

Let's hear the voice of voice actors! Exploring the role of voice actors in the process of dubbing translation

¡Escuchemos la voz de los actores de doblaje! Explorar el papel de los actores de doblaje en el proceso de traducción de doblaje

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Abstract: Dubbing has been the dominant modality for conveying foreign media productions in Turkey for several decades. In the chain of dubbing translation, by the time the process is completed, there is a varied group of people from translators to voice actors, editors, and dubbing specialists that play a role in the many-sided process of dubbing. With the aim of reaching an impeccable outcome, the steps of dubbing (script and timing, casting, recording, editing) must be completed in a harmonious way. Some studies have been conducted on dubbing in Turkey in terms of translation quality (Sayman), censorship (Okyayuz), and translation strategies (Tekin); however, non-translation issues such as the performance of voice actors have not been explored. This paper offers further insight into the process of dubbing by distributing a survey to ten voice actors to evaluate the impact of translation on their end during the voicing process, their attitudes toward translators, and the translation along with their expectations from translators. Upon compiling the responses from the professional voice actors, the data is analyzed and discussed to gain a better understanding of the process. The results indicated that the voicing process is mainly affected by the quality of translation and that there are challenges that arise from it. Therefore, to some extent, voice actors also intervene in the translated dialogues while recording. Overall, the end product, which is the translated dialogues, represents not only the work of the translator but also the voice actors.

Keywords: Dubbing; voice actors; dubbing translators; the dubbing translation process; voicing; challenges of voicing.

Resumen: El doblaje es desde hace varias décadas la modalidad dominante para transmitir producciones de medios extranjeros en Turquía. En la cadena de traducción de doblaje, cuando

se completa el proceso, hay un grupo variado de personas, desde traductores hasta actores de doblaje, editores y especialistas en doblaje, que desempeñan un papel en el proceso multifacético del doblaje. Con el objetivo de alcanzar un resultado impecable, las etapas del doblaje (guion y programación, castin, grabación, edición) deben realizarse de forma armoniosa. Se han realizado algunos estudios sobre el doblaje en Turquía en términos de calidad de la traducción (Sayman), censura (Okayayuz) y estrategias de traducción (Tekin); sin embargo, no se han explorado cuestiones ajenas a la traducción, como la actuación de los actores de doblaje. Este artículo ofrece más información sobre el proceso de doblaje mediante la distribución de una encuesta a diez actores de doblaje para evaluar el impacto de la traducción en su parte durante el proceso de doblaje, sus actitudes hacia los traductores y la traducción junto con sus expectativas de los traductores. Al recopilar las respuestas de los locutores profesionales, los datos se analizan y discuten para comprender mejor el proceso. Los resultados indicaron que el proceso de sonorización se ve afectado principalmente por la calidad de la traducción y que de ella surgen desafíos. Por lo tanto, en cierta medida, los locutores también intervienen en los diálogos traducidos durante la grabación. En general, el producto final, que son los diálogos traducidos, representa no solo el trabajo del traductor sino también el de los actores de doblaje.

Palabras clave: Doblaje; actores de doblaje; traductores de doblaje; el proceso de traducción de doblaje; doblaje; desafíos de doblaje.

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Sumario: Introducción; 2. Traducción de doblaje; 3. Traducción de doblaje en Turquía; 4. Proceso de traducción de doblaje; 5. Hallazgos y análisis, 5.1. Los desafíos durante el proceso de sonorización, 5.2. El efecto de la traducción en el proceso de sonorización, 5.3. Los inconvenientes/ventajas causados/proporcionados por la traducción durante el proceso de sonorización, 5.4. Las expectativas de los traductores, 5.5. La interferencia con el texto traducido por parte de los actores de doblaje; 6. Discusión y conclusión; Referencias bibliográficas; Anexo.

INTRODUCTION

Audiovisual translation (AVT) has enabled the dissemination of audiovisual media productions worldwide and enabled viewers to access foreign media translated into their own language. With its two main fields of study (subtitle and dubbing), audiovisual translation has been a topic of research and has been studied from various perspectives such as translation quality, perception of viewers, censorship, amateur/volunteer/non-professional translation, fansubbing, and so on. Within the area of Translation Studies (TS), even though it is a novel research field of audiovisual translation, it has made its way around toward the forefront of the field over the last twenty years (Remael, 2010, p. 12)

Until recent years, academic studies in dubbing translation have been limited in number, however today there are several scholars such as Zabalbeascoa (1997), Martínez (2004), Pujol (2006), Danan (2010), Romero Fresco (2012), Ranzato (2013), and Chaume (2020) who have been conducting research, particularly in the field of dubbing translation.

In view of the increase in the number of foreign mass media products and streaming services offering a wide variety of media products, the dubbing and subtitling industry has shown exponential growth as well.

In the area of audiovisual translation, even if dubbing is the widely preferred form of translation, it has remained relatively under-researched in Turkey. As Şahin mentions, with the spread of mass media audiovisual translation gained more significance in our lives by taking up a huge amount of time; however, the area of audiovisual translation has not appealed enough to translation scholars in Turkey (2015, p. 302). Therefore, this clear gap triggered the idea of this paper as a way to attract attention to the field of audiovisual translation, specifically to dubbing from a perspective that has not been studied before. While aiming to contribute to the field of dubbing in Turkey, the main aim of the current research is to explore the dubbing process from the voice actors' point of view to investigate their attitudes toward the dubbing translators, as well as the expectations actors have from them, along with the impact of translation quality on the dubbing process.

In the present paper, the term *voice actor* is used to define the person who provides a voice for the characters in a given medium. According to Alburger, the purpose of the job of voice actors is to turn the role written in the script into a spoken form by transmitting the message in the best possible way (2011, p. 1). Before delving into dubbing translation itself, it would be fair to point out that voice acting remains quite unexplored in its relation to dubbing translation. In addition, in the mutual relationship between the translators and the voice actors, the role that the voice actors play in dubbing also affects the final product since they tend to alter the translated text with the aim of creating synchronicity or correcting the translation. In a way, it would not be wrong to say that voice actors may also be considered translators.

To be able to shed light on the perspective of the voice actors in the dubbing process, firstly, the following section will provide some information on dubbing translation and will offer insight into the dubbing translation industry in Turkey before turning attention to the process of dubbing translation. Then, the data collected from the survey with ten

voice actors will be presented and analyzed before reaching the results. Finally, the results compiled based on the responses from the voice actors will serve to better understand the process of dubbing from a different point of view along with the role of translation in voicing.

2. DUBBING TRANSLATION

As for the translators, it is also necessary to keep in mind that audiovisual translation practices have some fundamental limitations. As Delabastita points out regarding the distinctiveness of audiovisual translation, specifically subtitle and dubbing:

Subtitling and dubbing are often governed by the respective constraints of text compression and lip synchronicity. In many cases, these constraints occupy a higher position in the translator's hierarchy of priorities than do considerations of syntax, style, or lexicon (1990, p. 99).

Following this, as far as the process of audiovisual translation is concerned, translators face several difficulties from a technical or linguistic perspective. The initial technical issue is that it is not possible to add extra notes, captions, or descriptions to make the source material more comprehensible for viewers from different cultures and strive to maintain synchronicity between the dubbed text and the lip movements of the actors speaking the source text (Iaia, 2015, p. 12).

In this respect, the translation of audiovisual texts forces the translator to consider not only the words in the dialogue but also extralinguistic elements. In dubbing, the crucial points are to be able to create synchronicity and make the audience believe that the media they are watching were produced in their own language. In the same context, Díaz Cintas and Orero define the act of dubbing translation by mentioning that:

It involves replacing the original soundtrack containing the actors' dialogue with a TL recording that reproduces the original message, ensuring that the TL sounds and the actors' lip movements are synchronized in such a way that target viewers are led to believe that the actors on screen are actually speaking their language (2010, p. 442).

It seems undeniable that dubbing translation stands as the major audiovisual translation mode in many countries. Even in countries where subtitling is the dominant audiovisual translation type, animation films for young viewers are dubbed, and, as long as the costs of dubbing can be afforded, in many more countries, the technique of dubbing is on the rise (Giovanni, 2018, p. 159).

Undoubtedly, there is a myriad of points to be considered exclusive to dubbing practice that affects the end product presented to viewers. Some constraints attached to the nature of the dubbing translation need to be taken into account with caution.

Before going into the steps in the process of dubbing translation, the role of dubbing translation in Turkey will be examined in the following section.

3. DUBBING TRANSLATION IN TURKEY

To date, dubbing has been the paramount modality of audiovisual translation in many countries including Turkey for various reasons up to date. The history of dubbing in Turkey goes back to 1928 with the foundation of İpek Film which established several movie theaters in two major Turkish cities, İzmir, and Istanbul. It also brought foreign movies to Turkey until the 1940s. Additionally, İpek Film was at the center of the first systematic translations and dubbing practices (Okyayuz, 2017, p. 132). However, at the end of the 1940s, more dubbing studios were established and, eventually, more than a hundred movies were dubbed yearly in Turkey (Gürata, 2007 p. 338).

The explanation as to why dubbing is considered the preferred and most convenient mode of audiovisual translation in Turkey may be due to political, religious, or cultural factors. Initially, unlike other audiovisual translation modes, dubbing translation may seem more appealing with its feature of creating the ability to manipulate the source content. In other words, dubbing enables translators and institutions to conceal or erase *verbal content* to an extent that *subtitling* is not able to achieve (Valdeón, 2022, p. 371). By the same token, according to Gottlieb, what makes dubbing different from subtitling is that “it offers a discrete, covert mode of translation replacing the entire dialogue track and sometimes even the accompanying music and effects-track with a target language version” (1994, p. 102).

Especially on national TV channels dubbing has been the prevailing method in Turkey. In reference to the statements put forward by Okyayuz, the dubbing practice in Turkey was especially favored during the emergence of TRT¹ (the state-owned television channel), since in the practice of dubbing, it became possible to delete the source audio completely and, this way, to conceal any censorship and adaptation to the norms of the target culture was easier (2017: p. 141).

In Turkey, the fact that dubbing is the common mode of audiovisual translation has led the dubbing sector to become quite developed. Today, there are many established private studios that employ many experts, similar to some other European countries. As Dwyer also posits, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain are also among the countries that regularly prefer the method of dubbing for foreign media products, so a stable dubbing industry appeared with a small team of highly specialized professionals, and this fact resulted in an emergence of highly standardized practices and conventions (Dwyer, 2019, p. 84).

In countries like Turkey, dubbing is widely used since it is a modality of audiovisual translation that is more convenient for diminishing the foreign features of a product. As stated by Gürata:

Dubbing was an important tool for cultural adaptation and familiarization, especially in the case of comedy. Through dubbing, a film's foreign origin was at least partially effaced, giving its Turkish audience the chance to disavow what they really know, hence opening an avenue for cultural ventriloquism through voice post-synchronization (2007, p. 342)

As stated above, the rapid dissemination of dubbing in Turkey can encompass a wide range of factors, but the main factor may have been the nationalist and culture-based attitude of Turkish audiences. The concept of dubbing is handled under the heading of “Dubbing: (mis)translation, (re)writing, and ‘Turkification’” by Arslan, who claims that films are made more ‘national’ through dubbing. In his book, Arslan also puts forward the argument that in the process of dubbing translation, foreign films were ‘Turkified’ with several modifications or excisions of characters, dialogue, and storylines (2011, p. 536).

¹ The national public broadcaster of Turkey since 1964. Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT; Turkish: Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu).

From another viewpoint, Mencütekin emphasizes the negative perspective on the preference for dubbing in Turkey and posits that the country is considered among the pre-eminent countries when it comes to dubbing. However, this fact signals two fundamental socio-economic and, maybe, political issues in a given country, although it may only seem a point of pride. The first reason is the insufficiency in the field of foreign language learning and teaching, causing a general indifference toward other cultures. The second one is that the foreign features of the film are concealed, which exposes the cultural protectionism of the dubbing sector and its inability to embrace the source culture (2009, p. 198).

As stated throughout this section, it is clear that dubbing is a prevalent practice in Turkey, and the reasons for this may have varied throughout the history of the country. At times, the reason may have been to enrich the film industry by importing foreign media products. At other times the dubbing practice may have simply been convenient given its function to protect the culture against foreign elements by manipulating the source text.

4. DUBBING TRANSLATION PROCESS

Having multi-dimensional features in its process, dubbing consists of various steps that play essential roles on the way to completing the process in the best way possible and to creating an end product in a smooth operation. One of the significant tenets of dubbing translation is the requirement of a team consisting of a translator, dubbing assistant, dubbing director, sound engineer, and quality control department, along with proofreaders working together at every step of the dubbing process. To be able to achieve a *high-quality end product*, teamwork is a must in dubbing. In this team-oriented operation, the stages consist of "...translating, adapting, and lip-syncing the script of an audiovisual text" (Chaume, 2020, p. 104).

Translators are also a part of the dubbing team as they translate the script from the source language to the target language and then voice actors give voice to the character in the target language. In dubbing, the translator has the objective of producing a target product that will leave a similar impact as the original on the target viewer by providing a lip-synched translation performed by professional actors (Tekin, 2019, p. 343). In the multi-staged process of dubbing, although there exist some differences, the steps taken are generally similar in the dubbing process. Chaume describes

the dubbing stages of most Western European countries as follows (2021, p. 204):

- The choice of a foreign audiovisual text such as a film, documentary, cartoon, or series by the TV channel or a distributor.
- The dubbing studio takes over the responsibility of dubbing translation.
- The dubbing studio finds the translator and arranges the whole process (dubbing actors, dubbing directors, sound engineers, etc.).
- The translator roughly translates by making the process quicker and less costly.
- The dialogue writer domesticates the dialogue by creating *natural* sound and synchronizes the text to the character's mouth. In this stage, various people may also have input.
- With the assistance of a sound engineer and under the supervision of the dubbing director, the dubbing actors read the translation.
- Recording of the dialogue is done by the sound engineer and the film with the recorded dialogue in the target language is sent back to the client.

Similarly, Zabalbeascoa puts forward the steps of the dubbing process as follows (1997, p. 335):

The dubbing process is something like this. A film or program is chosen and purchased. A decision is made as to whether the program should be dubbed, subtitled, or not touched. If it is to be dubbed decisions have to be made regarding dubbing actors, directors, studios, etc. A copy of the original version on tape is given to a freelance translator or to a number of translators, with or without the script. The translation is adjusted for timing and lip movement and performed by dubbing actors under the supervision of a dubbing director. The translator's work often undergoes considerable changes in this stage. Finally, the new soundtrack is dubbed onto the film or tape.

The head of the Localization, Dubbing, and Subtitling Department at Doğuş Media Group, Aziz Acar, has been taking part in the dubbing industry for more than thirty years. He described the process of dubbing in Turkey as follows in an interview done via phone (16/12/2022).

The process starts by obtaining the necessary documents (folders of the video, sound, music-effect) from Ingest² and the texts from One

² Ingest is the department of a company where a special system is used to receive and convert all original materials from abroad.

Drive³. Upon receiving the materials, we prepare low-resolution copies of them for translators and these copies are sent to the translators with the source text by our translation coordinator. The materials received from the translators, if necessary, are sent to our editors to be proofread. After the necessary changes and checks are done, the translation is sent back to us to be dubbed. Then, the translated texts are itemized into the dubbing system and followed by the casting process suitable to the content. Then, the voice actors are called to the studio for dubbing their roles.

In the dubbing studio, one technician and one director work. The technician prepares the computer and the system for the dubbing record to be able to receive the sounds of the related project. After that, our voice actor enters the studio and first adjusts the headphones in order to inform the technician and the director in case of a problem.

If problems related to the translation exist during recording, the translation coordinator is informed immediately, and the issue is resolved as soon as possible. Having recorded all the sounds for the related project, the technical process starts. In this step, the complete recording with the dubbing goes into the mixing. In the event of any defective part, the necessary sounds are required, and the related voice actor is called back to the studio and the mixing process is completed. Then the editing process starts and, in this process the necessary parts such as montage, subtitle, censor, and effects are added. The person who is responsible for editing sends the completed project to receive authorization to broadcast. The project is watched and if there are no issues it is approved and becomes ready for broadcasting (Acar, 2022).

In dubbing, without a doubt, the role of translators is significant as the aim of dubbing translation is to be able to make the viewers believe that they have watched a media production in their own language while trying to retain synchronization as well. However, most of the time, the translators are not present in the studio during the dubbing process, so the assistant or the director may become involved. Therefore, to diminish the interference with the translated text, translators are expected to do a professional job to avoid such changes to the final product (Oğuz, 2018, p. 113).

³ Microsoft OneDrive is a file hosting service operated by Microsoft. It enables registered users to share and synchronize their files.

On the other hand, considering the nature of dubbing translation, maintaining synchronicity is a demanding part of the translator's role compared to that of a voice actor. In one regard, Mompeán stresses that:

...the voice actors' task is much less restrictive, considering that they are given more leeway to deliver their lines as well as to dictate the pace of their words and can even take the liberty to improvise (2015, p. 277).

A significant point to note is that there is a correlation between the steps of the translation and the voicing in the sphere of dubbing translation since the whole process involves a team that works at different stages until reaching the final product. Therefore, it goes without saying that one part of the process influences the other whether positively or negatively. Thus, this paper attempts to address a widely under-researched aspect of dubbing by focusing on the view of voice actors with the objective of ascertaining in what ways the translation stage is related to the voicing stage.

Before delving into the discussion of the obtained results, it is necessary to take a necessary foray into the findings and analysis of the data compiled from the responses of the voice actors in order to better understand where the translation stands in the dubbing process and how it affects the performance of the voice actors.

5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The present study consists of data gathered from the responses of voice actors to a survey of five questions with the intention of discerning whether the translated text affects their process of voicing in the dubbing studio. Before analyzing the responses by mainly focusing on the common responses for each question, we will have a look at how the respondents were chosen and how the survey was conducted.

First of all, the names and contact information of the voice actors were collected by contacting the dubbing and translation director of a broadcast company. The survey was sent to the participants via e-mail or WhatsApp, depending on their preference. Some opted for answering with a voice message because of their time constraints while some chose to write their answers through email. All ten participants work for a national broadcasting company that was established in 1999 and operates popular TV and radio channels in the country. The participants requested that their names and the name of the company they work for be kept confidential.

The main aim was to have a group of voice actors who have been working in the field of dubbing (the language pair is dominantly from English to Turkish) professionally for a significant period so that the data obtained from the study could be based on real-life samples from first-hand experiences. For various reasons such as limited time, a busy work schedule, or simply not being interested, the number of participants volunteering to contribute to the study remained limited. However, for practical and purposeful reasons participants were chosen from among the most experienced voice actors referred by the dubbing and translation director of the company.

Considering the design of the survey, the questions were not limited to a set of options and instead included open-ended questions to leave more space for comments with the aim of gathering more qualitative data and gaining more diverse insight into the issue (see Appendix A for the English and Turkish versions of the survey questions).

In what follows, the responses to each question from the survey conducted are analyzed. As seen in Appendix B there are five items grouped under themes according to the questions asked. The translation of both the questions and responses was performed by the author.

5.1. The challenges during the voicing process

The first question posed dealt with what kind of challenges the voice actors encounter during the dubbing process. Out of ten participants, seven of them mentioned that the major issue they experience during voicing is the quality of the translated text. They referred to the mediocre translation done by translators who do not have a sufficient command of the language pair they work on, which leads to serious lexical or semantic errors in the translated text. Another constraining factor is the lack of synchronicity between the dubbed text and the lip movements. Overall, poor translation hinders the efficacy of the dubbing process by causing the voice actors to spend valuable time either to correct mistakes or retake the scene to maintain synchronization.

In addition, regarding the issues caused by the translation, two of the respondents stated that sometimes they encounter technical problems in the studio. Still, one of these respondents stated that the technical problems are generally caused by the low-quality of the translations.

Lastly, one respondent put forward the fact that the dubbing industry is growing at a very fast pace, and the demand of the market leads to a race

against time, so the dubbing industry forces all the staff involved in the dubbing process to work long hours to meet very short deadlines. In the end, the sector places emphasis on quantity rather than quality.

Clearly, the main point revealed from the responses regarding the challenges involved in the dubbing process is that the majority of the voice actors seem to take issue with the poor quality of the translations.

5.2. The effect of translation on the voicing process

Another point of interest regarding the effect of translation on the voicing process was the topic of the second question. In the previous question, some of the respondents covered this question as well in the sense that the poor quality of the translated text created a challenge for the voice actors during the voicing process in the studio.

As shown in the responses in Appendix B, all respondents stated that the quality of the translated text plays a highly significant role in terms of the performance of voice actors and in the whole process of dubbing. Overall, they mentioned that they were not satisfied with most of the translated texts because of the lack of synchronization, and the lack of the translator's command of both languages semantically and culturally. These two issues were stated repeatedly.

Respondents mainly criticized the substandard translated texts. However, most of them agreed that when the translation is of a high quality then the dubbing process runs smoothly, and the voice actors enjoy their job. In addition, it saves time for the whole dubbing team, and the recording process is completed efficiently.

In brief, the findings from the second question assert the assumption that the quality of the translation has an impact on the process of dubbing, especially on the stage of voicing by directly affecting the performance and the job satisfaction of the voice actors.

5.3. The issues/convenience caused/provided by the translation during the voicing process

Question three was asked to obtain information on whether the translated text causes issues or provides convenience during the voicing process. As for the first two questions, the translation and its effect on the voicing were somewhat included and the most common point made clear

by the respondents was the fact that the quality of the translated text determines the efficiency of the dubbing process at all stages.

Regarding the responses to this question, the voice actors were mainly concerned with the similar constraints caused by the lack of quality in translated texts. One respondent raised an interesting point in terms of the payment method for the translation work and commented that the translators are paid by the word count and this fact may account for the appearance of overly long sentences in the translated texts.

Overall, the common point mentioned repeatedly was the problem in translation because of translators' lack of command of the technical aspect of dubbing translation and the knowledge of the language pair they work on, as well as an inability to use punctuation in the translated text. Another constraint connected to this point is the sync between the text and the image. The dubbed text must match certain visual features of the original film which leads to obstacles for the practice of dubbing translation (Herbst, 1997, p. 292).

Moreover, the respondents showed a positive attitude towards the high-quality translated texts and stated that when they do not experience any issues with the translated text, the voicing process becomes a very pleasant job and the voice actors and other members of the team involved in the dubbing process do not lose time by trying to correct the translation or sending it back for correction.

Undoubtedly, the responses to question three support the findings revealed in the previous questions. The data shows how influential the translated text can be in the process of dubbing, particularly with regard to the voicing.

5.4. The expectations from the translators

Question four aimed to gather data on the expectations of the voice actors from translators. To that end, the responses demonstrated that translators must have a good knowledge of their native tongue (the target language) since the sole command of a foreign language is not sufficient to perform translation.

Another emphasized point was on the matter of work ethics and understanding the workflow in the process of dubbing translation. The expectations reported by the responses included the requirements of the translation job from their perspective. They mentioned that translators should be obliged to proofread their translated text before submitting it,

take their job seriously, and, in order to comprehend the process better, if possible, be present at the dubbing studio and observe the entirety of the process.

5.5. The interference with the translated text by the voice actors

In the last question, the voice actors were asked to what extent they interfered with the translated text. This question was intended to draw out information that could illustrate the role of voice actors as translators. All respondents agreed that, when necessary, they intervene and correct the translated text. It is worth indicating that the situations in which this kind of intervention seemed necessary involved examples of errors, such as censored words, untranslated sections, incorrect translation of culturally bound expressions, too long or too short sentences, and lack of synchronization, to name a few.

Another intriguing point made was that one respondent even referred to the voice actors as the rewriters. The responses gathered to the questions posed showed that the low quality of the translation, both technically and semantically, places the voice actors into the position of translators in that they must sometimes rewrite whole sections of the text.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this article was to explore the relationship between the translation and voicing stages of the process of dubbing translation. It also investigated what voice actors expect from dubbing translators and the attitude of the voice actors toward dubbing translators by analyzing the responses to a survey. All questions were answered by professional voice actors working actively in the field. Since the survey was made up of open-ended questions, respondents were given the option to answer the questions via e-mail or voice message through WhatsApp to avoid placing any limits on the length of their responses.

Following an analysis of the responses, the data obtained revealed that the final work of the translated text for dubbing can be considered a collaboration of both the voice actors and the translators. All respondents shared the perspective that the primary challenge appears to be the impact of poor translation on the dubbing process. They seemed to experience a hardship caused by the quality of the dubbing translation due to technical problems such as synchronization or the errors caused by translators' lack

of command of languages. The main issue that creates hardship stems from the quality of the translation.

Another noteworthy point raised in the responses was how the poor quality of translation causes time to be wasted by slowing down the work of technical staff and diminishing the effectiveness of the process. Also, inevitably, one more evident data point was the effect of translations on the motivation of the voice actors and their performance. If the translation is poor, their voicing lacks a certain naturality and instead simply becomes a reading of the dialogues. Consequently, the quality of the translation repeatedly appears as the most fundamental part of the voicing process. The effectiveness of the entire process primarily stems from the quality of the translation in terms of lip-synch, timecode, localization, and so on.

Although the current article can be classified as a first attempt to take a glance at the role of dubbing translation in the voicing process from the point of view of voice actors in the context of Turkey, future research could benefit from this study and broaden the scope of the relationship between the translation quality and the voice acting by focusing on the perspective of translators. In this regard, another topic for further research could include the translators' perspective, including their working conditions, time constraints, and their various expectations.

Overall, the findings and the analysis of the responses showed that translation is deemed the most important part of the dubbing process. Furthermore, it is revealed that the quality of the translation is a variable that directly affects the voice actors in their job satisfaction and performance. Ultimately, the dubbing quality and translation quality are intertwined. In this regard, dubbing can be considered to be a collaborative effort and a chain process whereby all members play pivotal roles.

One other striking fact was that almost all respondents complained about the low quality of translations received. This consistent result may potentially lead to further research with a larger sample size from both parties, translators, and voice actors, along with inferential statistics, rather than descriptive. This study with data from a sample of selected voice actors serves as a means to gain in-depth knowledge from the voice actors' perspective. As Ranzato and Zanotti (2019, p. 4) point out, there is a lack of research conducted on dubbing compared to other modalities in the field of audiovisual translation. Therefore, the overall aim of the current study is to pave the way for subsequent research in the dubbing field.

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APPENDIX A: THE SURVEY FOR THE VOICE ACTORS (TR/ENG)

1. Seslendirme esnasında yaşadığınız zorluklar nelerdir? *What are the challenges that you face during the voicing process?*
2. Çevirinin seslendirme aşamasına nasıl etkileri vardır? *How does the translation affect the voicing process?*
3. Seslendirme esnasında çeviri kaynaklı yaşadığınız sıkıntılar/ kolaylıklar nelerdir? *What are the obstacles or advantages that you experience because of the translation during voicing?*
4. Çevirmenlerden beklentileriniz nelerdir? *What are your expectations from the translators?*
5. Seslendirme esnasında çeviriye ne ölçüde müdahale edersiniz? *To what extent, do you interfere with the translated text during voicing?*

APPENDIX B: THE RESPONSES FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

Themes	Responses
<p>The challenges during the voicing process</p>	<p>Respondent 1: I keep trying to correct the errors in a bad translation and on top of that when dubbing directors, who are not sure of themselves, constantly say that it would be better if we retake, I have a hard time doing my job.</p> <p>Respondent 2: A voice actor does not just listen to the original sound coming from the headphones but also listens to his own speech while following the screen where the original work is shown and the screen with the Turkish text. While doing this, the voice actor should reflect the character and get into the role in the most appropriate form in the target language. This is what we have to achieve as performers. However, since we have mastered it over time, we do not see it as a challenge. Of course, it is a kind of skill that requires experience. The products we dub are also very diverse such as a documentary, a drama, a comedy, an animation, books, and commercials. If we want to elaborate further, the list goes on and on (Internet texts, computer games, match presentations, etc.). We are expected to give life to an unlimited variety of products, each of which demands different tones and different stances... I think the challenge that is affecting not only the voice actors but also the entire industry right now is the race against time. Translators, technical staff, directors, and managers all have difficulties due to the tight deadlines. Today, when the principle</p>

of time equals money comes to the fore, the time allocated for translation and dubbing has been so accelerated that we are losing people in every field from translation to acting. Moreover, we are losing our unique voice, our unique art with mediocre translations. Another challenge is that the wages received by the employees of the sector, despite the increase in work, are decreasing at an incredible rate, causing the emphasis to be placed on quantity rather than quality. It may take a long time to share all of our problems. I prefer to stop at this point.

Respondent 3: The biggest challenge is the quality of the translation. It must be very good. Most of the time, it sounds like it has been done by using Google Translate.

Respondent 4: If there are no technical problems during the dubbing, I do not have any difficulties with the recording process or the translation.

Respondent 5: Unfortunately, the biggest and most annoying problem I face during the dubbing process is that the translations are not good enough.

Respondent 6: The difficulties we experience during the dubbing are caused by poor translations. For example, a food documentary is being shot in Italy. On the island of Gallipoli in Italy, our translator translates it as Gelibolu (the peninsula in Northwestern Turkey), and it is mentioned in nine different places in the documentary film. Of course, in this case, if the director, technician, and voice actor are not careful, -sometimes we may miss it- then it would be translated as Gelibolu. This is a very serious mistake caused by the lack of knowledge of the translator. I know for sure that there are so many examples of mistakes similar to this one.

Respondent 7: The difficulties I have with the translations during the dubbing process are as follows. As is well known, dubbing also has a technical side. So, we need to keep the script and the lip movements synchronized. When the translations are not done well, it is very difficult for us to keep that synchronicity and all responsibility falls on the voice actor. Secondly, a translator should know Turkish and Turkish rules as well as foreign languages. For us, word-for-word translations are very problematic and incomprehensible. When I was working in Ankara for television in my childhood years, names such as Aziz Üstel, Sungun Babacan, and Selma Yeşilbağ⁴ used to both translate and voice for dubbing. These people were very proficient in both foreign languages and Turkish, but nowadays it is not quite possible to employ such translators due to low budgets and the economic situation. Current translators do not have enough knowledge in Turkish, English, or any other languages to be able to

⁴ Very important names in the business of dubbing and all are also very well educated in foreign languages and related with the area of translation as well.

	<p>convey idioms and certain expressions. That's why they do word-for-word translation. Of course, we also deal with such translations a lot. Sometimes, there are things that we overlook, and then we get a lot of criticism in the broadcast. Therefore, a translator must have a good command of the foreign language, all the rules of the foreign language, the slang, idioms, everything, and command of Turkish as well so that the translation does not create problems for us. As I said, we can experience difficulties both in terms of meaning and synchronization. Sometimes we think about what the translator meant here or there. Sometimes I even make my spouse listen to the original sound. Something completely different is said in the original, but the translator uses an irrelevant expression. Let me give a very simple example. The translator uses an expression that means <i>careless</i> or <i>desperate</i> in Turkish for the English expression <i>I don't care</i>. We often encounter mistakes like this, and they cause a lot of trouble for me.</p> <p>Respondent 8: Unfortunately, I have to say with great regret that we mostly have problems with translation.</p> <p>Respondent 9: To begin with, the difficulty we experience during dubbing is the translation. There are translation errors such as sentences that are either too long or too short, grammatically incorrect sentences, or inappropriate sentences in the context of Turkish culture. Of course, there are great translations as well, but they are very rare. I can tell if the translation is good or bad right from the beginning thanks to my long experience in the field. If we come across a bad translation, then I turn to my sound technician friend and say, 'We are ruined', and our job gets much harder.</p> <p>Respondent 10: I don't normally have a problem unless there is a technical problem caused by the translation during the dubbing process.</p>
<p>The effect of translation on the voicing process</p>	<p>Respondent 1: If the translation is good enough, the voice actor tries to play the role, however, if the translation is bad then the actor only tries to fill in the dialogue.</p> <p>Respondent 2: If the dubbing is like a building, the translation is the foundation of that building. A translation in proper Turkish, with proper pauses and exclamations, allows you to enjoy your art and be satisfied with the result. It is extremely important. Translation should be a job done by people who know, love, and want to protect their mother tongue. Just knowing a foreign language is not enough. Especially if their area is dubbing translation, they should absolutely have a command of both languages they work with as well as the technical side of the dubbing translation.</p> <p>Respondent 3: The translation has a significant impact. It is very important to translate with the correct Turkish for the correct intonation of the voice actor.</p>

Respondent 4: Translation is very important...almost 80 percent, maybe even more.

Respondent 5: If the translation is good; if the sentences are not too long or too short, if it is done by watching the image, if it is translated correctly (e.g. the military expression- “fire in the hole”,- translated word-for-word as *Ateş delikte* in Turkish-), if it has comprehensible Turkish (sometimes, unfortunately, I can't even understand what it is saying, so how can I explain it to the audience?!), if it has consistency (e.g. for the pronunciation of proper names (Gary): somewhere it is written *Geri* and somewhere else in the text the same person is written as *Ceri*), the recording is completed effectively in a much shorter time, and it does not cause me to have a nervous breakdown. It is important for me to finish my job happily!

Respondent 6: Translation is very important for voice acting because frankly, we are racing against time. It wasn't like that in the past, that is to say, at *TRT* time, if there were 30 voice actors in a movie, we would all go into the studio at the same time and do our dubbing together. There would be at least four or five microphones and ten to fifteen headphones, and we would all go into the studio by taking turns and we would record our parts. We used to call it *tulum* (overall) recording. Everyone entered the studio and the recording was done at once. For this reason, our translations were much smoother and much better in the past. Of course, Turkish has also changed, I cannot say it has improved, abbreviations have changed, and a lot of things have entered our language from foreign cultures. Honestly, many expressions from American movies like *Damn!* and, *Oh my God!*, tend to be used very often. They were derived for many different reasons. Most of these types of expressions include slang words and we have to translate them as *Damn!*. Of course, the translators did this as well, but in fact, this is not the right way. We apply our own self-censorship during voicing and thus new words are formed in our Turkish. The translation is also very important in terms of time, and I can say that the better the translation is, the better our work will be, and the more timesaving it will be since the translation does not cause us to waste time. We can also do other jobs. I say this as a director and a dubbing producer.

Respondent 7: Translation is everything. Meaning that what makes our work meaningful and understandable is translation. In fact, let me put it this way, in American sitcoms and comedies, the translation must be really good for the target audience to understand. The translator should not translate the source text word for word since it includes many jokes, idioms, and cultural references. For example, in a foreign language idiom, the elements that each language laughs at within the framework of its own culture are very different. So, when an American joke is translated literally, we don't find it funny at all. More precisely, Turkish people do not laugh at that joke much

	<p>because of the lack of understanding. Translation determines the fate of a product both at the time of voicing and broadcast.</p> <p>Respondent 8: The most important part of dubbing is the translation for me. The only problem in studios with good technical equipment and directors is that the work is completed late due to poor translation, but in studios where there is no director, all the work is on the shoulders of the voice actors. A one-hour job can take up to two hours.</p> <p>Respondent 9: Yes, translation is very important. In the previous question, I explained the issues we have with the translation.</p> <p>Respondent 10: Translation is the most important part of the dubbing process. It determines the quality of my job. One of the most important factors that make it easy to concentrate on the role of the character is a good translation.</p>
<p>The issues/ convenience caused/ provided by the translation during the voicing process</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Either too short or too long sentences or translations that are not localized into Turkish create issues. However, voicing a good translation is a very pleasant experience.</p> <p>Respondent 2: Actually, I think I gave the answer to this question in the second question. While the bad ones waste your time and prevent you from enjoying your work, the good ones protect you, the sound technician, and the director from wasting time and getting furious. You become proud and happy with the resulting product. Just as every language has a rhythm, every artist, actor, or character who uses it has a rhythm as well. For me, a good translation means: Understanding the context, character, and technical side of the work; a text that should maintain synchronicity and reflect the foreign culture correctly in “Turkish”.</p> <p>Respondent 3: The whole problem is whether or not the translation is good.</p> <p>Respondent 4: The primary issue is that the translations are done word-for-word. They do not make sense in the context of the Turkish culture. The translator's command and knowledge of Turkish are very important.</p> <p>Respondent 5: Time is important to all of us. I don't want to waste time or be in a situation where I can't trust the translation.</p> <p>Respondent 6: Some translations are so good that they flow like a river. They are amazing. In other words, the lips fit perfectly, everything is smooth, and I don't have to correct the words or translate the text again myself. When it is like this, I love it but believe me, there are very few of these. On the other hand, I can't blame the translators too much because I think they should be present with us in the dubbing studio. The person who puts his heart into this business must come to the studio and learn how the dubbing is done. He/She</p>

	<p>must see how the recording process is done because a dubbed text by itself is not enough for us.</p> <p>Respondent 7: I have already mentioned the issues that I complain about in questions 1 and 2.</p> <p>Respondent 8: Inverted sentences and especially interrogative sentences cause the wrong intonation. Sometimes we come across translations done via Google translate that the meaning is irrelevant. Inexperienced translators translate sentences with irrelevant meanings, so a completely different narrative emerges. There is a timecode problem as well. There are translations for which I must show a special effort especially when I do the recording from home. The sentences can be very long or very short. I think this is due to the translator's lack of command over the technique of dubbing translation. It is necessary to give a pause in places where the meaning needs to be changed. We are supposed to speak at a certain pace that will not sound strange to the viewers. Punctuation marks and vowels are very important in this sense, and of course, pauses, correct spelling, and exclamations are also very important. I know very experienced voice actors who have mastered their profession, and they can focus on acting while reading. We sometimes just read and pass. In this context, it makes our job easier if the censored words were not written as they shouldn't be voiced. (e.g. sex, wine, heroin, etc.). There are times that I send back the translated text for corrections repeatedly because it includes censored words, errors in character names, and misspelled words.</p> <p>Respondent 9: Synchronization is very important, and we mostly experience problems on this issue. Scenes that need to be spoken outside of the image or with the image must be specified. The translators should know this point very well. Accordingly, in the translation, if the speech is performed in the image, the letter 'G' is noted, and in the case of the non-image mouth, 'GD' is used, but sometimes you see that 'G' is written, but it is not in the mouth or vice versa, but sometimes you look at it, neither the mouth nor the image sync. The sentence is overwritten and too long. I can't blame my translator friends at this point, I also worked as a voice-over director. I guess they still get paid per word on the channel TRT. I don't know what the fees are, and if it's per word it's good for them to write more words to earn more money. I believe many translators lengthen sentences unnecessarily for this reason.</p> <p>Respondent 10: Extra or missing words both distort the expression and prevent synchronization. When this happens, it can be difficult to fill that mouth and keep the synchronicity, especially in a language you don't know.</p>
<p>The expectations</p>	

from the translators

Respondent 1: My expectation from translators is that they must know that among the translation rules, the first one is proofreading, and contrary to what is believed, proofreading is not synching the script to the lip movements of the actors, but finding the Turkish equivalence of the sentence which fits the original sentence. They must also know that along with a good command of English, a better knowledge of Turkish is required.

Respondent 2: My first and most important expectation is that they must not think in Turkish. What I mean is that one idiom or one expression in English should not be translated word for word. They must try to find the equivalent meaning in Turkish. The second important point is that they should love their native language and have the will to protect it. Thirdly, they should get enough knowledge to be able to understand dubbing translation as a whole process. They should even try to do the voicing themselves with their own translated texts. As a result, they should comprehend the importance of using punctuation marks, exclamation points, and vowels appropriately, because they are the indicators for voicing by telling us when to pause or stop. They make our job easier and ease the process of dubbing.

Respondent 3: Translators must have good knowledge of Turkish, otherwise we, as the voice actors must translate the script or correct it during the recording process.

Respondent 4: Demonstrating his/ her own quality with a good knowledge of his/ her native language may be my expectation from translators. They must not do a literal translation, instead, they should translate the text in an appropriate form for the Turkish language and culture.

Respondent 5: I expect a translator to fulfill his/ her responsibility in a manner that he/she should deserve the money he/she earns. Because it is not my job to revise a translation or to translate a paragraph left untranslated. However, it will be my voice in the final production, so it is up to me to correct the negatives.

Respondent 6: The translation for dubbing is very different. For example, the translator must know about the 'time-code' and how and according to what these codes are taken. I think our translator friends need to come to the studio and experience the process with us. After all, I think this is a profession where you gain experience as you practice it. A good translation is not performed by just translating the text from English to Turkish. For dubbing translation, the situation is very different, and therefore translators must come and experience it firsthand. That's my recommendation.

Respondent 7: For sure, I have many expectations from translators. On the one hand, I am aware that there are unpleasant issues for the translators, such as trying to meet a deadline or insufficient payment. On the other hand, translation is also a serious job. It is a serious full-time job, so to be able to translate, a person

	<p>must have a good command of both the foreign language s/he is translating from and Turkish. Therefore, translators should educate themselves in this sense. In other words, they should learn both the culture they translate from and the Turkish culture well. They should learn idioms and proverbs well and adapt those expressions accordingly to the target language.</p> <p>Respondent 8: My expectation is that translators must know the techniques of dubbing translation. They must not copy-paste the script that is translated via Google Translate.</p> <p>Respondent 9: Today, the internet, computers, and technology have developed, and translations can be done automatically thanks to some programs. I'm not a fan of this progress. If they have respect for their work and for us, they should translate the script by watching the product at the same time. When there are translations done with some computer programs, the result is awful. There is no nuance in the text. That is why translation is a very important and very difficult job. To be honest, if I do not have a translated text that is good, I don't enjoy voicing the script at all.</p> <p>Respondent 10: When I asked an old friend about why he didn't translate despite being proficient in a foreign language, he told me that he didn't feel like he had the necessary command of Turkish to translate, so he preferred not to translate. I think the most important factor that makes my job easier is that the translated texts that are done by the translator who knows his/her mother tongue very well. I would say translators should have an efficient vocabulary as well.</p>
<p>The interference with the translated text by the voice actors</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Generally, I try to correct the translation in most parts.</p> <p>Respondent 2: If the translated text is good, I won't interfere. If there is a mistake in Turkish, if the sentences are too long or too short, I make corrections. In some unfortunate cases, this process may turn into a complete rewrite of the translated text.</p> <p>Respondent 3: We definitely intervene in cases of bad translation, and even request it to be corrected. If we leave the translated text as is, the quality of the dubbed product will be very low.</p> <p>Respondent 4: During the dubbing process, if the translation needs to be corrected, I intervene under the supervision of the director.</p> <p>Respondent 5: If I think there is a mistake, I correct it during the voicing process. In some cases, I do an alternative voicing and when I leave the studio, I inform the studio about the situation.</p> <p>Respondent 6: In some cases, I must interfere with the translated text. As I mentioned before, for example, because of the use of slang words or because there are some censorship rules imposed by</p>

*RTÜK*⁵. For example, it is forbidden to say *pig*, and a *pig* is an animal, so how else can it be said? I may have to involuntarily intervene in such cases. We learn these censored words after a certain period of time and start to translate such words quickly. This type of situation happens so many times. But I must say that translators who are committed to doing this job should definitely come and understand how dubbing is done in the studio. The dubbing translation is a very different translation process that includes important stages such as time code and synchronization, and it is the job of every translator to come and experience it in person.

Respondent 7: If the translation is not good, I regularly interfere at the stage of the voicing process because I also have knowledge of English. I understand mistakes made in English. Apart from that, I am trying to get rid of this so-called “dubbing language”. For example, I say the phrase *you know*, which is very common in English, to mean *in other words*. Other than that, I correct inverted or grammatically incorrect sentences. I correct grammatical mistakes as much as I can, but of course, conditions do not always allow for this.

Respondent 8: Believe me, in most projects, I must rewrite the translation myself because the words are short, or there are parts where I feel like there is something wrong in the translated text. I think I am one of the voice actors who is the most loyal to the translation. Most of the time I try to close the gap by speaking more slowly. By the way, there are also wonderful translations. Those make a great contribution to our good performance, and they make the work much better.

Respondent 9: I interfere with the translation when it is necessary, during the dubbing process. The most important thing for me is the preservation of Turkish. If the incorrect Turkish structure is used, if the sentence is inverted, I definitely intervene and make corrections. I congratulate the translators for having knowledge of foreign languages, but I ask them to pay attention to their mother tongue, Turkish, as well.

Respondent 10: I intervene with the translation when a big issue arises such as errors in an expression or a lack of synchronization.

⁵ Radio and Television Supreme Council (Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu). Turkish state agency founded in 1994 for monitoring, regulating, and sanctioning radio and television broadcasts.