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Audiovisual translation: a subtitling proposal for
“The Silent Child”

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Abstract

“Audiovisual translation: a subtitling proposal for *The Silent Child*” is the final thesis of a master’s degree in specialized translation and focuses on the translation of an English short film and the consequent creation of its Italian subtitles.

Based on the assumption that over the past century the audiovisual industry has become one of the most profitable sectors worldwide, the first chapter of this work offers an introduction to its history and diffusion. Moreover, it provides a detailed explanation of the term “audiovisual product” and presents the different forms of audiovisual translations, with particular emphasis on the subtitling process, which is the main topic of the thesis.

The second chapter focuses on the short film *The Silent Child*, providing an overview of its plot, the filmmakers involved, and its language features. It addresses the film's exploration of deafness and the integration issues faced by deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals in society, analyzing its reception by audiences. Finally, since the film’s dialogue list was not available, the chapter also includes a transcription of the original English script along with its Italian translation. The final part explores the translation challenges and discusses the different choices made in the translation process.

As mentioned before, the main purpose of this work is to create the Italian subtitles for the short film previously introduced. The third and final chapter is dedicated to this task. It begins with an introduction to Subtitle Edit, the software used for creating the subtitles. Following this, the Italian subtitles are presented, accompanied by a detailed examination of the patterns and norms that guided the final result – in accordance with the spatial and temporal constraints of this practice as illustrated in the first chapter.

Ultimately, some concluding remarks are included, discussing the difficulties encountered and the overall considerations developed during the realization of the project.

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Introduction

The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution represented an epoch-making change within the technological and industrial fields. The already huge film industry has been positively affected by the technological advancements that have led to the global diffusion of audiovisual products. Nowadays, this sector sees the USA in a dominant position, alongside China and Japan, which have emerged only in recent years thanks to a new genre: anime. Consequently, problems related to linguistic differences have arisen: the need to find a way to connect different countries and their respective cultures has become urgent and crucial for both producers and viewers. On the other hand, the direct importers of these products – represented by countries such as Italy, Spain, Germany, and so on – have developed a strong and renowned subtitling and dubbing industry. These two realities have given birth to an industry that provides jobs to thousands of people around the world and produces billions of dollars in profit every year.

However, contrary to popular belief, audiovisual translation does not involve only dubbing and subtitling but includes many different practices such as revoicing, audio description, voice-over, narration, and so on. Moreover, despite being practices carried out by non-professionals in the field, fandubbing and fansubbing are becoming increasingly popular among audiences, especially for specific product genres. All the practices introduced share the same final goal: to make the source product understandable for an audience that belongs to a different culture and speaks a different language from the original one. The only exception is subtitling for deaf or hard of hearing people; Chapter 1 will provide an overall illustration of the variations compared to regular subtitles. On the other hand, the differences among the above-mentioned practices are related to the realization costs, the software needed, and the type of product they are intended for. For example, audio description may be suitable for a documentary or a museum tour but not for a film or a TV program, which usually employ dubbing or subtitling.

It is precisely on this subject that the present composition is focused: a subtitling proposal for the British short film, *The Silent Child*. The first chapter opens with a general overview of the history of the audiovisual industry to understand the reasons that led to the creation of today's huge industrial giant. The second part of the same chapter then illustrates the different forms of audiovisual translation briefly introduced in the last paragraph, and finally, it closely considers subtitling. First, a definition of this practice will be provided, and secondly, it will be analyzed according to the different existing categories. The last sections will then display the current norms that regulate subtitle creation, not only from the point of view of technical parameters such as maximum length, maximum number

of lines, position, etc., but also in relation to punctuation marks employed and conventions regarding the linguistic varieties of a specific language. Finally, a focus on the figure of the subtitler and the work field surrounding this profession will be included.

The second chapter of this thesis will first offer some general considerations regarding the British short film: the production company is illustrated, the filmmakers are presented, and the plot is described in detail. Great importance is given to the Deaf Community as well as to the positions of the Italian and British governments on the matter, thus introducing the issue to the readers and familiarizing them with it. It is crucial to consider these aspects to better understand not only the issue of deafness – which is a delicate topic nowadays – but also the thesis itself and the decisions made during the creation of subtitles, which cannot overlook the content. Moreover, according to the principles of subtitling and translation in general, one of the key points not to be neglected is the delivery of the original content to the target audience. In this kind of video, the producers aimed precisely at sensitizing people to deafness. For this reason, having the opportunity to accompany the translation and the subsequent subtitling process with a commentary is important to focus on each aspect in detail. Finally, the last section of the chapter will include the transcription of the original dialogue together with its Italian translation. This will be accompanied by an explanation of the different translation techniques adopted and some considerations regarding the linguistic aspects in order to notice and better understand the variations employed while subtitling.

To conclude, the third and final chapter will open with a detailed analysis of the target audience identified by the producers of the original English product, which will then be compared to the target audience of the translated short film. This aims to make explicit how the viewer can significantly impact the choices made in both translation and subtitling. The second section of the chapter will provide a detailed explanation of Subtitle Edit, the software used to create the subtitles, and the steps leading to the final result. Finally, the Italian subtitles are included, along with an accurate description of the techniques adopted. However – as one can realize from reading the explanations – it may be impossible to perfectly adhere to all existing norms simultaneously in every subtitle. Consequently, some subtitles may represent exceptions, and the reasons for these compromises will be discussed as well. Lastly, given that there is a great variety of techniques to employ in subtitling, the final section of this chapter is dedicated to illustrating those that will not be applied during this process.

Apart from the mere practical realization of the subtitles for the short film, the primary aim of this thesis is to illustrate the different steps of the entire process and highlight the difficulties and obstacles that may arise. The goal is to demonstrate that, contrary to popular belief, the subtitling process is neither a mere transcription of the original dialogue nor simply its translation. These are just the first

two steps of the process, but in order to achieve an acceptable final result, many other practices must be employed.

At the very end of the dissertation, a list of all the consulted sources will be provided, and in the concluding section, the results of this process will be discussed, along with the confirmation or rejection of the thesis presented above.

Chapter 1

Audiovisual Translation

1.1 History and diffusion of audiovisual products

The term ‘audiovisual’ is used to refer to something that involves seeing and hearing¹ so – under the umbrella category ‘audiovisual products’ – we can include films, videos, television programs and so on. Nowadays, the audiovisual industry is rapidly evolving on a global level thanks to the diffusion of the new technologies and the advent of the fourth Industrial Revolution – which is developing to its fullest the already enormous technological changes introduced by the third Industrial Revolution in the middle of the last century. However, how and when did this branch begin to develop?

In 1891, the newly established Italian Edison Company invented the Kinetoscope through which – one person at a time – could look at moving pictures. It had such a great success that the Lumière brothers further developed it creating the Cinématographe: a camera, a projector and a film all in - once². At first only black and white movies were produced and they lasted only a few minutes. Moreover, they did not have synchronized dialogues, so they were silent; however, the audience used to actively participate by reading lectures.

As regards the sound then, the first tool able to record was invented by the French Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville, however, it could record but not reproduce the sound. It was later improved and thanks to Thomas Edison the so called “phonograph” was created at the beginning of the 1880s. The first movie with synchronized dialogue was “The Jazz Singer” and dates back to 1927. Simultaneously – at the beginning of the 19th century – the world witnessed the birth of several film industries whose success grew remarkably in a very short time. Some years later – precisely at the end of the 1920s – the television was invented and it challenged the status cinema had gained over the years, especially towards the 1960s when the first colored TV programs were released. On the one hand, television was considered inferior in terms of prestige, but on the other cinema was significantly more expensive to produce. Anyhow – despite the fact that this debate has never come to a permanent solution – in the present days the audiovisual industry represents one of the most

¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/audiovisual?q=audiovisual> (Last Accessed: 02/05/2024)

² <https://www.scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk/objects-and-stories/very-short-history-of-cinema> (Last Accessed: 6/03/2024)

profitable and developed sectors of the economy worldwide. The turning point occurred precisely between the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium with the spread of portable devices such as MP3s or DVDs. Moreover, the invention of Bluetooth and USB allowed the immediate transfer of videos, music, photos and so on from one device to another, thus incrementing exponentially the spread and the diffusion of audiovisual products. Some years later then, online platforms such as YouTube and Netflix allowed the unlimited reproduction of a product from every device at any time and this marked another huge breakthrough in the history of audiovisual industry. Within this sector – according to a research conducted in 2021 by the Centre of Economic and Social Research Manlio Rossi-Doria, Centre of Excellence and Roma Tre University – in 2019 the USA still held the dominance in terms of audiovisual products trade, with the 45% of exports and the 40% of imports. On the contrary, Italy’s position is marginal³.

In parallel, indeed, the sector offers nowadays a huge amount of job positions considering the number of people that the realization of a film requires, starting from the actors, the director, the sound technician and so. And then if the film is successful and released among different countries this implies the need of other professionals to realize the dubbed or the subtitled version.

In the current days, audiovisual products represent a considerable part of our daily life since they are used to study, as a form of entertainment, as a tutorial to learn how to do specific everyday tasks and so on. But what do they consist of? Audiovisual products are a combination of two different channels: aural and visual, which in turn can be divided into verbal and non-verbal. The aural verbal channel includes for example dialogues and song lyrics, so all those elements that can be spoken. The aural non-verbal channel, on the other hand, includes the background music, sound effects and so on. For what concerns the visual verbal channel then, it represents the written text included in the image: street signs, newspaper titles etc. And finally, the visual non-verbal channel identifies images and symbols.

1.2 Forms of Audiovisual Translation

As one may infer from the title, this section will deal with the different forms of audiovisual translation – often referred to as AVT. However, before analyzing them in detail a definition of what the expression “audiovisual translation” means will be provided.

³ https://www.ice.it/it/sites/default/files/inline-files/Rapporto%20audiovisivi%20ICE%20en_1.pdf (2021:16,17) (Last Accessed: 15/03/2024)

Audiovisual translation is concerned with the transfer of multimodal and multimedia texts into another language and/or culture (González, 2009: 13). With the term “multimodal” we refer to something that consists of the combination of several modes; in this specific case multimodal products consist of a compound of language, image, sound, color and music. On the other hand, the term “multimedia” concerns the way through which these products are delivered. To directly quote Negroponte – an American architect and one of the current biggest experts in the field of hi-tech – “the panoply of semiotic modes is delivered to the viewer through various media in a synchronized manner, with the screen playing a coordinating role in the presentation” (Negroponte, 1991).⁴

As already mentioned in the previous section, the origins of cinema date back to the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. During the first period, and especially after the First World War, the American film industry held the dominance on the global scale, and this inevitably entailed a linguistic problem for other nations. At this stage the first form of audiovisual translation appeared: intertitles, i.e. written text included in the film. They were placed between one frame and the other and the aim was to provide the viewer with some information regarding the character’s thoughts and personality and what was happening on the scene, including special and temporal references. Later in time this technique was replaced with the so-called “in-house commentators” who overlaid the original dialogue with their voices. These figures performed the same function as the intertitles, but were heavily criticized since they also added rumors about the movie and the actors.

Towards the end of the 1920s then, the ancestor of the modern dubbing was invented. It was known as “post-synchronization” and consisted of substituting the original sound of specific scenes with the dialogue translated in the target language. Simultaneously, technological advancements allowed the film industries to further develop also the old intertitles “[superimposing] titles straight onto the film strip images through optical and mechanical means” (Ivarsson 2002) synchronizing them with the film’s dialogues.

Being the practice of subtitling the main subject matter of the present thesis, it will be discussed in detail hereafter; however, under the category of audiovisual translation techniques they are included also other processes worth analyzing.

We can mention first of all dubbing that – together with subtitling – represents one of the two mainstream forms of AVT: it consists of replacing the original dialogue of the audiovisual product with the dialogue recorded in the target language. However, some constraints need to be respected in terms of synchrony given that the primary aim of this technique is to make the viewers believe that

⁴ Baker M. and Saldanha G. 2009 *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London and New York: Routledge

the characters are truly speaking their language in the first place. As a consequence, three types of synchronies must be employed: lip synchrony, isochrony and kinetic synchrony⁵. The first kind is to adjust the words pronounced by the target speaker to the lips movement of the characters – where the expression “target speaker” is used to refer to the person who records the translated dialogues. Isochrony then, refers to the duration of the original speech and the target sound that must coincide; and finally, kinetic synchrony regards the choice of the actors’ voices, that is to say, they should suit the physical appearance of the characters speaking. Dubbing is a highly expensive and time-consuming practice to adopt, but on the other hand, it enables the viewer to follow the audiovisual product – be it a video or a movie – without dividing his or her attention between the images and the written subtitles. Furthermore, dubbing is not strictly dependent on the spatial and temporal constraints of subtitling; consequently, the translators is not obliged to apply as many restrictions as he or she would in subtitling, thus keeping a substantial number of features that characterize the spoken language.

However, this is not the only difference it displays in reference to subtitling. In fact, dubbing requires neither a deep knowledge of a foreign language nor translation competences, given that it is not the dubber the one who carries out the translation process of the original script. Moreover, when subtitling a movie, it is usually the professional who includes the subtitles on the screen, since the software is quite simple and easy to work with. The dubber instead, relies on a dubbing agency because – apart from being very complex and expensive – it requires the usage of specific tools that only a professional in the field is able to employ. The other big difference is the fact that to become a dubber it is essential to take acting classes in order to have a good diction and to learn how to read the script as an actor. A dubber indeed, should pretend to be the real actor and the viewer is not supposed to realize that the film has been dubbed, it should sound as natural as possible. For this reason, it is very common for dubbers to have a voice coach.

Ultimately, due to the fact that it’s very expensive and difficult to realize, this form of audiovisual translation is especially employed for the production of movies and famous TV series, rather than videos uploaded on online platforms such as YouTube. In this case the use of subtitles is preferred. In addition – as for the other forms of audiovisual translation – also dubbing is more employed in specific countries rather than in others. Currently, the biggest film industries known as the “Big Five” are Columbia Pictures, Universal Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Warner Bros and Walt Disney Pictures, and they are all located in the USA. As a consequence, the majority of the film produced worldwide employs English as the original language. This implies that in English speaking countries

⁵ Díaz Cintas J. and Remael A. 2021 *Subtitling Concepts and Practices*. London and New York: Routledge

it is not necessary to make use of techniques such as dubbing or subtitling that would rather be adopted in those countries where the film is released as foreign production. Another two big producers of audiovisual products are China and Japan, thanks to the success that the genre known as “Anime” is obtaining. Those countries indeed, are not so famous for their dubbing or subtitling industry as for example Italy would be, where we can count with actors and dubbers that have lent their voices to some of the most famous actors of the world. Among the most important dubbing and subtitling agencies in Italy indeed, we mention LaserFilm that – apart from the Big Five – works with some of the most important industries of the sector such as Netflix, Medusa Cinema and the two main Italian companies: RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana – in particular with RAI Cinema – and Mediaset.

Among the other forms of AVT we can also find voiceover, narration and audio description. Voiceover consists of recording the dialogue in the target language and overlap it with the original one; for this reason, it’s common to think about it as a synonym of dubbing. There are some differences, though. First of all, the original track is played but after a few seconds the volume turns down so that at the same time the audience can listen to the pre-recorded translated speech. On the contrary, in dubbing this doesn’t occur and the viewer listens only to the dubbed version. This technique then, is used especially in those productions that don’t need the lip-synchronization such as documentaries.

Narration, on the other hand, is a faithful summary of the original script and differs from the voiceover in that here the original track is completely removed.

Finally audio description – that derives from narration – is a relatively recent technique designed specifically for a visually impaired audience. It consists of summarizing the dialogue in the source language providing at the same time an exhaustive account of the relevant occurrences on the scene – including the characters’ physical appearance, their facial expressions, signs and every other element that is fundamental for a correct comprehension of the plot.

In conclusion, it is important to mention fandubbing and fansubbing⁶ as well. Both practices are carried out not by professionals in the field but by amateurs and – as one may deduce from the terms – the first one relates to the dubbing process, while the last one concerns the realization of subtitles. Especially with regard to fansubbing, it was invented between the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, concurrently with the global diffusion of the Japanese film and animation production, commonly known as anime. Fans of this kind of AVT products were driven by the belief that dubbing and subtitling professionals – due to the numerous constraints their work imposed – were not able to truly and completely maintain all that culture specific features that create what can

⁶ Pérez-González 2014 *Audiovisual Translation Theories, Methods and Issues*. London and New York: Routledge

be defined as the magical Japanese aura. To overcome this problem, they decided not to take into consideration the subtitling norms and create subtitles according to their necessities. Indeed, fansubbers usually don't respect the standard subtitles position, the length, the duration, the minimum and maximum number of characters and so on. They simply translate the original script trying to display as many details as possible in order to create the same magical flavor in the target culture that the original production created in the source culture. Besides, at the top of the screen they also add explanations of the plot and personal commentaries. The aim behind this practice is to offer the viewer the possibility to completely immerse in the Japanese culture and understand what is generally seen as “the other” from a western perspective.

1.3 Subtitling

As previously mentioned, together with dubbing, subtitling is one of the two techniques most employed worldwide. In this practice, a written text is projected on the screen while an audiovisual product is played – where the written text refers precisely to the “subtitles”, also known as captions.

1.3.1 Classification of subtitles

Subtitles can be classified according to different parameters: the language, whether they are offline or online, the display mode, the technical parameters, whether they are edited or verbatim and the methods of projection and distribution⁷.

According to the first distinction subtitles may be divided into intralingual and interlingual. Intralingual subtitles are made up of a text written in the same language than the one that is spoken throughout the film or video, and may display different functions. Traditionally they were created specifically for those who were not native speakers of a language – such as migrants – in order to help them improve their language skills. Nowadays they serve also as a didactic tool for foreign language learning. However, in these two practices the conventional rules of subtitling are not always obeyed. Indeed, they are meant to be a help for the audience who is supposed to have an even basic knowledge of the language and above all is supposed to hear the original. As a consequence, their position is not fixed, not all the spoken language features are corrected and the number of characters for each line is increased, thus improving the reading and comprehension skills of the viewer. Analyzing the subtitles with educational purpose we can finally mention those that serve to neutralize

⁷ Díaz Cintas J. and Remael A. 2021 *Subtitling Concepts and Practices*. London and New York: Routledge

the strong dialects or accents spoken by people belonging to the same country but coming from a different region. Further, intralingual subtitles conduct another main function that address deaf and hard of hearing people, indeed – if relevant to the plot comprehension – they contain not only the script of the dialogues but also information regarding the music and the sounds. The way in which the characters talk is defined as well to convey to the reader the emotions as well; usually this information is included between parenthesis at the beginning of the line so that the reader may imagine it with the right intonation. Moreover, since the audience cannot distinguish between the different characters' voices, the subtitler usually indicates who's speaking, so that the reader can easily follow the turn-taking of the dialogue, either by identifying each person with a different color, or by indicating the character's name at the beginning of each line. To conclude, among this category we can find subtitles with an entertainment aim as well, for example the transcription of a song lyrics used mainly in animation movies or musicals, thus making the audience feel involved and participate. Regarding interlingual subtitles then, they are a transcription of the source dialogue in the target language and they can be monolingual or bilingual. The first type is the most common one and it's frequently used when the film or video we are watching hasn't been dubbed, so we may still hear the original track while reading the subtitle in our own language. On the other hand, bilingual subtitles are usually employed in those country where two languages are spoken in the same percentage, such as Canada. In this case, the subtitle appears on the screen in both languages at the same time: one line displays the subtitle in one language and the following in the other. However, the rules regarding the length and the space are not ignored. As a consequence, the number of characters and the space available are strongly constrained and this implies a deep intervention on the subtitler's side.

Subtitles are then classified according to whether they are online or offline. Offline subtitles are the most employed and are realized after the audiovisual product has been produced and before its release to the public. They are the result of a very precise work of a subtitler and follow the typical norms regarding the spatial and temporal constraints: they end up being perfectly synchronized with the spoken dialogue without overcoming the grammatical, syntactical and lexical features which are the outcome of thoughtful choices. Contrarily, online subtitles are created simultaneously with the staging of the product. In some occasions they may be semi live, that is to say, the subtitler pre-prepares a transcription of the script without considering the timing and then adjusts them while the film is projected. In other cases they are live – or realtime – that is, they are generated as the video is played.

As regards the display mode, subtitle can appear in three different ways. The most frequently used are the pop-up subtitles that show up on the screen as a block and remain visible until the next subtitle

appears. Then we have cumulative subtitles which are used when there is the necessity of a clear distinction between the speakers or when the director wants to avoid anticipating information in order to create suspense. In this case, each line appears synchronized with the speaker but they all disappear together at the end of the frame. In such circumstances however, sometimes the maximum number of characters on the screen is not considered and subtitles of more than two lines are allowed as well. Finally, scrolling subtitles are the less common since they make the reading much more complicated for the viewer. Indeed, they appear word by word or in blocks of sentences and they are a continuous flow on the screen.

According to the technical parameters then, subtitles may be divided in open and closed. Open subtitles are those included within the video or film, so they are created together with it and they are meant to translate those elements belonging to the visual-verbal channel that are relevant to the plot, such as road signs, newspaper titles and so on. For this reason, they cannot be deactivated. On the other hand, with the expression “closed subtitles” we refer to the previously described interlingual or intralingual subtitles that are created after the release of the audiovisual product. In fact, they can be activated and removed based on the viewer’s necessities.

The expression “edited subtitle” identifies those subtitles that are created according to the norms, so their grammatical, syntactical and lexical content is modified taking into consideration the spatial and temporal constraints. They are, indeed, the most common form. Verbatim subtitles, in contrast, are the mere and literal transcription of the oral dialogue, as a consequence is the less employed practice and the one viewers tend to criticize because – not considering the limits – it usually forces the reader to rise his or her reading speed.

The last category classifies subtitles in relation to the methods of projection and distribution and the two parameters have an influence on each other. However, in order to analyze and understand them one should have a deeper technological knowledge; for this reason, the present dissertation is going to simply provide a list of the techniques used to create them and the methods of distribution according to the information contained in “Subtitling Concepts and Practices” written by J. Díaz Cintas and A. Remael⁸, without discussing them in detail. Among the methods of projection – following a chronological order – we can find: mechanical and thermal, photochemical, optical, laser, electronic, 3D, immersive. Nowadays the most employed methods are laser, electronic and 3D. Finally, the media of distribution include: cinema, video, DVD, VCD and Blu Ray, television and internet.

⁸ Díaz Cintas J. and Remael A. 2021 *Subtitling Concepts and Practices*. London and New York: Routledge

1.3.2 Spatial and temporal constraints

As mentioned earlier subtitling is not a mere transcription of the original dialogue and it has to obey to a series of different rules, and – as one can infer from its title – this subsection is going to offer an overall presentation of them.

First of all, it is important to highlight the fact that – according to the two scholars Zoe De Linde and Neil Kay – “subtitles can deliver 43 percent less text than the spoken dialogue they derive from” (De Linde and Kay, 1999)⁹. This is due to the fact that – depending on the average reading speed – the text has to be reduced to adapt to the limited space and time available. Moreover, the original dialogue of a video or a film – despite being read from a written script – belongs to the oral language because it should sound real and spontaneous. On the other hand, the subtitles follow the rules of the written language. This means that, during the subtitling process there is the need to correct the possible linguistic errors and the anacoluthon – in other words, when a person starts a sentence but then gets interrupted by someone else or gets distracted and starts the discourse again leaving the first sentence incomplete. This cannot be included in the subtitles because of the spatial and temporal limits discussed below. As a consequence, the subtitler will make use of different techniques to adjust these errors and produce a final version of the dialogue in a standard target language.

As for the Italian subtitles, the maximum number of characters per line is included in a range that goes between 35 and 40 – involving spaces between words – given that normally a person can read between 12 to 15 characters per second. This datum can reach the 17 characters if we’re watching specific kinds of products such as online videos and tutorials, since we are supposed to be able to stop the video to read as much as it is necessary. Generally, these conventions are the same ones followed also for English and Spanish subtitles, since the language structure is not so different between one and the other in terms of words and sentence composition. Regarding the position then, subtitles should occupy the bottom of the screen and precisely they should be positioned near the end of the so-called “safe area” – that is, that part of the screen that does not undergo the risk of being cut to adapt to the display dimensions of the different broadcasting platforms. To be more precise, according to the instructions provided by Rai – the Italian state-owned television – concerning the creation of subtitles for hard of hearing people, the whole screen is divided into lines and the subtitles should be located in line 22.¹⁰ Moreover, the subtitle needs to be at the center of the screen so that the viewer doesn’t need to move the sight away from the images and can more easily focus on both elements without losing information. Finally, the maximum number of lines that subtitles may occupy is two,

⁹ Baker M. and Saldanha G. 2009 *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London and New York: Routledge

¹⁰ *Norme e convenzioni essenziali per la composizione dei sottotitoli televisivi per non udenti a cura di Sevizio Sottotitoli-RAI*. Febbraio 2016

both in agreement with Italian, English and Spanish rules. However, in those cases where the subtitle consists of only one line of text, this would be placed in the second one in order to only partially overlap with the image. On the other hand, there are no rules regarding the minimum number of characters per line; however, it isn't so common to find subtitles that are made up of only one or two words. An example could be a short answer to a previous question that simply required a "yes" or "no" in return; although in those cases – if possible – the subtitler tends to place this word together with the following of previous subtitle so as to obtain more space and time and not wasting them for a single word subtitle. In addition, in general terms one subtitle represents an entire sentence – or a part of it – pronounced by a single person; despite that, if the sentence is very short and there is some space and time available to include the next one – as just mentioned – the subtitler should take advantage of that. However, in such circumstances the two sentences must occupy two different lines to distinguish who's speaking, otherwise the listener will get confused looking at a text that seems to be pronounced by a single person while listening to two different people talking. What's more, the lines have to be introduced by a hyphen to indicate the speaker.

As concerns the duration, obviously it depends on the number of characters, but – even if it's very short – the subtitle usually remains on the screen for a minimum of 1.5 or 2 seconds.

Yet, if one pays attention, currently we are getting used to see another type of subtitles on screen that violates all the norms we have discussed so far. For example, when a character on the movie receives an email or a message – if it isn't read out loud – there is this increasingly tendency to include its text in an icon that reminds us to the chat's layout on our phones. As revealed in advance it still belongs to the category of subtitles but it's a more creative and captivating way to render the visual verbal channel and usually it is part of the original production, that is, it does not belong to the process of subtitling realized after the product's release. As a consequence, when creating interlingual subtitle to a foreign movie, the subtitler sees him or herself forced to insert an extra subtitle to translate that image in any case.

Another form of subtitle that is becoming more and more frequent is represented by the text usually placed at the bottom of the screen on the right or on left and indicating a precise time and place. This technique is used to specify the setting of the movie when it's not evident or when the film director makes use of a flashback or a flashforward. In this case, if the text is written in English and it's comprehensible worldwide – such as in the case "London 1965" – the expert may decide to leave it in the source language without creating a new subtitle to translate it. On the other hand – if the setting is indicated in another language that may not be globally understood – the subtitler tends to translate it in the target language.

Further, normally nowadays we are used to watch color movies and videos, so usually subtitles are written in white color to easily contrast with the images below. In the past, with black and white productions, subtitles were written in yellow color. However, this particular convention may be applied only with regular subtitles and not with subtitles specifically address to deaf or hard of hearing people. As already mentioned in chapter 1.3.1 this peculiar kind of subtitles tend to follow different rules regarding also other aspects –apart from the colors – that will be discussed hereafter. As previously pointed out indeed, the main goal of subtitles addressing deaf or hard of hearing people is to provide them not only with a transcription of what is said orally by the speakers, but also the essential information regarding the characters and the general details crucial to understand the scene. In order to do this, one of the first thing to remember is the fact that those people can't hear the dialogue, so it's obviously important to transcribe them but also to distinguish between the different characters speaking; otherwise, the viewer would think that it is always the same person talking and this would contrast with the images where people take turn. Moreover, subtitles don't always perfectly match the scene and the turn taking, so they would not be able to establish the right connection in any case. To solve this problem, professional make use of colors. This thesis will directly refer to the already mentioned guidelines provided by Rai that will be reported as follows. However, a brief clarification is necessary: previously on the same subsection it has been stated that subtitles normally don't have a background color, they contrast directly with the images; nevertheless, in this case where the subtitle is written in a different color there is the need to add a background – otherwise the viewer won't be able to read it – which could be in different color depending on who's talking, as we are going to see below. For the human beings, usually the background is black and the text is written in white, cyan, green and magenta, precisely in this order according to their importance – however, they are all among the lead actors. On the other hand, for the non-protagonists the yellow color is used. For all those characters that are non-human being – such as in animation programs – or that belong to sci-fi genres, there exist different options: a black background with blue, red or magenta text; a blue background with a white, cyan or green text; a green background and a blue text; and finally, a cyan background and a blue text. Lastly, a yellow background with a blue text is used for sound effects crucial to the plot, which must also be spelled with the first letter in capital letters and don't include punctuation marks. ¹¹

1.3.3 Line division and punctuation

The spatial and temporal limits described above imply at the same time the necessity of splitting the subtitle into two lines and sometimes also dividing the same sentence or discourse into different

¹¹ *Norme e convenzioni essenziali per la composizione dei sottotitoli televisivi per non udenti a cura di Sevizio Sottotitoli-RAI. Febbraio 2016*

subtitles. However, this cannot be done randomly: as every other decision, it must follow specific rules.

First of all, minimal phrases should never be split. With the term minimal phrases, we refer to those phrases that consist of a subject, a verb and potentially a complement; this type of sentences can be recognized by the fact that – if we remove all the other elements – they make sense on their own. For example, the sentence “Yesterday night I went to the cinema with my best friend” is composed of a complement that indicates when the action took place, that is “yesterday night”, a subject that would be the first personal pronoun I, a verb in the past simple form, that is “went”, another complement that indicates where the subject went, that is “to the cinema”, and finally a complement that specifies that there was another person together with the subject that is “my best friend”. Consequently, the sentence is not a minimal phrase because two of the complements are not strictly necessary to understand the action occurred and, in particular, they would be: “yesterday night” and “with my best friend”. Indeed, the minimal phrase in this case is “I went to the cinema” and if this phrase had to fit into a subtitle, it could not be divided in two different lines or in two different subtitles.

Ideally, each of the subtitle’s line should correspond to a sentence; however, we will see that this is not always possible. Consequently, the important aspects to consider when dividing a sentence are listed below.

We should never divide a subject from a verb or an auxiliary verb and the main one it refers to: the correct way to divide the following sentence, for example, would be “Hanna had studied a lot for the exam;
 however, she didn’t pass it”. Otherwise, it would be wrong if we divided it as follows: “Hanna had studied a lot for the exam; however, she
 didn’t pass it”.

Other important aspects to pay attention to are not to divide a noun from its adjective or an adverb from the adjective. For example, we should divide the following sentence in this way: “I bought a pair of red shoes
 and I really like them”. The break could never be placed between “red” and “shoes” or between “really” and “like”.

Then, a subtitler should never separate an article from the noun it refers to or a verb from the preposition that follows it. In a sentence such as “The tickets were very expensive but the game paid off” the division should be between “expensive” and “but”, because they are two independent phrases. We could never divide “the” and “game” or “paid” and “off”, and if the two sentences don’t fit into the same subtitle, we should find another solution.

Finally, another rule to bear in mind is that we should never divide single words with a hyphen.

As long as Italian and English punctuation rules are concerned then, their differences and similarities will be listed hereafter, especially in reference to the subtitling process.

Regarding the full stop, its use is identical in both languages: its function is to indicate a long pause and to divide a long and complex sentence. It is more frequent in English rather than in Italian due to the fact that English phrases tend to be shorter and less complex. However, for what concerns the subtitling process, the most common tendency is not to use it. Indeed – despite the fact that subtitles follow the rules of the written language where it is included at the end of every sentence – a subtitle never ends with a full stop, unless there is the specific need to divide the sentence. Nonetheless, it's a rare phenomenon since in any case two different sentences tend to be placed in two different subtitles or in two different lines, if possible.

The other frequently used punctuation mark is comma. Both in Italian and in English it's used to divide two coordinated phrases – that is those that are linked by a coordinating conjunction such as but, or, and – and to separate two elements of a list. The big difference between English and Italian is that – while in Italian it's also used to separate two subordinated sentences – in English that would be a considerable grammatical error. Indeed, phrases introduced by a subordinating conjunction should be divided by a semicolon or – if we are dealing with an aside – it should be introduced by an en dash. In subtitles, however, this difference is not so evident because punctuation marks such as full stops, commas, parenthesis, semicolons and so on, are rarely used.

For what regards the colons then, they are employed to introduce a list of elements, to specify the meaning of something, to introduce an example and so on.

Finally, in relation to the less used punctuation marks such as the question and the exclamative mark and the ellipsis, the only subtitling convention that distinguishes them with respect to the ordinary written language, is the fact that they are usually preceded by a single space. Moreover, among the ones illustrated before, the ellipsis is the most rarely used in written text because it displays a specific function: it's employed to highlight the fact that the sentence has been interrupted by the speaker himself or by someone else, but this is more common in the oral language. In subtitles indeed – unless this phenomenon is necessary to create a specific context on the whole, as a particular case illustrated in the last chapter – it should possibly be avoided in order to respect the norms of the written language and save up some space.

As regards the Italian subtitles for deaf or hard of hearing people, the conventions in relation to the above illustrated marks are the same; however, they make use of other marks as well to fulfil different

necessities that regular subtitles usually don't observe. First of all, the symbols < and > are frequently employed in order to indicate those lines pronounced by people that are not visible in the current scene, that is, voice-overs. And this is a big difference with respect to regular subtitles because people that don't suffer from deafness can understand the situation from the particular tone used so it is not necessary to highlight that is a voice-over.

The second great difference is the recurrent use of the sharp to identify the fact that the text included in the subtitle refers to a song. It is placed at the beginning of every subtitle but only at the end of the last one.¹² In this case as well the symbol is preceded by a space.

One punctuation mark whose adoption that is common both to the regular subtitles and the ones specifically dedicated to deaf people is the hyphen. This symbol is employed in order to distinguish two lines pronounced by two different people within the same subtitles.

1.3.4 Linguistic variation and cultural references

As introduced in the first part of this chapter, linguistic variation is at the basis of the audiovisual translation. This practice indeed, wouldn't exist if the audiovisual products didn't spread all over the world. Translation into a different language is in fact the primary aim of AVT. However, there exist other forms of linguistic variation that belong to the same language: marked language and dialects, slangs, taboo words etc. They will be illustrated in this subsection since they may represent a considerable challenge when it comes to subtitling.

The expression "marked language" refers to a way of speaking that doesn't correspond to the standard language. This phenomenon includes differences from a lexical point of view and when it comes to accents and intonation as well. Ideally, every language has its own neutral version that is characterized by no particular accent or slangs, and the use of standard words that, very trivially, are those that can be found in the dictionaries. However, the vastness of a territory where that language is spoken implies the fact that the population does not employ the same version unanimously. Each area indeed, has its own accent and its own expressions that have been influenced by a different cultural and historical background or by the geographical proximity with another country and with another language. One only has to look at the case of Italy: despite the small surface of its territory, it's perhaps one of the countries with the highest number of dialects that are actually spoken in the everyday life, not only by elderly people but from every bracket of the population. Consequently, this becomes a real challenge while subtitling because dialects not only immediately identify a person according to

¹² *Norme e convenzioni essenziali per la composizione dei sottotitoli televisivi per non udenti a cura di Sevizio Sottotitoli-RAI. Febbraio 2016*

his or her geographical origin, but also in relation to the personality and above all, customs. This indeed brings a large contribution to the whole character creation: through the physical appearance and through his or her way of speaking indeed, the viewer can automatically conceive a specific idea of that character without the need for it to be made explicit in the script. And here resides the challenge: the general conventions of subtitling usually impose the adoption of a standard language. As a consequence, the skill of a subtitler is precisely the ability to understand to what extent the dialect is important in relation to the whole film and character's depiction, in order to create adequate subtitles and find a balance between a completely neutral language – that would lose the character's features – and the usage of the dialect throughout the whole movie that would compromise its comprehension by a great part of the audience.

As for the slang, this term may refer to two different phenomena. On the one hand it is commonly associated to those expressions pronounced mainly by young people and teenagers. They usually are the result of a calque from another language's words, usually English – that nowadays spread worldwide through social media – and belong to a very colloquial and informal register. On the other hand, it may represent the way in which a particular group of the society speaks. In this case the expressions used come from the standard language but are given a different meaning from the original. This is very frequent in crime movies and TV series such as the British production *Peaky Blinders* or the American one *Narcos*. In both of them indeed, the plot develops around the story of a gang – which in this type of movie is usually related to drug dealing or other illegal activities – that are characterized by a specific language, dress code and customs. In this case – even more than with marked language – preserving those language features is crucial, otherwise the standard language would contradict the physical appearance of the characters, thus compromising the whole movie.

As far as taboo words are concerned then, they may refer to different fields. The expression “taboo words” indeed includes sexual references, issues related to the religious or political field, vulgar and offensive terms and references to a physical or psychological problem of a person with the intention to make fun of it. Moreover, even though making use of them is not advisable, they sometimes are used by the speaker to give emphasis to the content of the message or to express his or her feelings towards that topic. Consequently, the challenge here is not only to avoid those words without completely changing the register of the speaker, but also – if they have to be maintained – to find the right equivalent in the target language. In other words, every language is based on a precise historical and cultural background, both for the everyday and standard expressions, and for the taboo words. This implies the fact that what is considered acceptable and not offensive in one language may be perceived differently in another; so, the translator first of all, and then the subtitler as well is supposed

to have a deep knowledge of the language as well as of the culture of the target audience not to be disrespectful of it.

Moreover, precisely due to the fact that audiovisual products are worldwide spread, it arises another obstacle: cultural references. This expression refers to all those elements that are strictly connected to a specific culture that are not only everyday aspects such as food or music, but also political and social ones. References can be divided into two groups according to their level of diffusion around the world. On the one hand there are cultural references that – despite belonging to one specific culture – are worldwide known; if one thinks to food for example, pizza has its origin in Italy but nowadays is known and appreciated in every country around the world. On the other hand, there are cultural references that are not spread outside their country of origin, such as colloquial and everyday expressions that are connected to the historical and cultural background of that specific country. Moreover, in countries where the population is heterogeneous and different from one region to the other, like in Italy, for example, these expressions may even belong to one specific region without being understood outside of it even if the standard language is the same.

When a translator finds him or herself in front of a cultural reference, a range of possibilities opens. Depending on the reference's level of spread, the translator can choose either to maintain the original expression – if it's worldwide known – or to adopt a different translation technique. The strategies to choose between during a translation process are a lot, but there are some of them that are more suitable to this situation rather than others.

The most common tendency is to make use of a cultural equivalent already existing in the target language and culture that displays the same function of the original one but that is more famous among the target audience. This technique indeed, is the preferred one also by subtitlers since it allows them to solve the problem without making use of footnotes or further explanations that cannot be included in subtitling and that tend to be reduced to the minimum also in translation.

Another similar solution may be the use of a substitute of the original expression that has no connection with it but that perfectly suits the context.

In other cases, the translator may decide to employ an explicitation: if the reference is subtle and there is the possibility that it might not be completely understood by the target audience, it can be made explicit. However, a translator, and even more a subtitler, has to consider that this technique usually takes up more space.

Finally, if the cultural reference in question does not contribute to the delivery of the message an option could be its omission. However, in translation it might be easier to adopt this technique given

that in subtitling it is fundamental to pay attention also to the synchronization with the images and with the sounds. If, for example, this reference includes humoristic content the audience would immediately realize that some parts of the message have been deleted but they don't have the possibility to verify that in fact it wasn't crucial, thus affecting both the product and the subtitler.

A very similar situation occurs also when the translator decides to include the reference in another position with respect to the original one, probably because in that context it would be easier to get. However, this recreation may be useful to the whole content creation but on the other hand it has been aligned to the visual element.

Despite the technique adopted, the choice to use a domesticating or a foreignizing approach depends on different aspects and the same solution does not apply to every situation. By domesticating the text produced is closer and more aligned to the target culture, so the target audience is able to easily comprehend it and usually finds itself more familiar with the content. On the contrary, adopting a foreignizing approach the target product maintains the typical features of the source text and the audience is required to do some more effort in order to understand it. The choice between the two strategies depends first of all on the subtitler and the translator's vision of the product. Then, it may vary according to the kind of product in question and on the message the writer or producer wants to convey: if it has a mere humoristic aim, it would be better to adopt a domesticating approach, otherwise the viewer won't properly get the humor – since it usually depends on the cultural and historical background. On the other hand, if it displays an educational content the foreignization is the most suitable strategy.

1.3.5 Decide what is relevant

As introduced so far, the subtitling process starts with an audiovisual product that needs to be subtitled in a different language in order to be comprehensible for an audience that doesn't understand the original language. However, audiovisual productions do not consist of a mere dialogue to translate: they are composed by characters – that in turn have their physical appearance and gestural peculiarities – images, sounds, music and above all, a plot. Each movie, tv series or video has a message to convey and this is the main aim of subtitling: reproducing that message in another language and in another culture the most faithfully possible, respecting at the same time the spatial and temporal constraints. This represents the great challenge of a subtitler. However, it has been stated before that subtitling does not consist of a mere transcription of the original script, so there may be some compromises to find.

First of all – depending on the kind of production – a script may include humoristic lines. In this case – similarly to what occurs with taboo words – what is considered an element of humor within a culture, may either be perceived as an offense or not be understood at all. Indeed, every language, depending on the country's traditions and customs creates jokes that may regard politics, religions, ethnicity and so on. However, as said before, they do not necessarily produce the same effect in the target language. Consequently, before literally translating a humoristic element, the subtitler needs to make sure that the audience's reaction will be the same. On the other hand, he or she may adopt one of the following solutions: if the content is relevant to the plot but cannot be translated faithfully to the original, it should be replaced with a functional equivalent that grammatically and perhaps also lexically differs from the initial one but reaches the same objective. Otherwise, if it does not contribute to the plot creation it may also be avoided and leave space to another subtitle that might be more relevant. In any case, in doing so the professional shouldn't overcome the importance of the synchrony; in those cases when the element he or she is dealing with causes an evident reaction in the other characters – be it positive or negative – the viewer would feel that something is missing from the script, so it is recommended not to adopt this solution unless it's unavoidable.

A slightly different case occurs with songs. In almost every audiovisual production there is the presence of a song or of a soundscape in general. This usually contributes to the creation of the atmosphere but they are not crucial element for the development of the story on the whole. As a consequence – unless the target product addresses deaf or hard of hearing people, for which the norms are different – the tendency is not to translate them. The only exceptions to this convention are represented by musicals and by cartoons. In these cases, especially songs are meant precisely to build the meaning of the production; indeed, they usually tell a story or narrate what is happening and make it explicit the character's reactions as well. Their presence is in fact considerable throughout the production. Therefore, they are supposed to be translated and subtitled since they are for all intents and purposes part of the script. However, in this case, the main problem is not the represented by the spatial and temporal constraints because – being it part of the script – the song doesn't overlap with the dialogue. Here, the main issue consists in finding the right translation. As stated before, the song contributes to the delivery of the contents, so its meaning shouldn't be altered or modify; but at the same time, it is not a simple text or dialogue. Songs indeed – especially those written for cartoons or musicals – follow a precise rhythm and are often written in rhyme. The translation is therefore more difficult because it's not just a matter of content, the form is as important as the message, and sometimes even more.

To conclude, it can be stated that – be it a slang, a taboo word, a song or an element of humor – it should first of all be analyzed in order to highlight its meaning and above all, the function it fulfills. Then, the right solution has to be adopted in order to find the perfect equivalent to reproduce the same effect created in the original version.

1.3.6 Role of the subtitler

As highlighted in chapter 1.2 Forms of Audiovisual Translation, the origins of subtitling don't date back to the creation of cinema and television – as the first means of diffusion of AVT products – but to their first importations and exportations to and from other countries. Indeed, this brought about the necessity to solve the linguistic problem and the first figure of the subtitler appeared. Despite the fact that this profession and the techniques have evolved and completely changed over the years, the primary aim of this practice has remained the same: providing the viewers with a translation or a transcription of the original dialogues so as to offer them the possibility to understand a foreign product.

As discussed in subsection 1.3.2 Spatial and temporal constraints, the process of subtitling is submitted to a multitude of strict rules regarding the spatial and temporal dimensions. As a consequence, the original dialogue is modified and the viewer is not provided with its literal and complete translation or transcription. The subtitler indeed needs to adjust the line to a maximum number of characters that in turn depends on the time the subtitle remains on the screen; in doing so the principal aim is to preserve the initial meaning as much as possible. However – in the majority of the cases – the audience that makes use of the subtitles has a knowledge of the source language – even if it's elementary – and this allows them to notice all the changes in the script with respect to the original spoken dialogue and constantly compare them. On the other hand, they are normally not aware of the number of constraints the professional has to obey to, so they often tend to criticize his or her job by saying that the translation is not loyal and the subtitles leave aside a great part of the initial message. One of the greatest challenges the subtitler has to face indeed, resides precisely here. Differently from the written translation of a book or an article, within the field of audiovisual translation the professionals don't have the possibility to include a translator's footnote or to give explanation to justify their choices: they simply have to rely on their abilities and expertise to convince the audience of their job's worth.

Despite the critiques, the subtitler is a professional in the field and to achieve this job position there are specific requirements to possess. First of all, a deep linguistic knowledge – both of the source and the target language – in terms of grammar, lexicon, syntax and so on. Then, the ability to recognize the different registers, dialects and cultural references is fundamental to capture the numerous nuances

of the spoken language and to select which ones are important to transmit in the target product. Translation competences – to produce interlingual subtitles – are also crucial, as well as technological skills to use the different programs¹³.

To a certain degree, we can conclude by saying that the work of the subtitler may be summarized by the following quote by the French sociologist Caillé “Condensing sentences helps us to realize that it is possible to say almost anything using only a few words, to the extent that the human faculty of language is, if you like, superfluous” (Caillé, 1960: 103, translation by L. Pérez González).

As for the actual process, the patterns that lead to the creation of the subtitles for a given audiovisual product and the tools at the disposal of the field’s professionals are discussed hereafter.

There are three main protagonists in this process: the film industry, an intermediary agency and the subtitler. Parallel to the translator profession, the figure of the subtitler is usually a freelancer that works from home for different companies, which in this case are represented by the so-called “intermediary agencies” that constitute a bridge between the other two figures. When an audiovisual product is produced – and this regards particularly movies – and once the agency wins the project, the film industry sends them the material that is in turn allocated to a professional.

First of all, it’s recommended to watch the whole movie before starting to translate the dialogue and create subtitles – assuming that the deadline predetermined with the client allows it. This step is important in the first place because the subtitler can create an overall idea of the topic he or she is going to deal with; and secondly because – as we have already made it explicit – an audiovisual product is not only made by the dialogue, but music, sounds, characters’ expression and movements and images as well have a deep impact in the creation of the whole production and may be as relevant as the dialogue.

In the second place, after seeing the movie, the subtitler needs to translate the dialogue. Nowadays it is the producer of the film the one that provides the subtitling company with a complete dialogue script to be translated and adjusted in order to create the subtitles. A complete list is comprehensive of: a mere dialogue transcription together with some instructions regarding the way the actors should speak – that is, whether they are happy, angry or sad; or whether they should shout, whisper or laugh, and so on –, some indications of what is happening on the scene, in case we are dealing with a tv series the details regarding the episode. Finally, a readapted dialogue transcription that leaves it aside all of the details that are unnecessary its fullest comprehension is included as well. It is a sort of draft of the subtitles and the onset and outset time is specified, as well as the duration of the subtitles. On

¹³ Sandrelli A. *La Sottotitolazione: Una panoramica*. Roma: Facoltà degli Studi Internazionali di Roma

the other hand, in the cases where the subtitler is dealing with an old production and the dialogue list is no longer available or when the producer doesn't provide the company with the document, the subtitler has to transcribe the whole dialogue based on the original spoken one. In any case, once the dialogue list is completed and created the subtitler can proceed with the translation.

After the translation has been carried out, the professional can now create the subtitles according to the spatial and temporal constraints outlined before. There is a large amount of software available to perform this task, some of them are more professional while others address amateur subtitlers; however, they all offer the same primary service and all the additional tools they provide are related to the attention to the details: font, color, position, animation and so on. Among them we mention some of the most used and famous ones: Aegisub, Subtitle Edit, OONA and WinCapsQ4.

Finally, the subtitles created are then included in the production and the product is usually submitted to a revision by a third person to guarantee the subtitles' quality. This last passage is common among all the different kinds of translation and if the original translator and/or subtitler accepts the revision and the possible adjustments, the final product is delivered to the client ready to be released. Occasionally, the subtitler may work directly with the client, but this happens mainly with streaming productions that are shorter and less complex to produce and spread.

Up to now we have taken for granted the fact that the process of translation and the creation of the subtitles are carried out by the same person, but it's not always the case. The translator and the subtitler should coincide because while translating one deeply analyzes the script from a linguistic point of view, thus noticing the relevant linguistic features such as: register, the variety of the language depending of the geographical region of the production, word games, idioms, cultural references and so on. As we said before, with a mere written translation there are no spatial and temporal limits; on the contrary with subtitles the rules are very strict. As a consequence, of course while translating the expert keeps in mind that the principal goal of the work is to create subtitles, so he or she will try to translate to adapt to the constraints as much as possible. However, the translator can't be a hundred percent accurate, since only adapting the text to the image one realizes the actual length that the sentence needs to respect, so some changes to the translation might be necessary. At this point, the translator won't find any difficulties in readapting the first output because he or she has a clear and complete image of what the original message was; on the other hand, the subtitler has only the translated version available and is not aware of the reasons why the translator took those specific decisions in the first place. However, as noted before this is not always the practice adopted since sometimes the situations can be far more complex. For example: when the original production is not in English – which is currently the most employed among the film industry due to the dominance of

the USA in this sector – and has to be translated into a target language not so popular and studied worldwide, sometimes the expert that has to carry out the final translation may find him or herself working with an already translated version of the original into English. This inevitably affects the final result since the starting point is not the original, so some aspects of the initial message may have already been modified.

On the other hand, regarding the title of the film or of the video, the process is slightly different. The title indeed, is not randomly chosen; first of all it should be short in order to be easier memorized. Secondly, it should summarize the topic of the whole film without make it too explicit and above all without revealing the end. Finally, it should capture the audience's attention and raise their curiosity. For this reason, this is the only part of the film that is usually translated not by a professional translator but by someone that is an expert of marketing strategies. The colors chosen, the words, the graphic design of the cover are all elements that deeply contribute to the film's sales and the consequent profit. However, what attracts people belonging to a particular culture may not have the same effect to a target audience that belongs to a different one. So, it is crucial that who translates the title is aware of the strategies that could get the same effect among the target culture.

In addition to those mentioned above, a lot of criticism has been raised against this professional figure also in relation to the linguistic nuances that the audience usually believe to be left aside. Indeed, sometimes viewers not only think that the subtitles don't include a great part of the original dialogue, but also they state that even when the dialogue is complete – in the sense that no part of the message has been excluded – there is no more sense of suspense or mystery. In other words, the spoken language allows one to be more ambiguous or to leave the sentences inconclusive – be it on purpose or not – so that the listener is encouraged to go beyond the mere words pronounced and reach their deep meaning. This is possible particularly thanks to the so-called “suprasegmental features” of a language, among which we recall: intonation, pitch, stress, rhythm and so on. As a consequence, since the written language is not in possession of these traits it is obvious that it is more difficult to reproduce them; however, it is not impossible – as we are going to see later in this dissertation – thanks to the different strategies the subtitler has at disposal. Despite them, a great amount of people continues to state that subtitles do not allow them to imagine because they tend to solve all the possible ambiguities even when it isn't necessary, moreover, subtitles do not transmit the passion and the emphasis of the oral language. This is, indeed, the reason why movements like the funsubbing were born, to avoid the rules imposed by professional subtitling to create subtitles that are – according to them – able to better reproduce all the features of the spoken language.

Chapter 2

The Silent Child

2.1 General considerations

The present thesis focuses on the creation of Italian subtitles for “*The Silent Child*”. It’s a British short film released in 2017 by Slick Films¹⁴, a well-known production company among the UK and worldwide famous for the numerous Academy Awards received – also known as “Oscar”. The company deals with the production of commercials, music promos and short films, and in particular *The Silent Child* won the Oscar for Best Live Action Short Film during its 90th edition in 2018.

Due to the fact that it has never been dubbed or subtitled in Italian or in other languages, and that it is not included in the most famous mainstream platforms such as Netflix or Prime Video, this short film is probably not so famous and popular in Italy or anywhere outside the UK. However, within its native country it gained a great success among the population since it brings an invisible disability to a prominent position.

In particular, IMDb – that stands for “Internet Movie Database” – is an online catalogue property of Amazon company, that registers all the films, actors, directors, videogames and TV programs. Among the reviews related to this film there is no negative comment; on the contrary, all the reviewers admitted that – even though the majority of them is already familiar with the topic – the film was able to offer them a further point of view to consider and highlight aspects that are often taken for granted. In particular, there is a blog “Hear me out”¹⁵ written by an English man called Ahmed Khalifa that focuses on deafness and the way in which people with this kind of disability are included in the society. The blog is divided into different sections and one of them is specifically dedicated to his personal story – which I think it’s important to briefly summarize in order to better understand his opinion on the short film. He’s not originally from the UK but he moved to the Northern Ireland with his family when he was eight, so he also had to struggle learning another language completely different from Arabic – his mother tongue. In addition, he is deaf and this represented an even greater obstacle for him especially during the first years of education. Fortunately, he admits that he has always received the support he needed from his parents and from the school, however – beyond the

¹⁴ <https://slickfilms.co.uk/> (Last Accessed: 15/04/2024)

¹⁵ <https://hearmeoutcc.com/> (Last Accessed: 15/04/2024)

restricted group of people that worked with him – the rest of people that he met had no idea of the difficulties he had to face during his everyday life. For this reason, he affirms that this short film was able to depict the reality of a deaf person and all the problems that may arise even within the most common and apparently ordinary situations such as having breakfast with the family. Indeed, in a passage of his personal film review he offers a deep consideration regarding a particular scene when the mom leaves the room shouting to her deaf daughter, without considering that she wasn't looking at her so she couldn't be aware of what was happening. This is a small but accurate example that brings our attention to the importance of becoming aware of this problem in order to help those people that are in the need of support to live the most normal life possible.

The director himself – Chris Overton – admitted that before producing the film he wasn't so familiar with this condition and he wasn't aware of all the issues related to it. It was precisely thanks to the little co-protagonist – starred by twelve-year-old Maisie Sly – that he realized the importance of deafness. Indeed, the girl is profoundly deaf in real life as well as in the movie, and this made the production even more real and moving, given the fact that she wasn't simply acting but she had truly lived all the emotions and the struggling she brought on stage. And this is exactly the intention of the writer – Rachel Shenton – who aimed at giving this issue the importance and the attention it deserves by depicting every single aspect of the everyday life of a deaf person, precisely as she had witnessed during her own experience as daughter of a deaf parent. Moreover, she declared that this cause is so dear to her because – given that her father wasn't born deaf but suddenly lost his hearing – she had the possibility to notice how his life changed completely from one day to the next. This condition wasn't the normality for the family so they realized even more that every little common thing may represent an obstacle if we don't pay the due attention.

To this extent, the short film offers another issue to think about: while talking to the woman that looks after the little six-year-old child – one of the two lead actors – her grandmother asks two specific questions. First of all, she wonders whether the child is “brilliant” – thus suggesting that the fact that she's deaf may negatively affect her intelligence – and then she asks whether she could ever find a decent job. Moreover, she makes it explicit that Libby's granddad was deaf and that he was a cleaner – which clearly, she doesn't consider it to be a respectable job. This implies a deeply-rooted belief that deafness is seen as a disability that affects the life of those who suffer from it from every point of view; as if deaf or hard or hearing people weren't perfectly able to live a normal life.

This is probably a little exaggerated but it leads us to think especially if we consider the fact that in Italy the Italian Sign Language – also known as LIS – has been recognized as a minority language only in 2021. Before this point it was certainly used also in public circumstances but its crucial role

was recognized only by those who needed it or those who simply worked as interpreters – that is to say in private occasions. This means that – despite the fact that the first scholars that tried to develop an education system suitable to deaf people go back to the 18th century – this big discrepancy between the LIS’ official recognition and its status among society lasted more than three hundred years. In the UK, the situation is not so different. The BSL – that stands for the British Sign Language – is the equivalent of the Italian Sign Language and was recognized as a language in 2003 but as an official language only in 2022. Fortunately, starting from September 2025, the British Sign Language will be included as a mandatory course during the first years of education – precisely, it will become one of the subjects of the GCSE. This is a result of a campaign began years ago by Daniel Jillings, a 17-year-old British young boy who – deaf from birth – simply desires that from a young age people become familiar with the deaf community and the issues they have to face, hoping to be able to count on their support. This has been defined by Daniel as “a powerful step to equality”¹⁶, considering that – according to the British Deaf Association – about 151,000 people in the UK use BSL and of those 87,000 are deaf.

Luckily, nowadays the situation is becoming less and less of a problem thanks to the fact that the different governments are promoting more and more laws and measures to adopt. An interesting example would be the creation of some BSL courses provided by the British Local Authorities known as Family Sign Language Classes. Here the parents or carer of a deaf child have the possibility to learn the basics of the sign language, particularly related to the domestic context, in order to communicate with the child. This in accordance to The Children Act – stipulated in 1989 by the English Department of Education – which established that the public service has to provide the family with the money necessary to learn the sign language or to obtain extra support in order to guarantee the child’s welfare.

2.1.1 British Deaf Association

The origins of the British Deaf Association¹⁷ – also known as BDA – date back to the end of the 19th century, precisely to 1890. It was founded by Francis Maginn, a missionary of the Church of Ireland who was deaf himself. The association’s aim was to promote the inclusion of deaf people in the society through the use of the sign language and make deaf people’s voice heard. The community indeed already included a large number of people at the time but they felt they were not truly represented. From a political point of view indeed, there was no spokesperson among the political officers of the British Empire and hearing people took the decisions also on behalf of them. However

¹⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/disability-67772338> (Last Accessed: 16/04/2024)

¹⁷ <https://bda.org.uk/> (Last Accessed: 15/05/2024)

– as made explicit from this short film – hearing people cannot always understand what is best for deaf people and what are their needs.

Nowadays, the association is becoming bigger and bigger and its goals and projects increase everyday involving both deaf and hearing people to fight for the same cause. For example, above all they are currently struggling to obtain the legal recognition of the British Sign Language and Scotland was the first state to recognize it in 2015; this means that BSL is protected and considered equal to the official language of the country. Moreover, on the 28th of April 2022 Great Britain recognized BSL as an indigenous language; consequently, this day became the National BSL Day. To commemorate this crucial event a Sign Language week was established as well; usually it's celebrated in March.

This association led to the creation of a well-known Deaf community that contributed to the definition of a Deaf culture. People who suffer from this disease in fact, are bonded not only by the same issue, but also by the same needs, the same history, the same traditions and the same way to interact with people, like every other religious or linguistic community. Indeed, they designed also a flag to represent their culture, whose colors are turquoise, yellow and dark blue: they represent respectively their pride and unity, the light, the humanity and the gain of recognition in a world dominated by hearing people.

The situation in Italy is very similar. There exists an association, known as Ente Nazionale Sordi¹⁸, that was established in 1932. It has various headquarters in the country and it's committed in different activities that aim at protecting and promoting deaf and hard of hearing people. Indeed, they organize courses of Italian Sign Language to train professional figures competent in the field, they promote political campaigns to obtain the recognition they deserve, and they conduct researches on the new technologies and educational methods available in order to make LIS accessible to everyone and include the teaching in as many courses as possible.

2.1.2 Filmmakers

The Silent Child is written by Rachel Shenton and directed by Chris Overton. They are husband and wife and have worked together for a lot of other successful short films; among the most famous and recent ones we mention: “A Glimpse” and “Leader”.

Rachel Shenton is a 36-year-old British writer and actress. She studied performing arts and her career began with small roles in some television series, but – already at a young age – she managed to achieve a great success. She is fluent in British and American Sign Language which she learnt in

¹⁸ <https://www.ens.it/> (Last Accessed: 15/05/2024)

honor of her father after his death. He became deaf during a treatment for cancer and as a consequence, Rachel – who at that time was still very young – became deeply sensitive towards this issue. Indeed, it is the main topic of “*The Silent Child*” where a consistent part of the dialogue is expressed through the Sign Language.

With this short film she won the title of Best Actress at the London Independent Film Festival and at the Overcome Film Festival in 2017. She was then awarded the same title also for “A Glimpse” two years in a row in 2019 and 2020, respectively at the New Renaissance Film Festival and at the Bristol Film Festival.

As previously introduced, deafness is the main topic of the short film and it represents an issue in which the protagonist – played by Rachel Shenton – is personally involved also in her real life. Indeed – as briefly illustrated in her biography above – she spent part of her life living with a deaf parent and this gave her the possibility to realize and deeply understand the difficulties a deaf person encounters during the everyday life and the importance of having some support. The urgency to sensitize this issue and raise awareness became a personal mission to her and the short film “*The Silent Child*” was produced precisely to accomplish this intention. Indeed, together with the production company, she decided to include her point of view through some brief considerations and some data at the end of the short film. They affirm in fact, that more than the 78% of deaf children attends school with no specific support and they make their intention explicit as well: to directly contribute to this cause in order to allow the sign language to be recognized in every school of the world so that deaf children can obtain the support they deserve. Moreover, through the brief sentence – “Deafness is not a learning difficulty. With the right support, a deaf child can do exactly the same as a hearing child” they briefly summarize the whole short film and clarify once again the message they want to convey. In addition, she was appointed ambassador of the British charity organization “National Deaf Children’s society” and she contributed to the creation and the launch of a website called “Viewtalk” through which more and more companies communicate with deaf or hard of hearing people. This platform indeed, creates videos using the British Sign Language to promote the companies’ products. Finally, in 2013 she founded the Midlands Screen Acting school where, together with another acting coach – Amanda Andrews – she offers acting classes at a very affordable price.

Chris Overton is a 34-year-old English actor, producer and director. In particular, he is the director of *The Silent Child* and of the other two short films mentioned above: A Glimpse and Leader. As for Rachel Shenton, also Chris Overton was awarded with a lot of different prizes and among them we recall: the Best Short Film at the Overcome Festival and the Best Live Action Short at the Rhode Island Film Festival. During an interview, he stated that he started acting professionally at the age of

eight and at the middle school he realized that he had a deep interest in filmmaking. However, it was only while directing his first short film that he realized that his destiny was actually film direction.

The intention of the production company has already been made explicit. However, there is another aspect that may be seem secondary and might not be perceived immediately that actually emphasizes the message: soundscape. During the whole short film indeed, there is the same song in the background to create the atmosphere and set the audience's mood. It comes to the foreground when the characters are not talking and then the volume is turned down or the music is completely muted during the dialogues. It's not a cheerful music, on the contrary it conveys a sense of melancholy and sadness, and above all, there is no lyrics, so that the audience can focus on the script. Regarding the other sounds then, they are obviously present in those scenes where the family is all together; for example, during the breakfast the sound of the chairs moving, and the one of the spoon that hits the dish and so on are clearly audible. On the other hand, when the carer teaches the child the sign language or when she takes her to the coffee house there are no background noises, or they are slightly audible. And this is strange because if the scene is set at the park, we are used to hear sounds belonging to nature, especially if there is a lake as in this case. This is even more evident in the scene set at the café: it is usually a very noise location, on the contrary here, only the soundtrack is audible. However, one may infer that this has a very specific reason behind: first of all, the dialogue is not present because the characters are using the sign language, so if background noises were audible the audience would have perhaps got distracted. Secondly, if compared to those frenetic scenes, this emphasizes the deaf child's dimension: she hears nothing, she approaches the external world only through her eyes. As a consequence, by forcing the audience to immerse itself in her world, the director makes us realize even more the child's condition and the importance of becoming aware of this issue.

To conclude it can be stated that not a single element of the short film is left to the chance, everything has been included or excluded for a specific reason, and having in mind the filmmakers' intention may help the viewer better understand the whole film.

2.1.3 Plot

The Silent Child is a short film that deals with the issue of deafness. It is not an autobiography but it is inspired by real life events. The protagonist is a six-year-old child – named Libby – who is deaf from birth and lives with her mom, her dad, a brother and a sister, but all of them can perfectly hear. Already from the beginning of the short film we can perceive the atmosphere within that house: the rest of the family members have a strong connection among each other, they talk a lot, they joke and laugh as a common happy family. On the other hand, Libby feels always left behind and not included

in the everyday life within her own house, and we can notice this from the fact that she doesn't even try to interact with the others, she never laughs and she's always in a bad mood.

One day, her parents – worried about the fact that after a short time she would have started primary school – decide to hire someone to help their daughter interact with other people. The nanny is a young woman named Joanne that – since the very beginning – realizes the deep discomfort the child feels. This character is played by Rachel Shenton: the writer of the short film. During the first days, Joanne finds it a bit difficult to build a connection with the little girl, since she was used to be alone, play alone and not talk to anyone. However, Joanne starts to talk to Libby using the sign language so that she could learn it as well, and the two begin to interact more and more every day. They do a lot of different activities together and Libby begins to feel understood and involved, and this has a positive influence also in her attitude towards other people: she laughs, she tries to communicate with the family and she's always happy when she knows that Joanne is going to come and spend some time with her. However, her mother Suzanne – despite the huge improvements she notices – is not so glad; indeed, she doesn't agree with Joanne's intention to teach sign language to her child. She states that no one in the family knows it and makes it really explicit that they have no time and energy to learn it. Once again, we understand how Suzanne not only doesn't understand the importance of the issue, but also is too absorbed in her life to even properly care and worry about it. Moreover, she believes that it would not help her neither at school since the other children won't understand her. Joanne, on the other hand, tries to convince her that Libby can live a normal life as any other person, and this is the only method that will allow her to achieve it. In addition, she emphasizes the fact that it is Libby's right to ask for someone to give her extra support at school and that it is actually very simple and undemanding for them to try to learn at least the basics; as a family it would be a great thought towards Libby.

At this stage Joanne realizes the true point of view of Libby's parents regarding her condition: they have never understood their daughter's feelings and struggle, in fact, they are convinced that it's simply a psychological problem and that the child has just a really bad temper. At that moment a slightly change of attitude in Suzanne can be noticed: she argues with her husband regarding Libby's issue and it seems like she's trying to understand her and make a little step towards her. However, Paul is clearly against the idea of teaching his daughter the sign language and manages to convince his wife as well. Within the whole film indeed, it's precisely the father the one that seems to care the less among the other family members, and this is evident in a specific scene: the family is having breakfast all together and Libby says for the first time that she wants orange juice. Here, her brother points it out but the father immediately changes the subject and shifts the attention towards something

else, as if that event had no importance. As a consequence, they decide to take her to a doctor that could convince her to learn how to speak. Precisely when the child begins to feel more confident with Joanne and the rest of the family, Suzanne fires the nanny since – in her opinion – she’s an obstacle, and with her Libby would never be encouraged to talk.

The short film doesn’t really have a good ending: the school starts and Libby is clearly sad and feels lonely again. We can see that in class the teacher does nothing to help her or to guarantee that she could read her lips, so Libby can’t do the activities like the other children. Moreover, during the break they all play together in the courtyard while she is alone. The last scene of the film depicts Libby that cries at school and Joanne that – worried for her – goes visit her from outside the school’s gate and tells her “I love you” using the sign language. Then Libby says it back to Joanne.

Finally, some end credits appear. Rachel Shenton – the writer of the film – includes some data to raise the audience awareness by saying that: “90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. Over 78% of deaf children attend mainstream school with no specialist support in place”.

2.1.4 Language features

There are no specific references to the time and place where the short film is set; however, from the characters’ accent we can suppose that it set in the UK and from the type of car they drive, the clothes they wear and their customs one can infer that – from a temporal point of view – it’s set in the present days. Moreover, another important indicator that suggests the fact that the setting is the UK is the language. The characters have a strong British accent and the lexicon they use clearly belongs to this domain. An example could be the reference to the GCSE – whose meaning will be discussed later – since it is neither included in the American school system nor there is a direct equivalent given that in America, they provide for a simple High School diploma obtained after completing the four years of high school. Another case is the term “sweets” – that is the general words for candies, chocolates and so on – that in American English corresponds to “candies”, or “jam” that is the equivalent of the American term “jelly” – which in turn in the UK indicates the specific dessert made from gelatin.

As for the language, the main characters belong to the same family, so there is a high degree of intimacy among them. As a consequence, they all employ a colloquial register, as we can infer from some specific expressions such as: “chill, that’s fine” and “I’m on the bloody hospital run again”. The mother indeed, often addresses the daughter calling her “Libs” instead of Libby – the real name – and this is very typical of the spoken colloquial language; the original name is shortened and the letter “s” is added in order to convey love and tenderness towards a beloved person. The same happens with Joanne – even though she’s not a member of the family – first of all she’s young, and secondly, she spends a lot of time with them – especially with Libby – so she’s close to them. Moreover, she does

not have a job that requires a formal approach such as a company employee, a lawyer, a doctor, and so on; she works with a little six-year-old girl, so it is necessary that she relates properly to her, otherwise the child would never see her as a friend or as someone to trust and open up to.

However, even though the language is colloquial and informal, it does not mean that is immediately comprehensible to a non-English speaker. Indeed, in some cases, the expressions used in the everyday life are even more complex to understand. An example would be: “[it] was a real blow” or “Seb’s got his GCSE’s and he got all A*’s in his mocks”. The second line in particular is very complex since it refers to an education system that is different from our own; moreover, the speaker does not explain what the acronyms stand for, and a person that is not so familiar with the UK’s organization will never understand it immediately without looking it up. Indeed, this is one of the points that will be discussed below among the translation issues.

The only part of the short film where the register elevates a little is when Joanne is talking to the child’s grandmother. The conversation is casual, so they do not employ any formal word or technical terms; however, since she’s talking to an adult she doesn’t know, Joanne tends to be even more polite and formal. We can notice it from the fact that she never answers rudely even when she’s visibly annoyed or irritated. For example, when the grandmother tries to provoke her by asking whether – in her opinion – Libby would ever be able to find a decent job, she kindly tells her that Libby is going to have a great success in whatever career she chooses.

2.2 Dialogue list and translation issues

As introduced in the previous section of this chapter, the short film that the present thesis aims to analyze is focused on the issue of deafness and the importance of the sign language to include deaf or hard of hearing people in the society. For this reason, the original version of *The Silent Child* available on the online platform YouTube includes English subtitles – since parts of the dialogue is conveyed through the sign language.

As we have seen in the first chapter – subsection 1.3.3 The Role of the Subtitler – the first step of the subtitling process is to obtain a dialogue list of the original script. Usually, when there is a client that commissions the work, it takes care of providing the subtitler with this list. However – since in this case there is no commissioner and given that the aim of this essay is to provide Italian subtitles for the short film – the first task was the transcription of the dialogues. The following table indeed, includes the transcription of the dialogues based on the orally delivered script and not on the already existing English subtitles. The only parts that have been transcribed according to them are those in the sign language and they can be easily identified by the use of italics.

The second step then, was the translation of the subtitles into Italian; however, this practice didn't consider the spatial and temporal constraints. The final Italian subtitles will be provided in the last chapter of the essay, together with the proper detailed explanation of the choices that led to that result.

Original English dialogue	Italian translation
[A sign language is used throughout this film it is essential that you turn on subtitles for your language now]	[durante il cortometraggio viene usata la lingua dei segni. Si consiglia l'attivazione dei sottotitoli per la vostra lingua.]
[SLICK FILMS presents]	[SLICK FILMS presenta]
Suzanne: What time cello tonight?	Suzanne: A che ora hai violoncello stasera?
Seb: Six	Seb: Alle sei.
Suzanne: Oh God, you'll have to run him, Paul. Pip has ballet at 5:30, I can't split myself in two.	Suzanne: Oddio, devi portarlo tu Paul, Pip ha danza alle 17:30, non posso dividermi in due.
Paul: Yeah ok, chill that's fine.	Paul: Sì, ok rilassati, va bene.
Pip: It sounds so weird when old people say "chill".	Pip: Suona così strano quando gli adulti dicono "rilassati".
Paul: Charming.	Paul: Wow.
Seb: What time is the 'help' arriving?	Seb: A che ora arriva l' 'aiuto'?
Suzanne: Joanne is arriving at- Yeah, it's time to go, grab your bags please! Oh God, she's early. Paul, can you go to the door and take Libby with you?	Suzanne: Joanne arriva alle... Ok è ora di andare, prendete i vostri zaini per favore! Oddio, è in anticipo. Paul puoi andare tu alla porta e portare Libby?
Paul: I'm leaving now, I'm already late.	Paul: Me ne sto andando, sono già in ritardo.
Joanne: Oh, hi! I was just about to knock, I'm Joanne.	Joanne: Oh, ciao. Stavo giusto per bussare, sono Joanne.
Paul: Yes – Suzanne! She'll be down in a minute – Thanks for helping us out, we have quite low expectations. We just want her to be a little more confident in time for school.	Paul: Sì... Suzanne! Scende subito. Grazie per aiutarci, non abbiamo molte aspettative in realtà. Vogliamo solo che si senta un po' più sicura in vista della scuola.
Joanne: Right.	Joanne: Giusto.
Paul: Anyway –	Paul: Va be...

Suzanne: She has a hearing aid, but she won't wear it.	Suzanne: Ha l'apparecchio acustico ma non lo mette.
Joanne: And I'm assuming there's no history of deafness on yours or your husband's side?	Joanne: Immagino non ci siano casi di sordità nella tua famiglia o in quella di tuo marito, giusto?
Suzanne: No. We only found out she was deaf when she was three and a half, which probably makes me a bloody awful mother but – Because she had a bit of hearing in her left ear that was overcompensating. Apparently, that's common.	Suzanne: No. Abbiamo scoperto che è sorda solo quando aveva tre anni e mezzo, cosa che probabilmente mi rende una madre orribile. Ma riusciva ancora a sentire leggermente dall'orecchio sinistro e questo stava compensando anche troppo bene. A quanto sembra è diffuso.
Joanne: You're not an awful mother, it's very common. And you said she didn't qualify for cochlear implant?	Joanne: Non sei una madre orribile, è molto comune. Hai detto che non aveva i requisiti per un impianto cocleare, giusto?
Suzanne: No, which was a real blow.	Suzanne: No, è stato un vero colpo infatti.
Joanne: And what's her communication like? Does she know any sign language or is it just lip reading?	Joanne: E come si comunica con lei? Conosce un po' di lingua dei segni o legge solo le labbra?
Suzanne: Just lip reading.	Suzanne: Legge solo le labbra.
Joanne: And her speech?	Joanne: E nel parlato?
Suzanne: Not good.	Suzanne: Non bene.
Joanne: Well, we'll probably start with a combination of speech and sign language just to see where she's at. A lot of children respond really well to sign cause it's less frustrating.	Joanne: Bene, inizieremo con un misto di linguaggio parlato e lingua dei segni, così vediamo a che punto è. Molti bambini reagiscono bene alla lingua dei segni perché è meno frustrante.
Suzanne: I can't see that being the case. Libby follows what we are saying really well.	Suzanne: Non penso sia questo il caso. Libby segue molto bene quello che diciamo.
Joanne: Right. Well, I'm sure she'll be fine then.	Joanne: Bene. Sono sicura che non avrà problemi allora.
Pip: Stop, you idiot! I'm on the phone.	Pip: Smettila, idiota! Sono al telefono.

<p>Suzanne: Okay. So, make yourself at home, sit down if you like –</p> <p>Libs, there's someone here to see you.</p> <p>Libby, can I have the remote please? Libby!</p> <p>[Libby screams]</p> <p>Libby, can I have the remote?</p> <p>She's usually happy when she's watching TV.</p> <p>She could be very difficult; sometimes we don't even know what's wrong with her.</p>	<p>Suzanne: Ok, fai come se fossi a casa tua, siediti pure se vuoi...</p> <p>Libs, c'è qualcuno qui per te.</p> <p>Libby, posso avere il telecomando per favore?</p> <p>Libby!</p> <p>[Libby grida]</p> <p>Libby, posso avere il telecomando?</p> <p>Di solito è felice quando guarda la TV. Sa essere molto difficile, a volte non sappiamo neanche noi cosa ci sia che non va.</p>
<p>Joanne: Is there any pattern to that happen?</p>	<p>Joanne: C'è una situazione in particolare in cui fa così?</p>
<p>Suzanne: Oh, no. You know what they are like at this age; my other two were the same.</p>	<p>Suzanne: Oh, no. Sai come sono a questa età, gli altri miei due figli erano uguali.</p>
<p>Seb: Mom, my exam starts in 25 minutes!</p>	<p>Seb: Mamma, il mio esame inizia tra 25 minuti!</p>
<p>Suzanne: Yes, I'm coming.</p> <p>Seb's got his GCSE's and he got A*'s in his mocks, so I better not make him late.</p> <p>Right, you've got my mobile number; I'll be back in a few hours to see how you got on.</p> <p>You'll be brilliant.</p> <p>Bye Libby, darling.</p>	<p>Suzanne: Sì, sto arrivando!</p> <p>Seb ha gli esami di fine biennio e ha preso il massimo dei voti alle simulazioni quindi meglio che non gli faccia fare tardi.</p> <p>Ok, hai il mio numero di telefono, tornerò tra un paio d'ore per vedere come va. Andrai alla grande.</p> <p>Ciao Libby, tesoro.</p>
<p>Joanne: <i>Can I play?</i></p> <p><i>Let me show you something; you'll like it.</i></p> <p><i>You're mum's here.</i></p>	<p>Joanne: <i>Posso giocare?</i></p> <p><i>Lascia che ti mostri una cosa, ti piacerà.</i></p> <p><i>Tua mamma è qui.</i></p>
<p>Suzanne: How has it been?</p>	<p>Suzanne: Come è andata?</p>
<p>Joanne: Yeah, good.</p>	<p>Joanne: Bene</p>
<p>Suzanne: I told you she was quiet.</p>	<p>Suzanne: Ti avevo detto che è tranquilla.</p>
<p>Joanne: Yeah. Does she ever interact?</p>	<p>Joanne: Già. Interagisce mai?</p>
<p>Suzanne: Yeah, she follows what we're saying really well.</p>	<p>Suzanne: Sì, capisce quello che diciamo molto bene. Fidati di me, quando Libby è triste te ne rendi conto.</p>

Trust me, when Libby's unhappy you'll know about it.	
Joanne: I think I'll just try with some more interactive stuff; I've got quite a few books I think would be useful. There's actually a really good...	Joanne: Penso che proverò con qualcosa di più interattivo, ho alcuni libri che penso possano essere utili. In realtà ne ho uno molto buono...
Suzanne: Hello? Sorry. Yeah, I've literally just walked in the door, can I call you back in five minutes? I'm really sorry. Yeah, yeah tomorrow. I said yes... 8:30, yeah? Okay, don't worry, bye! Sorry, that was Paul's mom, she's a bloody nuisance.	Suzanne: Pronto? Scusa. Sì, sono letteralmente appena entrata dalla porta, posso richiamarti tra cinque minuti? Sì, mi dispiace molto. Sì, sì domani. Ho detto di sì... 8:30, giusto? Ok, non preoccuparti, ciao! Scusa, era la mamma di Paul, sa essere una vera seccatura.
Joanne: Oh, it's fine. I'll just bring some stuff to try her with tomorrow. Does she like the park?	Joanne: Oh, tranquilla. Porterò del materiale da provare con lei domani. Le piace andare al parco?
Suzanne: Well, I haven't taken her since she was tiny, but I'm sure she'll love it. Yes, it's only five minutes away.	Suzanne: Non la porto da quando era piccola, ma sono sicura che lo adorerà. È a soli cinque minuti da qui.
Joanne: Yeah, I saw that. Great!	Joanne: Sì, ho visto. Perfetto!
Suzanne: Thanks Joanne.	Suzanne: Grazie, Joanne.
Joanne: Okay, bye.	Joanne: Ok, ciao.
Paul: Are you moving in?	Paul: Ti trasferisci qui?
Joanne: Oh, they're for Libby.	Joanne: Oh, sono per Libby.
Paul: She's inside with Sue; she's in a good mood. Libby, I mean, Sue is never in a good mood.	Paul: È dentro con Sue, è di buon umore. Libby, intendo, Sue non è mai di buon umore.
Pip: Hey!	Pip: Hey!
Joanne: Oh, hey! Hey Libby	Joanne: Oh, hey! Hey, Libby.

Oh sorry, the door was open I...	Oh scusa, la porta era aperta e io...
Suzanne: Looks like you're gonna have a busy day. I'm sorry I've got to shoot off again, I've got to take Paul's mum to the hospital.	Suzanne: A quanto pare avrete una giornata impegnativa. Mi dispiace devo scappare anche oggi, devo accompagnare la mamma di Paul all'ospedale.
Joanne: Oh no worries.	Joanne: Oh, Nessun problema.
Suzanne: Bye Libs, you'll be good. See you later.	Suzanne: Ciao, Libs, andrà bene. Ci vediamo dopo.
Joanne: Bye	Joanne: Ciao.
Suzanne: Thank you.	Suzanne: Grazie.
Joanne: <i>What's that?</i> <i>Milk.</i> <i>Orange juice.</i> <i>So, what's that?</i> <i>Want to go to the park and feed the ducks?</i> <i>You know ducks?</i> <i>Ducks.</i> Right. Let's pack a bag. Where's your bag?	Joanne: <i>Cos'è quello?</i> <i>Latte.</i> <i>Succo d'arancia.</i> <i>Quello, cos'è?</i> <i>Vuoi andare al parco e dare da mangiare alle anatre?</i> <i>Conosci le anatre?</i> <i>Anatre.</i> Ok, prepariamo lo zaino. Dov'è il tuo zainetto?
Libby: <i>Orange</i>	Libby: <i>Arancia.</i>
Joanne: <i>You want orange juice?</i> Let's get you some orange juice then.	Joanne: <i>Vuoi succo d'arancia?</i> Andiamo a prendere un po' di succo d'arancia allora.
Libby: <i>Finished, I'm full.</i>	Libby: <i>Ho finito, sono piena.</i>
Joanne: <i>You're full?</i> <i>You don't want any sweets then?</i>	Joanne: <i>Sei piena?</i> <i>Non vuoi le caramelle quindi?</i>
Libby: <i>What sweets?</i> <i>That's my favorite.</i>	Libby: <i>Che caramelle?</i> <i>Sono le mie preferite.</i>
Joanne: <i>You're favorite? Mine too.</i>	Joanne: <i>Le tue preferite? Anche le mie.</i>
Suzanne: I just wondered how she'll get on with the sign language at school?	Suzanne: Mi stavo solo chiedendo come farà con la lingua dei segni a scuola
Joanne: How'd you mean?	Joanne: In che senso?

Suzanne: Well, I'm not sure that many people know it?	Suzanne: Beh, non sono sicura che molte persone la conoscano, no?
Joanne: Well, she'll need to have an interpreter sat with her and extra support. And, well, I'm not trying to talk myself into a job but I'd be more than happy to help.	Joanne: Beh, avrà bisogno di un'interprete accanto a lei e di supporto extra. E, non sto cercando di raccomandare me stessa, ma io sarei più che felice di aiutarla.
Suzanne: Right, okay. I'm just wondering if we should be focusing more on the lip reading, rather than the sign language?	Suzanne: Giusto, ok. Mi stavo solo chiedendo se non fosse meglio concentrarci di più sull'abilità nel leggere le labbra che sulla lingua dei segni
Joanne: Well, as it stands at the moment Libby's gonna struggle with speech. So, a combination of sign language and lip reading will have the best results. Look, I know it can feel a bit alien but the basics are actually really easy to learn. It might be a nice thing to do as a family.	Joanne: Per come stanno le cose al momento Libby avrà maggiori difficoltà a parlare. Quindi, una combinazione di lingua dei segni e di lettura delle labbra porterà a risultati migliori. Ascolta, lo so che può sembrare un po' assurdo ma le basi sono in realtà molto facili da imparare. Potrebbe essere una bella cosa da fare come famiglia.
Suzanne: I'm not sure how doable it is at the moment. Pip has ballet and Seb rehearses with the Midland choir three times a week, but we'll chat about it tomorrow; I'll talk to Paul.	Suzanne: Non so quanto sia fattibile al momento. Pip ha danza e Seb ha le prove con il coro di Midland tre volte a settimana, ma ne discuteremo domani, ne parlerò con Paul.
Joanne: Okay, great. Right. Thanks Sue.	Joanne: Ok, Perfetto. Bene. Grazie Sue.
Suzanne: I want her to speak, Paul, and I'm saying to you she's not hearing anything we say.	Suzanne: Voglio che parli, Paul, e ti sto dicendo che non sente niente di quello che diciamo.
[Argument]	[Discussione]
Pip: Seb, can you pass me the jam please?	Pip: Seb, puoi passarmi la marmellata, per favore?
Seb: There you go.	Seb: Tieni.

Paul: Oh Sue, don't forget that letter, will you?	Paul: Oh Sue, ti ricordi della lettera, vero?
Suzanne: Did you ever find you leather jacket?	Suzanne: Hai più trovato la tua giacca di pelle?
Paul: Yeah, it was in the office.	Paul: Sì, era in ufficio.
Libby: <i>Orange.</i>	Libby: <i>Arancia.</i>
Seb: She's signing.	Seb: Sta usando la lingua dei segni.
Paul: She's probably hungry. Can you pass me that butter, Seb?	Paul: Probabilmente ha fame. Mi passi il burro, Seb?
Seb: I think it means orange juice; Jo taught me some stuff.	Seb: Penso significhi succo d'arancia, Jo mi ha insegnato qualcosa.
Libby: <i>Thank you.</i>	Libby: <i>Grazie.</i>
Pip: That's cool.	Pip: Forte.
Seb: Yeah, Jo's doing a good job.	Seb: Già, Jo sta facendo un buon lavoro.
Paul: You know? However many hairstyles that you try, she's not gonna go out with you.	Paul: Sai, nonostante tutte le acconciature che provi non uscirà con te.
Suzanne: Oh, talk of the devil.	Suzanne: Oh parli del diavolo.
Joanne: Hello, I'm coming.	Joanne: Ciao, sto entrando.
Pip: Quick, someone give him some hair wax.	Pip: Veloci, qualcuno gli dia della cera per capelli.
Seb: Shut up.	Seb: Zitto.
Paul: Morning.	Paul: Buongiorno.
Suzanne: Morning Jo.	Suzanne: Buongiorno, Jo.
Joanne: Hello, hello.	Joanne: Ciao, ciao.
Pip: Jo, what do you think of Seb's hair?	Pip: Jo, cosa pensi dei capelli di Seb?
Joanne: It's cool.	Joanne: Sta bene.
Paul: Right, it's time to go.	Paul: Ok, è ora di andare.
Pip: Seb?	Pip: Seb?
Libby: <i>Treasure.</i>	Libby: <i>Tesoro.</i>
Suzanne: What is it Libs? What is she saying, television? No.	Suzanne: Che cosa, Libby? Cosa sta dicendo, televisione? No.
Joanne: No, I think she wants to look for treasure so, I'll sort that out. <i>You want treasure?</i>	Joanne: No, penso voglia fare la caccia al tesoro, me ne occupo io. <i>Vuoi il tesoro?</i>

Paul: We've gotta move on Pip. Seb, will you bring my briefcase please?	Paul: Dobbiamo muoverci, Pip. Seb, mi prendi la valigetta per favore?
Suzanne: Thank you. Right, so, I'm on the bloody hospital run again with Paul's mom today. I think I mentioned last night, I'm gonna be a bit late again tonight, more like six?	Suzanne: Grazie. Ok, devo di nuovo correre in ospedale con la mamma di Paul oggi. Penso di avertelo accennato ieri, tornerò un po' tardi questa sera, tipo sulle sei, ok?
Joanne: Yeah, that's fine. We'll have lots of fun.	Joanne: Sì, va bene. Ci divertiremo un sacco.
Libby: <i>Fun, you, me.</i>	Libby: <i>Divertimento, tu, io.</i>
Suzanne: Bye, Libby.	Suzanne: Ciao, Libby.
Joanne: <i>What are you drawing?</i>	Joanne: <i>Cosa stai disegnando?</i>
Libby: <i>You, me, holiday.</i>	Libby: <i>Tu, io, vacanza.</i>
Joanne: <i>Wow, I could do with a holiday. Is that me?</i>	Joanne: <i>Wow, mi servirebbe proprio una vacanza. Sono io?</i>
Suzanne: Back again, sorry, can never leave. I forgot my bloody purse.	Suzanne: Sono di nuovo qua, non me ne vado mai. Mi sono dimenticata la mia maledetta borsa.
Joanne: Hi, I'm Joanne, I look after Libby.	Joanne: Salve, sono Joanne, mi occupo di Libby.
Grandmother: Oh, hello darling, is she being good for you?	Nonna: Oh ciao cara, si sta comportando bene con te?
Joanne: Libby? Yeah, she's great, she's so bright.	Joanne: Libby? Sì, è così brillante.
Grandmother: Is she? Do you think she'll be able to get a job one day?	Nonna: Davvero? Pensi che sarà mai in grado di trovare un lavoro un giorno?
Joanne: Yeah, I think she'll be able to have a career in whatever she likes.	Joanne: Sì, penso che sarà in grado di fare carriera in qualsiasi ambito voglia.
Grandmother: Oh, God bless her. Her grandad was deaf, you know, from birth. He had a job, as a cleaner. I knew him.	Nonna: Oh, Dio la benedica. Suo nonno era sordo, sai, dalla nascita. Aveva un lavoro, come addetto alle pulizie. Lo conoscevo.
Joanne: Really? Libby's grandad? Sorry, do you mean Paul's dad or Sue's dad?	Joanne: Davvero? Il nonno di Libby? Scusi, ma il papà di Paul o di Sue?

Grandmother: Neither darling. She's not Paul's, you know. I told him he should have left, but he never listens to his mother.	Nonna: Nessuno dei due, cara. Sai, non è figlia di Paul. Io gliel'ho detto che avrebbe dovuto andarsene, ma non ascolta mai sua madre.
Joanne: Right, well it was really nice to meet you.	Joanne: Già, bene, è stato un piacere conoscerla.
Grandmother: You too, dear.	Nonna: Anche per me, tesoro.
Suzanne: Alright then?	Suzanne: Andiamo?
Grandmother: Yeah.	Nonna: Sì.
Suzanne: Couldn't find it but I've got my card.	Suzanne: Non riesco a trovarla ma c'è dentro la mia carta.
Joanne: <i>Found you.</i>	Joanne: <i>Trovata.</i>
Libby: <i>Easy.</i>	Libby: <i>Facile.</i>
Joanne: <i>Oh, it was easy. That's why.</i>	Joanne: <i>Oh, era facile. Ecco perché.</i>
Libby: <i>I thinking.</i>	Libby: <i>Pensando.</i>
Joanne: <i>Thinking? About what?</i>	Joanne: <i>Pensando? A cosa?</i>
Libby: <i>My ears are broken.</i>	Libby: <i>Le mie orecchie sono rotte.</i>
Suzanne: I know that she's progressing but I'm worried. She's learning this language that I don't know and no one in her school will know. When you have a child you want them to be normal, you want her to be perfect.	Suzanne: So che sta facendo progressi ma sono preoccupata. Sta imparando questa lingua che io non conosco e nessuno nella sua scuola conoscerà. Quando hai un figlio vuoi che sia normale, che sia perfetto.
Joanne: She's normal, Sue. She's just deaf.	Joanne: Lei è normale, Sue. È solo sorda.
Suzanne: Look, I know it's your area of expertise, but you must understand. I'm Libby's mother and I know what's best for her.	Suzanne: Ascolta, lo so, è il tuo campo ma devi capire. Io sono la mamma di Libby e so cosa è meglio per lei.
Joanne: No, of course you know best; it's just that schools don't always understand deafness and you have to fight for the support sometimes, but it is out there.	Joanne: No, ovviamente ne sai più di me, è semplicemente che la scuola non sempre comprende la sordità e devi lottare per il supporto qualche volta, ma è lì fuori.
Suzanne: I know what I'm doing Jo, you must understand. I've been a mother for a very long time and I do appreciate your concern and Paul and I will arrange to go and see her head. I	Suzanne: So cosa sto facendo, Jo, devi capirlo. Sono madre da tantissimo tempo e apprezzo la tua preoccupazione ma io e Paul la porteremo a farle fare una visita dalla logopedista. Insomma,

mean, do you think we'd send her to school without making sure everything was in place first?	pensi che la manderemo a scuola senza assicurarci che sia tutto a posto prima?
Joanne: Hello?	Joanne: Pronto?
Suzanne: Hello Joanne, you okay?	Suzanne: Ciao, Joanne, tutto bene?
Joanne: Yeah, no I'm fine; I'm on the bike. Is everything okay?	Joanne: Sì, si sto bene. Sono in bici. È tutto a posto?
Suzanne: Just... I'm sorry this is a difficult thing to say, but Paul and I have been talking and we think it's best if Libby stops the sign language.	Suzanne: Sì... mi dispiace, è una cosa difficile da dire ma io e Paul abbiamo parlato e pensiamo che sia meglio per Libby se smette con la lingua dei segni.
Joanne: What? Why?	Joanne: Cosa? Perché
Suzanne: We think that speech therapy is a better route to take. I'm really sorry, Jo.	Suzanne: Pensiamo che la terapia del linguaggio sia la strada migliore da percorrere. Mi dispiace molto, Jo.
Joanne: I don't understand. She was doing so well.	Joanne: Non capisco. Stava andando così bene.
Suzanne: I know.	Suzanne: Lo so.
Joanne: For school it's really important that she carries on with sign language and gets extra support.	Joanne: Per la scuola è molto importante che continui con la lingua dei segni e riceva supporto extra.
Suzanne: Look, we've talked a lot about this, Jo, and we've actually been in to see the head and they had a little deaf boy a few years ago and he was absolutely fine; they know what they're doing.	Suzanne: Ascolta, ne abbiamo parlato molto a riguardo, Jo, e siamo anche andati a farle la visita. Avevano un bambino piccolo sordo qualche anno fa e sta bene, sanno quello che fanno.
Joanne: Ok, I'm nearly here now. Can I explain it to her? Because she'll wonder where I am.	Joanne: Ok, sono quasi arrivata ormai. Posso spiegarlo io a lei? Si chiederà dove sono.
Teacher: Ok class, open your books. Write the date at the top and we'll start the spelling test. Number one: there. Number two: here.	Maestra: Ok, bambini, aprite i libri. Scrivete la data in cima e iniziamo la prova di spelling. Numero uno: lì. Numero due: qui.
Libby: <i>I love you.</i>	Libby: <i>Ti voglio bene.</i>
Joanne: <i>I love you.</i>	Joanne: <i>Ti voglio bene.</i>

[90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. Over 78% of deaf children attend mainstream school with no specialist support in place]	[il 90% dei bambini sordi sono nati da genitori udenti. Oltre il 78% dei bambini sordi frequenta scuole pubbliche senza il dovuto supporto]
[Deafness is not a learning difficulty. With the right support, a deaf child can do exactly the same as a hearing child.]	[La sordità non è un disturbo dell'apprendimento. Con il giusto supporto un bambino sordo può fare le stesse cose di un bambino udente.]
[We hope this film contributes to the fight for sign language to be recognized in every school across the globe]	[Ci auguriamo che questo cortometraggio contribuisca alla lotta per il riconoscimento della lingua dei segni in tutte le scuole del mondo]

As already explained at the beginning of the section, the original English dialogue displays a rather colloquial and informal register except for some words and expressions that may represent an issue. As a consequence, the same approach has been adopted to realize the Italian translation, as one can see from expression such as: “Va be”, “idiota” or “valigetta”, used rather than the more specific term “ventiquattrore” since it’s more suitable within the domestic context. On the contrary, as regards the more formal lines the solutions employed will be explained below.

Hereafter the different problems that appeared during the translation process will be discussed. First of all, at the very beginning the father says “Yeah ok, chill that’s fine” and the first literal translation that came up for the term chill was “tranquillo”. However, as we have said before, the register is very colloquial; moreover – as one may infer from the following line – it should sound strange since it is pronounced by the father, indeed his daughter then replies by saying “It sounds so weird when old people say chill”. As a consequence, a better translation would be “rilassati”.

The second issue worth analyzing is the sentence “we have quite low expectations”. In the Italian version it has been rendered as follows “non abbiamo molte aspettative in realtà”. Here, the technique employed is a modulation which – according to Vinay and Darbelnet’s theory – is a shift of the point of view in order to render the same meaning but with a more natural expression in the target language than the one produced with a more literal translation – despite being this grammatically and syntactically correct. Indeed, the original one has a more positive approach and focuses on the fact that there are some expectations even though they are very low; on the other hand, in Italian we adopt a more negative attitude by saying that there are not so many expectations or that they are equal to

zero. The same technique has been used in the following example: the English sentence “Oh Sue, don’t forget that letter, will you?” has been translated into Italian as follows: “Oh Sue, ti ricordi della lettera, vero?”.

As regards the rhetorical questions such as “And I’m assuming there’s no history of deafness on yours or your husband’s side?” and other expressions like “No, which was a real blow”, filler words such as “giusto” or “infatti” have been added in order to emphasize the rhetorical tone used in the original, since the literal translation would have produced a sentence that would have lost this nuance that is actually important for the whole message.

Then, with respect to the sentence “Because she had a bit of hearing in her left ear that was overcompensating” a specific translation technique was adopted: expansion. As a consequence, its Italian version would be “Ma riusciva ancora a sentire leggermente dall’orecchio sinistro e questo stava compensando anche troppo bene”. According to Newmark, this technique consists in the increasing of the number of words to explain the same message because the target language lacks the specific terms. In this case, indeed, in Italian it exists no literal equivalent to substitute the expression “she had a bit of hearing” because we can’t say that an ear has hearing; on the contrary, we stress the capacity of a person to hear or not. For this reason, the focus has been changed to the fact that the child could still hear but at the same time the adverb “leggermente” was added to emphasize that she could not hear perfectly. Similarly, the verb “overcompensating” was translated with its Italian correspondent “compensare” in the basic form and the expression “anche troppo bene” is meant to replace the prefix “over” to highlight the fact that it was not a positive thing as it may seem.

Moreover, we can notice that when the child and Joanne talk, the sentences are very short and simple and sometimes they may appear grammatically incorrect, such as in this case: “I thinking”. Clearly the verb “was” is missing here; however, this is a characteristic of the sign language which has a completely different way of composing a sentence from the one we are used to. For example – for what concerns the Italian Sign Language – the verbs’ tenses past, present and future, this is indicated through the hand position while signing, the use of time markers such as yesterday, today, tomorrow and so on, and the body position. Moreover, it’s important not to forget that it’s a child speaking and that she is learning the sign language, as a consequence, some errors are considered normal. Indeed, in a specific scene Joanne teaches her how to say “orange juice” and some scenes later the child tells her parents that she wants orange juice by saying simply “orange”.

Finally, the last issue worth explaining is the acronym GCSE – which stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. It’s an academic qualification – typical of England, Wales and Northern Ireland – and it’s meant to test the students’ level in some specific subjects – that vary according to

the country. The students take this exam at the end of Year 11 and – if passed – it allows them to continue with their higher education. However, it is something that does not exist in the Italian education system, as a consequence, a model audience that does not possess a deep knowledge of the English system would never understand it. Consequently – given that there is no direct or functional equivalent in the target culture and language – it was necessary to make use of a descriptive equivalent to make it comprehensible.

A similar choice has been employed with the grades. In the original script the mom says that her son got all A*s in the mock tests; however, in Italy we have a different grading system. Our marks, indeed, go from 1 to 10 until the end of High School, and then at the University from 1 to 30; contrarily, in the English system they go from A to F – where A and 10, or 30, correspond to the excellence; while 1 and F to a failure. Therefore, there were two possible solutions to solve this problem: on the one hand the expression “he got all A*s” could have been translated with a descriptive equivalent “ha preso il massimo dei voti”; or – on the other hand – it could have been rendered with a cultural equivalent “ha preso tutti 10”. In this case – since there are no spatial and temporal constraints – the first option was adopted.

To conclude, as observed at the beginning of the section, there is a prevalence of the informal register – employed throughout the whole film – with two great discrepancies in some specific points: when Joanne talks to the grandmother and then when she talks to Libby – the child. This is particularly evident in Italian, since – while in English the register simply becomes more formal – in the target language the courtesy form is used. It is also known as the polite form and it consists in the use of the third person singular rather than the second, when talking to the elderly, high-ranking people, or to someone who occupies a prominent job position compared to us. This in conjunction with a very polite and elevated register. An example could be “Scusi, ma il papà di Paul o di Sue?”. In contrast, when Joanne talks to Libby words belonging to a very low register have been used; as we can notice from the term “piena” – employed in place of “sazia” – and from the sentence “my ears are broken”. This, in order to emphasize that it’s a six-year-old talking.

As anticipated at the beginning of the analysis, the language employed in this short film is neither technical nor particularly difficult; however, the translation into Italian has been included and analyzed in order to compare it with the final version of the dialogue adjusted according to the subtitling rules. In the following chapter, indeed, the Italian script will be provided and one can see how the first Italian translation – even though it is very accurate and precise – sometimes has to be changed completely to obey to the spatial and temporal constraints of subtitling. This is interesting to notice especially given the fact that in the last chapter the role of the subtitler has been discussed and

it has been pointed out the importance of having the same person to carry out the translation and then the subtitling process, since he or she is already familiar with the original dialogue and the different choices that had led to the translation.

Chapter 3

Subtitling Process

3.1 Target audience

The Silent Child is a short film imagined and developed around the personal story of a deaf six-year-old child named Libby. Consequently, as one can imagine, the main topic of the film is deafness and the difficulties that a person who suffers from this issue may encounter. As introduced in the last chapter of this dissertation, the film focuses on the everyday life of this young child analyzing her struggles, her small victories, her emotions and her interaction with the rest of the world, her family in particular. Despite being a very complex issue, it is not introduced from a medical point of view. Indeed, there are no technical terms or expressions that require a particular education or level of information to be understood. On the contrary, a simple and colloquial language was employed precisely in order to make it comprehensible to everyone. This in compliance with the intention of the production team; indeed, they declared that their primary objective was to sensitize to this problem. For this reason, it was important to maintain this feature in the target version subtitled in Italian, otherwise it would have lost its original aim.

It is pretty difficult indeed, to identify and define a precise target audience because, as said before, the goal was to spread the short film among as many people as possible. This includes children, elderly people or simply people who are not familiar with the topic as well. As discussed earlier in fact, the production succeeded in its goal given that online reviews have been posted by different categories of people. The part of the audience that already lives this condition daily or that is familiar with it because it has a relative or a friend that suffers from it, has stated that it is very accurate and – though a delicate issue – it succeeded in presenting it with great sensitivity and honesty at the same time. This may have encouraged also those who have a more superficial knowledge of the problem to watch it and they all affirmed that it really made them aware of this condition.

Regarding the practical subtitling creation then, they address a hearing audience and it is important to make it explicit because – as we have seen in the first chapter – to address deaf or hard of hearing people there are some specific rules to employ that have not been considered here, neither in terms of punctuation, nor with reference to the indications regarding the tone, the stress, the background sounds and so on, often referred to as suprasegmental linguistic aspects.

3.2 Software used

The subtitling process, main part of this thesis, was carried out employing Subtitle Edit – a software released in 2009 by Nikolaj Lyngé Olsson. Despite being a free editor it allows an amateur subtitler to perform all the basic tasks such as: create, edit and adjust subtitles to a video. Its default language is English but it offers the possibility to choose between 37 other languages including not so spoken ones like Vietnamese or Polish, for example. For this reason, it's the most popular among non-professional subtitlers. Plus, it displays a very simple and intuitive graphic interface which will be analyzed hereafter.

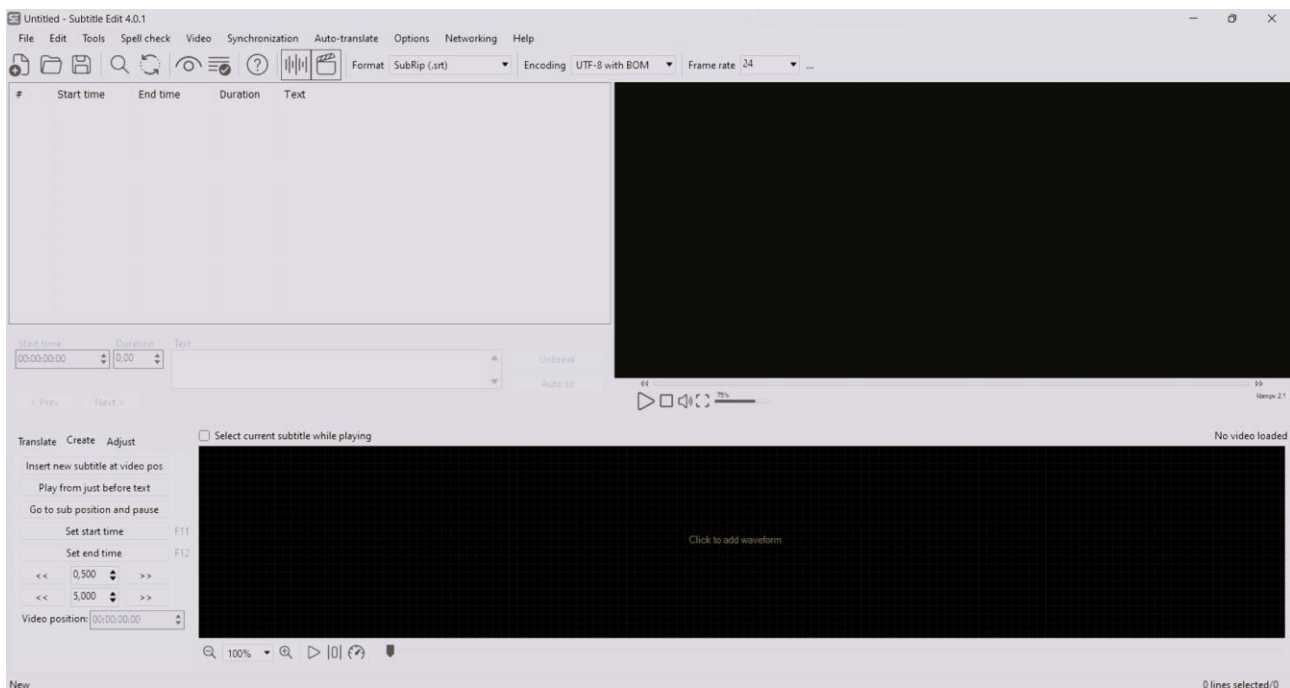


Fig. 3.1 homepage SubtitleEdit

Once we have opened the software, the first step to start with is the uploading of the video we are going to subtitle. This procedure can be done in three different ways. We can open the folder on our computer that contains the video and drag it into the dedicated area, that is the black rectangle placed on the upper-right part of the screen. Otherwise, we could click on “video” among the menu at the top and then on “open video file”, and it will automatically open the document folder on the computer. The last and easiest possibility is to tap on the video rectangle and it will open the computer folder. After having uploaded the video, it is recommended to add the waveform at the bottom by simply clicking on “add the waveform”. It is the representation of the sound according to its frequency and intensity and it's very useful during the subtitles creation because it allows a more precise synchronization between the video and the subtitle – as we are going to discuss later in this section. Once we have completed this passage – before starting with the creation of the first subtitle – we

should adjust the default parameters. Among the menu on the upper part of the homepage we select “options” and then “setting” and the following window will appear.

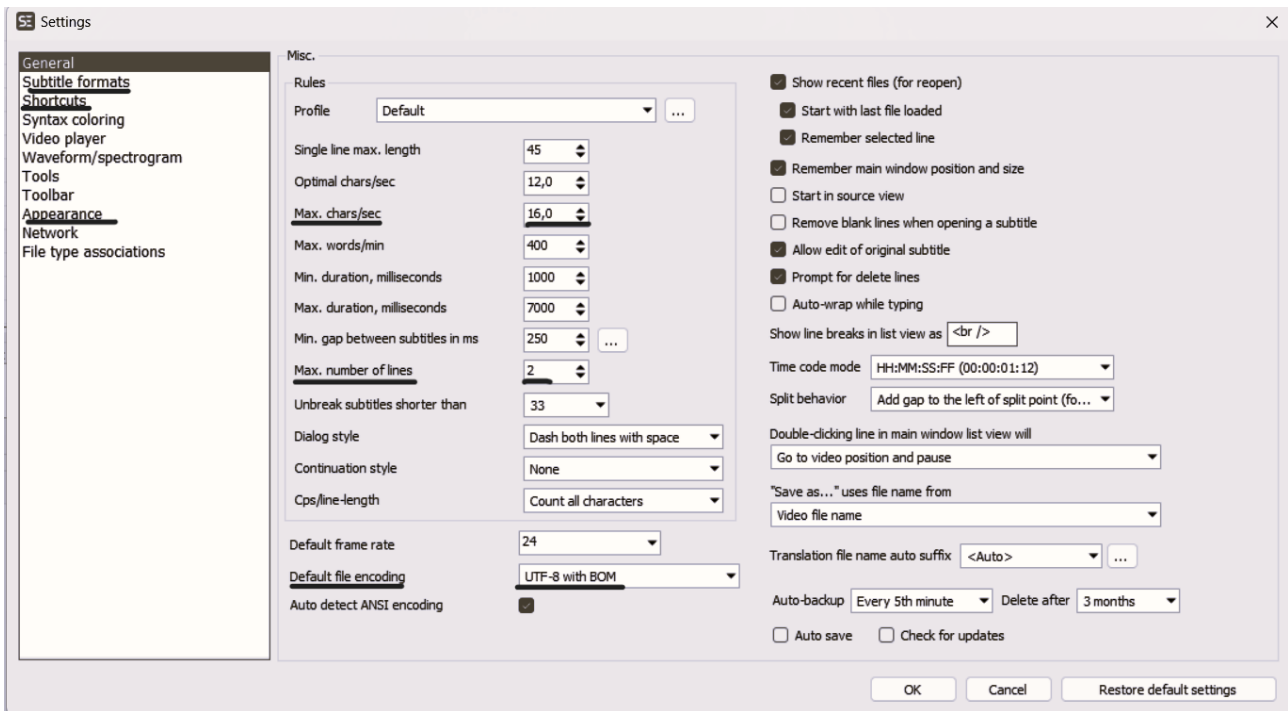


Fig.3.2 settings SubtitleEdit

Now, we are going to verify if the parameters are acceptable for the realization of Italian subtitles according to the general instructions provided in the first chapter of the thesis.

The most important aspects to consider are: the maximum length of the lines, which is set on 45 characters and the maximum characters per second, that should be around 15 – in this case indeed the default number is 16 and we can consider it acceptable since we are dealing with a video that – if released – would be published on an online platform such as YouTube, so users can pause it whenever they want, differently from a film released at cinema for example. Moreover, we should focus on the minimum subtitle duration and the maximum number of lines that corresponds to two since we are dealing with the creation of regular subtitles rather than subtitles for deaf or hard of hearing people or amateur subtitles. Finally, we have to make sure that the subtitles are written in white color and with an appropriate font and dimension, and we can adjust these aspects selecting the “appearance” item.

From the list on the left we can notice that there is the possibility to personalize a lot of other different features relating both the software appearance and the constraints for the subtitles according to our needs. However, since in this case there is no commissioner to negotiate with and it is not a professional job we could leave the default settings.

Lastly, there are some useful shortcuts we can make use of to adjust the subtitles and they can be changed as well. For example, the one that is meant to start and pause the video is “Ctrl. + Alt + K”; however, it would be more intuitive to use the letter P. So, we should click on “shortcuts”, select the function we are referring to among the list and change it into Ctrl. + Alt + P. The other shortcuts will be illustrated while explaining the following steps.

All these aspects described above have been underlined in figure 3.2 settings SubtitleEdit

Once we have regulated all the different parameters we can start with the creation of the first subtitle. In order to do so there are three possibilities: we can simply click on the text box, use the shortcut “Ctrl. + Alt + U” or click on “insert new subtitle at video position”. In the first case however, the subtitle will be automatically created at the beginning of the video, so we’ll need to synchronize it using the waveform and the instructions on the left in the main window: “set start time” “and “set end time”. In the second case instead, we can more easily pause the video when the first subtitle needs to be placed and use one of the two options introduced above. To regulate its duration then we can pause the video when the subtitle should end and click on “set end time”. However, stopping the video at the right time might be difficult and requires a lot of precision, so, using the waveform we can easily move from one frame to the other. To move one frame back we can use the shortcut “Ctrl. + Alt + J”, while to move one frame forward “Ctrl. + Alt + L”. Otherwise, we can make use of the specific tools located near the text box: “start time” and “duration”.

The upper-left part of the main window of the editor is dedicated to the subtitles. There is a chart divided into five columns that indicate: the number of the subtitle, its start time, its end time, the duration and the text. While writing, the duration of the subtitle automatically sets itself according to the length of the text, and if the number of the characters exceeds the maximum parameter the indicator of the characters per second turns red in order to warn us. Simultaneously, also the sign “split line” turns red as well as and the line of the chart that corresponds to that subtitle. An example of a longer subtitle is provided in the following picture, however, as we’ll see hereafter, it’s an exception.

In this case as well all the parameters that should be in red have been highlighted in the picture below, since the final version of the thesis will be black and white.

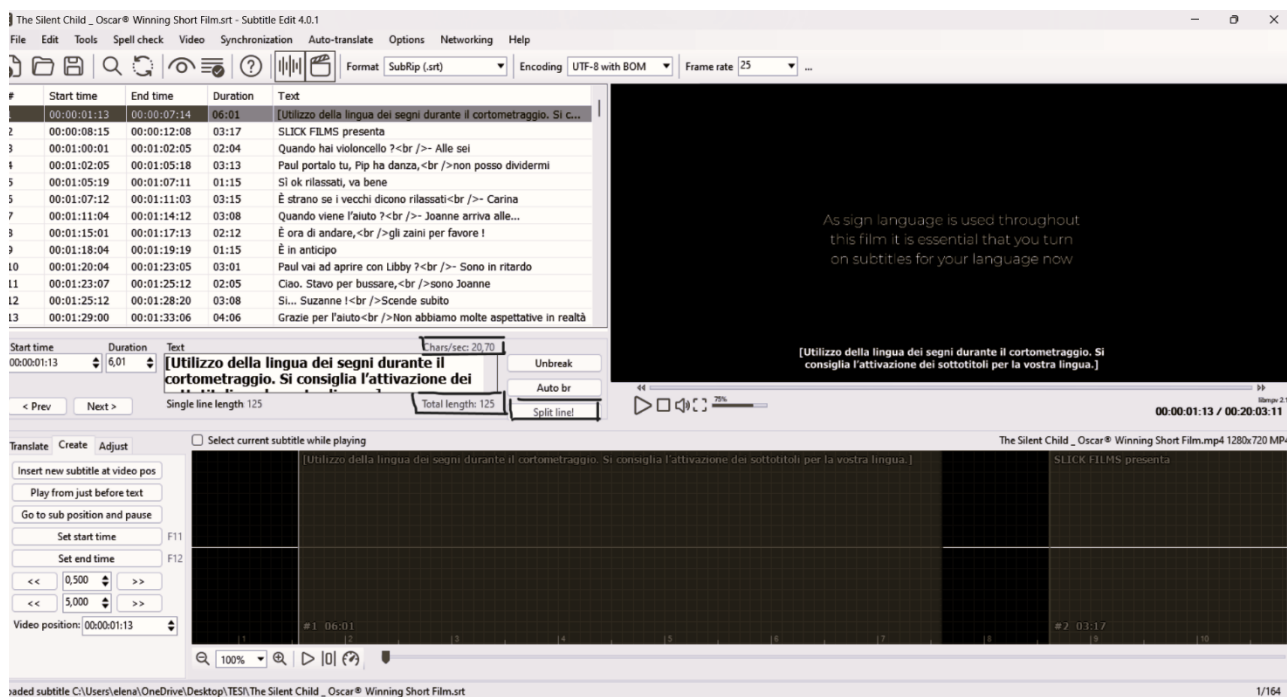


Fig. 3.3 long subtitle

3.3 Italian subtitles

As introduced in the previous chapter, this dissertation aims at creating the Italian subtitles for a British short film entitled “*The Silent Child*”. The first step of the process was transcribing the original English dialogue and it has been carried out without looking at the initial subtitles included by the production – they have been consulted only for the parts of the script expressed through the British Sign Language. Secondly, the translation into Italian has been realized and both of them are included in section 2.2 Dialogue list and translation issues. The table below will provide the third and last step of the process: the adaptation of the Italian translation into subtitles.

But first of all, a small premise is necessary: as already declared, the transcription of those parts of the dialogue expressed in the BSL is based on the initial subtitles; consequently, their translation into Italian is based on that as well. For this reason, some of the signs may not correspond to the ones that are actually used in the Italian Sign Language and an Italian native speaker may find him or herself a bit confused. However – as discussed in the first chapter, the British Sign Language is recognized as a language, so its use in the short film and in the subtitles has the same function of any other language and must be referred to properly. For this reason, even for these parts the Italian subtitles were created in synchrony with the original script so that the signs and the text of the subtitle fully correspond. Moreover, the sentences are very short and simple and sometimes the line consists of only one word, so it wasn’t necessary to adapt the content or to reduce it.

1 00:00:01,560 --> 00:00:07,600 [Utilizzo della lingua dei segni durante il cortometraggio. Si consiglia l'attivazione dei sottotitoli per la vostra lingua.]	10 00:01:20,160 --> 00:01:23,213 Paul vai ad aprire con Libby ? - Sono in ritardo
2 00:00:08,619 --> 00:00:12,338 SLICK FILMS presenta	11 00:01:23,280 --> 00:01:25,480 Ciao. Stavo per bussare, sono Joanne
3 00:01:00,042 --> 00:01:02,200 Quando hai violoncello ? - Alle sei	12 00:01:25,520 --> 00:01:28,840 Si... Suzanne ! Scende subito
4 00:01:02,200 --> 00:01:05,760 Paul portalo tu, Pip ha danza, non posso dividermi	13 00:01:29,000 --> 00:01:33,240 Grazie per l'aiuto Non abbiamo molte aspettative in realtà
5 00:01:05,800 --> 00:01:07,440 Sì ok rilassati, va bene	14 00:01:33,387 --> 00:01:36,960 Vogliamo che si senta più sicura in vista della scuola
6 00:01:07,480 --> 00:01:11,120 È strano se i vecchi dicono rilassati - Carina	15 00:01:37,000 --> 00:01:38,720 Ok - Va be...
7 00:01:11,160 --> 00:01:14,488 Quando viene l'aiuto ? - Joanne arriva alle...	16 00:01:43,913 --> 00:01:46,543 Ha l'apparecchio ma non lo mette
8 00:01:15,040 --> 00:01:17,560 È ora di andare, gli zaini per favore !	17 00:01:47,294 --> 00:01:51,000 Non ci sono altri casi in famiglia, giusto ? - No
9 00:01:18,160 --> 00:01:19,800 È in anticipo	18 00:01:51,040 --> 00:01:55,413 L'abbiamo scoperto a tre anni e mezzo e mi sento una madre orribile

<p>19 00:01:55,458 --> 00:01:59,840 ma l'orecchio sinistro compensava bene. A quanto pare è comune</p>	<p>28 00:02:25,000 --> 00:02:27,280 Bene Non avrà problemi allora</p>
<p>20 00:01:59,960 --> 00:02:01,960 Non è vero, è molto comune</p>	<p>29 00:02:28,440 --> 00:02:30,880 Smettila, idiota! Sono al telefono</p>
<p>21 00:02:02,000 --> 00:02:06,280 Non può fare l'impianto cocleare giusto ? - No, è stato un duro colpo</p>	<p>30 00:02:31,484 --> 00:02:33,800 Fai come a casa tua, siediti pure</p>
<p>22 00:02:06,320 --> 00:02:10,101 Come comunica ? Usa la lingua dei segni o legge le labbra?</p>	<p>31 00:02:34,040 --> 00:02:36,200 Libs, c'è qualcuno qui per te</p>
<p>23 00:02:10,101 --> 00:02:11,240 Legge le labbra</p>	<p>32 00:02:36,474 --> 00:02:39,133 Libby, posso avere il telecomando ? Libby !</p>
<p>24 00:02:11,400 --> 00:02:13,080 E nel parlato ? - Male</p>	<p>33 00:02:41,320 --> 00:02:43,240 Libby ! Posso il telecomando ?</p>
<p>25 00:02:13,942 --> 00:02:17,880 Inizio con un misto di linguaggio parlato e di lingua dei segni</p>	<p>34 00:02:45,542 --> 00:02:47,762 Di solito è felice se guarda la TV</p>
<p>26 00:02:18,014 --> 00:02:20,600 A molti piace perchè è meno frustrante</p>	<p>35 00:02:47,800 --> 00:02:52,160 Sa essere difficile, a volte non sappiamo cosa ci sia che non va</p>
<p>27 00:02:20,800 --> 00:02:24,920 Non credo in questo caso Libby segue molto bene quello che diciamo</p>	<p>36 00:02:52,200 --> 00:02:53,800 C'è un motivo specifico ?</p>

<p>37</p> <p>00:02:53,818 --> 00:02:57,240</p> <p>No. Ma a questa età gli altri due erano uguali</p>	<p>46</p> <p>00:04:15,200 --> 00:04:16,800</p> <p>Lo so, è tranquilla</p>
<p>38</p> <p>00:02:57,280 --> 00:03:00,120</p> <p>Mamma, l'esame inizia tra 25 minuti ! - Arrivo</p>	<p>47</p> <p>00:04:16,800 --> 00:04:18,280</p> <p>Già Interagisce mai ?</p>
<p>39</p> <p>00:03:00,240 --> 00:03:03,920</p> <p>Ha gli esami, meglio non fargli fare tardi</p>	<p>48</p> <p>00:04:18,520 --> 00:04:21,280</p> <p>Sì, capisce quello che diciamo molto bene</p>
<p>40</p> <p>00:03:03,920 --> 00:03:08,040</p> <p>Hai il mio numero, tornerò tra un paio d'ore per vedere come va</p>	<p>49</p> <p>00:04:21,429 --> 00:04:24,040</p> <p>Fidati di me, se è triste te ne accorgi</p>
<p>41</p> <p>00:03:08,040 --> 00:03:09,840</p> <p>Andrai alla grande Ciao Libby</p>	<p>50</p> <p>00:04:24,222 --> 00:04:28,240</p> <p>Proverò con qualcosa di più interattivo, ho alcuni libri utili</p>
<p>42</p> <p>00:03:46,000 --> 00:03:47,080</p> <p>Posso giocare ?</p>	<p>51</p> <p>00:04:28,561 --> 00:04:30,120</p> <p>Pronto? Scusami</p>
<p>43</p> <p>00:03:50,160 --> 00:03:53,440</p> <p>Lascia che ti mostri una cosa, ti piacerà</p>	<p>52</p> <p>00:04:30,768 --> 00:04:34,960</p> <p>Sì, sono appena entrata, posso chiamarti tra cinque minuti ?</p>
<p>44</p> <p>00:04:11,280 --> 00:04:12,440</p> <p>Tua mamma è qui</p>	<p>53</p> <p>00:04:35,006 --> 00:04:40,960</p> <p>Sì, domani 8:30, giusto ? Ok non preoccuparti, ciao</p>
<p>45</p> <p>00:04:12,520 --> 00:04:15,080</p> <p>Come è andata? - Bene</p>	<p>54</p> <p>00:04:41,400 --> 00:04:44,600</p> <p>Scusa, la mamma di Paul, sa essere una seccatura</p>

55 00:04:44,640 --> 00:04:48,040 Tranquilla Porto del materiale da provare domani	64 00:06:12,920 --> 00:06:14,400 Sarà una giornata lunga
56 00:04:48,120 --> 00:04:49,320 Le piace il parco ?	65 00:06:14,476 --> 00:06:17,880 Scusa devo accompagnare la mamma di Paul all'ospedale
57 00:04:49,360 --> 00:04:53,200 Non la porto da quando era piccola, ma lo adorerà	66 00:06:17,880 --> 00:06:20,440 Tranquilla - Ciao Libs, starai bene
58 00:04:53,200 --> 00:04:55,361 È qui vicino - Ho visto. Perfetto	67 00:06:20,524 --> 00:06:22,754 Ci vediamo dopo, grazie - Ciao
59 00:04:55,440 --> 00:04:58,120 Grazie, Joanne - Di niente, ciao	68 00:06:52,912 --> 00:06:56,040 Cos'è quello ? Latte
60 00:05:50,989 --> 00:05:53,600 Ti trasferisci ? - Oh, sono per Libby	69 00:06:58,920 --> 00:07:03,040 Succo d'arancia Quello, cos'è ?
61 00:05:53,800 --> 00:05:58,440 È dentro con Sue, è di buon umore. Libby, Sue non è mai di buon umore	70 00:07:08,800 --> 00:07:13,160 Andiamo a dare da mangiare alle anatre ? Conosci le anatre ?
62 00:05:59,577 --> 00:06:00,977 Hey ! - Oh, hey !	71 00:07:16,160 --> 00:07:17,160 Anatre
63 00:06:10,016 --> 00:06:12,920 Hey, Libby Oh scusa, la porta era aperta e io...	72 00:07:21,395 --> 00:07:26,360 Ok, prepariamo lo zaino. Dov'è il tuo zainetto ?

73 00:07:26,400 --> 00:07:27,400 Arancia	82 00:09:41,971 --> 00:09:45,640 Non credo che molte persone la conoscano
74 00:07:34,640 --> 00:07:36,280 Vuoi succo d'arancia ?	83 00:09:45,720 --> 00:09:48,480 Ha bisogno di un'interprete e supporto extra
75 00:07:41,480 --> 00:07:43,640 Andiamo a prenderne un po' allora	84 00:09:48,480 --> 00:09:53,240 Non voglio raccomandare me stessa, ma io sarei più che felice di aiutarla
76 00:08:10,331 --> 00:08:15,160 Grazie - Grazie	85 00:09:53,280 --> 00:09:59,800 Non dovremmo dedicarci alla lettura delle labbra invece che alla lingua dei segni ?
77 00:09:03,097 --> 00:09:05,880 Ho finito, sono piena - Sei piena ?	86 00:10:00,066 --> 00:10:06,640 Ora Libby ha più difficoltà a parlare, insieme porteranno a risultati migliori
78 00:09:05,920 --> 00:09:09,320 Non vuoi le caramelle quindi ? - Che caramelle ?	87 00:10:06,680 --> 00:10:10,600 So che sembra assurdo, ma le basi sono facili da imparare
79 00:09:13,440 --> 00:09:19,960 Sono le mie preferite - Le tue preferite ? Anche le mie	88 00:10:10,640 --> 00:10:12,520 Un bel gesto come famiglia
80 00:09:36,320 --> 00:09:40,280 Mi stavo chiedendo, come farà con la lingua dei segni a scuola ?	89 00:10:12,600 --> 00:10:14,574 Non so quanto sia fattibile
81 00:09:40,574 --> 00:09:41,874 In che senso ?	90 00:10:14,574 --> 00:10:18,280 Pip ha danza e Seb prova con il coro tre volte a settimana

91 00:10:18,280 --> 00:10:21,200 Ma ne discuteremo domani, ne parlerò con Paul	100 00:11:05,640 --> 00:11:07,520 Sta usando la lingua dei segni
92 00:10:21,500 --> 00:10:24,014 Ok, Perfetto	101 00:11:08,598 --> 00:11:12,040 Probabilmente ha fame. Mi passi il burro, Seb ?
93 00:10:31,746 --> 00:10:32,846 Grazie, Sue	102 00:11:12,040 --> 00:11:15,520 Credo sia succo d'arancia, Jo mi ha insegnato qualcosa
94 00:10:35,318 --> 00:10:41,480 Voglio che parli, Paul, e non sente niente di quello che diciamo	103 00:11:16,400 --> 00:11:17,440 Grazie
95 00:10:41,520 --> 00:10:42,820 [Discussione]	104 00:11:17,814 --> 00:11:20,520 Forte - Già, Jo sta facendo un buon lavoro
96 00:10:56,208 --> 00:10:58,480 Seb, mi passi la marmellata ? - Tieni	105 00:11:20,560 --> 00:11:24,360 Sai, nonostante tutte le acconciature non uscirà con te
97 00:10:58,480 --> 00:11:00,326 Sue, ricordati la lettera	106 00:11:24,360 --> 00:11:26,000 Parli del diavolo - Entro
98 00:11:00,326 --> 00:11:03,520 Hai trovato la giacca di pelle ? - Era in ufficio	107 00:11:26,000 --> 00:11:28,640 Qualcuno gli dia cera per capelli - Zitta
99 00:11:03,520 --> 00:11:04,520 Arancia	108 00:11:28,640 --> 00:11:31,080 Buongiorno, Jo - Ciao

<p>109 00:11:31,800 --> 00:11:35,960 Jo, cosa pensi dei capelli di Seb ? - Sta bene</p>	<p>118 00:12:18,160 --> 00:12:23,960 Cosa stai disegnando ? - Tu, io, vacanza</p>
<p>110 00:11:40,937 --> 00:11:43,560 Ok, è ora di andare - Seb ?</p>	<p>119 00:12:24,792 --> 00:12:30,200 Wow, mi servirebbe proprio una vacanza. Sono io ?</p>
<p>111 00:11:43,560 --> 00:11:46,907 Tesoro - Che cosa, Libby ? Televisione ?</p>	<p>120 00:12:42,050 --> 00:12:46,480 Sono di nuovo qua, non me ne vado mai. Mi sono dimenticata la borsa</p>
<p>112 00:11:46,960 --> 00:11:51,680 Vuola la caccia al tesoro, me ne occupo io. Vuoi il tesoro ?</p>	<p>121 00:13:09,589 --> 00:13:14,972 Salve, sono Joanne, mi occupo di Libby - Oh ciao cara, si sta comportando bene ?</p>
<p>113 00:11:51,720 --> 00:11:54,000 Dobbiamo muoverci. Seb, la valigetta</p>	<p>122 00:13:15,223 --> 00:13:18,760 Libby ? Sì, è così brillante - Davvero ?</p>
<p>114 00:11:54,867 --> 00:12:00,400 Grazie. Corro in ospedale con la mamma di Paul oggi</p>	<p>123 00:13:19,040 --> 00:13:25,360 Sarà in grado di trovare lavoro un giorno ? - Farà carriera in qualsiasi ambito voglia</p>
<p>115 00:12:00,400 --> 00:12:04,373 Te l'ho accennato ieri, tornerò più tardi, circa alle 18</p>	<p>124 00:13:26,315 --> 00:13:30,600 Oh, Dio la benedica. Suo nonno era sordo, sai, dalla nascita</p>
<p>116 00:12:04,373 --> 00:12:06,040 Ok. Ci divertiremo un sacco</p>	<p>125 00:13:30,947 --> 00:13:35,029 Aveva un lavoro, come addetto alle pulizie. Lo conoscevo</p>
<p>117 00:12:06,040 --> 00:12:09,160 Divertimento, tu, io - Ciao Libby</p>	<p>126 00:13:35,188 --> 00:13:40,400 Davvero? Il nonno di Libby ? Scusi, ma il papà di Paul o di Sue ?</p>

127 00:13:42,040 --> 00:13:45,960 Nessuno dei due, cara Sai, non è figlia di Paul	136 00:14:45,387 --> 00:14:48,320 So che fa progressi, ma sono preoccupata
128 00:13:47,080 --> 00:13:51,120 Io gliel'ho detto di andarsene, ma non ascolta mai sua madre	137 00:14:48,320 --> 00:14:52,400 Impara una lingua che non conosco e nessuno a scuola conoscerà
129 00:13:52,040 --> 00:13:55,560 Già, bene, è stato un piacere conoscerla - Anche per me	138 00:14:52,667 --> 00:14:56,480 Quando hai un figlio vuoi che sia normale, che sia perfetto
130 00:14:01,322 --> 00:14:02,522 Andiamo ? - Sì	139 00:14:56,520 --> 00:14:58,800 Lei è normale, Sue. È solo sorda
131 00:14:02,576 --> 00:14:04,840 Non la trovavo ma c'è la mia carta	140 00:14:59,111 --> 00:15:02,960 Ascolta, lo so, è il tuo campo ma devi capire
132 00:14:24,880 --> 00:14:27,360 Trovata - Facile	141 00:15:03,000 --> 00:15:05,880 Sono sua mamma, so cosa è meglio per lei
133 00:14:28,080 --> 00:14:30,080 Oh, era facile. Ecco perché	142 00:15:05,968 --> 00:15:10,560 Ovviamente. Ma la scuola spesso non comprende la sordità
134 00:14:30,640 --> 00:14:34,400 Pensando - Pensando ? A cosa ?	143 00:15:10,560 --> 00:15:14,080 A volte devi lottare per il supporto, ma è lì fuori
135 00:14:35,107 --> 00:14:37,357 Le mie orecchie sono rotte	144 00:15:14,080 --> 00:15:16,400 So cosa faccio Jo, devi capirlo

<p>145 00:15:16,667 --> 00:15:20,760 Sono madre da tantissimo tempo e apprezzo la tua preoccupazione</p>	<p>154 00:16:39,560 --> 00:16:43,360 Deve continuare per la scuola e ricevere supporto extra</p>
<p>146 00:15:21,011 --> 00:15:23,811 Ma io e Paul la porteremo dalla logopedista</p>	<p>155 00:16:43,360 --> 00:16:47,320 Ne abbiamo parlato molto e siamo anche andati a farle la visita</p>
<p>147 00:15:23,840 --> 00:15:28,440 Pensi che la manderemo a scuola senza assicurarci che sia tutto a posto ?</p>	<p>156 00:16:47,320 --> 00:16:51,000 Hanno curato un altro bambino tempo fa, sono competenti</p>
<p>148 00:16:15,800 --> 00:16:18,680 Pronto ? - Ciao Joanne, tutto bene ?</p>	<p>157 00:16:51,000 --> 00:16:54,040 Sono quasi lì Posso dirglielo io ? Chiederà di me</p>
<p>149 00:16:18,720 --> 00:16:21,600 Sì, sto bene. Sono in bici. È tutto a posto ?</p>	<p>158 00:17:23,360 --> 00:17:28,440 Bambini, aprite i libri. Scrivete la data e iniziamo con lo spelling</p>
<p>150 00:16:21,640 --> 00:16:27,920 Sì... mi dispiace, è una cosa difficile da dire ma io e Paul abbiamo parlato</p>	<p>159 00:17:29,960 --> 00:17:35,840 Numero uno: lì Numero due: qui</p>
<p>151 00:16:27,920 --> 00:16:31,320 Pensiamo sia meglio smettere con la lingua dei segni</p>	<p>160 00:18:16,720 --> 00:18:19,560 Ti voglio bene</p>
<p>152 00:16:31,625 --> 00:16:36,720 La logopedia è la strada migliore. Mi dispiace molto, Jo</p>	<p>161 00:18:24,520 --> 00:18:26,360 Ti voglio bene</p>
<p>153 00:16:36,760 --> 00:16:39,440 Non capisco, andava così bene - Lo so</p>	<p>162 00:19:10,240 --> 00:19:17,200 il 90% dei bambini sordi è nato da genitori udenti. Oltre il 78% dei bambini sordi frequenta scuole pubbliche senza il dovuto supporto</p>

<p>163 00:19:17,966 --> 00:19:23,240 La sordità non è un disturbo dell'apprendimento. Con il giusto supporto un bambino sordo può fare le stesse cose di un bambino udente</p>	<p>164 00:19:24,320 --> 00:19:30,120 Ci auguriamo che questo cortometraggio contribuisca alla lotta per il riconoscimento della lingua dei segni in tutte le scuole del mondo</p>
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3.4 Techniques employed

As already introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation, subtitles are not a simple translation of the original oral dialogue because they have to obey to some spatial and temporal constraints that may cause unavoidable changes of the syntax, as one can notice comparing the translation included in the second chapter and the subtitles above. Moreover, the spoken language is full of grammatical or lexical errors, anacoluthon, redundancies, idioms and expressions such as “Oh God” that are not so common in the written language. On the contrary, subtitles belong to the written language and must follow those rules by correcting the errors, eliminating redundancies, and reducing idioms. However, at the same time the professional needs to pay attention not to completely alter the original script, otherwise it would result into a totally different text and this is not the aim of subtitling. The differences introduced affect indeed the lexical and syntactic level in particular and are produced according to some specific rules that are going to be discussed below. Some of them may be very similar to one another and it could be difficult to differentiate between them, especially considering that they all obey to the same principles and tendencies. The final subtitle indeed, may turn out to be the result of a combination of more than one of the different strategies that will be listed in the second part of this chapter.

3.4.1 Text reduction

As already stated in the first chapter, “subtitles can deliver 43 percent less text than the spoken dialogue they derive from” (De Linde and Kay, 1999)¹⁹. This is due to the fact that the listener memorizes a message faster while listening than while reading. As a consequence – given the fact that there exists a maximum time for the duration of a subtitle because it needs to be synchronized with the images – the subtitler can’t simply transcribe word for word the source text delivered orally. This leads to an inevitable reduction of the text that can be partial or total. In a partial reduction, only the superficial words are deleted; on the other hand, in a total reduction the professional intervenes in the text in a deeper way with a reformulation. Indeed, this technique often turns into a rewriting process where the subtitler writes the message using completely different words with respect to the original. This depends on the length of the initial sentence, the reading speed and the time available for the subtitle that in turn may depend on the character’s speaking speed and on how often the dialogue takes turn. In any case, however, the meaning of the original message has to be conveyed even through different words. The aim of this technique in fact, is to give the audience the time to

¹⁹ Baker M. and Saldanha G. 2009 *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. London and New York: Routledge

read the subtitle and memorize it without ignoring the images and the sound; even subtitled, a movie or a video must remain a synchronization of all the different parts it is composed of.

An example of usage of this technique can be directly taken from the subtitling process carried out for *The Silent Child*.

As we can see from the transcription of the original dialogue, towards the beginning of the short film the mother says “Oh God, she’s early. Paul, can you go to the door and take Libby with you?”. This line presents no particular issues and has been translated into Italian as follows: Oddio, è in anticipo. Paul puoi andare tu alla porta e portare Libby? The problem arose while adapting the translation to the correspondent subtitle. At this precise point of the video the dialogue’s turn taking is really fast and even though the sentences are rather short and concise it is difficult to write them word for word because of the problem explained before: the audience must be given the time not only to read the subtitle but also to look at the images and enjoy the video on the whole. For this reason, in the subtitle the word “oddio” has been deleted since it is a mere exclamation that does not bring additional information to the sentence; here, a partial reduction has been employed.

The same occurred with the rest of the sentence; the important message to convey was the fact that Suzanne asks her husband to welcome Joanne at the door together with the child. Consequently, the sentence has been condensed and turned into the following one: Paul vai ad aprire con Libby? Here indeed, from the context and the images we can easily infer that with the verb “aprire” the woman is referring to the door, so it is not necessary to make it explicit. As for the expression “take Libby with you” then, it could simply be summarized with the preposition “con”, thus applying a total reduction. This solution allowed the subtitle to include the whole message and at the same time respect the temporal limit.

However, even though text reduction usually involves single words or short phrases, it may affect whole sentences as well. An evident example could be subtitle number 39: “Ha gli esami, meglio non fargli fare tardi”. This represents the final adaptation of a longer sentence that “is Seb’s got his GCSE’s and he got A*’s in his mocks, so I better not make him late”. However, as already explained in the second chapter of the thesis, it wasn’t possible to maintain the exact original meaning without providing an explanation because it would have resulted incomprehensible to the listener. At the same time, it was impossible to provide an explanation respecting the spatial and temporal limits. As a consequence, this is a clear example of a whole sentence reduction

3.4.2 Equivalent expression

Italian language often makes use of adverbs, adjectives or expressions that are really long and take space uselessly and may represent a problem while subtitling. Fortunately, at the same time it is a language that has a great number of synonyms available and allows the speaker to reformulate the sentence in many other ways. However, one should always make sure that the synonym or the equivalent expression employed really means the same, since sometimes there are words that can be used only in a specific context or that express slightly different features. This especially if we are dealing with technical terms whose meaning can completely change the sense of the message.

Fortunately, in this case there isn't the necessity to be so precise and the informal and colloquial language and context allow us to rewrite the sentences with more flexibility such as in this case: Is there any pattern to that happen? In this sentence the word "pattern" indicates a series of defined events that lead to a specific result; however – since Italian language lacks the direct equivalent – in translation an expansion has been employed and the question has been rendered as follows: C'è una situazione in particolare in cui fa così? Yet, this sentence didn't fit into a subtitle because, according to the length, it exceeded the maximum number of characters per second; so there was the need to find another Italian equivalent expression but shorter than this one. The final solution adopted was: C'è un motivo specifico? Together with this strategy also an omission has been adopted since the last part of the sentence has been completely deleted. This, however, was possible because in the previous line the mother had already made it explicit the fact that she's referring to her behavior.

3.4.3 Compound VS simple tenses

As it happens in English, in Italian as well we have a lot of different tenses to indicate precisely when an action takes place; however, this may be a double-edged sword. On the one hand indeed, it allows the speaker to be more precise and to specify the time of the occurrence even without making use of temporal markers; on the other, compound tenses occupy a lot of space which, precisely in a subtitle, may represent an important issue since that space might be useful to express other details that otherwise must be ignored. In this case, the subtitler could decide to simplify the tense and use a simple one. Let's analyze some cases taken from *The Silent Child*.

The most evident example is the sentence: "I think I mentioned last night". The Italian equivalent adopted in translation "Penso di avertelo accennato ieri" is even longer since, in English, the second verb is simple while in Italian it's compound. However, this sentence belongs to a longer one that couldn't even be included in one subtitle. Indeed, first of all it has been divided into two parts

according to its meaning and all the other conventions introduced in the first chapter. Despite that, it was still too long, so the verb has been simplified. From the speaker's tone and the context, we can infer that the expression "I think" was included simply to be polite and that she is indeed sure of what she had said the night before. For this reason, it is not fundamental to keep it; moreover, it necessarily requires a compound tense made up of the infinitive plus the past participle that would turn out to be too long. Consequently, by removing the first verb "penso" we are able to use a shorter compound tense that simply consists of the auxiliary verb and the past participle, conveying at the same time the original meaning.

Another example even more evident than this one is included in subtitle number 136. The original English line was "I know that she's progressing", and has been translated into Italian with a literal equivalent "So che sta facendo progressi". However, this line belongs to a longer discourse pronounced by the same person, so it needs to be divided and condensed as much as possible because there isn't enough time between one subtitle and the next. Consequently, considering that the maximum number of characters per second is 16 and the subtitle lasts only a few seconds, according to Subtitle Edit – that automatically controls the subtitle's length – it can't exceed 46 characters. On the whole, this line consists of 39 characters but employing the compound tense the number would increase and reach 48 characters, which is too long.

3.4.4 Different word classes

With the terms "word classes" we refer to the different grammatical categories to which a word may belong to, that is: noun, verb, adjective, adverb and so on. However, in some cases a word may change its class either through the addition of prefixes or suffixes, or simply remaining in its original form – this last case occurs often with verbs that turn into nouns, so to recognize that it belongs to a different class we can analyze the function it occupies in a sentence.

As regards in particular words that turn into nouns, in languages such as Italian and English this practice is very frequent and it's called "nominalization". In the sentence "I wake up at 7 a.m. in the morning", wake up is a verb, given that it indicates a precise action and the subject is the first personal pronoun "I". On the contrary, in the sentence "waking up early is very difficult to me", waking up functions as a noun because the verb is the third person singular of the verb to be and there is no person or element that performs the action. We can say that in this case it replaces the longer expression "the fact of waking up early" that in turns corresponds to the subject.

A practical example taken from the subtitling proposal realized in this dissertation is the subtitle number 13. In this case, the original line included a verb “helping (us out)” that has been translated into Italian with its equivalent “aiutarci”. However, as we can notice from the subtitle, that is “Grazie per l’aiuto”, the verb turned into the noun “aiuto” and this because of a simple stylistic choice. In Italian it is very common to say “grazie per” followed by a noun or a verb in the infinitive form and the past participle; on the other hand, it would not sound so natural for an Italian native speaker to place a conjugated verb after this expression. Moreover – given that the infinitive together with the past participle indicates an action already finished – it sounded more intuitive to change the verb with the noun.

3.4.5 Reformulation of sentences

As already discussed, in this short film there is a great prevalence of the colloquial register; as a consequence, the speakers tend to use a lot of different strategies to make the discourse more informal and casual. In this specific case, a lot of rhetorical questions are employed. Hereafter some examples will be provided.

The first case is subtitle number 17: Non ci sono altri casi in famiglia, giusto? Here, the rhetorical question has been maintained but at the same time shortened. The original line was “And I’m assuming there’s no history of deafness on yours or your husband’s side?”; however, in this case the rhetorical question simply has the aim of confirming what the speaking is already thinking – as stated in the first part of the sentence “And I’m assuming that”. Moreover, the listener already knows that she’s there to help a deaf child and has already been given the necessary proofs to infer that the rest of the family is not. As a consequence, there is no need to highlight once again that we are talking about deafness and it isn’t necessary to report the first part of the question thanks to the presence of the last word “giusto” that already conveys the idea that what the speaker needs is a mere confirmation.

The same occurs some lines later with the question “Non può fare l'impianto cocleare?” The original question was “And you said she didn’t qualify for cochlear implant?” which – even though a different expression is used – it has the same objective of the previous one: verifying the speaker’s thought. In this case, indeed the first part of the question was omitted and to keep the same tone the word “giusto” was added at the end. However, another part of the question was deleted here: non aveva i requisiti per un impianto cocleare. In this case, on the one hand it should have been maintained because it’s a more technical and precise expression and it’s pronounced by a competent person in the field. On the other, the requirements are not explicit, so it does not add important information to the message on

the whole and – unless the audience is really familiar with this issue – the viewer simply needs to know that for some reason the child can't have the cochlear implant.

A slightly different case can be identified in subtitle number 82 that is “Non credo che molte persone la conoscano” The English original line was “Well, I'm not sure that many people know it?” Here, we are dealing with a rhetorical question written in the form of an affirmative sentence. This, indeed, has a different aim with respect to the last two questions analyzed because the speaker makes use of it in order to make it explicit that she doesn't agree with the interlocutor's point of view, but in a very polite way. For this reason – even though the structure is the one of a sentence – it is pronounced using an interrogative intonation so as not to convey the impression of being arrogant.

The second rhetorical question that is included in order to be more polite is “I just wondered how she'll get on with the sign language at school?”, here the mother wants to clearly state that according to her the sign language will be useless. Given that one of the main aspects of the film to convey is the parents' opinion towards the sign language and the issue of deafness in general in order to contrast them, it's crucial in this case to maintain this nuance of the language. For this reason, the best choice would have been to keep the rhetorical question; however, it was not possible because the sentence had to be split and, as we have seen so far we couldn't do that, otherwise, we would have separated two elements that are supposed to be together. As a consequence, the statement has been divided through a comma into two independent phrases: the affirmative sentence “mi stavo chiedendo” – that allows us to convey the fact that the speaker is against this practice – and the regular question “come farà con la lingua dei segni a scuola?”. By doing so, the meaning has been preserved and at the same time rules have been obeyed.

Another example worth analyzing is the subtitle number 97: Sue, ricordati la lettera. In this case, the original line was a rhetorical question “Oh Sue, don't forget that letter, will you?” composed by the affirmative sentence “Oh Sue, don't forget that letter” and the question tag “will you?”. In the final adaptation for the subtitle then, the question tag has been removed and a simple affirmative sentence has been kept, thus conveying the implicit request expressed in the initial dialogue that represents the essential part of the message to maintain. This is due to a temporal limit: in other cases, a subtitler usually includes sentences such as this one in the previous or in the following subtitle in order to have more time available. However, in this case this wasn't possible because they both consist of a question and its answer – that should always go together if possible – so this subtitle must only include this line and fit into the little time available.

3.4.6 Use of nouns and pronouns

On a general basis, the use of pronouns instead of proper names implies a considerable saving in terms of space and time, especially if we are dealing with subtitles as in this case. For this reason, especially in languages such as Italian where we often tend to omit even the pronouns not to appear boring and redundant, the massive use of proper names, pronouns or epithets may produce a heavy text that might appear neither natural nor fluent. As a consequence, this tendency has been applied in this case as well. This is even more evident especially if we consider the fact that the original script was written in English, where it would be considered grammatically wrong to write a sentence without making the subject explicit even if we are talking about an action carried out neither by a person nor by an animal or a thing.

To provide an example, let's analyze as the following sentence taken from the original dialogue: It sounds so weird when old people say "chill"; here, the pronoun "it" is present even though the expression that follows the verb functions as a subject, so we could say that in English they tend to repeat the subject rather than making it implicit or eliminating it. This represents a big difference with respect to the final Italian subtitles and it's an aspect that can be easily detected from the beginning. For example, subtitle number 11 derives from the original line "Oh, hi! I was just about to knock, I'm Joanne". Here, there are two sentences and both of them have the same subject; despite this, the pronoun "I" is repeated twice. In the adaptation for the Italian subtitles, on the other hand, there is no subject; in other words, the subject is clearly the first personal pronoun "io", but it is implicit in both cases. This phenomenon however, has a precise explanation: in English, regardless of the tense, the verb has the same form for all the persons – except for the third person singular that in any case, despite being three different pronouns, they share the same form. For this reason, it would be impossible to identify the subject without making it obvious. On the contrary, in Italian, the verb is conjugated in a different way according to the person, so we are able to easily understand who or what is performing the action.

However, there is an exception to this tendency and it's represented by subtitle number 7. The original script consisted of a question pronounced by the brother "What time is the 'help' arriving?" and the answer "Joanne is arriving at-". Here, from the point of view of the narration it wasn't fundamental to already explicit the name of the carer because we haven't seen her yet and she's going to appear in a few scenes and introduce herself. However, the decision to preserve her name was taken according to two different reasons. First of all, we are dealing with a very common English proper name that could easily be detected even by those people who don't possess a deep knowledge of English; so, it

would have probably felt weird not finding a correspondence in the subtitles. This, indeed it usually one of the reasons why viewers tend to criticize a subtitler since – as we have discussed in the first chapter – non-professional people are rarely aware of the difficulties and the issues that may arise during the subtitling process as well as of all the temporal and spatial constraints to obey. Secondly, if pronounced with the right intonation – as the mother does – it contributes to the creation of the atmosphere: in fact, she’s scolding her son for making fun of the fact that they have decided to hire a carer for the baby. Being this one of the primary aspects the producers wanted us to think about, it should be given the right importance.

3.4.7 Acronyms

As explained so far, the tendency in subtitling is to find the shortest way possible to explain a concept due to the numerous spatial and temporal constraints existing. However, this is not always possible in the practice of subtitle making, especially when we are dealing with very culture-specific elements, as in the case of the GCSE qualification. In chapter 2.2 Dialogue list and translation issues the meaning of this acronym has already been explained as well as the decision to employ the expression “esami di fine biennio” in its Italian version. However, in the subtitling process, another difference choice has been taken. Here, simply “esami” has been kept, without explaining what they refer to. Obviously, the original acronym would have been even shorter, despite that an Italian speaking audience would have never understood it without looking it up online, but we have to consider that this is not the primary aim of subtitling. Moreover, removing this clarification doesn’t lead to a significant loss because it isn’t so relevant in order to understand the whole film.

The same decision has been adopted with the acronym that refers to the sign language. In this case, it exists both in Italian and in English and it is respectively LIS and BSL. In this case as well, the acronym would have been perfectly suitable in terms of temporal and spatial limits given that it consists of only three letters. Despite this, the Italian audience might be not so familiar with the English one and in this case it’s not an aspect that may be overlooked or modified because it is an important part of the message to convey in order to understand the whole short film. In fact, in the original subtitles as well it is always referred to as “sign language”, the acronym BSL is never used. Moreover, it couldn’t be replaced with the Italian acronym since the British Sign Language is officially recognized as a language, that is in turn a distinctive feature of a person. Therefore, changing it would mean describing another person. Consequently, the decision adopted is the following one: the reference to the British Sign Language was maintained in the Italian subtitles but, instead of the acronym, the hypernym “sign language” was employed.

3.5 Exceptions

The realization of the Italian subtitles for the English production “*The Silent Child*” has been carried out according to the different rules illustrated in the first chapter of the thesis and through the use of the strategies discussed below. However, subtitles can never be perfect because there is a great number of aspects to consider and applying all of them at the same time might be almost impossible. Consequently, there are some subtitles that do not follow the conventions literally and they will be listed and explained hereafter.

The first exception is subtitle number 1. As already stated, the maximum number of characters per second should be 15 or 16; however, even stretching it to 17, this subtitle would still be significantly out of compliance since it considers more than 20 characters reaching a total length of 125. Indeed, it is a mere translation of the original one and the reasons behind this choice are various. First of all, in the English version it’s long as well and it consists of three lines and secondly, we are dealing with a simple advice provided by the production team, it is not part of the dialogue and it is not necessary to understand the whole story. Finally, it’s a video uploaded on an online platform where viewers can pause it whenever they need, so the only adaptation employed in Italian was reducing it to two lines because it was visually less perturbing and could easily be distinguished from the original one that occupies a considerable part of the screen. The same decision was adopted with the three small texts included at the end, which are even longer than the first one since, regarding the total length, they all exceed 130 characters. In addition, they consist of a very technical and precise message that is impossible to shorten them from the point of view of the content.

The second anomalous subtitle is number 7. Here, the second line ends with three suspension dots that suddenly stop the sentence pronounced by the mother. This phenomenon has a precise name and it’s called anacoluthon; however, in subtitling normally the professional tries to correct this kind of episodes creating a linear and grammatically correct discourse. On the contrary, in this case it was important to leave the three dots because the line, together with the images contributes to the understanding of the whole scene: they are having breakfast but they are late and, in addition, Joanne is coming, so they need to hurry up. This is indeed represented also in the dialogue by the mother that can’t finish a whole sentence because of the numerous things she has to focus on.

The same decision has been adopted in subtitle number 15; however, here it wasn’t dictated by the necessity to synchronize the dialogue with the images. At this point indeed, the father says “Anyway” and then leaves home and it could be interpreted as a way to express, though in a subtle manner, that he doesn’t agree with the decision of hiring a carer for the child. Indeed, as we have already analyzed

in the review of the film in the second chapter, he thinks that it's a psychological problem and does not understand the issue at all. This is, in fact, just the first manifestation of his indifference and, consequently, it was really important to convey it to help the viewer realize it.

The last example of the employment of the three dots is in subtitle number 63. However, here it is simply a way to indicate that Joanne was speaking and gets interrupted. It has neither particular message to convey nor there is the necessity to create a synchronized atmosphere in conjunction with the images.

Other subtitles that don't obey the conventions are those that consist of a single line. As we have explained before, the most common tendency is to include in the same subtitle as much content as possible, and this is due to different reasons. First of all, subtitles can't overlap, so there's usually a frame between the two of them and this can represent a considerable waste of time and space if repeated multiple times throughout the film. Consequently, since the longer the subtitle, the more content it can include, professionals tend to never create subtitles made up of a single line – especially if they contain only one or two words.

However, there are some cases when this is inevitable, as we can notice in subtitles number 71 and 73: they both consist of one word. Above all, at this point of the short film the dialogue is particularly slow because the carer is trying to teach the sign language to the child but she's not so familiar with it and in addition, they don't have a strong connection between each other yet, so the child tends not to answer or interact with her. Then, In the first case, the previous subtitle already consisted of two lines that couldn't be joined together because they represent two different questions. Moreover, this word is signed three seconds after the end of subtitle number 70, so in any case it is necessary to create a new subtitle because there is a long pause between the two. Moreover, it couldn't even be included in the next one because it already contains two lines and there are, in this case as well, four seconds of silence between them. The same decision has been taken in subtitle number 73 for the same reasons illustrated above.

Other two subtitles that consist of a single line are subtitle number 99 and subtitle number 100. However, in this case the reason behind this choice is different. Indeed, from a temporal point of view, they could be included in the same subtitle because there is just a second of pause between the two lines. Despite that, they were separated in order to give emphasis to both of them. This is a very crucial point of the movie because for the first time the little child feels confident enough to use the sign language to talk to her family. Her brother indeed reacts astonished and points out to everyone that she's finally interacting through the BSL.

Finally, as for subtitle number 103 and 104, according to the tendencies and the conventions illustrated so far it would probably have been more appropriate to include the first line of the second subtitle in subtitle number 103 because they both consist of one word. However, here the decision was to divide them because “Già, Jo sta facendo un buon lavoro” is the answer to “Forte” and – as we have already stated – an assertion or a question and its answer should go together.

To conclude, there is a specific point towards the middle part of the video where the subtitles are not present at all. To begin with, they weren't included because – as already specified, regarding the subtitles for the dialogue's parts expressed through the BSL – they were created based on the original ones, and in this case, they weren't available in the first place. However, there may be a reason behind the choice of the production team. In this precise moment, the short film is focusing on the fact that the child is trying to interact with someone and feels included in a conversation for the first time. This is very important for the whole story and the creation of the message they are trying to convey. Moreover, it is actually not relevant what the two women at the coffee house are saying of which words Joanne is teaching her at the park; what really matters is the child's emotions and feelings. For this reason, one can imagine that the one of the film director to exclude subtitles was a conscious and focused decision, and it was indeed important to adopt the same approach in the creation of Italian subtitles.

3.6 Other subtitling techniques

The last section provided a detailed analysis of the different strategies employed for the realization of the subtitles. However, they are not the only one a professional makes use of. Among those that haven't been mentioned here we can find: the use of the active instead of the passive voice, the tendency to avoid redundancies and to merge phrases, and the inclination towards the direct rather than the indirect speech. Finally, a professional subtitler tends to change the position of the so-called theme and rheme and to simplify the periphrases.

First of all, in the active voice the subject is the one that performs the action specified by the verb, while in the passive voice, the subject is the receiver of the action carried out by someone else. The active voice is more direct and fluent to read, so it's normally used when a normal or colloquial register is employed. On the contrary, the passive voice is considered more formal. Generally speaking, the passive voice is preferred when there is no need to specify the agent, when it is unknown or when the focus should be on the action itself and not on who did it. Moreover, if we are dealing with subtitling as in this case, the active voice is favored because usually it's also shorter, as proved by the following example. “The government approved the law” is a sentence written in the active

voice and consists of 31 characters including the spaces; “the law was approved by the government” on the other hand, is a passive voice and is made up of 38 characters. When subtitling then, due to the spatial and temporal limits it is usually more convenient to make use of the active voice, if the necessities of that particular case allow it.

As regards the tendency to avoid redundancies and to merge the different sentences, here there was no particular need to apply this technique and this is due to different reasons. First of all, redundancies are typical of a monologue or of long discourses pronounced by the same person, especially if we are dealing with interior monologues of the explanation of a concept that requires technical terms. However, the script of this film consisted mainly of a dialogue, so when there are turn takings, it is less common for the speakers to repeat themselves in the same line, even if they adopt a colloquial and informal register like in this particular case. Moreover, the turn taking is very rapid and this brings the speaker to the necessity to provide a brief and direct answer. Consequently, except for some particular cases, the sentences were short and concise, so there was no need to merge them or to delete some parts that were redundant. The only omissions have been employed simply because there wasn't enough space and the message conveyed allowed us to eliminate part of it, as it was illustrated at the beginning of subsection 3.4.1 Text reduction.

With direct and indirect speech then, the situation is very similar to the one presented with respect to the difference between the passive and the active voice. In this case as well, the indirect speech is used especially in written documents and it's considered more formal given that it allows a deep reformulation of the discourse. On the other hand, this practice takes up much more space because often introductory expressions such as “he said that” are used, as well as explanations regarding the tone, the manner and so on, for example: “he whispered to her with trembling voice”. Moreover, as regards the verb tenses, the reported speech often requires the use of compound forms, whereas the direct speech is more flexible. In addition, the direct speech is more colloquial and immediate. To conclude, it is true that – as specified before – subtitles belong to the written language and tend to follow these rules, but concerning the adoption of the direct or the indirect speech they represent an exception and tend to follow the norms of the oral language. First of all – especially in this specific case – the script consists entirely of a dialogue, so it would be impossible to report it all using the indirect speech. Secondly, the register employed is very colloquial and the action takes place within a domestic environment, so there is no need to elevate the level of formality; on the contrary it is essential to preserve the speakers' spontaneity and the concision. Finally, the indirect speech would have result to heavy and above all too long considering that the dialogue is very dense in some particular moments of the film, so conciseness is the key.

In relation to the theme and the rheme, first of all a definition will be provided. The term “theme” refers to the part of the message with which the listener or the reader is already familiar. On the other hand, the word “rheme” indicates the new information regarding the topic of the discourse. This division can be applied both within a whole discourse and within a single sentence. Both in Italian and in English, the tendency is to place the already known information at the beginning of the sentence, and the new one at the end, so that the reader would remember it more easily. Then, the sentence that follows this one will invert the order of this information and place it in an initial position since it’s no longer new with respect to the rest of the information that it contains. This scheme is very typical in writing, but when it comes to the oral language it is usually inverted because usually the speaker tries to focus more on the new information and emphasize it by placing at the beginning. In subtitling, this practice is very common because – even though from a grammatical and syntactic point of view it follows the written language norms – from the point of view of the sentence’s structure it tends to follow the typical conventions of a dialogue. On the one hand this guarantees a more natural and direct style, but on the other it may lead to an impoverishment of the source script because – due to the spatial and temporal limits – the subtitler unconsciously tends to give emphasis to the new information ignoring the part of the message that is considered redundant or useless in that subtitle.

As far as the periphrasis is concerned then, the line of reasoning is the same applied to explain the decision to use simple tenses rather than compound ones. By definition, a periphrasis is the use of more than one word together to express a precise meaning that usually doesn’t depend on those of the single words. A periphrasis may be of different types but the most common is the verbal one. It’s a phenomenon particularly spread and used within the oral language both in English and in Italian because it allows the speaker to express also those little and slight nuances of the meaning that sometimes with a regular verb the listener might not get. However, in the majority of the cases a single general word to replace it with does exist. And this is the tendency in subtitling because – as introduced below – a periphrasis consists of different words put together, and this is very time and space consuming, so there is often the need to replace it with a shorter and more immediate word, if possible. An example of periphrasis in English may be “I should really be going now. I have a dentist appointment”. Here the periphrasis is composed by the combination of the modal verb “should”, plus the auxiliary verb to be and the -ing form of the verb “go” that in this case conveys the majority of the meaning. However, this can be easily replaced with another expression that would be “I have to go now”. It’s a periphrasis as well but it’s way shorter than the other one and in the case of a subtitle it would allow us to save up a lot more space to include other contents. In Italian the same sentence may be translated using a periphrasis as well and it would be: “Dovrei proprio andare adesso. Ho un

appuntamento dal dentista”. In this case likewise, it is possible to change it with another expression: “adesso vado”. Here, the replacement has been employed through the use of a regular verb “andare” that is even shorter than the solution adopted in the English case.

Concluding Remarks

As stated in the introduction, the primary aim of this project was to create Italian subtitles for the British short film titled *The Silent Child*, which was written, directed, and produced by Rachel Shenton and Chris Overton in 2017. However, in addition to this objective, the dissertation also included an introduction to audiovisual products and the film industry, an overview of various audiovisual translation practices, a focus on the role of the subtitler, and a deep and detailed analysis of subtitling practice. This was done to demonstrate that, contrary to popular opinion that it is merely a transcription of orally produced dialogue, subtitling is a highly complex and meticulous process. All steps of the process were exemplified, including the most fundamental ones, and the standards and parameters to consider were thoroughly explained. The transcription of dialogue and its translation into Italian were specifically included to facilitate a more precise comparison between these two practices.

As Umberto Eco once affirmed in his book *Dire quasi la stessa cosa*, a translation can never achieve a perfect equivalent of the source text in another language. Instead, it results from a negotiation process that involves linguistic aspects, cultural issues, and different modes of expression, all of which are closely tied to diverse historical backgrounds. In subtitling, these challenges become even more apparent: apart from these aspects already outlined, it is crucial to consider spatial and temporal constraints, which significantly limit the amount of text that can be included in a subtitle. Unlike in other forms of translation, subtitlers do not have the possibility of adding footnotes or explanations to justify their choices. Although both processes share the same fundamental goal, the steps and thought processes leading to their execution can be considerably different. This divergence is often a point of criticism for subtitlers. The general audience may lack the necessary understanding of the intricacies involved in subtitling and may judge the work only based on what appears on screen. Criticism can be even harsher from viewers who have some knowledge of the source language and can compare the original dialogue directly with the subtitles.

This short film posed an additional challenge due to the inclusion of dialogue expressed through British Sign Language in the original script. The transcription and subsequent translation of these parts were based on the original English subtitles provided by the competent production team that – as already ascertained – is very competent in this field. However, it is important to clarify that this process involved translating the original subtitles themselves and not a direct translation of British Sign Language into Italian. This distinction is crucial as British Sign Language is a distinct form of expression for individuals.

On the whole, the subtitles were created using the designated software, Subtitle Edit, taking into account several important aspects. First of all, spatial and temporal constraints played a significant role in adapting the message. Secondly, the relevance of the short film's topic was crucial, as there was a specific message to convey without altering its original meaning. Finally, defining the approach was influenced by the target audience: the production team had a precise aim in mind and tailored every aspect of the product accordingly. The same goal has been set for the Italian subtitled version, targeting audiences of varying educational backgrounds and social classes. Consequently, the language used was direct and simple, complementing the images and sounds to effectively convey the message: raising awareness about the challenges faced by deaf or hard of hearing individuals and advocating for their ability to live as normal a life as possible.

As regards my personal comment on this work, it can be viewed as a comprehensive composition that incorporates all aspects studied over these two years. In the first place, it provided an opportunity to assess and apply my English language skills, as a thorough understanding of the short film was essential for the initial transcription phase. Furthermore, during the linguistic analysis, identifying the English variety and nuances of everyday colloquial language were crucial before proceeding with the translation. Secondly, I undertook the translation of the original script, which allowed me to apply all the theoretical concepts learned during my university courses. This endeavor also presented a challenge, as translating a short film script was a new and enriching experience. In this respect, the practice of subtitling has represented a pathway through which I could expand my knowledge in the field of translation. Audiovisual translation differs significantly from technical or literary texts with which I am more familiar. Moreover, while some techniques overlap with other forms of translation, others are unique and directly influenced by the spatial and temporal constraints that characterize subtitling.

To conclude, it can be affirmed that the thesis outlined in the introduction of this work has been substantiated, with all its components analyzed in detail, thereby achieving the initial goal. Furthermore, the final version of the short film subtitled in Italian can be deemed satisfactory: it adheres to all the current norms while preserving the original message without modification or alteration.

Finally, the software used for creating the subtitles was introduced and described at the beginning of the third and final chapter. However, throughout the writing of this thesis, numerous other sources including books, papers, essays, and websites were consulted. A comprehensive list of all these sources will be included at the very end of the thesis. Nonetheless, special recognition and mention should be given to the following resources: the volume edited by Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha,

Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies, and the book authored by Jorge Díaz Cintas and Aline Remael, *Subtitling Concepts and Practices*. These texts have represented invaluable sources of information for the completion of this dissertation.

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