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The Italian Dubbing and Subtitling of *Monster, Inc.* - An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The study attempted the analysis of the Italian dubbing and subtitles of the animated film *Monsters, Inc.*, released in 2001 by Disney Pixar and directed by Pete Docter, Lee Unkrich and David Silverman. The paper is divided into three sections- each one regarding a (extra) linguistic issue. The first one focuses on cultural-specific references (CSRs), which are considered one of the hardest aspects in all types of translation. Dialects and registers are analysed in the second section, while the third one deals with typical phenomena of the spoken language-such as question tags, vocatives and modes of address. For each section, a brief theoretical frame is provided to build the basis to discuss the examples taken from the film (original and dubbed/subtitled version). In addition, the degree of influence (or difference) between the two versions is considered, and some translation strategies are outlined according to the examples shown.

Keywords: *Monsters, Inc.* AVT, Dubbing, Subtitling, Cultural-Specific References (Csrs), Dialects

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1. Culture-Specific References (CSRs): A Theoretical Introduction

When translating an audio-visual product, the translator faces some difficulties. These can be actual 'translational hurdles' and interest both dubbing and subtitling translators. According to Chiaro (2009), CSRs represent one of the three main categories (the other two are: 1. language-specific features and 2. areas of overlap between language and culture/fuzzy areas) of translational hurdles that AV translators have to cope with.

Chiaro defines CSRs "entities that are typical of one particular culture, and that culture alone, and they can be either exclusively or predominantly visual [...], exclusively verbal or else both visual and verbal in nature" (Chiaro, 2009:155). A part of the possibility of differences in terminology, e.g. Pedersen (2011:43) has termed these elements "extralinguistic culture-bound references (ECRs)", it is important to notice that the audience normally must agree with two illusions. The first is called "the suspension of disbelief" (using the term coined and applied to poetry by Coleridge) and concerns the fact that viewers accept the depicted world as real. The second one has been termed "the suspension of linguistic disbelief" (Romero-

Fresco, 2006) and refers to the capability of the audience to accept the fact that the characters can speak in the target language even if the film is set in another country. Furthermore, the suspension of the linguistic disbelief is even easier in animated films in which characters are not real. It follows that characters can also allude to the target-language reality in their conversation without it seeming odd.

The problems arising from these entities-bounded to encyclopaedic knowledge and carried by the lexis of the source text-can be handled by means of different strategies. As Katan points out, "in written translation there is usually some space to make the 'extrinsic features' through the addition of qualifying or supplementary information within the text or through footnotes outside the main body. In dubbing and subtitling, though, due to their extreme *vincoli*, the opposite is true, leaving the *adattatore* principally with 'chunking strategies'" (Katan, 2010:3).

According to Antonini and Chiaro (2005), CSRs can occur in ten different areas:

1. Institutions (including judiciary, police, military): a. legal formulae (e.g. "Objection, your Honour", "All rise", "This Court is now in session"); b. courtroom forms of



address (e.g. “Your Honour”, “My Lord”, “Members of the Jury); c. legal topography (e.g. Grand Jury, Court, Supreme Court, etc.); d. agents (e.g. lawyers, solicitors, attorneys, etc.).

2. Education: high school culture, grading system, tests, etc.

3. Place Names: Minnesota, Baker Street, etc.

4. Units of Measurements: 150 pounds, thirty yards, Fahrenheit, etc.

5. Monetary system: dollars, Euros, pounds, etc.

6. National sports and pastimes: American football, hockey, baseball, basketball teams.

7. Food and drink: muffins, pancakes, noodles, etc.

8. Holidays and festivities: Halloween, St Patrick’s Day, Thanksgiving, etc.

9. Books, films and TV programmes: America’s Most Wanted, etc.

10. Celebrities and personalities: Loch Ness, Big Foot, The Abominable Snowman, etc.

Perhaps other categories need to be considered, since the above list appears incomplete. For example, in this study other categories were added to list all CSRs linked to jobs, plants or folklore (see 2.1). To handle CSRs, Chiaro (2009), drawing on Katan (1999/2004:147) identifies three main translation strategies:

1. Chunking upwards– when a CSR is replaced in the target language with a more general item, i.e. through the adoption of hyperonymy;

2. Chunking downwards– when a more culture-specific item substitutes the CSR, and therefore the translation will represent a completely different item from that of the source text;

3. Chunking sideways– when the item replacing the CSR is neither more general nor more specific than the original, so it is of the same level.

It is important to highlight the fact that the preferred strategy mainly depends on the type of text that the translator is dealing with and on the target reader/audience. In this respect, Pedersen proposes the following strategies for dealing with CSRs when translating (Pedersen, 2005:3-9):

a. The use of an official equivalent

b. Retention of the original CSR in the target text

c. Specification, i.e. adding extra information to facilitate the target audience’s comprehension

d. Direct translation by means of literal translation or calques

e. Generalisation, i.e. chunking upwards

f. Substitution, i.e. chunking downwards or sideways

g. Omission.

These possible strategies refer mainly to subtitling, but they can also be applied to other types of translation (it must be noticed that Mona Baker’s list of strategies is similar).

When translating for dubbing, according to Wierzbicka (Trysińska, 2015), dialogues have to be comprehensible to the target audience and it follows that “it is *not always appropriate* to produce a complete equivalent of the original dialogues”. Therefore, it can be argued that CSRs should be adapted, when the target audience does not share them. “What counts is that the text is synchronized, attractive and comprehensible”, even if it might not be faithful to the original. Thus, there is a tendency, in cartoons, to neutralize the exoticism of the culture-specific element in favour of domestication and explicitation.

1.1. Analysis of CSRs in *Monsters, Inc.*

1.1.1. Verbal Culture-Specific References Units of Measurements

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Temperature’s a balmy sixty-five degrees	La temperatura è piacevolmente intomo ai venti gradi	La temperatura è intomo ai 20°

In this case, this CSR has not posed great translation problems. Differing from what would have happened with Education and the grading system, the strategy adopted was not to leave it as the source text but to convert it in the unit of measurement that is more common in the target culture.

Books, films and TV programmes

In a scene in which Sullivan is playing with Boo, he tells a piece of a verse, famous in the Anglophone culture. This is “Fee-fi-fo-fum”, the first line of a historical quatrain (or sometimes couplet) famous for being used in the classic English fairy tale Jack and the Beanstalk. This would be an allusion that perhaps the Italian audience would not understand. Thus, in the dubbed and subtitled versions it has been changed with a CSR that was understandable by the target viewers.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
SULLIVAN Ready or not, here I come! // I’m getting warmer. / Any second now. / Fee fi fo...	Mmm pronta? Attenta che arrivo! Gira gira il mondo, ti trovo in un secondo, ucci-ucci sento odor...	Attenta, sto arrivando. Sento che questa volta non mi sfuggirai. Ucci-ucci sento odor di...

Then, in this case the translation is not faithful to the original but triggers the same effect to the audience. The line used is taken from a popular fairy tale known in Italy under the name of *Pollicino*.

In the case below, the translator opted for a cultural substitution. He must have thought that the allusion to the Fox TV show, i.e. America's Most Wanted, would not be received by the target audience.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE I'm telling you, big daddy, you're going to be seeing this face on TV a lot more often.	Te lo dico io, d'ora in poi questa faccia la vedrai molto più spesso in TV.	Vedrai la mia faccia in TV molto più spesso!
SULLIVAN (while laughing) Yeah? Like on <u>Monstropolis</u> ' Most Wanted? (He laughs)	Oh, sì, nella trasmissione "Chi l'ha visto?" di Mostropoli. (Ride)	Ah, sì! Nel "Chi l'ha visto?" di Mostropoli!

In dubbing and subtitling, they used the Italian television program "Chi l'ha visto?" which is dedicated to missing persons and to unsolved mysteries.

Celebrities and Personalities

In the example reported below, Mike quotes three monsters' names belonging to the imaginary world. They are in fact a sort of urban myth and are most typical of the Anglo-American culture, but are known also in the Italian one, and indeed to the children's audience. Thus, in this case, the translator kept both Loch Ness and Big Foot, and made a literal translation of The Abominable Snowman, because he must have thought that the target audience would know them and, also, because in the film there is a scene in which The Abominable Snowman appears, hence it could not be substituted with another creature typical of the Italian culture.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Just think about a few names, will you? <u>Loch Ness</u> , <u>Big Foot</u> , <u>The Abominable Snowman</u> . They all got one thing in common pal: banishment! We could be next!	Ti voglio citare solo qualche nome, va bene? <u>Loch Ness</u> , <u>Big Foot</u> , <u>L'Abominevole Uomo delle Nevi</u> , hanno tutti una cosa in comune, amico: l'esilio! Noi potremmo essere i prossimi!	Pensa a <u>Loch Ness</u> , <u>Bigfoot</u> , <u>l'Abominevole uomo delle nevi</u> ... Hanno una cosa in comune. Sono stati esiliati!

Food and Drink

At the end of the film, when Mike was accidentally kidnapped by Randall (Sulley's main rival), there is a reference to "latte".

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Hello. / Come on, where you going? W-we'll talk. Come on, we'll have a latte. (Chuckling nervously)	Ciao. / No, scusa! Dove stai andando? Dai, parliamone! Prendiamoci un caffè.	Ciao... Dove vai? Parliamone! Ti offro un caffè!

The Oxford Dictionary defines latte as "a type of coffee made with espresso and hot steamed milk, milkier than a cappuccino", hence the Italian equivalent would be a "latte macchiato". Instead, in the dubbed and subtitled versions they chose a domesticating strategy, i.e. they did not keep "latte" (even if it is an Italian word) because it would not seem natural in a situation like that.

Holidays and Festivities

A CSR example linked to holidays and festivities could be the one that follows. "Bring an Obscure Relative to Work Day" is

a fake day that Mike had made up for Mr. Waterhouse not to find out that he and Sulley were hiding a human child.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Yeah, it's, uh...it's...a..."bring / an obscure / relative to work day."	Sì, oggi, è, la...giornata del "porta un lontano parente sul lavoro"	È la giornata del "Porta al lavoro un parente lontano"...

In this case the CSR belongs to the world created by the film, therefore it was not necessary to change the reference. However, this expression could not be understood in a culture in which at work there are not days like these.

Plants

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
YETI Aaw, poor guy. I understand. It ain't easy being banished. Hey, take my buddy Big Foot. When he was banished he fashioned an enormous diaper out of <u>poison ivy</u> .	Eh, poverino. Io ti capisco, non è bello essere esiliati. Prendi il mio amico Big Foot, quando fu esiliato si fabbricò un enorme pannolino di <u>foglie d'ortica</u> .	Poverino. Capisco... Non è facile essere esiliati. Prendi l'amico Big Foot. Quando l'hanno esiliato ha fatto un telo di <u>edera</u> .

In this case, there is a mention of the plant called "poison ivy", which according to the Oxford dictionary is a "North American climbing plant which secretes an irritant oil from its leaves that can cause dermatitis". The proper translation would be "edera velenosa" but it could have been misleading because in Europe there is a different plant named "edera". "Foglie d'ortica" seems a good solution when a domesticating strategy is chosen. The subtitled translation does not render the idea because "edera" in Europe is not irritant; therefore it seems an inaccurate translation.

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Advertisement

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
YETI Kids? Sure! <u>Tough kids, sissy kids, kids who climb on rocks...</u>	Bambini? Certo! Bimbi belli, bimbi brutti, bimbi che fanno i rutti...	Certo, bimbi tosti, bimbi flosci che inseguono i camosci...

This is an example of allusion to a jingle of a very popular advertisement of the late 60s and early 70s—Armour Hot Dogs ad. In the dubbed and subtitled advertisement the quote is lost, but there is the attempt to compensate using rhyme.

Fuzzy Areas



Another example could be found in the expression “two regular Joes”, which perhaps should be treated like an idiom. This expression has been rightly translated, both in the dubbed and subtitled versions, with the Italian “due tipi qualunque”.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE You're right, you're right. We're just two regular Joes / on our way to work. / We will blend/ right in.	Hai ragione. Hai ragione! Siamo due tipi qualunque che vanno al lavoro. Non ci faremo / notare.	Giusto. Siamo due tipi qualunque che vanno al lavoro.
SULLIVAN Top of the momin', fellas!	Buona giornata a tutti ragazzi!	Buona giornata!
MIKE Hey, what's shakin', bacon?	Ehi come butta, frutta?	State bene?
SULLIVAN Did you lose weight? Or a limb?	Di un po', sei dimagrito o hai perso un braccio?	Hai perso dei chili o un braccio?

In this scene Sullivan and Mike attempt to pass unnoticed entering the factory with the kid. Then, there is a humorous aspect arising from the colloquial and exaggerated greetings that follow. Humour is also conveyed in the Italian translations, in which they used creative and funny solutions.

Other cultural aspects can be found in this exchange:

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE (He sniffs under his arm) Uff! Hey, can I buy your odorant?	(Si amussa le ascelle) Uh! Ehi, mi dai il tuo odorante?	Mi presti il tuo deodorante?
SULLIVAN Yeah, I've got "Smelly Garbage" or "Old Dumpster".	Sì, che preferisci? "Miasmi d'oriente"? Oppure "Acqua fetida"?	Ho "Pattumiera" e "Eau de fogne".
MIKE You got "Low Tide"?	Ce l'hai "Cozza al sole"?	Hai "Cozza al sole"?

It must be said that “Low Tide” is a fragrance which can be found in one of the last work, called “Jerry of the Islands”, of the American writer Jack London, initially published in 1917. However, the quote might not be understood neither by the source nor the target audience. Thus, in the Italian translations, the choice of omitting that allusion and add humour could be legitimized.

It must be noticed also that in the subtitled version the play “deodorant-odorant” has been neutralized, as often happens in subtitling – where there is a tendency towards levelling out.

Children's Culture

Another fact that must be mentioned is that, while Sulley or Mike talks with Boo (the kid) in some scenes of the original version some nursery rhymes or children's songs are sung. One of the scenes is the one which follows.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE (Nursery rhyme) One, two, three, four! Get the kid back through the door!	(Canticchiando) Uno, due, tre, nessuno saprà più che c'è!	Uno, due tre, quattro, la bambina se ne va! L'incubo è finito!

In the translation, both in dubbing and subtitling, it has been chosen to neutralize and compensate it with singing (in dubbing) or adding “l'incubo è finito” (in subtitling).

Moreover, in the dubbed version there is the attempt to maintain the rhyme present in the original.

1.1.2. Visual Culture-Specific References

An example of visual culture-specific reference can be found in the scene in which Sulley thinks that Boo has been crushed to death in a trash compactor. This scene refers to the Looney Tunes' short “Feed the Kitty”. The scene in *Monsters, Inc.* – in which Sulley and Boo are the protagonists – mimes the bulldog's reactions to Pussyfoot being cooked alive in an oven and subsequently lamenting her presumed-death after retrieving a cookie shaped like a cat.

2. Dialects and Registers: A Theoretical Introduction

Language varies considerably according to the users and the situations and, as language users, we tend to control and modify our speech depending on many factors, such as the person we are talking to, or the occasion we are speaking in, or the purpose of our speech.

Registers can in fact be determined as “varieties of language in use which are determined by different textual, functional, interpersonal and situational features” (Minutella, 2009:28). This means that when we talk, we do it by choosing the right words and syntax the situation requires.

When talking about registers, one more distinction has to be made. While offering a wide overview of sociolinguistics, Berruto (1995:73) presents the point of view of Halliday. According to the British linguist, any socio-linguistic occurrence (or, using his own words, “diatypical variation”, i.e. variation which occurs in conversations) can be explained thanks to the interaction of three main components: field of discourse, tenor of discourse and mode of discourse. The first one can be identified with the subject matter, the second one to the relationship existing between the participants and the latter with how the communication is taking place.

But language may also vary according to the peculiar features of each user: their way of speaking will provide clues about their geographical origin, about the historical time (when the story is set), or about the character's educational level. Any peculiarity in the speech will then affect pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and will define the dialect of the user. Resorting to the distinction provided by Minutella (2009:45), we have different types of dialects, which are temporal dialects, geographical or regional dialects (among

which it is worth mentioning ethnolects), social dialects, standard/non-standard dialects and idiolects.

2.1 Dialects and Registers in *Monsters, Inc.*

2.1.1. Dialects

As already mentioned, the story takes place in an American-like setting. Therefore, the characters' main geographical dialect is standard American English or, as defined by Lippi Green (1997), mainstream US English (MUSE). This means that this variety is not geographically or socially marked. There does not seem to be any exception, apart from two secondary characters, namely Tony, the monster working in the grocery store, and the mum and son in whose house Randall arrives after being banished from Monstropolis.

The first mentioned character, who has got a bushy moustache, speaks a Southern-Italian sounding English, and his being Italian seems to be proven by the fact that when he offers Mike and Sulley some fruit, they both answer with a misspelled "Grazie".

The second different dialect of the film can be heard in the caravan where Randall is banished and called "gator". This word gives the audience a hint because the Collins Dictionary defines it as an informal word that is mainly used in the US to indicate an alligator. Since this animal lives typically in the eastern Sun Belt climate, there is enough evidence to think that the mum and son speak a south-eastern variety of American English, and a southern American setting is suggested not only by the screen image, which represents the caravan in a swampy area, but also by the soundtrack with a folk song featuring a banjo.

According to Pavesi (2005:36), diatopic varieties are the most difficult to be rendered in dubbing, in that it is difficult to find an equivalent in the target language that would be able to convey the same connotation, stereotype or cliché associated with that dialect. Moreover, in audio-visual products, flattening (and sometimes uprising) the way in which the characters speak seems to be a typical Italian tendency.

However, the two geographical dialects above mentioned are differently rendered in the Italian version. In the case of the southern mum and son, in the dubbing they simply happen to speak a standard Italian, due to lack of ways to underline their linguistic traits in the dubbing and even less so in the Italian subtitling. As Tony is concerned, the inflection in his Italian dubber's voice gives the idea of a

stereotyped Italian man, while only the Italian subtitles inform us of its Southern origin, due to the use of the word "picciotti".

Since the film is set in the present days, it shows no archaic language and only contemporary English is spoken. As far as social and standard/non-standard dialects are concerned, there are reasons to think that they are strongly linked to the register mainly used throughout the film and will be discussed in the next paragraph.

2.1.2. Registers

Given the fact that conversations mainly occur in informal circumstances, and among work colleagues, the most used register is the informal one. But since the film is also an animated-film whose target audience is children, and whose main function is then to educate, relaxation in speaking is limited to some morpho-syntactic and lexical features.

As far as the Italian translation is concerned, we will see that these marked elements are not rendered (they are either erased or flattened in the Italian version), in line with the Italian trend.

Example 1		
MIKE		
[...] Oh, what a creep! One of these days I am really... gonnagione let you teach that guy a lesson.	Oh, ripugnante. Uno di questi giorni io ti farò-ti farò... ti farò dare una lezione da qualcuno.	Che essere disgustoso. Uno di questi giorni io gli faccio dare una bella lezione da te.

The first example of informal register is provided by Mike, whose speech is full of slang and colloquialisms. In example 1, Mike is commenting Randall's arrogant behaviour. The noun *creep* is defined by the Collins Dictionary as "*slang*, a person considered to be obnoxious or servile" and in both the dubbed version and subtitles it is translated into the adjectives "ripugnante" and "disgustoso". This choice obviously conveys the meaning yet does not use a slang or a similar colloquial noun that would produce an Italian insult, which might be, for example, "verme".

There are more utterances containing a marked set of modes of address, as the following:

Example 2		
MONSTER		
Keep it together, man!	Controlla i nervi, amico!	Controllati, amico!
Example 3		
MIKE		
Come on, pal, if you start crying I'm gonna cry and I'll never get through this.	Eh, no amico, se ti metti a piangere piangerò anch'io e non riuscirò ad arrivare fino in fondo.	Se ti metti a piangere, piango anch'io e non ne uscirò mai più.
Example 4		
SULLIVAN		
Great buddy, we lost him!	Bel colpo! L'abbiamo seminato!	Bel colpo! L'abbiamo seminato.

In these examples the vocatives *man*, *pal*, *buddy* are a clear sign of a friendly and colloquial register. When the vocative is not omitted (in two out of three examples shown), it seems to be rendered into the



translational routine *amico* (Minutella, 2015b:274).

Interjections as well feature signals of low register:

Example 5		
MIKE		
Whooh! Attaboy, attaboy!	Oh, sei bravo, sei bravo!	Così mi piaci!

This is what Mike says to Sulley once the scaring session has begun, approving of Sulley’s performance by saying “Attaboy!”, a typical US slang expression used to approve of someone’s behaviour. As indicated by the Collins Dictionary, then, not only is this lexical choice a hint of the variety used (as we said before, MUSE), but it also conveys an extremely colloquial register. This choice loses completely its original traits when we focus on the dubbing and the subtitles, which standardise it.

Before taking a step forward towards the verbal system, the last lexical choices revealing the informality are worth looking at:

Example 6		
MIKE		
You're not pinning this on me. I never would have gotten out if you hadn't been cheating last night!	Ah! Non dare la colpa a me! Non se tu non avessi barato ieri notte.	Non mi scaricare la colpa. È fuggita perché tu hai barato!

The Collins Dictionary defines the idiom *pin something on someone* as informal. The dubbed version opts for a homogenising *non dare la colpa*, while subtitles get close to the opt for *scaricare la colpa*, while a good solution that would be colloquial and convey the meaning at the same time could be “*fare a scaricabarile*”. It is also worth mentioning the use of *gotten*, typical American past participle of *get*.

Finally, the higher informality conveyed in this utterance by Mike:

Example 7		
MIKE		
Uh, I thought I had you there.	Credevo di averti fregato!	Credevo di buggerarti

The expression *have someone there*, which cannot be found on the Collins Dictionary nor in the Urban Dictionary, is defined by PhraseMix.com (a website whose aim is “to teach the *real* English”) as a way to express that someone is tricking someone else. The Italian dubbing contains a colloquial word (*fregare*) and conveys the proper meaning, while the subtitle gives a completely wrong idea of the register, as *buggerare* is not a frequent expression and does not belong to low registers.

As verbal forms are concerned, example 1 also contains a colloquial verb form, which is the slang contraction *gonna* in place of *going to*. Similarly, we have numerous examples of verb contractions, as shown in the following examples.

Example 8		
RANDALL		
[...] Gonna be doing some serious scaring, putting up some big numbers.	Farò prendere dei tremendi spaventi. Vedrai quanti punti farò.	Spaventerò alla grande. Roba seria, punti pesanti.

Example 9		
SULLIVAN		
[...] You're gonna get your germs all over it!	Me lo riempi tutto di germi!	Lo riempirai di germi.

Example 10		
MIKE		
[...] We gotta get outta here. Now!	Dobbiamo andarcene da qui, subito!	Dobbiamo andarcene!

Although scholars have identified compensation as a translation strategy (Minutella, 2009:36) to deal with the impossibility to render such grammatical features in Italian, in examples 8, 9 and 10 this strategy has clearly not been used (nor it is during the film) and this morpho-syntactic feature has not been rendered neither by the use of phonological material, lexis nor by a peculiar syntax. The informal register is then totally unperceived in both the Italian versions, and Sulley’s utterance in the subtitles looks rather formal, due to the use of the future tense *riempirai* (example 9). About the omission of the auxiliary, in *Monsters, Inc* there are many examples, especially in questions:

Example 11		
MIKE		
You call yourself a monster?	Sei un mostro sì o no?	

Example 12		
MIKE		
Hey, you guys seen Sulley anywhere?	Ehi! Avete visto Sulley da qualche parte?	Avete visto Sulley?

Example 13		
SULLIVAN		
See that, Mike? Ted's walking to work.	Hai visto, Mike? Ted va a lavorare a piedi.	Vedi? Ted va al lavoro a piedi.

None of these examples render the low register in the Italian translation, which opts instead for a formal register.

One more interesting example of informal register can be found in Mike’s utterance, when he tries to mislead Randall, who is looking for little Boo:

Example 14		
RANDALL		
Waxford?	Waxford?	
MIKE		
Yeah, the one at station six. You know, he's got them shifty eyes.	Sì, quello della postazione sei, quello con lo sguardo furtivo!	Quello della 6. Col suo sguardo furtivo.

A grammatical shift into low register can be seen in example 14. It consists of a non-standard element which is the use of the 3rd person object pronoun *them* instead of the demonstrative adjective *those*. The difficulty in finding an equivalent in the target language probably led the translators to follow the coherent trend to standardise the language, both in dubbing and subtitles.

One more character who also presents many features of an informal register is undoubtedly The Abominable Snowman. During his short appearance, he provides a wide range of some interesting examples, consisting of:

Example 15		
SNOWMAN		
Ah, what about you, big fella?	Eh, e tu lo vuoi, gigante?	E tu, gigante?

Colloquial vocatives, whose Italian translations are thought to convey satisfactorily the friendliness of the original version;

Example 16		
SNOWMAN		
It ain't easy to be banished.	Non è bello essere esiliati.	Non è facile essere esiliati

The use of *ain't* for the *be*, which is totally homogenised in the Italian versions;

Example 17		
SNOWMAN		
Milking a yak ain't exactly a picnic.	Mungerlo non è una passeggiata.	Mungerlo è un guaio.

A mixture of non-standard variety of English and idioms which is partially neutralised. Curiously enough, the meaning of idiom “no picnic” is rendered properly in the dubbed version (yet not conveying the informality in the form) while it has been mistranslated in the Italian subtitles;

Example 18		
SNOWMAN		
We're outta snowcones!	Abbiamo finito il gelato.	Abbiamo finito il gelato.

Contractions;

Example 19		
SNOWCONES		
Hey! I got more snowcones!	Aspetta! Ho dell'altro gelato!	Aspetta, ho dell'altro gelato!

Omissions of the auxiliary.

The Italian dubbing and subtitles, in general, appear rather standard. As for high register, this seems to be restricted to few characters and situations, and the Italian versions maintain the right formality both in dubbing and in subtitles.

Example 20		
LOUDSPEAKER		
All scarefloors are now active. Assistants, please report to your stations.	Tutti i reparti spavento sono attivi. Gli assistenti si presentano alle proprie sezioni.	Tutti i reparti spavento sono attivi. Assistenti pronti ai propri posti.

The use of *report to* conveys a higher formality, so that rendering this verb with the subjunctive in the Italian dubbed version perfectly fits the context. This mood is not used in the subtitles but the lack of the verb and therefore the use of a nominal sentence conveys the high formality of the utterance.

3. Question Tags, Vocatives and Modes of Address

3.1. Question Tags: A Theoretical Introduction

Question tags are only one possible type of tags, which Biber *et al.* define as “short structures which can be added at the end of the clause in conversation or in written presentation of speech” (Minutella, 2009). In particular, question tags can be usually found at the end of a declarative clause, and they are made of an auxiliary verb and a personal pronoun, such as the expression “isn't it?”.

The main functions of this structure are of taking the distance from what is said

in the sentence and of demanding the participation of the interlocutor, thus helping the fluency of conversational turns. On another level, however, as it regards film practice, they are a way of characterisation: as pointed out by Chiara Pavesi (2005), who cites Chiaro Nocella (2000) and her study on question tags in the film *Four weddings and a funeral*, they serve as an expression of verbal insecurity, which is a stereotypical characteristic of “Britishness”.

Question tags are a construction that is proper of English language and culture: in Italian, in fact, there is not a similar grammatical construction, and question tags are therefore expressed lexically, through words such as “no?” or “vero?” put at the end of the sentence. In translation practice, and notably in AVT, question tags are translated using these words or not translated at all. In the first case, it can lead to unnatural structures in Italian, openly calqued on the English one; in the second case, the result is that characters seem more assertive and self-confident than in the original.

*3.1.1. Question tags in *Monsters, Inc.**

As it concerns the film *Monsters, Inc.*, some examples of question tags can be found, with both the function of involving the participation of the interlocutor, as a form of politeness, and of diminishing the assertiveness of some affirmations. However, in some cases a question tag is used to highlight aggressiveness, as we will see in the examples.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
RECTUITER All right. Mr. Bile, is it?	Basta così, signor Bile, vero?	Basta così, signor Bile.

In this scene, the scarer Mr. Bile has just failed a scaring demonstration by getting scared himself instead of the kid. Thus, the recruiter stops him, saying the sentence above. In this case, the question tag has the function of involving Mr. Bile in the analysis of his mistakes and also making an interruption in a politer way. The Italian dubbed version retains the form of a question but recreates an unnatural structure, because of the fact that in Italian this construction usually presupposes an earlier affirmation that has to be confirmed by the interlocutor. In the Italian subtitled version, the question form is eliminated, creating a more natural Italian construction. If the translator had the purpose of maintaining the question form in the dubbing version, maybe a better translation could have been made by using the question “d'accordo?” or “va bene?” instead of “vero?”.



ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Come on, tell me. It's a new haircut, isn't it?	Avanti, dimmelo! / Nuovo taglio, no?	Dimmelo. Hai tagliato capelli.

This is a scene in which Mike tries to flatter Roz, the administrator of the floor in which Mike and Sullivan work, in order to distract her attention from the fact that, as always, he did not make his paperwork. Therefore, he is worried and in a position of inferiority, so the question tag has the function of expressing lack of confidence and assertiveness. He tries to appear submissive and tries to flatter her.

Again, the Italian dubbed version maintains the question form, through the word “no?”, while the subtitled version uses an affirmative form. This eliminates the lack of confidence and the submission that Mike’s sentence should convey, but it could be due to the time and space constraints that are proper of subtitling, which have to fit a maximum number of lines and characters.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE All you had to do was listen to me! Just once! But you didn't, did you?	Non dovevi far altro che ascoltare. Solo per una volta! Ma tu non l'hai fatto, vero?!	Ti bastava ascoltarmi! Per una volta! Ma tu non l'hai fatto, no?

In this scene, Mike is very angry because of his and Sullivan’s banning and he yells at his friend. In this case, therefore, the question tag does not convey the idea of submission and politeness, but, on the contrary, Mike uses it to speak to Sullivan in a direct way, forcing him to admit his mistakes.

Both the Italian dubbed and subtitled versions maintain the question, because this construction is used in angry speech in Italian too. The only criticism that could be done to the subtitled version is the choice of using the word “no” instead, for example, of the word “vero” used in the dubbed version. In fact, this word may not be fully natural in this context. However, as we already said, this choice was probably made because of space constraints, as the word “vero” is longer than “no”.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE You know what? Let's watch my favourite part again, shall we?	Facciamo così: ripassiamo la mia scena preferita, che ne dite?	Riguardiamo la mia parte preferita ...

Finally, this is the scene in which Mike and Sullivan record Mr. Waterhouse’s confession and make it play many times in front of the whole factory.

In this case, Mike’s question is almost ironical, and it has the purpose of involving the audience in the scandal they just discovered. Moreover, it also has the function of lessen the aggressiveness and of stating a certain degree of superiority

towards Mr. Waterhouse’s dishonesty. Italian dubbed translation “che ne dite?” seems to be appropriate, since the meaning of the question tag “shall we?” of the original is that of indirectly asking the audience’s opinion. On the contrary, the subtitled version again eliminates the question, but it succeeds in conveying the lack of assertiveness through punctuation: the dots, in fact, serve as a mean of suspending the sentence and thus making it less commanding.

3. 2. *Vocatives and Modes of Address*

Modes of address give the audience a hint to understand the type of relationship that exists between the participants in a conversation: indeed, through them, we can understand the degree of formality of the situation and the social position of each speaker. In fact, they change according to the register, which is the way of speaking that each interlocutor chose according to the communicative situation, the subject they are talking about (field), the relationship they have with their interlocutor (tenor) and the channel they are using (mode).

Modes of address are usually crystallized in speech routines and in fixed expressions, which are commonly known and shared by the members of a particular society. In general, English and Italian have similar forms, even if they can differ slightly in their meaning or there can be cases like the one of the pronoun “you/tu-lei”. As it is known, Italian distinguishes two degrees of formality between the informal “tu” and the formal “lei”. Moreover, Italian also has the courtesy pronoun “voi”, which was used more than “lei” in the past. Nowadays, it has almost disappeared in everyday language, so as in filmic language (make an exception films set in ancient times or in some regions of the South of Italy).

Translation problems arise when the hierarchy of the relationship is not clear in the original, so that a straightforward choice between “tu” and “lei” cannot be done easily. In these cases, anyway, the translator can observe all the other verbal and non-verbal features to make his/her choice.

Vocatives are a type of modes of address. Quirk and Greenbaum define them as “[a] nominal element added to a sentence or clause optionally, denoting the one or more people to whom it is addressed, and signalling the fact that it is addressed to them” (Minutella, 2009). They can be names or surnames with or without a title, family terms, endearments, honorifics or common substantives used as a vocative, such as

“man”, “dude”, “boy”. The last type is the one that usually gives more problems in translation, because of the fact that Italian language usually expresses familiarity by using “tu” and does not need an informal vocative: for this reason, a correlative word of the original often does not exist. This has created some translation routines that have become fixed and sound a little unnatural, such as the common translation “amico” for “man”.

In *Monsters, Inc.*, the translation of the unique form “you” with the Italian “tu” or “lei” does not create many problems, as the roles are quite fixed for the whole film. This is also the case of vocatives such as “Mr.” and “Mrs.”, which are used in a quite standard way. An exception is made with the vocative “Sir”, which is a little different from “Mr.”. In fact, the first one is a bit more formal than the second one and it is usually used by an inferior speaker towards a superior. However, they are both translated in Italian as “signore”, eliminating the difference of formality. In the film, there are some scenes in which Sullivan uses this vocative when speaking to Mr. Waternoose, his boss: in all these cases, it is translated with “signore”. The word is also used by Fungus, Randall’s helper, in a scene in which he wants to catch Randall’s attention.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
FUNGUS (ACC) Eh, uh, sir? RANDALL What?	(ACC) Eh, uh, scusa? Cosa?	Scusa? Cosa?

As we can see, not only the term “sir” is avoided in both Italian versions, but also the informal pronoun “tu” is used. This could be due to the fact that Fungus and Randall are work colleagues and, while in English the use of the word “sir” to catch the attention is quite common, in Italian that could have sounded a bit too formal.

In *Monsters, Inc.*, however, the most common vocatives are those made of common substantives, such as “pal” and “buddy”. The two main ways of treating them is to translate them with “amico” or to avoid using them at all. Here is an example in which “amico” is used:

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE You know, pal? She’s the one.	Sai, amico? È quella giusta.	Sai, amico? È quella giusta.

In another case, the vocative is eliminated, and the familiarity is retained through a more informal lexicon.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
SULLIVAN Great job buddy, we lost him!	Bel colpo! L’abbiamo seminato!	Bel colpo! L’abbiamo seminato.

As we can see, in this scene the vocative is eliminated, but the familiarity is replaced with a lexical choice: the fixed expression “bel colpo”, in fact, is quite informal and can substitute the vocative.

Moreover, it is also interesting to observe some vocatives that have been created purposefully for the film and are an example of creative language. Mike and his fiancée Celia, in fact, call each other by tender nicknames.

ORIGINAL VERSION	DUBBED VERSION	SUBTITLED VERSION
MIKE Oh, Schmoopsie-poo! CELIA Googley bear!	Oh, Cipollinottolo! Orsotto-potto!	Cipollottolina! Orsotto-potto!

They are creative because these vocatives are not existing words in English or Italian vocabulary. In English, more importance is given to the sound of words than to the meaning that they convey; in Italian, on the contrary, Celia’s name is translated on the basis of the word “cipolla” and Mike’s one conveys the idea of bear as in the original one. The result can be considered appropriate.

4. Conclusions

After giving a brief introduction of the concepts analysed, this paper has highlighted the importance of some elements in the original, dubbed and subtitled versions of *Monsters, Inc.*, analysing the translation strategies adopted and providing original translations.

For what concerns CSRs, in this paper the difficulty of their translation has emerged and are reflected the fact that references are often neutralized or chunked upwards, downward or (in the best of the cases) sideways, in the attempt of maintaining the effect for the target audience.

As it regards question tags, vocatives and modes of address, we can confirm that those are the items which most characterize orality. For this reason, they are very common in filmic language, whose aim is of recreating realistic speech, and most of all for animated films, because of the fact that they do not want to convey a formal reality.

Furthermore, it was clear that question tags were used mostly to show a dismissive or unsecure attitude, to engage another character in the speech or to stress rage. The general tendency of Italian dubbed version was that of maintaining the question tag, sometimes in an appropriate way, sometimes creating an unnatural expression; as it concerns the subtitled version, on the contrary, the tendency was that of eliminating the question tag, probably



because of space constraints. The final effect was not much different from the one of the original version, as Italian translators tried to convey the lost effect through other linguistic features.

Conversely, the translation of modes of address and vocatives was a little more complicated. The pronouns did not represent a problem, because there were not shifts in formality between the characters. Thus, the Italian versions respected the original version and showed certain stability in their translation strategy. Regarding English vocatives, they were sometimes translated by crystallized translation routines, thus creating an unnatural speech, or they were not translated and the familiarity was conveyed by the use of a more informal lexicon. Finally, as it concerns creative nicknames, Italian versions were faithful and equally creative as the original.

As dialects are concerned, some of them are not present (such as idiolects or temporal dialects) while others are completely flattened (such as geographical dialects), reflecting the Italian translational trend that goes against the strong correlation between the spoken language and space variation in Italian, to use Pavesi's words (2005:37). As far as other dialects are concerned (standard/non-standard and social dialects), these are strongly intertwined with the register used. The latter, in line with the Italian trend, does not seem to be properly rendered in the dubbed and subtitled version.

Generally speaking, we can affirm that the subtitled version is usually more standardizing than the dubbed one. This is due mostly of its being a written form, and therefore more linked to the writing standard.

To conclude this paper with a curious fact that confirms the complexity and the difficulties that the film provides in translation, it could be funny to notice that 23-19, i.e. the code cried by a monster when George is found with a baby sock on his fur, may refer to "w" (the 23rd letter of the English alphabet) and "s" (the 19th letter of the English alphabet), which could stand for "white sock".

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