"The Process of Subtitling at Film Festivals: Death in Venice?"[1]

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Abstract

Much has been written on subtitling films and TV content, but little is known about the process of subtitling for film festivals. Compared to ordinary films seen in the cinemas or on TV, in the case of film festivals technology has a higher impact on both the process and the display. This contribution presents a retrospective analysis of the subtitling practice at film festivals, data gathered from the Venice Film Festival - which is the oldest festival of its kind dating from 1932. Though the subtitling process may not be the same as in other film festivals, the underline principles remain the same.

Keywords: Subtitling, Surtitling, Film Festivals, Multilingual Subtitling, Venice Film Festival

1. Introduction

Until 1985 with the introduction of the electronic subtitling, the creative process of subtitles was difficult and costly, these surprised given the fact that its use was ephemeral: usually one or two showings. While, on the other hand the final product itself was used only for the festival[2]. After the film premiere at the festival, the print could not been further distributed in Italian, which has mainly a dubbing tradition. Furthermore, the elaboration process of the subtitles for a film festival presents three main particularities: timing, material available and medium of display. These features rarely have the same impact in other subtitling practices. Finally, over the last two decades a digital process has emerged to challenge photochemical filmmaking, affecting all stages from the film script to the screening of the film. Hence, as part of the audiovisual product, new subtitling practices are being adapted to the new digital products presented at the Venice Film Festival. Digitization of audiovisual products has opened new questions related to subtitling requirements and processes. But it also offers new subtitling possibilities adapted to the changing patterns of audiovisual products consumption.

The purpose of this paper is to study the characteristics of subtitling practices at film festivals. It takes stock of audiovisual translation practices conducted at festivals to date, and raises questions about new challenges inherent for subtitling practice, especially taking into consideration both the turn towards digitization and the rise of new distribution platforms like the Internet. The paper in the first instance will outline the essential features of film festivals, arguing that international film festivals are a specific form of multimodal translation, where audiovisual translation is highly dependent on the venue and technologies available. For that reason it will put forward a diachronic analysis of the technical developments introduced at the Venice Film Festival from the first documented guidelines in the 1950s until 2012. Moreover, new platforms like the Internet, and possible viewing formats such as complementary second screens as Smartphone (Oncins et al forthcoming), their effect on subtitling will be presented and discussed in the context of the demands of new audiences, such as accessibility. Secondly, the paper will deal with the user's reception needs in such events.

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[2] As the article ''ORANGE' to Venice with Italo' published in Variety in 1972, points out: ''Stanley Kubrick's, 'A clockwork Orange', which gets an official Venice Film Festival screening Aug. 23, will be shown at the Lido event in its original English-language version plus Italo subtitles. Though Venice regulations 'suggest' Italo titles on foreign pix, French-titled prints are accepted and, since these can be used in Paris playoffs anyway, are generally preferred to an Italian titling job, which gets almost no play after its Venice exposure'. Variety (1972) July 26, p 15.

Finally, it will address questions related to the digitization of films and the implications for the subtitling practices. The paper will conclude with some considerations for future research.

2 - Defining International Film Festivals

Film festivals are held mainly annually, usually for one or two weeks, with the purpose of celebrating, rewarding and evaluating new film productions as well as recognizing outstanding achievement in the cinematic arts. Depending on the film festival sponsorship may come from national or local government, industry, service organizations or individual linked to the film industry, experimental film groups or any organization or individual related to the film industry. Festivals provide an opportunity for filmmakers, distributors, critics, and anyone interested in the film industry to attend film screenings and discuss current and to new artistic developments in the industry. Festivals consist of several film sections that are determined by the festival organization. Each section has a director who will choose which films will feature in it, according to the indications of a committee of film experts. Additionally, films may only be submitted for consideration by the festival providing that they meet the demands of the structural framework established by the festival organization.

According to the report from the International Federation of Film Producers Association (FIAPF), in 2008 'the number of film festivals with the word "international" in their title has continued on its lineally, exponentially growth curve, with various estimates now putting the number at between 700 and 800 worldwide'. However, not all film festivals have the same impact on the film industry. Within this context, Venice, Cannes and Berlin are the most prestigious film festivals in Europe, and Toronto has grown to be the most influential film festival in North America. The table below provides statistics concerning participation and attendance of the major four film festivals:

	Venice (66th ed)	Cannes (62th ed)	Berlin (59th ed)	Toronto (34th ed)
Number of films presented	184	84	389	332
Number of world premieres	109	77	139	135
Number of international premieres	9	7	50	47
Number of press and correspondents covering the festival	2.276	4.245	3.983	1.104
Proportion of press from outside the country in which the festival is located	41%	55%	NC	40%
Number of sales companies and distributors or other buyers	174	NA	1.058	1.353
Proportion of sales companies and buyers from outside the host country	30%	NA	NA	95%
Number of screening facilities	8	5	52	33
Total number of seating capacities	5.201	5.300	15.823	13.203
Number of admissions	165.701	183.109	486.955	470.000

Table 1. FIAPF (2009)

It is clear from this data that the number of press correspondents covering the film festival can conform up to half of the audience capacity. Journalists and film writers cover the entire festival and have exclusive entrance to press screenings of the films, which are then followed by press conferences with the crew and production team of the film. One of the main aims of any international film festival is to provide a reliable platform for the promotion of films internationally. As Nornes (2007: 65) points out 'The film Festival is a scene of power. Festivals make and break careers'. Filmmakers, distributors, producers, critics, actors and any professional related to the film industry attend these events to join in the network. The cultural and symbolic value of film festivals means that all countries aim at having their own film festival and all film productions plan at some of point to be present at an international film festival. Therefore, the success of a film premiere at any International Film Festival will depend in great part on its reception. Within this context, it could be said that translation renders film festivals possible and accessible to an international attendance, because it is necessary in most of the events organised within the festival beyond the actual screening, from press conferences to business meetings or presentations before screenings.

As the operational procedures for any film festival are similar this paper focuses on the Venice Film Festival, which is the oldest film festival in the world.

3. Defining the Venue

The Venice Film Festival was founded in 1932, under the dictatorship of Mussolini, as part of the Venice Biennale and was a non-competitive event. The second edition was held in 1934, this time with a competitive dimension. From 1935 onwards it became an annual event with the exception for the years during the Second World War. The Festival was held again in 1946 and ever since it takes place annually, during two weeks, in late August or early September on the island of the Lido in Venice (Italy). In 2012 the festival celebrated its 69th edition, but most important its 80th anniversary (1932-2012). This film festival is recognised as one of the most important events in the film industry. In the 69th edition, 113 films (including feature, documentaries and short films) were screened at the official sections, from which 50 were world premieres. The Festival presents two main types of events: official and independent sections. While the former is managed by the Venice organization, the latter sections are independent from the Venice Film Festival and managed by the Sindacato Nazionale Critici Cinematografici Italiani (National Union of Italian Film Critics in Italian), with the aim of promoting new cinematic trends. Since in both types of events the films present the same formal characteristics, this article will focus on the official sections. Furthermore, the new non-competitive section *Your Film Festival*, which runs within the Venice Film Festival, will be outline in section 5.3, with the aim of explaining the impact of digitization on both - film and the subtitling practice.

The official sections, which screen only new films, are:

- *Venezia 69* (international competition of feature films),
- *Out of Competition* (important works by directors already established in previous editions of the Festival),
- *Orizzonti* (new trends in world cinema)

While restored films are also presented in the following sections:

- Retrospective section *80!* (rare films from the Biennale's Historial Archives)
- Retrospective *Venezia Classici* (a selection of restored classic films and documentaries on cinema).

Depending on whether the film is a new production or a restored film the screening will take place in a specific venue. This fact affects the viewer experience since it is not the same to sit at the Sala Grande (see image 1) or Pale Biennale (see image 2), with 1,032 and 1,700 seats, respectively, than the Sala Passinetti or Sala Volpi (see image 3), both with 150 seats. Within this context, films competing at the official sections *Venezia 69*, *Out of Competition* and *Orizzonti* are mainly screened at the Sala Grande and Pale Biennale, while restored films from the *Retrospective 80!* and *Vennezia Classici* are mainly screened at the Sala Passinetti and Sala Volpi.

Figure 1. Main screen at the Sala Grande with 1,032 seats

Figure 2. Main screen and screen with subtitles at the Pale Biennale 1,700 seats

Figure 3. Sala Volpi with 150 seats

Moreover, the Venice Film Festival has adapted to new technologies and has included a new venue and viewing format, the *Sala Web*, where the films are streamed. The user can connect to the purposely-designed Internet platform, which allows film viewing in streaming of 10 feature-length films and 13 short films from the *Orizzonti* section from a computer all over the world with access to Internet. The *Sala Web* concept has 500 virtual seats, and tickets might be purchased online, then a personal link is sent for one-off viewing in streaming on a computer within a restricted 24-hour period. Films are provided in the original version with English subtitles. From the many Festival sections and the cinema theatres it can be safely said that not only the film content, but film screening has an influence on the audience.

The events held at the Venice Film Festival present three main forms of translation: simultaneous interpretation, simultaneous translation[3] and subtitles. The first translation form, simultaneous interpretation, can be mainly found at press conferences and it is provided from any language into Italian, English and French. The second form, simultaneous translation, is provided in French language but only for selected premieres screened in original version at the Sala Grande (see image 1). This technique was introduced at the Berlin Film Festival in 1959, where high-frequency receivers were offered to non-German speaking audiences for simultaneous translation in English, French and Spanish.

[3] This form of translation at film festivals has already been dealt in AVT studies (Agost 1999, Bartoll 2008, Chaume 2003, Diaz-Cintas 2003, Gambier 1996). However, as argued by Bartoll (2008) no agreement among the authors can be found about the use of a standard term. Some authors refer to it as 'simultaneous interpretation' and others describe it as 'simultaneous translation'. For the purpose of this paper the term used will be 'simultaneous translation' in order to differentiate it from the simultaneous interpretation provided at the press conferences.

During the 60s earphones were also used in other festivals like Karlovy Vary and Moscow[4]. The use of earphones has also been a polemic issue among professionals from the film industry. Some directors, producers and distributors have favoured the use of earphones since they feel that screen pollution with subtitles 'ruined the photographic look of the picture'[5]. The fact is that simultaneous translation has remained over the years and can still be found in most film festivals in combination with subtitles.

The third translation form, subtitles, is used at the Venice screenings, where the subtitles are provided in Italian and English. Subtitles in Italian are embedded at the bottom of the screen and subtitles in English are projected on a small screen placed outside the main screen (see image 2). As part of the audiovisual product, subtitles are imposed by both regulations and technological facilities. The former are determined by each constituent organization within the overall film festivals and are mostly determined by their historical context. The latter refers to the technological developments introduced over the years at the film festival in terms of subtitling practice. Both aspects aim to overcome the linguistic needs of the audience –linguistic accessibility--, at the expense of neglecting the issue of accessibility for sensory disabilities. In the following section a retrospective analysis of subtitling regulations and technologies introduced at the Venice Film Festival will be provided.

4. Regulations

Regulations at film festivals establish the parameters by which filmmakers are allowed to present their audiovisual product to a broad and international audience. Nowadays, subtitles are part of the power play implicit in this process, but during the early years of the Venice Film Festival the decisions about any element related to the film translation were made at a political level. In fact, if we look at the early years of the festival, subtitling was not mentioned in the regulations and films had to be submitted in their original versions. Therefore, no translation in Italian –or any other language- was provided during the screening. As Durovicova (2009: 98) states:

"As a direct reaction to the threat of such linguistically threaded trade competition (and in full congruence with Mussolini's nationalist film policies) the Venice Film Festival asserted itself from its very beginning in 1932 as a *translatio-free*[6] zone, refusing to accept any versions as any translated films, whether dubbed or subtitled."

Subtitles were first mentioned in Venice Film Festival regulations in the 1950s, and only for non-Italian speaking films. Subtitles could be submitted in Italian or French but it was only a recommendation. In the event of a film not being submitted with subtitles, there was an increased possibility of poor reception on the part of the critics from the specialized film press[7], thereby jeopardising any possibility of winning a prize [8] at the festival. However, subtitles have tended to generate polemic among all kind of audiences, from general viewers to professionals from the film and press industry. The article "Subtitles must go!"[9] by Crowther (1960) was a negative critique against the subtitles arguing in favour of dubbing practices. Most film distributors and producers welcomed Crowther's article, mainly because subtitling films for a dubbing countries represents an additional cost for the film industry, especially in the case of film festivals, where subtitles remain an intermediate step before the release in other distribution platforms mainly: theatres, DVD or Blu-ray or Video-on-demand. It is important to remember that Italy has been always a dubbing country so subtitles have represented an additional cost for the film industry. A clear example is the case of Giuseppe Amato a famous Italian producer, who agreed with Crowther's vision and added that for Fellini's film *La Dolce Vita* he was planning to make two English language versions one for the British market, and the other for the US.

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[4] "Boxoffice, Art, Politics Not all that Complicates Fest O'seas; also Lingo" Variety (1968), 25 September, p.39.

[5] Ibid.

[6] The author argues that by using the term *translatio* an extended description of the translation process is provided. Including the social and political ground-rules of text transfer (Durovicova 2009: 95)

[7] In 1952 the screenings of the American film Metro's "Ivanhoe" and the British films "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Mandy" were screened and without subtitles and in an article published at Variety the reaction of the audience was that: 'Its weak point was a lack of subtitles to explain the wordy dialog' "Hollywood entries nab good reaction as Venice Film Fete in final week". Variety (1952), 10 September.

[8] In 1968 the film "Faces" that obtained an acting prize was screened untitled and in an article from Variety it asserts that: 'one jury member confided it did not get a bigger one due to being untitled' "Boxoffice, Art, Politics Not all that Complicates Fest O'seas; also Lingo" Variety (1968), 26 July.

[9] The article "Subtitles must go!" was published in the New York Times on 7 August 1960, some weeks before the opening of the 13th Venice Film Festival and opened a polemic within the film industry.

However, for the festival the film was screened with subtitles. In his own words: 'the film may nevertheless open first in titled form ("to get the reviews"), and then follow up with a mass release in dubbed form'[10]. In this sense, as Cronin (2009) remarks it could be stated that subtitling signals otherness, while dubbing delivers it masked to the audience. However, both practices have to deal with the problems posed by the technical constrains of synchronization of the original sound of the film with subtitling and dubbing.

By the late 60's the regulations in Venice, like in most international film festivals, stipulated that all films submitted had to be in their original versions with subtitles in the language of the festival host country. In Venice as has been noted subtitles were accepted in Italian or French. But since the late 80's film festivals started to include also subtitles in English, which had emerged as a 'lingua franca' (Nornes 2007: 165) in influential fields such as politics and finance. Today, the producer has to provide subtitles in Italian and the festival pays for the subtitles in English. However, in Italy it is difficult to get films printed with subtitles, once again because general distribution uses dubbing. Moreover, as we have seen if a producer presents a film with Italian subtitles embedded, the film will have no shelf-live after the festival. Therefore, as Federico Spoletti points out: 'The festival fights a lot to get prints with subtitles in Italian. But directors are allowed to screen a film with English subtitles engraved and Italian subtitles displayed'. It can be said that the role of the technological developments introduced in subtitling practice has been crucial in rendering the films accessible to international audiences in permitting language accessibility to foreign films.

The section that follows will deal with the impact of new projection technologies, introduced in 1985 which enabled the combination of different languages for the same screening. Additionally, mention will be made to the influence that digitization is having in all steps involved in the audiovisual field, from production to distribution and final reception, which also affects the subtitling practice. Finally, mention will be made to the improvements and challenges that new projection platform - such as the Internet and second screens as Smartphone or tablets - are having on subtitling practice, particularly in the new sections that are being presented at the Venice Film Festival.

5. Projection technologies

In 1940 most films were produced in black-and-white, in America only 4 per cent of the films were in colour[11]. In terms of conventions it should be mentioned that from the beginning, the position of the subtitles in western countries was placed at the bottom of the screen and in white colour. Therefore, when the bottom part of the screen was white, subtitles could not be read[12]. Another further problem with the subtitles, which directly affected the film, was that mechanical, thermal and chemical processes provided a burned-in text in the screen, which could neither be removed nor modified. According to Nornes (2007) all these process required technical rather than linguistic skilled professionals and subtitles with misspellings and typos became a common problem. It was not until 1988 with the introduction of laser subtitling that problems related to the subtitle colour, misspelling and elaboration times were improved. This technology is a computer-based system, which allows the user to typeset and cue the video display by means of time coding or frame counting. Therefore, subtitles are more effective in both: elaboration time and costs, but still required 'a higher investment in equipment' (Ivarsson 2002: 3). However, the need to burn-in the subtitle text still remains a problem in terms of distribution costs and time, especially in the specific case of film festivals which have their own regulations and film copies usually have to be submitted in original version with subtitles in the language of the festival's country.

5.1 The impact of Softitler

In 1984 a new age for subtitling in film festivals started with the developments introduced by the company Softitler, based in Florence (Bartoll 2008). In 1985 this company presented a revolutionary electronic subtitling technology at the Florence Film Festival. This new system was mainly conceived for film festivals.

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[11] According to Cook and Bernink (1999:51) 'In 1940, only 4 per cent of American features were in colour. By 1951, rhis figure had risen to 51 per cent as a result of shrinking budgets and the emergence of the back-and-white televisión. By 1967, however, the televisión networks having turned to colour broadcasting, the percentage rose once more to 75 per cent, and in 1976, to 94 per cent.'

[12] This question also caused discomfort among audiences attending theaters that provided films in original versions with subtitles.

For the first time a subtitling system provided an alternative to the burned-in subtitles. It was a computer-based system that displayed the subtitles in a LED screen and could deliver two languages simultaneously. As Bartoll explains:

'The program is used to subtitle 16 mm, as well as, 35 mm films. In the case of 35 mm, a barcode is usually registered in the celluloid and a reader system, placed in the projector, automatically identifies when the subtitles have to pop up in the display. In the case of 16 mm, the display of subtitles is determined by the time. Therefore, when the projection of film starts, the broadcast of the subtitles have to be manually activated' (My translation). (Bartoll 2008: 372)

This technical development was especially important for international film festivals taking place in non-English speaking countries, where subtitles are provided in the host country's language and English. In fact, this new technology was introduced in different film festivals around the world like: Toronto, Cannes, Bafta, Florence or Turkey and was welcomed by both audiences and festivals organizations[13].

5.2 New projection technologies

During the many years at Venice Film Festival subtitling practices and companies have coexisted offering the services, making the study of the subtitling practice is almost impossible given the lack of data kept regarding this issue in the Festival archives, but from 2005, the company SubTi based in London provides the subtitles. The stability provided by one single company in the last seven years offers the first real opportunity to study and understand how the service is provided along the many challenges posed by the process. SubTi started using electronic subtitles displayed on a LED screen but nowadays they use video projection screens (see image 2), which allow more flexibility for the text presentation in terms of colours, font or size than a LED screen. Furthermore, they have developed their own software, which allows them to automatize the projection of the subtitles. Once the film starts subtitles are automatically synchronized with the film, nevertheless for quality control an operator is always present to check the correct synchronization, especially at the beginning and at the end of each reel. Since the current regulations require subtitles in Italian and English for films in another third language, subtitles in both languages are displayed in two different screens: Italian subtitles for non-Italian speaking films are provided in the main screen and English subtitles are projected in a smaller screen outside the main screen (see image 2). Within this context, the technological developments introduced in the film industry with the digital technology over the years, have been crucial to increase storage capacities, reduce production times and costs and allowing new projection platforms to distribute the films worldwide.

5.3 New projection platforms

Nowadays, most films are produced with digital technology, which has been improved since its beginnings. This revolutionary technology has completely changed the film production mainly in terms of time saving, easy conversion to other formats and financial costs improvements. It allows filmmakers to visualize and edit the film on-time, deletes conversion problems from analogue technology, and minimizes the production time and costs compared to the previous process of burned in or laser subtitles in photochemical films. Additionally, digitization is also having a great impact on the distribution system with the introduction of the Digital Cinema Initiative Package (DCP), which enables audiovisual works to cross-border distribution and gain access to other countries. This fact is also affecting the subtitling industry and practices. As Federicco Spoletti mentions 'we started in Venice in 2005 every film was in 35 mm or DigiBeta. Nowadays, probably the 10% of the film is in prints and 90% is in DCP.' One of the main advantages of the audiovisual productions in digital format for the subtitling practice is that subtitles can be inserted easily and for a smaller cost than embedded subtitles, allowing also to convert the format to different distribution platforms easily, compared to the unfeasible conversion of the embedded subtitles. Additionally, DCP solves the distribution problem presented in the host countries of film festivals with a dubbing tradition because subtitles can be switched off once the festival is finished. However, as Durovicova asserts:

'Digitized cinema, capable of near-infinite and near-instantaneous global circulation, is thus bound to depend on an adequate translation track even more than photo-cinema ever did' (Durovicova 2009: 108)

[13] "A Turkish delight despite fears of war" Variety (1991), 4 August.

One of the main reasons of the increasing need on producing adequate translations, is that a rising amount of digital audiovisual materials is being constantly uploaded and circulate on the Internet, throughout emerging platforms like YouTube or Vimeo or 'video on demand' to name the most popular. In this sense, the Venice Film Festival in 2012 introduced a non-competing new section: *Your Film Festival*, which runs in parallel with the other official sections and was sponsored by YouTube and Emirates Airlines in partnership with The Venice Film Festival and Scott Free to promote the work of novel filmmakers. This section in 2012 consisted of ten short films from new filmmakers and was screened at the Sala Pasinetti (see image 3). The *Your Film Festival* received a total of 15,000 submissions and an internal first selection of 50 videos was carried out, later votes Internet users voted the ten finalists for the festival. The winner short film was 'La Culpa'[14] (The Guilt) from David Victori, which was available on the web in Spanish with subtitles in ten languages (see image 4)

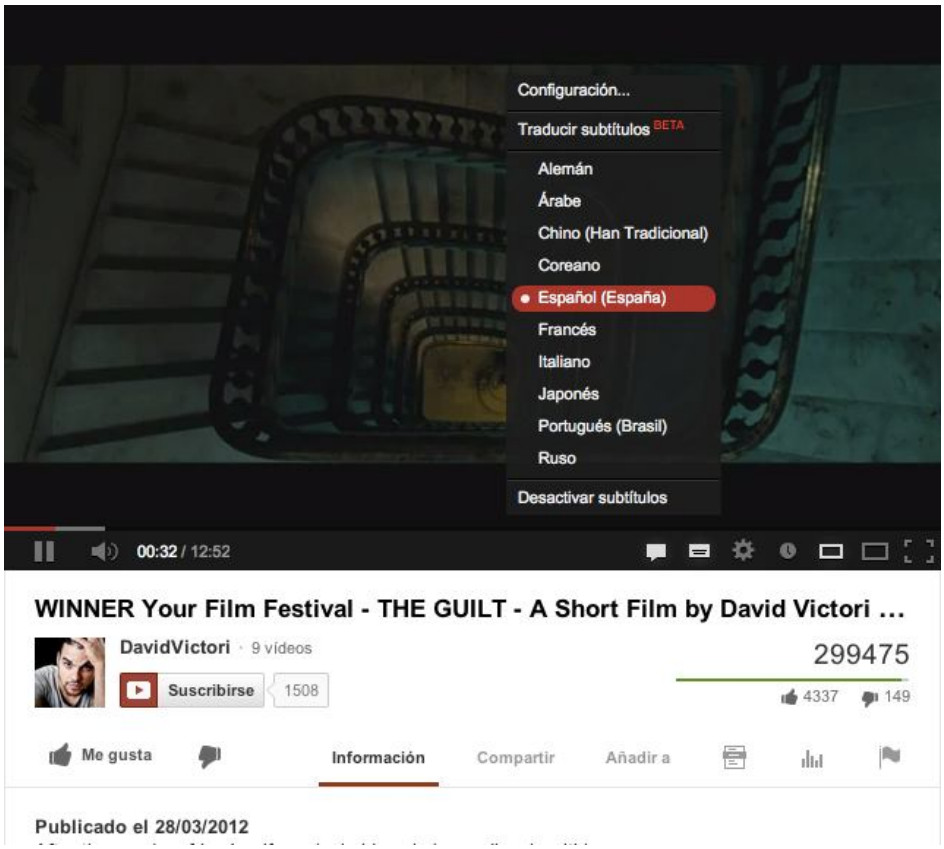

Image 4. Languages available for the short film 'La Culpa' on YouTube platform.

The submission of a short film was subjected to given rules and the process required to upload the short film on the *Your Film Festival* website, which was using the YouTube platform offering auto-captioning service through Google automatic speech recognition (ASR). In addition, YouTube also offers the possibility to upload the transcript of the film. In this case, speech recognition is used to match the transcript to the video and thus generate a caption file automatically. In both cases, once the captions are created the film owner can download the file in .srt format and make the corrections. Within this context, attention should be made to the increasing number of tools for subtitling/captioning online audiovisual material on the Internet[15]. In terms of subtitling quality, auto-captioning and subtitles translation on YouTube videos, they present accuracy problems both in language and synchronization. One of the main reasons is that accuracy of any transcription provided throughout ASR, is highly dependent on having an acceptable quality of sound. Therefore, to have the sound quality under control is crucial. In this sense, videos containing music or superimposed dialogues present quality problems in the auto-captioning process and thus the derived translations might be further affected.

[14] The short film 'La Culpa' can be found on: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiikS2xRSdE <retrieved on 10 November 2012>
[15] For more information regarding specifications and features of tools for captioning on line audiovisual materials visit: http://www.accessiq.org/content/tools-for-captioning-online-videos <retrieved on 10 November 2012>

In addition, language accuracy hardly depends on the existing data available on the Internet, where the text information is retrieved. Since most of the data on the web is in English, accuracy for English-speaking videos is more accurate than for other minority languages like Catalan for instance. In this sense, following the explanations provided by Dom Elliot, product marketing manager of Google and YouTube in London: 'Wikipedia is actually a very effective source of languages because humans translate a lot of that data and that helps to power the search and keeps improving the database'. But, the question about the quality standards of an 'adequate translation' remains unanswered: Therefore, further research in this field especially in AVT studies is crucial. Because as Federicco Spoletti asserts: 'automatic translation will take definitely control. Good translators will be involved anyway because there is a need of proofreading and to check everything, but we are definitely going to automatic translation and subtitling'. In this sense, new platforms are challenging the figure of the subtitler not only at film festivals but also in the current practice. Therefore, major attention should be made to the clear influence that the Internet is having on AVT studies and practice. Because this platform is also affecting the user's attitudes on the consumption of audiovisual works, a subject that also deserves much attention in AVT studies.

5.4. New projection needs

The main function of subtitles is to render films accessible to all audiences overcoming the linguistic barrier, regardless of their language combination. However, accessibility services for sensory impaired audiences at the Venice Film Festival were first introduced in 2008, announced outside the official program and only for some Italian films in competition. Since then accessibility at the festival has not been improved and is provided free of charge by the subtitling company SubTi, in sponsorship basis. Therefore, these audiences are still being excluded from such events[16] even if the technologies are available and could be adapted to the existing facilities at the festival. For instance, audio descriptions (AD) for visually impaired audiences could be provided with the same earphones or receivers addressed to the French speaking audiences. In addition, accessibility solutions could be provided with the use of new technologies that are already available in the market. As Oncins *et al.* (2013) point out: 'New mobile phone technology is ubiquitous and has also entered cinemas and theatres. The displaying of access services is beginning to be available as in-house technology'. Within this context, the Venice Film Festival has developed a Smartphone application which allows the user to check the different screenings and venues. Therefore, accessibility services could be introduced in the application improving the accessibility services available.

6. User reception

Another important factor is the mode in which the subtitles are displayed. Depending if the audience need embedded or displayed subtitles, the gaze movement of the viewer will differ. The films that include both displays formats present, what Spoletti calls, the 'Christmas tree effect', which is produced by the combination of the subtitles embedded or projected appearing at the same time during the screening of the film. In order to minimize this effect, subtitles in both languages have the same spotting but present different lengths due to the language differences and also exposition time might be slightly larger for the projected subtitles to allow readability times. Also, it might occur that audiences relaying in the projected subtitles have longer gaze fixations in the screen displaying the subtitles because it is placed outside the main screen. In this sense eye-tracking experiments could provide significant data on the reception effects generated by the use of both display modes in the screening of a film. A further reason for the use of two different displays at film festivals is that as Federico Spoletti explains 'Filmmakers do not want to have two strips of subtitles on the image because they do not want you to cover the image'. As mentioned in section 5.1., the use of secondary screens such as Smartphone could allow the inclusion of subtitles in multiple language versions and also increase and improve the existing accessibility services, which at the moment are still very limited. Also, the use of Smartphone would allow the subtitle company to include all parameters needed to render the films accessible to sensory impaired audiences in a more effective form.

[16] In the film Babel, which won an award at the Cannes Film Festival, there is a figure playing a deaf student in Japan. According to an article from Variety in January 2007, nearly 500 hearing-impaired people were invited to a preview screening in Tokyo, but the Japanese- language scenes from the film were not subtitled. Therefore, they left disappointed because it was hard for them to follow the story. "Babel subtitles plea falls on deaf ear" Variety (2007), 7 March.

8. Conclusions

The Venice Film Festival can be considered a relevant subject of study in order to analyse the developments introduced in the electronic subtitling process to date. Three main factors have been reviewed in this paper: structure and regulations of the venue, technological developments, and reception. While the first is mainly conditioned by contextual political decisions, the second has resolved long and costly elaboration processes, adapting the final product to new consumer needs and trends. But the third factor, that of reception, still remains a factor that clearly requires more research in AVT Studies in order to determine the effect of the use of different displays and platforms on audience perception. Films screened at the festival may be in any language, and most recently, in any language combination. Thus, success of the screening depends on an adequate translation, which may determine the film's international success. Within this context, the introduction of the electronic subtitling system in 1985 could be considered as the first turning point in improving the subtitling process and display at film festivals. However, the recent technological developments introduced by digitization are generating a second turn in this particular AVT field.

Over recent decades digitization has emerged as a main player in the audiovisual industry, revolutionizing all steps involved in the production of the film, from the production to final screening at the venue, including also the subtitling process. Questions relating to the lengthy preparation time and high costs of the subtitling process have been mitigated with the introduction of digital products like the DCP, which allows the subtitles to be turned off after the festival screenings and the digital copy to be distributed without subtitles in other countries. Furthermore, the introduction of new platforms, like the Internet, is changing user's attitudes towards audiovisual consumption. The Internet is also starting to be used at film festivals, like in the case of the *Sala Web* launched in 2012 at the Venice Film Festival or the live broadcasting for the web in events such as press conferences and daily interviews, also available in Cannes, Berlin and Venice. This fact will inevitably have an effect on both: the subtitling practice and the traditional consumer's attitude towards the cinematic experience. Additionally, the increasing number of audiovisual distribution platforms is already challenging researchers and professionals in the subtitling field, forcing them to approach new technologies related to automatic and semi-automatic transcription and translation processes, which are being improved over the years. Moreover, increasing transnational and European projects - such as the EU-Bridge (based on technologies for transcription and translation in the field of closed captions, Universities and parliamentary reports) or EU-SUMAT (an online service for subtitling by machine translation) - are determining the future of subtitling practice. Therefore, the engagement of researchers and professionals in the subtitling field is vital in order to preserve the quality standards.

Finally, one of the limitations still in force at film festivals is the use of only two languages and the need of more effective accessibility services in a larger number of films. As argued by Oncins *et al.* (2013) Smartphone could render the display and visibility of subtitles more effective, especially in large venues like the *Pale Biennale* in Venice, which has 1,700 seats. These platforms would also allow the increase of languages available for each film and benefit the introduction of new accessibility services, addressed to sensory impaired audiences, which still remain a problem to be resolved at international film festivals.

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