translated script is adapted to the original soundtrack;
- 3- the translated script is recorded by actors;
- 4- the new recording is mixed with the original recording.

Traditionally, the entire dubbing process was overseen by a project manager helped by an assistant who was responsible for negotiating costs, timescales, and general organizational aspects. The process began with the word for word translation of the script. Then, a "dubbing-translator" (or "dialogue adapter") adapted the translation in order to make dialogues natural and synchronized with the actors' lip movements on screen. Dubbing-translators needed to be able to render the new dialogue as natural and credible as possible. In the meantime, the dubbing assistant divided the film into "loops" (short tracks) and organized the recording shifts for actors. When recording began, actors watched the film and listened to the original soundtrack, reading the translated script. The completed recording was finally mixed and balanced with the international track and musical score. However, this traditional approach is being replaced by digital technology,

which eliminates the need to prepare reels of celluloid into short tracks and allows voice talents to perform in a recording studio. Now progress in technology allow actors to record from their personal workstations, and software programmes are able to edit different tracks together. Moreover, actors' facial expressions and lip movements can be edited and synchronized with the movements produced in the target language, while other software programmes are able to match the voice quality of the original actor with the recording of the translation, giving the impression that the original actor is speaking (Chiaro 2013: 3-4).

1.3.2 Subtitling

Subtitles are lines of written text inserted in an audiovisual product, which are synchronised with the original soundtrack. They can be part of the film (open subtitles), inserted by the viewer (closed subtitles) or projected on screen. Subtitles reduce original dialogues by between 40 and 75 per cent to allow viewers to read them and watch the action on screen at the same time (Chiaro 2009: 148). According to Antonini (2005: 13-14), three main operations should be carried out to reduce original dialogues:

- elimination: unnecessary elements are omitted (hesitations, false starts, or information which can be inferred from the images on screen);
- rendering: problems like humour, slang, language varieties or taboo language are faced;
- simplification: condensation of sentences in order to ensure a quick and pleasant reading.

The process of subtitling usually involves different professionals who work in the different stages of the process (Chiaro 2009: 148).

1.3.3 Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH)

Also known as “closed captions”, the aim of SDH is to allow the hearing impaired to access audiovisual material. SDH displays not only original dialogues, but also all the information about sounds, noises, music, voice intonation, etc. Different strategies can be adopted in order to create subtitles which are satisfying for a deaf and hard of hearing

audience, for example by changing colours or the position of subtitles on screen depending on who is speaking (Orrego Carmona 2013: 303). They will be discussed more accurately in Chapter Three.

1.3.4 Voice-over

Voice-over is a process in which the volume of the original soundtrack is completely or partially reduced and the recorded translation is added over the original voice. The original track is usually left at a regular volume a few seconds before the start of the translation, in order to allow the audience to hear the original voices. Then, the recorded track usually finishes a few seconds before the end of the original dialogue, in order to allow the audience to hear the original voice again (Díaz Cintas 2003: 195). During the translation, the original voice is audible but indecipherable to the public. This type of audiovisual translation is generally adopted in history and wildlife documentaries and news broadcasts, but it is not restricted only to these categories (Chiaro 2009: 152). Voice-over is also used to translate films and other programmes in countries like Poland, where the speaker is known as *lektor*, Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, where one or even several actors recite the translation (Díaz Cintas and Orero 2010: 442). Voice-over is technically less complex and demanding than dubbing, because there is no need to synchronize the translation with lip movements. For this reason, it is reasonably cheap and it can be carried out faster than dubbing. However, the fact that there are less limitations than in other AVT modes does not mean that they do not exist. Indeed, voiceover requires a certain degree of synchronisation, because the right balance with body movements and images shown on screen must be found. Moreover, some editing and condensation of the translation are required in order to fit in the required time slots because the translation starts after the original speech and finishes earlier (ivi, p. 443).

1.3.5 Audiodescription

Audiodescription is a process, which allows blind and partially sighted people to access audiovisual material by transmitting visual information through the acoustic channel. It consists in describing what is happening on screen: action, scenography,

actors' clothes, facial expressions and body language. The description is then added to the film soundtrack, where no dialogues or sound effects are present (Orrego Carmona 2013: 305).

1.3.6 Live subtitling

Live subtitling involved a stenographer who created subtitles in real-time, but it was technically complex and it was also difficult to find skilled stenographers. Nowadays, the advent of voice-recognition technology changed the situation (Campbell n.d.). Live subtitling is also called "real-time subtitling" and it should not be confused with pre-recorded subtitles (Cabrera and Bartolomé 2005: 97) . In live subtitling, the technique of respeaking is the mainly used: "a subtitler listens to the original soundtrack of a live programme and respeaks it (re-peats it or reformulates it, depending on whether it is possible to keep up with the original speech rate), including punctuation marks, to a speech recognition soft-ware, which turns the recognised utterances into subtitles displayed on the screen with minimum delay" (Romero-Fresco 2009: 118). When this technique is used for SDH, extra-linguistic information should be included, and this is possible with the help of a small keypad (*ibidem*).

1.3.7 The spread of AVT

According to Remael (2010: 12-13), the rapid spread of audiovisual texts at the end of the 20th century brought to a corresponding spread of different AVT modes and also to increasingly interdisciplinary research. The factors which had a greater impact on the AVT landscape are the globalisation of audiovisual distribution and production systems, the advent of DVD technology, the expansion of the Internet and the diffusion of mobile phones, iPads and other electronic devices. Some of these developments have led to the differentiation of target audiences. These new AVT modes include surtitling for the stage, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, live subtitling, as well as intralingual subtitling that deals with linguistic variations in a language. Fansubbing and fandubbing are two other AVT modes generated by Internet users who subtitle or dub their favourite productions, challenging commercial production modes. In 2009, YouTube started

offering subtitling options to its users: they are automatically generated subtitles that appear word by word on screen. Audio description for the blind is also important: it translates essential visual information into verbal narration placed between film dialogues. Video game localisation is another new AVT mode and integrates audiovisual forms like dubbing or subtitling with features of localisation. The proliferation of AVT modes is also linked to the growing number of new environments where AVT is used, such as museums, opera houses and trains stations (*ibidem*).

1.4 Audiovisual translation and Translation Studies

Today, audiovisual translation is a growing field within Translation Studies, even if this is a recent development. Research in the audiovisual area dates back to 1932, but it remained in the bigger area of Film or Media Studies and only in the 1980s it started to be studied from a translation perspective and in relation to the discipline of Translation Studies (Orero 2009: 130). Audiovisual translation has moved from the periphery to the centre of Translation Studies over the past two decades. The translation of intertitles in silent films may be considered the earliest form of audiovisual translation, but then, with the advent of ‘talking movies’ in the 1920s, greater needs for translation arose, as well as the necessity of producing films translated into other languages. Among the different forms of translation that were tried, subtitling and dubbing soon became the preferred modes. The selection between the two modes was based on their respective advantages and disadvantages, which will be presented in Chapter Two. The first research publications on audiovisual translation were published in the mid-fifties and sixties, but only in the early 1990s a true research and publication growth occurred (Remael 2010: 12).

The origin of audiovisual translation is surely linked to the origin of cinema. During silent films, verbal language was already used to transfer information to the audience, and there were also intertitles describing sound effects, which appeared in form of written text between the different scenes. The first film with intertitles was *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in 1903. Another mode to transfer information to the public was the presence of a narrator during the projection of the film, who told the story during the action on screen. Even if the origins of audiovisual translation are very close to the origin of cinema, this field

began to grow in the second half of the last century, thanks to the spread of television, which provided new opportunities and increased the needs of audiences. The recent technological progress are significantly influencing the field of audiovisual translation, as well as the increase in the production, distribution and consumption of audiovisual material (Orrego Carmona 2013: 298).

1.4.1 Models of analysis

The methods used in the translation of audiovisual products require a multidisciplinary approach, in order to carry out a detailed and correct analysis of this object of study. In an audiovisual product there are multiple codes operating simultaneously and producing meanings, therefore a good translator has to take into consideration more aspects to fully understand the relationship between these different codes and to be able to face the problems when he/she has to transfer them to another language and culture. Professional translators are required to have expertise in translation strategies and techniques, because they have already faced the most common translation problems, but a model of analysis is necessary for researchers, professionals, apprentices or students working in this field (Chaume 2004: 12-13).

The 1960 issue of *Babel* inaugurated research in the field of AVT. The following articles about the translation of audiovisual material focused on the aspects that differentiated them from other text types. These articles highlighted studies based on the limits and barriers which the translator should overcome in the attempt to convey the meaning of the audiovisual product using another language (ivi, p. 14).

Descriptive studies influenced the translation of audiovisual material and one of them, the methodology studied by Karamitroglou in his research *Towards a Methodology for the Investigation of Norms in Audiovisual Translation* (2000), is one of the most significant studies about this topic (ivi, p. 15). Karamitroglou analyses not only the field of audiovisual translation, but also this particular type of translation into the wider context of literary translation. In the introduction to his work, he explains how Audiovisual Translation was considered less prestigious than written translation, even if there are many reasons to consider audiovisual translation an important sub-field of Translation Studies. The fact that both audiovisual and literal translation are rooted in the need to

overcome language barriers is considered as one of the most important aspects. In the first part of his study, Karamitroglou explains his idea of norms, arguing that they are connected to one to another creating a unique system, and that they are different in every culture. Therefore, it is not important to simply follow norms to produce the source text, but to understand what norms to follow in order to produce a target text. In the second part of the book, he identifies four interdependent elements, which form a model for the analysis of audiovisual translation. The first element is “human agents”, that is people who try to follow the norms and who are very important because their ideas will support or modify the existing rules. The second factor is “products”, therefore translations. “Recipients” are the third element, namely that part of the public that consciously decide to consume the product. The fourth and last element is the “audiovisual mode”, that is the set of linguistic and sociocultural norms which belong to the AVT context and should be followed to produce an audiovisual text. Karamitroglou recognizes three levels in which these four factors work: a lower level, where only one particular audiovisual translation product is taken into consideration, a middle level, where audiovisual translation is considered as an independent field, and an upper level, where audiovisual translation is considered as part of a broader field. In the third section of his research a case study is presented, which analyses the choice between subtitling and revoicing in Greece in 1995 and 1996. The case study is based on the theory introduced in the first two sections. Karamitroglou’s book underlines the importance of considering audiovisual translation as part of the bigger field of Translation Studies. His theories are explained using a language that may be very difficult for people who have a limited knowledge of translation theory, for example undergraduate students. However, the author is successful in conveying the idea that, even if translation has started with the written word, in recent decades society is becoming ever more visual and therefore audiovisual translation must be taken into consideration more seriously and considered equal to literary translation (Kennedy 2000: 242-244).

Taking into consideration the most influencing studies in the field of audiovisual translation, Chaume (2004: 16-22) tries to create his method of analysis. He attempts to find a connection between Translation Studies and Film studies and uses the codes of cinematographic language to explain the process of AVT. He aims to take into account the whole meaning of an audiovisual text, by analysing its external factors (professionals,

history, culture, communication, etc.) and the translation problems from a purely translational point of view. He considers an audiovisual text, which can be a film, a video or a programme, as a product constituted by many codes with different functions, which result in a unique structure. The audience will have to understand the meaning of this structure. Chaume (*ibidem*) identifies several codes in audiovisual products:

- linguistic code: it is necessary in a text, because if it was not present, we could not speak about translation. In subtitling, for example, the difficulty for the translator is to turn an oral text into written text, making it sound spontaneous;
- paralinguistic codes: a good translator should know several symbols that they should include in a translation, for example the symbols for laughter, pauses or moments of silence. Translators in Spain, for example, usually represent laughter with an (R) in brackets in dubbing, while in subtitling, suspension points or the use of capital letters, are used to convey pauses or volume of voice respectively. Topicalization can also be a translation technique to hint at the primary quality of the voice (volume, protesting tone);
- music and sound effects;
- sound code: it can be part of the story (diegetic) or produced by a person or object outside the story (non-diegetic); it can be produced on-screen, if it is associated to the vision of its source, or off-screen, if its source cannot be seen;
- iconographic codes: they may be difficult to reproduce; generally they are not translated, unless they appear with a verbal explanation;
- photographic codes: the translator should also transfer changes in lights, colours, perspectives. For example, a colour can have a specific meaning in a certain culture, but that meaning could change in another culture;
- planning code: it is particularly important in dubbing, especially in close-ups and extreme close-ups, where the translator has to translate a sentence respecting actors' lip movement;
- graphic codes: the spectator can see written parts of the text on the screen in form of titles, intertitles, or subtitles;
- syntactic codes: the translator should choose coherent and appropriate lexicon and solve problems such as the visual and verbal repetition of an icon (through the use

of a pronoun) or the excessive length of a translation (through reduction or omission).

Chaume is interested in the interconnection between such different elements and in how this interconnection gives meaning to an audiovisual text. Understanding the interaction between image and word and the connection between visual and verbal codes is what allows the translator to find the right strategies to produce a correct and meaningful translation.

1.4.2 Linguistic and cultural issues

As we have already seen, audiovisual products include both oral and visual elements that create a whole. In addition to the problems related to the technical translation norms, the audiovisual translator has to face three other categories of issues: culture-specific references (place names, sports and festivities, famous people, currencies, institutions, etc.), language-specific features (term of address, taboo language, etc.) and areas of overlap between language and culture (songs, rhymes, jokes, etc).

CSRs (culture-specific references) are references that belong to a particular culture and can be only visual, only verbal or both visual and verbal. Ten areas in which some lingua-cultural translation problems may occur have been identified (Chiaro 2009: 154-157):

1. judiciary, police and military institutions: legal formulas ('Objection, your honour') and legal topography (Supreme Court), agents (lawyer) and courtroom forms of address;
2. educational references, for example grading systems (in Italy with numbers, in English speaking countries with letters);
3. place names (5th Avenue);
4. units of measurement (ounces, yards);
5. monetary systems (dollars, pounds);
6. national sports and pastimes (baseball, American football);
7. food and drink (pancakes, tortillas);
8. holidays and festivities (Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year);
9. titles of books, films and TV programmes;

10. celebrities and personalities.

Translators can adopt different methods to deal with these categories of CSRs (ivi, p. 157-158):

- Chunking up: replacing a specific reference with a hypernym of it in the target language (“muffins” become in German “Kuchen”).
- Chunking down: replacing a specific reference with an extremely specific and different item in the target language (hyponym).
- Chunking sideways: replacing a reference with a word-for-word translation.

With respect to language-specific features, translators should also deal with some pragmatic traits, for example forms of address ('you form' in English vs 'tu/Lei form' in Italian), and discourse markers (hesitations or interjections, which are usually omitted in the translation). Another translation problem is how to deal with offensive language because there are audiences that could feel offended by seeing swear words on screen (ivi, p. 160).

In conclusion, there are some areas in which linguistic features and cultural references clash. For instance, songs usually contribute to the plot, both in musicals and films. In the case of dubbing, songs are generally sung in the target language, but sometimes they can be sung in the source language and subtitled in the target language (ivi, p: 162). Humour is also difficult to convey, particularly if it is on screen: the irony of a joke risks to be lost when it is translated into another language, therefore translators should use the right words in order not to lose it completely.

1.5 The reception of audiovisual products by audiences

Media audiences are numerous and dynamic groups, and it is complex to distinguish them depending on their differences, but this does not mean that audience-centred research in the field of AVT is not necessary. This should be considered the starting point of a process in which approaching, investigating and understanding people's attitudes in specific contexts are the basis (Di Giovanni 2016: 60). Audience research is linked to media reception research, which is “the study of the social production of meaning in people's encounters with media discourses” (ivi, p. 61). It tries to identify audience practices and experiences and, like audience research, it is informed by social theories

and also by psychology, anthropology and cultural studies. However, the real value of media reception studies is the feedback they provide, which is very important for the development of the broader field of AVT (*ibidem*). Schrøder et. al (2003: 148-149) say that:

a reception study aims to find out how people make sense of a particular media product, or it addresses the sense-making question towards higher level units. A few reception studies have also extended their scope, encroaching on the territory of media ethnography in aiming to explore people's uses, taste preferences and experience of one media.

Audience is gaining importance and audience reception is becoming a leading topic in audiovisual translation research. Moreover, it is now going beyond the contrastive film dialogue studies, which remained for a long time at the core of this sub-discipline of Translation Studies (Denton 2007: 4).

Gambier (2009b: 44-46) recognizes some types of audiovisual translation as “challenging”, and they can be linked to specific target audiences:

- translation of the script/scenario, in order to have economical support for a co-production;
- intralingual subtitles, which are created for people with hearing impairments and also to help foreign people to learn a new language;
- real-time subtitles, which are generally used during interviews taking into consideration the knowledge and expectations of viewers;
- surtitling, which is a form of subtitling that is used during theatrical performances. Surtitles appear above the stage or in the back of seats;
- audio description, which is the description of what is happening on screen and it is addressed to people with sight impairments.

Gambier takes into account various audiences and the differences between their socio-cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds. Children, elderly people, people with hearing or sight impairments have different expectations, reading speeds and habits when they enjoy audiovisual products (ivi, p. 48).

Gambier (2009a: 22) also underlines that there are differences between the impact of a translation as reception, that is the feeling of the audience, and of a translation as effect, that is the response of the audience. Three types of reception can be distinguished (3 Rs) (*ibidem*):

- response, that is the perceptual decoding; it has been investigated by psychologists taking into account different variables, that is sociological variables (age, level of education, reading habits, foreign languages skills, hearing or sight difficulties, etc.) and AV variables (types of TV channels, broadcasting time, film genre, etc.);
- reaction, that is the psycho-cognitive decoding; the more the viewers make efforts in processing a certain audiovisual product, the lower the relevance of the translation is;
- repercussion, considered as viewer's attitudinal issue (preferences and habits regarding the mode of AVT), and the sociocultural dimension of the non-TV context, which influences the receiving process.

Reception studies can use different methods of investigation, based on the 3 Rs (Gambier 2009b: 54):

- survey methods, obtaining viewers' responses with questionnaires or interviews;
- experimental methods, providing understanding about the effects of certain translation features;
- controlled procedures, in order to record actual motor behaviour, for instance studying the different forms of attention of viewers.

1.6 The concept of accessibility in AVT

Accessibility has become an important issue in many countries. It aims to allow people with disabilities to have access to transport, facilities and culture. Today accessibility is also an important objective in the computer and telecommunications industries, with the purpose of optimizing the user-friendliness of software, web sites and other applications. The distribution of audiovisual media is considered part of this trend (Gambier 2006: 4).

1.6.1 What is accessibility?

The concept of accessibility could particularly refer to people with disabilities. Therefore, accessibility includes intralingual subtitles and sign language interpreting for

the deaf and hard of hearing, and audiodescription for the blind and visually impaired (Chiaro 2013: 4-5).

However, accessibility is not only a question of providing material for special visual, auditory, motor or cognitive needs; this would be a restrictive approach to the issue and just an issue for people with impairments. Accessibility means that audiovisual products and services must be available to and usable by all users, independently of the place where they live, their level of experience, their physical and mental capacity, or the configuration of their computer. It is something that is strongly connected to the effectiveness and efficiency of audiovisual products and to the satisfaction with which a member of a certain audience experiences and enjoys those products. The main target is to recognize the needs of different audiences and to know their reception capacity, in order to offer good audiovisual products. This is not an easy task for producers and screen translators, because there is not so much academic research available. Moreover, translators often focus more on the linguistic transfer than on the effects of their work on audiences. People's reactions, demands and expectations are not totally ignored, but audiovisual products would be more effective if we had a better knowledge of viewers' capacities, habits and technological literacy (Gambier 2006: 4-5).

The concept of accessibility includes various features (Gambier 2009b: 51):

- acceptability, based on language norms, stylistic choices, terminology, etc.;
- legibility, based on fonts, position of subtitles, colour, etc.;
- readability, defined in terms of reading speed rates, reading habits, shot changes, text complexity, etc.;
- synchronicity, defined depending on the synchrony between speech and lip movements, on the connection between what is said and what happens on screen, etc.;
- relevance, in terms of what should be omitted, clarified or added to allow people to read and listen without difficulty;
- domestication strategies, which are based on cultural issues. An audiovisual product can be manipulated and modified, in order to respect the ideologies and satisfy the expectations and cultural preferences of a certain target audience, for example censoring words or parts of dialogues or changing parts of the plot.

1.6.2 Brief history of AVT and accessibility

Before the introduction of sound in cinemas, silent films already required the translation of intertitles used by filmmakers in order to convey dialogue. The introduction of partial or full audible dialogue in films brought about the need for a different type of translation. Some of these films, known as *part-talkies* and *talkies*, used intertitles in the target language to translate the original speech, while others were dubbed and subtitled in French, German and Spanish unsuccessfully.

Audience's reaction to these types of translations was negative, therefore the film industry opted for a different solution: "multiple-language versions". Films were made in two or three languages by the same director or even in up to 14 languages with a different director for each language. For example, the Joinville studio, founded by Paramount in Paris in 1930, made up to 12 languages versions and had a literary committee that checked the quality of the translations. This could be considered as a form of accessible filmmaking, in which the need to offer accessible films to foreign audiences was not only an element of post-production, but also a structuring principle of film production. When dubbing and subtitling techniques developed and improved, they became the preferred modes, because they allowed the reduction of the cost of translations.

During the 1970s and 1980s SDH was introduced in the US and Europe, but this did not change the situation, because accessibility services were considered costly and adequate only to the needs of a reduced population. Since then, audiovisual accessibility has become an afterthought in the film industry. Research on the possible connection between these two disciplines has been made by AVT scholars, such as Chaume (2004), Mas and Orero (2005), Cattrysse and Gambier (2008), Fryer and Freeman (2012) and film scholars, such as Egoyan and Balfour (2004), but they are not so many. Accessible filmmaking could be useful to explore the aspects of AVT and accessibility that have an impact on the reception of films, and also to identify the elements of filmmaking and film studies that can contribute both to the theory and practice of translation (Romero-Fresco 2013: 205-206).

Unfortunately, the little awareness of the concepts of AVT and accessibility in the film industry affects the quality of translated films and the work of translators. Most viewers may not ever experience a dialogue written by a scriptwriter and then supervised

by a filmmaker over a long period. By contrast, they often deal with translations produced in too little time, for little money, by a translator who works without consulting any of the professionals who made the film. Even if translators are skilled, the quality of their translations will be damaged by this system.

The aim of making accessible films is to make AVT and accessibility part of the filmmaking process through the collaboration between translators and teams that work at films; it is the filmmaker who should decide to collaborate or not with translators. Accessible filmmaking aims to ensure that foreign viewers and viewers with hearing and visual loss are not excluded from the AVT world. This idea should not be restricted to SDH and audiodescription, but should include audiovisual translation in general (ivi, p. 217-218).

1.6.3 Legislation on audiovisual and media accessibility in Europe

Globalisation and diversification are influential terms in the field of AVT. Information is increasingly presented in audio-visual form through television, cinema, Internet and DVD. This trend will certainly continue in the future, thanks to the continuous progress in the field of technology (Morettini 2014).

An ever-growing community of users is enjoying growing quantities of diversified audiovisual products that combine sound and visual information. Unfortunately, not all users have the same access to them. For this reason, the new media and audiovisual products should be conceived to facilitate all people, including those who do not have access to the same amount of information as the rest of the population.

This situation has brought two concepts to the attention of scholars in Audiovisual Translation: inclusion and accessibility. The term ‘inclusion’ identifies the need to find different solutions to involve as many people as possible in the fruition of media and audiovisual products, in order to facilitate social interaction among the citizens of a given community, in this case the European community (*ibidem*).

As we have already seen in 1.6.1, the concept of accessibility should not be restricted to people with disabilities. There are different types of audience which could find barriers in accessing audiovisual products. First of all, people who do not understand the source language (language learners or immigrants). Secondly, illiterate people who

did not have the opportunity to continue their studies because of several reasons (economic problems, discrimination, etc.). Thirdly, elderly people who are not able to have full access to information and lastly, disabled people, particularly those with sensory impairments, with special reference to hearing and sight loss. The number of people belonging to these categories is growing significantly in Europe and North America (*ibidem*).

With respect to the legislation on the accessibility of audiovisual products, countries outside and across Europe are at very different stages, but, in general, little attention has been paid to the issue. Italy is particularly late in this field, as shown by the scarce number of publications about legislation, in favour of more practical research in SDH.

However, during the last decades authorities recognized the importance of audiovisual accessibility as a way to guarantee, through the adoption of legislative measures, the same access to information and culture to all citizens. One of the most substantial goal achieved by the European Union and its Member States about the creation of a shared European audiovisual policy is condensed in the United Nations' '*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*'(Assembly 1948), where Article 19, which principle is recognized by the UN as an inalienable right of all humans, recites:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas *through any media and regardless of frontiers*. [Morettini's emphasis]

Then, this principle found a more specific theorisation in the 2006 United Nations '*Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*', signed in 2007 by most Member States and the European Community. Article 30 reads (*ibidem*):

States Parties recognise the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities:

- enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;
- enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;
- enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.

This Convention formally entered into force in Europe on 22nd January 2011. Another significant part is article 21, about freedom of expression, opinion, and access to information (*ibidem*):

State Parties shall adopt all adequate measures to guarantee that people with disabilities are able to exercise their right to freedom of expression and opinion, including freedom to request, receive and communicate information and ideas on an equal footing with others and using whatever communications medium they choose, as defined in Article 2 of this Convention, taking particular action to:

- (a) make information intended for the general public available to people with disabilities in accessible formats and using technologies which are suitable for the different types of disability, in a timely manner and without additional costs;
- (b) accept and facilitate the use of sign language, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication and all other media, methods and systems for accessible communication of one's own choice by people with disabilities on official occasions;
- (c) ask private entities that provide services for the general public, also on the Internet, to offer information and services using systems that are accessible and usable by people with disabilities;
- (d) encourage the mass media, including those providing information on the Internet, to make their services accessible to people with disabilities;
- (e) recognise and promote the use of sign language.

The first measure taken by the EU in favour of a “European Television” was found in the ‘*Green Paper on the establishment of a common market in broadcasting, especially by Satellite and Cable*’, presented by the European Commission in 1984 and amended in 1987 with the title ‘*Green Paper on the development of the Common Market for Telecommunication Services and Equipment*’ (*ibidem*).

On the website of the European Commission, the aim of the Green Paper is explained:

The instruments proposed in the Green Paper on convergence were the liberalisation of the national telecommunication sectors and the abolition of national frontiers. This should inter alia be reached by the development of common standards, the “Open Network Provision” (non-discriminatory access to telecommunication networks), the stimulation of new services and the definition of a coherent European position on satellite communications.

The Green Papers of 1984 and 1987 led to the first official Directive, called ‘*Television Without Frontiers (TVwF)*’, adopted in 1989. This was very successful in establishing the ground rules for a common European audiovisual policy, but it did not satisfy the need of sensory disabled audiences for full access to television programmes. In 1997, the European Commission revised the TVwF Directive for the first time in order to update and improve the initial rules. However, also in this case, this revision did not provide any new rules on accessibility for sensory impaired viewers.

The TVwF Directive regarded only television, therefore another amendment was made in 2002. As a result, the new ‘*Audiovisual Media Services Directive*’ (AVMSD) was adopted in 2005. After some other modifications, it was adopted by the European

Parliament in November 2007 and entered into force in December 2007. Finally, a codified version of the Directive was adopted by the Council at the beginning of 2010 and published in its Official Journal.

The AVMSD had significant consequences for audiovisual and media accessibility. This was the first time the issue of accessibility was tackled within a formal European document. The third chapter contains a set of rules dictating that all audiovisual media services shall respect a number of obligations, including accessibility for people with disabilities. Article 7 of the Directive reads:

Member States shall encourage media service providers under their jurisdiction to ensure that their services are gradually made accessible to people with a visual or hearing disability.

Moreover European Commission states:

sight- and hearing-impaired persons as well as elderly people should be able to participate in the social and cultural life of the European Union. Therefore, they shall have access to audiovisual media services. Governments must encourage media companies under their jurisdiction to do this by sign language, subtitling, audio-description or easily understandable menu navigation.

Each Member State has the freedom to manage this regulation autonomously. As a consequence, some countries are better prepared than others, such as Italy, to face the issue of accessibility (Morettini 2014).

The European Commission recognised the importance of audiovisual and media content in the economic, social and cultural aspects of our lives. Therefore, it has developed a new Green Paper, entitled '*Preparing for a Fully Converged Audiovisual World: Growth, Creation and Values*' in order to promote a discussion on media policies. This Green Paper invites viewers and Internet users to share their views on the changing media landscape and borderless Internet, in particular on market conditions, interoperability and infrastructure, and implications for EU regulations. It did not presuppose any action, but aimed to open a debate on these issues, by encouraging people to respond to the questions contained therein by the end of August 2013 (*ibidem*). This Green Paper recognised that technology offers more possibilities to assist visually, hearing and cognitively impaired persons than ever before. However, these opportunities may be lost if accessible content, that is subtitles, sign language or audio-description, is not produced or available (*ibidem*).

In November 2010, the European Commission presented the '*European Disability Strategy*', which focuses on different initiatives to be developed until 2020, aiming to

facilitate the participation of people with disabilities in the society, by developing new EU legislations on accessibility standards (*ibidem*).

According to Viviane Reding (2011: 3-4),

As the word “barrier free” in the title of the disability strategy suggests, accessibility is at the core of the Strategy. The Strategy sets clear objectives to remove the barriers that persons with disabilities meet in many areas of everyday life: specific measures will be taken in eight priority areas, one of which is accessibility.

The European Commission proposed a European Accessibility Act, as part of the European Disability Strategy. The two main problems regarding the accessibility of goods and services in the EU are the scarcity of accessible goods and services and the fragmentation of the EU market for accessible goods and services. Therefore, this new Act will aim to increase the availability of accessible goods and services for disabled and older people in order to harmonise accessibility requirements across Member States, promote the freedom of movement of accessible goods and services, and increase the effectiveness of accessibility legislation. Moreover, the European Accessibility Act will complement existing EU legislation by providing details on what accessibility means for the goods and services addressed by the Act. Even though the scope of the new European Accessibility Act is not to force Member States to provide minimum quantities of accessibility service, its objective is to raise awareness on the topic.

The Commission is exploring how to improve the situation of accessible goods and services and establishing general accessibility requirements in the forthcoming European Accessibility Act. The future in Europe seems promising: the hope is to bring new awareness about accessibility, but particularly about audiovisual and media accessibility.

1.6.4 Accessibility in Italy

The first attempt to mention the right to inclusion and to accessible information for people with disabilities was made through Law No. 104 (1992), which regulates the assistance, social integration and rights of disabled people. Article 25, paragraph 2, reads (Morettini 2014):

At the time of renewal or on the occasion of modifications to the agreements for the concession of radio and television services, initiatives are provided for promoting the reception of information, cultural and leisure programmes, as well as the diffusion of decoders.

2004 was the year dedicated to disabled people in Italy and a law for the accessibility of the web was issued (Law 04/2004, or ‘Stanca Law’). The draft law was presented on 16th December 2001 and developed within a period of one year. More than 130 members of the Italian Parliament signed the law, which entered into force effectively on 1st February 2004. Article 1, paragraph 1 of this Law explicitly states that (Morettini 2014):

The Italian Republic recognises and protects the right of every person to access all sources of information and related services, including those that are provided through computer and telecommunication tools

In May 2004, the so-called ‘Gasparri Law’ (n. 112), provided a number of principles for the organisation of the Italian broadcasting system and the Italian public service broadcaster, that is RAI. It encouraged the active reception of television and radio programmes by people with sensory disability. Article 4, paragraph 2, reads (Morettini 2014):

The reception of radio and television programmes by people with sensory disabilities is encouraged. To this end, suitable measures should be adopted, after consultation with representative associations.

Later this article was inserted in the ‘*Unified Text of Radio/TV broadcast*’ (2013), which now governs the Italian radio and television system. The general principles regarding radio and audiovisual services for the protection of users are listed in Article 4, paragraph 1 (*ibidem*):

1. The regulation of the system of radio and audiovisual media services, for the protection of users, guarantees:
 - a. That the user has access, according to non-discrimination criteria, to a wide variety of information and contents offered by a multiplicity of national and local operators, thus promoting for this purpose the fruition and improvement, in conditions of pluralism and freedom of competition, of those opportunities offered by technological development by the parties that operate or intend to operate in the telecommunication system.
 - b. The diffusion of a conspicuous number of uncoded national and local radio and television broadcasts, thus guaranteeing the adequate coverage of the national or local territory.

Very detailed provisions can be found in the so-called ‘National Service Agreement’, which is stipulated every three years between the Italian Ministry for Economic Development and RAI. The version of the Agreement signed in 2011 for the period 2010-2012 contains some specific norms that bind RAI to provide accessibility

services. Several paragraphs of the Agreement focus on the quality and quantity of available accessible media services for people with disabilities. In the Agreement signed for the period 2013-2015 the issue is again taken into consideration, and RAI guarantees an adequate information in order to allow the accessibility to people with sensory impairments. However, it is important to underline that the obligation contained in the Agreement are mandatory only for RAI, while there are no legal obligations for DVD producers, cinema owners and private service broadcasters to provide minimum accessible media services, even if some of them already do so voluntarily (Morettini, 2014).

With respect to the particular case of SDH, RAI has always been doing efforts in order to offer accessible products by subtitling newscast editions, programmes and films, and using sign language. In summer 2016 some developments have been seen, which guarantee the progressive improvement of the quality of the services offered by RAI over three years and the increase of subtitled programmes: from 70 to 85%. In August 2016, during the Olympic Games in Rio, the Italian National Agency for the Deaf (ENS) denounced the total inaccessibility of the sporting event on TV. The protest was successful: every evening on RAI2, people with hearing impairment could enjoy such an important event on TV from 8.30 pm to 1.30 am. Moreover, Rai increased the quantity of newscast about Rio 2016 with sign language (ENS 2016a).

As we can see on its official website, ENS has been focusing on highlighting the rights of people with hearing impairments. In October 2016, an awareness-raising commercial about accessible cinema was published on the website of the institution, a commercial that was presented at the contemporary film show at the *Casa del Cinema* in Rome. The collaboration between ENS and *Casa del Cinema* could overcome those barriers that were an obstacle to cinema accessibility: four meetings took place from January to May, in which deaf and hard of hearing people were given full access to some international films coming from prestigious festivals (ENS 2016c).

The most recent mobilisation of ENS have been caused by the lack of accessibility to correct and complete information about the Referendum question regarding an important constitutional reform. Complaints are not limited to this case, but include a broader problem, that is the lack of daily accessibility to at least two national and one regional newscast with subtitles or translated into sign language during peak hours.

Moreover, the subtitles available often lack in quality and are only partial with respect to the total number of programmes. ENS announced a national mobilisation with the aim to sign a petition and organize regional conferences on the issue of accessibility and in order to establish a programme to achieve full accessibility within defined and short terms (ENS 2016b).

1.6.5 Accessibility in the UK

1.6.5.1 The Communication Act 2003

In 2003 the Communication Act replaced all previous legislation concerning the provision of subtitling, signing and audio description services. Ofcom (Office of Communications) is the regulatory authority for the telecommunication industries in the United Kingdom and it is responsible for applying the provisions of the Communications Act. It was established by the Office of Communication Act of Parliament in 2002 and it received its full authority in 2003.

Previous UK legislation required at least 90% of Channel 3 and Channel 4 programmes and at least 80% of Channel 5 to be subtitled by the end of 2010. Moreover, BBC was required to subtitle 100% of its programmes by 2008. The Communications Act 2003 extended subtitling regulations to many other channels and required Ofcom to establish a code to promote the availability and the enjoyment of programmes by viewers with sensory impairments. This code includes “requirements on subtitling, sign language and audio description that apply to television services licensed in accordance with the Communications Act 2003, the Broadcasting Act 1996, or the Broadcasting Act 1990 and are primarily intended for the reception by members of the public within the European Union” (Eaccessplus 2013). The Government’s role is to set the legislative framework for each service for sensory impaired people (*ibidem*).

1.6.5.2 Television access for people with sensory impairments

This is a leaflet, which contains information on targets that broadcasters must respect in providing programmes for people with sensory disabilities and explain the legal requirements for subtitling, sign language and audiodescription services (*ibidem*).

1.6.5.3 Television Access services reports

Every semester Ofcom releases a report on the provision of accessible subtitling, sign language and audio description services by broadcasters (*ibidem*).

1.6.5.4 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995¹ and has requirements for the provision of television access services. This Act aims to ensure that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged and imposes broader requirements than the Communication Act 2003 does (*ibidem*).

1.6.5.5 The Authority for Television On Demand (ATVOD)

The Authority for Television On Demand (ATVOD) is an independent co-regulator for the editorial content of UK video on demand services. Its task is to encourage Service Providers to guarantee that their services are progressively becoming more accessible to people with sight or hearing disabilities (*ibidem*).

1.6.5.6 BBC accessibility

In BBC Online (BBC 2014), accessibility is defined as:

the word used to describe whether a product (for example, a website, mobile site, digital TV interface or application) can be used by people of all abilities and disabilities. For instance, a website is

¹ The DDA 1995 was enacted to solve the problem of discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, contract work, provision of goods, facilities and services. It took some steps forwards in reaching equal opportunity for disabled people in the fields of education and accessibility (Doyle 1997).

accessible if all people, including disabled and elderly people, can use it. At the BBC, we aim to ensure that all of our products are informative and entertaining to use as well as being accessible - this is called usability.

Some elements affect accessibility. They are:

- for people with sight impairment: color, size and font of the text, features of the screen, availability of screenreaders or talking browsers;
- for blind people: inclusion of audiodescription in a video;
- for people with hearing impairment: inclusion of subtitles or availability of contents in British Sign Language;
- for people with difficulties in using a keyboard or a mouse: setting up of speech-recognition features, finding out alternatives to keyboard and mouse (switches and touch screen), making keyboard and mouse easier to use;
- for people who have difficulties in reading and understanding words (people with dyslexia): length of sentences or paragraphs, difficulty of the vocabulary, font and size of the text, availability of spelling and grammar checking software, dictionary and thesaurus, voice recognition software.

BBC accessibility policy considers all these elements, trying to allow all people to access web pages. When websites are well designed, developed and edited, all users can have access to information, functions and benefits. BBC Online focused on the accessibility of websites, the Internet and computers, but its rules could probably be broadened to all types of audiovisual products.

BBC Online considers disabled audiences an area of great importance and interest and aims to grant a good level of usability to all audiences, that is disabled, non-disabled and elderly people, following accessibility guidelines. BBC Accessibility Team also creates some specific tools, which allow people with disabilities to enjoy BBC Online, including BBC iPlayer's industry-leading inclusion of subtitles and audiodescription, the possibility to change size and colour of fonts at the top of this webpage, interactive videos for people with learning difficulties and games for children with motor and cognitive disabilities.

In order to achieve their aim, BBC Future Media and Technology published the Web Accessibility Standards and Guidelines, composed of two sections:

- accessibility standards: the elements which have to be considered by BBC teams when creating accessible websites;

- accessibility guidelines: recommendations and supporting information.
- BBC supports the future development of operating systems, web browsers and specialist assistive technologies.

If the specific accessibility needs of some disabled groups require the creation of new or repurposed editorial content, BBC will provide for a solution, becoming inclusive to a broader audience online.

1.7 Conclusion

As we can see, the world of AVT is wide and complex and it is constantly changing. It is important to deal with AVT without forgetting that it is part of the broader context of Translation Studies, and that nowadays the needs of the public are becoming one of the main points to take into consideration. We can say that today AVT is a real service demanded by people, and a responsibility for the professionals who work in this field.

Chapter Two

Subtitling

2.1 Introduction

In the first sections of this chapter a definition of subtitling will be given, followed by a brief historical analysis of the evolution of subtitles and some considerations on the debate about dubbing vs subtitling in Europe. Then, after a classification of the different types of subtitles, the technical and linguistic aspects of subtitling will be taken into consideration, that is all the norms and rules that a subtitler should follow during the subtitling process.

2.2 What is subtitling?

Subtitling can be defined as:

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

Subtitling is an AVT mode and has two main features. Firstly, there is a shift from the oral to the written channel; secondly, the translated product contains the oral message of the audiovisual text. The oral and written texts are received simultaneously, allowing viewers, in the case of interlingual subtitles, to compare the source text with the target text (Bartrina and Espasa 2005: 93). They will be able to do it only if they know the target language. Subtitles are a form of translation that is extraneous to the narrative of the film but necessary to the audience to understand the narrative. A subtitle normally consists of one or two lines, but in some cases also three lines. The lines do not necessarily have to appear at the bottom of the screen, for example in Japan subtitles are displayed vertically on one side of it. In Europe subtitles are usually placed at the bottom of the screen, but in some cases they can be moved to another position, for instance if they are hiding

something important. Subtitles do not display only the dialogues of a film/programme, indeed we can also frequently see written material from the source text (captions, street signs, etc.) in the form of subtitles (Pedersen 2011: 8-9).

Orrego Carmona (2013: 301) considers all types of subtitling as techniques that add a text code to a graphic code. Therefore, subtitling can be considered as a supplement to the original dialogue, which, unlike in dubbing, remains intact in the target culture.

All subtitled films/programmes are composed of three elements: the original spoken/written language, the original image and the added subtitles. Subtitlers should find the best solution to create the right interaction among these elements, considering the fact that viewers have to read the written text at a given speed, watching the images at the same time (Díaz Cintas 2010: 344).

2.3 The evolution of subtitling

Today, translating a film with the aim to sell and distribute it in foreign countries seems obvious, but this has not always been so. It is important to say that the problem of translating a film dates back to the invention of sound films. Silent films did not lead to great translation difficulties because translating the original captions was sufficient. When dialogues were added to films, the situation radically changed: images were no longer a universal language because each film reflected acoustically the characteristics of its country. Therefore, a solution was necessary to make films accessible to a foreign public too (Sandrelli 2000: 101).

Not long after the invention of films, attempts began to be made to convey the dialogue of actors to the audience. They started with intertitles, that is texts that were drawn or printed on paper, filmed and then placed between sequences of the film. They were seen for the first time in 1903 in Edwin S. Porter's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. From 1909 onwards, intertitles were called subtitles because they were used in the same way as subtitles in newspapers. During the era of intertitles, it was quite easy to solve the problem of translating films: original titles were removed, translated, filmed and added again to the film. In some cases a speaker gave a simultaneous interpretation of the intertitles (the French *bonimenteur* or the Japanese *benshi*) (Ivarsson 2004).

The first subtitles in the modern sense appeared during the silent film era. “In 1909 M. N. Topp registered a patent for a device for the rapid showing of titles for moving pictures. With this method the projectionist, using a sciopticon (a kind of slide projector), showed the subtitles on the screen below the intertitles” (*ibidem*). Then similar techniques, with the titles on a film strip instead of slides, were used (*ibidem*).

With the invention of sound films in 1927, audiences could hear actors’ dialogues, therefore the titles between scenes disappeared. The possibilities to allow viewers to understand foreign films were either to make multiple language versions, or to dub films into other languages. The latter solution was too complex and expensive for some film producers and distributors. Subtitling was quite cheap (between a tenth and a twentieth of dubbing), therefore it became the preferred solution in smaller linguistic areas, such as the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries. Norway, Sweden, Hungary and France quickly became leaders in developing subtitling techniques. The first time sound film with subtitles was shown in January 1929, when *The Jazz Singer* came out in Paris with subtitles in French. Later that year, in August 1929, an Al Jolson film, *The Singing Fool*, was shown in Copenhagen with Danish subtitles (*ibidem*).

Since then, many attempts were made to improve the technique invented in 1909 and “soon methods of copying photographed titles onto the film copy itself came into use. A frame containing the title was kept in position while the film negative and the positive print strip were fed forward and exposed” (*ibidem*).

Later on this process was improved, coming to a more efficient and quick method, that is “photographing the titles onto a separate film of the same length as the original, with the in and out cue frames synchronized with the sound. The film negative and the roll with the titles were then copied simultaneously” (*ibidem*).

In 1930, the Norwegian inventor Leif Eriksen “took out a patent for a method of stamping titles directly onto the images on the film strip, first moistening the emulsion layer to soften it. The titles were typeset, printed on paper and photographed to produce very small letterpress type plates for each subtitle (the height of each letter being only about 0.8 mm)” (*ibidem*). In 1935, the Hungarian O. Turchányi, registered a patent for another method: “the plates were heated to a sufficiently high temperature to melt away the emulsion on the film without the need for a softening bath” (*ibidem*) Both processes were not easy to control and the letters often resulted illegible (*ibidem*).

In 1932 R. Hruska and Oscar I. Ertnæs, inventors from Budapest and Oslo respectively, registered patents for a technique that made possible to the titles directly on the film copies. This process produced legible white letters and later it was automated through the use of a counter, “which counted the frames on the roll and ensured that the subtitles came in the right place and were of the right length. This was the cheapest process when less than ten copies of a film were to be subtitled” (*ibidem*).

The following development in this field was the use of lasers, a technique developed by Denis Auboyer in Paris and by Titra-Film in Paris and Brussels and was in commercial use from 1988. The results were excellent and laser subtitling was cheaper than the previous techniques (*ibidem*).

2.3.1 Subtitling for television

In 1938, BBC broadcast Arthur Robison’s *Der Student von Prag* on television in a subtitled version. However, prints with subtitles for cinema caused a number of problems because they were very difficult to read on television screens. Apart from the difference between viewers’ reading speed on television and cinema, the main problem was that pictures on television have a narrower contrast range than pictures on a cinema screen, therefore different methods had to be developed. A lot of progress was made: the manual insertion of subtitles was progressively substituted by timecoding and nowadays computers are used for the production of subtitles. Today it is possible to install subtitling programmes on personal computers, therefore subtitlers have the possibility to carry out the whole job, including cueing subtitles. (Ivarsson 2004).

2.4 Subtitling vs. dubbing

Dubbing seems to have originated in the United States and arrived in Europe in 1936 (Zojer 2011: 397). Since then, both subtitling and dubbing have been used and different preferences have developed in different European countries. An ongoing debate about the advantages and disadvantages of each method started. There are viewers, for example, who just want to enjoy the film without constantly moving from picture to subtitles and therefore prefer dubbed films. Other people think that dubbed versions

deprive viewers of the contact with the other culture (ivi, p. 397-398). France and other countries such as Italy, Spain and Germany, gradually became dubbing countries, while Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands preferred subtitling. At the beginning, countries' preference was mainly influenced by the costs involved by the two modes (Tveit 2009: 85).

The two approaches can be compared by paying special attention to their constraining factors (*ibidem*). Subtitling constraints can be summed up as follows (ivi, p. 86-92):

- potential loss of information;
- different audiences with different reading speeds;
- shift from oral to written channel;
- viewers have to constantly go from image to subtitles.

On the other hand, the following issues can be identified in dubbing (ivi, p. 92-95):

- loss of authenticity;
- it is expensive;
- it takes considerable time.

Nowadays, it is known that both forms of AVT have their advantages and disadvantages. The decision on the method to choose depends largely on the economic situation of each country: smaller countries have more limited funds for investment and production and therefore favour subtitling because it is the cheaper method, while bigger countries tend to favour dubbing because it seems to attract a larger number of viewers (Zojer 2011: 398).

According to Riggio (2010: 32), the countries that historically preferred dubbing over subtitling are Germany, Spain, France and Italy. However, today the trend is changing, and even dubbing countries are moving towards subtitling because it is less expensive and time-consuming. Concerning television programmes, “subtitling is the preferred choice among the majority of European countries, with the exception of Germany, Austria, Spain, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Switzerland and French-speaking Belgium, where dubbing is preferred” (*ibidem*). However, subtitling is gaining ground thanks to the introduction of paid television programming and to the growth of video contents on the Internet. In Italy, for example, all movies are available in English with Italian subtitles. One of the main reasons behind the choice between

subtitling and dubbing is related to the production costs of dubbing. Indeed, the labour involved in dubbing a film is very intensive (*ibidem*). Highly trained and specialized talents are used, who are often considered and payed as actors in some countries. Dubbing is certainly more popular in countries where there are mainly monolingual communities and in wealthier countries, while subtitling is preferred by countries with a more restricted market. The Scandinavian countries, for instance, are among the wealthiest EU countries, but prefer subtitling for both cinema and television and “have a market share quantifiably less than a 10% of the total audiovisual market” (ivi, p. 34).

In conclusion, today many European countries that traditionally opted for dubbing can choose between dubbing and subtitling. In Spain and France, for instance, many theatres give the audience the possibility to choose between the two versions. Moreover, with the development of new media, the trend is shifting towards subtitling. It is also important to say that audiences’ taste and reception have changed in the past decade thanks to the new generation of text and instant messaging, which shifts people’s preference to the written content. (ivi, p. 35).

2.5 Classification of subtitles

When grouping subtitles in different typologies, different parameters can be taken into consideration: linguistic parameters, time available for preparation, technical parameters, methods of projection and distribution format.

The most traditional classification of subtitles is based on the linguistic dimension and identifies three categories of subtitles (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 14):

- intralingual subtitles;
- interlingual subtitles;
- bilingual subtitles.

Intralingual subtitling involves a shift from oral language to written text, but the language remains the same. Different types of intralingual subtitles can be recognized.

The first type is intralingual subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH), aimed at people with different levels of hearing impairments. It is also known as closed captioning. Actors’ dialogues are converted into written dialogue and displayed in subtitles of up to three, or rarely four, lines. SDH usually changes colour, depending on

who is speaking. They also include all paralinguistic information that deaf or hard of hearing audiences cannot access, that is music, sound effects, noises, irony, etc. They usually appear at the bottom of the screen but they can be moved to other parts of the screen, for example depending on the position of who is speaking.

Subtitles created as didactic tools for teaching and learning a foreign language constitute another type of intralingual subtitles. They allow the viewer to listen to the original dialogue and to compare it with the written text, a very effective method to improve the knowledge of a language. Other examples of this type of subtitles are the subtitling for karaoke or musical films, in which lyrics appear on the screen to allow people to sing along with the singers on screen, and the subtitling for language varieties that audiences could not understand.

The last type of intralingual subtitles is subtitling for news, announcements, broadcasts or advertisements. They are common on screens situated in open public areas where information must be conveyed without annoying the public.

Interlingual subtitling involves both a shift from spoken to written language and a shift from one language to another. Two types of interlingual subtitles exist: for hearers and for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Bilingual subtitles are the third and last category. They are usually produced in areas in which two languages are spoken, for example Walloon and Flemish in Belgium, or Swedish and Finnish in Finland (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 14-18).

Orrego Carmona (2013: 303) includes another type of subtitling in the category of intralingual subtitles, that is live subtitling. It consists in creating subtitles in real time during live broadcasts and it is very demanding for subtitlers, who have to produce subtitles in a very short time. Subtitles are often the result of a transcription made using a special keyboard or are obtained through the technique of respeaking: a speech recognition software recognizes the speaker's voice and transcribes the speech that will be used to create the subtitles. Live subtitling is becoming more popular thanks to the growing interest towards the issue of accessibility, with BBC as its main supporter.

2.6 The subtitling process

In the subtitling process, three professionals can be distinguished:

- the spotter: he/she decides the in and out times of the subtitles.
- the translator: responsible for the translation of the original dialogue into another language. He/she is required to have an excellent knowledge of both the source and the target language and of how to deal with problems caused by the shift from oral to written channel.
- the adaptor: expected to be familiar with the rules, constraints and strategies of subtitling in the target language. Adaptors should find the best solution to fit the translation into the subtitle lines without losing the original meaning.

The spotter and the translator know the original language of the film/programme and they are expected to have a perfect knowledge of subtitling programmes and to be technologically literate. Nowadays, this partition of tasks is considered by many as not necessary and, thanks to the technological development of subtitling programmes, these three tasks are always more frequently carried out by only one professional: the subtitler (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 34-35).

The subtitling process begins with the commission from a broadcaster to subtitle a film or a programme. The subtitling company commissions freelance subtitlers, who receive a file of the film/programme to use as the basis of their work. They often receive a script of the dialogues as an additional source, but it could be unreliable, therefore the subtitlers should rely primarily on the polysemiotic text, that is the film. The following step of the process is subtitling itself. Subtitlers have numerous tasks to carry out: segmenting the source text into coherent subtitles, translating them, if necessary, into the target language and cueing (synonym of “spotting”) them in a way that they appear and disappear on the screen properly. Some subtitlers segment the text and translate it first, spotting the subtitles later; other subtitlers prefer to segment and spot the subtitles and translate them later. Software programmes help subtitlers in their task indicating, for example, if a line is too long or if it is superimposed to a shot change. Another task of subtitlers is editing, that is adapting the text into subtitles respecting space and time constraints, therefore this involves reducing or condensing the verbal content. The subtitler then should research background information, making sure that cultural references of the source text are rendered accurately in the target text. The result of the subtitling process is an electronic subtitle file that will be proofread and re-edited before sending it back to the subtitling company, which usually has an editor who revises the

work and checks for errors. The final step is to deliver the subtitle file to the commissioner. The subtitling process is simpler than two decades ago and the progresses in technology, together with very tight deadlines, have reduced the time needed to prepare one hour of intralingual subtitles, from 40 hours in 1980 to even less than ten hours today. Moreover, the costs of subtitling have been cut by two thirds with respect to 1990 (Pedersen 2011: 13-16).

2.7 Technical constraints: space and time

Subtitling is subject to technical parameters of spatial and temporal nature, indeed a subtitle can occupy a limited space and be exposed for a limited time (Deckert 2013: 58). The spatial constraints of subtitling are based on the fact that a maximum of characters into each line must be respected and more than two lines in each subtitle are rarely used. Therefore, the character is considered the basic spatial unit in subtitling, and not the word. Characters are not only letters, but also punctuation marks and blank spaces. The temporal constraints are linked to the spatial ones, because subtitle lines must appear and disappear within a certain time, so that the viewer is able to read it (Pedersen 2011: 19).

In order to find solutions to the constraints of subtitling, and in search of a set of rules to control the quality of subtitles, norms and conventions were developed, such as the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998) and Karamitroglou's *A Proposed Set of Subtitling Standards in Europe* (1998). Although these are considered the founding statements for the didactics of subtitling, nowadays television channels and subtitling companies have adapted them to their own requirements, going towards a new creative turn in subtitling (McClarty 2012: 135).

2.7.1 The spatial dimension

There is no uniformity in the way subtitles appear on screen, but it can be said that the development of subtitling for new media has been an influencing factor in the emergence of formal guidelines containing more uniform rules and parameters than in the past, where each country had its model based on individual preferences. However, this

uniformity has been reached in the DVD industry, while television subtitling remains less uniform (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 80).

2.7.1.1 Number of lines and position on screen

Subtitling is an AVT mode that should not draw viewers' attention too much and distract them from the viewing of the film/programme. In order to avoid this, subtitles are usually limited to a maximum of two lines. The general rule is to fit short subtitles into one line whenever possible. However, some companies prefer to have two shorter lines rather than one longer line for aesthetic reasons and because it is more difficult for viewers' eyes to read a very long line instead of two shorter lines.

The standard position of subtitles is horizontal at the bottom of the screen (except for languages such as Chinese or Japanese, in which vertical writing exists) because this limits the obstruction of the image and this part of the screen is generally not important for the action. When dealing with one-line subtitles, some companies position them in the first line, while others prefer the second line. Today, the general tendency is to place them in the second line, leaving more space for the action on screen. There are some cases in which subtitles can be moved from the bottom to other positions, for example when the background is too light and the subtitle is unreadable, when some relevant action is taking place at the bottom of the screen or when necessary information is displayed there while the dialogue is continuing. In these cases, subtitles are placed at the top of the screen or, rarely, in the middle. In case of interviews and documentaries, information about the speaker is usually positioned at the top of the screen. Viewers expect to see subtitles appearing at the bottom of the screen, therefore it is better not to move them unless there is a reason to do it. When information appears at the same time at the top and at the bottom of the screen, the exposure time needs to be reconsidered, because the viewers will spend more time reading words in two different positions. In the past, TV subtitles were often displayed in a left-aligned position, but nowadays they are often centred, like in DVD subtitles. The reason why subtitles are being centred is that broadcasters often place their logos in the lower left-hand corner of the screen, hiding the first characters of the subtitle lines. In the cinema, subtitles have always been positioned in the middle of the screen because in this way people from different sides of the movie theatre can see them. A

reason in favor of centred subtitles is that action usually takes place in the middle of the screen, so viewers' eyes need not to travel from one to another side of it. On the other hand, there are also reasons to prefer a left-aligned position, for example viewers know that subtitles will appear always at the same point of the screen, therefore they will be able to anticipate their location, while, if subtitles are centred they will always appear at a different position on screen. However, the general trend seems to be in favour of centred subtitles for all kinds of media (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 82-88).

2.7.1.2 Font, color and number of characters per line

In subtitles fonts without serifs are preferred, such as Arial or Times New Roman, while their size can vary. Subtitles are generally white, but yellow can also be used, for example in subtitles of black-and-white films. If subtitles appear in a very light background, they are usually enclosed in a black or grey box.

The maximum number of characters per line is generally 35-37 for TV subtitles, and 40 for cinema and DVD. At present, the number of characters varies depending on the country, the subtitling company, the clients or the software used (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 84). For example, in Scandinavia the maximum number of characters per line is 35 (Pedersen 2011: 19). Too long lines will hide more action on screen and they will force viewer's eyes to travel from left to right, especially on cinema screens, which are very large. With respect to the minimum number of characters, there is no fixed rule, but it is rare to find subtitles with less than five characters (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007:85-86).

2.7.2 The temporal dimension

The length of subtitles is related to their on-air time. In and out timing are very important and should be established accurately. The text in subtitles should be always adapted to the appropriate reading time setting. Even if a subtitle is perfect in terms of format and content, it will not be successful if viewers do not have the time to read it (Georgakopoulou 2009: 22).

2.7.2.1 Duration of subtitles

The spotting of dialogues should take into consideration all the characteristics of a dialogue: actors' performance, rhythm, pauses and interruptions. If sentences are too long, they need to be divided into shorter subtitles, while if they are too short, they need to be joined in one subtitle in order to avoid a telegraphic style. The main rule for ideal spotting is to keep temporal synchrony between subtitles and dialogue. Subtitles should appear when actors start speaking and disappear when they stop speaking. Research has demonstrated that if a subtitle remains on screen too long, the viewer will read it again, feeling uncomfortable (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 88-89). Traditionally, subtitlers followed the "six-second-rule" in deciding how much time a subtitle should remain on screen. This rule was based on research that demonstrated that a two-line subtitle of around 35 characters per line can be comfortably read in six seconds. However, today most professionals in the field of subtitling agree on stating that the six-second rule dictates a low reading speed because viewers seem to be faster in reading than in the past. Therefore, it is common to maintain two-line subtitles for a maximum of five seconds and even to lengthen lines (Díaz-Cintas 2010: 345). Moreover, it is important to take into account the fact that each audience has a different reading speed. Subtitles for children programmes, for example, require a longer exposure time, because these are slower in reading than adults. A longer exposure time is also required with complex lexis and syntax, and when much information comes from the action on screen, because it will distract the viewer, who will pay less attention to the subtitles (Pedersen 2011: 20).

In BBC *Online Subtitling Editorial Guidelines* (Williams 2009: 7) some circumstances which require giving less reading time are recognized:

- shot changes: reducing exposure time is recommended if keeping the standard timing would involve clipping a shot;
- lipreading: it is suggested not to edit out words if they can be lipread, but only in very specific circumstances, for instance when a word or phrase can be lipread very clearly;
- catchwords: if a phrase becomes unrecognisable when edited, it is better not to edit out catchwords;

- retaining humour: if a joke is ruined by conforming to the standard timing, it is recommended to give less exposure time;
- critical information in a news item or factual AV content: when subtitling news, the main aim is to convey information about “what, when, who, how, why”. If an item is particularly concise, it may be impossible to edit it into subtitles respecting standard timings without information loss;
- very technical items: it would be difficult to edit, for instance, a detailed explanation of an economic or scientific story without losing relevant information.

Williams (2009: 8) also lists cases in which some extra time is needed to allow viewers to read subtitles completely:

- unfamiliar words: viewers might find a word or phrase extremely hard to read and they might need more time;
- several speakers: when there are several speakers in one subtitle, the viewer might need more time to read the subtitle and relate it to the corresponding speaker;
- labels: it is recommended to allow an extra second for labels where possible, but only if appropriate;
- flashing subtitles: more time is needed because they are harder to read;
- visuals and graphics: when much action takes place on screen, for instance a football match, viewers need enough time both to read the subtitle and to look at the images on screen;
- placed subtitles: when, for example, two speakers are placed in the same subtitle, and the person on the right speaks first, viewers' eyes have to travel from one to another side of the screen, therefore more reading time is suggested;
- long figures: viewers need more time to read them;
- shot changes: if a subtitle crosses one or more shots, viewers will be slower at reading it;
- slow speech: slower timings should be used to keep the synchronization in a slow speech.

2.7.2.2 Synchronization

A film/programme is a combination of images, sounds and dialogues. Dialogues should be transformed into written subtitles respecting the balance between these components. It is fundamental to keep not only spatial balance between subtitle and image, but also a precise synchronization (De Linde and Kay 2016: 7). Temporal synchronization is one of the main factors affecting viewers' appreciation of a translated film/programme. Subtitles appearing and disappearing too early or too late without following original dialogues are confusing and even irritating for the viewer. However, a perfect synchronization is not always possible, therefore a certain level of flexibility exists. Sometimes, for instance, actors speak very fast, giving much information in a very short time, and it is not possible to reduce the information without compromising the message. In these cases, subtitles can appear some earlier and disappear some later. Subtitlers often resort to this strategy in SDH (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 90).

2.7.2.3 Shot changes and multiple voices

A very important rule in spotting is not to keep a subtitle over a cut. The subtitle should leave the screen before the shot change and the new subtitle should appear after the cut. Studies based on eye movement show that if a subtitle stays on screen at the moment of a shot change, the viewer is brought to think that also a change of subtitle has taken place and he/she will start reading the same subtitle again (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 91).

Another problem occurs when many people are speaking simultaneously on screen. The subtitler will have to decide which information to keep or delete and to choose a good layout for subtitles, in order to make viewers understand who is saying what (*ibidem*).

2.8 Punctuation in subtitles

The fragmentation of subtitles certainly complicates their reading, because they become isolated units, disconnected from the preceding and the following subtitles. Subtitlers aim to make viewer's reading easier, revising the standard punctuation rules,

which are often different from those that are required in subtitling (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 103).

2.8.1 Commas, full stops, semi colons and colons

The comma is the most flexible punctuation mark, but in subtitles it must be used appropriately and does not need to completely follow traditional grammar rules. There are some cases in which it is required, for example after vocatives or when phrases and clauses are inserted in the main sentence. It is recommended not to use a comma at the end of a subtitle, because it could be confused with a full stop, leading the viewer to believe that the sentence is concluded and that a new one will start in the following subtitle. If no punctuation marks appear at the end of a subtitle, this means that the sentence continues in the next one (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 105-106).

The full stop should be used right after the last character of a subtitle to indicate the end of the sentence. This signals to viewers that they can go back to the image because there is no following subtitle to anticipate (Karamitroglou 1998: 5).

Semi colons are generally avoided in subtitles, because they might be confused with colons. Colons are used in subtitles with the same function they have in traditional grammar, that is to introduce a list or an explanation. Some subtitlers decide to leave a blank space between the colon and the word preceding it to make it more visible on the screen (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 107).

2.8.2 Parentheses and brackets

Parentheses and brackets should be used to include information that explains the preceding phrase in the sentence (Karamitroglou 1998: 5). The use of round parentheses is limited in subtitles. Square brackets are almost never used in subtitles for hearers (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 108), but they are used in SDH to describe sounds, noises and other non-verbal elements (Griffin 2016). Parentheses or brackets of the source text are usually avoided and the sentence is reformulated using other punctuation marks, for example commas, or adding connectors if necessary (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 108).

2.8.3 Exclamation marks, question marks and triple dots

Exclamation marks are generally used to convey intensity, anger, scorn, surprise, happiness or disgust, or after sentences which are said in a loud voice. Some subtitlers leave a blank space between the exclamation mark and the preceding word, in order to make it more visible, as with colons. Question marks are put at the end of a question and, unless rhetorical, the viewer then expects an answer in the following sentence. Both exclamation and question marks indicate the end of a sentence. Exclamation marks should not be overused, because, viewers are able to understand certain emotions directly from the action on the screen. Moreover, it is recommended not to use more than one exclamation mark in one subtitle, as well as double or multiple exclamation or question marks (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 109-110).

When a sentence is not finished at the end of the subtitle, triple dots can be used to link it to the following subtitle. Today this use is avoided and triple dots are used with other functions, for example to convey hesitation and pauses (ivi, p. 112-113).

2.8.4 Dashes and hyphens

Hyphens are used to link words and no space characters should be inserted between them, while dashes are used before the first character of each of the lines of a two-line subtitle to indicate the exchange of speakers' utterances. (Karamitroglou 1998: 5). Two dashes appearing in a subtitle of two lines indicate that there are two different people speaking. The first line contains the utterance of the first speaker, while the second line includes the utterance of the second speaker. There is always a space between the dash and the first letter of the sentence. Parenthetical dashes are not used in subtitling and are substituted with other punctuation marks (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 111)

2.8.5 Quotation marks

They are often called *inverted commas* and they differ in shape depending on the language of the subtitles. Quotation marks usually indicate direct speech and in subtitling they are used when the speaker is reading something aloud or quoting something that

somebody else has said. If a quotation continues on the next subtitles, the general approach is to put quotation marks only at the beginning and at the end of the quotation, but some subtitlers prefer to put quotation marks at the beginning and at the end of every subtitle, in order to remind to the viewer that the quotation has not finished. Another solution is to open quotation marks only at the beginning of each subtitle of the series and close it in the final subtitle. Quotation marks are also used with incorrect words invented by the actors, or with colloquialisms. Moreover, they are sometimes used with names of restaurants, cinemas, brands, hotels, etc. or to stress some parts of the sentence (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 119-123).

2.8.6 Capital letters and other symbols

Capital letters should be used in the same way as in standard writing, therefore at the beginning of proper names, at the beginning of a new sentence and after a full stop or a question/exclamation mark. In the past, capital letters conveyed shouting, but today they are used to convey a high level of expressiveness. Upper case is also used for titles of films or programmes, road signs, newspaper headlines and computer messages.

Other symbols, such as percentages or currencies, tend to be avoided and the general rule is to use the complete word, if possible (for example 150 euros instead of 150 €). An exception is the asterisk, which is used to bleep swear words, which are ever more frequent in programmes and films. When subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, the general approach is to omit swear words completely, unless their omission influences the structure and the meaning of the sentence. In this case, the swear word will have the first letter visible, followed by asterisks. (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 116-118).

2.8.7 Other conventions: font types, songs, colours and numbers

In addition to the constraints described above, other stylistic conventions should be mentioned. Bold and underline types are not permitted in subtitling, while italics should be used to indicate an off-screen source, for instance when the voice of someone who is contemplating or narrating something is heard, or speaking over the phone from the other end. They should also be used when foreign words are maintained in their original version

(Karamitroglou 1998: 6). Italics are also used for voices from within, that is thoughts, interior monologues, voices in dreams, and to stress a word or a phrase. Other functions include citing literary quotation and bibliographical references, titles of films, books or songs, while italics should not be used with names of pop groups or places (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 125-126).

When dealing with songs, most countries use italics on the same point of the screen as the other subtitles and follow the same punctuation constraints (ivi, p. 127). According to BBC *Online Subtitling Editorial Guidelines* (Williams 2009: 32), “lyrics are almost always subtitled, whether they are part of the action or not and every song starts and finishes with a white hash mark (#)”, one at the beginning and one at the end of the song. There are two cases in which songs are not subtitled: when action on screen is considered more important than music and when the song is interspersed with actors’ speech, therefore viewers might be confused in reading subtitles of both the speech and the song (*ibidem*).

The use of colours constitutes the main difference between interlingual and intralingual subtitling. Subtitles for hearers are white, but in some cases they are yellow. However, the alternation of colours is not allowed because it is unnecessary. In subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing, different colours are used for each different speaker in order to allow hearing-impaired viewers to identify the different characters (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 130).

There are also some rules to follow when dealing with numbers. Most of them are general linguistic rules, which should also be respected in subtitling (ivi, p. 134-137):

- cardinal numbers up to ten are written in letters, while from eleven onwards in digits, apart from house or room numbers, which are always written in digits;
- if cardinal numbers up to ten are next to an abbreviated unit of measurement, they appear in digits;
- with long numbers, a comma is used in English, while other languages prefer full stops;
- with years, no commas are used and no blank spaces are left;
In English:
 - decimals always appear in digits separated by a full stop;

- ordinals are generally found in their abbreviated form (20th, 3rd); their ending usually disappears when they are part of a date;
- when dealing with time (both the 12 and the 24-hours system), numbers are separated by a colon or a period, never by a comma.

2.9 Mode-switching: from spoken to written language

Another great challenge in subtitling lies in the fact that dialogues must be turned into written text and this has consequences on the stylistic and structural level (Zojer 2011: 402). Elements that are typical of spontaneous speech, such as slips of the tongue, pauses, false starts, unfinished or ungrammatical sentences, etc., are not easy to reproduce in writing. The same is for dialectal and pronunciation features. For instance, using a pseudo-phonetic transcription in order to reproduce a dialect in subtitles, would hinder the readability and the comprehension of the text, slowing the reading time and obscuring the style. Subtitlers should render certain spoken features in subtitles only if their function is to promote the plot. For example, rather than reproducing the errors of an uneducated character, subtitlers could use appropriate and simpler vocabulary to convey his/her education level, dialect or social class. Another possibility is not to reproduce this type of mistakes if viewers have already information from the context of the film/programme. Depending on each case, subtitlers should decide what priority to give to some features of the dialogue (Georgakopoulou 2009: 26).

2.10 Linguistic constraints in interlingual subtitles

Subtitlers must take the semantic content of source language dialogues into account. Each subtitle should be semantically independent and complete and should result as a coherent, logical and syntactical unit. To support readability, spotting and line-breaking should be carried out in a way that words connected by logic, semantics or grammar should be displayed on the same line or subtitle whenever possible (Díaz-Cintas 2010: 345). Space and time constraints in the subtitling process usually increase traditional translation challenges, for example grammar and word order, and also problems related to cross-cultural shifts (Georgakopoulou 2009: 26).

Kovačić (1991: 409) identified three types of discourse elements in subtitling: indispensable elements, which must be translated, partly dispensable elements, which can be reduced, and dispensable elements, which can be completely omitted. The indispensable elements are those elements of a film that carry the experiential meaning, which is necessary to the viewers to understand and follow the action.

2.10.1 Gottlieb's model of subtitling strategies

Gottlieb (1992: 166) identified ten strategies that can be used when translating for subtitling (Dehbashi Sharif and Sohrabi 2015: 80). The degree of loss is higher in the last three, while the first one is additive:

1. expansion: extra information is added, for example, when cultural differences between the source and the target language require to be explained;
2. paraphrase: some parts of the sentence are changed when this is necessary to the transition from one language to another;
3. transfer: the source text is translated completely and accurately;
4. imitation: elements of the source language are maintained in their form, for example names of people or places;
5. transcription: when a term is unusual both in the source and in the target text, it is maintained. For instance, in cases of a third language or nonsense language;
6. dislocation: use of linguistic means to keep the same effect in the transition from source to target language; it is adopted when conveying the effect is more important than conveying the content;
7. condensation: summary of the original text, without losing the original meaning;
8. decimation: elimination of unnecessary parts of the text; in some cases, probably because of dialogue speed, semantically important elements can also be omitted;
9. deletion: total omission of parts of the text, whose meaning is not necessary to viewers' understanding;
10. resignation: solutions that do not satisfy the linguistic or semantic requirements of the source language are adopted when no other solutions are found. In these cases, meaning is unavoidably lost.

2.10.2 Reduction and omission

When translating from English into other European languages, reduction is the most important strategy in subtitling (Georgakopoulou 2009: 26). Reduction can be partial, when the original dialogue is condensed, or total, when part of the oral text is omitted. In both cases, the principle of relevance should be respected, making sure that no fundamental information is omitted. Subtitlers should take the visual information into account, avoiding the translation of what is explicitly conveyed through the action on screen. Subtitles sometimes cannot convey everything that is said, but they must capture its essence (Díaz-Cintas 2010: 346).

Many subtitlers would omit some linguistic elements, such as (Georgakopoulou 2009: 27) :

- repetitions;
- names in appellative constructions;
- false starts;
- ungrammatical constructions;
- internationally known words (“yes”, “no”, “ok”);
- expressions of salutation, politeness, affirmation, negation, surprise, telephone responses, etc., which are usually followed by gestures;
- exclamations (“oh”, “ah”, “wow”);
- instances of padding (excess wording), often empty of semantic load, for instance expressions such as “you know”, “well”, “naturally”, “of course”, or prepositional phrases such as “in view of the fact that”.

In many cases these linguistic elements can be deleted because they can be understood from the dialogue. If they were transcribed or translated, the same information would be found both in the subtitles and in the original utterance, and this would be a case of duplication. Some English words, such as “yes”, “no” and “ok”, are known all over the world, thanks to the global position of English and its importance in the media industry. Moreover, certain words or expressions can be recognised by target viewers depending on how much the source and the target language are related (ivi, p. 28).

2.10.3 Redundancy in subtitles

Linguistic redundancy is frequently discussed when dealing with the topic of subtitling. Redundancy is innately a feature of spoken language. Non-optional redundancy is different from pragmatic redundancy. The former type is positive and an example is a verb that can convey its meaning without other elements, but it is obligatorily accompanied by a preposition. The latter includes pleonasms and tautologies, which should be avoided (Deckert 2013: 61).

In the field of subtitling, three types of redundancy can be distinguished (ivi, p. 62)

1. what is repeated even if viewers can understand it from the action on screen or depending on their experience of conversation;
2. repetition or reformulation;
3. redundancy on the verbal-visual interface: something that can be understood by the action on screen is maintained in subtitles.

In the context of subtitling, the multimodality of an audiovisual product is both a challenge and a resource. Dealing with images might be challenging for translators, but thanks to verbal/visual redundancy, the other codes of the audiovisual text can help to make certain verbal elements redundant, and condensing the text becomes easier (O'Sullivan 2013: 11).

2.10.4 Cohesion, coherence and line breaks

According to Mubenga (2010: 39) , cohesion and coherence are “potential areas of research in audiovisual translation (AVT) in general and in interlingual subtitling in particular”. Cohesion and coherence connect clauses or sentences in a text, so that the text will give both grammatical and semantic meaning. These links are necessary to create grammatical and lexical relationships between the elements of clauses or sentences (ivi, p. 40).

According to Schiffrin (1987) “coherence can be regarded as a connection between utterances with discourse structure, meaning, and action being combined” (Tangkiengsirisin 2013: 2). Concerning cohesion, Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that

cohesion determines if a text is well-connected and that “cohesion does not concern what a text means; it concerns how the text is constructed as a semantic edifice”.

Cohesion in subtitling refers to the way through which subtitlers connect language directly to the soundtrack and images on screen, supplying information to create a coherent linguistic-visual unit. The strategies of reduction and omission typical of subtitling could lead to the disruption of coherence. The lack of coherence can be also due to confused references, poor sentences or illogical clauses. When subtitlers reduce or delete something in the transition from oral to written, they should pay attention not to lose the logic of the source text (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 171-172).

In order to keep coherence and cohesion in subtitling, it is important to carry out a careful segmentation, keeping in mind that subtitles must be easily understood in the time they remain on screen. Therefore, subtitles must be semantically and syntactically correct, with a clear and complete structure and no ambiguous elements. Segmenting means dividing the source text dialogue into different sections, following some rules (ivi, p. 176-178):

- if a subtitle contains two or more sentences, each line should display only one sentence;
- if a subtitle contains a sentence with subordinated or coordinated clauses, it is advisable to use one line for each clause;
- it is not recommended to separate adjective from noun or adverb, adverb from verb, article from noun, etc.;
- if a sentence includes a to-infinitive, a phrasal verb or collocation, they should not be split up;
- if the sentence contains a compound verbal form, it is recommended to keep auxiliary and lexical verb together;
- it is not advisable to separate a verb from its object;
- if a sentence is a reply to a question, it is better not to place it in the following subtitle, if possible;
- it is not advisable to continue a long sentence over too many subtitles. It is better to split the sentence into shorter independent sentences.

2.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, we can see that there are both technical and linguistic constraints in interlingual subtitling. The constraints will be different depending on the kind of audiovisual product and on the audience to which the subtitles will be addressed. Therefore it is important to say that nowadays the existing rules should not be considered strict and completely binding, but they should be adjusted depending on the subtitling context.

Chapter Three

Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a definition of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) will be given, along with a brief history of its evolution and legislation. The different types of deafness will be distinguished, which are related to different audiences with different characteristics and needs. In the second part of the chapter, I will present a case study on interlingual SDH, developed in collaboration with an institute for deaf and hard of hearing students, ISIIS ITC Antonio Magarotto of Padua.

3.2 SDH: definition and typologies

Subtitling for the Deaf and the Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) was long considered a “simple” variant of standard subtitling. Only recently, uprising social demands together with a growing presence of SDH materials in different international audiovisual environments, have promoted the proliferation of research initiatives on SDH practices. (Arnáiz Uzquiza 2012: 103)

“Subtitles for the Deaf or Hard-of-hearing (SDH) are a form of subtitles introduced by the DVD industry in the United States and refer to subtitles in the original language to which important non-dialog information has been added” (The Closed Captioning Project 2017). Even though a growing interest in the study of AVT has been seen in general, not so much has been written at an academic level on SDH. Intralingual subtitling was introduced on television in the 1970s, but research has been mostly connected to its technical implications. This could depend on the fact that SDH was considered a mechanical process requiring technical competence rather than linguistic competence. At the beginning, and up until recently, SDH was not seen as a real form of translation and therefore, it has not been so much taken into consideration into the studies on audiovisual translation (Neves 2005: 105).

The majority of SDH are intralingual: the language of the subtitles is the same as the language of the film/programme, but nowadays, also interlingual SDH is becoming more widespread: as regular interlingual subtitling, it involves the translation from one language to another. Both intra- and interlingual SDH add extra information to dialogues,

that is information about speakers, music, sounds and noises, which are very important for the understanding of the audiovisual product (Szarkowska 2013: 68). Therefore, interlingual SDH combines translation skills with the knowledge of the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing. The greater spread of intralingual SDH compared to interlingual SDH could be caused by the belief that deaf and hard of hearing viewers are able to understand a foreign film/programme from interlingual subtitles for hearing viewers, which does not contain the extra information mentioned above (ivi, p. 69). According to Díaz Cintas (2003: 200), thinking that the deaf and hard of hearing only watch programmes originally produced in their mother tongue is a big mistake. Indeed, they also watch foreign programmes, as their hearing counterpart, but standard interlingual subtitles for hearers are not appropriate for their needs.

3.3 The Deaf, and the deaf and the hard of hearing

An important issue is not given the right importance and consideration when dealing with SDH: the deaf and hard of hearing are not a heterogeneous group, even if they tend to be considered as if they had the same characteristics and needs. Indeed, SDH viewers form a very diverse group (Szarkowska 2013: 69). Medically speaking, a person is considered to be “deaf” when the hearing loss is very severe and he/she is unable to process and recognize linguistic information through hearing, while being “hard of hearing” involves a different affection of people’s ability to decipher sounds because there is still some residual hearing (Neves 2009: 154). Going beyond the common bilateral distinction between “deaf” and “hard of hearing”, Neves identifies a third term, which is “Deaf”, with a capital “D”. She defines the “Deaf” as a minority group of people with their own language, which is the national sign language, and with their own identity, which is different from the identity of hearers and hard of hearing people. They are different from the “deaf”, who use spoken language and relate to the hearing society as if they were part of it (Neves 2008b: 172). Neves tries to reformulate the traditional definition of “deaf and hard of hearing”, considering hearing and deafness as the two extremes of a scale. In this scale, being hard of hearing means being in the “grey zone”, that is between two very different realities. The hard of hearing often identify with the hearing community. They usually become hearing-impaired because of age or diseases,

and their mother tongue is spoken language. In most cases, residual hearing remains despite a severe hearing loss. On the other hand, the Deaf live in a world where sound does not exist. In the past, deaf children were taught to oralise, that is to pronounce words and understand speech through lip-reading. Sign language was not accepted and deaf people were forced to use the national spoken language, even if their hearing and speech apparatus did not allow to do it. Obviously, as oral skills, their reading competence too is different from that of hearers and hard of hearing people (Neves 2009: 154-155).

A significant number of people inside the deaf community use sign language as their mother tongue and they have difficulties in communicating with the hearing members of society. However, there are also many deaf people who do not have sign language as their mother tongue and their reading skills will be determined by the level of their hearing loss (Báez Monetero et al. 2010: 26). The different types of deafness can be classified depending on a medical standpoint or on a linguistic standpoint. From a medical perspective, deafness can be classified in the following ways (ivi, p. 34-35).

- Depending on the degree of hearing loss measured in intensity and in frequency, four groups of deafness can be identified: mild loss of hearing, moderate loss of hearing, severe loss of hearing and profound loss of hearing. Profound loss of hearing is a great barrier for the Deaf when they acquire linguistic oral skills. The problem is not the degree of hearing loss, but the hearing functionality that the hearing loss causes.
- Depending on the location of the injury, two types of hearing loss can be recognized: transmission deafness and perception deafness. The first affects the mechanical part of the ear, while the second affects the organ of Corti or the hearing superior centres or canals. When both types occur, it is a case of mixed deafness.
- Depending on the moment at which the hearing loss occurs, three types of deafness can be recognized: prelocutive/prelingual deafness (before the acquisition of language), prelocutive deafness (between the ages of 2 and 4) and postlocutive/postlingual deafness (after the consolidation of fundamental linguistic skills). Postlocutive Deaf people know at least the basis of oral language and have quite good reading skills.

- Depending on the etiology of deafness, several aspects can be identified: genetic origin (congenital or degenerative deafness), antenatal origin (rubella or other foetus pathologies), neonatal origin (caused by prematurity or perinatal suffering) and hearing loss acquired during childhood because of infectious, toxic or traumatic causes.

The linguistic perspective is also important when classifying the different degrees of hearing loss. Looking at the degree of communication and linguistic developments, several considerations can be made (ivi, p. 35-36).

- It is important to take into consideration the linguistic context in which Deaf people grow and live. Deaf children often grow up in hearing families and this does not favour communicative exchanges because they will tend to be subject to isolation and will not receive the proper stimulations to develop their communication skills. By contrast, if other members of the family share hearing problems, Deaf people will learn their language without delays in time.
- Education is a determining element in the linguistic development of the Deaf community. A duality between oralists and manualists exists: the former focus on the acquisition of oral language, the latter recognize the need of Deaf students to have a communication tool that is specific of their community. However, today special schools encourage socialisation through sign language, and the overcoming of linguistic barriers. In recent years, the inclusion of Deaf students in the same classes of hearing students could suggest that the objective is to prepare them to live in a world in which communication occurs through spoken language. However, the bilingual option seems to be the most accepted because it meets the students' need to be socially included and it also allows Deaf students to communicate in their first language.

3.3.1. Deafness and reading skills

According to Neves (2005: 98), hearing readers have both visual and acoustic access to words and a good knowledge of redundancy and spelling-to-sound correspondences, competences that they have acquired in a natural way. When readers acquire skills, they no longer need to concentrate on word-processing and can invest their

working memory in higher order processing, such as inferencing, predicting, planning, monitoring, self-questioning and summarizing (metacognitive techniques that are specific to highly skilled readers). By contrast, deaf people have difficulties in writing and reading, even if they have a certain level of knowledge of the oral language. The reason is that, unlike hearing children, when deaf children start learning how to read, they do not have the experiential, cognitive and linguistic bases needed to do it. This does not mean that they are less intelligent than hearing children, but that they generally approach reading with poor language comprehension skills, which result from experiential, cognitive and linguistic deficits, which are in turn the result of a lack of appropriate experiential and linguistic stimulus.

There is a difference between watching and reading a film. Watching a film involves decoding information through more channels, that is speech, sound and image, while reading a film is a more complex process. In hearing audiences, speech is recognized through cognitive processing, while sounds and images are often concurrent and interrelated with it. This makes it easy, if not natural, to access information contained in the message and it is when only one of these three elements cannot be accessed that subtitles gain importance. For this reason, subtitles are essential to the deaf and hard of hearing. For the hard of hearing they are a stimulus and a memory exercise, but for the deaf they are the only instrument to fully access information (Neves 2009: 156).

Báez Montero et. al (2010: 37-38) do not consider reading speed as a parameter to measure the comprehension of subtitles by deaf and hard of hearing people. Reading is something which allows to have access to information and which means decoding and understanding the combinations and the relations existing among the elements that constitute sentences. For example, when the loss of hearing is severe or profound, it will interfere with the acquisition of the oral language. Communication through oral language will be related not to the language itself, but to the command of language skills, possibilities for socialisation, educational experiences, educational and social environments of the target audience. Therefore, the ability to read subtitle in deaf people will not depend on their reading speed, but to their level of language understanding: they could be quick at deciphering written symbols, but slow at understanding the relations between them.

3.4 History of SDH and legislation in Europe

Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) is now a relatively widespread practice. However, this practice still needs to be improved and research on SDH audience needs to be further developed.

In Europe, BBC has always been the leader in SDH. In 1972, it announced the Ceefax Teletext service, which then led to the introduction of SDH seven years later (Remael 2007: 24): in 1979, BBC broadcast its first subtitled programme, a documentary about hearing-impaired children, entitled *Quietly in Switzerland* (Díaz Cintas 2010: 161). However, up to that time, BBC had already provided a weekly news subtitled programme. Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands provided their first SDH subtitles in the 1980s, while Portugal and Spain started later, in the 1990s. Many European broadcasters began developing teletext in the 1980s and the introduction of SDH was directly related to this. For example, videotext appeared in Germany in June 1980 and a limited part of the service was provided with subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing viewers. Therefore, initially the number of programmes with subtitles for hearing-impaired people was very limited (Remael 2007: 24).

The first Italian broadcaster to provide SDH was RAI, with Hitchcock's *Rear Window* in 1986 (*ibidem*). From that year on, TV stations and DVD producers have been providing SDH regularly, but only recently, Italy has begun to show interest in the study of accessible subtitling (Morettini 2012: 323). “There are still few Italian studies that focus on the analysis of SDH from an audiovisual perspective. In particular little is known about the Italian deaf and hard-of-hearing audience: this fact suggests the need for more in-depth investigations into the field of audience design” (*ibidem*).

In Spain, the first subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing were broadcast in 1990 by the national Catalan TV corporation CCRTV and later by the Spanish TVE. Then also the rest of the Spanish channels gradually began to broadcast programmes with SDH (Remael 2007: 25).

In Portugal SDH was introduced in 1999, as a result of an agreement between RTP (*Radio e Televisão de Portugal*), the Portuguese government and the national association for the Deaf: the national public broadcaster committed to offer 15 hours per week of intralingual subtitling on Portuguese-language programmes (*ibidem*).

An increase in the percentage of subtitling provision has generally been noticed together with the development of new forms of subtitling, such as live subtitling, but the speed with which these developments took place also depended on legislations and other forms of agreements between governments and broadcasting channels, along with the pressure put by the deaf and hard of hearing associations. Legislation is very important, but not sufficient. Referring to Germany for example, the real problem is financial: public broadcasters are aware of the needs of hearing-impaired people, but they do not have enough funding to provide SDH (*ibidem*).

In the UK, after the 1990 Broadcasting Act, subsequent Acts of Parliament have increased the requirement for subtitling (see 1.6.5), but it seems that the current legislation contains too many loopholes and that Ofcom, which monitors the legislation, has not insisted on providing quality services, therefore laws would aim at quantity only (Remael 2007: 26). Indeed, from 2008, the BBC subtitles 100% of programmes on the channels BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three, BBC Four, CBeebies, CBBC and BBC News, for a total of 50.000 hours per year (Díaz Cintas 2010: 163).

In Flanders, SDH is regulated by a contract between the public channel VRT and the government. It is much more concrete than the previous contract and mentions both SDH and AD (Audiodescription) explicitly. The aim of the contract was to increase SDH by up to 50% by the end of 2006, and 95% by 2010. In the Netherlands, the situation was not so different: a directive of 2006 aimed to subtitle 100% of Dutch language programmes on public television by 2010. The Flemish government has offered 50.000€ to each channel and 50.000€ to employ specialized employees. However, the sum is being used to train journalists who work for the local channels, instead of using the money to train new translators in the field of accessibility (Remael 2007: 26).

As for Italy, the European *Television without Frontiers* directive seems to have been ignored by both public and private broadcasters. The Stanca law (see 1.6.4) aimed at comprehensive social inclusion in the fruition of media and especially at literacy through the use of computers, therefore promoting Internet accessibility more than television accessibility. Moreover, it entailed obligations for the public administration, without considering RAI part of that administration (*ibidem*).

In Germany, the European directive (see 1.6.3) seems to be having an effect. An act entitled *Gesetz zur Gleichstellung behinderter menschen und zur Änderung anderer*

Gesetze (Act for the emancipation of physically challenged people and for the amendment of other acts) was passed in 2002: associations representing the interests of the disabled were given the right to make agreements with enterprises and other bodies, in order to improve accessibility and increase the number of programmes for the deaf and hearing-impaired (Remael 2007: 27).

In Portugal, SDH was introduced on television before becoming compulsory through legislation. The 1998 law, which was in force when RTP first introduced teletext subtitling, did not mention the needs of the hearing-impaired. The situation changed in 2002 when a new line was introduced to article 44 of Law 8/2002, stipulating that priority would have been given to Portuguese television broadcasters who had provided subtitling or sign language interpreting for the benefit of deaf and hard of hearing people. The law was then enforced with other agreements and forms of legislation (ivi, p. 28).

With regard to Spain, in the past SDH was provided on voluntary basis, but then social awareness increased and in 2001 the *Ley de Fomento y Promoción de la Cinematografía y el Sector Audiovisual* [Law for the Promotion of Cinema and the Audiovisual Sector] was passed: it offered grants for films with SDH and AD (*Ibidem*). The *Ley General de la Comunicación Audiovisual* of 2010 (last amended in 2015) contains an article about the rights of people with disabilities (Gobierno de España 2010: 14), saying that people with hearing and visual impairments have the right to have access to all media according to technological possibilities and that 75% of the programmes should be subtitled.

In 2003, the European Year of People with Disabilities was a real incentive to the promotion of legislations in favour of the integration of people with hearing impairments and, in general, disabled people (Díaz Cintas 2010: 162). In 2008 the European Parliament ratified the declaration of Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, a Polish MEP, who solicited the European Commission to prepare a legislative proposal that would impose to subtitle all the programmes that are broadcast through public European television channels (ivi, p. 163).

3.4.1. The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH)

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) is a non-profit European non-governmental organization, registered as a charitable organization, which has existed since 1990. It consists of hard of hearing and late deafened people, parent organizations and professional organizations at a European level in collaboration with the European Union, the Members of the European Parliament and other European authorities. Its aim is to allow hard of hearing people to live without barriers and have the possibility to take part to the society (EFHOH n.d.).

“Hard of hearing people” is used as a definition to describe all groups of hard of hearing individuals, “covering everybody with a hearing loss, ranging from light hearing loss to adult, profoundly deafened users. Unlike pre-lingual deaf people, hard of hearing people develop and use the spoken language” (EFHOH, 2011: 3). Still over 50 million of deaf or hard of hearing Europeans are deprived of basic human rights because they cannot hear programmes on TV, they do not understand films in the cinema or plays in the theatre. This situation has brought EFHOH to launch a campaign in order to promote subtitling in audiovisual media in all EU member states as a solution to grant full access to information to deaf and hard of hearing people. EFHOH published its own guidelines for accessibility to people with hearing impairments, including a part about subtitling (EFHOH n.d.).

In 2015 a report was released by EFHOH, that is the *State of subtitling access in EU*, in which we can read EFHOH members’ target: by 2020, they want to see subtitling on 100% of programmes broadcast on public channels across the EU, following simple rules. These rules are expected to be applied also to popular ‘On Demand’ services, so that hard of hearing people are not continually denied access to them. Moreover, they want to see more subtitling in cinemas and theatres (EFHOH 2015: 7). In their mission, they have a number of important tools at their disposal, including (EFHOH 2015: 8):

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD);
- Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD);
- European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020.

According to the UNCRPD, states should promote, protect and ensure the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and full equality under the law. Its guiding principles include participation and inclusion in society, equal opportunities and accessibility (*ibidem*).

The AVMSD is a tool that “covers the right to provide audiovisual services, the right to freedom of expression and information, and the protection of public interest, including non-discrimination. It covers traditional analogue and digital television and also more recent on-demand services. Non-discrimination must include equal access to services” (*ibidem*).

The European Disability Strategy “states that European Institutions must ensure accessibility to goods and services, including public services and assistance devices for people with disabilities”. Moreover, it underlines that “they must optimise the use of EU funding instruments for accessibility and non-discrimination and increase visibility of disability-relevant funding opportunities” (*ibidem*).

European Institutions should ensure the realisation of rights and recommendations contained in these documents. Considering the specific need of deaf and hard of hearing people for more subtitling, means (*ibidem*):

- ensuring availability of EU funding for public broadcasters to acquire technical equipment that is necessary to introduce subtitling and train their personnel;
- introducing EU standards based on recent research and good practice of countries that have already reached very good standards;
- taking into consideration the possibility of reviewing AVMSD in order to introduce a legal obligation for member states to set up the objective of subtitling a given number proportion of programmes, and subtitling 100% of the programmes in public TV as ultimate target.

Hard of hearing people and late-deafened people rely on visual text to be able to access the wide range of information available in the world in the same way as their hearing peers. Good quality subtitling, not only benefits all people with hearing loss, including elderly people, but also (ivi,p. 5):

- improves children’s reading skills;
- helps deaf children to approach spoken language;
- helps people to approach a foreign language;

- benefits bilingual sign/spoken language users;
- removes social barriers

According to EFHOH, the overall trend since their latest report in 2011 is positive because most countries have demonstrably improved their subtitling provision. However, it is clear that much more needs to be done in terms of data collection. As can be seen in the graph below, there are gaps in the data available. In blue there are data from 2011, while in red the level of subtitling provision reached by 2013 (ivi, p. 9).

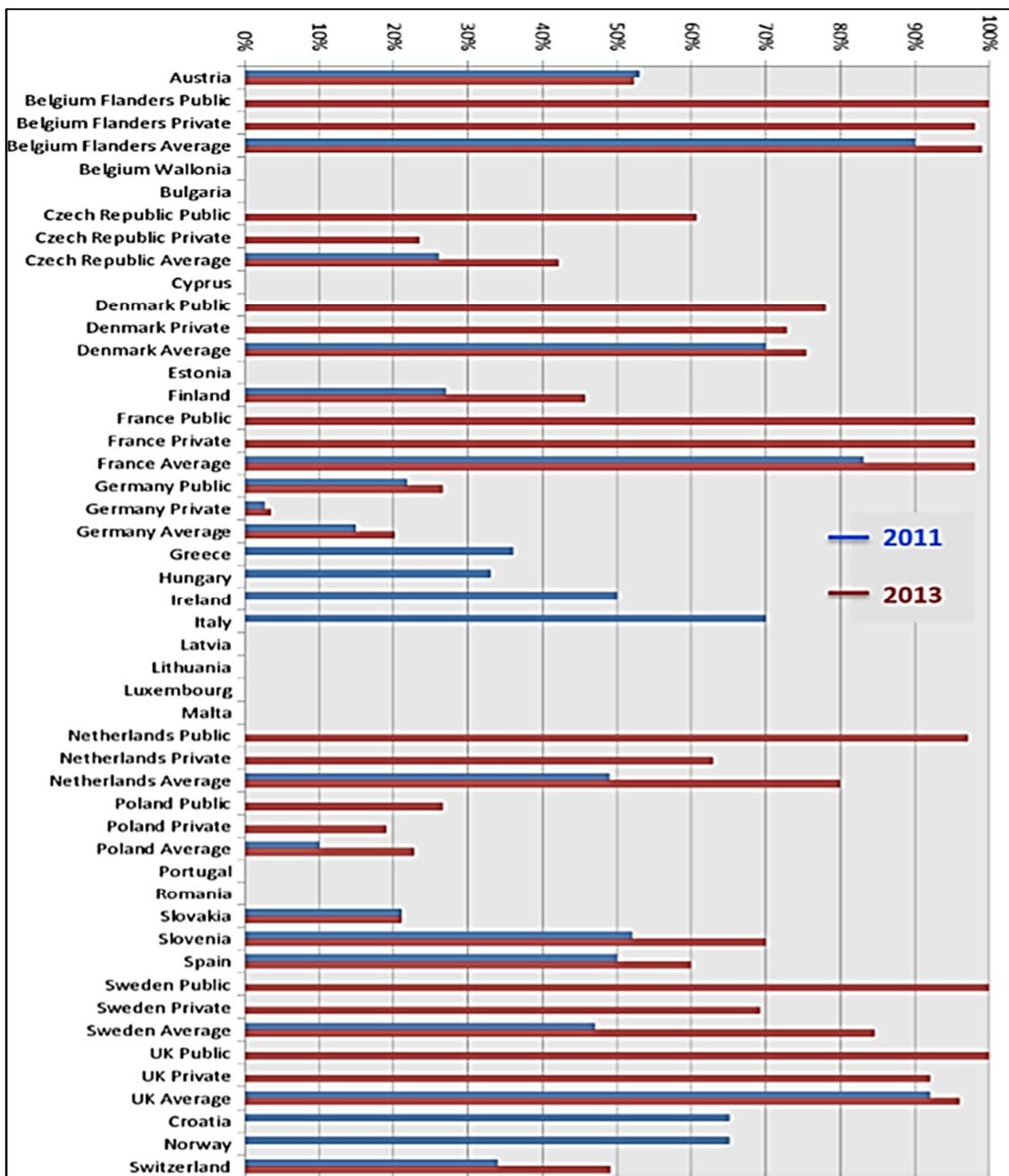


Figure 2: 2015 Report of subtitling provision in Europe (EFHOH 2015: 16)

Where possible, the data has been divided between public and private broadcasters. The graph also includes some countries that are not currently members of the EU.

Countries like the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium and France report amongst the highest levels of subtitling provision, particularly for public channels. The Netherlands, Sweden and France have improved since 2011, while the UK and Belgium have maintained and improved their already very high levels. However, it is important to say that the job is not finished for these countries because they should look to the future to ensure that this positive trend will be maintained (*ivi*, p. 10).

Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Finland, Denmark, Spain have made some progress since 2011, but they are below the levels achieved by the countries mentioned above. The improvements of these countries are to be recognized, but their ultimate goal should be reaching 100% of subtitling provision (*ibidem*).

Other countries, such as Germany, Slovakia, and Poland, report a level of subtitling that is not so satisfying. EFHOH is particularly disappointed with Germany because, considering its position within the European Union, it should have obtained better results to be able to protect the rights of its hard of hearing citizens (*ibidem*).

There are many countries that are not mentioned here because, in many cases, data have not been collected in time for this report. Moreover, it is important to say that across most member states, private broadcasters provision of subtitling was significantly lower than public broadcasters provision (*ibidem*).

EFHOH data has been collected from broadcasters, official regulators and deaf and hard of hearing stakeholder organisations. Moreover, there is not a universal standard for gathering subtitling data because methods differ from country to country. These differences make comparisons more complicated and mean that the reality for deaf or hard of hearing viewers does not necessarily reflect the statistics presented by broadcasters (*ivi*, p. 17). According to EFHOH, the reason for such discrepancies probably lays in the lack of Communication Acts that incorporate obligations regarding access to subtitling. They have found that countries with good and effective regulations are the countries that have the highest levels of subtitling provision, and make the most progress in terms of extending this provision (*ivi*, p. 18).

According to the Report, OFCOM and the UK seem to be one of the best examples of good practice that EFHOH suggests should be followed by other countries (*ibidem*):

- calculations are made depending on 24 hour broadcasting period;
- any broadcaster with an audience share over 0.05% is regulated;
- the sustainability of subtitling is based on a 1% of annual turnover;
- subtitling targets are always raised, even when they are achieved in advance;
- there are guidelines and guidance on what should be done and how.

The accessibility of subtitles depends on several factors. First of all, quality is essential. If subtitles are not accurate, they are not useful to viewers. Despite being the leader, EFHOH members are certifying that in the UK the quantity of subtitles is sometimes considered more important than their quality. However, quality should be maintained when quantity increases, otherwise the purpose of subtitling is lost. Another factor is the time at which subtitles are available. It is true that in many countries the percentage of broadcast hours covered by subtitles is increasing, but these subtitles are often available late at night or at unacceptable times.

3.5 The constraints of SDH

All types of subtitles are subject to spatial, temporal and linguistic constraints, but SDH differs from regular subtitling in a number of characteristics.

3.5.1. Space constraints

In the case of SDH, according to A. Szarkowska (2013: 70) subtitles can consist of up to three or even four lines. Their placement also sometimes differs from regular subtitles: they are often placed depending on speakers' position on the screen (speaker-dependent placement). In Spain, for example, the information about sound is often placed in the top right-hand corner of the screen.

In a case study proposing criteria for the production of subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing adults in Spain, Pereira (2010: 90) proposes subtitles of one or two lines, positioned at the bottom of the screen, and sound effects in one-liners at the top right-hand corner of the screen. Whenever possible, overlapping subtitles and sound effects descriptions was avoided. When subtitles reproduced a dialogue between two characters, each subtitle was assigned to one line. The subtitles were centred because most action

takes place in the middle of the screen; therefore, viewers' eyes do not need to travel from one side of the screen to the other. Díaz Cintas (2010: 164) also argues that SDH usually consist of one or two lines and sometimes three lines, positioned at the bottom part of the screen in order not to hide the action on the screen.

3.5.2. Time constraints

Subtitles exposure should respect the requirement of synchronization with image and sound. Hearing viewers are generally considered faster in reading than deaf and hard of hearing viewers, especially faster than those who use sign language as their mother tongue. For this reason, the duration of SDH is one of the most discussed issues (Szarkowska 2013: 71). In the case study mentioned above (Pereira 2010: 91), the six-second rule was followed, as the result of studies on the reading speed of Spanish prelocutive deaf viewers. This refers to the time that the hearing or postlocutive deaf adult viewers need to read and understand a two-line subtitle of 35 characters per line. In the case of children or young people, an eight-second rule is suggested.

3.5.3. Text reduction, redundancy and editing

In the subtitles for hearing audiences, omitting or reducing various features of orality (exclamations, hesitations, repetitions, reformulations, false starts, vocative forms of address, etc.) is customary, but it is not the same for SDH (Szarkowska 2013: 71). According to Neves (2009: 160), reducing the amount of information is not a solution to save time because reduction is often achieved through the omission of information that leads to the loss of redundancy. Gottlieb (1998: 247) identified at least two types of redundancy. The first type is an excess of information created by the coexistence of the auditory and visual channels, which allow viewers to add information from other audiovisual channels to the semiotic content of the subtitles. The second type of redundancy consists of the repetitive elements that are typical of spontaneous speech mentioned above, whose omission aims to avoid potential readability problems. SDH differs from standard subtitling also because redundancy is almost non-existent in the case of deaf viewers and very limited in the case of hard of hearing viewers (Szarkowska

2013: 72). In the case of the Deaf, redundancy is more than important because redundant elements make reading less demanding. Saving time and space is useless if it means losing meaning; for instance, it would be worthwhile to sacrifice synchronisation, making subtitles appear a little earlier and disappear a little later. (Neves 2009: 160). Another possible solution could be increasing the exposure time of the subtitles on the screen, sacrificing synchronization. Editing is considered by many deaf and hard of hearing people as a form of censorship and denies full access to information (Szarkowska 2013: 72).

In the case of intralingual subtitling, where oral utterances are transcribed verbatim, reducing a text is difficult, and editing might be seen as depriving the deaf and hard of hearing of the same rights that are given to hearers. It may be easier with interlingual SDH, where a word for word translation of dialogues would be useless. In SDH, the translation from one language to another allows to make intentional changes that are necessary to give accessibility to those who cannot hear (Neves 2009: 163). As Gutt (2014: 107) writes:

Thus if we ask in what respects the intended interpretation of the translation should resemble the original, the answer is: in those respects that make it adequately relevant to the audience – that is, that offer adequate contextual effects; if we ask how should the translation be expressed, the answer is: it should be expressed in such a manner that it yields the intended interpretation with minimal effort, that is, does not require any unnecessary processing effort on the part of the audience.

3.5.4. Making sound visible and accessible

Most of the time, hearers make very little effort to process sound. Its perception is taken for granted and hearers do not need too much thinking to attribute meaning to the common sounds that characterize their daily lives. It is easy for them, for example, to understand if a sound belongs to a person (female, male, adult or child) or to an animal. Sounds can convey certain connotations, but sometimes it has no meaning at all and it is simply perceived as noise. Music has a different function in the world of hearers: it is created and used to produce a number of effects. It is often used not to convey messages, but to produce contexts, such as given emotional states. In those circumstances, music is assimilated in the form of atmosphere, and the words, the rhythm and the melody become secondary to the overall mood produced. Among these types of sounds, speech is the most

complex because it contains linguistic and paralinguistic information that hearers interrelate in their de-coding effort. Voice quality, tone, pitch and intonation convey meanings that hearers understand naturally, thanks to de-coding tools that they gain through social interaction (Neves 2005: 156-157).

Given that audiovisual texts are formal constructs that result from multiple production efforts, every element plays an important role in their make-up. As happens with most elements used in the composition of audiovisual texts, sound plays a significant part in their narrative force. In audiovisual texts sound comes in the form of speech (linguistic and paralinguistic components), natural sounds, background sound effects and/or music. Unlike speech, that requires cognitive effort to be decoded, sound effects and instrumental music convey meanings in a discreet way. (Neves 2005: 157)

In a film, image and sound convey different meanings. Watching only images would not allow us to understand the whole meaning of the action, as listening without viewing would do. When subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, both the dialogue and the sounds must be turned into written words. (Neves 2009: 157). Describing music and sounds has different effects on deaf and hard of hearing: the hard of hearing are led to direct their residual hearing towards relevant contents and they might recall previous experiences and find cultural, social and historical references in melodies and rhythms. Deaf people cannot hear, but they perceive sounds through vibrations and learn to appreciate it if accompanied by other sources (literature, television, etc.). Therefore, describing sounds allows deaf people to create their own connection and their own references (*Ibidem*: 164). In *The Cry of the Gull* (Laborit 1999: 17) a deaf person says:

I was lucky to have music when I was a child. Some parents of deaf children think it's pointless, so they deprive their children of music. [...] I love it. I feel its vibrations. [...] I feel with my feet, or my whole body if I'm stretched out on the floor. And I can imagine the sounds. I've always imagined them. I perceive music through my body, with my bare feet on the floor, latching onto the vibrations. The piano, electric guitar, African drums, percussion instruments, all have colors and I sway along with them. That's how I see it, in color. [...] Music is a rainbow of vibrant colors. It's language beyond words. It's universal. The most beautiful form of art that exists. It's capable of making the human body physically vibrate.

Music is considered to be part of the lives of many deaf people more than it is believed. Their ability to perceive the vibrations of music and therefore to pick up the sounds physically more than cognitively, should be a reason for subtitlers to pay special attention to how to convey music (Neves 2010: 124). Dr. Dean Shibata testified in University of Washington (2001) that:

Deaf people sense vibration in the part of the brain that other people use for hearing – which helps explain how deaf musicians can sense music, and how deaf people can enjoy concerts and other musical events. These findings suggest that the experience deaf people have when “feeling” music is similar to the experience other people have when hearing music. The perception of the musical vibrations by the deaf is likely every bit as real as the equivalent sounds, since they are ultimately processed in the same part of the brain.

Deaf and hard of hearing viewers should understand from SDH if a character is shouting, stuttering or murmuring, when it cannot be understood from the context of the film. Translating sound effects is one of the most challenging tasks when dealing with SDH. Sound effects can be distinguished in sounds that come from the voice of characters (cough, grunt, burp, etc.) and ambient noises (background noises like laughs, phone rings, explosions, applauses, shots, etc.). They can be represented by a label through onomatopoeia or in a caption that describes the sound (Díaz Cintas 2010: 166-167). In the case study described by Pereira (2010: 94) background sound effects were positioned, as recommended by Standard UNE 153010, in the top right-hand corner of the screen, in red letters on a white box, without brackets and in lower-case letters, with only the initial letters in upper case. In the intralingual subtitling of the film *Annie Hall*, for example, the description of sounds and speakers are placed in round brackets in italics and they appear both in conjunction with the dialogue and on their own.

Songs and music represent another challenge for subtitlers. According to Neves (2005: 158), modern audiovisual texts depend greatly on their soundtrack. Even in silent movies the explanations that were provided by commentators, piano music and later orchestral music were fundamental elements for the viewers’ experience. Today the development of technology allows sound to be easily incorporated in modern films and film producers have become aware that investing in the improvement of sound effects’ conveyance will bring profit. According to Díaz Cintas (2010: 170-171), there are songs whose lyrics are necessary to the understanding of the action or of characters’ personality, therefore they should be subtitled in the same way as dialogues. The appearance of songs can vary; in Spain, for example, songs are usually written in italics. There are other songs (in Spanish *canciones ambientales*), which are not necessary to understand the action; therefore, they can be subtitled in the same way as instrumental music, that is objectively describing the genre of music.

Translators working on SDH have a difficult task when dealing with music and sounds: they should try to produce equivalent narrative and aesthetic effects that will be meaningful to people who could have never perceived sounds. Moreover, translators will need to understand how sounds interact with the rest of cinematic codes, and convey the meaning resulting from this interaction (Neves 2010: 125). A possible approach would be a multi-sensorial solution: 4D cinema would have the means to transfer acoustic messages into multi-sensory codes to produce multiple sensations, for example through seat movement or vibration and manipulation of seat temperature. However, apart from the fact that this would be a utopian solution, it would not only be possible at the cinema, and not on DVDs or television (ivi, p. 128). While these multi-sensorial solutions are not possible, translators working on SDH should understand and take into consideration the important role played by music in films, bearing in mind the four functions that Sonnenschein (2001: 155) identifies:

- music allows viewers to enter the film and perceive the invisible and the inaudible (emotional function);
- music preserves coherence when it is played over spatially discontinued scenes (continuity);
- music provides a given point of view, orienting the audience in the setting, characters and narrative events (narrative cueing);
- music supports the narrative and helps the formal unity of the film (narrative unity).

If subtitlers keep these aspects in mind, they will probably produce good subtitles that will help deaf and hard of hearing viewers to see music and sounds. This implies the necessity for subtitlers to acquire good listening skills and music decoding knowledge, something that is not yet considered important enough in subtitler training programmes (Neves 2010: 129).

3.5.5. The use of colors

SDH is different from regular subtitling in the use of colors to differentiate characters. Major characters have usually their own color, while minor characters speak in white (Szarkowska 2013: 70). Yellow is the main color for the translation of dialogues; other

colors that are used are cyan, blue and green (Díaz Cintas 2005: 9). In BBC *Online Subtitling Editorial Guidelines* (Williams 2009: 18) a limited range of colors is suggested to distinguish speakers from each other: yellow, cyan and green, all of which should appear on a black background to ensure maximum legibility. Moreover, the use of cyan and green should be avoided if not necessary, as viewers with poor eyesight find these colors difficult to read, while green should be the least frequently used color. Once a speaker has a color, she/he should keep that color for the whole film.

3.6 False beliefs on SDH

Josélia Neves (2008: 128-143) classified ten different misconceptions about SDH that could lead to unnecessary misunderstandings and tried to solve them.

3.6.1. SDH and Closed Captions (CC) are different realities

The term “subtitling” is used as opposed to “captioning”. In the UK and in Europe, subtitles for people with hearing impairments have been called “subtitling” probably because of the teletext subtitling system that appeared on television in the 1970s or because of the subtitling tradition of translating foreign films and programmes of many European countries. In the US and in the surrounding countries, the term “closed captioning” is used. Many Americans consider captioning and subtitling as two completely different concepts: captioning is addressed to hearing impaired viewers, therefore captions transcribe speech and provide information about sound effects and music, while subtitling is addressed to hearing audiences. However, if in the definition of “captioning” given by the Captioned Media Programme (2006: 2) the words “captioning” and “captions” were substituted by “subtitling” and “subtitles”, it would be clear that the two terms share the same meaning:

Captioning [subtitling] is the process of converting the audio content of a television broadcast, webcast, film, video, CD-ROM, DVD, live event, and other productions into text which is displayed on a screen monitor. Captions [Subtitles] not only display words as the text equivalent of spoken dialogue or narration but also include speaker identification and sound effects. It is important that the captions [subtitles] be: (1) synchronized or appear at approximately the same time as the audio

is available; (2) equivalent and equal in content to that of the audio, including speaker identification and sound effects; and (3) accessible and readily available to those who need them.

However, the figure below shows some differences between SDH and CC. The main difference is in their appearance: CC are generally displayed as white text on a black background, while SDH are usually displayed with the same font and in the same position of regular subtitles for hearers (Bond 2014).

	Subtitles	SDH	Closed Captions
Synched with video	✓	✓	✓
Can be turned on/off	✓	✓	✓
In source language		✓	✓
Speaker Identification		✓	✓
Sound effects		✓	✓
Text appearance	Varies	Varies	Usually white text on black background
Onscreen placement	Centered lower bottom third	Centered lower bottom third	Varies
Encoding	Supported through HDMI (Blu-ray or HD DVD)	Supported through HDMI (Blu-ray or HD DVD)	Not supported through HDMI (Blu-ray or HD DVD)

Figure 3: The difference between SDH and Closed Captions (Bond 2014)

3.6.2. SDH viewers are part of a unique group

SDH is addressed to different types of viewers that are grouped together, even if they have distinct characteristics and needs. They are:

- deaf and hard of hearing;

- pre-lingually and post-lingually deaf and hard of hearing;
- deaf who use oral language or sign language as their mother tongue;
- deaf who feel they belong to the hearing society group and Deaf who consider themselves a linguistic minority;
- Deaf who consider the written text as a second language;
- deaf who have residual hearing/hearing memory.

Hard of hearing, deaf and Deaf viewers represent, as we have seen in 3.3, different audiences who require different subtitling solutions because they read at different speeds, they enjoy different types of subtitles and they relate to sounds and noises in different ways.

3.6.3. Is it easy to access SDH?

The aim of most European countries is to provide and increase accessibility services for viewers with hearing impairments. However, these services are probably not being used by whom need them most. Indeed, people often do not watch programmes/films with SDH because they do not know that this service is available, especially in countries where accessibility services are limited or have recently been introduced. The reason is that broadcasters do not advertise their service properly: viewers are not always reminded, through onscreen written messages, that SDH are available in the programme that they are going to watch, and programmes do not always carry a logo to remind people that those programmes are provided with subtitles. Moreover, when viewers start using new services, they need a learning period, namely they need to learn how to plug subtitles in for example, something that cannot be so easy, either because people might not know which buttons to press, or because the remote control is not user-friendly.

3.6.4. Norms regulating SDH quality are effective

In the media, standardisation is being taken very seriously, especially because of the introduction of digital technology, which allows for a greater conversion of different media. Technical standardisation is regulated by international agreements and standards which determine parameters that should be rigorously followed and directives such as the

TWFD are an explicit effort to standardize the world of the media at a European level. Standards are considered norms that should be followed to guarantee the repetition of patterns which are accepted as good practice. There are countries, such as the UK and Spain, which are very close to the 100% quantitative target. However, quantity does not necessarily mean quality and the fact that norms exist does not mean that they are respected by subtitlers or that people are satisfied with what is offered to them.

3.6.5. Special training is not necessary to deal with SDH

SDH, intralingual or interlingual, requires high technical, linguistic and translation skills. They need to consider technical constraints (such as screen space or font size and shape), textual features (genre, rhythm and style), intersemiotic transfer (speaker identification, the conveyance of sound effects and music), and the actual manipulation of written speech (linguistic and paralinguistic information). Subtitlers should know their viewers and consider them people with their own identity and with skills and needs that require specific solutions. They should also be able to convey messages going beyond ideological, linguistic, social and even individual barriers. Furthermore, subtitlers working on SDH should learn to read films and to deal with language properly. Ideally, they should have attended specialised courses after completing a university degree in Languages or Translation Studies or have at least a university degree in Languages and/or Translation and a training period with qualified professionals.

3.6.6. Verbatim subtitles guarantee equal opportunities

Deaf, and especially hard of hearing viewers, expect verbatim subtitles, in order to feel at the same level as hearers. However, not many deaf and hard of hearing viewers are able to read subtitles with high reading rates. Their average subtitling reading speeds are 150 to 180 words per minute, a number that will vary depending on the manner in which the text is presented, the quantity and complexity of the information, and to the action on the screen (De Linde 1995: 10). Verbatim subtitles could have such high reading rates that they will be difficult to follow, and viewers would not enjoy the film/programme.

3.6.7. Adaptation and editing mean reduction and omission

Many deaf and hard of hearing viewers believe that adapting and editing a text means omitting important information and consider it a form of censorship and exclusion. In fact, adaptation is making reading easier and faster, and making meaning explicit and clear. Editing includes omissions, but if the information is superfluous or obvious, it will only lengthen the reading time. Moreover, editing also includes adding missing elements to give meaning to subtitles and, when information about speaker identification, sound effects, music or paralinguistic information is added, subtitlers are giving more and not less. Neves favours the term “transadaptation” to refer to everything that constitute SDH. Not in the sense used by Gambier (2003), who refers to all types of screen translation as transadaptation. She refers to the multiple task of translating, transferring and adapting for the benefit of special audiences, in this case to satisfy the needs of people who cannot hear sound, in order to make them perceive the audiovisual text as fully as possible.

3.6.8. Only sign language interpreting (SLI) grants accessibility

SLI and SDH play quite different roles in the world of accessibility and they cannot be measured against each other. SLI plays a political and social role and holds a sense of entitlement and identity. It is rapid, easy, cheap and easier to provide than subtitling. However, it has its limits: it is not adequate for all audiovisual genres and it does not satisfy the needs of the majority. SLI is excellent for a news bulletin or a sports report, but it is inappropriate when used on a soap opera or action movie because the presence of a sign language interpreter on a screen with a given number of characters could be confusing. Moreover, SLI is useful for Deaf who use sign language as their first language, but many deaf and the hard of hearing people do not even know sign language. This is the case of elderly people for example, who acquire hearing loss with age and have always belonged to the hearing community.

Neves considers SDH a more versatile solution because it is adaptable to many circumstances, it is quite unobtrusive and it has a great number of users. SDH can help deaf people, but also hearers, to improve their linguistic and reading skills and it can be the best solution for the deaf and the hard of hearing who do not use sign language.

3.6.9. 100% subtitling is the most important goal

As UK, Spain and France do, all the other countries should also aim at 100% accessibility services. However, quantity should not be the only and ultimate goal. 100% subtitled programmes does not necessarily mean 100% accessibility because if quality standards are not met, subtitles will not be totally accessible. Quality can be measured in terms of availability, accuracy, adequacy and style and quantity loses its validity when there is no quality in this sense and when it is only measured in terms of the number of programme hours covered by accessibility services.

3.6.10. SDH will always be as it is today

SDH has become a more widespread research topic, it has finally gained visibility and respect, and providers (television, the DVD industry and others) are now starting to invest more in SDH. However, SDH could not always be as it is today, thanks to the introduction of digital media and the changing landscapes in technology. Mobile phones have the same functions as televisions, information can be reached in a multitude of ways and in this context, accessibility services will also start to take new shapes. Slogans such as “Television for All”, “Media for All” or “Audiovisual Services without Frontiers” will become meaningful and new technologies will probably allow us all to interact and to adapt media to our specific needs. All viewers will have the possibility to choose what they desire. At this point, SDH will not be the correct term anymore. Perhaps the best terminology will be simply “Subtitling”.

3.7 Case study

An SDH proposal of the video *World Champion Gymnast goes for the Gold*, available on TheEllenShow YouTube Channel, will be presented. Ellen DeGeneres Show is an American talk-show that has been broadcast since 2003 and it is hosted by the comic actress Ellen DeGeneres. The video is a 4.17 minutes interview with Simone Biles, the 2016 Olympic individual all-around American champion for gymnastics. The video was subtitled using the programme VisualSubSync. The main characteristic of the video is the

constant and natural irony in Ellen's utterances, which can be perceived also thanks to the numerous laughs and applauses of the public. A questionnaire about the video was also created, which is composed of two parts: the first (four questions) to be filled in before watching the video, while the second (five questions) after watching the video.

The video and the questionnaires were delivered to Professor Arianna Caccaro, head mistress of the ISIIS ITC Antonio Magarotto of Padua, a secondary school for deaf and hard of hearing students. Another Professor showed the video to 32 students from 14 to 18 years old.

Most of the students of the institute are prelocutive deaf and have limited reading skills and linguistic knowledge. For this reason the questionnaire includes easy and clear questions, created using simple lexicon and syntax, in order to facilitate students' reading and understanding.

3.7.1. ISIIS ITC Antonio Magarotto

ISIIS ITC A. Magarotto was the first national school for deaf people in Italy and the deaf Antonio Magarotto, who was also the founder of ENS (Italian National Agency for the Deaf), founded it in 1954, in Padua. In 1978 the school became a public school and in 2000 it became part of the ISIIS (State school for the deaf and hard of hearing) that includes ITCG A.Magarotto of Padua, IPSIA A. Magarotto of Turin and IPSIA A. Magarotto of Rome.

3.7.2. SDH proposal: technical parameters

According to the technical and linguistic parameters described in Chapter Two and Chapter Three, the following choices were made to subtitle the video:

- one-line or two-line subtitles, aligned at the bottom centre of the screen;
- different colours were used to identify the two speakers: yellow for Hellen DeGeneres and cyan for Simone Biles;
- information about sounds, noises and music are displayed in white lowercase italics, between square brackets. I chose italics because most of the times all sounds and noises comes from off-screen sources. They appear in the same

position as subtitles containing dialogues, in order to allow viewers to read them without going from one side of the screen to the other. Whenever possible, description of sounds and dialogues are not displayed in the same subtitle.

3.7.3. SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast goes for the Gold*

The English script of the video and the proposal of Italian SDH are presented in the table below, followed by comments on the translation strategies used.

ENGLISH SCRIPT	INTERLINGUAL SDH
H: With the Olympics coming up this summer, our next guest just may be America's best shot at gymnastics gold. Take a look.	1 La prossima ospite rappresenterà l'America alle Olimpiadi 2 e potrebbe vincere l'oro.
	3 [Musica brasiliiana strumentale]
	4 [Il pubblico applaude]
	5 [Musica brasiliiana strumentale]
	6 [Il pubblico applaude]
H: From Spring Jackson, please welcome 18-year-old Simone Biles!	7 Benvenuta Simone Biles! [Applausi]
H: First woman to win three consecutive World all-around titles. First African-American to be World all-round champion. Most decorated American female gymnast in World Championship history, with 14 medals, most gold medals won by a female gymnast in World Champion history within 10.	8 La prima ginnasta afroamericana con tre titoli mondiali consecutivi. 9 È la ginnasta più famosa e ha vinto ben 14 medaglie d'oro. 10 Nessuno ha vinto così tante medaglie negli ultimi dieci anni!

Table 2: proposal of SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast Goes for the Gold* (sub. 1-10)

In Table 2, the first two-liner remains on screen less than 6 seconds, followed by a one-liner (sub. 1, 2). The solution proposed was the only viable option to avoid information loss within ca. 8 seconds. However, the number of characters per line was kept below the standard maximum number. The sentence was reorganized changing information order: the subject, which in the source text is placed in the second part of the sentence, is moved to the first line of the first two-line subtitle. Moreover, the message contained in the expression “America’s best shot” was conveyed through a verb, and the meaning of possibility, conveyed by the modal verb “may”, was kept using the conditional. Gymnastics was not mentioned because a video showing a floor gymnastics exercise starts immediately after Ellen’s utterance. If it had been mentioned, redundancy would have occurred. “Take a look” was omitted for the same reason, and because of time and space constraints; furthermore, its omission did not cause information loss.

Information about music (sub. 3, 4, 5, 6) and sounds was displayed in italics and in square brackets. This format will be maintained for all the descriptions of sound effects.

In subtitle 7, a hierarchy of priority was established in order to select and give only necessary information:

1. introducing Simone;
2. describing sounds;
3. Simone’s age;
4. Simone’s town of origin.

With ca. 3 seconds available, and since deaf audiences need the description of sounds, the best solution was omitting the last two details. Moreover, Italian viewers probably do not know where Spring Jackson is, therefore this information is not relevant.

Concerning the following part, the logical thread was maintained but the sentences were restructured (sub. 8, 9, 10). The noun “African-American” was moved into the first two-liner and became the attribute of “ginnasta”. In this way, two sentences were condensed in one subtitle, saving time and space. “Decorated” was translated as “famosa” and not “decorata” because, knowing the level of language competence of the students, the first adjective is more common than the second and it did not change the meaning of the sentence. “World Championship” was mentioned only in the first subtitle because of space and time constraints and because its omission in the second and third subtitle did not cause information loss.

	11 [Il pubblico applaude]
H: Now, does that just give you so much confidence or do you think now I have to surp... ² ? How do you surpass that?	12 Tutti questi premi ti danno sicurezza o incertezze?
	13 Come fai a migliorarti?
S: Well sometimes it's a kind of... I don't really think about it just because we have to go forward and I focus on other things, but once I look back at it it's like.. It's really cool and then all the little kids that look up to me it's just an honour.	14 Non ci penso tanto perché ho così tanti obiettivi... 15 ...ma se ci ripenso è fantastico! È un onore essere ammirata dai bambini.
H: Yeah, well you are inspiring a lot of young women to do this. So how old were you when you started and how did you get started?	16 Sei un esempio per molte ragazze. Quando hai iniziato?
S: I was six years old so that's actually late for gymnastics.	17 A sei anni, ma sarebbe tardi.
H: How old are you supposed to start at? S: As soon as you can walk in Mommy and Me classes. H: Really? S: Yes.	18 Quando si dovrebbe iniziare? Appena si impara a camminare.
H: So like as soon as you walk, they just start flipping you around? S: Yeah, sometimes. Yeah, they start you on the floor rolls. H: Or throwing you in the air.. S: Yes. H: ...to see if you land on your feet? S: Yeah.	19 Iniziano subito a rovesciarti e lanciarti in aria? [Risate] 20 Sì, all'inizio sulle corsie. Per vedere se atterri in piedi?

Table 3: proposal of SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast Goes for the Gold* (sub. 11-20)

The logical thread and the interrogative structure were maintained (sub. 12, 13, 14), but the message was re-elaborated, because a faithful translation would not have been effective in conveying what Ellen means to ask, that is what emotions and fears success

² This is a false start. The verb “surpass” appears immediately after, in the second question.

can raise in a young athlete. What “that” means was specified (explication). The interjection “now” was omitted because it is not relevant, as all the other interjections and forms of padding (well, yeah, all right) in the original dialogue.

Simone’s answer (sub. 14, 15) presents expressions that appear to be false starts, but are typical of teen-speech, such as “it’s a kind of...” and “it’s like...”. They were omitted because they are empty of semantic load. The logical thread was maintained, but the message was re-elaborated: “because we have to go forward” and “I focus on other things” were condensed in “perchè ho così tanti obiettivi”, but the meaning was not lost. The first person singular replaced the first person plural because Ellen’s question is for Simone, even if she probably answers from the point of view of her team. In the second line of the second subtitle, the sentence was restructured, inverting the first and the second part of the original utterance.

The verb “are inspiring” (sub. 16) was nominalized and became “sei un’esempio”, which also includes “to do this” (young gymnasts want to become like Simone). Ellen’s second question “how did you get started?” was omitted because Simone will only answer to the “when” question and because the subtitle would have been too long. In Simone’s answer, (sub. 17) “gymnastics” was omitted because it is implicit.

In the following question (sub. 18), the generic “you” is conveyed using an impersonal form in Italian. “Mommy and Me classes” are classes in which mothers can play and move with their babies doing a lot of activities such as swimming, dancing, art, music, etc. It was omitted because in Italy this type of classes does not exist, and there are no time and space to explain what it is. “Really?” and “Yes” were omitted because they do not give new information, but are only a confirmation of what had just been said.

In the last part (sub. 19, 20), Simone and Ellen have a crosstalk, in which overlapping occurs. It was not maintained in the subtitles, because it could be confusing for the viewers. The crosstalk was restructured: the first two-liner contains the first question and part of the second question of the original dialogue, while the second two-liner contains Simone’s answer and Ellen’s ironic question. “So like as soon as you walk” was omitted because it is a repetition of what had just been said and therefore constitutes redundant information. “Flipping you around” is also conveyed through Ellen’s hand movement. The public, whose reaction confirms Ellen’s irony, laughs in two moments,

but the second time, after Ellen's second question, it can be clearly seen in the video and therefore it is not specified in subtitles.

H: So I want to show...I haven't even seen this. Well, first of all how often do you train? How hard do you train?	21 Prima di mostrare un video, vorrei sapere quanto ti allenai.
S: I train 32 hours a week, six days a week and we only get Sundays off.	22 32 ore alla settimana e ho solo la domenica libera.
H: Okay, so this is you at the beach just pulling yourself up, I heard about this. I haven't seen it. This is without legs. This is just your arms' strength.	23 Nel video sali sulla fune. Avevo sentito di questo esercizio. 24 Usi solo la forze delle braccia. [Il pubblico è stupito]
H: I mean, I could probably do that but I think that, that's...	25 Sicuramente ce la faccio anch'io... [Risate]
H: Wow! And is that easy for you to do? S: Yes. H: Or is it challenging at all? S: No, it's very easy because I do one rope a day like that, so..	26 WOW! 27 È facile o difficile per te? Facile, lo faccio tutti i giorni.
H: Everyday you.. S: Yes. H: ...climb a rope like that with just your arms? S: Yes.	28 Ogni giorno? Solo con le braccia? Sì.
H: Wow, that is really impressive!	29 WOW! Impressionante!

Table 4: proposal of SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast Goes for the Gold* (sub. 21-29)

In the first subtitle (sub. 21), what Ellen is going to show was specified (explication) in order to anticipate what is going to happen. Moreover, a faithful translation would have produced a meaningless sentence. The following two direct questions were condensed in one indirect question. The Italian “quanto” refers to the training both in terms of number of hours/days per week and in terms of dedication. In Simone's answer (sub. 22), a selection between “32 hours” and “six days” was made, because their meaning is equivalent (Simone's training is intensive). The first option was

chosen because viewers can understand that she trains six days a week from the following coordinated sentence. “I train” was omitted in order to save space.

The video was mentioned (sub. 23) because Ellen starts speaking some seconds before it is shown, therefore it would not be clear what she is looking at. “At the beach” was omitted because viewers can see where Simone is in the video (redundancy), therefore the subtitle is completed by the image on screen. The word “esercizio” was added because this type of exercise is a routine exercise during gymnastics trainings. “I haven’t seen it” was omitted: the fact that Ellen had heard about this exercise involves that she had not seen it, therefore the omission did not cause information loss. Moreover, the information is irrelevant for viewers. The reference to legs was omitted (sub. 24) because it did not cause information loss, as viewers can see how the exercise is done on screen (redundancy). Moreover, space was necessary to display the description of public’s reaction.

In the following subtitle (sub. 25), conveying Ellen’s irony constitutes the priority: the translation is adapted in order to convey the same irony in Italian. “Could probably” was replaced by the adverb “sicuramente”, but the triple dots were maintained. Irony is also highlighted by the public’s laughs.

“WOW” was isolated and synchronized with Ellen’s voice (sub. 26) in order to highlight her amazement and because enough time was available to do it without scarifying other information. Ellen’s first and second question were condensed in one question, followed by simone’s answer, in which the word “very” was not translated because the second line (sub. 27) would have exceeded the standard maximum number of characters. Ellen’s following question (sub. 28) are repetitions of information that had already been given. However, they were maintained in order to convey Ellen’s amazement. For the same reason, the following “WOW” was kept, even if it is an exclamation, and exclamations can be omitted in subtitles. Moreover, deaf viewers cannot hear it. “That is really impressive” was reduced to one word, that is the adjective “impressionante”, because it is obvious that they still refer to the gymnastics exercise.

H: You have a crush on someone I heard. S: I do.	30 So che ti piace un ragazzo. Sì.
H: And he is one of my favourite people too. Who is it? S: ZacEfron! H: Yeah.	31 Piace molto anche a me. Chi è? Zac Efron! [Risate]
H: He is so ³ .. first of all you have a crush on a really good guy. He's a sweet guy and he's.. is it just because he's gorgeous, is that why you like him? S: Yes. H: Yeah.	32 Prima di tutto è davvero dolce e carino. 33 Ti piace solo perché è molto bello? 34 Sì.
	35 [Il pubblico ride e applaude]
H: Well, he also happens to be sweet. S: Yes. H: And he's in great shape too. S: Yes. H: He probably could climb up a rope like that with you. S: Yes.	36 È dolce e anche in forma! Forse anche lui riesce a salire la fune!
H: Well, he doesn't know that you have a crush on him, but I want you to get his attention. S: Ok.	37 Lui non sa di piacerti, ma vorrei che attirassi la sua attenzione.
H: So I got you something to wear at the Olympics. S: Oh my God! S: Thank you! I love it!	38 Potresti mettere questo alle Olimpiadi. Oh mio Dio! [Il pubblico ride] 39 Grazie! Lo adoro! [Risate e applausi]

Table 5: proposal of SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast Goes for the Gold* (sub. 30-39)

In the first subtitle (sub. 30) Ellen's utterance was restructured, inverting the main sentence and the subordinated sentence. The verb "hear" was replaced by "know" in Italian because it did not cause meaning loss and it occupies less space in terms of number of characters. "You have a crush on" and "he is one of my favourite people too" (sub. 30,

³ False start.

31) were translated using the verb “piacere” in order to save characters without meaning and information loss. Ellen’s following utterance (sub. 32) was restructured: the false start was omitted, and the two sentences were joined and condensed in a single one-liner. It exceeds the standard maximum number of characters, but it remains on screen for ca. 5 seconds. Ellen’s question is also restructured (sub. 33): the second part of the English question became the first part of the Italian question. Simone’s “yes” was emphasized, synchronizing it with the exact moment in which she pronounces it, because she also nods her head visibly.

Ellen’s following utterances were joined in one sentence, which constitutes the first line of the subtitle (sub. 36). In the following line, the adverb “forse” conveys possibility, keeping the function of the modal and the adverb in the corresponding English utterance. “With you” was omitted because the second line already exceeded the maximum number of characters. However, the two-liner remains on screen for ca. 7 seconds. All Simone’s “yes” were omitted because viewers can see her head nodding.

In subtitle 37, the indicative tense of the original utterance was substituted by a conditional structure because this type of structure is more frequent in Italian. The structure of Ellen’s utterance was completely changed: the subject became Simone and the indicative tense was substituted by a conditional, which better conveys Ellen’s irony. Moreover, a faithful translation would have exceed the standard maximum number of characters. The resulting sentence is shorter and simpler, but the restructuring did not cause meaning loss. The viewers’ and public’s laughs are caused by the leotard that Ellen shows. As in the rest of the video, the interaction between dialogue and images plays an important role. Indeed, in most cases, information contained in the dialogue is completed by the action on screen, making easier to reduce the text in the subtitles or to omit information without causing meaning loss.

H: Alright, alright, maybe he'll notice, I don't know. S: Yes, hopefully. H: Maybe he'll get in touch with you. He has a girlfriend, but you'll never know. S: Yeah, she's a gymnast, too, so she used to be a gymnast, too, so maybe I have a chance. H: Really? S: Yes. H: So, you know a lot about him. Yeah.	40 Magari lo noterà e ti contatterà! Speriamo! 41 Ha la ragazza, ma non si sa mai. [Risate] Anche lei è una ginnasta, 42 quindi forse ho una possibilità. Sai molto di lui. [Risate]
H: We really have to go on now. S: Okay, thank you. H: Can't wait alright.	43 Ora dobbiamo andare. Ok, grazie!
	44 [Musica suspense strumentale]
	45 [Applausi del pubblico]
	46 [Musica suspense strumentale]
	47 [Applausi del pubblico]
H: Amazing, good luck!	48 Fantastico! Buona fortuna!

Table 6: proposal of SDH of the video *World Champion Gymnast Goes for the Gold* (sub. 40-48)

In the first subtitle, Ellen's two utterances were condensed in one sentence that consists of a main clause and a coordinated clause (sub. 40). "I don't know" was omitted because its meaning of possibility is already conveyed through the adverb "maybe". "So she used to be a gymnast too" was omitted because it is not important if Zac Efron's girlfriend was or still is a gymnast. What Simone's wants to highlight is the fact that they have something in common.

In subtitle 43, "Can't wait, alright" was omitted because it is not relevant to viewers and its omission did not cause information loss. The last words pronounced by Ellen (sub.48) can be heard when information about Ellen's YouTube Channel appears on

screen. If the subtitle had been displayed when Ellen appears on screen after Simone's performance, it would have been ambiguous because Ellen does not speak in that moment. Therefore, the only viable solution was to leave it synchronized with the original voice using italics, as Ellen's voice is off-screen. The colour (yellow) allows viewers to understand who is speaking.

3.7.4. The questionnaire

Below, the English and the Italian versions of the questionnaire.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENTS OF IISIIS ITC ANTONIO MAGAROTTO (PD)		
<i>BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO</i>		
1. Do you often watch subtitled films/programmes?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	
2. <u>If so</u> , how many hours per week?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour <input type="checkbox"/> from 1 to 2 hours <input type="checkbox"/> more than 2 hours	
3. Do you easily find films/programmes with SDH?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
4. Do you need the help of a hearing person when you watch subtitled films/programmes?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> it depends on the programme	
<i>AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO</i>		
1. Were you able to read the subtitles in full?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	
2. Did the position of the subtitles on the screen make it easier for you to read them?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes	
3. Did the subtitles give you enough information about sounds and noises?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> only in part	
4. How did you find the words used?	<input type="checkbox"/> simple <input type="checkbox"/> quite simple <input type="checkbox"/> difficult	
5. Do you think that the subtitles helped you to better understand the video in general?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> only in part	

Figure 4: English version of the questionnaire

QUESTIONARIO PER GLI STUDENTI DELL' ISISS ITC ANTONIO MAGAROTTO (PD)

PRIMA DI GUARDARE IL VIDEO

5. Guardi spesso film/programmi sottotitolati?

- sì no ogni tanto

6. Se sì, quante ore a settimana?

- 1 ora da 1 a 2 ore più di 2 ore

7. Trovi facilmente film/programmi con sottotitoli per persone sordi?

- sì no

8. Hai bisogno dell'aiuto di una persona udente quando guardi film/programmi sottotitolati?

- sì no dipende dal programma

DOPO AVER GUARDATO IL VIDEO

6. Sei riuscito/a a leggere i sottotitoli per intero?

- sì no a volte

7. La posizione dei sottotitoli sullo schermo ti ha aiutato a leggerli meglio?

- sì no abbastanza

8. I sottotitoli ti hanno dato informazioni sufficienti su rumori e suoni?

- sì no solo in parte

9. Come hai trovato le parole utilizzate?

- facili abbastanza facili difficili

10. Pensi che i sottotitoli ti abbiano aiutato a capire meglio il video in generale?

- sì no solo in parte

Figure 5: Italian version of the questionnaire

3.7.5. Results

The questionnaires were anonymous but the students were asked to indicate if they are prelocutive/postlocutive deaf/hard of hearing. As we have seen in 3.7, the questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first one about the students' habits concerning SDH and the second one about the readability of subtitles in my SDH proposal.

The questionnaires were filled in by 32 students of the Institute, of which:

- one student did not give information about his/her deafness;
- 18 students are prelocutive deaf (deaf from birth);
- 7 students became deaf after birth
 - one student in 2015;
 - one student at the age of two;
 - one student at the age of four;
 - two students at the age of one;
 - one student at the age of eight;
 - one student at the age of ten;
- two students are hard of hearing from birth;
- two students are hard of hearing (they did not specify if from/after birth);
- one student is hard of hearing from the age of one;
- one student is hearing.

The Italian terms used by the students to indicate their level of deafness was “sordo” and not “non udente”, because some of them find it offensive. The Italian word for “hard of hearing” that they used is “sordastro”.

3.7.5.1. Results of the first part of the questionnaire

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS		
1	Do you often watch subtitled films/programmes)?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>sometimes</i>
		29	1	2
2	<u>If so</u> , how many hours per week?	<i>1 hour</i>	<i>from 1 to 2 hours</i>	<i>more than 2 hours</i>
		2	5	24
3	Do you easily find films/programmes with SDH?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>film yes/other no</i>
		9	14	9
4	Do you need the help of a hearing person when you watch subtitled films/programmes?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>it depends on the programme</i>
		4	14	9
			<i>yes (film)</i>	<i>no (film)</i>
			4	1

Table 2: Answers to the first part of the questionnaire

3.7.5.2. Results of the second part of the questionnaire

	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS			
1	Were you able to read the subtitles in full?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>no answer</i>
		25	0	6	1
2	Did the position of the subtitles on screen make it easier for you to read them?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	
		30	1	1	
3	Did the subtitles give you enough information about sounds and noises?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>only in part</i>	
		28	1	3	
4	How did you find the words used?	<i>simple</i>	<i>quite simple</i>	<i>difficult</i>	
		15	17	0	
5	Do you think that the subtitles helped you to better understand the video in general?	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>only in part</i>	<i>little</i>
		27	2	2	1

Table 3: Answers to the second part of the questionnaire

Some students added other answers to the questions of the questionnaire, which are included in the gathering of results. The additional answers are those in the coloured boxes.

3.7.5.3. Graphical representation of the results

Part one

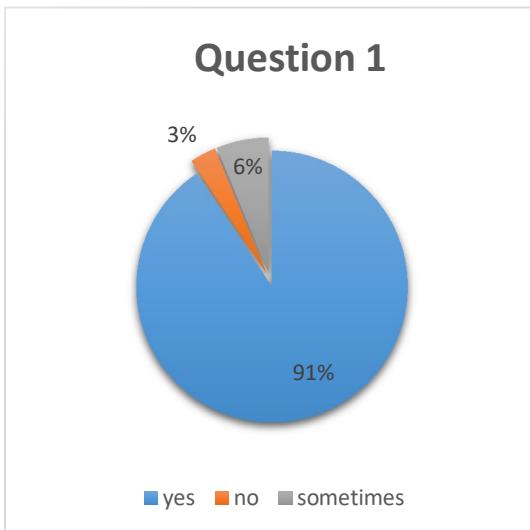


Figure 6: Answer to Q1/Part1

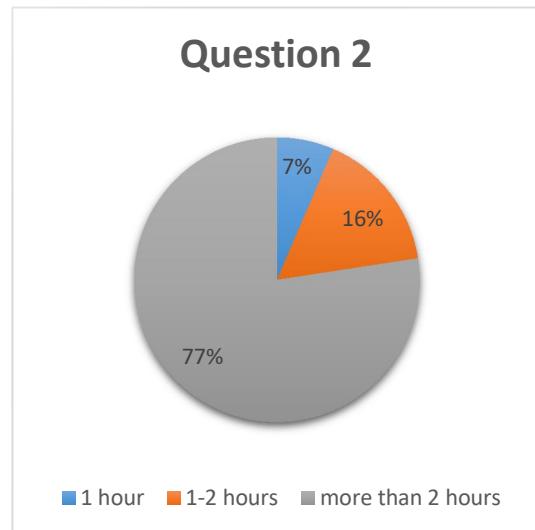


Figure 7: Answer to Q2/Part1

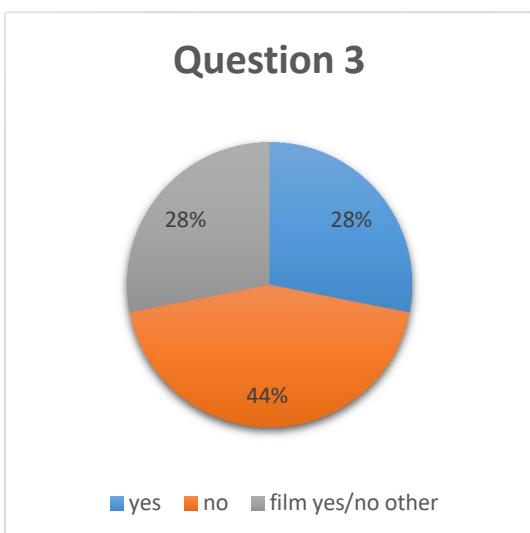


Figure 8: Answer to Q3/Part1

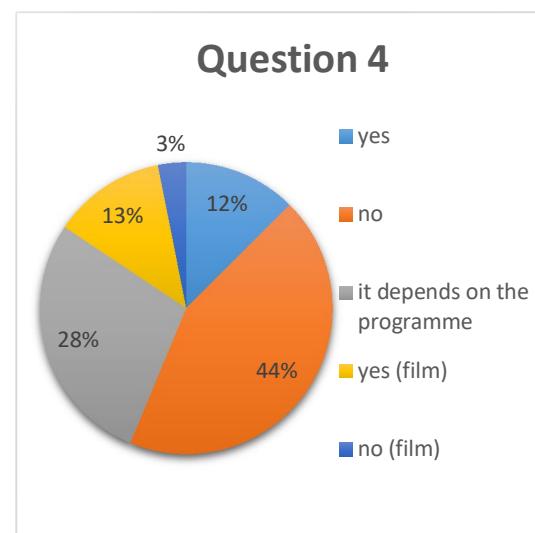


Figure 9: Answer to Q4/Part1

The majority of the students watches subtitled films/programmes for more than two hours per week. However, almost half of them does not easily find films/programmes provided with SDH and more than a quarter of them specified that it is easier to find films with SDH than programmes. 44% of students does not need the help of a hearing person while watching subtitled films/programmes, while only 12% needs help. 28% of them says that it depends on the programme.

Part two

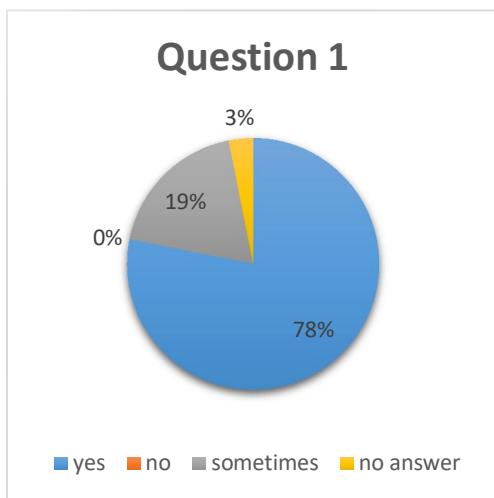


Figure 10: Answer to Q1/Part2

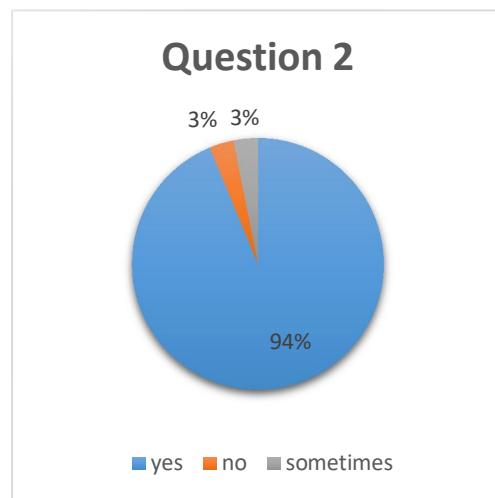


Figure 11: Answer to Q2/Part2

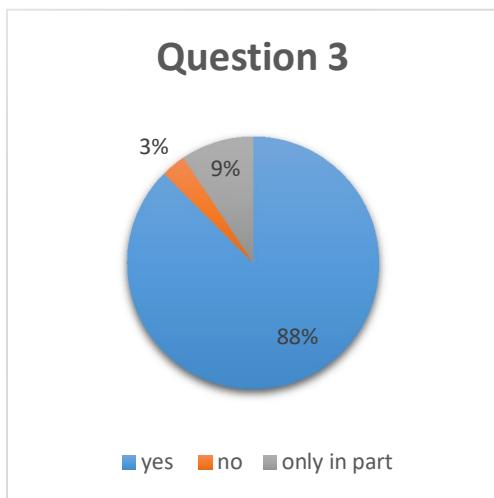


Figure 12: Answer to Q3/Part2

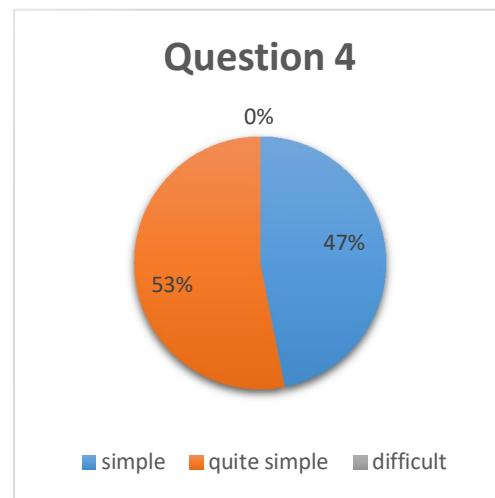


Figure 13: Answer to Q4/Part2

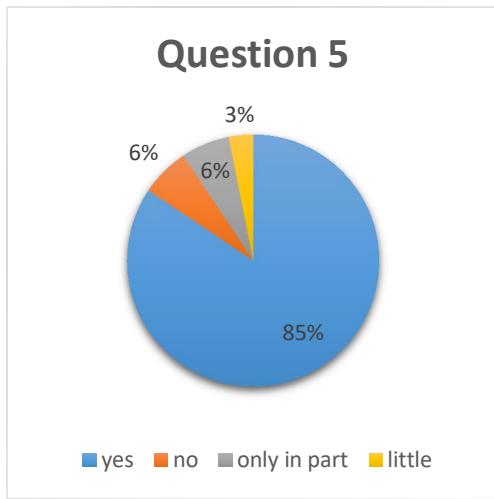


Figure 14: Answer to Q5/Part2

All the students, except for one of them who did not answer, were able to read the subtitles, 78% completely and 19% partially. Their position on the screen helped 94% of the students to read the subtitles (only two of them answered “no” and “sufficiently” respectively). Most of the students were satisfied with the provision of information about acoustic messages and only some of them (12%) were not. The subtitles with descriptions of sounds were placed in the same position of the subtitles containing dialogues and in many cases they were included in them. They could have been moved to the top right-hand corner of the screen but this has not been done for two reasons. The first is that the reading would have been more demanding for the students, who would have had to move their eyes from one side of the screen to the other. Moreover, in many cases the descriptions of sounds would have appeared at the same time as the other subtitles, but in a different position, distracting the students. The position was probably good, but in most cases it did not allow to dedicate enough space to the information about sounds.

More than half of the students found the lexicon quite simple, while the rest of them found it simple. Taking into account their reading skills and linguistic knowledge, simple but effective solutions to expressions like “America’s best shot at gymnastics gold”, “have a crush on”, “how do you surpass that” or “we have to go forward” (see n. 1, 13, 14, 30 in Figure 3) were found. Moreover, I parts in which there were superimposed cross talks (see n. 19, 20, 28 in Figure 3) were reorganized and hesitations, false starts and repetition were omitted when not necessary (see n. 12, 14, 16, 18, 36, 37, 40 in Figure 3).

The subtitles helped most of the students to understand the general meaning of the video. Only two of them answered “no” to the last question and other two were helped only in part by the subtitles. One student added the answer “little”.

3.8 Conclusion

SDH is certainly a type of subtitling that is gaining importance but we can say that there are two main issues that need to be taken into consideration more seriously. First of all, more attention should be paid to the characteristics and needs of the different audiences that are considered to constitute a unique group, that is the deaf, the Deaf and the hard of hearing. In each of these subgroups, there are differences in the level of deafness of each person. The other issue to deal with is the fact that countries should aim

more for quality, in addition to quantity: if a country reaches 100% of subtitling, but the subtitles are poor in quality, they will not satisfy audiences and they will be useless.

In conclusion, target audiences should be considered when dealing with SDH. If their needs are understood and the importance of the issue is recognized, the quality of subtitles will also improve. SDH should not be created only because legislation impose it, but to help the hearing impaired, a group of people that has the same rights as hearing people.

Conclusion

Hearing-impaired people constitute a large part of society and they need to be granted the same rights as hearing people. With the progress of technology, media are becoming an essential part of people's daily life because nowadays all information is accessible through media. They are useful - if not necessary - in the educational, working and social environment and for this reason it is essential that all people have the same opportunity to access them. For a long time, hearing-impaired people, and in general disabled people, have not enjoyed adequate access to multimedia products. However, nowadays the situation seems to be improving.

The aim of the case study presented in the third chapter of this dissertation is to highlight the importance of putting audiences' needs in the foreground when translating audiovisual products for impaired viewers, in this case hearing impaired viewers. In subtitling the video, the starting point was not the list of technical norms and parameters, but the question "Who will be the viewers of the video?" Once the target viewers were identified, their age, their degree of deafness and their oral and reading skills were investigated, and the subtitling constraints were adapted to the characteristics of the students. The positive outcome of the questionnaire led to the following conclusions:

- investigating audience's needs and characteristics is the main, if not the only, way to create satisfying SDH; it should be considered as the first step in the subtitling process;
- hearing impaired people constitute a group, but this group includes different subgroups with their own characteristics and needs;
- the norms and parameters to follow when dealing with SDH are not laws, but good practice. Therefore they are not compulsory, but they can be adapted to each different context;
- the main target of a country should not be the quantity of SDH offered, but its quality.

The ideal solution would be, as stated in the introduction, creating different types of SDH depending on the different characteristics of each deaf audience. However, as long as this possibility does not exist, subtitlers should investigate in depth hearing impaired audience and try to improve those aspects that are considered unsatisfying or

lacking. In this way, SDH will satisfy the requirements of those hearing impaired people who have limited linguistic and reading skills, also helping the remaining part of the group.

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Riassunto

Sottotitoli interlinguistici per giovani sordi e sordastri: studio di caso

Il sottotitolaggio per non udenti è una variante del sottotitolaggio tradizionale, e si è diffuso negli anni '70 in Inghilterra, e più tardi negli altri paesi europei. La diffusione di questo tipo di sottotitoli è stata accompagnata dall'approvazione di numerose leggi sull'accessibilità dei prodotti audiovisivi, con lo scopo di dare al pubblico non udente le stesse opportunità del pubblico udente. Tuttavia, l'aumento della percentuale di prodotti audiovisivi sottotitolati per non udenti non è sufficiente a garantire questo tipo di diritto, in quanto in molti casi i sottotitoli sono di scarsa qualità e non soddisfano il pubblico. Non è sufficiente attenersi solamente ai parametri tecnici che differenziano questo tipo di sottotitoli da quelli tradizionali, ma le caratteristiche del pubblico affetto da disabilità uditiva dovrebbero essere studiate più profondamente, tenendo in considerazione anche le diversità all'interno di questo gruppo, che comportano necessità differenti.

Questa tesi è suddivisa in tre capitoli: nel primo verrà data una definizione di Traduzione Audiovisiva, analizzata insieme ai concetti di ricezione e accessibilità; il secondo capitolo si soffermerà sul sottotitolaggio, indicando la suddivisione in tipologie di sottotitoli e i parametri tecnici e linguistici da rispettare durante il loro processo di creazione, insieme ai vincoli che il traduttore deve considerare durante tale processo. Il terzo capitolo tratterà nello specifico i sottotitoli per non udenti, di cui verranno descritte le caratteristiche e le differenze rispetto a quelli per udenti. Nella seconda parte invece verrà presentato uno studio di caso, realizzato in collaborazione con la scuola per sordi ISISS ITC A. Magarotto di Padova.

“Traduzione Audiovisiva” è un termine che si riferisce al trasferimento linguistico delle componenti verbali presenti nei prodotti audiovisivi, quali film, programmi, pagine web e video game, ma anche opere teatrali e trasmissioni radio. Il termine comprende tutti tipi di traduzione nell'ambito mediatico, al contrario di termini utilizzati in passato come “Screen Translation”, che escludeva le traduzioni per il teatro e per la radio, e “Traduzione Multimediale”, che sembrava essere riferita solo ad Internet.

Tradurre un prodotto audiovisivo significa trasmettere le componenti verbali e non verbali sia visivamente che acusticamente in base alla modalità di trasposizione audiovisiva, processo molto più complesso rispetto alla traduzione di un testo scritto, che ha il solo scopo di essere letto. Quindi il prodotto audiovisivo si manifesta contemporaneamente su livelli diversi, quello visivo e quello acustico, i quali comprendono sia elementi verbali che non verbali, quindi compito del traduttore è trovare il giusto equilibrio tra ciò che si vede e ciò che si sente, evitando che il codice visivo prevalga sul codice acustico o viceversa.

Gli intertitoli nei film muti (brevi didascalie descrittive o che riportavano brevi tratti di dialogo) possono essere considerati la prima forma di traduzione audiovisiva intersemiotica (cioè una trasposizione dalla modalità orale a quella scritta) prima della comparsa dei film sonori negli anni '20. Successivamente si fece sentire la necessità di tradurre i film in altre lingue e renderli accessibili a tutti. La rapida diffusione di testi audiovisivi verso la fine del ventesimo secolo ha comportato anche la diffusione di diverse modalità di Traduzione Audiovisiva. Oltre al doppiaggio e al sottotitolaggio, troviamo anche il sottotitolaggio per persone sordi, il voice-over (narrazione fuoricampo), l'audiodescrizione per non vedenti, il live subtitling (sottotitolaggio in tempo reale) e i soprattitoli per il teatro.

Oggi la Traduzione Audiovisiva è un settore in evoluzione nell'ambito della Scienza della Traduzione. La ricerca nell'ambito audiovisivo è iniziata nel 1932, ma fino agli anni '80 la materia ha fatto parte delle discipline dello spettacolo. Solo da quel momento la Traduzione Audiovisiva ha iniziato ad essere considerata una disciplina appartenente alla Scienza della Traduzione e negli anni '90 ci fu un vero e proprio aumento della ricerca e del numero di pubblicazioni a riguardo.

Negli anni il prodotto audiovisivo ha iniziato ad essere considerato come un insieme di codici con diverse funzioni, la cui unione costituisce un'unica struttura, di cui il pubblico deve capire il significato. I codici che coesistono nel prodotto audiovisivo sono il codice linguistico, i codici paralinguistici, la musica e gli effetti sonori, i codici grafici (sottotitoli, intertitoli), iconografici (immagini) e fotografici (colori, luci). Ognuno di questi può veicolare significati differenti a seconda della cultura di un certo paese, quindi sarà compito del traduttore trasmetterli in modo efficace e riuscirà a farlo solo se capirà come interagiscono tra loro.

Un elemento che ha acquisito maggiore importanza rispetto al passato nell’ambito della Traduzione Audiovisiva è il pubblico, più precisamente il modo in cui il pubblico percepisce il prodotto audiovisivo. Il pubblico può essere costituito da bambini, persone anziane, sordi, cieche o affette da altre disabilità, così come da stranieri, immigrati o soggetti con un basso grado di istruzione; ognuno di questi gruppi avrà bisogno di un prodotto audiovisivo diverso, che risponda alle loro caratteristiche e ai loro bisogni. Per ottenere risultati sempre migliori è necessario quindi investigare la ricezione del pubblico attraverso sondaggi, questionari e interviste.

Un’altra nozione che negli ultimi decenni ha acquisito maggiore visibilità è il concetto di accessibilità. Il termine tende ad essere riferito in particolare a persone con disabilità, quindi includerebbe il linguaggio dei segni, i sottotitoli per non udenti e l’audiodescrizione per non vedenti. Tuttavia, questa nozione non può riguardare solo le persone disabili, poiché sarebbe un approccio restrittivo. Nel contesto mediatico un prodotto audiovisivo accessibile è un prodotto disponibile a tutti, indipendentemente dal luogo in cui si vive, dalla presenza o assenza di disabilità o dalle capacità fisiche e cognitive. È un concetto che riguarda l’efficacia del prodotto audiovisivo sul pubblico. Anche se ultimamente i concetti di pubblico e accessibilità stanno guadagnando importanza, non ci sono ancora molti studi sulla ricezione, quindi per i traduttori e per i produttori non è facile studiare e individuare le necessità di ogni gruppo di spettatori e creare quindi un prodotto audiovisivo totalmente accessibile. Il concetto di accessibilità è legato a quello di inclusione, che si identifica nel bisogno di coinvolgere il maggior numero possibile di persone nella fruizione dei media, con lo scopo di facilitare l’interazione tra i cittadini di una stessa comunità.

Per quanto riguarda la legislazione che regola l’accessibilità dei prodotti audiovisivi in Europa, negli ultimi decenni è stata riconosciuta l’importanza della questione, e sono state adottate delle normative al fine di garantire a tutti i cittadini lo stesso accesso alle informazioni diffuse dai media. Tra esse, la “*Audiovisual Media Services Directive*” del 2005, il primo documento formale europeo sul tema dell’accessibilità. Tra le più recenti, la “*European Disability Strategy*”, presentata dalla Commissione Europea nel 2010, in cui sono esposte una serie di iniziative da sviluppare entro il 2020 al fine di promuovere la partecipazione delle persone disabili nella società per mezzo di ulteriori leggi europee sull’accessibilità.

Il sottotitolaggio è una modalità di Traduzione Audiovisiva che consiste nel presentare, generalmente sulla parte inferiore dello schermo della televisione, del cinema o del computer, il dialogo del film/programma sotto forma di testo scritto e le informazioni relative a effetti sonori e altri elementi paralinguistici. Il testo orale e il testo scritto vengono quindi ricevuti dallo spettatore simultaneamente. In Europa, il primo film sottotitolato fu *The Jazz Singer*, uscito nel gennaio del 1929 a Parigi, con sottotitoli in francese.

I paesi europei hanno da sempre manifestato preferenze diverse nei confronti del sottotitolaggio e del doppiaggio, modalità che presentano vantaggi e svantaggi. Per quanto riguarda il sottotitolaggio, i limiti che presenta possono essere riassunti come segue: si presenta una potenziale perdita di informazioni dovuta alla riduzione del testo originale, necessaria al fine di rispettare i vincoli di spazio e tempo imposti dai sottotitoli; come abbiamo già visto, ci sono diversi gruppi di spettatori con bisogni e caratteristiche differenti, tra cui la velocità di lettura; durante il processo di traduzione si verifica un passaggio dalla forma orale a quella scritta, con una conseguente difficoltà nel mantenere e trasmettere determinati tratti tipici della lingua orale; infine, lo spettatore deve costantemente spostare lo sguardo dall'azione sullo schermo ai sottotitoli e viceversa. Durante il processo di doppiaggio, invece, si accusa una perdita di autenticità del dialogo originale, in quanto le voci degli attori vengono sostituite da altre; inoltre il processo richiede molto tempo ed è molto costoso, in quanto in alcuni paesi i "voice talents" vengono considerati al pari degli attori e quindi pagati altrettanto. Sembra che Germania, Spagna, Francia e Italia siano i paesi che da sempre preferiscono il doppiaggio. Oggi però le tendenze stanno cambiando, e anche i paesi che tradizionalmente sceglievano il doppiaggio, stanno iniziando a preferire il sottotitolaggio. Altro motivo di questo cambiamento, oltre al fattore economico, è la tendenza del pubblico a preferire un contesto scritto, in quanto la nuova generazione è ormai esperta nell'utilizzo di sms e chat.

Esistono diversi parametri su cui basarsi nel classificare le tipologie di sottotitoli. La più diffusa si basa sulla dimensione linguistica e li distingue in:

- sottotitoli intralinguistici, in cui si verifica il passaggio da codice orale a codice scritto, ma la lingua di partenza e di arrivo è la stessa;

- sottotitoli interlinguistici, in cui si verifica il processo di traduzione vero e proprio, in quanto c'è il passaggio da una lingua ad un'altra;
- sottotitoli bilingui, di solito diffusi in paesi in cui vengono parlate due lingue, come il Belgio o la Finlandia.

Il processo di sottotitolaggio è soggetto a vincoli di tempo e di spazio, infatti i sottotitoli possono occupare uno spazio limitato e rimanere sullo schermo per un tempo breve. Di solito compaiono sullo schermo disposti su una o due righe, ma si possono vedere anche sottotitoli di tre o quattro righe, anche se raramente. La posizione standard è orizzontale, sulla parte inferiore centrale dello schermo: in questo modo l'azione del film non viene nascosta, lo spettatore saprà sempre dove compaiono i sottotitoli e non dovrà spostare lo sguardo da una parte all'altra dello schermo. In alcune lingue, come il cinese o il giapponese, si utilizza la scrittura verticale, quindi in questi casi i sottotitoli possono essere disposti verticalmente su un lato dello schermo. Esistono alcuni casi in cui i sottotitoli possono essere spostati dalla posizione standard, per esempio quando lo sfondo è troppo chiaro o quando in quel punto dello schermo si sta sviluppando un momento di azione importante. Nel caso di interviste e documentari, invece, le informazioni relative ai personaggi di solito compaiono sulla parte superiore dello schermo. In genere il numero massimo di caratteri per riga è 35-37 nei sottotitoli per la televisione, mentre in quelli per il cinema e i DVD si arriva anche a 40 caratteri. In realtà la regola non è fissa, e il numero di caratteri varia a seconda del paese, del pubblico a cui il prodotto audiovisivo è rivolto o del software utilizzato per creare i sottotitoli. Si può affermare che in genere si evitano sottotitoli troppo lunghi, per lasciare più spazio all'azione sullo schermo e facilitare la lettura agli spettatori.

Per quanto riguarda i vincoli di tempo, è molto importante che i sottotitoli non rimangano sullo schermo per troppo o troppo poco tempo. È stato dimostrato che se il tempo di esposizione è troppo lungo, lo spettatore involontariamente rileggerà il sottotitolo, se invece è troppo breve, non riuscirà a finire di leggerlo (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007:89) in entrambi i casi si sentirà irritato e a disagio. L'ideale sarebbe mantenere la sincronizzazione con il dialogo originale, quindi i sottotitoli dovrebbero comparire quando l'attore inizia a parlare e scomparire quando smette. Tuttavia questo non è sempre possibile. Nel decidere il tempo di esposizione di ogni sottotitolo, in passato il sottotitolatore si atteneva alla “regola dei sei secondi”. La regola era basata su degli

studi secondo i quali un sottotitolo di due righe con 35 caratteri ciascuna riusciva ad essere letto in sei secondi. Oggi però lo spettatore sembra essere diventato un lettore più veloce, ed è comune lasciare esposto lo stesso sottotitolo di due righe per un massimo di cinque secondi (Díaz-Cintas 2010: 345). Inoltre, è importante considerare il pubblico a cui il prodotto audiovisivo è rivolto: se si tratta di bambini, per esempio, il tempo di esposizione sarà più lungo, perché leggono più lentamente di un adulto.

I sottotitoli per udenti di solito sono bianchi, ma a volte viene utilizzato anche il giallo. Una volta deciso il colore, esso deve essere mantenuto per tutto il film/programma. Per quanto riguarda la punteggiatura, invece, ci sono alcune regole da seguire, che spesso coincidono con le regole di punteggiatura tradizionali. La virgola, per esempio, non deve mai essere inserita alla fine di un sottotitolo, perché lo spettatore potrebbe confonderla con un punto, e pensare che con il sottotitolo seguente comincerà una nuova frase. I due punti, come nella grammatica tradizionale, vengono inseriti prima di una lista o di una spiegazione, mentre il punto e virgola in genere viene evitato, in quanto può essere confuso con i due punti. Si evita anche l'utilizzo delle parentesi, cercando di sostituirle con altri segni di punteggiatura. Le parentesi quadre di solito vengono utilizzate nei sottotitoli per sordi per indicare la presenza di effetti sonori e musica.

Il processo di sottotitolaggio è soggetto anche a vincoli linguistici. Il testo originale infatti, per rispettare i vincoli di spazio e tempo, deve essere modificato e adattato. Le due principali tecniche impiegate sono la riduzione e l'omissione. Prima di tutto il sottotitolatore deve individuare gli elementi indispensabili e quelli superflui in base al principio della rilevanza. Generalmente, elementi quali ripetizioni, appellativi, false partenze ed esitazioni vengono omessi, in quanto non necessari alla comprensione del dialogo o riconoscibili dall'azione sullo schermo. Se tali elementi venissero mantenuti, avremmo casi di ridondanza, concetto molto discusso nel contesto della traduzione audiovisiva. Le tecniche di riduzione e omissione devono essere applicate facendo attenzione a mantenere coerenza e coesione all'interno del testo. Il sottotitolo deve costituire un'unità semanticamente e sintatticamente corretta, priva di elementi ambigui. Al fine di garantire questa unità, nella segmentazione del testo devono essere seguite determinate regole sintattiche.

I sottotitoli per sordi nascono come variante intralinguistica dei sottotitoli tradizionali per udenti. Sono stati introdotti nella televisione negli anni '70, ma inizialmente erano studiati più dal punto di vista tecnico che linguistico. Anche se i sottotitoli per sordi sono prevalentemente intralinguistici, oggi si sta diffondendo anche la variante interlinguistica, in cui le competenze di traduzione si uniscono alla conoscenza dei bisogni e delle caratteristiche di questo gruppo di spettatori.

La prima questione da considerare in questo contesto è il fatto che esistono vari livelli di sordità. Ci sono persone sordite dalla nascita, persone che hanno acquisito la sordità dopo la nascita e persone sordastre (dalla nascita o dopo la nascita), che hanno una certa percentuale residua di udito. Il livello di sordità e altre circostanze, quali l'ambiente familiare, sociale ed educativo in cui i non udenti crescono e vivono, determineranno necessità differenti nella vita di tutti i giorni così come nel contesto audiovisivo. I bambini sordi che crescono circondati da familiari udenti e frequentano le stesse scuole dei bambini udenti saranno maggiormente soggetti a isolamento, in quanto non riceveranno i giusti stimoli per sviluppare le abilità comunicative e un linguaggio proprio, che nel caso dei sordi è il linguaggio dei segni (LIS). Al giorno d'oggi, esistono scuole speciali per sordi, che incoraggiano la socializzazione attraverso il linguaggio dei segni, dando importanza anche all'acquisizione delle competenze orali. In questo modo i non udenti saranno preparati a vivere in un mondo in cui si comunica per mezzo del linguaggio orale, ma potranno sentirsi a loro agio avendo acquisito anche un linguaggio proprio.

Per quanto riguarda la legislazione sull'accessibilità dei prodotti audiovisivi in Europa, la BBC è sempre stata un esempio nel contesto dei sottotitoli e dal 2008 sottotitola il 100% dei programmi di numerosi canali. Secondo il rapporto del 2015 della EFHOH (European Federation of Hard of Hearing People), la disponibilità di sottotitoli per sordi è aumentata rispetto al rapporto del 2011. Per riassumere, Regno Unito, Paesi Bassi, Francia e Belgio sono i paesi che offrono una percentuale molto alta di sottotitoli per sordi, mentre Repubblica Ceca, Austria, Slovenia, Finlandia, Spagna e Danimarca hanno fatto progressi, ma sono ancora lontane dai livelli raggiunti dai paesi prima menzionati. Invece in Germania, Slovacchia e Polonia la percentuale raggiunta è ancora insoddisfacente. In altri paesi, come l'Italia, la raccolta dati non è andata a buon fine, quindi non è possibile un confronto.

Le leggi sull'accessibilità sicuramente giocano un ruolo importante in questo contesto, ma non sono sufficienti. Infatti, se si punta a raggiungere il 100% dei film/programmi sottotitolati, ma i sottotitoli a disposizione sono di scarsa qualità, il pubblico di telespettatori non sarà soddisfatto e il risultato del lavoro, oltre a essere inutile, sarà anche uno spreco di tempo e denaro. Bisognerebbe puntare meno alla quantità e più alla qualità, al fine di soddisfare realmente i bisogni del pubblico non udente.

I sottotitoli per non udenti si differenziano dai sottotitoli per udenti sotto alcuni aspetti. Prima di tutto, il numero di righe per sottotitolo può arrivare, anche se raramente, fino a tre o quattro. Inoltre, la loro posizione può variare a seconda di chi sta parlando sullo schermo. Anche la posizione dei sottotitoli contenenti informazioni su effetti sonori e musica può variare: in alcuni paesi come la Spagna, per esempio, vengono posizionate sul lato destro della parte superiore dello schermo. Possono essere utilizzati colori diversi in base ai personaggi, l'importante è mantenerli per tutta la durata del film/programma. I colori suggeriti, oltre al bianco, sono il giallo, il turchese e il verde. Una questione importante da tenere in considerazione è la descrizione di effetti sonori e musica nei sottotitoli per non udenti. In un film, la musica è fondamentale, perché dà informazioni sull'atmosfera e sulle emozioni dei personaggi. Spesso lo spettatore udente la dà per scontata perché la assimila in modo naturale, ma per il pubblico non udente è importantissima. I sordi vivono in un modo privo, o quasi, di suoni, ma li percepiscono sotto forma di vibrazioni, quindi la mancanza a livello uditivo è colmata da una sensazione fisica. Per loro quindi, la presenza del suono è importante tanto quanto lo è per le persone udenti, se non di più. Generalmente, nei sottotitoli le informazioni sugli effetti sonori vengono inserite tra parentesi quadre, e in corsivo se sono suoni che provengono da una fonte off-screen, cioè che non si può vedere sullo schermo. Per quanto riguarda il tempo di esposizione, i sottotitolatori si attengono alla regola dei sei secondi per sottotitoli di due righe con massimo 35 caratteri ciascuna.

Nei sottotitoli per non udenti, diversamente da quelli per udenti, il concetto di ridondanza è molto importante. Infatti le persone sordi non hanno accesso ad alcuni tratti del testo orale, quali ripetizioni, esitazioni, riformulazioni, ecc, elementi che nei sottotitoli per udenti vengono omessi in quanto possono essere sentiti. Per le persone sordi però, ridurre eccessivamente il testo o omettere questo tipo di elementi potrebbe risultare

frustrante ed essere interpretato come un ostacolo alla totale accessibilità del prodotto audiovisivo.

Nell'ultima parte del capitolo viene presentato uno studio di caso. È stata realizzata una proposta di sottotitolaggio interlinguistico per non udenti, dall'inglese all'italiano, del video *World Champion Gymnast goes for the Gold*, disponibile sul canale YouTube "TheEllenShow". I sottotitoli sono stati creati seguendo i parametri appena esposti. Il video è stato poi sottoposto a 32 studenti dell'istituto per sordi ISISS ITC A. Magarotto, insieme ad un questionario diviso in due parti: la prima sulle loro abitudini di fruizione dei prodotti audiovisivi sottotitolati, la seconda sulla comprensione del video.

I sottotitoli e il questionario sono stati realizzati in base alle informazioni fornite dalla preside della scuola sugli studenti, le cui abilità di lettura non sono molto sviluppate, in quanto quasi tutti sono sordi dalla nascita e quindi utilizzano come prima lingua il linguaggio dei segni. Le scelte lessicali e sintattiche sono state fatte tenendo in considerazione le caratteristiche degli studenti, al fine di presentare loro dei sottotitoli accessibili. I risultati sono stati positivi, infatti quasi tutti gli studenti sono riusciti a leggere i sottotitoli per intero e hanno apprezzato tanto la loro posizione sullo schermo quanto le modalità in cui sono state trasmesse le informazioni sugli effetti sonori. L'esito positivo dello studio di caso vuole dimostrare come, prendendo seriamente in considerazione le necessità di un determinato pubblico, in particolar modo un pubblico con deficit sensoriali, il prodotto audiovisivo soddisferà lo spettatore, e come puntare alla qualità nella traduzione audiovisiva sia un requisito fondamentale per garantire una totale accessibilità al pubblico.