

Barriere linguistiche e circolazione delle opere audiovisive: la questione doppiaggio (Language Barriers and the Circulation of Audio and Visual Works: the Dubbing Challenge)

Author: Eleonora Di Fortunato & Mario Paolinelli, editors
Publisher: AIDAC
via Asiago, 8
00195 Roma

ISBN: 88-86690-09-6

Presentation

The volume consists of the proceedings of the two symposia “La norma traviata: un ascensore per la torre di Babele” (A Garbled Rule for a Babel Lift) and “La voce e il suo doppio” (Dubbing Voices) with an addendum of “Doppiaggio e sottotitoli, linee guida per la produzione e la distribuzione” (Guidelines for Dubbing and Subtitle Production and Release) and “Principi comuni per il rinnovo del Contratto collettivo nazionale del doppiaggio” (Inceptions for the Renewal of the National Standard Contract for Dubbing).

Evaluation

The proposed goal of this volume is to lead the way for a purposeful approach to dubbing thus being a window for new and functional tools. In Italy, some 80% of film production and 92% of television fiction production come from abroad and the size and impact of the dubbing industry are such to ask vigorously for deeper attention by the multimedia industry and for better qualifications of translators-adapters.

By reading the papers, the reader will run across the recurrent theme of a lawless dubbing market jammed with low-standard operators running the risk of a further decay. As the Italian dubbing industry rightly boasts to be leader the word “further” sounds like a rending howl of sorrow assuming a long time decay which is now nearly impossible to halt. Most papers follow this very same theme and rail against a misplaced approach to translation analysis underlying the national language version of a movie picture and the urgency for a new teaching method to train adapting professionals. Many papers also focus onto a almost insane attention for cost control producing severe and widespread cultural damage with preliminary blind translations made by unqualified staff.

Further and well-founded doubts arise also about the quality of the cultural content of international film production always requiring a special dubbing thus offering the grounds for debating a major though almost neglected theme: the primacy of national subjects inside supposedly internationally oriented products. And a pretty snobbish attitude of some underculture lead from here to heavy mutations or even actual rewriting on the basis of alleged adaptation or artistic requirements intended to accommodate the picture for an academic or, worst, educational purpose while unveiling mere authorial whims or pseudo-artistic self-indulgence.

Although the need for capable and expert professionals is constantly remarked almost in every paper, virtually no indications are given here about the ways and the paths to train or recruit them: an unpleasant and enduring estrangement between the real and the academic world is rather perceived, the latter still being much too delighted with its own abstracticisms and incapable of producing programs and instructions to give birth to professionals capable of meeting the market demand.

Finally, most papers actually do not give any new evidence or indications. Those contained in the first part of the volume produce a certainty in the reader that none of the authors has never been confronted with the actual translation of a script or the adaptation of a movie picture. On the other hand, the second part is far richer in useful and interesting traces, maybe also for a substantial presence of dubbing and adaptation professionals.

The volume is extremely useful for the two annexes, one with the guidelines for dubbing and subtitle production and release and the other with the inceptions for the renewal of the national standard contract for dubbing. Nonetheless these papers can be better used by those already involved in dubbing and subtitling. Those who are willing to enter this market or even gain only an overview will find very few useful hints.

Anyway, this book is invaluable for focusing to the critical situation of the dubbing industry affected by almost the same problems affecting some parallel or contiguous markets, translation for all.

At the end of reading, the overall impression is that the majority of rapporteurs and, maybe, of operators are frightened by the rise and maybe the supremacy of a “dubbed Italian” having little to do with the real language yet overlapping to everyday communication like a testimonial of the resigned and unconditional surrender to the ruling cultural model: the American model.

Just for curiosity: as a reader I would expect to find some recurrent names, in good and evil those who made the history of movie industry. Strangely, the most quoted name, just like a bogey, was Bill Gates: the Big Brother in turn?

A rich and exhaustive bibliography closes the volume.