

Josu Barambones Zubiria, (2012). *Mapping the Dubbing Scene. Audiovisual Translation in Basque Television. New Trends in Translation Studies*, volume 2. Bern: Peter Lang, pp. 177 € 38.90 / £ 35.00 / US\$ 54.95 ISBN: 978-3-0343-0281-4.

Josu Barambones, a lecturer in Audiovisual Translation at the University of the Basque Country, Spain, is a prominent figure in the Basque translation field and one of the few scholars dealing with audiovisual translation in that language.

AVT in Basque constitutes a remarkable example of a language shaped into its standard oral form through its access to the public mass media. This is nonetheless a case with very little impact on AVT studies, probably because it involves an activity with a short history and very limited reach around a minority language.

Barambones has contributed to the visibility of Basque AVT in Translation Studies at a domestic level with a number of articles and a book, as well as a PhD thesis which was published in 2009. Now he addresses the international reader with *Mapping the Dubbing Scene. Audiovisual Translation in Basque Television*, a volume that encapsulates in less than 200 pages his thesis, originally written in Spanish.

According to the author, the book has three main aims, namely (i) to present a general view of foreign products shown on the public television channel in Basque language (ETB1) by means of a catalogue of dubbed programmes, (ii) to identify regular patterns in order to set up the main translation techniques used, and (iii) to compare the dubbed texts to original productions, both in Basque language, with the purpose of finding differences at the linguistic level.

The book's structure basically reproduces the original arrangement of contents established in the PhD thesis. Throughout eight chapters, the author moves from the general to the specific, starting by an introduction to the Basque linguistic and sociocultural situation and ending with a descriptive-comparative analysis of representative excerpts from cartoons dubbed into Basque.

In the first chapters, we are presented with the case of a minority language that depends on translation for its very survival and a public regional television that, at its inception in the early eighties, opted almost exclusively for dubbing as the AVT method that would secure the presence of the language in a schedule packed with bought-in productions. ETB1 (back then, just ETB) was created for the promotion and standardisation of Basque, aiming to complement the education of children and young people in that language. With the creation of the Spanish speaking

channel ETB2 in 1986, most dubbed programmes for older audiences were transferred from ETB1. Thereafter, linguistic normalisation in the media lost one of its pillars, general fiction, a major genre on television channels in Spain. As a consequence, Basque adult viewers were forced to watch most films and series on Spanish language channels, which resulted in insufficient exposure to Basque dubbing, affecting the credibility and acceptance of this type of product.

In subsequent chapters, Barambones gives an account of the making up of two catalogues that compiled all of the foreign products broadcast on ETB1 over two different periods of time. Those catalogues were taken as a starting point to create, through the application of different sets of criteria and filters, the bilingual corpora on which the research work presented in this book is based. The search for the most representative data samples limited the object of study to animated series and specifically to five episodes from two different productions, both originally made in English. This material is analysed against its dubbed counterpart following a systematic model that operates on four levels: preliminary data, macro-structural level, micro-structural level and intersystemic level.

In Chapter 6, a comparative-descriptive analysis of the sample is carried out. Particularly, it is worth mentioning the micro-structural analysis where, on the lexical and syntactic levels, representative examples of the main translation techniques applied are provided. In this way, we learn about recurrent decisions made by translators which drive them to make use of strategic devices such as generalisation, reduction, modulation, amplification, transposition or compensation.

Finally, in Chapter 7, intersystemic analysis compares the linguistic models used in the selected dubbed texts with those in analogous products originally made in Basque. This comparative analysis brings out a series of linguistic shortfalls which render the translated texts less natural and believable, as is the case of a poor variety of voice registers (the language used is very homogenous and formal) and a manifest linguistic protectionism (excessive compliance with grammatical rules, rigidity in sentence order).

In my opinion, Barambones' book has three main assets.

Visibility

The author complains about the scant visibility of minority languages in Translation Studies, a situation that fully concerns audiovisual translation in Basque language, despite its important role in linguistic and cultural planning. This invisibility leads to a lack of historical studies and research on AVT practice. This book is an important first step towards filling that gap, with readable contents and an attractive format. On a less positive note, the high price of this type of publication clearly limits its reach.

Future research

The framework presented in chapters 6 and 7, with the comparative-descriptive and intersystemic analyses of audiovisual texts, leaves a door open for further research. Although the material examined in the book is very limited, due to the weight granted to the representativeness of the samples, it would not be difficult to expand the scope in order to apply this useful model to different sets of audiovisual products. For example, taking into consideration all the films dubbed into Basque over the years, there should be a substantial quantity of material for the analysis of translation techniques. In addition, there is an increasing pool of films originally shot in Basque which can be used in intersystemic analyses.

Criticism

The book takes up a critical stance of the linguistic policy adopted by the Basque public television service. One of the reasons for Basque to be far from normalisation is that it has not yet gained full access to important domains of public life. When it comes to translation, the significant place it holds in the whole Basque cultural system has no correspondence in the audiovisual sector, where the bulk of dubbed programmes are addressed to children and young people. This crushing predominance has in fact a counterproductive effect on linguistic normalisation. In Barambones' words, ETB has "chosen not to offer a global service in Basque, thus aggravating the diglossic situation of Basque" (34). If, as the author puts it, translation is "a vital element not only for its development and standardisation but also for its very survival" (2), how can a language survive mainly on cartoons?

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