

## Translating Mad Cow Disease: A Case Study of Subtitling for a Television News Magazine

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### Article abstract

This paper explores how discourse is reframed in audiovisual translation in a well-known South Korean television news magazine, *PD Swuchep* [*PD Notebook*]. The episode under consideration raised serious questions regarding the safety of US beef and the conduct of South Korean officials responsible for negotiating imported beef in the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement talks. The program, which contained sound bites of interviews in English subtitled in Korean, created uproar in the South Korean society and played a significant role in touching off many months of massive street rallies against the government for its alleged sloppy handling of the beef import negotiation talks. Based on the view that subtitling for television news is a practice of “entextualization,” the study argues that (1) different degrees of discursive transformations in the target text cumulatively work to support and exaggerate the risk of the transmission of mad cow disease as a result of eating American beef; and (2) the discursive transformation is reinforced by institutionally defined roles and procedures for target text production. The findings suggest that one of the main criteria for the selection of target text expressions may be the narrative relevance of the political slant of the translation to the story of the program. Furthermore, the narrative of the target text may not necessarily be consensually co-constructed by participants. On the contrary, it is often a product of conflict-ridden processes that are characterized by tensions and differences in power relationships among people in different roles in the media institution.

# Translating Mad Cow Disease: A Case Study of Subtitling for a Television News Magazine

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## RÉSUMÉ

Le présent article explore le processus de transformation d'un discours par la traduction audiovisuelle dans un épisode d'un magazine d'informations télévisées coréennes bien connu, *PD Swuchep* [*PD Notebook*]. L'épisode en question a soulevé de graves questions concernant les risques liés à la consommation de la viande provenant des États-Unis, et la conduite des agents du gouvernement coréen, responsables de la négociation des importations de viande de bœuf dans le contexte des accords entre la Corée et les États-Unis sur le libre-échange. L'émission contenait des extraits sonores d'entretiens et des informations filmées en anglais, qui avaient été traduites en coréen pour les spectateurs. L'épisode a provoqué un tollé dans la société coréenne et a joué un rôle de catalyseur des manifestations massives qui suivirent contre le laxisme du gouvernement dans les négociations sur l'importation de la viande de bœuf. En se fondant sur l'approche du sous-titrage télévisé comme pratique d'«entextualisation», notre étude soutient que (1) des degrés variés de transformation discursive dans le texte traduit s'accumulent pour aboutir à la validation et l'exagération des risques de transmission de la maladie de la vache folle associés à la consommation de bœuf provenant des États-Unis, et (2) la transformation discursive est renforcée par des rôles et procédures définis au niveau institutionnel dans la production du texte traduit. Ces constatations suggèrent que l'un des principaux critères de choix dans les expressions cibles est la pertinence narrative du point de vue politique du texte traduit avec la structure de l'émission. De plus, il semble que le processus de traduction ne soit pas nécessairement l'aboutissement d'un consensus au sein d'un groupe de participants. Au contraire, le résultat est souvent le produit d'un processus parsemé de conflits, caractérisés par des tensions et des relations de pouvoir entre des personnes assignées à différents rôles.

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores how discourse is reframed in audiovisual translation in a well-known South Korean television news magazine, *PD Swuchep* [*PD Notebook*]. The episode under consideration raised serious questions regarding the safety of US beef and the conduct of South Korean officials responsible for negotiating imported beef in the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement talks. The program, which contained sound bites of interviews in English subtitled in Korean, created uproar in the South Korean society and played a significant role in touching off many months of massive street rallies against the government for its alleged sloppy handling of the beef import negotiation talks. Based on the view that subtitling for television news is a practice of “entextualization,” the study argues that (1) different degrees of discursive transformations in the target text cumulatively work to support and exaggerate the risk of the transmission of mad cow disease as a result of eating American beef; and (2) the discursive transformation is reinforced by institutionally defined roles and procedures for target text production. The findings suggest that one of the main criteria for the selection of target text expressions may be the narrative relevance of the political slant of the translation to the story of the program. Furthermore, the narrative of the target text may not necessarily be consensually co-constructed by participants. On the contrary, it is often a product of conflict-ridden

processes that are characterized by tensions and differences in power relationships among people in different roles in the media institution.

#### MOTS-CLÉS/KEYWORDS

traduction institutionnelle, entextualisation, sous-titrage, nouvelles, cohérence narrative  
institutional translation, entextualization, subtitling, news, narrative relevance

### 1. Introduction

When translation is suspected of having played a role in a major conflict, both the process and product of translation often become topics of intense debate and scrutiny. To have such attention focused on translation is unusual, given that translation, as a subset of the larger sets of transmission and mediation, generally upholds an image of transparency and immediacy, despite the complexity in the actual transfer and delivery process (Cronin 2003). As is the case with many systems of mediation, translation frequently makes an experience self-evident and the mediators invisible from the view of the end user, concealing the intricate and complicated problems related to agents, processes, and effects of mediation. Furthermore, transparency and immediacy become such an overriding imperative that an attempt to uncover the channel of transmission is often considered abnormal or fastidious and is even resisted by practitioners and the general public. However, when translation finds itself at the center of a conflict, the mediation processes are examined and possible motivations are explored in detail. The revelation of detailed information that would otherwise not be available and the clash in related parties' perspectives about translation provide an opportunity to gain insight into how translation practice is approached, perceived, and carried out in specific contexts.

When the debate centers on audiovisual translation (AVT) occurring in an institutional setting – more specifically, on subtitling for a television news magazine at a broadcasting network – discussions tend to become more complicated and volatile due to what Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007: 55) refer to as “subtitling’s vulnerability.” Compared to other forms of translation, subtitling is unique in that the source text (ST) is exposed to the viewers and thus, available for comparison and criticism by anyone who has knowledge of the source language. This aspect of subtitling has led scholars such as Gottlieb (1994: 102) to describe subtitling as an “overt type of translation,” based on House (1981). Yet, the illusion of transparency and invisibility of subtitles remains strong due to their nature to instruct viewers to disregard the distinction between the original and translation and the belief that subtitles best serve their purpose when viewers do not notice them. As subtitling occurs “*a posteriori* on the original programme, flashes in and out at the bottom of the screen, but pretends not to be there” (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 40), the paradoxical processes of self-effacement and intervention-revelation are simultaneously at work. Thus, the enflamed debate about subtitling in situations of conflict reveals complicated clashes of views on interpretation of meaning and translation of semiotic texts.

Furthermore, AVT in a broadcasting company is an instance of “institutional translation” (Kang 2009; 2010), in which translation is carried out by actors fulfilling certain institutional roles, under institutionally designated procedures and guidelines, to serve certain institutional interests. Power relationships in an institutional context or a translator’s place within the institutional framework usually remain

unseen until problematic translation and the ensuing scrutiny reveal the hidden processes and structures. Thus, in a situation of conflict, factors such as institutional processes that make the ST subordinate to the purpose of the new context, the process of identity negotiation for the institutional translator, moral dilemmas in interactions between parties with dissimilar ideological commitments, the forming and maintaining of delicate working arrangements, and the problematical conditions of work suddenly become important objects of inquiry.

The aim of this paper is to explore a case of subtitling of a television news magazine program by examining the extent to which different degrees of transformation of meaning in the process of target text (TT) production may reframe the original text. Based on the assumption that media discourse not only represents reality but also constitutes it (Fairclough 1995), the present study investigates translation in a well-known South Korean television program, *PD Swuchep* [*PD Notebook*], produced by Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), one of the largest broadcasting companies in the country. The episode in question, entitled *Mikwuksan Soykoki, Kwayen Kwangwupyengeyse Ancenhanka* [*US Beef, Is It Really Safe from Mad Cow Disease*], raises serious questions regarding the safety of US beef and the conduct of South Korean officials responsible for negotiating beef imports in the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement talks. This 2008 episode created uproar in the South Korean society and played a significant role in touching off many months of massive street rallies against the government for its alleged sloppy beef import deal with the US. Shortly after the program was aired, serious questions arose regarding the accuracy of the report and its translation. The episode contained sound bites from interviews and video footage in English, all of which were subtitled in Korean. At the center of the controversy was a translator of the episode who made allegations against the production team for engaging in an act of “intentional mistranslation” (Jeong 2009a: 10).<sup>1</sup> The media coverage of this controversy and legal debates that followed disclosed to the public many aspects of the TT production process at the broadcasting company.

Given that this case was at the center of public debates and legal battles in South Korea, some parts of the discussion regarding translation have already been addressed in legal documents and news reports. Most of these discussions focused on the factuality of the report, associated with both translational and non-translational aspects of the program. The debates that did concentrate on translation tended to represent this case as an instance of “mistranslation,” as evidenced by the prevalent use of this word in discussions (Kim 2008;<sup>2</sup> Jeong 2009a [see note 1]; Jin 2010;<sup>3</sup> Won 2010;<sup>4</sup> Shin and Baek 2009<sup>5</sup>), and tried to locate fault or place blame for the state-of-affairs by scrutinizing “mistranslation.” What this paper hopes to show is that to view this case simply in terms of “mistranslation” on the part of the translator or any other party fails to capture the complexity of the role translation plays in relaying and shaping meaning in a situation of conflict. What will hopefully become clear in the ensuing discussion is that the interpretation, representation, and attribution of meaning, especially vague or opaque meaning, in media translation is sensitive to institutional forces that play an important role in creating an intellectual context for conflict.

This paper also considers how this case relates to the assumptions or arguments made in media translation research. Discussions of news media translation have centered on how the transfer between languages in news organizations is not considered

an act of “translation” by the very people participating in it (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). Furthermore, news media translation is often investigated as an act carried out by “fixers” (Palmer and Fontan 2007), journalists (Conway 2010; van Doorslaer 2010), or editors (Stetting 1989), who view the translingual and transcultural mediation not as translation but as something “merely instrumental, one tool among others” (Conway 2010: 980). Media translation research has also concentrated on institutional positioning of translators in terms of how their positioning affects the manifestation in the TT of news organizations’ goals and ideologies (Schäffner 2008; Valdeón 2008; Kang 2007). These perspectives and arguments will be considered in relation to the details of this case study. While acknowledging that no definitive version of what actually happened is available – at least, a version that all parties agree on – and that teasing out translational aspects of a case which has proven to be highly intricate and political is difficult, I hope that an examination of translation as a ST-based act that is carried out by actors who are socially, historically, and politically situated will contribute to enhancing our understanding of this highly complex meaning-constituting process.

## 2. Entextualization and text trajectory in media translation

Scholarly interest in translating for television news programs is a fairly recent phenomenon. Although translation plays a crucial role in gathering, producing, and distributing information, the translingual and transcultural transfer of news discourse has been the focus of interest for a relatively small number of researchers (Palmer 2009). The findings that have been published mostly center on print, rather than broadcast, news. Compared to research on print news translation, which is increasingly based on diverse perspectives – translation in terms of gatekeeping (Fujii 1988), localization (Orengo 2005), transediting (Stetting 1989), self-censorship (Barnard 2000), and globalization process (Bielsa and Bassnet 2009) –, researchers have shown little interest in television news translation. The small number of publications that do shed light on the process and product of broadcast news translation include Clausen (2004), which, based on the study of the domestication process of international television news in Japan, argues that “news ‘domestication’ is a *universal* phenomenon and that global news is *particular* to each country. International news is presented within frames of interpretation of local audiences in each nation, which makes global news particular to each country” (Clausen 2004: 27). Other papers that have dealt with broadcast news translation include descriptions of television news translation in terms of work procedures in a newsroom (Tsai 2005) and its relationship with interpreting (Wadensjö 2000; Shibahara 2009). It is in Conway (2010), however, that translation method and effect receive a relatively detailed treatment. Based on the assumption that translation allows journalists to support their claim of objective reporting, Conway describes six categories of translation methods used in Canada’s television news programs, arguing that the method of translation has important consequences in the way television news is constructed and perceived.<sup>6</sup> Findings in these papers suggest that television news translation entails issues that may be different from those related to print news translation and that more case studies are needed to enhance our understanding of translation practices occurring in broadcast situations.

When a television news program is subtitled, the transformation of the text is one of the most apparent consequences of translation. Although this feature may be characteristic of many other modes of translation, the changes in form, meaning, and value are often so drastic and pronounced in news translation and subtitling that debates have ensued about the adequacy of their inclusion in the category of “translation” (Delabastita 1989; Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). In the context of news media translation, these changes may partly be related to the practice of producing one TT based on several STs or multiple TTs based on one ST (Kang 2010; Holland 2006). In addition to such “one-to-many” and “many-to-one” ST-TT relationship, various degrees of textual changes, such as simplification, explicitation, generalization, omission, and addition, occur for reasons that go beyond resolving linguistic and cultural asymmetries. A TT may reframe the ST to reflect the ideology of the translating institution or to construct a new context of reception (Kang 2007).

Such alteration in textual form and meaning is also manifest in subtitling. In the case of an audiovisual text, what gets translated into subtitles is not limited to dialogue; the image, sound, and language are all subject to representation in subtitles (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007: 46-47). However, the translingual and transcultural mediation of semiotic workings of media texts goes beyond representation. The mediation process entails the selection of certain interpretations over others that may lead to a re-creation of overall meaning and values. Compared to other types of translation, the transmodal and intersemiotic nature of subtitling may make the complex relationship between texts more obvious. The simultaneity in the presentation of both the ST and TT on screen and the *post hoc* nature of the actual TT production create tensions that allow subtitles to “feign completeness” (Nornes 1999: 18) and, at the same time, foreground displacement. This kind of layered temporality is further complicated by the unavoidability of compression or reduction of information in subtitling, due to temporal and spatial constraints (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998; Gottlieb 1994; Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007), all of which makes subtitling a uniquely interpretative process that is often ideologically and institutionally invested. As such, the drastic changes in subtitles, coupled with simultaneous availability of the ST, may easily become a source of contention, especially if textual changes work to construct a narrative in the TT which is distinct from that of the ST.

The reformulation and transformation evident in both news translation and subtitling highlight the process in which discourse is extricated from its original context and transferred into a different context for a new audience. Bauman and Briggs (1990: 73) use the concept of *entextualization* to refer to such a process: “the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit – a text – that can be lifted out of its interactional setting.”<sup>7</sup> As discourse is intricately connected to the rich and detailed context, the recontextualization of the discourse entails a process of “reifying it as a bounded object” (Park and Bucholtz 2009: 485). In the case of translation, a combination of the displacement of certain aspects of the social, cultural, and historical context in which the ST is anchored and an explicit reorientation of the textual product to a new context of reception constitute the conditions under which translation occurs. Approaching translation in terms of entextualization thus foregrounds not only how the act of translating is constrained by a new context of interpretation but also how translation plays a crucial role in redefining the context. The decontextualization and meta-

discursive recontextualization that accompanies every act of translingual and trans-cultural transfer show that translation is more than representation of a ST; it is an act of “re-presentation” or “re-production” (Bourdieu 1991; Sarangi 1998).

The prominence of entextualization in media translation raises two important issues. The first entails the power of the mediator. Mediators responsible for making discourse intelligible across linguistic, institutional, and cultural boundaries engage in an act of re-telling from a certain perspective (Goodwin 1994) and the preservation of meaning is not guaranteed as discourse travels across these borders. Re-telling can never be without a point-of-view and as such, re-tellers intentionally or unintentionally engage in an act of control. As discourse is decontextualized and recontextualized across boundaries, “value, meaning, and function are a matter of uptake, they have to be *granted* by others” (Blommaert 2005: 72). This is especially evident in cases of “frame ambiguity” (Goffman 1974: 302), where doubt exists regarding the definition of a situation. In cases where competing attempts to provide a legitimate interpretation of an ambiguous situation are based on translation of opaque signifiers, which may potentially have multiple signifieds or no signifieds at all, it is often those with the authority to enact the re-telling that may give a definitive interpretation of the obscure situation. As different actors attempt to define the meaning and situation in different ways, it is the mediator with access to definitive wording of the TT, with legitimacy in claims to translation, or with competence in the act of translating who will be in the position to provide an authoritative characterization of the situation. However, the granting of meaning, or, to be more precise, the granting of legitimate meaning, is embedded within specific historical, social, and political contexts. Translators have been described as having the power to resist dominant discourses, transform cultures, build nations, and engage in activism; nevertheless, they have also been associated with textual, paratextual, and extratextual invisibility, low social status and being under the control of more powerful agents (Delisle and Woodsworth 1995; Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002; Simeoni 1998; Venuti 2008; Inghilleri 2003; Tymoczko 2007; Baker 2010). Competing perspectives exist with regard to the translator’s power in terms of defining and affecting changes in the state-of-affairs; however, who does what in relation to translation is in fact shaped by factors that are sometimes beyond the control of one single translator. The translator’s power, especially in an institutionalized context, is often irrevocably linked to sociocultural structures, institutional definitions of eligibility, and other criteria for judging institutional inclusion and exclusion.

In addition to the issue of power, translation-as-entextualization sheds light on the self-reflexive nature of translating. A translated text says something not only about a ST but also about itself and the context under which a TT is produced. An examination of the entextualization process helps reveal both the discursive and material conditions under which a TT is produced and the positioning of a translator vis-à-vis a ST. Thus, a translation-as-entextualization approach affords a reflexive perspective for researchers to better understand translation as a situated social practice, the text’s complex relationship among a variety of texts, individual translator’s selection of certain expressions out of the many semiotic capabilities of the target language, and the production, negotiation, and circulation of discourse and meaning. It is through this reflexive dimension that the emergent meaning, value, and function in translation are recognized.

### 3. Mad cow disease and subtitling in a television news magazine

On 29 April 2008, Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), one of the largest broadcasting companies in South Korea, broadcast its weekly episode of its television news magazine, *PD Swuchep*. Under the title *Mikwuksan Soykoki, Kwayen Kwangwupyengeyse Ancenhanka* [*US Beef, Is It Really Safe from Mad Cow Disease*], the episode addressed (1) the potential danger of US beef and the possible exposure of Koreans to the human form of mad cow disease as a result of reopening the Korean market to American beef, and (2) the irresponsible conduct of South Korean officials in the beef import negotiations within the framework of the Korea-US Free Trade Agreement talks. The episode made strong allegations against key figures in the South Korean government for ignoring the risk of mad cow disease or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and for getting rid of most restrictions on US beef imports.

The beef issue had been one of the major stumbling blocks in 2008 free trade negotiations between the two countries, partly due to the South Korean government's long-held position that beef should not be a part of the trade deal. However, shortly before President Lee Myung-bak's first official visit to the United States, the South Korean government announced that it had come to an agreement with the US which included easing the import sanitation rules to allow for a wider opening of its market to US beef, including beef from cattle older than 30 months, if the United States tightens its controls on animal feed.<sup>8</sup> Many South Koreans interpreted the government's action as an indifference, or even a willingness, to expose South Koreans to the danger of mad cow disease, since BSE, a progressive neurological disorder of cattle that results from infection by an unusual transmissible agent called a prion, is mostly discovered in cattle older than 30 months and the relaxation of the age limit would increase the risk of infection (see Fact Sheet No. 180 of World Health Organization 2012).<sup>9</sup> The government's announcement came four years after BSE had broken out in the US and beef import to South Korea, the third largest importer of US beef at the time, had been banned.

Mass protests and legal battles that followed the airing of the program were due to complicated political and social factors and cannot be attributed to *PD Swuchep*'s report or translation alone.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the report and translation had a divisive effect on the society and were at the center of public debates, news reports, and legal battles. While the government, the ruling party and the conservative press condemned *PD Swuchep* for distorting the facts by exaggerating the risk of mad cow disease and the possibility of contamination as a result of importing US beef, the opposition party and the progressive press sided with *PD Swuchep*, stressing that despite the possibility of minor mistakes in the report, the program was essentially correct in raising questions about the irresponsible and careless import negotiation process that led to the South Korean government's scrapping of many restrictions on imported US beef.<sup>11</sup> In June 2009, a series of court battles also began in which four program directors and one script writer of the production team were charged with defamation, a criminal offense under the Penal Code in South Korea. The suits were filed against the defendants by two former top-ranking officials responsible for the beef negotiations on the grounds that the report had allegedly injured their reputation. Intense debates about freedom of press occurred in the wake of the arrest of the producers of the program and what many South Koreans viewed as the prosecution's



excessive investigation into *PD Swuchep* (Minbyun 2009).<sup>12</sup> Although *PD Swuchep* claimed that the report was about protecting public health and raising questions about the negotiation process, prosecutors had sought jail terms of two to three years for the defendants on defamation charges. Following legal battles and appeals, on 2 September 2011 the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's "not guilty" ruling, stating that *PD Swuchep*'s report had "no direct bearing on the reputation of public officials" and could not be seen as an "intentional" or "malicious" attack on them, despite some errors (Jeong 2011).<sup>13</sup>

In what follows, translingual and transmodal transfer of information in the episode will be examined in terms of (1) the ways in which subtitles transfer and transform semiotic meaning in audiovisual texts; and (2) the effect of institutional conditions under which the TT is produced on the wording of the TT. The discussion will be based on the analyses of the ST and TT, personal accounts of individuals involved in the production of the program, news articles, and legal documents.

#### 4. Institutional translation and subtitling sound bites

Since the first episode was aired in May 1990, *PD Swuchep* has taken an investigative journalism approach to reporting. Produced and broadcast by MBC, a public television company, *PD Swuchep* has provided in-depth coverage of numerous significant social issues, with a longer time slot and production schedule compared to traditional television news programs. In this study, focus is given to the first part of the episode, which deals with the risk and dangers of importing and consuming US beef. The components that make up this part of the program include commentaries by the main presenter in the studio, reports by other presenters in the studio, and a video-recorded report that contains visuals, voiceovers (mostly non-translational), and sound bites with subtitles (translational). The second part of the episode focuses on the negligent negotiation process which, to a large extent, is based on the risk narrative regarding US beef and its import. The present study centers on translation in regard to the following two subtopics in the first part of the episode:

- (1) the possibility of downer cows infected with BSE entering the food supply due to the problems in the ante-mortem cattle inspection system in the US;<sup>14</sup>
- (2) the likelihood of human beings being infected with mad cow disease as a result of eating US beef, based on the case of Aretha Vinson's death.

The episode's treatment of subtopic (1) is grounded on video footage of downer cows, which came from a 2008 undercover video shot by the Humane Society of the United States, the largest animal protection organization in the country, to protest against animal cruelty and to bring awareness to food safety (Martin 2008;<sup>15</sup> The Humane Society of the United States 2008<sup>16</sup>). The footage shows meat-packing plant employees using forklifts, water hoses, and electric prods to get the cattle, apparently too sick to be used for food, back on their feet so that they may be slaughtered. *PD Swuchep* points to the problems in the inspection of livestock before slaughter and sanitary standards for the slaughterhouse inspections in general. As shown in the discussion that follows, BSE is clearly one of the causes for downer cows, but many other reasons may lead to downer cows, including trauma at or after calving, metabolic reasons such as milk fever or hypomag, or toxic diseases such as metritis or mastitis (Laven 2004;<sup>17</sup> *State v. Cho Neung-Hee*<sup>18</sup>). No evidence is given in the original

video or the footage to directly link downer cows and BSE. Thus, one of the problems with the episode is the representation of the likelihood of downer cows being BSE-infected cows. In addition to footage, the report also contains sound bites of interviews with specialists on this issue, all of which are subtitled.

Subtopic (2) is addressed by *PD Swuchep* in its report of the death of a Virginia woman named Aretha Vinson. The risk posed by US beef is addressed by connecting her death to eating BSE-tainted beef. During the time *PD Swuchep* was making this episode, US health officials were conducting an autopsy to find out the exact cause of Vinson's death. At the heart of the controversy over translation is a differentiation between the following two types of diseases:

- Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD, Classic CJD): a neurodegenerative disease which is rapidly progressive and always fatal;
- Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD): first described in 1996, a rare and fatal human neurodegenerative condition which is strongly linked to exposure, probably through food, to cattle infected with BSE (World Health Organization 2012 [see note 9]; US Center for Disease Control and Prevention 2010<sup>19</sup>).

In the *PD Swuchep* episode, it remains unclear whether Vinson's death was caused by CJD or vCJD since the cause is indicated as CJD in the ST but translated as vCJD in the TT (see extract in Table 4). According to the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2010): “[c]lassic CJD is *not* related to mad cow disease. Classic CJD is also distinct from “variant CJD,” another prion disease that *is* related to BSE.” The distinction between these two concepts is an important issue, but the two categories of diseases are blurred or shifted in the process of TT production.

On 24 June, *PD Swuchep* broadcast another episode that dealt with US beef imports, concentrating this time on describing and explaining its intention in its previous reports on US beef, especially its 29 April report. The main presenter of the program made statements that amounted to an apology on behalf of the producers of the program, stating that “concerning the issue of English translation, we will pay more attention so that [translation is] more precise and exact.” However, he made it clear that “[we] cannot agree with those that try to turn the entire content [of the report] into a distortion and propaganda, based on minor mistranslations.” At this point one of the translators for the 29 April episode, Ji-min Jeong, a 26-year old freelance translator who has worked for MBC on a number of occasions, came forward to state that *PD Swuchep*'s claim about erroneous translation was misplaced and that what was at issue was *PD Swuchep*'s misreporting of US beef import issue due to the production team's intentional exaggeration of the risk of BSE. In her comments posted on the *PD Swuchep*'s official website, Jeong (2009a, see note 1) claimed that the wording in aired subtitles was different from the version that she had revised/proofread. Actively participating in online and offline forums, as well as publishing articles and a book on this matter, Jeong claimed that, based on her experience of participating in the initial draft translation and the revising/proofreading process for the episode, the “mistranslations” were added after the draft translation and revision process and that the defendants had intentionally changed the wording of the translation (e.g., from *CJD* to *vCJD*) to bring the report in line with its intentions.<sup>20</sup>

In May 2008, the Korea Communications Standards Commission, the media watchdog, ruled that *PD Swuchep* had violated many of the Communications Standards articles, including Articles 9 and 14 that stipulate fairness and objectivity

in reporting, and ordered MBC “to apologize to the audience” in regard to its mis-translation, which it claimed led to erroneous information in the report. In a series of legal battles that followed, the courts ruled that aspects of reporting of parts (1) and (2) were indeed incorrect and misleading, although the defendants were found “not guilty” on charges of defamation. Subsequent to the Supreme Court’s decision, MBC issued a formal apology to viewers in which the company admitted its irresponsible reporting behavior in relation to *PD Swuchep*’s coverage of US beef import, stating that “despite its “not guilty” verdict on charges of defamation, the Supreme Court has ruled that the main contents of the report were false [and that] as a news media organization which considers truth reporting as of utmost importance, [MBC] feels deeply responsible” (Koh 2011).<sup>21</sup>

The translation and revision/proofreading process for the episode under analysis occurred in various stages. The texts that were selected for translation came from 150 original tapes, involving English, Japanese, and Chinese and 5,000 minutes of running time (Kim 2008, see note 2). Draft translation was carried out by a number of external translators who did not have access to a written transcript but worked directly from the video (Won 2010 [see note 4]; Jeong 2009a [see note 1]). The final version of subtitles that appeared on the television program were preceded by various versions of translations, including a draft translation, a first draft script (pre-revision), and a second draft script (post-revision), all of which were connected to each other in a sequential relationship and form a complicated text trajectory. During the process of revising/proofreading the draft script, which took place in one of the MBC editing rooms, Jeong (2009b)<sup>22</sup> claims that she saw the translation of all the parts that were to be used in the broadcast, including the parts that other people had translated. Her claim that she verbally pointed out translation problems, including the wording in translation that could possibly present downer cows as BSE-infected cows, to the assistant script writer, Yeon-Hee Lee, were corroborated by Lee herself (Jeong 2009a [see note 1]; Lee 2008<sup>23</sup>). However, Jeong also claimed that her comments and warnings were ignored by Lee. The assistant script writer was the only person from the production team at *PD Swuchep* with whom Jeong had any contact. That the defendants were responsible for adding, omitting, and changing expressions at different points in the wake of the revision/proofreading process was also claimed by the prosecution, whose assertion was based on a comparative examination of different versions of translations that had been obtained by the prosecution (Shin and Paek 2009, see note 5).

Jeong’s claims, however, were ruled by the courts as less than believable for a variety of reasons including Jeong’s highly unlikely position to accurately know about the intention of the production team and her reversal of previous statements without any convincing reason. The Seoul Central District Court stated:

Since Ji-min Jeong, as a freelance translator, translated only a part of the material covered by the defendants and worked as an English reviser to check the fit between the draft script that had been prepared for subtitling and the English language portion of the video that was broadcast in the episode, *she did not participate in the process of making this program* or meet anyone in the production team except for the assistant script writer. Thus, she was not in a position to have accurate knowledge about the intention of the production, the process of making this episode, or the content of the covered material. (*State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, see note 18; translation and emphasis from the author)

The court also decided that Jeong “claims to have first-hand experience in things she in fact did not have experience in” (*State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, see note 18).

In the episode, a video-recorded reporting format is extensively used to provide a detailed and multi-voiced report. Large portions of the video-recorded report are based on video footage, image bites, and sound bites taken from longer interviews and public statements. Video footage and image bites are mostly provided with voiceover containing descriptions and narrative commentaries. Sound bites taken from interviews which take place in a language other than Korean are subtitled. The problem, however, is that sound bites are often used in reports without any description of the context in which the original speech is embedded (Nylund 2003). As will be shown below, many translation problems in the episode center on the subtitling of sound bites.

#### 4.1. Shift in referring expression

Changes in referring expressions in the process of translation often occur because of differences in linguistic and cultural norms; however, they may also be motivated by translation guidelines or ideological orientation of the translating agent (Munday 2007; Kang 2007; 2010). The consequences of such changes are often an alteration in textual meaning or even a reframing of a situation.

Extract in Table 1 is the sound bite of an interview with Michael Greger of the Humane Society of the US, which is subtitled in Korean. Presented in its entirety, the sound bite partly overlaps with and then follows the video footage of downer cows at a meat processing plant.

TABLE 1

Sound bite of an interview with Michael Greger of the Humane Society of the US, subtitled in Korean

ST	TT <sup>24</sup>
I think the public was truly horrified to see what they do in that photo.	사람들이 이런 장면을 보고 상당히 충격을 받았을 거예요 [People must have been quite shocked to see this scene.]
I think a large percentage of the population didn't even realize that <u>dairy cows</u> were slaughtered even.	아마 대부분의 사람들이 심지어 <u>이런 소가</u> 도축됐다고는 생각하지 못할 거예요 [Probably most people wouldn't think that <u>this kind of cow</u> was slaughtered.]
In fact, it was crowned by the USDA as USDA supplier of the year award 2002, 2003, saying that this was the best they had seen	사실 그 도축업체는 미국 농무부가 2002년, 2003년 우수공급업체로 지정한 곳이에요 [In fact, this meat-processing plant was designated by USDA as a premier supplier for 2002, 2003.]
In terms of supplying the national school lunch program that feeds our school children.	그것도 학교 급식 최우수 업체로 말이죠 [And (that was) as the best supplier for school lunch programs.]

In this extract, *dairy cows* is translated into Korean as *this kind of cow*, despite the fact that the corresponding term in Korean is *cecso* [*dairy cow*].<sup>25</sup> What is interesting about this extract is that the sound bite actually begins as a voiceover in English with Korean subtitles on the screen showing the video footage of downer cows. When

Greger’s remark about dairy cows is made (*I think a large percentage of the population didn’t even realize that dairy cows were slaughtered even*), downer cows are shown on screen with Korean subtitles (*Probably most people didn’t think that this kind of cow was slaughtered*). The voiceover evolves into a sound bite (with image), in which Greger states *In fact, it was crowned by the USDA as USDA supplier of the year award*. The likelihood of *this kind of cow* being interpreted by the viewers as downer cows in the footage would be high due to the synchronous delivery of image and voice. Such an interpretation by viewers becomes even more likely when the co-text is taken into consideration. Greger’s sound bite is immediately preceded by a voiceover in Korean that describes and provides a narrative commentary of the downer cows footage. The following is an English back-translation of the Korean voiceover:

- (1) In the wake of the first occurrence of mad cow disease in 2003, the US banned all cattle showing downer cow symptoms from being slaughtered. However, now downer cows may be slaughtered if they pass the first inspection and then go down. These cows all passed the inspection and went to the slaughterhouse.

The underlined *these cows* in the voiceover, which refer to downer cows that were led to the slaughterhouse, could influence viewers’ interpretations of *this kind of cow* in Table 1 that immediately follows. Thus, while the replacement of *dairy cows* with *this type of cow* could be considered a minor error, the consequences of the change are problematic in that the visuals, sound, context, and co-text simultaneously work to instruct the viewer to interpret the expression in a certain way, that is, to identify the referent as downer cows on the footage.

Extract in Table 2 is another sound bite which comes from *PD Swuchep’s* interview with Michael Hansen from Consumer’s Union, an independent and nonprofit consumer information organization in the US:

TABLE 2  
Sound bite of an interview with Michael Hansen from Consumer’s Union

ST	TT
And so that means that folks that eat <u>this beef</u> , we’re all being guinea pigs and hoping that there’s not a problem here in the US.	(미국산) 쇠고기를 먹는 사람들은 실험동물과 같다는 겁니다 그저 미국에서 문제가 생기지 않기를 바랄 뿐이죠 [People who eat (US-produced) beef are like guinea pigs. We/These people can only hope that a problem/problems do/does not arise in the US.]
So if Korea decides to import beef from <u>these animals</u> , then they share in the same risk	한국이 미국산 쇠고기를 수입하기로 결정한다면 한국인들 역시 같은 위험을 공유하게 되는 것입니다 [If Korea decides to import US-produced beef, Koreans will also share the same risk.]

In this extract, it is unclear to what *this* and *these* in the ST refer to. As is the case with many sound bites, usually taken out of their contexts-of-production and put to use in new ones, it often remains uncertain what they refer to, and in order to precisely understand what these demonstratives mean, the preceding speech or context needs to be provided. The sound bite appears suddenly on screen following the report about the Virginia woman whose death is suspected to be related to the human-form of mad cow disease. It is possible to infer that *this beef* or *beef from these*

*animals* in the ST refer to (1) beef from downer cows, which may or may not be infected with BSE; (2) beef from BSE-infected cows; or (3) beef from cows raised in the US in general. Without access to the original interview tape, we have no way of knowing definitively what is meant in the ST, and it cannot be argued with certainty that the selection of (3) is necessarily problematic, despite the fact that the speaker's use of *this beef* and *beef from these animals* instead of *US beef* or *beef from cattle raised in the US* in the ST may be viewed as signaling that the expressions refer to something other than *US beef*.

What is interesting here is that the extract in Table 2, which is part of a video-recorded report, is directly followed by a comment from the main presenter in the studio who, referring to the video-recorded report, states that *Akka kwangwupyeng kellin so tochwuktoyki cen mosupto chwingkyekcek* [*The footage showing the slaughtering of mad cow disease-infected cattle just a minute ago was shocking*]. His comment effectively recasts the previous footage and discourse, including sound bites such as the extract in Table 2, as a portrayal of and commentary about mad cow disease-infected cows. Downer cows in the footage are re-presented as BSE-infected cows and the sound bites on downer cows are reframed as comments about downer cows-as-mad cow disease-infected cows. Furthermore, when this comment is made by the main presenter, the viewers can see a large screen directly behind him, which shows the image of downer cows with the following sentence in large font in the middle of the screen: *Mokswumul Kelko Kwangwupyeng Soykokilul Mekeya Hapnikka* [*Should we put our lives on the line and eat mad cow disease-tainted beef*].<sup>26</sup> The connection between US beef and BSE-tainted beef is presented as direct and as posing real danger to South Korean consumers via the use of diverse meaning-creating mechanisms. The visuals, sound, and subtitles work in a combined way to shape and construct a context of reception for viewers in which the danger of mad cow disease facing South Koreans is serious and immediate.

Extract in Table 3 is a sound bite from an interview with a staff worker at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH),<sup>27</sup> who reportedly carried out an investigation of the death of Aretha Vinson, suspected of having died from the human form of mad cow disease. The quality of the image and sound is poor, since the source-video of this sound bite was shot undercover:

TABLE 3  
Sound bite from an interview with a staff worker at the Virginia Department of Health

ST	TT
Right now, I don't have <u>an answer</u> , so I don't have a plan for something I don't have an answer to.	지금 (인간 광우병으로) 결론이 나온 게 아니기 때문에 따로 계획은 없어요 말씀드릴 게 없네요. [Right now, because a <u>conclusion (as human-form of mad cow disease)</u> has not come out, there is no other plan. [I] have nothing to tell you.]
When I get an answer, then I'll go about (unintelligible)	결론이 나와야 계획을 논할 수 있지 않겠어요. [Don't [you think we] will be able to discuss a plan/plans only when a conclusion is out.]

In this extract, it is uncertain what is meant by *an answer*, since the sound bite does not include the question to which an answer is given. The use of *an answer* without any recourse to *the question* poses a problem in terms of interpretation. In the TT,

however, meaning is explicitated, with *as human-form of mad cow disease* added in parentheses to *a conclusion*. The effect of the addition is in line with other mechanisms at work: the meaning-constructing function of the immediately prior image and voiceover. The sound bite is preceded by a visual of the VDH press release, whose wording is too small and blurred to be legible, except for two English phrases that have been clearly enlarged by the producers of the program for Korean viewers: *variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD)* and *disease linked to consumption of beef*. A Korean translation of these phrases is also provided just below the original phrases in bright yellow color. The Korean voiceover that accompanies the visual states: “The health authority has disclosed in a press release that investigation is under way in order to find out whether Aretha had the human-form of mad cow disease.” The image and voiceover function to instruct the viewers to interpret *an answer* in relation to vCJD as the cause of death.

What is interesting is that the press release in question is still available on the VDH website and describes the investigation as follows:

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is investigating the recent illness of a Portsmouth woman who died April 9, 2008. The patient suffered from encephalopathy which is a degenerative disease of the brain [...] Recent news reports have linked variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) to the patient’s illness. “There are a wide variety of causes of encephalopathy,” explained State Health Commissioner, Karen Remley, M.D., M.B.A. “Infections, lack of oxygen to the brain, liver failure, kidney failure, toxic exposures, metabolic diseases, brain tumors, increased intracranial pressure, and poor nutrition are all related to encephalopathy. Further testing is the only way to know what caused this illness.” VCJD is a very rare neurodegenerative disease linked to consumption of beef infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and is invariably fatal. At least 200 cases have been reported worldwide since 1996. Diagnosis of the disease can be difficult and time consuming. VCJD differs from Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) in that CJD is not linked to beef consumption. While both are very rare brain disorders, the two are different diseases. (Virginia Department of Health 2008, see note 27)

The press release makes it clear that Vinson’s death may be related to vCJD; however, other possible causes are also mentioned. In the *PD Swuchep*, the visuals related to the press release, voiceover, and subtitles in the sound bite all work to present vCJD as the only possible cause of death. In fact, the title of the original press release, *Virginia Department of Health Investigates Illness of Portsmouth Woman*, is subtitled in Korean as Pokentangkwuk Potocalyo (Pecinia Pokentangkwuk vCJD Samangca Cosa) [Press Release by the Health Authority (Virginia Health Authority’s Investigation of the Person who Died from vCJD)]. Thus, the likelihood of Vinson’s death as resulting from vCJD is foregrounded and emphasized in the subtitles.

The extract in Table 4 is part of an interview with Aretha Vinson’s mother. Again, this is presented as a sound bite which is embedded in a voiceover description of events that led to Vinson’s death:

TABLE 4  
**Sound bite from an interview with Aretha Vinson's mother**

ST	TT
<p>The results had come in from the MRI and uhm it appeared that our daughter could possibly have CJD.</p> <p>He told us that there was no treatment, no cure. I couldn't believe what I was hearing.</p>	<p>MRI 검사 결과 아레사가 vCJD (인간광우병)일 가능성이 있다고 하던군요.            [Based on MRI results, [I] was told that Aretha could have vCJD (human-form of mad cow disease).]            (아레사를 위한) 치료법이 없다는, 고칠 수 없다는 말을 듣는데 믿을 수가 없었어요.            [As [I was] hearing that there is no treatment (for Aretha), no cure, [I] could not believe [it].]</p>

Prior to this extract, visuals of Vinson's deteriorating condition are shown to viewers with a voiceover that narrates: "Aretha was moved to the hospital for more thorough testing and the family was given the devastating news from the doctor." The transfer of CJD in the ST to vCJD in the TT is one of the most controversial issues of the episode in public and legal debates. Jeong accused *PD Swuchep* of changing CJD to vCJD after initial draft translation and revision/proofreading. However, the defendants claimed that Jeong had translated only one out of a total of four tapes of the interview with Vinson's mother and that neither CJD nor vCJD appear anywhere in the ST Jeong translated (Won 2010, see note 4). According to the defendants, Jeong may have "believed" that Vinson's mother did not think her daughter had the human-form of mad cow disease, based on the portion of tape Jeong translated, but a review of all four tapes shows a different picture. The situation described in the Seoul Central District Court's decision (*State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, see note 18) may be summarized as follows:

- At the time of the report, the cause of Vinson's death was unknown since the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDCP) autopsy result had not been announced.
- The Virginia Department of Health had announced in its press release that only additional investigation and autopsy result would precisely give the cause of death.
- American news outlets at the time of *PD Swuchep*'s report were reporting on a number of possible causes of death, including CJD, which Vinson may have contracted after having gastric bypass surgery, possibly from tainted medical instruments, vCJD, and shortage of oxygen to the brain during the surgery. The reports all stated that the exact cause of death would be unknown until the autopsy result came in.
- On 12 June 2008, the CDCP officially announced that Aretha Vinson's autopsy result showed that her death was not due to vCJD.
- Vinson's mother was interviewed twice by *PD Swuchep* before the 29 April episode. According to the STs released during the trial, Vinson's mother stated in the 16 April interview that "Aretha had been diagnosed possibly through her MRI as having a variant of CJD which is Creutzfeldt Jacob disease." In another interview on 19 April she stated "[w]e were told by physician here that associated with the state that um if our daughter should have CJD, the variant that only it's very rare, very very rare." During the same interview, she also stated: "Aretha had a neurologist and the neurologist was the one that gave us the result of MRI. And he told us that the MRI that intend to believe in suspect that our daughter had the variant CJD."

The distinction between the categories of CJD and vCJD is blurred in instances of Vinson's mother's speech. This is especially the case in her use of the noun phrase



a variant of CJD which is Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. In fact, public debates ensued in South Korea regarding whether CJD could be considered a generic category of “a variant of CJD” and how the relationship among CJD, vCJD, and a variant of CJD is viewed in the American medical community and by the American general public. The court ruled that based on USDA documents and Korean Center for Disease and Prevention’s categorization, “a variant of CJD” is to be interpreted as “vCJD” (*State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, see note 18). One of the reasons for the loss of credibility of Jeong’s testimony about *PD Swuchep*’s intentional mistranslation was due to Jeong’s own draft translation of a variant of CJD as CJD. Her translation decision became public during the trials, and although this piece of text was not included in the final subtitles, her ability as a translator was seriously questioned as a result.<sup>28</sup>

The discussion shows that the descriptions of the cause of death are fraught with ambiguity and vagueness (see Table 6 for another description of the cause of death). However, frame ambiguity that is evident with regard to Vinson’s death is suppressed and obscured in *PD Swuchep*’s report. Translation plays an important role in presenting vCJD as the only possible cause of death. The fact that other possible causes are not mentioned in the report suggests that the choice of wording in the TT is based on the consistency with the narrative of the report within which the TT is embedded.

#### 4.2. Change in epistemic modality

In Tables 5 and 6, shifts in the speaker’s stance or commitment to what is being said are examined. Focus is given to epistemic modality, which is concerned with the degree of commitment on the part of the speaker to her utterance and the question of how changes in epistemic modality may create different meanings in the TT. Extracts in Tables 5 and 6 are sound bites that make reference to Aretha Vinson’s death and show the change in the speaker’s stance towards the truth value of vCJD as the cause of Vinson’s death.

TABLE 5  
Sound bite from an interview with Aretha Vinson’s mother

ST	TT
It’s just so amazed me that there’s so many people who are involved with <u>this disease that my daughter could possibly have</u> .	너무 놀라운 일이었죠. 우리 딸이 걸렸던 병에 다른 수 많은 사람들도 걸릴 수 있다는 것을 생각하면요. [[To me] it was really shocking. When [I] think that <u>the disease that had infected our daughter</u> could also infect so many people.]

In the extract in Table 5, *this disease that my daughter could possibly have* is transferred in the TT to *the disease that had infected our daughter*, assigning a higher degree of confidence in the truth of the statement in the TT. While the modal auxiliary *could* and modal adverb *possibly* are used in the ST to mark uncertainty about the truth values of Vinson being infected with vCJD, the underlined phrase in the TT indicates that no grammatical marking is used to signal similar epistemic modality, despite the fact that marking such epistemic positioning is possible in the Korean language. Let’s consider the extract in Table 6:

TABLE 6

## Sound bite from an interview with Aretha Vinson's mother

ST	TT
Doctors <i>suspect</i> Aretha has variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease or vCJD.	의사들에 따르면 아레사가 vCJD라는 변종 크로이츠펠트 야콥병에 걸렸다고 합니다 [According to doctors, Aretha <u>had</u> variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease which is vCJD.]

This extract is a sound bite of an 8 April WAVY-TV news report. In the original, the mental state predicate *suspect* is used by the reporter to describe or report on the doctors' epistemic evaluation of a state of affairs. What is important here is how the doctors' evaluation of the probability of the state of affairs is reported. The degree of doubt expressed in the ST is not represented in the TT, despite the fact that the linguistic resources are available in the inventory of Korean language to mark this kind of doubt. As a result of the change in epistemic modality, the degree of commitment on the part of the doctor to his utterance is much stronger in the TT. The extracts share the directionality in the change in epistemic judgment, that is, the degree of doubt is downplayed as a result of the process of translation. In the TT, Aretha's mother's and doctors' assertions are formulated as having a stronger epistemic basis compared to those in the ST.

## 4.3. Omission

Omission is one of the most common characteristics of subtitling due to spatial and temporal constraints. Many of the extracts discussed above have shown aspects of omission. In this section, my focus is on the information that is left out and the consequences of such omission, often leading to the construction of different meaning in the TT. Extract in Table 7 is another sound bite from an interview with Aretha Vinson's mother:

TABLE 7

## Sound bite from an interview with Aretha Vinson's mother

ST	TT
If she contracted it, how did she? Because she's always lived in the same state.	아레사가 어떻게 인간 광우병에 걸렸는지 모르겠어요. 아레사는 버지니아에서만 살았고 [I don't know how Aretha could have contracted human form of mad cow disease. Aretha only lived in Virginia and]

In this extract, *If she contracted it* is omitted in the TT. Considering that *if*-conditional is used here to express the speaker's lack of full positive stance with respect to the content of *if*-clause, the non-positive stance expressed in ST is absent in the TT. This is not to say that the non-positive stance of *if* commits the speaker to a completely negative or skeptical stance (Dancygier and Sweetser 2000); however, it seems evident that by using *if*-conditional, Aretha's mother is distancing herself from the full commitment to the contents of the *if*-clause. While the Korean language also allows the distancing stance to be expressed by using conditionals, this option is not taken in the production of the TT. As a result of the translation, Aretha's infection of the human-form of mad cow disease is presented as a given that cannot be contested.

Thus, the TT displays a much stronger commitment on the part of Aretha's mother regarding Aretha's contraction of the disease.

Extract in Table 8 is another sound bite from an interview with Michael Greger of the Humane Society in regard to the video footage on downer cows. In this example, the multiple translation methods, including omission, addition, and shift in reference cumulatively work to construct a different meaning in the TT:

TABLE 8

**Sound bite from an interview with Michael Greger of the Humane Society**

ST	TT
When the <u>employees who were charged with animal cruelty</u> were asked,	현장 책임자에게 왜 (광우병 의심소를 억지로 일으켜 도살하냐고) 물었더니 [When the person in charge at the site was asked why ( <u>cows suspected of having mad cow disease were deliberately made to stand and then slaughtered</u> ).]
they said that their supervisors told them to do this, this was kind of company policy.	관리자가 위에서 그렇게 시켰다고 하더군요. 일종의 회사 방침이라고 했습니다 [[he] said that the manager from the top told him to do this, that this was kind of company policy.]

The sound bite is in reference to the footage showing abusive actions taken by meat-packing factory employees in order to get the downer cows on their feet. In the extract of Table 8, the question is presented in different ways in the ST (animal abuse) and in the TT (food safety and health). Furthermore, as mad cow disease is singled out for expression in the TT, the “downer cows-as-BSE-infected-cows” interpretation is foregrounded. The translation methods used in the episode cumulatively and unidirectionally contribute to creating a narrative of the grave danger and risk that US beef poses to Koreans.

#### 4.4. Discussion

In the preceding discussion, I examined the extent to which subtitles, in combination with sound and video, construct meaning and shape the context of reception for viewers. While different translation methods were used in the production of the TT, the analysis of data show unidirectionality in the effect created as a result of the translation. Compared to the ST, the subtitles explicitate, emphasize, and generalize the danger of being infected with mad cow disease by eating US beef. This is achieved in numerous ways, including addition, omission, and summarization of information and merging or shifting categories. Noteworthy are changes in the way the relationship among three categories of beef (beef from downer cows, beef from BSE-infected cows, and US beef) or between two categories of diseases (CJD and vCJD) are represented or re-presented. Shifts also occur in the speaker's commitment to the actuality of an event; degree of commitment on the part of Vinson's mother and the doctor to the veracity of vCJD-as-the-cause-of-Vinson's-death is presented as higher in the subtitles.

In subtitling TV programs, the temporal and spatial constraints entail omissions of superfluous information. These constraints may also be responsible for a drastic reformulation of the text, which inevitably leads not only to summarization of ST

content but also to a transformation of its meaning, confirmed in various case study findings of subtitling (Díaz Cintas 2009). Furthermore, considering that this program targets the general public and is produced for and broadcast by a public television network, the frequent use of highly technical concepts related to medicine and foreign trade may entail a simplification and explicitation in the process of translation. Nevertheless, what gets included in the final wording and how it interacts with the video and sound to create distinct semiotic meaning is crucially important in affecting the viewers' understanding and perception of the issues addressed in the program. The unidirectionality in the effect that is created as a result of translation in this episode shows that different degrees of textual shifts work cumulatively to emphasize, support, and elaborate the risk narrative.

This suggests that in the case of the episode under analysis, an important criterion for the selection of wording in the TT may be the assumed *narrative relevance*, i.e., the TT producers' idea of how the translated parts should fit in, support, and elaborate the larger story within which these parts are embedded. The risk narrative that informs the overall framework of the episode seems to function as the decisive factor in the determination of the wording in TT. If we accept that the process of TT production consists of two procedures, i.e., generating possible TTs and selecting a definitive TT (Pym 2003), it can be argued that narrative relevance guides decision-making in the selecting process. While no attempt is being made here to suggest that the type of drastic, and even blatant, changes in meaning observed in some parts of this study is rampant and pervasive in news media institutions, I am suggesting that where there is room for different interpretations, the wording that is chosen for inclusion in the TT in the end may very likely be the one that upholds the narrative of the entire program/episode in which the TT is embedded.

This brings us to the question of *who* is responsible for determining narrative relevance in translation. This is an issue that has been the source of considerable social and legal controversy in the *PD Swuchep* case. Within translation studies, researchers have repeatedly pointed out that the boundary between translation and editing is blurred in the case of news media translation (Stetting 1989; Bielsa and Bassnet 2009) and the institutional collectivity that characterizes translation and editing in television further works to erode the distinction regarding which agent is responsible for what. Based on research findings in the episode in question, narrative relevance is evaluated by the production team that does not seem to include the translator. While the responsibility of producing a draft translation lies with translators, these translators are only a small part of the collective responsible for producing subtitles. Discursive transformation is guaranteed by institutionally defined roles and procedures for TT production. The TT production in an institutional setting is to a large extent dictated by the roles and structures that are established to increase efficiency and quality of work. However, they also function to control and intervene in the process of mediation. While this may be necessary to maintain and improve quality of reporting, including reporting based on translation, in certain instances it may also function to bring translation in line with the narrative of the reporting. In other words, wording and the narrative of translation are not necessarily consensually co-constructed by the participants involved in producing a journalistic text; it may be the product of conflict-ridden processes that are characterized by tensions and power relationships among various people in different roles.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the view of translation as an entextualization practice, this paper has considered a case of controversial AVT in a television news magazine in South Korea. The findings of this study suggest that decisions on the selection of TT expressions are guided by the criterion of what helps elaborate a particular narrative in the report. When the ST contains opaque signifiers that may potentially have multiple signifieds, what gets chosen in the mediation process is often determined by its assumed narrative relevance to the main storyline of the report. The process of entextualization allows translation to serve as a mechanism through which elements from another context or another narrative may be imported into a new context or reframed as a new narrative. The dynamic interaction of sound bites, subtitles, voiceover narration, and visuals has a powerful effect on shaping the context of interpretation for the viewers. The findings of this paper suggest that translation can be used in strategic and manipulative ways to create a discursive and intellectual environment that may lead to or accentuate an ideological conflict (Baker 2006).

While the case study of *PD Swuchep* is obviously problematic and certainly unique in various aspects, problems related to translation in a media institution discussed in this study may exist in other institutional contexts as well. Agents of mediation invariably find themselves in positions of power in that they command discursive and semiotic resources that enable them to redefine a given state-of-affairs to a large number of people. However, the mediators are not a homogeneous group and in institutional contexts where a multiplicity of mediators have interconnected yet separate roles in the handling of a text, the power relationship among mediators affects the shaping of perceptions regarding translation and the wording of the TT.

This case study not only problematizes various aspects of institutional translation but also reveals assumptions and biases about meaning and translation that have significant consequences for how translation is perceived by the general public. The debates reveal a belief in transparency of meaning that is, in many instances, simply untenable. While some texts may contain expressions that allow for straightforward translation, there are more texts that contain ambiguous and contestable meanings whose translation may lead to controversy and criticism. Opaque and imprecise meaning is a problem in a translating context, but an unwillingness to recognize the difficulty in translating imprecise meaning is a more complex problem. Furthermore, a seemingly transparent word may have multiple meanings when the context of production is taken into account. If frame ambiguity is a feature of the ST, suppressing or obscuring it is a decision that needs to be justified textually and ethically. The concealing of frame ambiguity as exemplified by the presentation of vCJD as the only possible cause of Aretha Vinson's death in the subtitles above demonstrates how an unclear situation constrained by multiple factors may be exploited by the producers of the TT for their own ends.

The place of the translator in the discussions also raises important questions for the practice of translation. This case is not ordinary in that it highlights the choices and variability of Ji-min Jeong's actions, as evidenced in the translator's capacity and positioning to make herself heard as a situated subject. However, the discussion also reveals perspectives that reinforce the view that translators possess an inferior status among the more dominant roles in an institutional setting. In this case study, the

institutional constraints under which Jeong's activities as a translator and proofreader/ reviser were performed and her limited knowledge and authority as a consequence of the constraints were important factors, in addition to others, in weakening her claims about changes added to the translation after the revision process. In fact, neither Jeong nor the court considered translators to be part of the group of people making the episode (*State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, see note 18; Jeong 2009b, see note 22). The "outsider" status of a freelance translator seems to have instilled a certain submissive disposition in translators (Simeoni 1998). If that is the case, the questions that need to be asked are: How can a translator be expected to engage in responsible and ethical behavior without full knowledge of the larger picture of the text or the intention of the users of a translation? How much should translators know about the intention of the users of translation in order to make any claims regarding legitimate translation? What are the conditions under which institutional translators may make their voices heard regarding the interpretation of the ST or even possible distortions of the TT made by other related parties? This case study has clearly demonstrated that translators and translation play a critical role in the translingual and transcultural reporting of a major news event; yet what is equally apparent is the lack of acknowledgement received by translators for their mediating role of translation. Despite the superficial visibility translation receives in the debates, the invisibility that defines translators and translation in non-conflictual situations seems to equally characterize the complex input that translators and translation make in situations of conflict.

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#### NOTES

1. JEONG, Ji-min (2009a): Cwu: Nanun Cinsilul Concwunghanta [Commentary: I Respect the Truth]. Seoul: Tosechwulphan Sitam.
2. KIM, Eun-Hee (2008): Icey Kuman "Kecisuy Sangsang"ul Memchwue Cwusipsio [Please Stop "False Imagination" Now]. *OhMyNews*. Visited on 3 March 2010, <[http://www.ohmynews.com/nws\\_web/view/at\\_pg.aspx?CNTN\\_CD=A0000953746](http://www.ohmynews.com/nws_web/view/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0000953746)>.
3. JIN, Jung-Kwon (2010): Oyekkwa Kweypyen, Cengciminun Sakwahayya Hanta [Mistranslation and Sophistry, Ji-min Jeong Should Apologize]. *OhMyNews*. Visited on 4 February 2010, <[http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS\\_Web/view/at\\_pg.aspx?CNTN\\_CD=A0001308323](http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/view/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0001308323)>.
4. WON, Jong-Woo (2010): Inepyu: PD Swuchep Kwangwupyeng Phyen Ichwunkun [Interview: PD Swuchep Mad Cow Disease Episode's Lee Chun-Keun PD]. *The Ddanziilbo*. Visited on 5 March 2010, <<http://www.ddanzi.com/news/9424.html>>.
5. SHIN, Dong-Heun and BAEK, Kang-Nyung (2009): 'PD Sayngkaktaylo' Oyek, Kyomyohakey Phyencip, Pangsong Cikcen Penyek Pakkwechiki... [Mistranslation According to "PD's Thoughts," Crafty Editing, Changing Translation Immediately before Broadcast...]. *Chosun Ilbo*. Visited on 20 February 2010, <[http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2009/06/19/2009061900071.html](http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/06/19/2009061900071.html)>.
6. The categories of translation method used in Conway's (2010) study are: "self-translation, all cases (the speaker's use of a language other than the first language)," "self-translation, strong cases (speaking a foreign language with a strong accent, lexical)," "voiceover translation, reporter," "voiceover translation, anchor," "summary translation, anchor," and "subtitles."
7. Bauman and Briggs used *entextualization* from a linguistic anthropological perspective to describe narrative performance. However, scholars are increasingly using this concept to examine such phenomena as transcription, quoting, reporting, and translation (Kang 2007; 2010; Park and Bucholtz 2009).

8. The South Korean government's move regarding beef import was part of its effort to encourage Washington to ratify the free trade agreement (FTA) with Seoul, which the South Korean government considered as crucial for the country's economic growth and sustainability. In 2008, rumors were circulating in South Korea that Washington would not ratify FTA unless the South Korean government accepted the beef import deal. This rumor was revealed to be true in a 2010 report submitted to the US Congress on the beef issue in South Korea (Jurenas and Manyin, 2010). JURENAS, Remy and MANYIN, Mark E. (2010): U.S.-South Korea Beef Dispute: Issues and Status. *Congressional Research Service*. Visited on 13 January 2011, <<http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/RL34528.pdf>>.
9. ANONYMOUS (February 2012): *Variant Creutzfeld-Jakob disease. Fact sheet N° 180*. World Health Organization. Visited on 3 March 2012, <<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs180/en/>>.
10. The events that followed the airing of the program are due to numerous factors, including South Koreans' distrust of the government and its neo-liberal policies, the conflict between the conservative and progressive political forces, the history of Korea-US relations, anti-US sentiment in the country, South Korea's participatory politics, and the heightening of people's awareness of food safety.
11. Opposition political parties joined the protests and farmers also called for the rejection of the free trade agreement. President Lee's political standing was seriously weakened as a result, and he was forced to renegotiate the deal, to make an official apology to the South Koreans, and to reshuffle the Cabinet to save his plummeting approval ratings.
12. MINBYUN-Lawyers for Democratic Society (Updated last: 18 June 2009): Sengmyeng: Cengchikemchaluy Phokcwu, PD Swuchep Kisolul Kyuthanhanta [Statement: The Railroading by the Power's Handmaiden Prosecution, Denouncing the Indictment of PD Swuchep]. Visited on 22 October 2009, <[http://minbyun.org/?document\\_srl=27225](http://minbyun.org/?document_srl=27225)>.
13. JEONG, Sung-Yoon (2011): Taypepwen, PD Swuchep 'Kwangwupyeng Poto' Mwucuy Hwakceng [The Supreme Court, Not Guilty Verdict to PD Swuchep's Report on the Mad Cow Disease]. *Peplyulsinmwun [The Law Times]*. <<http://www.lawtimes.co.kr/lawnews/News/NewsContents.aspx?serial=59125&kind=AA>>.
14. A *downer cow* refers to any cow that is too sick or weak to stand on its own.
15. MARTIN, Andrew (21 May 2008): U.S. Moves to Prohibit Beef from Sick or Injured Cows. *The New York Times*. New York edition, p. C3. Visited on 3 March 2010, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/21/business/21beef.html>>.
16. The Humane Society of the United States (30 January 2008): *Rampant Animal Cruelty at California Slaughter Plant*. Visited on 21 November 2010, <[http://www.humanesociety.org/news/news/2008/01/undercover\\_investigation\\_013008.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/news/news/2008/01/undercover_investigation_013008.html)>.
17. LAVEN, Richard (2004): Downer Cow. *NADIS - National Animal Disease Information Service*. Visited on 10 January 2010, <<http://www.nadis.org.uk/bulletins/downer-cow.aspx>>.
18. *State v. Cho Neung-Hee*, 2009KOTAN3458, Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea. 20 January 2010.
19. ANONYMOUS (23 August 2010): *CJD (Creutzfeld-Jakob disease, Classic)*. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Visited on 11 November 2010, <<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/cjd/>>.
20. Jeong (2009a) stated that although she currently works as a translator, she identifies herself less as a translator than as a historian and a budding scholar in the humanities. She did not hide the fact that she does not share with other translators a love of the trade. Her curious, even negative, attitude toward translation as a profession may be one of the reasons why few translators have openly voiced support of her position.
21. KOH, Hyun-Sil (2011): MBC, 'PD Swuchep' Kwangwupyeng Poto Sakwa. "Chaykim Thongkam" [MBC, Apologizes for PD Swuchep's Reporting on Mad Cow Disease. "Feels Deeply Responsible"]. *Yonhap News*. Visited on 10 October 2011, <[http://app.yonhapnews.co.kr/YNA/Basic/article/new\\_search/YIBW\\_showSearchArticle.aspx?searchpart=article&searchtext=pd%20%ec%88%98%ec%b2%a9&contents\\_id=AKR20110905140000005](http://app.yonhapnews.co.kr/YNA/Basic/article/new_search/YIBW_showSearchArticle.aspx?searchpart=article&searchtext=pd%20%ec%88%98%ec%b2%a9&contents_id=AKR20110905140000005)>.
22. JEONG, Ji-min (2009b): Penyekcaka Malhanun Oyek, Waykokuy Cinsang [Facts Concerning Mistranslation and Distortion Told by the Translator]. *Hankwuknontan [Korea Journal]*. 242:116-125.
23. LEE, Yeon-Hee (2008): Pococakkaipnita (5) - Cengcimn Ssiwa Kamswu Kwacengeyse Nanwuessten Iyakitul - Ilen So/Tawunekhawu Tongyengsang Kwanlyen [I am the Assistant Script Writer (5) - Things Discussed with Ji-min Jeong During the Revising Process - This Cow/Downer Cows

- Video Related]. *MBC PD Swuchep Website Message Board*. Visited on 29 May 2010, <<http://www.imbc.com/broad/tv/culture/pd/board/index.html>>.
24. The Korean subtitles in the extracts are presented in the same way as the actual subtitles on screen, except for the underlining of words. All back-translations in the extracts are made by the author.
  25. In the case of the Korean language, both the singular and plural forms may fulfill the plural function, although plural markers are also available.
  26. About 15 minutes into the program, the downer cows footage is shown again with voice-over which states that “I tongyengsang sotul cwung kwangwupyeng soka issesstako tancenghal swunun epsta. Kulena i sotuli silceylo kwangwupyeng soinci yepwuto al kili epsta” [*We cannot say with certainty that there were mad cow disease-infected cattle in the footage. However, there is equally no way of knowing whether or not these cows in fact had contracted mad cow disease*]. However, during the 15 minutes before this voice-over comment was made, various mechanisms had been used to cumulatively support and elaborate a risk narrative on screen for viewers.
  27. ANONYMOUS (10 April 2008): *Virginia Department of Health Investigates Illness of Portsmouth Woman*. Virginia Department of Health. Visited on 29 June 2010, <<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/news/PressReleases/2008/041008Portsmouth.htm>>.
  28. Jeong’s ability as a proofreader/revisee was also called into question when the comparison of the various versions revealed that the alleged mistranslations and the change in meanings were bypassed in the revision process.

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