

This thesis will be focused on the phenomenon of audiovisual translation (AVT). It is a relatively new branch of translation studies. Until recently it was neglected by translatoologists, therefore the lack of comprehensive guidelines or extensive research in this field gave translators and subtitlers a free hand in doing their work. However, since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this phenomenon has received its deserved attention, having become an academic discipline and an extremely significant branch of translatoogy studies. Last years have witnessed the proliferation of monographs, journals and conferences devoted to this area of study

Since the advent of the cinema, there has been a need for making audiovisual materials understandable for the audiences which do not speak a language of the original. In the era of silent movies, translation was a relatively easy task, as it required only replacing the original intertitles with the ones in a target language. The emergence of sound in the 1930s brought the American domination of the film industry to a halt for some time, and made the demand for new forms of audiovisual translation evident (Gonzalez, 1998, p. 13-14). Nowadays, with the English language being lingua franca, audiovisual materials produced in the United States and the United Kingdom still constitute the overwhelming majority of the market, making the need for AVT even greater.

On the whole, two basic approaches to such language transfer can be distinguished: retaining the spoken text or switching to the written mode. In the former case, the original can be totally replaced by a new soundtrack, as it happens in lip sync dubbing, often employed in the translation of films and TV series, or it can be retained in the background, using voice-over techniques, which is frequently applied in documentaries or interviews. If, on the other hand, the spoken language is to be changed into written text, the technique of subtitling is used. Given the fact that it is much cheaper and quicker than dubbing or voice-over, it is no wonder that this method of translation has become the most popular one in the recent years (Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p. 4-5).

There are numerous reasons for the growth of the need for AVT. First of all, it is thanks to the omnipresence and still growing significance of the media. The emergence of seemingly innumerable television channels, ranging from the local to international level, has resulted in the number of programs which call for AVT. The film industry, the emergence of the DVD format, and the ever-growing importance of the Internet, which has actually been replacing all of the abovementioned media, also require proper translations. As much as these channels are mostly in the need of subtitles, there is also the opera or the theatre, in which translation is

presented in the form of surtitles, that is translations of the lyrics projected above the stage. Furthermore, audio description for the blind and the partially sighted (AD) as well as subtitling for the deaf and and hard-of-hearing (SDH) have recently also gained a lot of attention (Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p. 1-3).

Zabalbeascoa (2008) defines audiovisual material screen text as “a combination of verbal, nonverbal, audio, and visual elements to the same degree of importance” (p. 24). Audiovisual translation redefined the notion of translation itself, as it could no longer be considered as simply rendering a text written in one language into another language. AVT thus goes beyond the text and offers a new approach to translation, taking advantage of technological tools (Bogucki and Kredens, 2009, p. 11). Recently, one more dimension has been added to this area of translation studies, as the sociocultural aspect has been touched upon in the studies which investigated the influence of social constructs, such as race, nationality, gender, or class, on the translated texts. Thus, AVT translators have a difficult task when approaching their work, facing a potential mismatch and inability to bridge the cultural gap in an appropriate way. The semiotic complexity of audiovisual materials thus excludes the possibility of focusing solely on linguistic components, as dialogues are always placed in some audiovisual context, which has to be taken into account as well, or, rather, first of all (Cintaz, 2009, p. 5-9). Thus, the field of AVT research has recently started to draw upon other disciplines, such as pragmatics, or gender studies (Gonzalez, 1998, p. 19).

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