

SHINOHARA, Yuko (篠原有子) (2018):
映画字幕の翻訳学—日本映画と英語字幕 (Eigajimaku no
hon'yakugaku: nihon'eiga to eigojimaku) [The translation
studies of film subtitling: Japanese films and English subtitles].
Kyoto: Koyo Shobo (晃洋書房), 240 p.

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teórico, recurre a Deleuze y Guattari para defender la capacidad que tienen los textos para ramificarse rizomáticamente (p. 36-50) y dar cuenta de múltiples voces, lenguas y culturas. Asimismo, Scott abre la puerta a la oralidad en la traducción y, en las múltiples versiones que genera para traducir un poema, anota la diversidad de voces que se acumulan al momento de leer un texto; para ello, crea un sistema tentativo de anotaciones: la voz de la glosa o vigilancia textual entre corchetes; la voz más impulsiva, la que se integral texto en tonalidades variadas entre paréntesis; la voz de «menor pedigrí textual» (nuestra traducción), la más azarosa, entre llaves (p. 95-97).

Scott plantea que el uso de todos estos signos puede cambiar según el criterio del traductor y sugiere adaptarlos a cada caso. Este procedimiento ya anticipa el siguiente tema, que es el montaje, inspirado en las artes plásticas y cinematográficas, pues el estudioso privilegia lo multimedia sobre lo verbal. Y si bien esto también puede parecer polémico porque rebasa, quizá, los límites del trabajo del traductor, ya que acepta intervenciones con caligrafía, tipografía de diversos tipos y tamaños, la técnica del goteo o *dropping*, el *collage*, la fotografía y el color, con el afán de favorecer el azar y la compenetración entre el movimiento subjetivo, los estados mentales del artista y la libertad creativa. A favor de esta propuesta podría aducirse el hecho de que en el mundo multimedia de hoy pueden encontrarse muchos ejemplos de artes integradas que han seducido a sus respectivos públicos: poemas de Baudelaire, Rimbaud, García Lorca, López Velarde, entre muchos otros, convertidos en canciones, documentales, cortos cinematográficos, pinturas, esculturas, etc. Entonces, para esos propósitos, el traductor es una figura principal que no tendría por qué limitarse al trabajo de traslación lingüística. Pero algunas de las dificultades de la traducción oceánica (término que toma de Deleuze) y transdisciplinaria que plantea Scott obligan a pensar, por una parte, que la industria editorial tendría que abrirse a esta tendencia para publicar y difundir traducciones siempre en proceso: con muchas versiones, con rasgos de heteroglosia y multilingüismo, así como con intervenciones artísticas que exigen ediciones de alta calidad, como las de los libros de arte. Por otra, el libro de Scott ofrece entre líneas un cuestionamiento del perfil del traductor literario y de su formación, así como también de las expectativas de los lectores, que tendrían que modificarse a su vez.

Por último, otra propuesta valiosa en esta obra es la noción de que un estudio de las traducciones literarias que rebase lo verbal puede ayudar a ampliar las tareas de una literatura comparada centrada en la colectividad de lectores, pues las traducciones en versiones verbales o multimedia

evidencian que los lectores hacen con los textos lo que les place. De esta manera, los poemas no mueren; la masa de traducciones creativas bien puede contribuir a historiar de manera diferente la cartografía de nuestras literaturas. De la misma manera, una traducción centrada en la lectura, la apertura, la polisemia, la dispersión, lo fragmentario y múltiple reivindica el carácter creativo y artístico del traductor.

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NOTAS

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SHINOHARA, Yuko (篠原有子) (2018): *映画字幕の翻訳学—日本映画と英語字幕* (Eigajimaku no hon'yakugaku: nihon'eiga to eigojimaku) [The translation studies of film subtitling: Japanese films and English subtitles]. Kyoto: Koyo Shobo (晃洋書房), 240 p.

Since the book under scrutiny is written in Japanese and emerges from Japan, a longer-than-usual preamble is warranted. The title of the work can be translated quite literally as “The Translation Studies of Film Subtitling: Japanese Films and English Subtitles,” but this rather vague label does not really do the book justice. This monograph is, in fact, the published version of Yuko Shinohara’s (2017a) doctoral thesis, which bears the much more apposite alternative English title *Standardization of English Subtitles for Japanese Films: A Study Focusing on the Production Process* (see Shinohara 2017b for a summary in Japanese).

Shinohara has been working as a subtitler since the latter half of the 1980s and thus possesses over three decades of experience in the trade. In 2011, she obtained a Master’s degree with a sociologically oriented dissertation focusing on the many agents and norms involved in the production process of film subtitles in Japanese (Shinohara 2011). Since then, she has published

several papers on topics such as the expectations of Japanese filmgoers regarding subtitles (Shinohara 2012), the strategies used to render into English subtitles the cultural references found in a specific Japanese film (Shinohara 2013), and the factors influencing the English subtitling of Japanese films (Shinohara 2014).

In the late 1980s, in an article surveying the texts on translation published in Japan, Daniel Gile (1988: 115) stated that while “Japanese publications on translation are markedly more numerous than Western publications,” they “are aimed at the general public rather than at professionals or academics, and few are truly scientific or academic.” Nowadays, as was the case at the turn of the 1990s, there is certainly no shortage of books and magazines dealing with translation on the shelves of Japanese bookshops. Similarly, despite the significant growth and evolution of translation research in Japan over the last few decades, several of the newer publications remain personal essays or how-to manuals that cannot be considered scientific works. As Shinohara herself acknowledges in her monograph, the same holds true for books on audiovisual translation (henceforth AVT).

This is precisely where Shinohara’s publication stands out: as rightly touted on its “obi” (a strip of paper looped around a book to pique shoppers’ interest), it is indeed “the first Japanese scholarly book to discuss film subtitling” (my translation¹). However, this does not mean that Japanese TS researchers are not interested in AVT, quite the contrary. In fact, a cursory look at the archives of Japan’s two main TS journals (i.e. *Interpreting and Translation Studies*² and *Invitation to Interpreting and Translation Studies*³) reveals that as many as around thirty papers are concerned with the theme.

In the book’s short preface, the author first sets the scene by stressing the pivotal role English subtitles play in exporting Japanese films worldwide, especially through film festivals and markets. Shinohara then argues that in audiovisual translation studies (henceforth AVTS), little research has hitherto tackled English subtitles and the subtitling process in the broad, sociological sense. The aim of the book, the author declares, is first to identify the factors that influence the English subtitling of Japanese films, and then to examine what characteristics these factors bring about in the subtitles.

The first chapter, which essentially consists of a literature review, begins broad in scope with a general introduction to AVT(S), before zeroing in on relevant approaches and prior research. The author also goes over a few handpicked AVT studies conducted in the Japanese context and ends the chapter with the claim that the subtitling process and its various agents, along with the

“sociocultural approaches,” have yet to receive the attention they deserve.

In Chapter 2, Shinohara expounds the theoretical framework of the study, which draws mainly on Anthony Pym’s (2009) *localization model*, while also enlisting two “key concepts,” namely Gideon Toury’s *standardization* and André Lefevere’s *patronage*, albeit with slightly different meanings. The author then goes on to list the characteristics of English subtitles of Japanese films, that is, their source-culture (that is Japan) initiative and production, the diversity of their audiences, and their frequent use as a “source text” for subtitling into other languages. With this in mind, Shinohara draws a parallel between the *internationalization process* (as part of the *localization model*) and the English subtitles production process, since, she submits, English subtitles can be thought of as an intermediate version (a “standardized,” *internationalized text*) made from a Japanese film (a *start text*) in order to produce subtitles in multiple languages (a number of *target texts*).

In the third chapter, which is dedicated to the methodological framework of the study, the author introduces her data sources: semi-structured interviews with subtitlers, documentation pertaining to the reception of Japanese films abroad as well as to English subtitles, and the analysis of the strategies used to render into English subtitles the cultural references found in two Japanese films, namely *Shall We Dance?*⁴ and *Spirited Away*⁵. The bulk of the chapter is concerned with setting up the latter investigation, Shinohara contextualizing the two films and reviewing concepts useful to the analysis before ultimately adopting most of Jan Pedersen’s (2011) model for studying cultural references in subtitles. In a commendable bid to increase the research’s “credibility” and “trustworthiness,” the author announces that she will conduct a small study on the cultural references found in the Japanese subtitles of two American films (in order to contrast these results with the ones from the main corpus), and that the results from her analysis of the English subtitles of the two Japanese films will be verified with the assistance of two graduate students.

Drawing from her experience as a seasoned subtitler, Shinohara uses Chapter 4 to carry out a step-by-step dissection of the process of subtitling into Japanese, homing in on the various participating agents and emphasizing the important influence they have on the final product. The chapter ends with a review of the universal peculiarities of subtitling, that is, the spatiotemporal constraints, the multimodal nature of the text, the inherent vulnerability of subtitles, and the “diagonality” of the translation (that is to say from one language, spoken, to another, written).

Primarily through the lens of *patronage*, Shinohara begins Chapter 5 by pondering the factors at play in the production process of English subtitles for Japanese films, namely the respective roles of the export-driven, English-dominated film industry, the “Cool Japan” initiative spearheaded by the Japanese government, and the expectations of the highly diversified audiences. Next, the author closely considers the production process of English subtitles for Japanese films in two different ways. On the one hand, she focuses on the *internationalization process* by calling upon the concepts of *English as a lingua franca* and *indirect translation*. On the other hand, drawing mainly on interviews with subtitlers, she addresses the relations between them and the many other agents involved in the process as a whole by looking into both the instructions and the feedback (or lack thereof) they receive, as well as into the way they conceive of and deal with target audiences. Shinohara then asserts that, despite their relative *invisibility* and the fact that they rarely have the final say, translators nevertheless wield some kind of *power* owing to their capacity to enable communication across languages and cultures. Last, the author formulates the hypothesis at which she had hinted all along, namely that English subtitles of Japanese films undergo *standardization* in which smooth communication takes precedence over meaning preservation, and that for two main reasons: first, the *internationalization process* as part of the *localization model* (i.e. English subtitles for further translation), and second, the perception of subtitlers and other agents concerning the viewership (i.e. English subtitles for diversified audiences).

Chapters 6 and 7 are devoted to the case study. Here, the author sets out to test her hypothesis by probing, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the *strategies* used to render into English subtitles the *cultural references* found in two Japanese films. According to the degree to which strategies preserve the nature and features of the source cultural reference, the author divides them into two categories, namely *standardizing strategies* and *non-standardizing strategies*. Shinohara then explains that while cultural references in *Shall We Dance?* and *Spirited Away* were rendered by means of *standardizing strategies* in 51% and 63% of their respective instances, those in the two American films underwent translation through such strategies in only 22% and 18% of their respective occurrences, a result that supports her hypothesis. In the remainder of Chapter 7, Shinohara scrutinizes many examples drawn from the corpus from the perspective of *standardization* and concludes that the power imbalance between languages and cultures may account for such asymmetrical results.

In Chapter 8, Shinohara expands the scope of her reflection by pondering *non-standardization*, a newer trend in AVT opposite to that of *standardization*. In a noteworthy discussion invoking felicitous concepts from a diverse array of authors, she draws a contrast between the case of *professional translators*, from whom fluent subtitles are *heteronomously* demanded, and that of *fansubbers*, who, mainly by virtue of the democratization of technology, are free to craft creative subtitles *autonomously*, in line with their own agendas. Finally, after painstaking consideration, Shinohara comes to the conclusion that the opposing elements of *homogenization* and *heterogenization* found in the phenomenon of *globalization* translate into both *standardized* and *localized* subtitles, and also that *standardization* currently occupies a central position within the AVT system, whereas *non-standardization* remains peripheral. The author adds that since professional subtitling seems to be increasingly influenced by its non-professional counterpart as its stakeholders seek to match audiences’ ever-changing preferences, AVT *norms* could evolve towards greater tolerance and even appetite for *creativity*.

In the book’s conclusion, Shinohara not only summarizes the compelling results of her study but also straightforwardly addresses its main limitations. Incidentally, following the appendix, which gathers the transcriptions of the interviews, the afterword contains interesting “behind-the-scenes” information about the study itself.

Although an excellent monograph overall, I believe it has a few minor issues. For instance, while Shinohara’s rationale is laid out quite convincingly throughout the book, questions such as how common it is for subtitles to be translated indirectly and how actively subtitlers work towards streamlining potential subsequent translation processes find no satisfying answers. Unfortunately, this makes it difficult to assess the extent to which the study can be justifiably grounded chiefly on the *localization model*, which might not, ultimately, be perfectly suited to the case at hand. To cite a film from Shinohara’s corpus, the French subtitles of *Spirited Away* were actually translated directly from Japanese, as it appears to be the case for the great majority of Japanese films subtitled into French, at least according to the translator of this film and dozens more, Catherine Cadou⁶, from whom I received personal confirmation. At any rate, it would be interesting to undertake a study to establish, while taking other factors into account, whether subtitles of Japanese films known to have been translated indirectly are less “standardized,” more “localized” than their English “start texts.”

There is much more to this rich and fascinating book than space permits me to mention. As far

as I can tell as a non-native speaker, the monograph is clearly written and the chapters are logically organized, although there are a few overlapping areas. The research, undeniably carried out with great rigour, coherently brings together sound theoretical and methodological ideas while also benefiting from the author's invaluable expertise. Perhaps most remarkable is the attention Shinohara gives to every detail, leaving very few stones unturned, while never losing sight of the bigger picture. Her monograph truly constitutes an important contribution to (AV)TS in that it offers a scientifically grounded insight into the otherwise little-known world of Japanese professional subtitling, and even beyond.

In closing, the takeaway is that those who are interested in AVTS and happen to understand Japanese should read the book, and, perhaps more importantly, that Yuko Shinohara's outstanding piece of work ought to be translated and published in English, for the benefit of the global (AV)TS community.

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NOTES

1. Original Japanese: 映画字幕について論じた本邦初の学術書。
2. JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION STUDIES (JAITS) (日本通訳翻訳学会) (2020): 学会誌アーカイブ [Journal archives]. *Interpreting and Translation Studies* (通訳翻訳研究). Consulted on July 14, 2020, <<http://jaits.jp.org/home/pg90.html>>.
3. JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION STUDIES (JAITS) (日本通訳翻訳学会) (2020): アーカイブ (バックナンバー) [Archives (Back issues)]. *Invitation to Interpreting and Translation Studies* (通訳翻訳研究への招待). Consulted on July 14, 2020, <<http://honyakukenkkyu.sakura.ne.jp/archive.html>>.
4. Suo, Masayuki (周防正行) (1996): *Shall we ダンス?* [Sharu wi dansu?] (*Shall We Dance?*). Altamira Pictures (アルタミラピクチャーズ).
5. MIYAZAKI, Hayao [宮崎駿] (2001): *千と千尋の神隠し* (Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi) [Spirited Away]. Studio Ghibli (スタジオジブリ).
6. ASSOCIATION DES TRADUCTEURS/ADAPTEURS DE L'AUDIOVISUEL (ATAA) (2015): *Filmographie sélective des films japonais traduits par Catherine Cadou. L'Écran Traduit*. Consulted on July 14, 2020, <<https://beta.ataa.fr/revue/écran-traduit-4/japon-et-traduction-audiovisuelle-i/filmographie-sélective-des-films-japonais-traduits-par-catherine-cadou-par-ordre-alphabétique-des-noms-de-réalisateur-et-réalisatrice>>.

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VENUTI, Lawrence (2019): *Contra Instrumentalism: A Translation Polemic*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 216 p.

À quel type de document ai-je affaire? On aura reconnu dans cette interrogation la première question qu'un traducteur doit se poser à l'abord d'un nouveau texte. Ce rappel est banal pour les praticiens, mais il vaut aussi, quoique plus rarement, en traductologie. Nous sommes ici dans le registre du pamphlet, ce qui est attesté de trois manières dès la première page de couverture: par le titre, tout d'abord, *Contra Instrumentalism*, par