

DUBBING AND MANIPULATION: *THE NAME OF THE ROSE*, A CASE STUDY

Francisca García Luque
Universidad de Valladolid, España
paquigar@lesp.uva.es

Abstract : In this article, we illustrate the possibilities of manipulation offered by dubbing as a modality of audiovisual translation with some examples extracted from the film *The name of the rose*, directed by the French Jean-Jacques Annaud (1986), and based on the novel by Umberto Eco *Il nome della rosa* (1980). Firstly, we will concentrate on the changes operated in the Italian version, which could be divided into different categories. It is observed that the speech of the narrator is remarkably longer. By analysing the content of the sentences added, we can clearly hear the echoes of some passages of the novel and, in some instances, we can even find an utterance suspiciously similar to Eco's bestseller. Some of the characters' utterances are enlarged during the dialogues, and there is even a whole new scene. Secondly, we will examine the changes operated in the French version. This time we also find some enlargements with respect to the English version, although not as important as in the Italian case, and also a new scene. In this version, what is more noticeable during the whole film is the accent of the characters, which tries to reflect the origin of the different monks living in the abbey. Finally, we will say a few words about the Spanish version, which appears to be the most faithful to the original version.

Keywords: dubbing, manipulation, domestication, Umberto Eco.

Introduction

In this article we are going to present a brief analysis of the changes that appear in the Italian, French and Spanish dubbed ver-

sions of the film *The Name of the Rose*, by Jean Jacques Annaud. This film, which is an adaptation of the bestseller by the Italian semiologist Umberto Eco, is a co-production of Italy, Germany and France, filmed in English. The film is about two Franciscan monks, William of Baskerville (Sean Connery) and Adso of Melk (Christian Slater) who arrive at a monastery in northern Italy in 1327, where a young monk has recently died. William is asked by the Abbot to investigate what turns out to be a series of murders that the Franciscan links to a mysterious Greek book hidden in the library, while the Abbot suspects the presence of Satan in the abbey. An important meeting is going to take place there in a few days and the “mystery” should be solved before the monks’ deaths could be linked to what is going to be discussed.

As Rosa Agost reminds us in the title of her book, *Traducción y doblaje: palabras, voces e imágenes* (1999), dubbing is a question of words, voices and images, and the relationship between all those elements in the message is far from being simple. According to Alejandro Ávila’s definition, this modality of audiovisual translation consists of “la grabación de una voz en sincronía con los labios de un actor de imagen o una referencia determinada, que imite lo más fielmente posible la interpretación de la voz original.” (1997:18). This concept creates a strong degree of dependence between the translation and the lip movements of the actors on the screen, known as phonetic synchrony, according to Fodor’s terminology (1976).

But words that spectators hear throughout a film are not pronounced only by the characters on the screen; there are also voices coming from off-screen, extradiegetic narrators, etc., that must be translated and dubbed. In addition to that, the actor’s mouth does not always have the same level of visibility; it may vary according to the kind of shot. In this regard, we can see the importance of what Chaume (2004) calls “shot code”, remarking that the constraints the translator must respect will not be the same in the case of a first shot and an overall shot. In a first shot, there is only one visible element on the screen, such as the actor’s face or mouth;

and in the overall shot, the actor's body is just one of the many elements on the screen. Thus, the possibilities of manipulation increase in the latter and the differences might be remarkable from one version to another.

Ballester Casado (2001), in her study of the situation of dubbing and subtitling in Spain during Franco's dictatorship, has pointed out that the political preference for dubbing was due to the fact that dubbing allowed for the "domestication" of the original text and, what is more important, the adaptation of the translated text without the comparison with its original text. This provided the translator with more freedom to manipulate and adapt its translation to a cultural pattern. It is commonly accepted then that dubbing allows for more modifications than subtitling, with regard to the original text, due to the special circumstances in which this modality of audiovisual translation is carried out.

The Italian Version

As we mentioned in the introduction, *The Name of the Rose* is an adaptation of a book by Umberto Eco. After having studied the examples found throughout the film, it is possible to affirm that the fact that the novel is a masterpiece of contemporary literature and that the author has a reputation recognized worldwide had a clear influence in the translation process, in the sense that the Italian version tries to stay closer to the original novel. The idea that the novel might inspire multiple interpretations also had some consequences, as we shall see by examining the following examples.

First Example

In the first extract, we see William and Adso arriving at the abbey and the narrator describes the sensations of the young novice. We can hear that the narrator's speech is longer in the Italian

version because one sentence has been added. A sentence that sounds very similar to one we can find in the novel. Here, lip-sync is not demanded.

(Original version) NARRATOR: May my hand not tremble now that I start to relive the past and revive the feelings of uneasiness that oppressed my heart as we entered the battlements.

(Italian version) NARRATORE: Possa la mia mano non tremare mentre mi accingo a rivivere quegli eventi e ricordare l'inquiettitudine sottile che opprimeva l'anima mia mentre mi appressavo a quelle mura. *Perché oggi so che stavo rettamente interpretando gli indubitabili presagi iscritti in quella pietra.*

(Original novel, p. 30): Dio sà che non erano fantasmi dell'animo mio immaturo, e che rettamente interpretavo indubitabili presaggi iscritti nella pietra, [...]

(English translation, p. 22): God knows these were not phantoms of my immature spirit, and I was rightly interpreting indubitable omens inscribed in the stone [...]

Second Example

In the second example, it is again the narrator who makes the difference. While William and Adso are going upstairs to the scriptorium, in the original version we can only hear the music, while in the Italian version, the narrator intervenes and the ideological content of his speech is very significant.

(Italian version) NARRATORE: Entrando nello scriptorium ci trovammo in un opificio di sapienza e di pietà e di scienza, in un bastione di fortezza, in un ricettacolo di santi, in ciò

dicevo a me stesso, risiede la grandezza dell'ordine benedettino, nella produzione e la riproduzione della conoscenza., e nel difendere il tesoro del mondo cristiano e la parola stessa di Dio. Finché queste mura resisteranno, la parola divina sarà custodita.

(Author's English translation): [As we entered the scriptorium we found ourselves in an office of knowledge and pity and science, in a bastion of strength, in a receptacle of saints, which consists, I told myself, of the highness of the Benedictin order, in the production and reproduction of knowledge, and in defending the treasure of the Christendom and the word of God. As long as these walls resist, the word of God will be safeguarded]

In the words pronounced by the old monk, we recognize the influence of a medieval vision of the world, represented in the novel by Jorge de Burgos, the old Spanish monk, and, to a certain point, also by the young Adso. Later on, in the film, when the blind man is talking to his congregation at the church, he is inspired by the same idea, i.e. the purpose of the library is to keep knowledge in the hands of the right people, to hide it from those who might want to make a different (and consequently, bad) use of it: "Let us return to what was and ever should be the office of this abbey, the preservation of knowledge, preservation I said, not search for, because there is no progress in the history of knowledge, merely continuous and sublime recapitulation". The message is very similar to the one expressed by the narrator's words.

Third Example

Once again, we find in another scene, in which William and Adso are going through the different rooms of the library, that in the English original version we can only hear music, whereas in the Italian version the narrator speaks again. This additional sequence shows a speech very similar to the one in the previous ex-

ample, in the sense that it is inspired by the spirit of the novel, although it does not correspond to any concrete paraphrase of the Eco's book.

(Italian version) NARRATORE: Stavo osservando il mio maestro in quell'arca di scienza, in quel tempio della saggezza, e non potevo fare a meno di pensare che nemmeno la città celeste avrebbe mai potuto procurargli estasi più grande della seduzione della conoscenza e io sapevo quanto grande fosse la seduzione della carne.

(Author's translation): [I was observing my master in that ark of science, in that temple of knowledge, and I could not but think that not even the heavenly city could have ever given him a higher ecstasy than the seduction of knowledge and I knew how great the seduction of flesh was]

In this example, the reference that might have been taken from the book is the idea that William of Baskerville represents the new historical period, the Renaissance, in the sense that he considers that knowledge and human spirit are instruments to be developed and not restricted or limited in any way. Several authors have interpreted the rivalry between the two characters, Jorge de Burgos and William of Baskerville, as a rivalry between representatives of different philosophical trends: thomism and nominalism. This confrontation of several visions of the world that could be considered as irreconcilable and which leads to the final destruction of the library is one of the multiple readings that could be made from the novel, according to the critics. Pischedda (1994) underlines this interpretation of a *conte philosophique*. This idea is somehow present in the original version, but it seems to need explicitation in the Italian version.

Fourth Example

The last example in which the narrator is involved corresponds to the final scene of the film, in which William and Adso leave the abbey. The symbol ** marks the moment where a sequence was

added to the original version, and which is reproduced soon after the transcription of the original version below, and translated into English by the author.

(Original version) NARRATOR: I have never regretted my decision, for I learnt from my master much that was wise and good and true. When at last we parted company he presented me with his eye glasses. I was still young, he said, but someday they would serve me well, and in fact I'm wearing them now on my nose as I write these lines. Then he embraced me fondly, like a father, and sent me on my way. (...)** I never saw him again and know not what became of him but I pray always that God received his soul and forgave the many little vanities to which he was driven by his intellectual pride. And yet now that I'm an old, old man, I must confess that of all the faces that appear to me out of the past, the one I see most clearly is that of the girl of whom I've never ceased to dream these many long years. She was the only earthly love of my life, yet I never knew nor ever learned her name.

**(...) (Author's English translation of sequence added to the original in the Italian Version): [and he told me: you have lived in these days, my son, a series of events in which all the right rules seemed to be corrupted, but the AntiChrist may be born from pity itself, from the excessive love of God or the truth, as the heretic is born from the saint and the possessed from the visionary. And the truth can be found in strokes also in the mistakes of the world, so that we must decipher its signs wherever they seem dark and intertwined by a will entirely devoted to Evil]

This time, the Italian version adds a segment in the middle of the passage, inspired by the events that took place during the previous days in the abbey, and which reflects William's attitude with regard to life. Again, this version underlines this character's importance and his idea of how a man should behave in order to learn the truth.

(Italian version) NARRATORE: Mi ripeto ancora oggi a me stesso che la mia scelta fu buona, che feci bene a seguire il mio maestro. Quando infine ci separammo egli mi fece dono delle sue lenti, poi mi abbracciò con la tenerezza di un padre, e mi disse: *“tu hai vissuto in questi giorni, mio povero ragazzo, una serie di avvenimenti in cui ogni retta regola sembrava essersi sciolta, ma l’Anticristo può nascere dalla stessa pietà, dall’eccessivo amore di Dio o della verità, come l’eretico nasce dal Santo e l’indemoniato dal veggente. E la verità si manifesta a tratti anche negli errori del mondo, così che dobbiamo decifrarne i segni anche là dove ci appaiono scuri e intessuti di una volontà del tutto intesa al male”*. Non lo vidi più, né so che cosa sia accaduta di lui, ma prego sempre che Dio abbia accolto l’anima sua e gli abbia perdonato i molti atti d’orgoglio che la sua fierezza intellettuale gli aveva fatto commettere. Ma, ora che sono molto, molto vecchio, mi rendo conto che di tutti i volti che dal passato mi tornano alla mente, più chiari di tutti vedo quello della fanciulla che ha visitato tante volte i miei sogni di adulto e di vegliardo. Eppure, dell’unico amore terreno della mia vita non avevo saputo ne seppi mai il nome.

Fifth Example

In this case, the change affects the character of Adso, in one of the last scenes of the film, where he addresses the inquisitor Bernardo Gui. In the Italian version, he pronounces an extra utterance which does not appear in the original version. In terms of lip-sync, this was possible because, in the screen, the character of the young novice is seen from behind and then in an overall shot, in which the actor’s body is just one of the many visible elements in his running towards the gate.

(Original version) ADSO: No, you are not going to leave. All of this is your doing! My master has found the true murderer!

(Italian version) ADSO: No, non potete partire, tutto questo è opera vostra, il mio maestro ha scoperto il vero colpevole. *Vi trascinerò davanti al Papa perché siate bruciato sul rogo!* [I'll bring you to the Pope to be burnt at the stake]

By adding this sentence, the Italian version seems to insist on the idea that the Inquisitor must be punished for what he has done. This time, not even the Pope, who is supposed to be the maximum supporter of his ideas and acts, will be able to close his eyes to the truth that William has discovered and to the evil he has shown by wanting to blame the Franciscan monk just because he thinks differently.

According to the examples above, it is observed that changes operated in the Italian version affect mainly the narrator. This was possible through the voice-over that corresponds to the old monk Adso, remembering the events he lived during his youth. Also, as it comes from an extradiegetic source, there is no need of adaptation for the sake of lip-sync. Nevertheless, we have seen as well that dialogues can also be modified when the character is not in close-up. Let us see now what happened in the French version.

The French Version

In this case, we find again some additions to the characters' dialogues, although they are not as significant as in the Italian version, and they do not affect the narrator in the same measure. There is also a new scene that is neither in the original version nor in the Italian version. But maybe the most relevant feature in the French version is the accent of the dubbing characters, a feature that tries to reflect the origin of the different monks living in the abbey. The explanation for that is not easy to find. Maybe the French culture is more inclined than the Italian or the Spanish cultures to underline the idea of a community of monks coming from different parts of

Europe, once this feature is reflected only in this version. Maybe French viewers require a higher degree of mimetism in dubbed versions. In any case, the accents adopted by the characters follow the current tendency identified by Agost (1999) of being moderate in order to avoid laughter or even rejection by the audience.

First Example

William and Adso are having a conversation about Salvatore and his relationship with heresy after having met the hunchback. The French version goes a little bit further.

(Original version) WILLIAM: (...)You see, Adso, the step between ecstatic vision and simple frenzy is all too brief.

(French version) GUILLAUME: (...)Tu sais, Adso, il n'y a qu'un pas entre vision extatique et frénésie de péché. *Et il est vite franchi.*

By adding this sentence William shows that his vision of life is much more flexible than other members of the Church seem to have. While others condemn whatever kind of difference in behaviour or way of thinking and don't need to think twice to consider these as an heresy to be punished, he thinks the world is much more complex than it may seem. He understands that sometimes it is be easy to make a mistake, even when the premise we start from is right.

Second Example

In one sequence, we can hear the character of Malachie, the librarian, talking to the Abbot about the convenience of informing William of the events in the abbey. The librarian is German, and his way of speaking suggests a German accent. At another instance, we hear the blind Jorge de Burgos, a Spaniard, speak French with

a very strong Spanish accent. It is clearly perceptible in the way he pronounces the “r”, very far from the way French people do.

JORGE: *Verba vana aut risui apta non naquit!* J'espère que mes paroles ne vous ont pas offensé, frère Guillaume. Mais j'ai entendu rire et j'ai rappelé un des principes de notre règle. Tant que vous franciscains, vous venez d'un ordre où la gaieté la plus inopportune est vue avec indulgence.

As we mentioned before, the Spanish accent of Jorge de Burgos may have been reflected on purpose to insist on his origin. We must bear in mind that this character comes from the country where the Inquisition was reputed for being one of the most cruel and inflexible.

Third Example

In this example, a new scene has been added; a scene in which the young Adso goes out of the abbey walls to look for the young girl he met in the kitchen. Again, the narrator talks in voice-over to let the spectator be aware of the boy's thoughts. By including this scene, the importance of the love story is underlined.

NARRATEUR: Ma chair avait oublié le plaisir coupable que notre union m'avait donné. Mais elle, mon âme ne pouvait l'oublier. Et maintenant, maintenant que je la voyais dans sa misère sordide, je rendais grâce à Dieu d'être franciscain. Je voulais qu'elle sache que je n'appartenais pas à cette abbaye rapace mais à un ordre voué à tirer les humbles de leur détresse physique, et de leur indigence spirituelle.

(Author's translation): [My flesh had forgotten the sinful pleasure that our union had given me. But, my soul could not forget her. And now, now that I saw her in the midst of her poverty and squalor, I praised God that I was a Franciscan. I wanted her to know that I did not belong to this rapacious abbey, but to an order dedicated to lifting her people out of their physical destitution and spiritual deprivation]¹

The Spanish Version

In the Spanish version, the changes with regard to the original English version are not really significant. There is no modification or enlargement of the contents of the dialogues, neither concerning the main characters, nor the narrator, and the number of scenes is exactly the same. Below, an example of an unimportant change is described, where viewers can hear some minor characters saying lines that we cannot hear in the original.

First Example

In one scene, while the swineherds were killing a pig, we can hear one of them making a comment in Italian – that is heard also in Italian in the English version – and that is neither dubbed nor subtitled, maybe in an attempt to keep some of the local colour of the scene, as the audience knows that the action takes place in Italy.

SWINEHERD: Tieni ferma quella bestiaccia che mi scappa
la mira! [Keep the beast quiet, I can't see]

In the Spanish version, we can hear a translation that has nothing to do with what was said in the English original version, although the content of the sentence could be inferred from what is seen on the screen:

PORQUERIZO: ¡Procurad que no se pierda ni una gota de
sangre! [Try not to lose a single drop of blood!]

If we compare the same scene with the Italian version, we can find that, while in the Spanish version the translation seemed to have been taken, not from the text, but from the images, in the

Italian version the sentence pronounced in Italian is respected, but the dialogue goes on.

OPERAIO₁: Tieni ferma quella bestiacchia che mi scappa la mira. (Keep the beast quiet, I can't see)

OPERAIO₂: Dico che agitazione, sembra che senta quello che le accadrà! (What an agitation, it seems as if it knew what was going to happen to it!)

OPERAIO₁: Ecco qua un altro secchio di sangue. (And here it is another pail of blood)

OPERAIO₂: Sì, stasera mangiamo un bel pezzo di fegato. (Yes, tonight we will eat a good piece of liver)

OPERAIO₁: Dammela. (Give it to me) (The translation is mine.)

Conclusion

After presenting the different examples chosen in the different language versions of the film, it becomes evident that there are numerous changes, especially in the Italian version. The technical reason that explains why it is possible to do so is the physical absence of a character on the screen, so that the source of the voice is extradiegetic, i.e. the narrator. Or, there is the overall shot that makes it impossible, or reasonably difficult, to see the actor's lip movements. In both cases, there is no need to adapt the translation. But aside from that explanation, cultural aspects may also have something to do with the additions. In this case, it is easy to imagine that the influence of the novel – probably the best known in contemporary Italian literature – is the logical explanation for the additions we have found in the Italian filmic version. Those responsible for the dubbed film may have wanted to reflect more faithfully Eco's book. In this case, it seems that the source text has been not only the English script, but also the original novel.

As far as the French version is concerned, we may consider that the French tradition, as a mixture of cultures since the Revolution period, could explain the decision to underline the presence of monks, who came from different places of the world and went to the abbey to work together, by making them speak French with a foreign accent. By adding this feature to some characters, the French version attempts to individualize them and to reinforce their different origins. In both the Italian and the French cases, some decisions related to the translation may find a possible justification in the target culture and in the wish to adapt the translated text to the expectations, preferences and the cultural values of the target audience.

We have concentrated our comments on the additions to the dialogues or the scenes, but there are also other types of differences in the treatment of the linguistic elements. For instance, while the original version uses subtitles to translate the Latin sentences that are pronounced by the characters throughout the film, the Italian and the Spanish versions often keep the subtitles, but the French version chooses to eliminate them completely.

In terms of target audience tradition, expectations and preferences, these transformations could be related to the acceptability norms elaborated by Toury (1995), in the sense that all of them could be explained as an accepted naturalization or domestication of the product in order to make it culturally closer to the target context.

Whether technical or cultural, we could enlarge the list of reasons that justify or explain the changes introduced in the dubbed versions. But there are some interesting aspects that stand out as we try to analyse the changes and for which the answer may still not be clear. One of them is the question: who is responsible for changes? It is difficult to imagine that the translator decided to introduce them on a whim. Maybe the dubbing director or someone at a higher level in the production structure had something to do with it. Another question concerns the influence of the original novel in the translation of a script for a film that has been adapted, and the degree of distance that the translator may or may not be al-

lowed with regard to the original. All of these are matters which deserve deeper investigation.

Note

1. This translation was taken from the French DVD. It was surprising to find out that this scene did not appear in the original English version released in VHS, but in the French version released some years later in DVD. In the Spanish case, the addition of the scene in the DVD is even more remarkable because this scene and the one in which Ubertino leaves the abbey, which was in the Italian version, have been dubbed by different actors. It seems that dubbing in these particular instances was done in South America. Both voices and accents are very different from the ones the audience can hear throughout the rest of the film.

References

AGOST CANÓS, Rosa (1999) *Traducción y doblaje: palabras, voces e imágenes*, Barcelona: Ariel.

ÁVILA, Alejandro (1997) *El doblaje*, Madrid: Cátedra.

BALLESTER CASADO, Ana (2001) *Traducción y nacionalismo: La recepción del cine americano en España a través del doblaje (1928-1948)*, Colección Interlingua, Granada: Comares.

CHAUME VARELA, Frederic (2004) *Cine y traducción*, Madrid: Cátedra.

ECO, Umberto (1980) *Il nome della rosa*, Milano: Bompiani.

FODOR, Itsvan (1976) *Film Dubbing: Phonetic, Semiotic, Aesthetic and Physiological Aspects*, Hamburgo: Helmut Buske.

TOURY, Gideon (1995) *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.