

GAMBIER, Yves and RAMOS-PINTO, Sara (2018): *Audiovisual Translation: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 146 p.

Daniel E. Josephy-Hernández

Volume 66, numéro 1, avril 2021

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1079332ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1079332ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (imprimé)

1492-1421 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Josephy-Hernández, D. E. (2021). Compte rendu de [GAMBIER, Yves and RAMOS-PINTO, Sara (2018): *Audiovisual Translation: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 146 p.] *Meta*, 66(1), 228–230. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1079332ar>

it is hoped that the concept of translation will be a subject of further research in translation studies and many other facets of this area will be further explored.

OUMAROU MAL MAZOU
University of Liège, Liège, Belgique

REFERENCES

- BAKHTIN, Mikhail (1981): From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse. In: Michael HOLQUIST, ed. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 41-83.
- BLANCHOT, Maurice (1959): L'infini littéraire: l'aleph. In: Maurice BLANCHOT, ed. *Le livre à venir*. Paris: Gallimard/ Collection Blanche, 130-134.
- GRUTMAN, Rainier and VAN BOLDEREN Trish (2014): Self-translation. In: Sandra L. BERGMANN and Catherine PORTER, eds. *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 323-330.
- TOURY, Gideon (2012): *Descriptive Translation and Beyond*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- VERMEER, Hans J. (1989/2000) *Skopos and Commission in Translation Action*. In: Lawrence VENUTI, ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*. London/New York: Routledge.

GAMBIER, Yves and RAMOS-PINTO, Sara (2018): *Audiovisual Translation: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 146 p.

There have been numerous publications about audiovisual translation (AVT) in recent years, notably the book by Díaz-Cintas and Nikolić (2017) and the handbook by Pérez-González (2019). And this is besides the constant publishing of special issues devoted to AVT. There is even now a journal exclusively dedicated to AVT, the *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* (n.d.). One has to wonder, then, whether everything has been said and done, and if this book provides more than the usual (but still relevant!) convention of the case-study approach.

Gambier's and Ramos-Pintos' edited book was previously published as a special issue in 2016: *Target* 28(2). In that sense, the decision to publish that issue as a book is perhaps difficult to understand at first: there are no major changes between the special issue's chapters and the book's that could be identified right away, as the same chapters are included, and the content of each seems to be the same. The differences between the special issue and the book are that the former has the "book reviews" section, and that certain articles have translations, whilst the book does not. These translations are, specifically, Burchardt,

Lommel, *et al.*, and Taylor, which were translated into Chinese; Braun, and De Marco, which were translated into Hungarian. These translations, however, were not available for download on the Target website at the time of writing this review. If those translations do exist, it is a pity they were not included in the book. Overall, besides trying to reach a wider audience by publishing the special issue in book format, no specific reasoning for publishing this book is provided, and it is a pity that the special issue online actually has more content.

The book, however, rapidly shows that its aim is to provide the reader with as much quintessential knowledge in as little space as possible. In the introduction, the editors place the book inside Translation Studies (TS), although they do mention the possibility that AVT may now be a field in its own right, apart from TS, because of the exponential and multidisciplinary growth it has experienced. Besides presenting an overview of the volume's contents, the editors also explain that they aim to find a balance in the book between "pure and applied research" (5).

Chapter 1, by Rosa, deals with Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and AVT. Rosa searches the *Translation Studies Bibliography* for keywords related to DTS and AVT, and presents the cases in which these two areas have intersected. The author also deals with various aspects related to AVT (semiotics, multimodality, corpora), but does not specifically relate them to DTS. Instead, she ends up stating that there has not been much work in AVT studies that uses DTS as a theoretical basis, and posits that despite its limitations, DTS could be used "for empirical, descriptive context-oriented fundamental research on AVT" (21). As a reader, however, I was not entirely convinced by Rosa's argument, as the author concentrated more on why DTS has not been included much in AVT studies, instead of explaining *why* it should be included.

Chapter 2, by Burchardt, Lommel, Bywood, Harris and Popović, concentrates on a much-needed area of research in AVT: machine translation (MT). Few articles have been written about AVT and MT, and considering how developed the area of MT already is, it is high time to read an article dealing with MT quality in an audiovisual context, involving not only researchers, but also practitioners of the art. The authors include a relevant summary of MT theory, and state that, "despite the relatively high level of technological support for the AV translator [...] AV translators do not routinely use TMs [Translation Memories], despite their widespread use in translation" (27). Burchardt, Lommel, *et al.* then explain issues related to the use of "automatic translation of subtitles" (29): domain and genre; lack of visual context; oral style; and lack of context (29-32). A

useful example is provided in each case. Burchardt, Lommel, *et al.* go into further technical details related to MT and Multidimensional Quality Metrics, and conclude by advocating for a “closer cooperation between AVT specialists and MT experts” (36). It has taken many years, but finally these two areas are intersecting.

Chapter 3, by Taylor, presents an overview of the multimodal approach in AVT. This is an indispensable area of research in AVT, and Taylor presents in a succinct and complete manner the different “considerations” related to a multimodal text analysis: (1) Narrative Considerations, (2) Linguistic Considerations, (3) Semiotic Considerations and (4) Cultural Considerations. He takes a scene from *La vita è Bella* (Roberto Benigni 1997), and provides a multimodal transcription: the visual image + kinesic action, the soundtrack, and the final subtitles. By creating a simple chart, Taylor provides a new and useful reference for both practitioners and researchers. Taylor concludes by emphasising the importance of taking multimodality into account when translating an AV text, instead of simply concentrating on the script.

Chapter 4, by Neves, explores Action Research (AR), a democratic form of research that allows for the furthering of scientific knowledge; it is a reflexive–theoretical and practical–approach to AVT. The author has a useful section in her paper that outlines the contributions of AR towards AVT, including, for instance, “the application of AVT to cultural venues and museums; experimentation with new approaches to audio description; and a holistic multimodal approach to communicating the museum” (58). This not only serves to prove the usefulness of AR itself, but also serve as a guide to researchers as to what might be examined in their own museum (studies) and cultural (studies) contexts.

Chapter 5, by Remael, Reviers, and Vandekerckhove address one of the most important issues in AVT: accessibility. Remael, Reviers, *et al.* begin with a complete–yet brief–introduction to TS and AVT, and present the topics of subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) and audio description (AD). The authors then expand on those two areas, concentrating on the European side of the research (most of the research in AVT has been done in Europe, so this is understandable). The authors, importantly, mention that AD “is slower on all fronts: less legislation is in place to dictate quotas, less pressure is exerted by users [...]. Basic research providing insight into how AD actually works is moving slowly” (70). AD research is an area of studies that needs more exploration everywhere in the world in order to bring products to more consumers, and audiences. The authors conclude by giving useful advice: a more integrated

approach from various disciplines is necessary for young disciplines like AD and SDH to thrive (74). Most importantly, they emphasise the need for further cooperation between the industry and academia (74).

Chapter 6, by O’Sullivan, deals with the issue of policy in audiovisual translation research. Much like the previous chapter, it concentrates on the European side of the issue. She briefly mentions minority languages, an area that could have been emphasised more in the paper besides the usual dubbing vs. subtitling view. The “Future directions and challenges” (86–88) section provides a template for future areas of research regarding translation policies; the headings are quite useful as they let the researcher know right away how to apply the headings to their own research context.

Chapter 7, by Kruger, concentrates on the psycholinguistics issues of AVT, an area of little research. It is a difficult area of research that involves knowledge of psycholinguistics and an understanding of the different codes that happen in AVT, as well as the eye-tracking equipment needed for research. Kruger concentrates on performance and reception studies, physiological studies and eye tracking, and integrates those areas with others that are not normally used in AVT research, such as educational psychology (97). The largest section of the chapter is naturally about eye tracking, as it is an area of great interest in AVT. Kruger aptly summarises a large body of work in a few pages, providing a concise and relevant overview of eye-tracking studies. He also deals with the technical aspects involved in eye-tracking research, with that part being written in an accessible manner that can be understood by researchers who might not dominate the area’s technical terminology.

Chapter 8, by Guillot, addresses the fascinating topic of cross-cultural pragmatics in an AV context. The author concentrates on how specific segments are translated and how “subtitling and dubbing have a capacity to generate internal systems of pragmatic representation and modes of interpretation, to work as a code in their own right” (117). Guillot also emphasises the importance of dealing in a contextualised text segments (117).

Chapter 9, by Braun, continues in the vein of the previous chapter, concentrating on the cognitive-pragmatic aspects. Braun concentrates on Mental Model Theory and Relevance Theory, and how these theories “show that discourse processing yields uncertainties; [and] why individual recipients draw different conclusions from the same premises and why communication may be unsuccessful” (123). Braun relates these theories to different areas of study, e.g., multimodality, sociology and pedagogy, expanding the already interdisciplinary nature of AVT.

Chapter 10, by De Marco, is the final chapter in the book. It deals with the “engendering” approach in AVT. De Marco explains that gender can be manipulated through AVT, and that it can even have an impact “on the audience’s perception of portrayed reality” (135). She mentions various authors, e.g., Baumgarten (2005), Toto (2009), Feral (2011), providing a solid theoretical basis. Although she leans slightly towards quoting her own research, it is understandable as there is little work regarding AVT and gender. De Marco’s anger is palpable at times, although it causes her to make biased, unscientific statements such as “[...] Western cinema –which is notoriously at the service of economic interests that fuel patriarchal values–” (136). This is an overgeneralisation, as not all Western cinema fuels patriarchal values, and not *only* western cinema is heteronormative.

This leads me to the one issue I found in the book, which is that it leans heavily on European perspectives on AVT. As mentioned before, this is understandable as most work regarding AVT comes from Europe, but one or two articles dealing by non-European authors would have been appreciated. There is much work coming from countries like Iran and China that should be included in future compilations.

Interestingly, most of the chapters are short (averaging nine pages, less than the usual thirteen to fifteen), which I appreciated. This shows the researchers’ ability to summarise and include as much relevant information in as little space as possible. In that, I believe that this book can also serve as a guide on how to write excellent academic articles. I did miss some further exploration in Guillot’s and Braun’s chapters, but only because I was so gripped by the topic that I wanted to read more about it, not because they lacked information. In conclusion, this is one of the most accessible books on AVT, perfect for both seasoned researchers and newcomers to the area.

DANIEL E. JOSEPHY-HERNÁNDEZ
Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica,
Heredia, Costa Rica

REFERENCES

- DÍAZ-CINTAS, Jorge and NIKOLIĆ Kristijan (2017): *Fast-Forwarding with Audiovisual Translation*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF STUDIES IN SCREEN TRANSLATION (n.d.): *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*. Visited on 17 July 2020, <<http://www.jatjournal.org/index.php/jat>>.
- GAMBIER, Yves and RAMOS-PINTO Sara (2016): *Audiovisual Translation: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*. Special Issue of *Target*, 28:2. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing.
- PÉREZ-GONZÁLEZ, Luis (2019): *Routledge Handbook of Audiovisual Translation*. Oxford: Routledge.
- DESBLACHE, Lucile (2019): *Music and Translation: New Mediations in the Digital Age*. London: Macmillan, 407 p.
- This book represents a milestone development in the combined interdisciplinary fields of Music and Translation Studies. Lucile Desblache presents a text which is engaging and rich in its reach across and through the fields of translation studies, music studies and musicology, multimodal studies and audio-visual translation. Her reach is unique as she is herself both a translation scholar and a musician. She has published much before about music and translation, and she led the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s Network Grant, *Translating Music*.¹ As such, Desblache is uniquely placed to meet her aims to take ‘a broad understanding of translation’ (p. 5) to explore how music can ‘convey meaning across boundaries’ (p. 4). As such, this book has many aims, which build on encouraging a wider scholarship to engage with the methods and concerns of translation studies to reflect on their own fields. The core aims are to ‘expand the existing framework’ (p. 9) for bringing music and translation into dialogue, to ‘review’ the ‘intersections’ between the field (p. 9), and to ‘investigate the creative influence of translation on music’ (p. 9).
- There has been a flourish of activity in this area in recent years. Ever since Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva edited a special edition of *The Translator* (2008) exploring the connections between music and translation, the field has opened up to question translation in song and opera further (Low 2016, Apter and Herman 2016). But, it has also sparked a wider appeal outside of translation studies. As the translational turn expanded the scope of translation studies more broadly to the humanities and social sciences, as explored by Doris Bachmann-Medick (2009), the meaning of translation has extended to reach all forms of communication and multimodal studies (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001). As the field of intercultural studies expanded into the performing arts, questions concerning how scholars might, can and do form interpretations across media, across cultures and across eras raise significant issues about how such interpretations are formed. In so doing, it has raised critical questions about the choices made by interpreters, and some, including myself, have made a claim that all forms of interpretation might be understood as acts of translation (Minors 2013). Since then though the translational turn has progressed to a medial turn in that our many forms of communication are becoming increasing digital, mediated via technology, and disseminated globally. As globalisation continues to expand, translation has clearly grown as a field, its methods and approaches providing