

Bolaños García-Escribano, Alejandro (2025). *Practices, Education and Technology in Audiovisual Translation*. New York: Routledge, pp. 260. £145.00. ISBN 9781032434940 (hardback).

In a century in which audiovisual and media content are more and more present in our current global and multicultural society, the need for establishing links between three axes — audiovisual translation (AVT), higher education and technology — is a necessity. Bolaños García-Escribano's monograph has successfully achieved the task of bringing the reader close to these three areas, unfolding the intricacies of this professional activity and the state-of-the-art tools available in the translation sector. As quoted by the author: "The main aim of this book is to shed light on the new technologies that are currently being used in the language industry and to find ways in which to exploit them from an educational perspective" (p. 3-4). Given the quality and depth of the chapters of the volume, *Practices, Education and Technology in Audiovisual Translation* therefore represents an essential, fresh and up-to-date reading that professionals, scholars and students will highly appreciate.

In *Chapter 1. Introduction*, the author discusses how the vast amount of audiovisual content being generated today for on-demand television and video streaming services is boosting the translation market to levels far beyond those of previous decades. In this trend of disseminating audiovisual content in which AVT — or (multi)media localisation — is taking a leading role, Bolaños García-Escribano asserts that, however, the teaching of AVT has not received the same level of attention as the use of technology in translator training programmes. Although this tendency is starting to change as the number of scholars with a technological focus grows, this monograph contributes significantly to building bridges between higher education institutions and the professional field of translation.

Artificial intelligence (AI), cloud solutions and other automation tools are providing translators with much more powerful resources — such as large language models (LLMs), automatic speech recognition (ASR) and machine translation (MT) systems — than in earlier phases of technological development (p. 1). Indeed, it is argued that the outstanding change in the use of technology and translation which has arrived with the cloud turn (Bolaños García-Escribano & Díaz-Cintas, 2020) will significantly influence the way AVT will be taught in higher education in the next few years. The author also argues that the translator's job as it has been carried out to date may be endangered because of the widespread adoption of MT systems (p. 2) and that this trend will lead to changes in the nature of their work.

The evolution of the AVT market is contextualised with data from the latest European Language Industry Survey (ELIS) and reports by Nimdzi. The author explains the advantages provided by cloud-based translation solutions, as well as the benefits for new ecosystems, such as web-based project management (PM) platforms. He notes, however, that these new tools are still not widely used in higher education institutions, where desktop-based freeware continues to be mostly employed due to economic reasons. Reference is made to AVT projects that have emerged in educational contexts, such as ClipFlair and TRADILEX, with platforms for revoicing and subtitling

for language learning purposes. This introduction comes to an end with references to the industry's need for qualified translators, which has prompted the promotion of cross-sector actions involving the industry and the academia, such as the AVTPro certification and The Pool directory. Other examples, such as Zoo Academy, dealing with industry-led training in the AVT educational scope, or private initiatives, such as AVT Masterclass, offer an alternative to AVT training beyond tertiary education.

Chapter 2. Practices is devoted to the actual branches within AVT both as a professional activity — also normally known as (multi)media localisation — and as an academic discipline. Media localisation and AVT quality standards and evaluation are dealt with here. The features of audiovisual texts (Chaume, 2016) are described along with the four types of signs they involve (Zabalbeascoa, 2008). The history of film translation is reviewed, starting from the creation of intertitles for silent films, moving to multiple-language versions, and finally to subtitling and dubbing, first in the context of technological developments that followed in the form of CD, DVD and Blu-rays, and then within the more recent stage of transformation of audiovisual distribution and exhibition enabled by the Internet.

Data on expenditure on the language industry for content localisation in the EU and the Middle East and Africa and on the growth of the translation industry are presented. Media localisation workflows are described in terms of the agents involved in translation projects, their tasks and phases. As for AVT settings, the phases of pre-localisation, localisation and post-localisation are introduced and explained. The common approach to dealing with contents in languages other than English is addressed, highlighting the use of English as a pivot language (Nikolić, 2018). Given the evolution in translation technologies, Bolaños García-Escribano foresees that AVT workflow will include more automatised work and translators working as "language engineers, post- editors, and revisers" (p. 19). Post-editing is, indeed, gaining more presence in professional circles, with academia following suit.

Regarding trends in media localisation, the author points out that increasing audiovisual content consumption at a time when video on demand (VOD) services are booming and when a noticeable "Netflix effect" can be perceived in the growing disconnection of younger generations from live TV has gradually introduced new habits as well as new research challenges — for instance a greater emphasis on accessibility to meet the needs of different types of viewers, a surge on English-language dubbing, and a greater presence of intralingual captions.

Bolaños García-Escribano also examines the evolution of AVT as an academic discipline from its origins, tracing its various names — film translation, constrained translation, screen translation, and (multi)media translation —, the first publications in the field and its boom in the so-called "the golden years of AVT" in the mid-1990s (Díaz-Cintas, 2012, p. 280), and beyond. The author notes that AVT has moved from being a marginal discipline to one of paramount importance, with growing relevance in translator training programmes (both at underdegree and postgraduate level), and in research, as illustrated by an unstoppable and growing number of scholarly publications on AVT as a separate branch of Translation Studies (TS) (p. 21). In this line, the author also observes that some scholars are defending a further disconnection of media accessibility from AVT (Romero-Fresco, 2018).

When delving into media localisation practices, Bolaños García-Escribano explores revoicing and subtitling as the two main ones. Their different modes are described in detail in the form of a taxonomy: the category of revoicing is divided into dubbing and voiceover — the former including lip-sync dubbing, partial dubbing and off-screen dubbing or narrations, and the latter also referred to as single voice translation in Poland and half-dubbing in Italy —, and also linked to simultaneous and consecutive interpreting (rarely used in AVT) and sign language interpreting (to address the needs of d/Deaf or hard of hearing audiences), audio description (for the needs of visually impaired audiences), free commentary (or parodic dubbing in comedy), remakes, and amateur dubbing (or fandubbing and non-professional dubbing). The category of subtitling distinguishes among interlingual and intralingual subtitling or closed captioning or SDH — for d/Deaf or hard-of-hearing viewers —, surtitling (both intralingual and interlingual), live subtitling (real time-subtitles and respeaking or speech-based live subtitling or real-time subtitling via speech recognition), integrated (sub)titles (or creative subtitles, impact captions, dynamic subtitles, or authorial titles), and amateur subtitling (or fansubbing or amateur or non-professional subtitling). The chapter finishes with a revision of the standards and protocols that serve as linguistic and technical guidelines for professionals. Translation quality is addressed from the point of view of translation teaching in higher education, as well as from the point of view of its evaluation (both in the industry and in academia).

Issues related to the didactics of translation — also known as translation pedagogy or translation (translator) training and education — are explored in *Chapter 3. Education*. Learning and teaching approaches in higher education are examined as well. Teachers are presented as facilitators who are to provide their students with the necessary instruments and tasks to acquire competences, and to monitor them through formative and summative assessment as important elements of their learning process. The physical spaces where teaching and learning practices are carried out also deserve attention. Bolaños García-Escribano observes how, thanks to technology and ICT tools, university campuses have shifted to other formats, such as distance or online education; how online platforms (for example, Moodle) have expanded the teaching environment, and how massive online open courses (MOOCs) are gaining more and more interest in academia — a fact that poses new challenges in preparing students for a global industry as AVT. As regards quality assurance methods of training in higher education institutions, it is perceived that it is approached by every university differently, although each country has its own national agency — for example, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the UK, High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education in France, Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes in Italy and ANECA in Spain. Although it has not provided educators or practitioners with training, the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) promotes quality standards on AVT and media accessibility through international cooperation and collaboration. An example of it is the first international journal on AVT studies, *JAT: Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, published by ESIST.

Drawing on literature on translator education, which has been an object of interest for scholars for decades, different training approaches which are relevant for AVT are presented. These include task-based learning and sequencing approaches, and socio-

constructivism, project-based and situated learning experiences. Another point of interest tackled in relation to AVT is translation (and translator) competence, which Bolaños García-Escribano develops by calling upon specialised literature from TS, as well as AVT and interdisciplinary approaches to didactics drawing on both fields. Similarly, translation assessment is explored paying attention to a variety of issues: 1) different types of assessment tasks, marking criteria and rubrics developed in TS; and 2) the idea that assessment of AVT tasks should be done on the basis of some established parameters. The author proposes three broad categories — technique, language, and translation — although he acknowledges that this is a controversial matter. A number of additional parameters for marking criteria and rubrics for both AVT and accessibility modes are included, enriching this section.

The section devoted to the provision of specialist AVT education tackles programmes of study on AVT at universities and educational centres. As for relevant didactic projects in the field of AVT, there is a summary of the most important ones to date (the Subtitle Project, AVT-Lp, ClipFlair, TRADILEX, and SI@VT). This section also discusses important challenges as regards curriculum design, distinguishing between descriptive and prescriptive curriculum models, and proposes a list of contents that AVT-specific courses should include. In the last section of the chapter, the author elaborates on a number of interesting points related to the technological turn, which is undoubtedly affecting and reshaping TS teaching. Focusing specifically on AVT, we can read questions and answers related to aspects anticipated in the previous sections: "What is taught?" (industry vs. research-led education), "Who teaches?" (trainers and their training), "Where to teach?" (features of learning environments and of teaching institutions), "How to teach?" (pedagogical approaches), "Why to teach?" (future training scenarios).

Chapter 4. Technology is dedicated to a core part of the monograph that complements *Practices* and *Education*. Bolaños García-Escribano depicts the evolution of technology throughout the years and explains how it has positively impacted the growth of translation as a discipline. The migration from desktop to cloud computing technologies is examined in detail. With regard to tools in audiovisual translators' workstations, these are described using different state-of-the-art categories, starting by revoicing and subtitling editors. An exhaustive review of TM tools and MT systems, from early versions to the most recent resources in the market, is also provided. In addition, automatic speech recognition technology is described based on the ensuing taxonomy: speech-to-text, text-to-speech, and speech-to-speech and automatic dubbing. Project management software programs, which have also migrated to cloud environments, are described together with translation quality systems. In line with ongoing development in technology, the author delves into generative AI and LLM, describing how they are currently being used in translation, and identifying their limitations when it comes to dealing with AVT. The last section of this chapter provides the reader with a description of the most modern media localisation systems and editors. Focusing on OOONA Tools and OOONA Edu for subtitling and captioning — the former originally aimed for professionals, and the latter currently used as an educational version —, different steps are described, such as how to create and translate subtitle templates, and how to review, convert and burn subtitles. The tool ZOOdubs for dubbing and voiceover is also presented, and the reader is guided on how to use it. The operational uses for audio description of Stellar are also thoroughly

explained. Finally, the lesson plans of TRADILEX, a state-of-the-art didactic audiovisual translation (DAT) platform for foreign language learning and teaching, are scrutinised.

Finally, *Chapter 5. Conclusions* provides the author's justification to cover the three main fields addressed in the book, that is, practices, education, and technology. Taking into account recent social transformations as regards media consumption habits, it is suggested that many more research avenues remain to be explored. In addition, Bolaños García-Escribano stresses that the uses and applications of technology in AVT in education (including the use of cloud-media localisation editors in training environments), and the possibilities for teaching-oriented research and research-led education need to be the focus of further studies.

Bolaños García-Escribano's monograph engages the reader in a fascinating journey through the history of professional practices, educational scenarios and the advancement of technology from its very origins to date. Written in a comprehensible style, while introducing the audience to highly technical terminology, this book quickly captures the reader's interest, as it conveys the author's passion and deep knowledge of these three fields. This is a ground-breaking book, and I strongly believe that professionals, educators and students who are eager to update their knowledge of translation, educational practices and technology will be thrilled to read such a publication which is, indeed, an invaluable contribution to the captivating and ever-growing field of AVT.

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