New Perspectives in Audiovisual Translation

Towards Future Research Trends

L. Mejías-Climent, J. F. Carrero Martín, eds.

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Arturo Vázquez Rodríguez holds a degree in English Studies from the Universitat de València (2013), institution in which he also completed a Master's Degree in Creative and Humanistic translation in

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When **Rafaella Athanasiadi** finished her bachelor with distinctions in English Language and Literature at the University of Cyprus in 2014, she opted for a translation-oriented career. She studied specialized translation with translation technology at University College London and after submitting her MSc dissertation she was offered to publish it (*The applications of MT and TM tools in subtitling: A new era?*). She also published an article based on her MSc research with the title *Exploring the potential of machine translation and other language assistive tools in subtitling: A new era?* In addition, she is the co-author of the research paper *Streaming platforms and AVT training in a peripheral context: Asymmetries calling for pivot audiovisual translation* (2023, forthcoming). She also submitted recently her PhD thesis with the title *Mapping the area of subtitling technologies from a sociological standpoint and exploring didactic implications for subtitlers' training*. Her research interests revolve around subtitling technologies, translation sociology and AVT didactics.

María López Rubio holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting from the Universitat Jaume I (Castelló, 2017) and a Master's Degree in Medical Translation from Universitat Jaume I (2018). During her BA studies, she got a collaboration grant in the audiovisual translation research group TRAMA, led by professor Frederic Chaume Varela. She was awarded the final-year prize (2017) by Universitat Jaume I, the extraordinary prize 'Capitania General de València' (2017) for the best academic records, and the prize Ernest Breva (2013-2017), by Universitat Jaume I, for her academic career. She has participated as a speaker in conferences such as SELM (on modern languages), IALIC (International Association for Languages & Intercultural Communication), Media for All, and PluriTAV International Conference. She has worked in the service of audiovisual accessibility at the Valencian regional television channel À Punt, in charge of Audiode-

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A Brief Overview of Current Approaches to AVT Studies and Practices

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Audiovisual translation (AVT) is on the rise. Over the last twenty years, the world has seen a complete transformation of the film and media industries. The arrival of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTTV) in the 2000s and video-on-demand (VoD) in the 2010s, with platforms such as Netflix, HBO Max, Amazon Prime, Disney + and Apple TV+ reshaping the traditional audiovisual landscape, has had a direct impact on AVT as a profession, turning it into one of the most profitable industries in the language service business (Carrero Martín *et al.* 2019: 1), a trend that only seems to be growing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Shevenock 2020: online). Furthermore, the European Union's *Directive (EU) 2018/1808* establishes that «Member States shall ensure that media service providers of on-demand audiovisual media services under their jurisdiction secure at least a 30% share of European works in their catalogues and ensure prominence of those works.» As a result, European production and distribution on the aforementioned VoD platforms is on the rise (Aguado-Guadalupe and Bernaola 2019: online), which is likely to have a positive effect on AVT as it will increase the need to translate content from a wide variety of languages.

Likewise, the video game industry has also seen dramatic growth. It is estimated that the current video game market generates $159.3 billion in revenue, with the $200 billion mark expected to be hit by 2023 (Wijman 2020: online). Thus, it is not farfetched to predict the continued growth of video game localization, an already important

industry, with companies like Keywords Studios among the top 10 language service providers in 2020 (Common Sense Advisory: 2020). As the Globalization and Localization Association (2019: online) states: «Gaming companies need translation and localization to maximize their global reach [...] making products and services more relatable to customers who speak different languages, with different cultural backgrounds.»

Moreover, media accessibility practices have also flourished over the last 10 years. For instance, *EU 2010/13/EU* and *EU 2019/882* have made subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing, audio description and sign-language interpreting common practices in European broadcasts, both public and private. As for the United Kingdom, laws regulating accessibility on public television are also in place (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2014: online). In fact, Reverter Oliver (2019: 161) points out that the UK is one of the leading countries with regard to accessibility. As for future trends, Mangiron (2021: 107) also points to video game accessibility.

This boom, however, has not just occurred in the professional landscape. As Bogucki and Díaz-Cintas (2020: 11) state, «[t]he most obvious change that we have observed in the last three decades or so is the progressive shifting of AVT from the margins to the centre of the academic debate, in a rather rapid fashion and after somewhat sluggish beginnings.» It is undeniable that audiovisual translation has flourished in recent years, as demonstrated by the increasing and fruitful academic production, and said growth coincides with the requirements of audiovisual and mass media technologies. A considerable number of high-quality publications and research projects have taken place in recent decades and a new journal devoted exclusively to AVT was even established in 2018, the *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, demonstrating this already standalone discipline's capacity for growth and enrichment. But interest in AVT research goes even further. As Carrero Martín *et al.* (2019: 1) state, multiple conferences, seminars and courses on AVT have proliferated during the last two decades.

Likewise, this situation reflects an increase in the graduate and postgraduate offer in AVT studies. Although «AVT training was not incorporated into higher education translator training curricula until just over twenty years ago», dating back to the late 1980s and 1990s (Cerezo Merchán 2019: 468), nowadays, a high number of «educational programmes focused on AVT [...] are part

of the curricular offerings at many universities around the world» (Bogucki and Díaz-Cintas 2020: 19). Consequently, with the rise of this graduate and postgraduate education, the number of doctoral dissertations on AVT has grown dramatically. According to the data collected by Pérez Escudero (2018: 173), up to 280 doctoral dissertations on AVT studies were written between 2001 and 2017, a number which, when compared to the 50 written between 1967 and 2000, serves as proof of the current upward trend of AVT in translation studies. It is also interesting to point out that despite the main AVT research seemingly being centralised in Spain – followed by the United Kingdom, Brazil, Italy and the United States –, nearly 50% of these doctoral dissertations were written in English (Pérez Escudero 2018: 185-186).

Many of these doctoral projects have shed light on different aspects of the blossoming field of AVT, as demonstrated by monographs such as those edited by Martínez Sierra (2017, 2012). This book aims to contribute to this ever-growing landscape of new research projects and the avenues that young researchers in AVT are opening. We intend to contribute to the further dissemination of increasing research on the different and varied forms of AVT in which new generations of researchers work and which can complement and expand the approaches and methodologies that have already been developed in recent years. The aim of such a collection of contributions is to shed some light on the most recent research trends in audiovisual translation, localization and media accessibility, giving an account of the preferences that young researchers in the field demonstrate with their projects, and to point out the main needs in the research and professional scope that AVT might reflect.

It is commonly known that AVT represents not only a fruitful field of study, but also an ever-growing professional practice. This dual approach is demonstrated by the authors' profiles, who not only carry out cutting-edge research in the field, but also work as professional translators themselves, as enriching as this perspective might be. Various aspects and modes of AVT will be brought to the forefront from different perspectives, demonstrating how broad and flexible this discipline has become in recent years, encompassing not only the «most traditional» audiovisual products and their translation (such as movies, TV shows and series), but also some other products such as comics, interactive audiovisual products (video games) and accessible products.

As pointed out by Chaume (2018), there are essentially four methodological turns that can be identified in the already mature discipline of AVT, together with transversal aspects influencing the foci of AVT research, with new technologies being one of the most prominent components, as demonstrated by some of the authors' contributions to this book. To some extent, the different pieces of research gathered in this volume respond to most of the methodological turns that AVT has experienced throughout its relatively short but event-filled history: cultural approaches are touched on by Hayes – who analyses linguistic variation to convey cultural identity – and Villanueva Jordán and Martínez Pleguezuelos' approach combines two case studies to analyse gender representations in audiovisual products. A sociological standpoint can be identified in Bolaños Garcia-Escribano's work reviewing the current use and impact of Cloud technologies in AVT processes and Athanasiadi's more theoretical approach toward the importance of technological advances in the development of the subtitling industry throughout history. The sociological relevance of AVT and its application in inclusive language education is also manifested in Reverter Oliver's study, while a more traditional descriptive methodology is used by García Celades to approach intertextuality in comics. Vázquez Rodríguez addresses the issue of defining localization in the current AVT landscape from a purely theoretical standpoint, while López Rubio and Martí Sansaloni´s approach is eminently professional, drawing on their own experience to describe modern accessibility practices in regional TV and multilingual products.

Although varying in nature and approaches, this book represents a very limited selection of what is being done nowadays in academia, but the strength of the sum of the contributions presented here is precisely derived from the fact that they are not restricted to academic circles, but rather offer an overview on research, professional and educational perspectives. Research in AVT is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary (Szarkowska and Wasylczyk 2018) and it is expanding to all spheres of society. It is essential that the long-standing gap between the AVT industry and academia be bridged (Bogucki and Díaz-Cintas 2020: 22) and the multifaceted nature of this book aims to reflect that connection. It is by no means an exhaustive collection of current approaches to AVT, but rather a carefully selected list of research perspectives that are worth exploring in the current technologised landscape of AVT.

More precisely, this book is divided into eight additional chapters following the present one. As introduced, each of them deals with the subject of audiovisual translation from an academic, educational or professional perspective. As diverse as their approaches may be, all the young authors who have collaborated to create this volume offer enriching perspectives that reflect the potential that AVT still has today and the prospective studies that are worth undertaking to continue enriching the AVT landscape.

After this initial overview of the current state of AVT, the second chapter is *Audiovisual Translation Migrates to the Cloud: Industry, Technology and Education*, written by Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano. These pages offer an examination of the current state of Cloud technologies in AVT, a still-developing trend in the AVT professional landscape that could optimise current practices considerably. Not only does this chapter deal with the industry implications of this cutting-edge technology, but it also advocates for the introduction of Cloud-based toolkits in the AVT classroom in order to meet the demand for tech-savvy, well-trained language professionals.

The third chapter of the book is entitled *Audiovisual Translation for Inclusive Language Education: The Case of the EOI Centres of the Valencian Community* by Beatriz Reverter Oliver. The study described here explores the applications of AVT for sensory-disabled students in foreign language (FL) classrooms. The author analyses possible uses of AVT to adapt teaching materials for sensory-disabled students. Then, a theoretical review of the main studies on AVT and FL teaching is conducted – which are converging areas as demonstrated by current projects such as PluriTAV, developed at the Universitat de València. Finally, the results of a study carried out in order to explore the current role of AVT in an inclusive FL classroom – with special emphasis on subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing and audio description – are presented.

The fourth chapter of the book is *Trans* Representations and Translations: Two Pictures, Two Spaces, Two Moments*, written by Iván Villanueva Jordán and Antonio Jesús Martínez Pleguezuelos. Here, the authors address the representation of trans* subjects in two audiovisual products, each one establishing specific cases of gender, race and class in different temporal and spatial contexts: the documentary *Paris Is Burning* (Jennie Livingston, 1990) and the short film *Loxoro* (Claudia Llosa, 2011). Subsequently, two translation analyses are performed in order to observe what changes may or may not have occurred in

both discourses, paying special attention to the use of language for expressing specific gender and sexual identities outside the traditional binary structure and their reflection in subtitling.

The fifth chapter of the book, written by Yeray García Celades, is entitled *May the Intertextuality Be with You. The Translation of Star Wars Comics*. These pages offer a study on intertextuality and translation. The author discusses the concept of *intertextuality* (a textual property that arises when a text refers to other texts) and its importance in the translation of derived products. Then, the *Star Wars* saga is introduced in the study, focusing on how intertextuality (references, quotes, character names and more) has been preserved in the translation of the current line of comics from this popular franchise and what translation techniques have been employed to do so.

Approaching the Concept of Localisation and its Place in Translation Studies is the sixth chapter of the book, written by Arturo Vázquez Rodríguez. The author takes a close analytical look at *localisation*, a current term that is widespread in both the translation industry and academia, but which lacks a unique, unanimous definition. Here, the author performs a theoretical review of some of the attempts at defining the concept, distinguishing and grouping different theoretical approaches toward localisation. Furthermore, the relationship and similarities of the concepts of *localisation* and *translation* are discussed, as well as localisation's place in the AVT and translation studies landscapes.

The seventh chapter of the book, written by Rafaella Athanasiadi, is entitled *Technology as a Driving Force in Subtitling*. Here, the author performs a historical review of the relationship between subtitling and technology, starting with the birth of sound films and television, continuing with the arrival and impact of home video (particularly DVD) and digital television, and finally moving to the current audiovisual landscape in the form of video-on-demand platforms. Moreover, current working processes and software are explored and future subtitling trends in the form of translation memories and machine tanslation post-editing, among others, are also discussed.

The eighth chapter of the book, written by María López Rubio and Valentí Martí Sansaloni, is *Media Accessibility Services at the Valencian regional TV Station À Punt Mèdia. A Professional Overview*. As the title itself states, this chapter presents a professional overview of the main working processes and strategies employed by the accessibility team at the Valencian regional TV station À Punt Mèdia. The authors conduct a brief historical review of the history of AVT accessibility in Spain,

focusing on the Valencian Community, to then offer a thoughtful look at how the subtitling staff works at this public regional TV station, including guidelines, software and some other professional aspects which are worth exploring. Moreover, audio description tasks are also described and the importance of media accessibility is discussed.

To conclude, the last chapter is entitled *Linguistic Variation in Netflix's English Dubs: Memetic Translation of Galician-Spanish series* Fariña *(*Cocaine Coast*)*, written by Lydia Hayes. This chapter deals with the rise of international production and the English dubbing of foreign original shows pioneered by the video-on-demand giant Netflix. After an insightful look at dubbing's current status as the new mainstream AVT mode for English-speaking audiences, the author analyses the foreignising strategy used in the English dubbing of the Spanish TV series *Fariña*, known as *Cocaine Coast* in the Anglophone market, including the use of a wide variety of Hispanic accents in order to convey connotations of cultural identity.

This book's readership is expected to be as varied as the authors themselves, encompassing a wide range of professionals and researchers not only in the field of AVT, but also in translation studies, language teaching and communication studies, as well as translation trainees who have just begun researching and are interested in discovering the current AVT landscape. As stated, this book intends to contribute to the dissemination of current research carried out by young scholars who are starting to build promising careers in the field of AVT. The various chapters that compose this volume touch on different AVT modes, approaches and methodological perspectives, and they can be considered the appropriate starting point for enriching projects that will contribute to the ever-growing landscape of AVT studies and professional practices.

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New Perspectives in Audiovisual Translation
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The aim of this book is to contribute to the dissemination of current research carried out by young scholars who are starting to build promising careers in the field of audiovisual translation. Although it is by no means an exhaustive collection of state-of-the-art approaches to AVT, this publication offers a carefully chosen list of research perspectives that are worth exploring in the current technologised landscape that this area of translation has become.

Therefore, it represents a select yet judicious group of studies, with the added strength that the contributions presented here are not limited to academic circles, but rather offer different points of view from various angles, given the diverse profiles that characterizes the authors. Thus, each chapter deals with the subject of AVT from an academic, educational or professional perspective.

As diverse as their approaches are, all the young authors who have collaborated to create this volume offer enriching perspectives that reflect the potential that AVT has today and the prospective studies that are worth undertaking to continue enriching the field of AVT.

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