



Domestication and foreignization in interlingual subtitling: A systematic review of contemporary research

Mariana Yonamine
University of New South Wales, Australia
mariana.tradutora@yahoo.com.br

DOI: 10.12807/ti.114201.2022.a11

Abstract: When faced with culturally anchored terms, subtitlers can render the translation closer to the foreign language and culture, adopting a strategy of foreignization, or closer to the domestic audience, thus adhering to a strategy of domestication (Venuti, 1995). The goal of this systematic review, based on the PRISMA framework (Moher et al., 2009) is to identify, via structured and extensive selection of studies, assess and summarize the academic literature on domestication and foreignization in interlingual subtitling. The thematic analysis of comprehensive contemporary literature aimed at understanding concepts, discussions, findings and research gaps, to inform future relevant and constructive contributions to the current body of research. The analysis of 33 studies published in English and Portuguese between 2004 and 2020 examined five themes: overview of studies, orientation towards foreignization or domestication, translation strategies continuums, linguistic features covered in the studies, and reception of subtitles. Limitations of previous studies and under-researched matters are then presented to support future research. Further empirical studies on the reception of interlingual subtitling are recommended to advance the understanding of subtitles as a product, using dedicated methods and technologies to develop objective metrics about their perception and processing by viewers and move the audiovisual translation field forward.

Keywords: Audiovisual translation; subtitling; cultural transfer; translation strategies; domestication; foreignization.

1. Introduction

When using interlingual subtitles, viewers have simultaneous access to foreign media content with subtitles translated into the audience domestic language, putting domestic and foreign conventions in the spotlight. Venuti's (1995) influential work described two global-level strategies of translation: *domestication*, aiming to adjust the translation to the target culture and language, which may involve losing source content information, and *foreignization*, producing a translation closer to the source culture, preserving foreign terms and conventions to convey meaning, and sometimes breaking codes of the target culture.

The debate over domestication and foreignization is far from settled in subtitling professional and academic practice, posing a frequent challenge for subtitlers. Traditionally, the prevailing notion is that a fluent translation, passing as original text written in the domestic language is ideal (Venuti, 2001). Some subtitling guidelines in the market follow this notion by making unspecific recommendations about adapting the content to the domestic audience. Venuti

(1995) recommends the foreignizing approach instead, to maintain the foreign flavour and preserve the source text's authenticity. In reality, subtitles reaching viewers frequently take this to a limit that risks undermining comprehension, indicating "overreliance on the source text" (Perego & Bruti, 2015, p. 12), filled with: expressions exceedingly close to the foreign language and culture, borrowed words, transposition of syntax or even word-for-word translations, that bear no meaning to the domestic audience. This is due in part to conditions of a substantial portion of the industry, with deadlines that are "virtually always urgent by default" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 57), commonly low budgets and diminishing rates of pay (Kuo, 2015, p.13), combined with ill-defined quality assessment and loose supervision (Pedersen, 2017; Kuo, 2017). Also, the domestication approach often takes longer and is more challenging for translators, demanding more research, sophisticated translation strategies and advanced skills. For example, a foreignizing option to translate the idiomatic expression "try keeping a lid on that", meaning "to keep something under control", from English into Brazilian Portuguese, could be to quickly paraphrase describing the expression meaning: *controlar a repercussão* (literal back translation: "control the repercussion"). The meaning is conveyed but the style and tone differ, as the translation is not an idiomatic expression. A domesticative option could be to use a culturally equivalent idiom as *abafar o caso* (literal back translation: "stifle the case"; meaning: "to hide something"). The second option demands looking beyond wording and meaning and finding an equivalent idiomatic expression in the other language.

Guidelines and recommendations on how to deal with cultural-related elements are usually imprecise or non-existent. Therefore, subtitlers frequently rely on personal judgement (Ramière, 2006; Matiolo & Espindola, 2011) to decide how close the translation should be to the domestic or foreign language and culture. More often than not, subtitlers face arbitrary and subjective quality assessment on this complex issue. The Netflix recommendations for translation were chosen to illustrate this issue because they are the main guidelines publicly available for consultation and are considered "the strictest on the marketplace" (European Parliament, 2017, p. 15). Culture and domestication or foreignization strategies are not mentioned directly on the Netflix Style Guide (Netflix, 2018). The issue is covered indirectly regarding the treatment of historical or mythical characters, plot relevant nicknames, titles of published books and movies, foreign words, and brand names (Netflix, 2018). Moreover, Netflix recommends matching the tone of the "original" content to the equivalent in the "target" audience and language (Netflix, 2020).

This paper aims to contribute to the audiovisual translation (AVT) field by providing deeper insight on how the application of translation strategies in subtitling has been studied so far. This is the first systematic review of research on domestication and foreignization in interlingual subtitles. This study will present a comprehensive selection of contemporary studies written in English and Brazilian Portuguese covering the topic of domestication and foreignization in interlingual subtitling. The investigation was initially motivated by the professional practice and gaps in the literature in empirical studies on perception of subtitles by viewers (Ghia, 2012a, 2012b; Chaume & Díaz-Cintas, 2018), reception studies in AVT (Di Giovanni & Gambier, 2018; Gambier, 2013), and audience preferences on translation faithfulness (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2019).

This review aims to gather information, data and evidence to identify the important issues, discussions and useful knowledge, to inform applicable future research; conducting a meta-synthesis aiming to "integrate the collective products of extant bodies of qualitative research findings using systematic, formal processes for the purpose of generating overarching inductively derived claims about

phenomena of interest” (Thorne, 2008, p. 511). The review aims to provide a summary and assess the existing academic literature (Machi, 2012) to identify relevant academic studies, and determine the research gaps in the field to support relevant future research.

This review is written from the point of view of a translation researcher and subtitling practitioner working in the language pair English-Brazilian Portuguese. Therefore, the selected studies are in those two languages. This review targets interlingual subtitling, a translation practice defined as “presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that aims to recount the original dialogue exchanged among the various speakers, as well as all the other verbal information that is transmitted visually and aurally” (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 9). Hence, studies involving other modes of AVT will not be covered, such as intralingual subtitling, dubbing, audio description, and captions. The term subtitling refers to interlingual subtitling from now on.

This paper is divided into three sections. The first section describes the methodology used to identify and select relevant and representative publications for the review. The second section presents the thematic analysis of the selected studies grouped in five themes pertinent to the domestication/foreignization discussion. Finally, the third section presents the conclusions and recommendations for future research.

2. Methodology for identification and selection of studies

The relevant literature on the topic was selected and examined in a structured and transparent manner, making it possible to replicate the method in the future. The literature review question to define search terms and design was: “What are the relevant academic studies covering the topic of domestication and foreignization in interlingual subtitles?” The selection of studies included in the review followed the main steps of the PRISMA Statement, “an evidence-based minimum set of items for reporting in systematic reviews” (Moher et al., 2009, p. 1): identification, screening, and eligibility.

The following databases were chosen for the identification phase, on account of their academic rigour and relevance to works on translation studies and subtitling: Web of Science - WoS, Scopus, Modern Language Association of America - MLA, Linguistics and language behaviour abstracts via ProQuest - LLBA, and Bibliography of Interpreting and Translation - BITRA.

The search terms devised for the identification phase were: *subtitl**, *caption**, *domesticat**, and *foreigni?at**. The symbol * and the wildcard symbol ? were used to truncate words and capture variations around a word stem, this enabled capturing spelling variations whenever possible. This way the four aforementioned search terms captured entries in the databases encompassing 15 relevant term variations.

The search strategy crafted using the Boolean operators OR/AND to identify relevant works in WoS, Scopus, MLA and LLBA was: “*subtitl* OR caption**” AND “*domesticat* OR foreigni?at**”. The search format was adapted to work on BITRA, and was divided into three sub-searches equivalent to the one used in the other databases due to the processing limitations of this database. The three formats used on BITRA were: a) *subtitl* AND domesticat**; b) *subtitl* AND foreignisat**; c) *subtitl* AND foreignizat**. The searches with the term *caption** returned empty on BITRA. Figure 1 presents the number of studies covered in the three phases conducted to select references for the current study: identification, screening and eligibility.

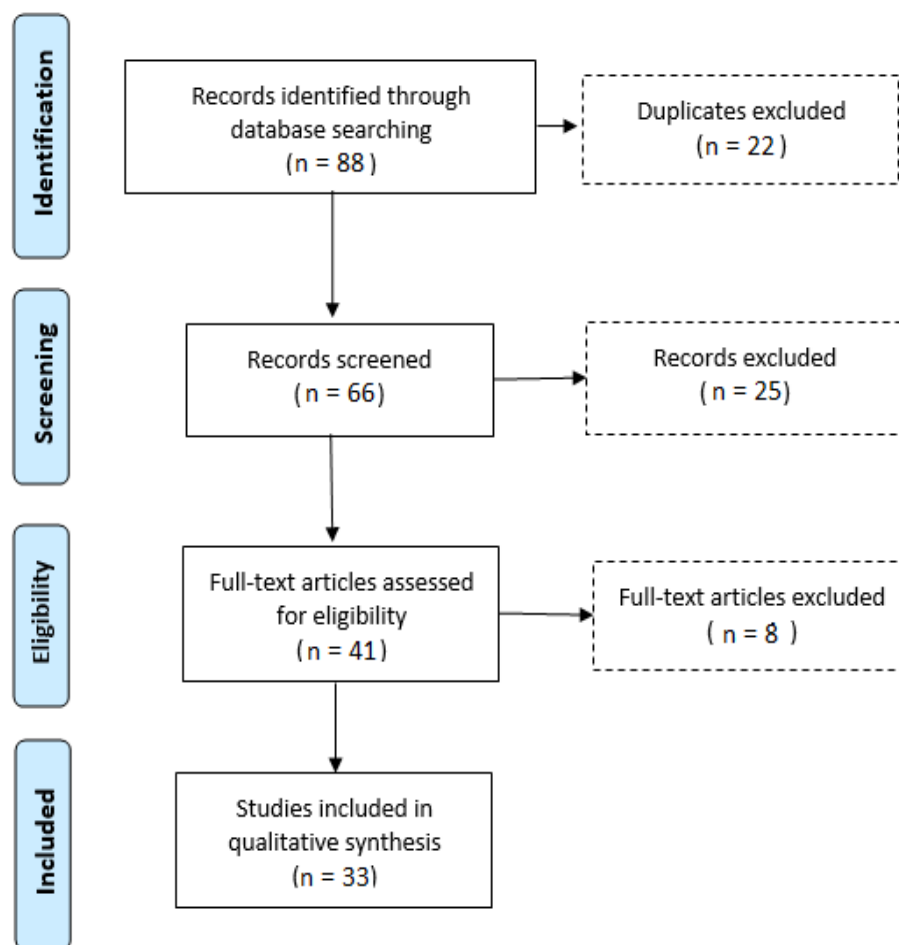


Figure 1. Selection of texts for analysis

The identification phase started with searches on the five databases conducted on 30/05/2020, returning 88 results. The number of results per database is presented in parenthesis: WoS (22), Scopus (13), MLA (3), LLBA (4), and BITRA (46). The results found in the five databases were consolidated and 22 duplicated items were found. Therefore, the identification phase detected 66 distinct studies.

The screening phase involved analysis of titles and abstracts of the 66 studies found; 25 of them were excluded based on the title/abstract analysis, either because the investigations focused on dubbing, intralingual subtitling, technology, textual translation or biology, or were written in languages other than English and Portuguese. The excluded studies were published in Catalan, Croatian, French, Italian, Korean, and Spanish.

The eligibility phase involved full-text analysis of the studies to determine if they fit the review. The 41 items selected for this phase were located for download or consultation. Six studies were excluded because they were not available due to embargo or no access to physical copies due to border closure in 2020. Languages and topics described in abstracts are also covered in other studies included in the review, ensuring review sample's representativeness. Full-text analysis of the remaining 35 studies confirmed 33 of them were relevant to be included in the review thematic analysis. Two studies (Messerli, 2009; Thawabteh, 2014) were excluded because the discussion on domestication/foreignization in subtitling was not their main focus.

3. Thematic analysis

The selected studies were analysed according to five themes pertinent to the domestication/foreignization discussion. The first theme of analysis aimed at forming a general overview of the studies, looking into: general structure, main topics, languages covered, and publication format. The other four themes analysed were orientation of translation towards domestication/foreignization, translation strategies taxonomy representations, specific linguistic features and terminology, and reception of subtitles.

3.1. Overview of studies

The 33 studies selected for this review were published in the period from 2004 to 2020, covering a 16-year time span. Contextualising them in the broader scene, the domestication/foreignization discussion was presented in Venuti (1995) and the subtitling body of academic work started forming around the mid-1990s (Díaz-Cintas, 2012). The studies included in the review are listed in Table 1, along with general structure or format of the study and main topics investigated and discussed in each of them.

After thorough examination, the studies were grouped according to structure. Most of them (23 out of 33) combined theoretical reasoning with empirical evidence, looking for patterns and norms in the use of translation strategies in a corpus of subtitles, subscribing to the descriptive studies paradigm. The other ten encompassed case studies, theoretical discussions and essays discussing translation solutions, challenges, constraints, or translator roles.

The most usual topics discussed related to domestication/foreignization were identified. Ramière (2006), Massidda (2012), Tanase (2014), Cai (2015), Sadeghpour and Omar (2015), Gao (2017) and Boito and Caetano (2018) discussed humour. Nine studies worked with informal and localized registers and terminologies: Brazilian Portuguese slum ghetto slang (Espindola & Vasconcellos, 2006); vulgarisms and sexually-oriented language in Cantonese (Fong, 2009); culinary terms (Judickaité, 2009); Australian English use of expletives (Petillo, 2010); African–American vernacular English and *verlan*, slang used by the French youth (Mével, 2011); ethnolect Indian English (Minutella, 2012); swearing in Persian (Ameri & Ghazizadeh, 2014); military register and terminology in American English and Polish (Pirus, 2015); Nigerian languages, Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa (Babatunde, 2017); and Chinese political slogans (Chang, 2017). The mode and producer of the translation were also common topics; ten of the studies investigated differences in treatment in dubbing or subtitling, and seven investigated fansubbing, the production of amateur subtitles by fans. The cultural discussion topics more commonly identified were related to cultural mediation aspects (19), power relationship between languages and cultures (7) and cultural identity (5).

Languages spoken across the five continents are encompassed in the review. This suggests the studies form a comprehensive overview of the discussion and challenges around domestication/foreignization in subtitling around the world. The languages covered in the review are Arabic, Bengali, Brazilian Portuguese, Cantonese, Czech, English (American, British, Australian, Indian), French, German, Hindi, Hausa, Igbo, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Persian, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Spanish, Turkish, Yoruba. In addition, not all studies have analysed the English of the respective languages pair. Therefore, they explore out of the limits of English's pervasive presence in AVT, commonly being in the source audio or used as pivotal language – audio language is translated first into

English and the English subtitles are used as basis for translation to other languages.

Table 1. Overview of studies – Structure and main topics

Study	Structure		Main Topics						
	descriptive – norms	case study / discussion / theoretical essay	informal / local register	Humour	fansubbing	dubbing x subtitling	cultural identity	Language power	cultural mediation
Howell (2004)	x					x			
Szarkowska (2005)		x				x		x	x
Ramière (2006)	x					x			x
Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006)	x		x					x	
Ramière (2007)	x			x		x			x
Fong (2009)	x		x						x
Judickaitė (2009)	x								
Petillo (2010)	x		x			x	X		
Matielo and Espindola (2011)	x				x			x	
Mével (2011)		x	x				X		x
Massidda (2012)	x			x	x				
Minutella (2012)	x		x			x			
Kwong (2013)		x							x
de Higes-Andino et al. (2013)	x								
Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014)	x		x		x	x			
Gheorghiu (2014)		x							
Gottlieb (2014)		x						x	x
Raine (2014)		x						x	x
Tanase (2014)		x		x					x
Cai (2015)	x			x	x				
Pirus (2015)	x		x						x
Sadeghpour and Omar (2015)	x			x					
Erguvan (2016)	x				x				x
Babatunde (2017)		x	x				X		x
Chang (2017)	x		x		x		X		x
Cui (2017)		x							x
Gao (2017)		x		x					
Klinger (2017)	x					x			
Massidda and Casarini (2017)	x				x	x			x
Özbudak (2017)	x						X	x	x
Boito and Caetano (2018)	x			x					x
Unsal (2018)	x								x
Soares (2020)	x					x		x	x

3.2 Translation orientation towards domestication or foreignization

The 23 empirical studies that worked with a corpus of subtitles were assessed considering their translation orientation towards domestication or foreignization to form an overview of subtitling practices in the real world. This analysis is useful to gauge the level of foreignization or domestication with empirical standards. The list of studies is presented in Table 2, along with the translation orientation, audiovisual genre, and language pairs.

Explaining the number of entries in the table, when the study analysed the translation orientation of multiple titles, linguistic features or different versions of subtitles, for example fansub and official subtitles, both cases were included separately in the table of analysis for translation orientation, thus both cases were included separately in the table, either by citing the movie title or the translation version. Ramière used the same corpora for both studies (Ramière 2006; Ramière, 2007), so they merged into one entry in the table.

Only five studies presented statistical analysis: Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006); Judickaitė (2009); Matielo and Espindola (2011); Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014); and Soares (2020). The other studies selected examples and drew conclusions.

Analysing the source language of the studies, most of the investigations had English, the hegemonic or dominant language in the international audiovisual industry presently, in the source end (20 cases). Looking into other source languages in more detail, four investigations dealt with non-dominant languages, those that have a lower presence in audiovisual production and international distribution, namely Brazilian Portuguese, Czech, Arabic, Yoruba, Persian and Turkish (Espindola & Vasconcellos, 2006; de Higes-Andino et al., 2013; Sadeghpour & Omar, 2015; Özbudak, 2017). Sadeghpour and Omar (2015) and de Higes-Andino et al. (2013) detected a foreignization profile in the translation, uncommon when the transfer is done from a non-dominant language into English, subscribing to Venuti's recommendation of keeping the foreign flavour to preserve the source text authenticity. This could become a trend, since content in other than English languages is gaining traction in countries that traditionally preferred English spoken content before. This way foreignization can be used to emphasize the exotic element in foreign productions. The idea that audiences in the Anglosphere are more open to tackle the one-inch-tall barrier of subtitles caught the public eye when it was mentioned in a celebrated speech broadcasted worldwide by Bong Joon Ho, director of the Korean movie *Parasite* (Garcia, 2020), the first non-English-language movie to win the Oscar for best picture.

To explore if the audiovisual genre of the study could explain the orientation towards domestication or foreignization, the titles and corpora were classified following IMDb's genre typology (IMDb, 2021), an authoritative source about media content. The genres present in a majority of studies were animation and comedy. In this sample of studies, the orientation was balanced for both genres, out of the 6 analyses of animation, 50% tended towards domestication and 50% towards foreignization. Out of six analyses of comedy titles, 3 tended towards foreignization and 2 towards domestication. Nine of the studies drew the orientation analysis of a compilation of excerpts from multiple titles with different genres, they were tagged "multigenre corpus", it was not possible to analyse the correlation of each genre with the overall translation orientation trend found in the study.

Table 2. Translation orientation towards domestication or foreignization

Study	Orientation	Genre	Source	Target
Howell (2004)	D	Animation	Japanese	English/ French
Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006) - City of God	D	Crime	Brazilian Portuguese	English
Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006) - Boys N the Hood	F	Crime	English	Brazilian Portuguese
Ramière (2006, 2007)	None*	Multigenre corpus	French	English
Fong (2009)	D	Multigenre corpus	English	Cantonese
Judickaitė (2009)	D	Animation	English	Lithuanian
Petillo (2010) - Picnic at Hanging Rock	D	Mystery	English	Italian
Petillo (2010) - Ned Kelly	F	Biography	English	Italian
Matielo and Espindola (2011) - Official subtitles	F	Fantasy	English	Brazilian Portuguese
Matielo and Espindola (2011) – Fansub	F	Fantasy	English	Brazilian Portuguese
Massidda (2012) - Mainstream Subtitling	D	Multigenre corpus	English	Italian
Massidda (2012) – Fansub	F	Multigenre corpus	English	Italian
Mével (2012)	D	Multigenre corpus	English	French
Minutella (2012)	F	Multigenre corpus	English/ Hindi/ Punjabi/ Bengali	Italian
Minutella (2012)	D	Multigenre corpus	Indian English	Italian
de Higes-Andino et al. (2013)	F	Multigenre corpus	Spanish/ Others (Czech, French, Italian, Arabic, Yoruba)	English/ French
Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014) – Fansub	F	Crime	English	Persian
Cai (2015) – Fansub	F	Comedy	English	Mandarin
Pirus (2015)	D	War	English	Polish
Sadeghpour and Omar (2015)	F	Comedy	Persian	English
Erguvan (2016) - Professional	D	Animation	English	Turkish
Erguvan (2016) – Fansub	F	Animation	English	Turkish
Chang (2017)	D	Comedy	English	Mandarin
Klinger (2017)	F	Animation	English	German
Massidda and Casarini (2017)	F	Multigenre corpus	English	Italian
Özbudak (2017)	D	Drama	Turkish	English
Unsal (2018) – idioms	D	Comedy	French	Turkish
Unsal (2018) – cultural components	F	Comedy	French	Turkish
Soares (2020)	F	Animation	English	Brazilian

*Note: *The author deemed the analysis inconclusive due to lack of context and intercultural position of translator and viewer, considering impracticable to locate strategies on the continuum.*

Analysing the translation orientation in the sample of studies over the years, domestication was more frequent in the first studies, from 2004 to 2009. Starting from 2010, there is a tendency towards foreignization in subtitling. In the studies that included fansubs, the approach was more foreignized, keeping the foreign markers and sense of otherness, most likely with the support of creative practices not available to professional subtitlers (Orrego-Carmona, 2015), with the exception of domesticated Chinese fansubs, presented by Chang (2017). The studies on fansubbing mention famous translators, which seem to challenge the translator invisibility paradigm (Venuti, 1995), for example: “Some Turkish fansubbers such as Eşekherif and Pınar Batum have become famous on social networking sites. Nazo82 [...] is one of the most popular fansubbers in Turkey.” (Erguvan, 2016, p. 154).

3.3 Taxonomies of translation strategies

With respect to taxonomies positioning translation strategies around domestication/foreignization poles, two studies included graphic representations. They are useful to position the local-level translation strategies in terms of foreign/domestic language and to analyse the global-level strategy of translation in subtitling.

The first representation is the simple but practical continuum developed by Ramière (2006, p. 156), presented in Figure 2. The study tested the applicability of domestication/foreignization concepts for subtitles in a corpus of three movies. Although concluding the concepts are applicable, Ramière was critical of the statistical approach because many translation events used mixed strategies. The author also questioned the position neutral strategies such as omission or neutralization would take in the continuum.

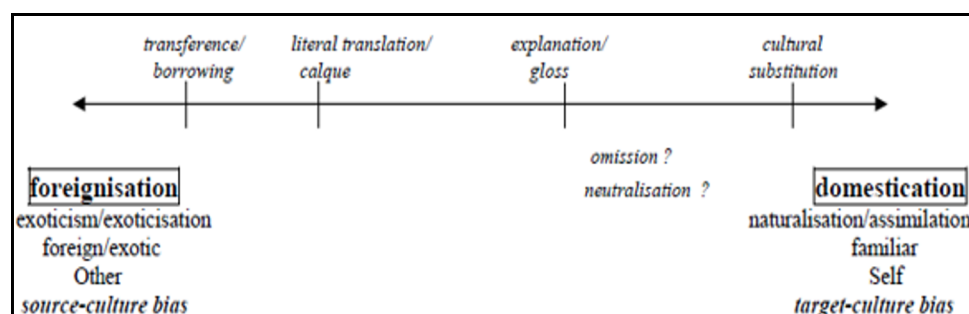


Figure 2. Ramière's translation strategies continuum (Ramière, 2006, p. 156)

The second representation is the continuum of strategies presented by Judickaitė (2009), shown in Figure 3. It has the added feature of including the number of strategy occurrences below the continuum, a convenient visualization of the global-level strategy orientation.

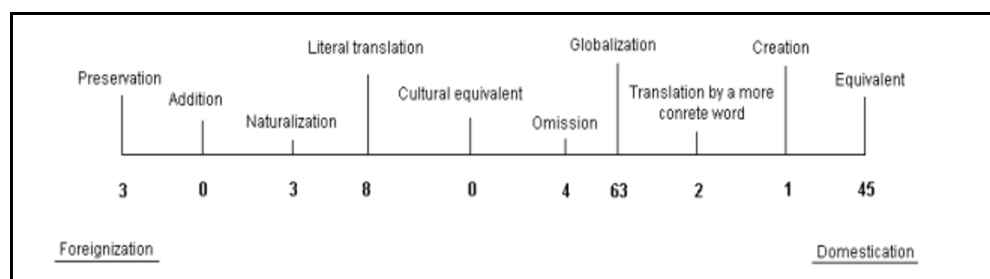


Figure 3. Judickaitè's translation strategies continuum (Judickaitè, 2009, p. 42)

3.4 Linguistic aspects

Eighteen studies explicitly explored intercultural rendering of specific linguistic features and specialized terminology. They are listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Specific linguistic features and terminology covered by the studies

Study	Linguistic Features/Terminology
Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006)	dialects, toponyms, anthroponyms, forms of entertainment, local institutions, food and drinks, scholastic reference
Matielo and Espindola (2006)	toponyms, anthroponyms, forms of entertainment, fictional characters, local institutions, slang
Fong (2009)	vulgarisms, dialect
Judickaitè (2009)	names of kitchen occupations and food, dishes and beverages
Petillo (2010)	expletives, names of geographical references, idiomatic expressions
Mével (2011)	dialects, vulgarisms, slang
Minutella (2012)	code switching, ethnolects, names of dishes, geographical references, television shows, vocatives
Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014)	vulgarisms
Pirus (2015)	military register, acronyms, idiomatic expressions, vulgarisms, slang
Sadeghpour and Omar (2015)	linguistic jokes
Erguvan (2016)	brands, television shows, idiomatic expressions
Chang (2017)	websites, social media, religious and cultural values, political slogans
Gao (2017)	neologisms
Klinger (2017)	characters' names, idiomatic expressions, linguistic jokes
Özbudak (2017)	address forms, greetings, idiomatic expressions, religious expressions
Boito and Caetano (2018)	idiomatic expressions, linguistic jokes
Unsal (2018)	geographical references, food and beverage names, professions, public and military institutions, idiomatic expressions
Soares (2020)	fixed expressions

The following studies exemplify how the translation of idiomatic expressions, a specific linguistic feature, was explored in terms of domestication/foreignization in the studies. Idiomatic expressions were chosen as they are the specific linguistic feature more commonly discussed in the review's studies.

Petillo (2010) discusses the translation of the Australian movies *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Ned Kelly* from English into Italian, discussing translation of Australian idiomatic expressions, and presenting an interesting analysis of the expletive term "bloody". Pirus (2015) shows how military register has its own set

of idiomatic expressions with examples from the war movies. Klinger (2017) presents an analysis of the translation of the movie *Finding Nemo* from English into German for subtitling and dubbing, discussing the translation of idiomatic expressions such as “hold it together, mate” and “fall off the wagon” and of linguistic jokes, playing with words to achieve humorous effect. Özbudak (2017) analyses translation strategies used to render into English idiomatic expressions extracted from the award-winning Turkish period drama *Kelebeğin Rüyası* (Butterfly’s Dream). Boito and Caetano (2018) discussed the translation of the Brazilian humorous sitcom *A Diarista* (The Cleaner) from Brazilian Portuguese into English. The show is set in Rio de Janeiro, with dialogues filled with regionalisms and idiomatic expressions such as “colocar as tripas pra fora” (literal translation: take the intestine out/meaning: to throw up) or “tirar água do joelho” (literal translation: take water out of the knee; meaning: to pee). Unsal (2018) studies the translation of idioms from French into Turkish in the multicultural movie *Qu’est-ce qu’on a fait au bon Dieu*; the analysis indicates the translation adopted a domestication orientation to the idioms.

3.5 Reception of domestication/foreignization in subtitles

Confirming the gaps in the literature mentioned in the introduction (Ghia, 2012a; Gambier, 2013; Chaume & Díaz-Cintas, 2018; Szarkowska and Gerber-Morón, 2019), none of the studies investigating domestication versus foreignization in subtitles subscribed primarily to reception studies.

Although not being the focus of the selected investigations, many of them mentioned the importance of framing the discussion within the reception context. They included the audience and viewers as factors in the analysis, examining the impact of the translation on them, and their role in the subtitle processing. However, they did not present data collected directly from viewers to backup this discussion (Howell, 2004; Szarkowska, 2005; Espindola & Vasconcellos, 2006; Ramière, 2007; Fong, 2009; Petillo, 2010; Mével, 2011; Gottlieb, 2014; Tanase, 2014; Pirus, 2015; Erguvan, 2016; Babatunde, 2017; Chang, 2017; Ozbudak, 2017; Soares, 2020). Maticelo and Espindola (2011) stated that their study “did not cover audience response so as to allow for further speculation. This aspect left undiscussed is suggested for further research” (p. 89). Ramière (2007) questions the notions of “homogeneous audience” and “average viewer” (p. 249). Those notions permeate the translation practice in the lack of primary data from reception studies with viewers. Reception studies could be conducted with viewers with diverse content consumption preferences or watching purposes to get a deeper understanding of subtitle processing, for example to analyse if people used to watch videos with fansubs could be more open to foreignization than those who watch content with commercial subtitles or no subtitles at all.

The lack of reception studies presenting the viewers’ needs and opinions on subtitles is in part covered by the fansubbing studies. As Cai (2015) points out, the fansubbers are producers, distributors and receivers of their own subtitles. Since fansubs are created for their own use, they are more daring, “far less dogmatic and more creative and individualistic” (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 51). Chang (2017) notes the Chinese fansubs possibly mirror the attitude of the broader public towards subtitles. The production of fansubs may also give insight into viewers’ needs.

4. Conclusions

In summary, this comprehensive systematic literature review evaluated 33 studies published between 2004 to 2020, covering 22 languages spoken across the five continents. The review provides an overview of the fruitful contemporary research conducted on domestication/foreignization in interlingual subtitling.

Most of the studies (70%) combined theoretical reasoning with empirical evidence to infer norms, being descriptive in nature, analysing corpus of subtitles to describe solutions and look for patterns. The studies using corpora indicated a general orientation towards domestication was more frequent from 2004 to 2009, with foreignization gaining force after 2010. However, the modest size of the corpora in the studies, and spare use of statistical analysis limit generalisation and applicability of findings.

The most discussed topics identified were translation of humour and informal and localized register and terminologies, differences between dubbing and subtitling, and cultural mediation. About half of the studies explored intercultural rendering of specific linguistic features and specialized terminology. Idiomatic expressions were the specific linguistic feature more commonly analysed.

None of the studies subscribed primarily to reception studies, suggesting lack of primary data in the literature reviewed on the reception of subtitles, the audience perception and processing of the subtitles. However, many studies mentioned the importance of framing the discussion within the reception context. The studies relied mainly on the point of view of translators and academics about the subtitles and their reception. This is problematic because the subtitle as a product can be understood and perceived in different ways by the many agents in the subtitling process (Szarkowska et al. 2020), depending on the audiovisual material purpose as well.

A comprehensive literature on translation studies could support future empirical research on domestication/foreignization, going beyond interlingual subtitling. The broader literature review could provide useful insights to formulate hypotheses, design experiments, and interpret results. Examples of relevant translation studies publications that would bring another layer of understanding to the discussion would be Kruger (2016), Davies (2014), and Olk (2013).

The findings and insights gained from this paper can shed light on market behaviour, providing empirical descriptive information, and may assist: project managers and subtitlers when deciding about the use of specific translation strategies depending on the purpose of the translation and developing more consistent and coherent subtitles; translation teachers, when presenting translation strategies to students and describing their effects, being able to demonstrate how the professional activity is carried out using empirical data.; developers of subtitling guidelines, who will have empirical basis and a broader context of practices and discussions to inform the use of translation strategies for specific purposes.

Future research on reception of translation strategies in subtitling could explore mixed-methods research, exploring benefits of each method and bypassing their specific limitations (Orero et al., 2018). The cognitive load of processing different strategies could be further explored making use of eye-tracking technology to allow exploring specific points of the subtitles. To generate statistically robust and more meaningful results, future research should take into account recommendations of Doherty (2018) about the use of regression designs to control for diverse variables and better handle the time-bound data collected in eye-tracking studies. Insights into empirical objective measures of how viewer's process subtitled media, such as cognitive load, immersion and enjoyment, could

have “direct implication for defining and assessing quality in AVT” (Doherty & Kruger, 2018). The use of specific translation strategies could be explored in regard to using subtitles for entertainment, language learning or to support learning in general using “behavioural measures such as eye tracking, as well as venturing into physiological measures such as electroencephalography (EEG), galvanic skin response, and heart rate” (Orero et al., 2018, p. 105). The use of these technologies would allow to explore the link between processing and perception of subtitles, for example exploring the relationship between visual attention (Ragni, 2020), viewers self-reported evaluation and performance metrics, such as recognition or recall. Outcomes of the use of subtitles, such as meaning comprehension or vocabulary acquisition, to cite a few, could be tested in longitudinal studies (Orero et al., 2018). The effect of translation strategies in subtitles in listening performance could be tested as well (Gernsbacher, 2015).

References

- Ameri, S., & Ghazizadeh, K. (2014). A norm-based analysis of swearing rendition in professional dubbing and non-professional subtitling from English into Persian. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 2(2), 78–96. <https://doaj.org/article/5d90c537eb3349c7b8e76dd7c33114cc>
- Babatunde, O. T. (2017). Audio-visual translation and Nigerian cinematography: Subtitling and dubbing from English and indigenous languages in favour of French. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and Translation*, 3(2), 24–31.
- Boito, F., & Caetano, M. (2018). A tradução do humor no processo tradutório para legendas da série brasileira ‘A diarista’. [Humor translation in the translation process for the subtitles of the Brazilian TV series ‘A diarista’]. *Mutatis Mutandis*, 11(1), 126–144. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6593304>
- Cai, X. (2015). Fansubbing humor. A mainland China case study. *Journalism and Mass Communication*, 5(9), 434–453.
- Chang, P. (2017). Chinese fansubbing of US TV Show ‘The Big Bang Theory’: From ideological perspectives. In D. Orrego-Carmona & Y. Lee (Eds.), *Non-Professional Subtitling* (pp.234–260). Cambridge Scholars.
- Chaume, F., & Díaz-Cintas, J. (2018, July). Frederic Chaume interviewed by Jorge Díaz-Cintas about developments in translation (part 1 and 2), *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*. https://www.jostrans.org/issue30/int_chaume.php
- Cui, H. (2017). Chinese and foreign film and TV drama translation from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Social Science and Technology Education* (pp. 10–14).
- Davies, E. (2014). A goblin or a dirty nose? The treatment of culture-specific references in translations of the Harry Potter books. *The Translator*, 9(1), 65–100.
- de Higes-Andino, I., Prats-Rodríguez, A. M., Martínez-Sierra, J. J., & Chaume, F. (2013). Subtitling language diversity in Spanish immigration films. *Meta: Journal des Traducteurs*, 58(1), 134–145.
- Di Giovanni, E., & Gambier, Y. (2018). *Reception studies and audiovisual translation* (1st ed.). John Benjamins.
- Díaz-Cintas, J., & Remael, A. (2007). *Audiovisual translation, subtitling*. St Jerome.
- Díaz-Cintas, J., & Remael, A. (2020). *Subtitling: Concepts and practices*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315674278>
- Díaz-Cintas, J. (2012). Subtitling: Theory, practice and research. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of Translation Studies* (pp. 285–299). Routledge.
- Doherty, S. (2018). Analysing variable relationships and time-course data in eye-tracking studies of translation processes and products. In C. Walker & F. Federici (Eds.), *Eye Tracking and Multidisciplinary Studies on Translation*. (pp. 71–94). John Benjamins.
- Doherty, S., & Kruger, J.-L. (2018). Assessing quality in human and machine-generated subtitles and captions. In J. Moorkens, S. Castilho, F. Gaspari & S. Doherty (Eds.), *Translation quality assessment (Machine translation: technologies and applications*

- 1) (pp. 179-197). Springer.
- Espindola, E., & Vasconcellos, M. L. (2006). Two facets in the subtitling process: Foreignization and/or domestication procedures in unequal cultural encounters. *Fragmentos*, 30, 43–66.
- Erguvan, M. (2016). Venutian scale in the realm of subtitling in Turkey. A comparative analysis of the fansubs and the official subtitles of *Family Guy*. *Journal of Translation Studies*, 22, 147-168.
- European Parliament. (2017). *New perspectives for subtitling in Europe: Preparatory action subtitling*. https://ipeda.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/PreparatoryActionOnSubtitling_29052017_web_ok-1.pdf
- Fong, G. (2009). The two worlds of subtitling: The case of vulgarisms and sexually-oriented language. In G. Fong & K. Au (Eds.), *Dubbing and subtitling in a world context* (pp. 39-63). Chinese University Press.
- Gambier, Y. (2013). The position of audiovisual translation. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies* (pp. 45–59). Routledge.
- Gao, F. (2017). Domestication? Over-domestication? Feasibility of applying Chinese internet buzzwords in subtitle translation. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Education and Social Development*, 1128–1131.
- Garcia, S. (2020, February 12). After ‘Parasite,’ are subtitles still a one-inch barrier for Americans? *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/movies/movies-subtitles-parasite.html>
- Gernsbacher, M. (2015). Video captions benefit everyone. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 2(1), 195–202.
- Gheorghiu, O. (2014). Subtitling for adaptations: *Little Women* (1994). *Translation Studies: Retrospective and Prospective Views*, 17, 43–54.
- Ghia, E. (2012a). *Subtitling matters: New perspectives on subtitling and foreign language learning*. Peter Lang.
- Ghia, E. (2012b). The impact of translation strategies on subtitle reading. In E. Perego (Ed.), *Eye tracking in audiovisual translation* (pp. 157–182). Aracne. <https://doi.org/10.4399/97888548491367>
- Gottlieb, H. (2014). Foreign voices, local lines: In defence of visibility and domestication in subtitling. In B. Garzelli & M. Baldo (Eds.), *Subtitling and intercultural communication: European languages and beyond* (pp.27-54). Edizioni ETS.
- Howell, P. K. (2004). *Textual procedures and strategies in the translation of manga and anime dialogue* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Edinburgh.
- IMDb. (2021). *Help center: Genres*. <https://help.imdb.com/article/contribution/titles/genres/GZDRMS6R742JRGAG#>
- Judickaitė, L. (2009). The notions of foreignization and domestication applied to film translation: Analysis of subtitles in cartoon *Ratatouille*. *Journal of Young Scientists*, 23(2), 36–42. <https://www.lituanistika.lt/content/20975>
- Klinger, S. (2017). Foreignizing subtitling versus domesticating dubbing: Finding Nemo in German. *Interactions: Ege Journal of British and American Studies*, 26(1-2), 129–142.
- Kruger, H. (2016). Fluency/resistancy and domestication/foreignization: A cognitive perspective. *Target*, 28(1), 4-41.
- Kuo, A. (2015). Professional realities of the subtitling industry: The subtitlers’ perspective. In R. Baños-Piñero & J. Díaz-Cintas (Eds.), *Audiovisual translation in a global context* (pp. 163-191). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kuo, A. (2017). Quality in subtitling: Theory and professional reality [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Imperial College London.
- Kwong, C. (2011). Problems in translating culture: The translated titles of Fusheng Liuji. *Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction*, 24(2), 177–206.
- Machi, L., & McEvoy, B. (2012). *The literature review: Six steps to success* (2nd ed.). Corwin Press.
- Massidda, S. (2012). *The Italian fansubbing phenomenon* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Università degli studi di Sassari.
- Massidda, S., & Alice C. (2017). Sub me do: The development of fansubbing in traditional dubbing countries. The case of Italy. In D. Orrego-Carmona & Y. Lee (Eds.), *Non-Professional Subtitling* (pp. 63-88). Cambridge Scholars.

- Matielo, R., & Espindola, E. (2011). Domestication and foreignization: An analysis of culture-specific items in official and non-official subtitles of the TV series *Heroes*. *Cadernos de Tradução*, 1(27), 71–94. <https://periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/traducao/article/download/2175-7968.2011v1n27p71/19789>
- Mével, P. (2011). *Can we do the right thing? Subtitling African American vernacular English into French* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Nottingham.
- Messerli, T. (2009). Subtitles and cinematic meaning-making: Interlingual subtitles as textual agents. *Multilingua*, 38(5), 529-546.
- Minutella, V. (2012). 'You fancying your gora coach is okay with me': Translating multilingual films for an Italian audience. In A. Remael, P. Orero & M. Carroll (Eds.), *Audiovisual translation and media accessibility at the crossroads* (pp.313-334). Rodopi. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789401207812_018
- Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: The PRISMA statement. *PLoS Med*, 6(7). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000097>
- Netflix. (2018). *Timed text style guide: General requirements*. <http://partnerhelp.netflixstudios.com/hc/en-us/articles/215758617-Timed-Text-Style-Guide-General-Requirements>
- Netflix. (2020). *Brazilian Portuguese timed text style guide*. Retrieved June 27, 2020, from <http://partnerhelp.netflixstudios.com/hc/en-us/articles/215600497-Brazilian-Portuguese-Timed-Text-Style-Guide>
- Olk, H. (2013). Cultural references in translation: A framework for quantitative translation analysis. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, 21(3), 344-357.
- Orero, P., Doherty, S., Kruger, J., Matamala, A., Pedersen, J., Perego, E., Romero-Fresco, P., Rovira-Esteve, S., Soler-Vilageliu, O., & Szarkowska, A. (2018). Conducting experimental research in audiovisual translation (AVT): A position paper. *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, (30), 105–126. https://www.jostrans.org/issue30/art_orero_et_al.pdf
- Orrego-Carmona, D. (2015). *The reception of (non) professional subtitling* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Rovira i Virgili University.
- Özbudak, S. (2017). Representation of Turkish culture through subtitling: the case of 'Butterfly's Dream.' *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 5(2), 104-113.
- Pedersen, J. (2017). The FAR model: assessing quality in interlingual subtitling. *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, (28), 210-229.
- Perego, E., & Bruti, S. (2015). *Subtitling today: Shapes and their meanings*. Cambridge Scholars.
- Petillo, M. C. (2010). Translating Australian cinema for an Italian audience. *InTRAlinea* (10). http://www.intralinea.org/specials/article/Translating_Australian_Cinema_for_an_Italian_Audience
- Pirus, J. (2015). Translation of military register in the Polish subtitles of American war movies. *Res Rhetorica*, 2, 51-81.
- Raine, M. (2014). From hybridity to dispersion: Film subtitling as an adaptive practice. In D. Abend-David (Ed.), *Media and translation: An interdisciplinary approach* (pp.151-172). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Ragni, V. (2020). More than meets the eye: An eye-tracking study of the effects of translation on the processing and memorisation of reversed subtitles. *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, (33), 99-128.
- Ramière, N. (2006). Reaching a foreign audience: Cultural transfers in audiovisual translation. *JoSTrans, The Journal of Specialised Translation*, (6), 152–166. https://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art_ramiere.pdf
- Ramière, N. (2007). *Strategies of cultural transfer in subtitling and dubbing* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Queensland.
- Sadeghpour, H., & Omar, H. (2015). Humor translation in Persian subtitled comedy movies into English: A case study of 'Lizard'. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(10), 1995–2004.
- Soares, D. (2020). Asymmetrical relations in audiovisual translation in Brazil: A corpus-based investigation of fixed expressions. *Ilha do Desterro*, 73(1), 317-338.
- Szarkowska, A., & Gerber-Morón, O. (2019). Two or three lines: A mixed-methods study on subtitle processing and preferences. *Perspectives*, 27(1), 144–164.

- Szarkowska, A., Díaz-Cintas, J., & Gerber-Morón, O. (2020). Quality is in the eye of the stakeholders: What do professional subtitlers and viewers think about subtitling? *Universal Access in the Information Society*. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10209-020-00739-2>
- Szarkowska, A. (2005). The power of film translation. *Translation Journal*, 9(2), 1–9.
- Tanase, V. (2014). Subtitling humour – A journey across cultures. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Globalization, Intercultural Dialogue and National Identity*, 239–242.
- Thawabteh, M. (2014). Translation and crime: The case of subtitling English thrillers into Arabic. *Studies about Languages*, 24, 11-17.
- Thorne, S. (2008). Meta-Synthesis. In L. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (pp. 511-513). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Unsal, G. (2018). Subtitle translation: Cultural components in the translation of the film *Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait au bon Dieu?* [Serial (Bad) Weddings]. *SEFAD*, (40), 73-86.
- Venuti, L. (1995). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Venuti, L. (2001). Strategies of translation. In M. Baker & G. Saldanha (Eds.), *The Routledge encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (pp. 261-265). Taylor and Francis Group.