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Yeah Baby, yeah! A case study of a film's "shagadellic" transition into Italian as packaged on a DVD.

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A Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Translation.

Johannesburg, February 2005

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the decisions made in the dubbing of a comedy of a specific genre, that is, in the translation of the humour used in the English film *Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged Me* into Italian *Austin Powers, La Spia Che Ci Provava* as packaged on a DVD. The study attempts to answer the following question: Does the dubbing of a film diminish the humourous appeal of the film?

DECLARATION

I declare that this Research Project is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Translation. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University.

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INTRODUCTION

The power of television and film in today's modern world is indisputable. Gone are the 'black and white' Charlie Chaplin days. Today, the film industry has reached levels which Thomas Edison or even the Lumière brothers would never have envisaged. We have progressed from Betamax, to VHS, to VCD and now (for the moment) to the DVD[1]. The DVD can store gigabytes of information, with a single digital format, and it has replaced laserdisc, videotape (almost), and even videogame cartridges. Not only did it become the most successful consumer electronics product of all time in less than three years since it was introduced but it also revolutionized the film industry. Gone are the days that film studios concerned themselves with how the final product would look on the big cinematic screen.

Today, film is produced for the DVD. Even before a film is screened on circuit, it is already available on DVD which you can rent or buy. The film house wants to sell, sell, sell and what better way to sell a film if not in the form of one of today's most loved digital masterpieces, the DVD.

The intricacies and technicalities of DVDs would constitute a paper all on its own, but they are briefly discussed in a later chapter. My interest lies with one specific feature that a DVD offers. My fascination with this feature arose while browsing through a friend's extensive DVD collection. I noticed that each DVD offered different language options. He suggested that we watch the film *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged*

[1] There is a never-ending debate around what the letters "DVD" stand for. The two which make the most sense are: Digital Video Disk (the original meaning proposed by DVD creators); and Digital Versatile Disk (the most recent meaning proposed by DVD creators). However according to an article titled: DVD FAQs, the DVD Forum decreed in 1999 that DVD, as an international standard, are simply three letters, and don't have to stand for anything. (Bear in mind that no real explanation for the acronym VHS exists.)

Me, and once inserted into the DVD player, we (the viewers), were offered various language options.

Generally a DVD offers up to eight tracks of digital audio. In other words, it can offer up to eight language options for the viewer. In this case, for example, we could choose between watching the film in English with no subtitles; English with Italian subtitles; English with English subtitles (for the Deaf); Italian with no subtitles; Italian with English subtitles and Italian with Italian subtitles (for the Deaf). This made sense since films are today regarded as commodities, and American-English films are becoming increasingly available in numerous languages, just as famous sitcoms and soap operas are available in almost every dominant language across the globe. Wherever you find yourself in Europe, when you turn on the television you will find a film or series that has been adapted for local viewers either with subtitles or through dubbing. The art of film translation has allowed viewers worldwide to see, hear and experience the adventures, of James Bond or even *Austin Powers*, in a variety of languages, in the comfort of their own homes, on DVD.

Putting aside the success many countries have had in their own film industries, it is the American film industry which has dominated the filming world. There would not be much sense in the Italian film industry re-filming an Italian version of a film with Italian actors in an Italian setting. It would simply defeat the 'sell, sell, sell' theory, since both the Italian and American film industries would lose a target market.

My interest in the language options does not end here. Having only watched the *Austin Powers* saga in its original English version, the thought of watching it in Italian, my home language, intrigued me. Together with my equally fascinated friend, we took up this challenge and decided to explore the world of *Austin Powers* in Italian.

Perhaps at this point it is appropriate to provide a brief description (as a more detailed one will follow in Chapter 2) of the film which this case study focuses on. Since it forms part of a trilogy, one film cannot be discussed to the exclusion of the others.

The trilogy starts with *Austin Powers: International Man of* Mystery: Mike Myers is '*Austin Powers*', England's number one secret agent. Based in London, in 1967, his nemesis Dr. Evil (also played by Mike Myers) freezes himself and, in turn, Austin is also frozen in order to combat Dr. Evil when he returns. Austin is unfrozen 30 years later, and teams up with Vanessa Kensington (played by Liz Hurley). Austin and Vanessa go in search of Dr. Evil, who is plotting to blow up the world. Dr. Evil captures them while they are undercover but they manage to escape. Austin saves the day and prevents Dr. Evil from ending the world. However, Dr. Evil makes a getaway – just in time for the sequel.

In the sequel, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*[2]*,* Austin once again goes head to head with Dr. Evil. This time the villain wants to rule the world, and goes 'back in time' to steal Austin's 'mojo'[3]. By stealing Austin's 'mojo', Dr. Evil believes Austin will be incapable of stopping him from ruling the world. Austin also goes back in time to recover his 'mojo' and teams up with CIA agent, Felicity Shagwell (played by Heather Graham). Together they plan to stop Dr. Evil, who this time has many more helpers, such as his cloned double, Mini-Me and Fat Bastard (also played by Mike Myers). However, in the end Austin prevents Dr. Evil from dominating the world, and Dr. Evil escapes once again.

In the latest film, which was only released in 2003, *Austin Powers in Goldmember*, Austin captures Dr. Evil and Mini-Me and places them in a maximum security prison.

[2] The title of the film, Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me, has been reflected in this study in the same format as it has been referred to in the literature consulted.

[3] Some believe Austin's 'mojo' to be his good luck charm, in other words, his ability to defeat Dr. Evil. Others believe his 'mojo' to be his sexual ability.

Austin's father is also captured by a Dutch criminal, Goldmember (so named after the colour of his artificial genitals and his love for gold). Austin travels back in time again, this time to the 1970s. Ironically with the help of Foxxy Cleopatra (played by Beyonce` Knowles) and his nemesis Dr. Evil, Austin puts an end to Goldmember's plans.

Having watched all three films in English, we took up the challenge of watching *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me,* in Italian. Initially we thought we were watching the English version, since apart from the title printed on the cover of the DVD, *Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava*, the title displayed on the screen was: *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*. Only the DVD options menu (a feature on DVDs) was in Italian. This aside, we chose to watch the film in Italian, with no subtitles. The credit introduction was written in English with an Italian voiceover[4], and the same English music score as the original played in the background. It was when Austin *Powers* uttered his first words that we as the audience were surprised since he was speaking Italian and not English. From many visual elements, for example the Union Jack fashion that Austin wears, the viewer would naturally expect to hear words reflecting the famous British accent. Further in the film, the Italian viewer had to accept that Austin Powers was no longer a 'Brit', but an Italian man dressed as a British one. It was in addition difficult to overlook the English credit introductions, the American stereotypes, and the Italian voiceovers translating for the English subtitles. It was important, however, to bear in mind that I had previously watched the film in English, and since I have been influenced by the Anglo-Saxon world, it was only natural, after only having seen the Italian version once, that I found the original English version to be funnier than the Italian version.

I then asked native Italian speakers if they found the Italian version funny, and if they would prefer watching it in its original English version. The overall consensus was that

[4] A voiceover occurs when information or comments in a film are given by a person who is not seen on the screen (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, 2000).

they did find the Italian version funny, and easily overlooked the dubbing effects. In fact, many said that they hardly noticed that the film had been dubbed. After a second screening of the Italian version I was also hardly aware of the dubbing effects, and after a third screening with English subtitles, I realised that the Italian version was not far off the English version. I later realized that my first interpretation of the dubbed version was highly influenced by my comparison of it to the English version, and while watching the dubbed version, my unconscious would not allow me to accept the film in its dubbed version. After watching the Italian version the second time around, I came to realize why Italy is known as one of the best dubbing countries in the world, since the dubbing of the film, did not in fact alter (with extreme measures) the original version. However, I still questioned to what extent my previous advantage of having watched the film in English influenced my reactions, i.e. my laughter, while watching the Italian version. Questions arose: Was I laughing because I actually understood the 'jokes' or wordplay in Italian, or, because I had already watched the film in English?; and did my laughter at certain points correspond with the same scenes in the English version?. It became clear that if I wanted to answer these questions I would have to look at the art of dubbing used to translate the film for a new audience.

After doing some research, I learnt that Italy is regarded as "the home to Europe's most respected dubbing industry" (Chiaro[5] in Evans, 2003), and that English-language films that are dubbed into Italian bring in over a billion dollars a year in Italy. Hollywood even relies on Italy's dubbing expertise to reach its growing Hispanic community. Eighty percent of film production and ninety-two per cent of television fiction production in Italy come from abroad, which proves that the art of adapting of films through dubbing plays a vital role in both the Italian and American multimedia industry.

[5] Professor Delia Chario is a British translation expert based in Italy.

The above-mentioned statistics seem to indicate that Italy plays a large role in the commoditisation of Hollywood films. One would think that the huge Hollywood market would give the translated versions of films some credit. Unfortunately this is not the case. Not long ago, in 1998 to be exact, hundreds of dubbing actors who normally dub English films into Italian went on strike for more money as well as increased recognition for films which would appear on TV or even as a video rental (remember the DVD had not taken off yet). As a result, the latest Hollywood releases for that season were not premiered in Italy since they were not (at that point) dubbed. Studios preferred to wait the strike out rather than replace the 'famous' dubbing actors. Italian producers and directors believe that the dubbing actors are valuable and they recognise the importance of their role in the movie industry. According to Chiaro (2003) a good example would be dubbing actor Claudio Sorrentino, the voice of Mel Gibson; Italians recognise his voice more as that of Mel Gibson, than Mel Gibson's original voice. This left me with another question with which translators are often faced: How are dubbers and/or dubbing actors compensated for their work, if not for their precise expertise?

Once again I turned to the film in question and in an attempt to discover who had translated the film we were watching and who the dubbing actors were, we studied the credits at the end of the film. The translator(s) name(s) did not appear in the credits, nor did those of the dubbing actors or editors. Full credit was only given to the original cast, crew and directors. Translation theorists refer to this as the 'invisibility' of the translator. The invisibility underlines the vast differences between the filming of the original and its dubbing. A film (the original) is shot in the 'real world' and is filmed on sets and locations; the dubbing or dubbed version is carried out in a dark studio. The original actors become famous and are always acknowledged in the credits; in the dubbed version, the dubbing actors remain invisible (their names do not appear in credits). In the original the screenwriter is acknowledged; in the dubbed version, the

dubbing writer(s) remains anonymous (Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 9-10). To quote Whitman-Linsen (1991: 9-10):

> [*It's] ironic that such a professional field with such real and potential impact, with such widespread exposure to masses of people, with so much power to influence and promote intercultural and artistic understanding, is so vastly underestimated or even depreciated [since] as far as impact is concerned, […] the exposure of dubbed films to the public far outstrips that of translated written material.*

Is it right that the translator and/or dubbing actors remain invisible since so much effort and work goes into 're-creating' the film for a new audience? Does the new audience not contribute to the success of the film?

Nida (in Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 10) acknowledges the importance of dubbing in translation studies:

> Some persons regard translating for the cinema as peripheral and not too important. However […] in **interlingual** communication, film translating probably surpasses book translation in total impact. Successful motion picture translating is increasingly vital to the cinema industry […].

The majority of films released in Europe are dubbed from English and reach millions of people who prefer watching a dubbed film than reading a translated book (Whitman-Linsen, 1991). Furthermore, the image certain countries have of other countries, such as America, is influenced by the films. Dubbing is responsible for cultural filtering: "Dubbing has the power to misrepresent, distort, sway, and in general make a large

contribution (positive or negative) to America's image abroad" (Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 11).

We know that there exists a market for films in almost every country. We also know that the majority of language groups prefer to hear music and films in their preferred language since less cognitive effort is required. Not every country is able to produce films such as *Austin Powers* and attain the same success. Thus, it is inevitable that the best option is to dub or subtitle an already famous film which practically markets itself. However, in dubbing or subtitling such a popular film, there is no doubt that the language transference is not only difficult but has to be done with extreme caution. There is little if no point in dubbing a famous comedy into Italian if it is not going to be well-received by an Italian-speaking audience. Since the goal of translation is to reproduce the meaning-value, of a text into another language, then the meaning-value, jokes, laughter, puns, and wordplay produced in the original *Austin Powers* has to be reproduced in the Italian version. This is not to say that the audience needs to laugh at the same things or even at the same time since cultures do differ and find different things funny.

In many countries, watching a dubbed or subtitled film is the norm. Some audiences are not troubled by the fact that the film is dubbed or subtitled. With the growing impact of technology and globalisation, dubbing and subtitling are in great demand. However, even if this demand is growing, studies on dubbing and subtitling have been ignored by academics and professionals.

For the purposes of this study, I have looked at the decisions made in the dubbing of a comedy of a specific genre, that is in the translation of humour used in the English film *Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged* Me into Italian *Austin Powers, La Spia Che Ci Provava.* The study attempts to answer the question: Does dubbing a film diminish the intended appeal of this particular film? This study looks at the transference of the

value and meaning of the film for the source film culture as well as for the target culture from a South African perspective.

The case study of the dubbed version of *Austin Powers, La Spia Che Ci Provava* and its original, *Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged Me*, is theoretically located within the domain of audiovisual translation as an area of study. Although it is necessary to look at the technical aspects involved in the dubbing process, here they are only considered in relation to their impact on the translation and do not constitute the focus of the study. Important technical techniques which are considered include lip sync and nucleus sync.

Theoretically, the discussion of the translation is based on two lines of work in audiovisual translation: audiovisual translation as the process and audiovisual translation as the product. This case study looks at the product rather than the process. In this sense the study deals with the film as a translation of an existing text, looking at its cultural impact and the value of its translation. With regard to the value of the translation, the study looks at the film as a commodity, and its circulation within the source culture and the target culture. The discussion is supported by a discussion on the cognitive effect of humour– i.e. what is responsible for the humorous effect and what impact the humour has. The study considers how the authenticity of the 'Austin Powers world' was maintained in the dubbed version, and where and how the dubbed version differs from the original.

The first part of the study looks at the discipline of audiovisual translation in translation studies. This discipline has only recently found its place in translation studies and serves as an introduction to film translation. This discussion is limited to the art of dubbing, although subtitling is discussed briefly. The 'dubbing vs. subtitling' debate is not elaborated on, since many other authors have concentrated on this aspect. The dubbing processes are, however, introduced without delving into the technical aspects

involved. The relationship between the translation, source culture, target culture and various norms is examined by drawing on Delabastita (1989). As an introduction to the analysis, the acoustics, non-verbal elements, images, as well as the invisibility of the translator and actors are discussed.

The part of the study which follows is based on the world of *Austin Powers*. This discussion includes a brief description of the film, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*. Since this film forms part of a trilogy, the other two films in the trilogy: *Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery* and *Austin Powers in Goldmember* are discussed briefly. The commentary of the directors, producers and writer's (retrieved from the DVD) are discussed in order to provide insight into the thought processes behind the humour used in the films. The topic of humour is discussed in terms of the humour used in the original film and the translation, focusing on the specific slapstick humour used in *Austin Powers* and the relationship between words uttered and images. General information on the film can be found in the book, 'The World of *Austin Powers',* written by And Lane (2002), as well as in articles and critiques retrieved from the internet. Critiques and reviews of both the English and Italian versions of the film are used, and an overview of the source culture film is provided.

The final section, i.e. the practical part of the study, first consists of a brief overview of dubbing in Italy. I believe this overview is important in understanding the choices made when films are dubbed in Italy. And since dubbing actors and translators are not given the necessary credit, I hope to highlight their 'invisible' importance in the film industry. I attempt to establish the principles governing the presence or absence of imported and translated film material in the Italian cultural system, as well as the role DVDs has played in replacing 'going to the films'.

This discussion is then followed by an analysis of selected sections from the films: the English version versus the Italian version. For the purposes of this study the following approach was taken:

Two focus groups were identified:

- FOCUS GROUP 1: English speaking[6]
- FOCUS GROUP 2: Italian speaking[7]

Each group consisted of 4 subjects aged between 19 and 35. Group 1 was asked to watch the entire English original during which their responses to specific sections of the film were noted. Group 2 was asked to watch the entire dubbed (Italian) film and their responses noted.

Based on the responses observed, the 'meaning constructed from the conjunction of images and words' was identified (Varela, 2002). After watching the films, both groups took part in a combined discussion where questions provided in the form of a checklist presented by Delabastita (in Jardim, 1998:22) were raised. This checklist was adapted for the purposes of this study, and asks questions about the dubbed translation in relation to both the micro level and the macro level of the film. It is presented below:

MICRO LEVEL

A look at the individual screen translation

What target language and geographical variant of that has been used?

What type of screen translation technique has been used?

Were additions or reductions made to the plot?

Which strategy was used if more than one language is used in the source text?

A look at dubbing

[6] This group has no knowledge of the Italian language.

[7] Since the study takes place in South Africa, the Italian audience is bilingual (English-Italian). Italian is nonetheless the home language of this group and its members are fluent in Italian.

Does synchrony between visible body movements and audible speech exist?

Do the dubbing voices 'act' their dialogues?

Has any source information been deleted?

With regard to qualitative aspects

Are the syntax and style used foreign?

How were loan words and/or foreign expressions translated?

What was the result where taboo and/or controversial elements were used and adapted?

How were gender-markers conforming to the target audience's expectations of conventional or stereotypical elements translated?

MACRO LEVEL:

Systematic observations of a corpus of texts

What is the source language and culture?

What is the text-type of the source film and the genre to which it belongs?

Does the genre exist in the target culture?

Is vocal performance important in the genre?

What is the culture status of the genre?

Issues and interpretations of, for example, verbal messages (character speech, narrator speech, flashbacks, musical texts, background conversation, titles, and credits), dialects, accents, names of characters, the rendering of wordplay, other forms of humorous language use, taboo elements, stereotyped elements, and the interaction between verbal and visual narration presented by the focus groups were considered in order to carry out an analysis of selected scenes in relation to Delabastita's checklist, and to highlight the norms underlying the translator's solutions to translation problems within the dubbed film. The analysis does not aim to highlight mistranslations but rather to show examples and provide answers to the questions laid out by Delabastita in the checklist. Taken in conjunction, the analysis, the theory presented and the

critiques and reviews of the film, help determine whether the dubbed version of the film diminished the intended appeal of the film.

CHAPTER ONE: AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

Audiovisual translation as an area of study in Translation studies

> *Any given discipline must be able to describe and explain all the phenomena that are to be found in its object of study. In the case of translation studies, considered as an autonomous discipline, researchers have to be ambitious and make an attempt to cover each and every modality of linguistic and cultural interchange that occurs in the ambit of human communication between (two or more) natural languages (*Varela, 2002: 1).

According to Varela (2002), audiovisual translation is an example of an area of research that has its rightful place in Translation Studies. Not only is it a form of translation which is present in our everyday lives, in the form of news broadcasts, television programmes and films, but it is also one of the fastest growing forms of translation. Most mass media messages undergo some form of translation in order to make them accessible to the many cultures of the world. Apart from generating money, an important goal of translating is to overcome language barriers in order to link cultures, and for decades, translation has played a very important role in shaping cultures and building relations between them (Delabastita, 1990: 95). When an audiovisual translation is produced, it is generally the intention of the producer of the audiovisual text to communicate to a wider audience and to make the new target audience understand what the text is trying to communicate to them. Therefore, it can be said that a translation has a certain amount of value attached to it since it plays a key role in the communication process.

According to Appadurai (1986) if something is of economic value, it is a commodity, and objects are given value because humans endow them with value.[8] Since the production of a translation has (economic) value attached to it, a translation (for example an audiovisual translation) is thus a commodity. The Advanced Learners Dictionary (2002) defines a commodity as "a product or raw material that can be bought or sold, especially between countries" or "a thing that is useful or has a useful quality". This definition of a commodity as well as the explanation provided by Appadurai of commodities supports the argument I wish to make that an audiovisual text (i.e. a film) is a commodity and possesses a certain amount of value. In simpler terms, when an object is desired, he who desires it generally needs to possess it, and in order to possess an object, economic exchange occurs, where one object is sacrificed for another. Economic value is generated by the exchange of sacrifices (Appadurai, 1986). The amount of sacrifice made determines the value of the desired object. However, the value of the economic object is also based on the demand for the object. Demand is determined by social and economic forces, thus the need for the translation (Appadurai, 1986; Sprott, 2003). When a commodity is produced, it is sold for something of value and a process of exchange takes place, where one good is exchanged for another of value – a simple process of supply and demand. In the same way, when a text is translated from one language into another, it is done for the purpose of exchange; someone has attached a form of value to the source text and finds it useful or needs it to be translated for a specific purpose. Appadurai (1986: 8) also said that unless a 'thing' has a use-value it can have no exchange value and it cannot be considered a commodity.

In the case of a film (or audiovisual text), one would have to ask the following questions: What is the demand for the film? Why dub or translate it? Is there a demand for it in the target audience? Was the demand created or did it already exist?

[8] I find it necessary to discuss audiovisual translations in terms of commodities in order to understand the reason that they are translated.

It is only when the product is produced that a public/audience becomes aware of their need for it (Marx, in Sprott, 2003: 18). It is the audience which constitutes the determining actors in the exchange process and controls the nature of the exchange. Without the audience the film cannot acquire commodity status (Sprott, 2003).

Vega (in Varela, 2002) said that when a translation occurs at a level where the text is easily understood by people with an average level of education, the text is regarded as a general text and as a result undergoes a general translation. Varela (2002) believes that this definition or description of a general text fits in well with audiovisual translations since the goal of an audiovisual text (as mentioned earlier) is to communicate to a wider audience, in other words, to the general public. However, just as with a specialised text, a general text such as film translation also has its fair share of complexities and constraints (Whitman-Linsen, 1991) and can contain terminology belonging to any area of learning (Chaume in Varela, 2002). According to Raphael (in Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 103) the translation of film material "patently outstrips the difficulties involved in articles and factual texts because of the heavier influence of factors connected with the social ethos on the one hand and the situational factors on the other". Nida (in Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 103) said that the "the translator of poetry or songs is hemmed in by the communication medium, the translator of motion pictures is subject to restrictions sometimes even more severe".

> *[…] film translation is undeniably a species of its own. The staging of the film plot is already a given, movements and gesticulations of actors immutable and mouth articulations exasperatingly confining. The translation must be chiseled and carved to cling convincingly to the visual image and still awaken the impression of authenticity. It thus requires a complex juggling of semantic content, cadence of language, technical prosody, all the while bowing to the prosaic constraints of the medium itself. Add to this the fact that the speech community of the source language also shares certain cultural connotations attached not only to content of text but also to dialects and accents, styles,*

> *and vocabularies of those speaking it, and we see the towering hurdles facing the (generally underpaid and often underqualified) translator* (Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 103-104).

It was the pioneering work of Fodor in 1967 that opened the doors to research in this field of audiovisual translation. Fodor was the first to analyse this process from a professional perspective and focused on the adaptation of translation to the movements of mouths of screen characters. Later in 1982, Titford looked at the role of cohesion between text and images. In 1988, Mayoral, Kelly and Gallardo laid down the foundations for investigation into audiovisual translation, which led to a wide set of publications on audiovisual translation in the 90s, by Whitman-Linsen, Ivarsson, Lyken, Gottlieb, Zowe de Line and Niel Kay, and Karamitroglou for example (see Varela, 2002).

Varela (2002) identifies two lines of work in audiovisual translation:

1) Audiovisual translation as the **process** which transforms one audiovisual text into another, with the strategies employed, the textual configuration of each one, and;
2) The study of the translation itself: the **product** i.e. the audiovisual text is studied from linguistic-discursive, cinematographic, ideological, cultural and other perspectives.

With regard to the study of the process, various contributions have been centred around two fields: (a) studies that deal with the audiovisual text as a genre or type of text susceptible to being translated, in other words, audiovisual translation is seen as a paradigm of translation studies; and (b) studies that deal with the specificity of the audiovisual text according to its mode of discourse (oral, written, audiovisual, iconic or mixed). In the first case, researchers such as Reiss (1971) focused their theories on

the function of the text or on the subject matter that it offers; Hurtado (1995), Hochel (1986) and Zabalbeascoa (1993) all include semiotics with the parallel study of the image, and regard these texts as specific genres, different from other established types (Varela, 2002). In the second case, authors such as Mayoral, Kelly and Gallardo (1988) focus on the idea that the text specificity is a result of the combination of images and words. Thus, they study the influence of the iconic text on the elaboration of the verbal text and therefore its influence upon the eventual translation (Varela, 2002).

With regard to the study of the product, authors focus on two general areas: (a) studies that deal with the audiovisual text as a translation of a previously existing literary text; and (b) studies that deal with the cultural impact of audiovisual texts; the generation of new types of texts in the receiving cultures and the necessary adaptation (Varela, 2002). In the first case, Cattrysse (1998) proposes a polysystem theory as a frame of analysis for this type of translation and says that texts adapted to cinema can be studied according to: the policy of the selection employed; the policy of adaptation according to culture and epoch; the reception and criticism; the relationships produced between the policies of selection and adaptation and the function or position of the adapted text in the cinematographic context (Varela, 2002). In the second case, Delabastita (1989 and 1990) and Lambert (1989) centre their studies around what the target culture understands from reading/watching new genres and new types of text (Varela, 2002).

Delabastita (1990: 100) provides the following guidelines for the translation scholar to consider with regard to the target culture:

(1) "Delimit the target system corpus you intend to work with. In other words, ask: What is the relative share of translated films in the total supply of the target system? Does the relative presence of the film import vary according to particular

subsystems within the corpus (genre, cinema vs. TV, different circuits in the world of cinema)? Is there a significant preference for or resistance against import from particular languages or cultures, genres, schools?

(2) Establish the principles governing the presence or absence of imported and translated film material in the cultural system under discussion. In Gideon Toury's (1995) terminology: try first to establish the *preliminary norms*[9] governing translation in the target system. In other words ask: What is the degree of tolerance towards film translations made on the basis of an intermediary translation rather than the actual source film? Is the tolerance restricted to particular original source languages and/or to particular intermediary languages?"

Varela (2002) points out that little research has been carried out on the construction and individuality of audiovisual texts, the interaction between the text and the image, and the repercussions that this has on the process of translation. He goes on further to say that: the "discovery of translation strategies and rhetorical mechanisms unique to the construction of audiovisual texts is only possible from an analysis of audiovisual texts that looks at their peculiarity: meaning constructed from the conjunction of images and words" (Varela, 2002: 3). The process of combining images and words through dubbing is often described as an art. The translators challenge is to make the target audience believe that they are not watching a dubbed version of the original film. In order to achieve this, the translator has to perfect the art of film translation. The section which follows discusses the art of film translation with specific focus on dubbing as an Art.

[9] These preliminary norms '[H]ave to do with two sets of considerations: those regarding the very existence of a translation "policy" along with its actual nature, and those questions related to the "directness" of translation' (Toury, 1980: 53 in Delabastita, 1990: 100).

The art of Film translation – Dubbing

Even though the art of dubbing was introduced around the same time that sound was added to films, it was ignored as a field of study in translation studies for quite some time. This is, perhaps, as a result of the fact that it involves stages and factors additional to those of language transfer (equipment, actors, editing, sound engineering - see Dries, 1995). Fawcett (in Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997) suggests that it has been overlooked because of the synchronisation constraints which force dubbers to make drastic changes to the original in order to match sounds to lip and physical movements. This is not a valid argument, since, as pointed out by Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997), the synchronisation constraint does not apply to all situations. They point out that dubbing should not be seen as a kind of "phonological translation" (translating sound by sound), but rather as "visual phonetics" (visual synchronization as opposed to acoustic) since synchronisation ultimately depends on the distance of the camera from the speaker (Delabastita, 1989 in Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997).

Probably the largest part of research which has been carried out on film translation, as pointed out by Delabastita (1990), Whitman-Linsen (1991) and Varela (2002), concentrates on the technicalities of film translation. In other words, the discussions are based on the "Dubbing versus Subtitling debate" (Delabastita, 1990: 95) and the technical processes involved in the re-adapting of the film. The Dubbing versus Subtitling debate is never-ending and both sides present valid arguments. Those in favour of dubbing claim subtitles destroy the original photography, that they turn the audience off and are socially unjustifiable since they appeal only to intellectuals. Those in favour of subtitles claim dubbing destroys the original soundtrack, is socially unjustifiable (viewers are deprived of a chance to improve their linguistic competence) and artistically unjust since production costs are higher (up to 15 times more expensive) (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997; Delabastita, 1990; Baker and Hochel 1998). They further claim that subtitles give the translation more leeway, take less

time and do not disrupt the cultural/linguistic/voice coherence in the original film, but do demand a lot of cognitive effort from the viewer or reader (Delabastita, 1990: 105). The latter point is probably the most important point to bear in mind when deciding whether to subtitle or dub a film such as *Austin Powers*, since it seems that the average target audience would prefer not to read subtitles. Gottlieb (in Athsmneh and Zitawi, 1999), using House's terms, (1981: 207) considers subtitling as an "overt" mode of translation, i.e. retaining the source language version, and dubbing as a "covert" type of translation, i.e. replacing the entire dialogue track with a target language version.

Since our study is primarily concerned with dubbing, what many call 'lip synchronised translation' or 'post synchronization' (Killborn, 1989 in Athsmneh and Zitawi 1999) it will not elaborate on this debate. Dubbing is, however, still the preferred form of film translation in countries such as Spain, Italy and Germany. The reason for this is that the decision for them to either dub or subtitle does not depend on factors such as cost, the availability of technology, standard of literacy, interest in foreign languages, degree of cultural openness, and the strength of the local film industry which is the case for many other countries (See Luyken, 1991).[10]

Dries (1995: 9) defines dubbing as "the technique of covering the original voice in an audiovisual production by another voice". Of the various forms of dubbing presented by Dries, for example re-voicing[11] in the same language as the original (looping or post-synchronization), here we are focusing on lip-sync dubbing, where the foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth movements of the actor in the film where the dubbing occurs in a foreign language (Dries, 1995).

[10] Dubbing will later be looked at in an Italian context in order to understand and perhaps appreciate its value in Italy.

[11] According to Baker and Hochel (1998) revoicing occurs in the form of a voice-over, narration or free commentary, and does not adhere to the constraints of lip synchronization. Revoicing can be pre-recorded or transmitted live (as opposed to dubbing which has to be pre-recorded).

Zabalbeascoa (in Athsmneh and Zitawi, 1999: 128) sums up the dubbing process in 4 steps:

(1) A programme is chosen and purchased;

(2) A decision is made as to whether the programme should be dubbed, subtitled or not touched;

(3) A copy of the original version on tape is given to a freelance translator or a number of translators, sometimes with the script;

(4) The translation is adjusted for timing and lip movement and acted out by dubbing actors under the directions of the dubbing director. Then the new soundtrack is dubbed onto the film or tape.

In summary, the main goal behind dubbing is to make the dubbed version absolutely convincing to the audience. This can, however, only be achieved if the original version of the film is interpreted in the correct manner.

> *The final rendering into another language of the intricate strands of linguistic denotation and connotation, "pronounceability" of text, respecting the accompanying picture with gestures, oral articulations and facial expression of actors, along with culturally unique allusions – quite a handful – is all expected to issue basically from one source … The original script* (Whitman-Linsen, 1990: 104-105).

Once the original script is handed over to the translator, it is translated in such a way that the dialogue writer knows the literal meaning of the words spoken in the film and the groundwork is, thus, laid down. Further steps taken by the dialogue writer in conjunction with linguistic messages conveyed in the film, such as written material, posters, billboards, headlines, background music or effects, allow the final product to develop. That which differentiates a dialogue writer from the translator is that the

dialogue writer has the original film in front of him and can adapt certain words and phrases more appropriately (Whitman-Linsen, 1990: 117).

> *The dialogue adaptor's task is a continuous challenge, frame by frame. Watching again and again the film you are adapting, you realize how many difficulties influence your choices and push you away from stylistic completeness. This causes also moments of narcissism in which you can feel that your version is better than the original one. When the frenzy of omnipotence is such as to cause a major departure from the rule, we always realize that it is a mistake, because the original author's choice may be questionable, but it is nevertheless a choice, and must be respected* (Paolinelli, 2002).

According to Rowe (in Whitman-Linsen, 1990: 117), "[It is the task of the dialogue writer] to cause phonetically dissimilar dialogue to appear visually similar while still preserving the semantic and stylistic parallel between the original and the dubbed lines, the whole to form a dramatically vigorous and playable text". However, the list of contributors to a dubbed film does not only include the translator and the dialogue writer but many other key players. What ultimately brings the dubbed film together is the notion that the original needs to be almost the same or similar in many respects to the dubbed version.

According to Dries (1995: 9):

> *[Dubbing] should create the perfect illusion of allowing the audience to experience the production in their own language without diminishing any of the characteristics of the original language, culture and national background of the production. Any irregularities can destroy this illusion and will bring the audience back to reality. The work is well done when no one is aware of it.*

Yet, in order for this to be a reality, talented directors, writers, and translators are needed. Whitman-Linsen (1990) points out that not enough of these talents exist in the dubbing world and believe this to be so because the dubbing system has become an industrial process and not an artistic one where it is more important to save time and money. The result of this is that inexperienced persons demanding cheaper rates are employed to work on the film and the final product is generally unsatisfactory. Since dubbing films into new target languages takes place at the same rate that films are released on a day-to-day basis, the quality of dubbing decreases.

> *Until the domestic motion picture companies begin to attach a value to the foreign versions, and translate that value into greater budgets allotted to the dubbing process, high quality final products will probably be more a matter of luck or the idealistic commitment of those involved* (Whitman-Linsen, 1990: 124).

As mentioned earlier, when translating a film, the translator must remember that the stage has already been set, the plot has already been established, and the conclusion has already been reached. The film cannot be re-shot and the millions of dollars used to produce the film cannot be supplied to produce the same film in another language with actors of that language. So the translation of it must be done in such a way that the words correspond almost perfectly to the images, as if the actor were saying the words in the foreign language into which the film was being dubbed. However, the challenge for the translator does not end here; s/he must also consider the situational factors, the cultural connotations attached to the content of the text and also the dialects and accents, styles and vocabularies of those speaking it (Whitman-Linsen, 1991).

This brings us to the process of synchronization. Herbst (1997) mentions two criteria for synchronization: (1) Lip Sync and (2) Nucleus Sync. Lip Sync refers to the correlation of the lip movements of the original actors with the sounds perceived in the dubbed version. A distinction can be made between quantitative lip sync (referring to the correlation of the beginning and end of visible lip movements and sound) and qualitative lip sync (referring to the correlation of actual lip movements or the shape of the mouth and the quality of the dubbed sound). With Nucleus Sync, there is a correlation of gestures or particular movements of the head (such as raising the eyebrows) with nuclei, i.e. syllables carrying accentual prominence in the dubbed version. Lipsync does, however, prevent the dubbed version from using an authentic Italian equivalent (Evans, 2003). For example, when an Anglo-Saxon seals his/her wedding vows with 'I do', there is no equivalent for this in Italian other than 'yes' or 'no'. In order to match the lip movements to the sound, they have to say 'Io voglio'. Evans mentions that because of this 'bad habit', Italian productions are also no longer using the true Italian response, and rather use 'Io voglio'.[12]

Dubbing is an art which is subject to many constraints. Herbst (1997) mentions a few constraints related to dubbing. One of the biggest problems he points out is finding the right voices to match the voices of the characters of the original actor. The goal is to match the voices almost perfectly, bearing in mind that dubbing voices only seem unnatural to people who are familiar with the real voices of characters (Herbst, 1997). Apart from matching the right voice to the characters, there is also the constant illusion of authenticity in the form of visual reminders throughout the film, as well as the foreignness of the setting and characters (Baker and Hochel, 1998). Another important constraint referred to by Herbst is the length of the text. Dubbing is the only

[12] According to Professor Chiaro (in Evans, 2003), "spoken Italian has also been invaded by a host of what Professor Chiaro calls "doppiaghese" - terms created or misapplied to translate essential American film language like "bastard" and "son-of-a-bitch," which have no real equivalents in Italian".

form of translation in which the length of the translated text has to be identical to the length of the original text. The dubbed text has to match specific visual features of the original film (Herbst, 1995).

The effects of dubbing

> *Any film is a mirror of the culture in which it unfolds, along with the mentality, attitudes and intentions of its screenplay author and director, all conveyed through the language and visual images which serve as their vehicle. How then can these cultures, mentalities and attitudes be transposed in film so that they remain intelligible and digestible for an audience embedded in a different culture?* (Whitman Linsen, 1991: 125).

Translating culture-specific content is difficult. Other than complying with 'orders from above', the translator needs to make educated decisions in order to make culturally unfamiliar material understandable to the target audience. What the viewer sees and hears reveals the individual psychology of the film's characters as well as the social setting which shapes their actions (Whitman Linsen, 1991). Moral values, political and historical identity, collective aesthetic tastes are all taken for granted by the original audience, which generally belongs to the same speech community or culture (Whitman-Linsen, 1991). When an American film is shown to an American audience, the lack of understanding is minimal. However, when a foreign audience is exposed to the film "the threads interwoven in the particular socio-cultural skein have to be rewound for those coming from different backgrounds" (Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 125). The only way to do this is linguistically since the scenes have already been shot.

The dubbed version of the film will never be exactly the same as the original. The translator has to make changes in order to adapt the film for the target audience. According to Toepser-Ziegert (in Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 127), language is socially determined; the authenticity of an original text cannot be completely preserved in the course of dubbing. For example, when something is unfamiliar in one culture, such as 'tea with the queen', the translation has to provide an equivalent to ensure understanding. Whitman-Linsen (1991) points out that many translators, when searching for an equivalent to a joke or tradition, opt to explain it rather than find an equivalent. This is not a good solution, especially in the case of film translation since there is no space for explanations or footnotes. Therefore, when the ultimate goal is to create a certain reaction in the target audience, such as laughter, changing the letter or words is unavoidable as long as the spirit of the original is maintained (Rowe, in Whitman-Linsen, 1991).

In order to reach a similar response between audiences, one would need to use words and phrases, especially when sarcasm for example is at play. Literal translations seldom work. If the original version contains, for example, proper names, events, and institutions, the target audience is usually not familiar with these references unless the terms are universally well-known. Many translators believe that there is not much sense in retaining them and find equivalents which trigger the same responses in the target audience. However, when sufficient familiarity exists, they are retained. With the Austin Powers saga, removing some of the culture specific events, institutions and even proper names could remove the very essence of the film and it may not be understood as a product of the local surroundings (Whitman-Linsen, 1991).

One of the biggest changes made to a translated film is the title, which is responsible for selling the film and grabbing the interest of the potential audience. The translation of film titles provides an interesting insight into the culture which the film represents. The translated title of a film has to carry the same appeal and meaning value as the

original; in other words, it has to appeal to the foreign audience in the same way it appealed to the original audience (Whitman-Linsen, 1991). Some alternative titles used for the film we are studying (*Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava)* include: "*Austin Powers 2; 008 la spia che mi ha sedotto* (Italian promotional title)*; Austin Powers – Spion in geheimer Missionstellung* (German title)*; Austin Powers 2: It's Shagging Time* (working title)*; Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava* (Italian title); and *The return of Dr. Evil.*

According to Otto Heess-Quack's monograph *Der Ubertragungsgrozess bei der Synchronization von Filmen* (in Delabastita, 1990: 98):

> *[…] mass communication acts both as a 'reflector' and as a 'moulder' of the values, norms, stereotypes and attitudes of a given society. Translation acts like a 'gatekeeper' and, accordingly, the shifts introduced by the dubbing process in the imported film material can be studied as evidence of the differences between the respective* ***Symbolmilieus*** *of source and target culture.*

Factors such as slang and dialect tend to disappear; social criticism is toned down, obscurity is filtered out, and sexual remarks, indirect or blatant, are changed (Delabastita, 1990 and Whitman-Linsen, 1991).

In describing the relationship between the original film and translated film, Delabastita (1989: 206-210) provides the following checklist (formulated by Toury) which should be considered:

- The varieties of (local) dialect, social (register, jargon) or personal (idiosyncrasies, speech dialects).

- The different treatment of various special types of verbal messages: character speech vs. narrator speech, flashbacks, letters written/read, musical texts, background conversation, peritextual signs such as titles and credits.
- The rendering of wordplay, other forms of humorous language use, taboo elements, prosodic features.
- The translator's attitude towards loan words and foreign idioms.
- The possible introduction of genre markers i.e. stereotyped elements that further conforms the target film to the target audience's expectations.
- What governs the audience's behaviour?
- The target culture's position in an internal context.
- The source culture's position in an internal context.
- If the target audience imposes restrictions on the translator.
- To which genre does the source film belong? Does the genre to which the source film belongs exist in the receiving culture? Does it have a counterpart in the target culture? Is it a genre where the qualities of the vocal performance are important to the entire artistic sign? What culture status does the source film genre claim? Does the source film claim status within the genre to which it belongs?
- The interaction between verbal narration and visual narration; the role of non-verbal information in dubbing; how relevant is the non-verbal information?

The complete checklist is not applicable to the present case study, however any translator should consider all the possible issues. According to Delabastita (1990:105) "It seems impossible that a researcher can study film translation (or any other kind of translation, for that matter) in isolation from the cultural context in which it is practised – and vice versa". Translation scholars are always taught that translation is not a clearly defined and independent practice, and therefore outside factors always have to be considered. The section which follows helps understand the importance of translating within the context in which the words are spoken and will be spoken in. For

example, when translating something humorous, the translator has to consider the source context of the humour and its effect in this context. In order to understand this translation has to be discussed in conjunction with film as well as humour.

Translation, Film and Humour

Humour, in the words of Nash (in Lopez, 2002: 34) "characterizes the interaction of persons in situations in cultures, and our response to it must be understood in that broad context". Cracking a joke comes naturally to some and is generally understood immediately. Translating the same joke is more of a challenge, since in most cases it only achieves the same reaction if it is translated with full understanding of the new context in which it will be used. Plays on words, puns, sayings and proverbs, idioms, and metaphors are difficult to translate; once they are combined with images they tend to be a translator's worst nightmare.

> *If film dubbing represents the quintessence of the art of translating, and the rendering of humour sets the highest hurdles within this film dubbing, then the translating of visually-linked humour tops the hierarchy of supreme difficulties* (Whitman-Linsen, 1990:147).

Through her research, Professor Chiaro (in Evans, 2003) discovered that viewers laughed at different things at different times. Each person has his or her own sense of humour. What I find funny, you may consider vulgar or simply not funny. The same applies to different cultures. When translating a comedy, it is up to the translators to determine what makes the audience laugh, at which points in the film the audience laughs and how he or she will achieve this in the dubbed version. The translator of a

film has to make the foreign audience laugh at the same points as intended in the original text (Whitman-Linsen, 1991). However, Anthony Pym (in Sprott, 2003: 26) stated that "texts do not always go exactly where and when their senders or receivers want them to go; they can be intercepted, delayed, destroyed, blocked and destroyed; notice enters the passage of information, contexts change […]". According to Appadurai (1986: 5) "diversions are only interesting if considered in relation to the path from which they have strayed. We have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories. It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things. Thus, even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context". Thus by studying things in motion, we can identify the influences of the various actors involved.

Rowe (in Whitman Linsen, 1991: 140) believes that "the intensity of the audience reaction to a comic line is far funnier than any literary fidelity to the original sense. A funny line is intended to get a laugh. If it fails to do so when translated into the foreign tongue, then the translation has failed, whatever its literary excellence or fidelity to the original". Response is what humour is all about. A joke cannot be explained – an explanation will destroy the humour – thus an equivalent has to be found.

> *The dubbing of comedy requires above all a writer capable of writing a funny line in his own language […] It is in comedy that the dubbing writer diverges most in function from the translator. The former must to a large extent be a comedy writer* (Rowe, in Whitman-Linsen, 1991: 139).

Generally humorous expressions rely on situational, linguistic or cultural factors (Marta Mateo in Lopez, 2002). Researchers have found that the greater the cultural load and/or dependency on linguistic factors, the more difficult it will be to be faithful to the source text (Lopez, 2002). Once the intended humour has been identified in the original script, the translator then has to reconstruct the humour so that it can be just as easily understood in the target text.

Vandaele (2002) in his paper *(Re-)Constructing Humour: Meaning and Means* attempts to answer the question: What does it mean to say that one translates humour? He first looks at humour as a cognitive effect - that humour causes a humorous effect ('the humour feeling') and when translating this humour the same humorous effect needs to be achieved. He then attempts to answer the question: What is humour? Vandaele (2002) discovers that apart from various dictionary definitions of humour, some believe it to be completely dependant on stimulus and the response. Others believe humour is whatever has a humorous effect. In other words, when a person smiles or laughs they have experienced humour. He points out that the translator inevitably has to ask when translating humour: what caused the humorous effect (an image, a sound, or the words) and what effect does the humour cause (does the viewer laugh, or even squirm)? Thus humour is dependant on cause and effect (Vandaele, 2002).

Vandaele (2002) identifies theories which should help researchers see humour's 'shape' and 'structures' in order to compare the source text and target text humour. In doing so the most general concepts used to characterize humour are *incongruity* and *superiority*. In relation to humour in terms of cause and effect, incongruity is "a humorous effect caused by a departure from normal cognitive schemes", in other words, humour is playful and aggression does not exist in humour and superiority relates to the effect of humour, any social effect, intention or cause (Vandaele, 2002: 150). In Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humour, (2002) the perceived differences between jokes are compared to six hierarchically ordered Knowledge Resources

(parameters), namely knowledge concerning Language (LA); Narrative Strategies (NS); Target(s) (TA); Situation (SI); Logical Mechanism(s) (LM); Scripts Opposition(s) (SO). His theory allows the translator to evaluate how much a joke differs from the source joke (Attardo, 2002). Based on the above-mentioned Knowledge Resources, the translator is able to evaluate a joke and adjust his/her translation strategy accordingly.

Vandaele (2002) also distinguishes between two types of humorous feelings in relation to the *internal* and *external* effect humour causes: (1) a humour feeling caused by intended acts, and (2) humour caused by external (situational) non-intentional causes. Both are discussed in order to determine if there is a communicator and if there is an apparent humour intention and/or effect. The humour is a result evaluated in terms of the type of situation and communication. The concept of communicated pragmatics is also introduced, where a distinction is made between the speaker's intended meaning and the message's factual effect on the hearer – the "intention-effect distinction" (Vandaele, 2002: 151). According to Lopez (2002) pragmatic approaches to translating humour have emphasised the importance of attaining effect equivalence from both source and target audiences. In other words, just as the words in the original cause the audience to laugh, the translation should do the same.

In relation to humour, pragmatics[13] (as an area of Language Studies) identifies what actually happens, how one thinks, speaks, acts and understands the humour used. According to Vandaele (2002: 160), the "strongest asset of pragmatics in the discussion of humour translation is the distinction that it makes between *illocution* and *perlocution,* [that is] the speaker's *intention* (intended meaning) and the message's factual *effect* on the hearer [in other words] the intention-effect distinction". Sometimes however when translating, one may not always be able to grasp the

[13] The study of the way in which language is used to express what somebody really means in particular situations, especially when the actual words used may appear to mean something different (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2000).

sender's intentions; "we may have our own (conscious or unconscious) agenda while grasping intentions; many other contextual elements play a role in the interpretation process, original context may be absent, new contexts may emerge continuously; the humorous function of the text may be combined with other textual functions" (Vandaele, 2002: 165).

Then, as is the case with every type of translation a translator is faced with, the translator has to make the right decisions in order to reproduce the text as ethically correct as possible. This brings us to one of translations biggest open-ended questions, that is, the question of ethics which ultimately affects the decisions the translator makes in his/her translations. According to Pym (in Vandaele, 2002:166), ethics in translation requires "respect for a source text's meaning, the commitment to represent a client, the acknowledgement of the other, as well as respect for divergent opinions on what is considered a good translation in different locations". Based on this notion, Vandaele (2002) points out that humour as a rhetorical device is not too concerned with ethics since it is very incongruent and raises a wide-range of effects.

J. D. Muller (in Whitman-Linsen, 1991) distinguishes between 3 types of humour in film (or as he calls it "gags"): (1) only conveyed through the acoustic channel; (2) conveyed through the optical channel; and (3) conveyed through the acoustic and optical channel. The first is easy to tackle, the second does not affect the translator as much and the third is the most challenging. With regard to the film we are studying, *Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava*, the third is where our focus will lie, since the type of humour used throughout the film is largely dependant on the visual images and acoustic channel. Muller (in Whitman-Linsen 1991:38) breaks down the third type of humour into four categories: 1) the acoustic comments on the optical; 2) the optical comments on the sound; 3) the build-up is acoustic and the punch line is optical; and 4) the build-up is optical and the punch-line is acoustic. The film we are studying is filled with visual jokes, puns, slapstick silliness and irony.

As this chapter draws to a close, a final point needs to be made on dubbing and its impact on the International world. Currently, almost every film, including animations are dubbed into at least 28 languages world-wide. The growing popularity of films world-wide has aroused a lot of attention from key studio players in Hollywood, since (as mentioned earlier in the chapter) when another market opens it means an increase in revenues.

However, a successful film in its original language necessitates a successful translation in the target language, and, in order to maintain high returns, high standards in the international environment with regard to dubbing need to be preserved. If this is done, it has a positive impact on the international release of the film as well as increases the "value of the product by 'branding' recognition and cultivating a reputation which is synonymous with quality (Chinn, 1998)[14].

It seems to be a growing trend worldwide that the knowledge of many languages is a prerequisite in today's modern world. It thus makes sense that dubbing can be said to be a Modern Day Must. As the world grows smaller, and staying at home to watch a good movie is the easier and, in some countries, the cheaper option, film production studios have realised that audiences are increasing by the minute. In many countries, smaller film studios are working in conjunction with larger studios in order to dub more films at a faster rate. This means that both the original film studio as well as the target culture film studio can increase profits. Countries such as France, Italy, Germany and Spain have become experts in dubbing feature films. One important reason for this is that European countries have embraced the DVD dubbed product. As a result of this dubbing has become increasingly important in countries such as Italy (this will be discussed in Chapter 3).

[14] Debra K. Chinn is the director of Fox International Theatrical Dubbing at 20th Century Fox Film Corporation and handles all international live-action and animation theatrical releases.

In this chapter we looked at the literature available with regard to audiovisual translation as an area of study in Translation Studies. In the first section, two approaches to audiovisual translation were focused on: audiovisual translation as a process and audiovisual translation as a product. The next section looked at the art of film translation, more specifically dubbing and its effects. This was followed by an in-depth look the effects of dubbing within the context translation, film and humour. In the next chapter provides a discussion of the world of Austin Powers in order to provide a context and an understanding of the film before the analysis is carried out.

CHAPTER TWO: THE WORLD OF AUSTIN POWERS

A number of books have been written and published on the Austin Powers trilogy. Some of these books concentrate on psychoanalysing the character played by Mike Myers, Austin Powers; other publications thrive on scrutinizing the ins and outs of the Austin Powers world. One book in particular, by Andy Lane (2002), takes an in-depth look at the World of Austin Powers. Lane's approach to the book is similar to the creators' approach to the films themselves, and dares the reader to lose himself in this crazy world. The first part of this chapter delves into this world by first presenting Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery and Austin Powers in Goldmember, as Lane did. The second part of the chapter explores this world by looking at Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me. The final section of this chapter deals with a brief summary of reviews and critiques on the film, Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me.

The following section serves as a summary of the first and third films in order to introduce the second film which is discussed in detail in the second part of this chapter. All three films are linked by one main ingredient: Time Travel. The time-line on which Austin travels can only be "deciphered" once all three films are taken into consideration.

Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery



Illustration 1

(www.bestprices.com)

It all starts with Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery (1999) – a charming, suave swinger who is witty and sophisticated or as Lane puts it: "Women want him and men want to be him". In the year where free love reigns, 1967, Dr. Evil's most diabolical plan fails thanks to Austin Powers. In an attempt to regain his evil reputation he sets out to destroy Austin Powers, who is known as a photographer by day and international man of mystery by night. Austin and his boss in the British Intelligence, Basil Exposition, design a fool-proof plan to confront Dr. Evil. Austin does this by walking deliberately into the trap set by Dr. Evil in London's Electric Psychedelic Pussycat Swingers Club. Austin escapes an assassination attempt on his life by one of Dr. Evil's minions with the help of the swift judo moves of his new found playmate, Mrs Kensington. He does this while still strutting his stuff and grooving to the music. Dr. Evil retreats and escapes in a cryogenic freezing capsule within a rocket disguised as a gigantic Big Boy. The Big Boy (known as a gigantic mascot for a food chain) launches off the top of the club and sends the frozen Dr. Evil, and his cat Mr Bigglesworth, into suspended animation. Austin decides that he too shall be frozen in order to combat Dr. Evil should he return.

Thirty years later, in 1997, Dr. Evil returns and is even more determined to carry out his one and only aim: to extort as much money as he can from whatever organisation will pay. Upon learning of Dr. Evil's return, Basil, who has held the same position as Chief of British Intelligence for over 30 years, orders Austin to be defrosted so that he can stop Dr. Evil from destroying the world. Austin teams up with Miss Vanessa Kensington, super female spy. Austin now finds himself in a new decade, and with the help of Miss Kensington, he attempts to adapt himself to this new way of life. At the same time, Dr. Evil reclaims his evil empire from his number two agent, Number Two, who has diversified the evil empire into various legitimate money-making schemes under a company called Virtucon. Dr. Evil also discovers that the semen he had left behind was used to clone a son, Scott Evil. While trying to relate to his son's slacker lifestyle and, when not trying to have him killed for his slackness, Dr. Evil attempts to build a relationship with his son. Without letting this newly found forced relationship get in the way, Dr. Evil orders that a nuclear weapon be stolen from the former Soviet republic of Kreplachistan. His plan is now to burrow the weapon deep into the core of the earth, using an underground torpedo, and then use it to blow up the world unless the United Nations pays him one hundred billion dollars.



Illustration 2

(Lane, 2002: 33)

It is in Dr. Evil's nature to threaten the world with destruction by blackmailing any organisation which will pay so that he can keep his own organisation funded. He is fascinated by technology, such as huge drilling machines, sharks equipped with laser beams, and seats that deposit people into fiery pits.

Austin and Vanessa suspect that Virtucon is a cover for Dr. Evil's schemes and they travel to Las Vegas. In an attempt to infiltrate Virtucon's premises, they are captured by Dr. Evil's hench-people. Austin and Dr. Evil confront each other in a showdown in front of Dr. Evil's torpedo. Dr. Evil orders the torpedo to be released and in a slow-motion dive for the abort button, Austin destroys the missile just before it penetrates the hot, gooey centre of the planet.

Dr. Evil then escapes into space again; Austin and Vanessa celebrate their meeting each other and the fact that they saved the world. Almost unbelievably, Austin the 'world's greatest swinger' commits himself to Vanessa and they get married.



Illustration 3

(Lane, 2002: 13)

Austin Powers in Goldmember

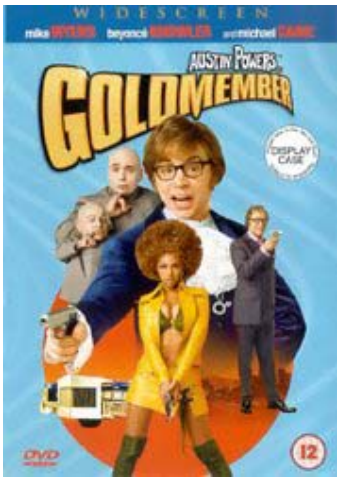


Illustration 4

(www.images-eu.amazon.com)

In the third film, *Austin Powers in Goldmember*, (2001) while Dr. Evil is in exile in space, Number Two attempts once again to launder the evil empire, called Virtucon, into a 'legitimate' business – a Hollywood talent agency. While in exile, Dr. Evil initiates Preparation H (his other evil attempts A through G all failed). He explains to his loyal followers that he plans to travel back in time to 1975 and locate a Dutch scientist named Johan Van Der Smut, who loves 70s pop culture and most of all, gold. His love for gold was so extreme that he lost his genitalia in an unfortunate smelting accident and coined the name Goldmember. Goldmember designed a cold fusion tractor beam which could attract meteorites towards the earth, but technology in 1975 was not advanced enough for him to build it. For this reason, Dr. Evil brings him to 2002 where he can use the tractor beam to attract the asteroid Midas 22 (constructed entirely of gold) to earth. Just before Dr. Evil can put his plan into operation, Austin Powers captures Dr. Evil who is then sentenced to 400 years in prison by the World Organisation. Austin is knighted by the Queen for his acts of heroism. Proud of his achievement, he looks over his shoulder and sees that his father's chair (Nigel Powers) is empty. As Austin calls to his father's empty chair the room erupts in laughter and

Austin drowns in his sorrows, performing a rocking set of tunes from his shag pad with Austin groupies. Unexpectedly, Basil Exposition shows up and informs Austin that his father has been kidnapped from his private yacht, the HMS Shag-at-sea. The only clue the kidnapper left behind was the calling card of the criminal mastermind known as Goldmember.

Austin, in an attempt to find out more information about Goldmember, visits Dr. Evil in a maximum security prison in Geneva. In a quid pro quo tactic, Dr. Evil tells Austin where Goldmember is and Austin transfers Dr. Evil to a regular prison where he can be with his beloved Mini-Me. Dr. Evil reveals that Goldmember kidnapped Nigel Powers 27 years ago in 1975. Austin travels back in time using Basil Exposition's time travelling equipment, a pimpmobile and infiltrates Goldmember's New York club. Here he makes contact with former lover Foxxy Cleopatra who informs him that his father is being held captive behind the scenes at the club. Austin realises too late that his time-travel had been a trap and he is captured. Goldmember uses Dr. Evil's time machine to take Nigel back to 2002 and is soon followed by Austin and Foxxy Cleopatra. In the meantime, Dr. Evil escapes from prison. Austin discovers from Basil, who has a mole in Dr. Evil's organisation, that Dr. Evil and Goldmember are in cahoots and Dr. Evil's base is near Tokyo. Together Dr. Evil and Goldmember formulate a plan to attract the meteor Midas 22 to earth and use the heat to melt the polar ice cap. Austin and Foxxy rescue Nigel from Roboto Industries which has built the Preparation H tractor beam, but Dr. Evil and Goldmember escape with the beam.

Mini-Me discovers that he has been replaced by a now evil Scott Evil, and decides to join the good guys and leads Austin to Dr. Evil's submarine in Tokyo. Austin, Foxxy Cleopatra and Mini-me infiltrate Dr. Evil's submarine lair and confront him. Dramatically, Nigel Powers reveals that he is Dr. Evil's father. He embraces his two sons and everyone except Goldmember is choked with emotion. Goldmember is determined to complete Dr. Evil's plan.



Illustration 5

(Lane, 2002, 79))

Austin and his long-lost brother combine forces and together reverse Preparation H's magnetic field, flinging the Midas 22 meteor back into space and electrocuting Goldmember by his own golden member.

Austin, Foxxy, Dr. Evil (now called Dougie Evil) and Mini-me head back to Hollywood to enjoy the premiere of *Austinpussy* (a film based on Austin's exploits) while Scott Evil is left to take control of Dr. Evil's organisation (Lane, 2002).

Austin Powers, The Spy Who Shagged Me; and *Austin Powers, La Spia Che Ci Provava* on DVD.



Illustration 6

(www.35mm.it)

Our case study is based on the Italian version of the *Austin Powers* film as packaged on a DVD. Therefore the film as it is presented on the DVD will be discussed in conjunction with descriptions provided in the book by Andy Lane (2002).

Two years after the release of the first *Austin Powers* film, the 'International man of mystery' is back. In this film there is more comedy, more action, and more evil villains. In the first movie, the 007 legacy was ridiculed. This time, "good-natured-fun" is made of several films such as *Star Wars*. The film in question begins with Dr. Evil's return to earth from an orbiting "Big Boy" with a plan to take over the world. While Dr. Evil was floating in space, his crew created a clone one eighth his size, which Dr. Evil names Mini-Me and his Number Two was building a legitimate business empire – Starbucks (yes, the coffee house giant). Dr. Evil continues to ignore Number Two's efforts to legitimatise the business and is determined to rule the world. His primary aim, once again is to prevent Austin Powers from de-railing his plans to take over the world.



Illustration 7

(Lane, 2002, 49)

First, Dr. Evil attempts to kill Austin by replacing Austin's new bride Vanessa Powers Kensington with an exploding robot (better known as a 'fembot'). When this attempt fails, Dr. Evil sends Scottish guard "Fat Bastard" 30 years back in time (with his new time machine) to when Austin was frozen to steal his 'mojo' – his life force, charisma and the power which helps him defeat Dr. Evil time after time. Back in 1999 while trying to seduce one of Dr. Evil's most seductive agents, Ivana Humpalot, Austin realises that his mojo has been taken. Austin alerts Basil of his impairment and Basil sends him back to 1969 to thwart Dr. Evil's plans. Fortunately '69' is Austin's favourite number and favourite year. He arrives back at his own shagpad in 1969 and after surviving another attempt by Dr. Evil to kill him, Austin makes contact with Felicity Shagwell, a CIA Agent. Austin falls in love with Felicity Shagwell, but without his mojo he feels useless. Meanwhile Felicity discovers that one of Dr. Evil's agent's Fat Bastard has infiltrated the Ministry of Defence and she sleeps with him in order to plant a tracker on him. Fat Bastard inevitable leads Felicity and Austin to Dr. Evil's island lair. Dr. Evil having managed to take full control of his 1969 organisation, has elaborated a plan to put a giant laser, developed by the noted Cambridge astrophysicist Dr. Alan Parsons, on the moon and threatens to destroy the entire world.



Illustration 8

(Lane, 2002 : 42)

Austin and Felicity are captured by Dr. Evil's forces and Dr. Evil and Mini-Me travel to Dr. Evil's hidden moon base which is divided into Moon Unit Alpha and Moon Unit Zappa. Austin and Felicity escape and by using a borrowed Apollo 11 rocket, they find Dr. Evil. Dr. Evil takes Felicity hostage and Austin is faced with having to choose between preventing Dr. Evil's laser from firing or saving Felicity's life.



Illustration 9

(Lane, 2002, 39)

Austin chooses to foil Dr. Evil's scheme and having realised that he made the wrong choice, he uses Dr. Evil's time machine to travel ten minutes back in time in order to save Felicity's life and at the same time to foil Dr. Evil's plan. Unfortunately, the test tube containing his mojo is destroyed in the process. Dr. Evil escapes through the

porthole of his time machine. Austin and Felicity return together to 1999 once Austin realises that his mojo had never really been taken from him since a true mojo comes from within.

With regard to the DVD's technical aspects, the quality of the images is outstanding and the bright "shagadellic" colours are particularly striking. The audio (Dolby Digital 5.1 track) is perfect and dynamic. This is probably all that is necessary to say about the technical aspects of the DVD. It is the extra features offered on a DVD are far more interesting, such as the "Extras and Highlights". This DVD included a commentary with Mike Myers (Creator & Screenwriter), Jay Roach (Director), and Michael McCullers (Co-writer). With excerpts of the film playing in the background, they casually talk about it, and added in silly stories. Also included is a 25-minute behind-the-scenes feature, broken up into chapters, 20-minutes of deleted scenes, 3 teaser-trailers, and 3 music videos by Madonna (Beautiful Stranger), Lenny Kravitz (American Woman), and Melanie C (Word Up). Extras also include the original cast and crew biographies. The Menus are always in motion, are accompanied by sound, and typically 60s, have floating colourful flowers in the background while *Austin Powers* dances in the foreground. There are also hidden features, such as extra songs and stories about the film and one of particular interest, a hidden credit profile of companies involved in the production of the DVD[15]. With regard to the success of the three films, it is interesting to note that the first film, once released on DVD, was more successful than the creators had imagined it to be. Figures and commentaries prove that this film topped all comedies with its DVD release.

[15] With regard to this it is interesting to note that no mention is made of the Italian production companies, and mention is only made of 3 American companies involved in the production of the English version of the DVD.

Commentary and reviews from critics

The Austin Powers franchise stirred up much expected criticism when Jay Roach, Mike Myers and Michael McCullers released the first of the trilogy in 1997. The release of the second film in 1999 and the third in 2003 sent critics into over-drive. Some had indifferent opinions; some contradicted themselves and were torn between calling the films a flop or a great success. There were those who called the trilogy fantastic, refreshing, perfect for a comedy lover's collection, and others who viewed the films as insulting, crude and a pathetic attempt at comedy. This section of this chapter takes a brief look at various critiques and reviews found on the internet[16] on the film Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me.

Today the internet is known as a vast source of information and it is for this reason that only a selected amount of reviews were chosen in order to provide a fair commentary on the film. It is my hope that this review of critiques and commentary will facilitate the final chapter to perform a fair and non-judgmental analysis. Positive and negative commentary and critiques from both English and Italian websites were chosen and will be discussed in conjunction.

According to Paul Russell (1999), a regular critic on DVD Angle, moviegoers, especially fans of the Austin Powers comedy style, could hardly wait for the sequel to Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery. The sequel picked up perfectly where the first film left off, and continued to amuse and throw an unsuspecting audience off track. Along with many other critics, Russell believes that the sequel is a comedy which can be watched over and over again, since every time it is watched a new gag or joke is discovered which may have been missed the first time around. "When you have

[16] Critiques and Reviews were obtained only from the internet since it was easier and comments were more varied than finding hardcopies which contained reviews and critiques.

something good, you have no choice but to go with it and improve on it" (Russell, 1999), and that is why the second film is regarded as the best of the trilogy.

> *Like the James Bond series that provided it with comic inspiration, the Austin Powers series benefits from a certain familiarity. Not every James Bond movie is good, but once you get started going to them you would never think of missing one. Same with Austin Powers.* (Ebert, 2002)

In the first movie, the jokes, gags and story line served to introduce the world of Austin Powers to the audience and to poke fun at the 007 legacy, in the second film, the audience knew what to expect. They were surprised with new material and, as movie lovers, were delighted to discover that this time around not just one, but several films were made fun of, including Star Wars, The Phantom Menace.

Various users on the Internet Movie Database (IMDB, 1999-2002) had different opinions; they felt that the sequel was funny but contained far too many recycled gags from the first film and that the creators and producers, Myers and Roach adopted the attitude: 'if it ain't broke then don't fix it'. In other words, the same tag-lines and jokes which were used in the first film were re-cycled and used in the second. Collin Jacobson (2002), a well known reviewer for *DVD Movie Guide* felt that not only did the creators lacked creativity this time around, but also assumed that the audience would not notice their "pathetic attempt to recapture […] the same gag". Not only did Jacobson and other IMDB users not appreciate the recycled jokes, but found the plot to be silly. Having said this he admits that while watching the film you laugh hysterically, and only realise how silly the plot is once you leave the cinema, and give the film some thought.

On the same internet site (IMDb.com) another user commented that Austin Powers is one of those movies that has become more popular as time wears on and that the plot is not so important with this kind of movie.

> *When news of a sequel hit the streets, fans freaked. It's safe to say that AP2 is rivalled only by The Phantom Menace as 1999's must see. […] We're ecstatic to report that AP is a friggin' laugh riot, as Myers and crew have strung together another brilliant collection of one-liners and over the top, sometimes horribly disgusting, sight gags. The follow-up to 1997's video hit has Austin heading back to the 60s to track down his mojo, stolen by one of Dr. Evil's comically evil hapless henchmen. What's mojo? A multi-colored, stringy looking mess that makes Austin irresistible to the ladies. But the plot isn't so important. This is the Austin you know and love, […] as Basil Exposition of British Intelligence says, "Just sit back and enjoy yourself.* (Hamn, 2000)

Columnist for *Chicago Sun-Times.com* Roger Ebert (1999) said:

> *There are some big laughs in "Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me," but they're separated by uncertain passages of noodling. You can sense it when comedians know they have dead aim and are zeroing in for the kill. You can also sense it when they don't trust their material. The first "Austin Powers" movie burst with confidence: Mike Myers knew he was onto something. This time, too many scenes end on a flat note, like those "Saturday Night Live" sketches that run out of steam before they end. "SNL" cuts to music or commercials; "Austin Powers" cuts to song-and-dance interludes.*

Ebert also comments that where in the first film the satirical target was the James Bond series, the second film doesn't want to be a satire so much as just zany, raunchy slapstick and ironically filled with laughs where the audience should rather be groaning where they should be disgusted. He highlights a specific scene where the sexy Heather Graham, a spy dedicated to her craft, goes to bed with a villain from Scotland named Fat Bastard, who wears a kilt, "weighs a metric ton," and is covered with greasy chicken bits. Ebert also says that the film has moments when it addresses the audience directly, for example when Austin introduces Burt Bacharach and Elvis Costello, or later observes, during a scene set in the British countryside but shot in the Los Angeles hills, "Funny how England looks in no way like Southern California." According to Ebert, a particularly successful and funny scene is that where "Austin's private parts were obscured by a series of perfectly timed foreground objects. After Dr. Evil blasts off in a phallic spaceship, characters look up in the sky, see what the ship looks like, and begin sentences that are completed by quick cuts to other dialogue. Like other critics, he concludes his commentary on a positive note saying that as crass as Austin may be, there is underlying likeability to Austin Powers that allows us to enjoy his joyful swinger attitude throughout the film.

A review by CNN.COM Film reviewer Paul Tatara titled: Maybe, baby, you can resist *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999), Tatara strongly advises movie lovers to give this film a miss. He says that the film is a 90-minute collection of stupid puns and pop culture references strung together by a lot of unrelated scenes.

> *That it's sporadically amusing at best is all that's required to make it a huge success […] it's finally gotten to the point where people laugh hardest at what they've seen and heard before. […] The dollar-greased wheels of the entertainment*

> *industry -- that hyperventilating circle-jerk of product, promotion, promotion, promotion, promotion, and pretend dissection -- have already deemed this one worthy of your bucks, and nothing that anyone writes or says about it is likely to stop you from seeing it. So go. […] You might, however, take the time to wonder why something like this (which ultimately isn't much better than those "Saturday Night Live" movies that everyone's so happy to retch over) passes for a hit comedy nowadays. Not too much to expect, really.* (Tatara, 1999)

According to Tatara (1999), it is almost impossible to review a film of this type anymore since film-goers no longer care for comments such as: "the film lacks character and is thus not comedy; or that the jokes are endlessly repetitive, with punch-lines that get involved several times within the scenes the reader of the review says you're expecting too much from a silly comedy and that you are a kill-joy". According to him, viewers today regard a film without rhythm, such as this one as a master-piece when in fact it is a mess.

Tatara believes that the problem lies with the audience and cannot understand why today's audience is incapable of measuring just how minuscule its "wonderfulness" actually is. Ultimately a film of this kind is made to make the audience laugh, even if they are laughing at what they laughed at in the first film. However, the film according to him definitely lacks structure and momentum and a lot more could have been accomplished while still retaining the all-important level of idiocy. He concludes his reviews saying: "Try not to run over anybody on your way to the theatre".

In another review by Tatara entitled: Retro funk of 'Austin Powers' blitzed by thin script (1997), also for CNN.Com, he said: 'Austin Powers is to put it politely, disappointing. Oh, […], let me put it unpolitely and say it stinks'. He justifies this by saying that this movie is a skit and not a movie:

> *Think how many other movies starring former "Saturday Night Live" cast members can be described the same way. There's a reason for this, and I'll bet everybody in America except for those cast members already knows what it is. Simply put, a movie is not a skit. A skit is a skit (I hope you're writing this down). A movie is a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end, with characters that play off of each other and maybe even grow a little bit by the time the whole thing is over.*

The problem according to Tatara is that the Austin Powers saga is funny, and in those moments of amusements, an illusion is created that it is actually a movie. He further says that between the set, clothes and quirky comments, Myers and Roach have not created the best comedy of the year, but rather the best comedy commercial.

Some users on the IMDB agreed with Tatara, and said the following:

> *The popularity of the Austin Powers character is another example of our decaying culture. Hardly an original concept, incredibly stupid male spies have been played to far better effect, both on the big screen (Peter Sellers' Pink Panther) and the small screen (Don Adams in "Get Smart"). Mike Myers's character is derivative of one of Martin Short's old characters on the classic SCTV show (Jackie Rogers, Jr.), but audiences (and critics) don't seem to have noticed. These movies are geared towards adolescent audiences, with their unimaginative sexual references and fart jokes.*
> *If you are a sixteen year old out on a first date, an Austin Powers movie might be suitable for you. Mature audiences will find this completely forgettable movie to be annoying, and it is definitely not for children.*

> *15 minutes was enough for me. Mike Myers is a very clever man, he must be because he persuaded somebody to produce this garbage. His comedic skills are derived from the dregs of the cesspool, the bottom of which is where this film belongs. After 15 minutes of this trash I`d had enough, my wife would`nt even attempt to watch it. This muck is very popular and it underlines the fact that vulgarity, homosexuality and sexual innuendoes are what the masses want, what a depraved world we live in.*
> *chester-gray.*

Andrew Sarris, reviewer for The New York Observer in an Article titled "Austin Powers Is Back with a Frenzy of Cesspool Humour" (2002) in support to Myers's talent said "Mr. Myers, the Canadian changeling from the second generation of Saturday Night Live, is a gifted mimic with both verbal and physical wit and a creatively wide-ranging satiric imagination. He is not without a certain charm. Yet I can't help feeling that he and his associates decided to wing it this time and see if it made any difference to their target audience."

Hamilton (2003), an IMDB user agreed that the film and its characters are funny, but its crude using "tasteless jokes" and vulgar humour gets repetitive after a while:

> *While the first movie was James Bond-ish and had something resembling a plot, the sequel has a lame story, although pretty good direction. Myers looks bored throughout much of the film. The permanently bland Heather Graham is almost as bad an actress as Elizabeth Hurley. The once great actors Michael York and Robert Wagner look embarrassed. The movie is funny but perhaps not as funny as it thinks it is.*

Other users on the same website (ibid) agreed that no plot or story line exists in this movie, but rightly say that this is what Mike Myers intended. In the film itself, Basil

Exposition turns to the camera and says: "I suggest you don't worry about those things and just enjoy yourself." Clearly the creators wanted to let the audience know that they need not concern themselves with details and rather just enjoy themselves. Myers in many interviews, including in the commentary on the DVD Extras (1999) has said that his primary aim was to make the audience laugh, and not take things seriously, in other words that the audience should not worry too much about a plot and story line, and just laugh. That is why this user said that the film was not "good", "great", or "the best" (comments associated with films with a good plot or story line), but rather said it was "funny". The film did what Myers expected, that is: please the audience; provide jokes, sexy ladies, cool music and unforgettable performances.

An Italian reviewer on PIXEL.com, Elisabetta Marino (1999), found that apart from the lack of rhythm, the kaleidoscopic colours, incredible music score and cameo roles made up for content lacking in the story line and Mike Myers. She concluded her review saying that the film was in fact "fallico".

Another Italian reviewer for PIXEL.com, Luca Bandirali (1999) said that the first film contained key ingredients such as key cinematographic details, excellent photography and musical scores, a comical script with jokes that worked and were original, a perfect rhythm between gags, music and innuendoes. Bandirali believes that the second film contained none of the above features. According to Bandirali, the first error made in the film is that the 60s character was no longer in the 90s, but back in the 60s. It was this 60s character who found himself uncomfortably in the 90s which made for good comedy, in other words this comically accident the character found himself in was funny, now that the character is back in the time he should be in, it is, in his opinion, no longer funny. For example, the language used by Austin and his sexual character were humorous to a woman of the 90s such as Vanessa, Austin back in the 60s were no longer as funny, but expected. Bandirali found this film to be a huge let down, and commented that it was a great pity that a commercial cult is being

created around a film which clearly has no value. One could then argue this and point out as we did earlier that perhaps Bandirali was focusing too much on the details of the film and not just watching it and enjoying it as he probably did while watching the first film.

Andrea Tagliacozzo (1999) points out that even though viewers and reviewers regarded the first film as better, the figures, which ultimately count, prove otherwise. In other words, where the first film brought in approximately 55 million dollars, the second came in at around 200 million dollars. This goes to show that ultimately the film achieved its goal and millions of viewers did actually watch the film. Whether they liked it or not is a matter of opinion. Tagliacozzo termed the film "esilarante" ("exhilarating"). Other Italian reviewers agreed with Tagliacozzo and said that it would be wrong to judge a Ray Roach film based on cinematographic criteria since, like many of his and Myers's other films, the aim is to make people laugh at a sort of on-man-show and at something not even the viewer knows they are laughing at. It's all in aid of having fun.

The problem with Italian viewers, as Tagliacozzo points out, lies in the dubbed version, where it was difficult to understand the double meanings intended with phrases such as "Yeah, Baby", "Oh, Behave", or "Shaggadelic!" another problem lay in the missing British accent Austin should have (cockney English), Dr. Evil's Canadian English accent, or even Fat Bastard's Scottish accent. Italian viewers were deprived of this and at the same time were expected to react in the same way English viewers did. Put simply the same effect could naturally not be expected. This aside, Tagliacozzo points out that even though this dubbing error exists, the comedy Myers presents visually makes up for this dubbing disaster.

Raffaele Capano (1999) agrees and felt that the second film along with the third far out run the first. According to him, it can only get better and it did. What was

evident though was that the film was not successful at the cinema but rather with regard to DVD sales. He agrees that it was a dubbing disaster since translating many of the polysemic words could have been a harder challenge than many would have expected. However he maintains that better voices could have been chosen, ones which were actually similar to the original characters and there was a lack in trying a little harder to match lip movements to the words they were saying. It seemed as if saying the words was far more important than paying attention to dubbing techniques. This aside, the DVD as a whole is one of the best in circulation, thanks to the quality of sound and pictures.

According to Russel, (1999), the DVD version of the film attracted a lot of attention, and it is difficult to find anything negative to say about the DVD as a package. What makes watching this film on DVD even more entertaining are the special features offered. Mike Myers, Jay Roach and Michael McCullers provide great commentary where they talk about the film, the impact which it had and provide silly sideline stories. Their commentary supports the notion that the film was made to entertain and make the audience laugh. They themselves, while commenting on the film, poke fun at it and emphasise that the minor details film critics concern themselves with are not important in such a film. This highlights that when translating such a film, the translators goal should also be the same.

Sean McGinnis, a user on DVDVerdivt comments on the DVD:

> *[…]Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me is the successful follow up to the original Austin Powers riot-fest recently released to DVD […] is sure to please Austin Powers fans. In this sequel to Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery, the cast and crew return for even more laughs. […] As we all know, New Line has consistently produced terrific special edition DVD's and this*

is no exception. Despite the bright color palette of this film, this disc remained visually stunning [and] this disc is loaded with extras, including a commentary track with Mike Myers, director Jay Roach and co-writer Michael McCullers, a behind-the-scenes documentary, four theatrical trailers (including one from Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery), and 20 minutes worth of deleted scenes. The disc also includes some groovy musical extras such as music videos from Madonna, Lenny Kravitz and Mel B as well as links to Dr. Evil's musical numbers within the film and Comedy Central's "The Dr. Evil Story."

Catherine Edwards (1999), film reviewer for Insight Magazine stated that Austin Powers, with the second film Austin Powers transformed himself into a cultural phenomenon.

It's so genius how all the phrases he made up, like `Yeah, Baby! Groovy!' and all that stuff really permeates our culture now," Graham recently told MTV, seemingly oblivious to the fact that people really did say "Yeah, Baby! Groovy!" 35 years ago. Never mind. Hipsters such as singer/songwriter Elvis Costello, who makes a cameo appearance (with Burt Bacharach), love Myers' spoof. "He really got the English humor down, but he does it in a way that everybody in the world can appreciate" said Costello. Austin Powers [is] all over the world and the World Wide Web, plastered on the sides of buses ... just about everywhere a media buyer can lease space. People who haven't seen the films know the persona.

Further on in her article she writes:

Peter Bradshaw, film critic for the London Guardian, is amazed that Myers can dish out such crass humor -- the word "shag" in the movie's title, for example, is a Britishism for sex. "It's pretty crude," Bradshaw tells Insight, "but his humor and dialogue are

> so clever that he gets away with it." The Singapore Board of Film Censors was less amused, changing the film's title to The Spy Who Shioked Me (shioked means good or nice). The board eventually decided "shagged" was acceptable after all -- perhaps hoping the "No Sex Please, We're British" sensibility isn't completely passe.

Derek Armstrong (1999) wrote that this film doubled the character's pop culture prominence and the vernacular use of the phrases "Yeah, baby!" and "Do I make you horny?" (1999). He goes on further to say:

> *[…] rarely has there been such a widely mimicked film icon as Austin Powers […] Audiences were so giddy to pluck themselves back into that free-lovin' world of shagadellic goofiness, they didn't even notice that many of the jokes were essentially repeated, or that the improvisation level was shockingly high. All that mattered was Myers returning […] The movie hits its funniest strides when revealing in its anachronistic cultural references, such as Dr. Evil covering Will Smith;s paternal ode "Just the Two of Us", or aping Jerry Maguire by telling his miniature self, "You complete me". Capable of enormous feats at the box office, as well as getting incredible mileage from kitsch, the Austin Powers series should be healthy for as long as Myers wants to continue coining catch phrases.* (Armstrong, 1999*)*

Ultimately generally the reviewers, Italian and English, admit that the Austin Powers bug seemed to have bitten everyone who watched the film. The ultimate goal was achieved whether reviewers and critics liked it or not: the film set tongues wagging and made the audience laugh. Myers gives a sweet and impish tone to his performance that accommodates rude humour, which allows for the risqué jokes to seem like good clean fun. Thus is seems appropriate to conclude this chapter with a comment from Paul Russel (1999):

Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery for hit DVD in late 1997 it flew off the shelves. With vast enhancements over the first The Spy Who Shagged Me is a true gem. Time and time again New Line has delivered sensational DVDs, with each new one being just a bit better than its predecessors. The Spy Who Shagged Me guarantees hours upon hours of entertainment value. If you have a DVD-ROM you can count on even more fun and games. As for the movie The Spy Who Shagged Me is a great way to sweep the blues away or just sit back, realize and lose yourself in comedy at its best. No comedy lovers' collection is complete without this DVD.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ANALYSIS

This chapter starts with a brief overview of dubbing, with particular reference to Italy where the film was dubbed. It then moves on to discuss how the introduction of the DVD has substituted 'going to the movies'. These two short sections allow us to see the context in which the dubbing took place, before moving into the analysis proper. The procedure adopted in the analysis is briefly recapitulated before introducing the actual analysis.

The importance of dubbing in Italy

> *The world of cinematography has never liked the idea of dubbing, this phenomenon occurs mainly in Europe (as in the USA it is almost unheard of) where the sense of national identity and culture is very strongly felt. And yet dubbing is widely used or, to be more precise, exploited, albeit unwillingly.* (A.I.D.A.C, 2002[17])

This was the opening line made in an appeal by the President of A.I.D.A.C at the 54th Venice International Film Festival in an attempt to appeal to authors and actors. A.I.D.A.C faces dubbing problems on a daily basis, one of the biggest being that of recognition, that is, recognition of what goes into the dubbing process and how difficult it actually is. As pointed out in this appeal and in Chapter 1, authors focus their studies and arguments on whether subtitles are better or less accurate than dubbing. In the end this is not really the issue: dubbing is a commodity and ultimately it is the

[17] Association of the Italian Translators for Cinema and TV

consumer, the spender and the client who determine whether dubbing is successful or not. Very rarely is a film produced for one specific market that is with one specific country or language group in mind. More often than not, a film is produced for a world-wide market. In other words, cinematography originates and travels as a form of merchandise to be distributed on a large scale (A.I.D.A.C, 2003).

> *The extremely complicated interactions between the industry of telecommunications, the production of special effects and the production and the distribution of the film itself do not allow the original message of the author to reach the viewer in its integrity. The artistic content of the film is sacrificed to the materialistic interests of those who translate it and whose main aim is to boost their sales. The art of dubbing is not just a sequence of litterally translated words but it involves the rewriting of the whole text, adapting it to the culture of the people you are translating for. In the materialistic industry of today the art of dubbing is seen as too slow and, dare I say it too expensive to produce and is therefore systematically stripped of all its artistic value.* (A.I.D.A.C, 2003)

In Italy, and many parts of Europe, the art of subtitling and dubbing has been perfected to such a degree that different language versions of a single film can be produced for various linguistic regions in a matter of days if not hours.

> *[…] dobbiamo sarcasticamente pensare che finalmente l'Europa sa fare una cosa meglio degli Stati Uniti, e cioè noi sappiamo doppiare e gli Usa no.* (A.ID.A.C, 2002).

It is a well known fact that America plays a very important role in the cinematic world. However, the European Community comprises at least double the number of cinema and television viewers than America does. The only major difference is that, whereas

in America and Britain, English is the first language if not the most understood language, the European community is divided into at least nine linguistic regions and approximately thirty different languages (Lyken, 1991). In order to overcome these language barriers, subtitling and dubbing of television programmes and films has become very popular. Where for a bilingual English speaking person watching the soap opera, such as *The Bold and the Beautiful,* in Italian is confusing and uncomfortable, for the Italian audience this is perfectly normal.

European audiences are used accustomed to watching films and programmes in their subtitled and dubbed forms even if at times the lip movements do not match the words coming out of the actors' mouths. According to Lyken (1991:27), any form or method of Language Transfer "will inevitably interfere with the film or programme but it should attempt to be as unobtrusive as possible so that, ideally, the new viewer's experience of the programme will differ as little as possible from that of the original audience". This is, however, only possible if skilled and competent methods of Language Transfer are applied in order to preserve the original identity of an audiovisual production (Lyken, 1991).

Many professional dubbers feel that if there is anyone one which should be thanked for the introduction of dubbing into Europe, it is Mussolini (also known as Il Duce).

> *The introduction of sound in the cinema began five years after Mussolini's rise to power in 1922, and the Fascist dictator quickly took advantage of the situation. Intent on purging Italian life of various insidious foreign influences, he ruled that all movies imported into the country must be in Italian* (de Forrest, 2003).

By the late 1920s, the only means available to diffuse standard Italian throughout Italy, was through its many dialects. Il Duce decided that this could only be done by

dubbing English and Italian films into Standard Italian and by Italian working citizens. Subtitling foreign-language films would have been out of the question, says Sofia De Dominicis, a dubbing synchronization specialist: "There were a lot of people who didn't know how to read" (de Forrest, 2003).

Italian dubbing studios were quickly set up in Rome and the Italian dubbing industry, *il doppiaggio*, was born (de Forrest, 2003). Traditionally, all the countries which were under a right-wing regime during the 30s - Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain - adopted dubbing as a system, and subtitling was used by other countries such as Scandinavia, Holland and Belgium.[18] Dubbing countries can be found at the centre of Europe, whereas Northern Europe and Scandinavia are known as subtitling countries.

In Europe approximately 30 dominant languages are spoken with German, French, Italian, English and Spanish (in order of dominance) as the most dominant (Lyken, 1991). In the Chapter 1 we pointed out that Language Transfer 'describes the means by which a film or television programme is made understandable to target audiences who are unfamiliar with the source language in which the original was produced' (Lyken, 1991:11). We also mentioned that Language Transfer can take place visually, by means of subtitling (where the text is superimposed onto the picture), or aurally, by means of dubbing (where the original voice track of the film or programme is actually replaced by a new one). Subtitling and dubbing allow a single film to be more accessible and understandable to target audiences throughout the world.

> *[L]anguage is an intristic property of all audiovisual productions. Hence it is felt that the changing – or transfer – of this property also changes the production in itself and*

[18] According to Lyken (1991: 12) the largest source language transfer for cinema in Europe is English (2500 language transfer processes per year), followed by French (350 language transfer processes per year), Italian (200 language transfer processes per year), and German (150 language transfer processes per year). In total approximately 90% of imported (into Europe) cinematic films are translated into a European language.

> *therefore might affect its very identity. At the same time, television is now, for many people, the most important source of knowledge of their own culture and language, as well as being a window to the rest of the world. Because of the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe, Language Transfer can be an important means of access to life-styles, thoughts and creative productions of peoples from other regions in Europe and elsewhere. High quality Language Transfer is, therefore, a vital key to better understanding between countries and people in Europe* (Lyken, 1991: 28).

Initially films were dubbed because the "great" leaders thought it to be a "perfect tool" to preserve native languages in dominating European countries, most of all to prevent the inevitable *Americanisation* of their land. In as much as the dubbing and subtitling of films and television programmes did prevent the loss of native languages in European countries (since the average family is influenced by what is on television tonight), native languages were still and continue to be influenced by American English, referred to as *doppiaghese* by Professor Chiaro. We referred earlier to the example used by Professor Chiaro where in wedding vows, original Italian films still to this day use the term *Io voglio* as opposed to 'yes' or 'no'. It is inevitable, that with the breakdown of borders, Language Transfer plays a significant role in the television and film industries.

The dubbing industry in Italy is chiefly located in Rome, in the midst of *Cinecitta'* and *RAI*. In Italy dubbing actors are grouped into class performer groups A, B and C. Class A demands extremely high fees and class C much less. Statistics, according to Lyken (1991), show that the Italian industry can produce more dubbed films in a shorter time and at cheaper rates than Germany and France, its major competitors. The dubbing industry in Italy is so advanced and its rate of turn-over in quantity is so fast that almost no films or television programmes are subtitled (Lyken, 1991:34). In 2002, Italy dubbed approximately 300 films and several thousand hours of television fiction which

together cost approximately what it costs to make one movie in Hollywood. Films in Italy bring in approximately 600 million Euros thanks to DVD sales (A.I.D.A.C, 2002).

Italy's dubbing professionals are known as dialogue adapters, vocal directors, dubbing actors or dubbing assistants. According to A.N.I.C.A., dubbers in Italy feel, though, that the quality of dubbing is not maintained and that cheaper options are used, such as unqualified dubbers. It would seem that over the years, the role of the translator (skilled or unskilled) has increased dramatically when it comes to films. The work of the translator appears to be more in demand since almost every film made is required to be dubbed into all or at least one of the many languages of the world.

However, even though it may seem that the demand for the work of the translator or dubber has increased in relation to the increase in demand of films in various languages across the globe, dubbers in Italy feel that dubbing as an art is being eroded because of the perception of the concept of cinema as a product.

> *An author can only protect the integrity of his work from misunderstandings and adulterations by selecting the qualified author's technicians who will be responsible for translating, adapting and dubbing the dialogues. One of the problems faced by the authors is, in fact, the unprofessionality of many of the workers in this sector.* (A.I.D.A.C, 2002)

In short, inexperienced and cheaper dubbers and dubbing actors are hired, which diminishes the value of professional dubbing. Dubbing actors in Italy take their work very seriously and firmly believe that they should be given the recognition deserved for their hard work. Recently, AIDAC and UNI-ISO (International Standards Organisation) together established a certification system to establish rules and to protect the dubbing industrial process, the quality of dialogues, and the level of professionalism.

They have also fixed the terms for a 300-hour specialization course for adaptors. (Paolinelli, 2002)

Even with this system in place, many (money-driven) industries do not adhere to this certification system mentioned above, and the lack of this recognition of translators and low financial compensation drives them into strike mode (knowing exactly the impact their strike will have on the film industry[19]). Releasing the films with subtitles or using amateurs is simply not an option since Italy's dubbing actors are considered the world's best and most conscientious dubbers (Young, 1998).

> *The dialogue adaptor is, in his way, in his style, a translator, "transforming" a text from one language to another. In contrast to literary translation, in the film text there is not only the verbal element to take into account, but also the whole physical structure of the image, which makes for more imperatives which must be obeyed and drastically reduces the dialogue adaptor's metacreative ability* (Paolinelli, 2002).

Italy's actors are much more than dubbers. "They tend to really know that actor. They really know him ... or her. They tend to know the nuances, as if they are speaking from the same voice," (Gvirtzman in Young 1998). Italians demand dubbing excellence.

In Rome, five major dubbing cooperatives handle the bulk of the film and television work, and there are more than 100 smaller cooperatives. In addition, there are schools devoted to the various technical aspects of dubbing (De Forrest, 2003).

[19] In 1998, 2000 and 2003, dubbing professionals went on strike in Italy. As a result the latest Hollywood films did not make their much anticipated summer premiere release at the scheduled Venice Film Festival (Young, 1998 and A.I.D.A.C, 2003).

There is even the equivalent award ceremony to the Oscars held in Italy known as 'The Voci nell'Ombra' (Voices in the Shadow). This Festival takes place every October in *Finale Ligure* and awards the *Anello d'Oro* to the year's best vocal performances, best adaptations, and best overall *doppiaggi* in films and television. It is, therefore, no surprise that dubbing actors become celebrities in Italy (de Forrest, 2003).

One could argue that *Il Duce* succeeded in preserving the Italian language through his enforcement of standard Italian language. In Italy parents are complaining that their children are not learning English because they never hear English spoken. These parents feel that films should be viewed in their original language with the use of subtitles so that the English language can at least be heard by "the film addicted youth".

> *Mussolini is gone. Today, it is American popular culture that threatens to blanket the world. Doppiaggio represents a distinctly Italian blend of art and technology, like bicycle design, Murano glass or regional sheep's-milk cheese. As the promotion for Voci nell'Ombra asserts, dubbing is an artisanal tradition, to be valued, celebrated, preserved* (De Forrest, 2003).

Dubbing is the preferred choice of film translation in Italy and with the increasing demand of DVD's its value needs to be appreciated. The section which follows briefly discusses the role of the DVD and its role in the cinematic world.

The DVD substitutes going to the movies

It is very rare for a film to be released without its first big-screen red-carpet preview. However, the fact still remains that most films are made with one thing in mind: ensuring that it is a blockbuster and in order for it be one, sales need to higher than ever. The DVD medium has made it even easier to sell films.

In Italy, the technique of dubbing has grown in conjunction with the development of this highly regarded form of cinematic transportation. Audiovisual demand is enormous; through dubbing and the DVD facility, an answer to globalization and bridging cultural differences may well have been found (Paolinelli, 2002).

The DVD was first launched in Japan, in December 1996, with feature films such as *The Assassin*, *Blade Runner*, *Eraser*, and *The Fugitive* from Warner Home Video. With its immediate success, over 150 titles were available on DVD in Japan by April 1997. Well aware of the DVD's success in Japan, The Warner Bros launched the DVD in the United States in March 1997; within two weeks, almost 19,000 DVD discs were purchased in the U.S. By December 1997, 530 titles had been released, and over 1 million DVD discs had been sold nationally and internationally. By the end of 1999, over 100 million discs had been produced with approximately 5,000 titles. This number had increased to 10,000 titles available in the U.S. by 2000 and over 15,000 worldwide. By the end of 2001 there were about 14,000 titles available in the U.S., by the end of 2002 there were about 23,000 titles available in the U.S. and by March 2003, six years after its launch, over 1.5 billion copies of DVD titles had been sold (Paolinelli, 2002).

Alongside the success of DVD films in the U.S. and Asia, the European market took off in 1998 and, by the end of 2003, had sold approximately 2 billion copies of DVD titles within its market. Translators became more in demand and the cinematic industry

changed dramatically. Watching a film in the comfort of ones home became far cheaper and time-friendly. Not only did the film industry start to gain from this innovative invention but so did home theatre producers, and movie lovers began installing the best and latest home theatre equipment in their lounges. Films are now released more quickly and more efficiently. The DVD has 'the potential to penetrate an audience larger than that of digital cable and digital satellite combined, DVD offers studios a means of capturing far more and the audience put a higher monetary value on owning a DVD, permanent copy – one that's infinitely re-playable for no extra charge - than do on having one-time experiences like going to a cinema or watching a broadcast' (DVD Demystified). Where in the past the best film sound could only be heard within the walls of the cinema, the DVD now offers high quality sound and individual style, which is customised to the needs, interests and bank balance of the individual. According to Mitchell (2003), the technological innovation of the DVD has changed cinema in a way that no one ever expected; DVD has changed the way films are made, sold, bought and how they are watched. It has also changed the consumer.

The features that a DVD film offers are continuously being developed. Some of these features include: over 2 hours of high-quality digital video (some up to 8 hours of high-quality video); support of wide screen films on a standard or wide screen TV; offer up to 8 tracks of digital audio for multiple languages, commentaries, etc.; can include up to 32 subtitle tracks and up to 9 camera angles (different viewpoints can be selected during playback); offer on-screen menus and simple interactive features (for games, quizzes, etc.); contain multilingual identifying text for title name, album name, song name, cast, crew, etc.; have instant rewind, fast forward, search to title, chapter, music track and time-code; also offers instant playback, freeze, step, slow, fast, and scan, parental lock, and programmability (playback of selected sections in a desired sequence), random play and repeat play; are durable (no wear from playing, only from physical damage) and not susceptible to magnetic fields; are resistant to heat; are compact in size (easy to handle, store, and ship; players can be portable; replication is

cheaper than tapes or laserdiscs); offer various language choices (for automatic selection of video scenes, audio tracks, subtitle tracks, and menus); and have digital audio output (PCM stereo and Dolby Digital), and recognition and output of DTS Digital Surround audio tracks (DVD Frequently asked questions (and answers), 2003).

However the DVD also has many disadvantages. For example: some movie disks do not function properly (or do not play at all) on some players; DVD specifications are Vague and the inadequate testing of players and discs has resulted in incompatibilities; DVD recorders are more expensive than VCRs; the DVD has built-in copy protection and regional lockout; the DVD uses digital compression and sometimes poorly compressed audio or video may be blocky, fuzzy, harsh, or vague; some DVD players and drives can't read recordable DVDs; very few players can play in reverse at normal speed; and variations and options such as DVD-Audio, DVD-VR, and DTS audio tracks are not supported by all players (DVD Frequently asked questions (and answers), 2003).

Yet, the quality and 'no disturbance' factor of a DVD greatly outweigh the option of watching a film in the cinema. The DVD offers fascinating features such as a running commentary on how the film was made, cut-out scenes, and interviews with actors and directors. Sometimes, a DVD version is created which may differ from the big-screen version in the sense that it may include scenes which where cut out in order to obey the set-out rule pertaining to the length of a standard film. Sometimes an age restricted big screen movie has a more acceptable version on the DVD.

The DVD has by far become one of the most important influences on the cinematic world and not one film is made without bearing the DVD in mind. After the introduction of the DVD, movie studios knew things would never be the same. The film creator does not only consider how the film is going to appear on the big-screen, but more importantly, how it will appear on DVD. The innovative and technological

features offered on DVD allow the viewer to enjoy a lot more than they would on the big screen. From slow motion to watching frame by frame, DVD features are innumerable. Gone are the days where you watched a movie once on the big screen and then had to wait a long time before you could rent it on VHS Tape and watch it in the comfort of your home. Today the DVD version of the film is available within a short period after its premiere. Movie lovers and collectors have never been so satisfied.

> *We should hope that the new medium, which will force dialogue adaptors to work in a new way, towards a centralization of multilingual culture, does not lead, instead, to a further standardization of the cinematographic "product" by the industry, worsening in this way the present working conditions, compressing further their rhythms and degrading the role accorded to dubbing* (Paolinelli, 2002).

More often than not a viewer will watch a film at the cinema and not enjoy it at all. This was the general impression many viewers had of the film studied in this case study. For example, well known film critic Colin Jacobson (1999) commented that he did not like this film when he saw it theatrically and it was only after watching it on DVD that he started to develop an appreciation for it. He termed it "pretty good and consistently funny" and preferred it after watching it on DVD. He only recommends the DVD version of the film especially since it contains a large amount of extras and language options. These language options on the DVD facilitated the initiation of this study and the subsequent sections attempt to analyse the effect of language adaptation on the DVD.

Procedure of the analysis

Chin (1998) provides a description of what it takes to achieve successful dubbing results: It all begins with the "VTK", the Voice Test Kit. The film studio in the United States, for example, sends the dubbing studio in Italy the VTK which contains the following: dialogue lists, character profiles and synopses, voice casting recommendations, edited voice testing tapes with edited voice samples for each character, storyboards, model sheets and size comparison charts, and cast lists of the original version's actors with profiles on each of them. Once the dubbing studio in Italy is familiar with what is required for dubbing the film in terms of the VTK's indications, they start auditioning and casting the film's characters. Then, after the cast has been chosen and approved by both the Italian dubbing studio and the U.S studio, the dubbing process begins.

In Chapter 1 Delabastita's guidelines for analysing a film translation were considered. In this chapter these guidelines are taken a step further and are used in the form of what he terms a checklist for analysing a film. In other words, these guidelines, together with the theoretical issues discussed in Chapter 1, are used as a basis of analysis.

Delabastita uses the following approach to translation studies provided by Theo Hermans:

> [A] *view of literature as a complex and dynamic system: a conviction that there should be a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case-studies; an approach to literary translation which is descriptive, target-orientated, functional and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translations, in the relation between translation and other types*

> *of text processing, and in the place and role of translations both within a given literature and in the interaction between literatures* (Hermans, in Delabastita, 1990: 99-100).

According to Delabastita this is a perfect point of departure for the study of film translation. Many theorists believe that by using this same point of departure and the guidelines provided by Delabastita (as discussed in the Introduction), a successful screen translation analysis can be discussed and carried out.

For the purposes of this study two focus groups were identified:

- FOCUS GROUP 1: English speaking
- FOCUS GROUP 2: Italian speaking

As discussed in the introduction to this study, each group consisted of 4 subjects aged between 19 and 35. Group 1 watched the entire English original during which their responses to specific sections of the film were noted. Group 2 was asked to watch the entire dubbed (Italian) film and their responses noted. Once both groups watched both films, they were asked selected questions based on the checklist provided by Delabastita (in Jardim, 1998:22). The list has been adapted in order to meet the demands of this case study and is provided in the introduction to this study.

The interpretation made by the 2 focus groups in relation the checklist, helped identify decisions made in the dubbing of the comedy; more specifically the translation of humour used in the English film into Italian. While watching the film, the focus groups were asked to pay specific attention to verbal messages (character speech, narrator speech, flashbacks, musical texts, background conversation, titles, and credits), dialects, accents, names of characters, the rendering of wordplay, other forms of humorous language use, taboo elements, stereotyped elements, and the interaction between verbal and visual narration.

Once combined, these varied interpretations highlighted the norms underlying the translator's solutions to translation problems within the dubbed film. The same list is used to look at the transference of the value and the meaning that the film has for the source film culture as well as for the target culture from a South African perspective. In conjunction, the analysis, the theory presented and the critiques and reviews of the film help determine whether the dubbed version of the film diminished the intended appeal of the film.

The Italian DVD version of the film has been divided into 30 chapters. In the analysis examples are drawn from the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – Single / Ho sposato un'autopa
Charter 2 – Titoli di testa
Chapter 3 – "Mio padre e' malvagio e vuole dominare il mondo"
Charter 4 – Servizio fotografico
Charter 5 – Il quartier generale del Dottor Male
Charter 7 – Compagna di scacchi
Chapter 10 – 1969, Casa di Austin Powers
Charter 12 – Fex cosi … non si dimenticano
Charter 20 – Analisi di laboratorio
Chapter 21 – Lisola del Dottor Male
Chapter 22 – Just the two of us
Charter 25 – Base luna

These extracts are discussed in terms of the checklist as set out in Chapter One. The analysis itself follows below.

The analysis

MICRO LEVEL:

A look at the individual screen translation

What target language and geographical variant of that has been used?

The source language of the original film is English, with the main characters using both British and American English accents. The Italian dubbed version of the film has made use of what can be termed as 'Standard Italian' as the dominant language. An important translation problem exists when trying to render a specific type of English into Italian. For example, when rendering of 'polite English' into Italian the correct register has to be chosen in order to represent social differentiation on a lexical level. In other words, if a higher register or style of English is used, the Italian vocabulary must correspond (La Trecchia, 1998). The character of Austin Powers may have posed a major problem since in the original English version, Austin speaks with a distinct British accent characteristic of the 60s. In other words, the type of language or words used is directly related to the 60s free-spirit era. The same character in the Italian version speaks fluent Standard Italian, and perhaps does not demonstrate the 60s era as well.

For most of the other characters in this film, Standard Italian was used in the dubbed version with the exception of the character of Fat Bastard. In the English version, this character speaks English with a heavy Scottish accent, and in the Italian version he speaks a specific variation of Italian, namely that spoken in the region of Naples, which distinctly sets this character apart from the other characters. Both focus groups felt that by using these two corresponding accents in the two different languages, the translators clearly represented two different social classes on a lexical level.

Another character, Frau Farbissina, does not speak 'standard' Italian. In the Italian version of the film, she speaks Italian with a German accent. After also having watched the English version of the film, the Italian focus group felt that the use of her German accent while speaking Italian clearly corresponds to her character in the English version of the film (in which she speaks English with a German accent). It was agreed, by both focus groups, that this has probably been done deliberately in an attempt to maintain consistency with her German character in the source language film.

What type of screen translation technique has been used?

The technique used for translating the film is exclusively dubbing, which once again highlights Italy's tendency not to use subtitles. In many circumstances, the use of subtitles would have been appropriate; however the dubbers of this film decided that a narrator would fulfil this function more effectively. An example of this can be found in the introduction used in the original film which is a parody of the Star-Wars epic: written text scrolls up the screen in conjunction with a narration (as in the Star Wars films). However, in the Italian version the English written text is maintained but with an Italian narration. The Italian focus group felt that the viewer has no choice but to try and read the writing on the screen since there is nothing else to look at. The better part of the same focus group felt that this inevitably leads to some confusion since as viewers they are concurrently seeing English but hearing Italian. The English focus group felt that this same scene in the English version of the film was carried out better since as the words scrolled up the screen the English text is also narrated.

Were additions or reductions made to the plot?

Through the dubbing process of this film, no additions or reductions were made to the plot of the film. The Italian focus group felt that the Italian dubbed DVD version had not deviated in any way from the plot of the original English version of the film. Both the original English and translated versions contain exactly 30 Chapters.

After having watched the English version of the film, and discussing various scenes with the English focus group, the Italian focus group found that in some circumstances shifts do occur where changes were made to the dialogue within the plot and where the meaning of the text had been changed in the translation (this will be discussed later) – this occurs frequently with gag-lines and jokes. However, both focus groups agreed that the viewer, (the source language viewer as well as the new target language viewer), of this type of film must remember that the plot of this film is simple: there is a hero who battles it out with a villain, saves the world and ultimately gets the girl. Considering a plot of this nature, simple and straight-forward, it seems almost impossible that the dubbing process could in fact alter the plot with a couple of mistranslations and shifts. When translating, even the most difficult translations such as wordplay, translators generally tend to preserve the meaning rather than the joke so that the plot is not lost in the process (Jaskanen, 1999).

Which strategy was used if more than one language is used in the source text?

Fortunately the original English version of the film did not contain many examples of the use of a different language. The English focus group could only draw upon a couple of examples from the original film. In the original version, in Chapter 5, Dr. Evil speaks to Farbissma in German asking her how she is. The Italian focus group pointed out that in the Italian version, the use of German is not maintained, and Dr. Evil asks Frau the same question, but in Italian.

The English focus group pointed out another example found in Chapter 25: after declaring what he wants from the American President, Dr. Evil says "Ciao", which is Italian for 'good-bye'. The Italian focus group responded to this saying that in the dubbed Italian version, the Italian term 'Ciao' was not maintained but substituted with the Spanish equivalent expression "Adios". Both focus groups felt that the dubbers of the film may have done this in an attempt to maintain the 'foreignness' as expressed in the original.

A look at dubbing

Does synchrony between visible body movements and audible speech exist?

There are many conflicting opinions concerning the synchrony between body movements and audible speech in the dubbed film. Some reviewers and critics (referred to in the previous chapter) mention that the translators made very little effort to maintain this form of synchrony. However, the Italian focus group commented that they felt sufficient effort was made to ensure synchronisation of body movements and speech during the film.

Italy, as discussed in Chapter 1 sets out high standards when it comes to dubbing and has an esteemed reputation as dubbers to uphold. For this reason the synchrony between sound and visuals are regarded by Italian dubbers as essential. Generally viewers expectations are easy to please: when the lips move the audience expects something to come out, and if nothing does, the audience feels that they have been robbed of something. The Italian focus group remarked that fortunately, this film is abundant with long-angle camera shots, which enable the viewer to watch the dubbed

version with more ease. In other words, they felt that they do not notice the lack of synchrony as easily as they would have if it had been shot with close-up shots. The same focus group also felt that another factor which played a very important role is the focal point of the camera shot. In many of the camera shots, the camera does not focus only on the character who is currently speaking but rather focuses on the actions and reactions of other characters. However they pointed out that this was not achieved in every scene. In Chapter 12 where Felicity and Austin are attacked by one of Dr. Evil's assassins, Mustafa, most of the camera shots are close-ups, and the lip movements are clearly visible. The Italian renditions of the spoken utterances are lengthier than the original, and lip- and synchrony between the lip movements and spoken words is not achieved as well as they are in other chapters. Part of the dialogue is as follows[20]:

Austin:	Who sent you?	*Chi ti manda? Parla!* (Translated as: 'Who sent you? Speak now!')
Mustafa:	Kiss my ass Powers!	*Baciami le chiappe, Powers!* (Translated as: 'Kiss my ass Powers!') '
Austin:	Who sent you?	*Chi ti manda? Parla!* (Translated as: 'Who sent you? Speak now!)
Mustafa:	Dr. Evil.	*Okay, Dott. Male.* (translated as: Okay, Dott. Evil)
Felicity:	That was easy.	*E' stato facile.* (translated as: That was easy)
Austin:	That was. Why did you tell us?	*E' stato piu' che facile. Perché c'l'hai*

[20] When quoting dialogue from the film, the dialogue was retrieved from the subtitles used on the DVD. The English dialogue appears in normal text on the left and the Italian text in italics on the right. The Italian text (is accompanied by a literal translation of it, carried out by myself).

		detto? (Translated as: That was more than easy. Why did you tell us?)

This scene was shot with close-ups of each individual character. The Italian focus group felt that this usage of close-up shots in the Italian version draws attention to their mouth movement. The same focus group suggested that perhaps if the scene was shot with all three characters in the shot, as opposed to zooming in on each character one at a time, lip-synchrony may have been maintained. The extreme close-up shots, and clear lack of synchrony between mouth movements and dialogue deterred them as viewers from what is being said and the viewers become more preoccupied with Mustafa, Felicity and Austin's actions rather than the dialogue, which is the essence of the humour in this scene. After having discussed this scene with the English focus group the Italian focus group realized that this 'distraction' deprived them of a scene which in the English version is extremely funny.

The Italian focus group also made reference to another scene in Chapter 22. In this scene, in Dr. Evil's lair the musical number "Just the Two of Us" performed by Dr. Evil reminded the focus group that they were watching a dubbed version of the song and the film. In this scene a lack of synchrony clearly exists between the words, actions, lip movements and original background music. Those sung by Dr. Evil in the dubbed version and the original version are not those of the original song.

The English and Italian dialogue sung by Dr. Evil is as follows:

Dr. Evil:	This is a very sensitive subject.	*Spero che ti piaccia questa canzone. Te la dedico, "Ciccio".*
	From the moment I heard Frau say I had a clone, I knew that	*Dal momento in cui Frau il clone mi dono', le fibre sono Ok, mai piu' solo*

I'd be safe 'cause I'd never be alone.	*non sarò.*
An evil doctor shouldn't speak aloud about his feelings. My hurt and my pain don't make me too appealin'.	*Un vero dottor Male non dovrebbe avere un cuore, ne solo meta' e fa rima con terrore.*
I'd hope Scott would look up to me, run the business of the family, head an evil empire just like his dear old dad.	*Caro Scott, non deludermi, randelliamo tutti gli uomini. Sai che devi fare proprio come il tuo papa'.*
Give him my love and the things I never had. Scott would think I was a cool guy, return the love I have, make me want to cry, be evil but have my feelings too.	*In paranoia tutte quante le citta'. Scott non sa che sono un tipo OK. Io lo vorrei con me, ma proprio lui non e' cattivo.*
Change my life with Oprah and Maya Angelou. But Scott rejected me, c'est la vie.	*Lo giuro sulla testa, l'ho detto ad un talk- show.*
Life is cruel, treats you unfairly. Even so a God there must be. Mini-Me you complete me.	*Ma Scott, ascoltami, e' la vita. Sempre piu' cattivissimi. E lo so che è giusto cosi. Mini-Me, siamo insieme.*

The words sung in the original version of the film accompany the background music a lot better than those sung or used in the dubbed version. After a closer analysis of the words sung by Dr. Evil, the Italian focus group found that the translator chose rather to ignore lip-synchrony and 'almost' try to maintain meaning and thus translated this 'number' loosely. Yet, when the viewer hears the background music (a well-known

song originally performed by Will Smith, - Just the Two of Us), they expect to hear specific words to be sung by Dr. Evil. As Dr. Evil sings in Italian, the backing track is accompanied by the vocals "just the two of us". After discussing this scene, both the Italian and English focus groups found that the Italian words sung by Dr. Evil did not correspond to the background music as well as the English words sung in the original version of the film. This lack of synchrony between the words sung by Dr. Evil and those in the background music results in the viewer having to translate "just the two of us" sung in the background, and link it up themselves to the Italian words sung by Dr. Evil in order to find some synchrony between what they are hearing and what they are seeing. In fact the song in the original film is a dedication sung from Dr. Evil to Mini-me, a factor which the Italian focus group found that the Italian version did not clearly depict. In the English version of the film, this anachronistic cultural reference was the core of the humour in this scene.[21]

- **Do the dubbing voices 'act' their dialogues?**

According to Richard Killborn (quoted in La Trecchia 1998: 120) "Successful dubbing also involves an awareness of what is sometimes referred to as 'voice personality'. In other words those responsible for the dubbing operation will have to ensure that a voice with the right timbre and tonal qualities is found to match that of the original actor. Achieving a satisfactory voice match will make it more likely that the audience will be willing to suspend its disbelief and that a greater sense of realism will be achieved". Along with this the dubbing actor must also take into consideration the gestures which reinforce the verbal utterance. The dubbing actors have to avoid creating a distance between the voice and the image.

[21] A simple reason why this was not changed in the dubbed version could be the financial implications related to changing the musical score in a film, which is hardly ever done when dubbing a film.

Critics, reviewers (see previous chapter) and both focus groups found that in most cases the dubbing actors did not match the roles they played. After having watched the English version of the film, the English focus group watched a piece of the Italian version of the film in an attempt to compare the voices used. In fact, they agreed with the Italian focus group and reviewer Capano, who said that the film would have had more humorous effect if the voices chosen had been more similar to those of the original characters (Capano, 1999). The English focus group pointed out to the Italian focus group that, in the original version, the two characters who had distinct accents were Austin Powers and Fat Bastard, both key figures in the plot. Austin Powers, the main character is distinctly British. Everything that is British in Austin Powers is central in his character. Very rarely in the film does Austin appear in a shot without a British symbol in the background. His accent is a large contributing factor to the humour of the film. His British idiosyncrasies and colloquialisms constitute a major part of this films humour and are necessary in appreciating the films humour. However, the Italian focus group felt that in the Italian version, his idiosyncrasies, colloquialisms and accent, when dubbed into Italian, did not maintain the same effect as in the original English. In the dubbed version, visually, Austin is clearly British, and verbally he is Italian; whatever Austin says in the English version comes across as funnier (probably due to the British accent) than his words do in the Italian version. Clearly the missing British character in the Italian language results in a loss of a certain amount of humour which should be displayed.

The same can be said for Fat Bastard who, as previously mentioned, speaks a dialect of Italian which is from Naples. However in the original version he is distinctly Scottish, visually and verbally, as portrayed by his bag-pipe playing, clothing and Scottish accent. The Italian viewer has to overlook the fact that a *Napoletano* is dressed as a Scotsman.

Contrary to what critics said, the Italian focus group did, however, feel that generally, the dubbing voices acted their voices well: Dr. Evils manner of speaking with his "inverted-commas", his intonations and dragged out phrases are clearly portrayed by the dubbing actor; the same can be said for other characters such as Ivanahumpalot, Felicity Shagwell and Scott Evil where a distinct similarity exists between the original voices and those of the dubbing actors; Frau Farbissina is clearly German in the dubbed version and acts this part almost identically to her original character (this character may not have posed a major problem, since the portrayal of a German character is not uncommon in Italian films). According to the focus groups, by ensuring that the dubbing voices 'acted' their dialogue, the translator/s maintained the relationship between the humour used visually and verbally. For example, the Italian focus group looked at the voice, intonation and register used by Ivanahumpalot in Chapter 7. In the Italian version it almost gives the viewer (who has watched both the English and the Italian version) the impression that the same actress performed the same dialogue in both versions. The humour in this scene is based on her dialogue and actions, using any other dubbing actor would have made the humour weaker in the Italian version. However, both focus groups agreed with reviewer Tagliacozzo who said that even though the dubbing error did exist in various scenes where dubbing actors did not match their roles, the comedy presented made up for this dubbing disaster (Tagliacozzo, 1999).

- **Has any of the source information been deleted?**

No essential information which is necessary to understand the basic plot of the film has been deleted in the dubbed version. However there are instances where verbal information has been altered, or where shifts occur between the original dialogue and the translated dialogue. This is generally done in an attempt to ensure that the viewer has a better understanding of the plot or the dialogue. A lot of the information

presented in the original version is replaced with explanations or other topics which would be better understood by an Italian audience. For example, in Chapter 20 when Dr. Evil threatens the President of the United States of America and asks for bribe money, the following dialogue is followed:

Dr. Evil	Come on Mr President, Show me the Money. Show me the money! Show me the money! (said while talking into a telephone) You had me at a tear.	*Fuori i soldi, presidente, o vi riduco come l'Iraq.* *Caro presidente, ti faccio saltare i pozzi.* *Non avrai piu' neanche "gli occhi per piangere" (pointing at his eye).*
Scott Evil	It's 1969, Jerry McGuire won't come out for another 30 years. Nobody knows what you are talking about. Ass!	*Guarda anche siamo nel '69. La Guerra del Golfo non c'e` ancora stato. Nessuno sa di cosa stai parlando. Pirla!.*

The English focus group explained that in the original version, this was a parody from the film: Jerry McGuire. Quite evidently from the Italian translation, the translator felt that an Italian audience would not be familiar with this parody and thus substituted it with another. The Italian focus group felt that with a film of this nature the visual aspects were unavoidable and the translator had to create a text which the target audience would understand as well as a text which complemented the scenes on the screen. The visual in this scene shows a President negotiating via a Satellite link with a terrorist threatening world domination. Since the translator/s clearly felt that the Jerry McGuire parody would not be understood (as a coincidence, many of the members of the Italian focus group had never heard of the film "Jerry McGuire"), the dubbed versions dialogue was rather based on a War scenario. In theory, this is an appropriate strategy, since it is important to rather align verbal and visual with an analogy which

will be better understood by the new target audience. However, the Italian focus group felt that it was questionable whether the level of humour by doing this was maintained. The verbal was adapted to correspond to the visual, but the English verbal tends to be a lot funnier, since the typical viewer of this film is a movie-fanatic and would without a doubt link the humour to that used in the Jerry McGuire film. The English focus group emphasised in support of this claim that Austin Powers films were generally based on parody's of other films: by removing these elements in the dubbed version, the "idea" of the film is disrupted.

Another example where source information has been left out is in Chapter 4, where Dr. Evil tastes Starbucks coffee for the first time. In the original version, when he explains why he has milk-foam on his upper-lip (from drinking the coffee) he explains that coffee is drunk this way in Belgium. In the Italian version, he says that the foam is on his upper-lip because he is playing a game he always plays. The Italian focus group felt that the dubbed version deprived them of information which the original clearly provided. The same focus group said that the same could be said for the introduction of Mini-Me. In the original version, Number Two says to Dr. Evil that Mini-Me is one eighth his size. In the translated version, he says to Dr. Evil that Mini-Me can fit into his pocket. Clearly the viewer is robbed of the information regarding the actual size of Mini-Me. This being said, the focus groups agreed that if something had been removed from the original version, it had been done implicitly, and only a close analysis, as carried out between the groups, would reveal what had been removed.

One could point out, as has been done earlier, that another problem the Italian focus group found was that Austin should have had a British accent (Cockney English – as described by reviewers and the English focus groups), Dr. Evil a Canadian English accent, and Fat Bastard a Scottish accent.[22]. Once again while the Italian focus group

[22] It seems appropriate here to emphasise once again how by eliminating an accent of a character one deprives the viewer of essential information.

felt deprived of information they were at the same time expected to react in the same way English viewers did. Quite evidently the same effect achieved by the accents in the original could naturally not be expected in the translated version. If different accents had existed in the dubbed version, the viewer's interpretation of the characters could have been different. These accents, referred to above, were not translated but rather, as is the case with Fat Bastard, were given an Italian Regional accent. However, even if the plot of this film is not entirely dependant on the accents or geographical position of the characters, it does add to the effect achieved from the audience. The focus groups considered that it was fortunate that the visual aspects in this film made up for the lack of expected accents. In other words, if the Italian audience had never watched Austin Powers in English, they would not have expected Dr. Evil to have a Canadian English accent, but would most definitely have expected Austin's British accent and Fat Bastard's Scottish one, since the visual, and more specifically their attire influenced the audiences' expectations.

A look at the qualitative aspects

Are the syntax and style foreign?

In order to answer this question one would have to ask the focus groups if the sentences sounded as satisfactory in Italian as they did in English. It appears that, when the original script was translated into Italian, the target audience seems to have been taken into consideration. According to the Italian focus group this was clearly proven by the fact that the syntax and style were edited in order to sound Italian. In a few circumstances, expressions and punch-lines seemed to out of place, but the focus groups felt that this was rare. The same can be said for the script as a whole, in the sense that the words spoken in Italian sound natural and unforced. The dubbed film gave the impression that the style of the original version was conveyed. Thus the

target audience could appreciate the style of the dialogue and the appeal of the original.

How were loan words and / or foreign expressions translated?

As pointed out in Chapter 2 and by John Lyons (Producer of the film) the Austin Powers culture consists of phrases and words which have caught on with a whole new culture and mean a million different things to a million different people. It would thus only be reasonable for a film of this nature which has created many different expressions and words which are used by people, even after watching the film only once, in everyday vocabulary. The original version boasts words and expressions such as: "I'm spent", "Wait a tick", "Oh Behave", "Yeah baby Yeah", and "Shagadellic" (amongst many others). Many of the words or expressions used, mainly by Austin Powers, are British click-words used in the 60s. In the dubbed version, the same words were used, like "Shaguar", or they were adapted in order to sound Italian. For example, when Austin refers to Felicity as "Shagadellic", in the Italian version, she is "Scopadellica"; "Yeah Baby Yeah" or "Oh Behave" is translated as "Oh Fallico" and "mojo" as "mai-piu-moscio". British expressions such as "wait a tick" and "I'm Spent" lose their Brittishness and are translated as "Un momento" and "Spremuto", and "shag" as "sesso".

What was the result where taboo and/ or controversial elements were used and adapted?

Taboo elements indicate that a different culture is apparent. When one considers taboo and controversial elements, the line between what is acceptable in one country and that which is not has to be considered. Since Italy does not fall within the

category of countries such as India, or Pakistan where the mere mention of 'sex' is unheard of, the sexual references and/or innuendoes were preserved. Within this film, most of the taboo and controversial elements were interpreted correctly since taboo of this nature is acceptable in Italy. However, as Tagliacozzo (one of the critics cited in Chapter 2) points out, Italian viewers found that in the dubbed version it was difficult to understand the double meanings with regard to phrases such as "Yeah, Baby", "Oh, Behave", or "Shaggadelic!". As a whole, the taboo elements, such as the "passing air" and "shagging", in the sense of the words were not changed in the Italian version, perhaps in order to maintain the colloquial sense of the words.

In Chapter 1 we mentioned that when a script is generally translated into a new language, factors such as slang and dialect disappear, social criticism is toned down, obscurity is filtered out, and sexual remarks are changed (Delabastita, 1990 and Whitman-Linsen, 1991). With this type of film, this is almost impossible, since the essence behind the film would not be received as intended, by the target audience. The film is based on the "swinging 60s" which if looked back on was a time filled with sexual freedom and unusual jargon. According to the Dictionary of Italian Slang and Colloquial Expressions (1999:IV), slang "has come to indicate one particular jargon: the one that we can all use, independently of professional and technical concerns, when we want to express what official language-and-mores-consider taboo, either in content or emotional overtone". Italian slang is still in the developing phase, which explains why many slang terms in the original film were not maintained in the translated version and were rather replaced with little explanations. This being said, the Italian focus group, for example, felt that the expression and taboo terms were interpreted in the same manner as they would have been in the English versions – in other words they ultimately felt that they carried the same humorous effect.

The dubbed version clearly decided not to maintain the taboo word "Shagged" in the title. The original English title of the film: "The Spy who Shagged Me" was changed to

"La Spia Che Ci Provava" (The spy who tried). In Singapore, according to Tsang (1999), the original title which contained the term 'shagged' (a British colloquial term for sex) was regarded as "crude and offensive" and underwent a name change: Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shioked Me; the word "Shioked" used as slang for good, nice or fun (and does not have any sexual connotations).[23] Perhaps this title was changed in the Italian version for the same reason, since a direct translation could have been: Austin Powers: La Spia Che Mi Ha Scopato – which is not in Italian terms as subtle as "Shagged".

How were gender-markers conforming to the target audience's expectations of conventional or stereotypical elements translated?

Very few gender markers exist in this film, and the focus groups found only one example which clearly stood out in Chapter 17. In this scene, Fat Bastard and Felicity are in bed. In the original version Fat Bastard asks Felicity if she would like some chicken. In the Italian version, he tells her to go to the kitchen and fetch the chicken if she wants some. The Italian rendition of this utterance highlights stereotypes prevalent in Italy; the woman is told that she can go fetch some chicken if she would like some, whereas in the English version, she is offered some chicken by the man.

MACRO LEVEL:

Systematic observations of a corpus of texts

What are the source language and culture?

[23] However, according to Tsang, the public did not accept this name change and protested against it. In this case even though the public itself felt the title was crude, it was very difficult to understand why a name change had to be carried out. Sometimes the original is the better option. Tsang goes on to say that Warner (the films distributors) appealed for the original name to be reinstated, and succeeded. After all, any publicity is good publicity.

The source language of the translation is English. What varies are the accents of the main characters (as discussed earlier): many have a North American English accent, Dr. Evil has a Canadian accent, Austin Powers a British accent, Frau a German accent, and Fat Bastard a Scottish accent. A film is essentially made up of what you see and what you hear. For example, when in the original English version of the film, we see Fat Bastard dressed in Scottish attire, we expect to, and do hear a Scottish accent when he speaks. In the translated version, he speaks with a Neapolitan accent. When translating a film, changing visual aspects is virtually impossible, changing the verbal is easier. Thus, when Fat Bastard speaks in the English original film, his accent and the style of the language used immediately indicated to the focus group viewers where he was from. Since translator's decisions are determined generally by the visual, a similar accent had to be chosen for Fat Bastard in the Italian version. The Italian focus group believed that the dubbers should have used a Scottish-Italian accent for Fat Bastard; however, the dubbers felt that the Neapolitan accent should have served its purpose. Accents do however influence the viewer's interpretation of the character. In this film the Italian focus group found it interesting that in the dubbed version, accents were not maintained, except for the characters of Frau and Fat Bastard. All the other characters had standard Italian accents.

Where in many films the plot of the story is not entirely dependant on the differentiation between classes or geographical regions, in this film, the English focus group highlighted that Austin's character, in particular the understanding of his character, was dependant on the accent. What is characteristic of Austin is his accent, his idiosyncrasies and the colloquialisms he uses. The Italian focus group felt that the Italian accent used in the dubbed version did not do the Austin character justice. The general consensus was that the missing element was his accent, and the viewer was deprived of this vital aspect of his character. Austin's essential nature and the entire package was diminished.

This film is rich with culture specific information. The dubbers thus had to ensure that the culturally unfamiliar material was easily understood by the target audience. Since elements such as moral values, political and historical identity, collective aesthetic tastes are generally taken for granted by the source audience, these elements have to be reconstructed parallel to the visual aspects in the dubbed version.

Both focus groups agreed that two main source cultures existed in the film: one clearly being British, which is portrayed by Austin Powers as representative of the British Ministry of Defence, the other being American, portrayed by the visual scenes in the background (for example such the Californian Hills) and, the era to which the characters jump in and out of (for example the American 60s parties) as well as the majority of the other characters on the film, such as Felicity Shagwell (a typical 60s American icon) and Scott Evil (who represents the stereotypical American teenager). Scott Evil tries to build a relationship with his father who wants nothing to do with him since they are very different. During this time he becomes angry and rebellious and loses respect and love from his father.

What is the text-type of the source film, and the genre to which it belongs?

According to comments made by the creators (found on the DVD Extras), the film was influenced by the Flint series, old and new spy movies, and the 60s. The film is based on a form of slap-stick comedy, where a large part of the comedy is based on the visual elements and the physical actions of the various characters. The translator is therefore expected to adhere closely to the source text imagery since in the original film the imagery and punch-lines correspond directly and have to make sense when translated. For example, in Chapter 10 when Austin arrives back in 1969, many of his movements and actions correspond directly, rendering the scene as funny. When he

tells one of the girls to get her hands off his "Heini", she in turn passes him a Heineken. In the Italian, the passing of the Heineken does not correspond to what he says: "Ehi, la tua mano "morta" é cosi "morta" che é gelata", which clearly does not correspond to the visual.

The type of humour used in the film is characteristic of the film. According to Nash (in Lopez, 2002: 34) the humour "characterizes the interaction of persons in situations in cultures, and our response to it must be understood in that broad context". When a joke is translated, the same reaction has to be achieved. Thus a link needs to be found between the source language and the target language. Plays on words, puns, sayings and proverbs, idioms, and metaphors are difficult to translate; once they are combined with images they are harder to translate. For example in Chapter 21 and 22, when Austin and Felicity find themselves on Dr. Evil's island, they are in a tent. The scene is primarily shot from outside the tent thus an onlooker would only see shadow figures inside the tent. The shadow-actions of these two characters and their corresponding dialogue is what makes this scene humorous. Without the correct words and their combined actions the scene would not be funny.

What one culture finds funny may or may not be seen as humorous by another culture. When translating slap-stick-comedy, the translator has to make the foreign audience laugh at the same points as intended in the original text. In this film, this was achieved. In various scenes different interpretations of the context resulted in the words spoken going exactly where their senders or receivers thereof wanted them to go. The end result was that the desired response – humour - was achieved, which is ultimately what humour is all about.

Does the genre exist in the target culture?

According to Porter (1981) the importance of popular writing (genre) resides in its status as a meaning-system that embodies implicit world views. 'Any type of popular literature [in this case a film] will belong to a genre which imposes certain requirements on the author and [viewer].' (Meintjes, 1989: 35). In order to answer this question, the genre to which the original film belongs needed to be identified. It has already been said that in the film in this study the dominant genre is Slapstick Comedy. However, the term 'genre' in this study is, in the words of Meintjes (1989: 38), to be understood in the sense of a formulaic form of literature intended for entertainment and imbued with social, cultural and ideological material that makes it 'seemingly' specific to a particular culture'.

It is important to identify whether the genre exists in the target culture, in this case, the Italian culture. Acting in Italian films originated from the very traditional *Comedia dell'Arte* – where the movement of the body is fundamental in comedy. This is why actors in Italian films are very expressive and use a lot of gestures. According to distinguished Italian director, Mario Monicelli (Totaro, 1999), Italian comedy is quite specific to Italy:

> *The Italian Comedy revolves around arguments and themes that are very dramatic and sometimes tragic. So the theme is tragic, but the point of view is comical and humoristic. This is a type of comedy that grows precisely out of the fact that Italians see reality and life in this manner.*

He goes on further to say that this form of comedy comes from ancient literature such as that of *Baccaccio* and *La Comedia dell'Arte,* in which what makes the Italian audience laugh stems from poverty, hunger, misery, old age, sickness and death.

Many critics believe that Italian comedy is based on the classic Italian comedy of the 50s and 60s visual slapstick humour. Further on in the interview, Mario Monicelli says that in Italy the tradition of actors who are expressive and use a lot of gestures is maintained in conjunction with *La Comedia dell'Arte* which is based on body movement (which is a dominant characteristic in the Austin Powers films and Slapstick Comedies in general). Thus, the comedy genre represented in the Austin Powers trilogy is easily adaptable for the new target audience. In other words, it would thus seem easy for the translator to adapt the text to suit target reader expectations (Meintjes, 1989).

Mario Monicelli also says that in most Italian comedies, there is little use of close-ups, and a preference to use shots showing the body – similar to the comic tradition of Chaplin – because they capture the comic and irony better. Ultimately Italian directors and producers feel that what makes the audience laugh are body movements and not just facial expressions. In the film under study this form of humour, based on body movements occurs frequently. In many instances, the audience is not laughing at what the characters are saying, but more at their actions. For example in Chapter 13 when Fat Bastard discusses his desire to eat babies and eventually breaks into the Red Hot Chilli Peppers baby back ribs song, the audience is not laughing at his words but more at what he is doing.

Is vocal performance important in the genre?

When one speaks of slap-stick humour, Charlie Chaplin comes to mind; a kind of subtle humour where the actions speak loader than the words. One of the major questions this research wants to answer is whether the translation did the original justice, as the translation is based on both the vocal and the visual. The Austin Powers trilogy is based on the expressions and quick lines invented and maintained by Austin

and Dr. Evil. In some films, such as the Charlie Chaplin series, perhaps the visual was enough to make the audience laugh, but in this film, the way the characters speak, their intonations and quirkiness defines the film. As an example the focus groups drew on Dr. Evil's inverted commas when he says "moon base" "death star" accompanied by the tone of his voice makes the viewer laugh (which the dubbed version fortunately maintained) and Austin's catch-words such as "Yeah, baby", "I'm Spent", "Groovy baby" "Oh behave" which the Italian focus group felt were all lost in the translation. When watching a film of this specific genre, viewers tend not to notice what is being said as much as the way it is being said.

In this film, the vocal performance is based on what Delebastita calls "Film Signs" (1990). According to Delabastita (1990: 100-101), film signs can be: Verbal signs transmitted acoustically (dialogue); Non-Verbal signs transmitted acoustically (background noise and music); Verbal signs transmitted visually (credits, letters, titles and documents shown on the screen). He also highlights five techniques, or categories of classical rhetoric are adopted:

1. Dubbing: substitution of the acoustic or verbal signs.
2. Substitution: replacing visual and or verbal signs.
3. Destrastio: deletion of visual and or verbal and or non verbal signs.
4. Repetitio: reproduction of the film by retaining all the original material features.
5. Adiecto: addition of new images, sounds, dialogue or spoken comments.

Not all these techniques have been applied in the translation of this film. For example, the visual aspect has not been altered (cutting and editing would have had to occur, and a close comparison proves that this did not occur); probably due to financial costs, the credits and titles (which lie in the domain of the verbal code within the visual channel) remain the same. Where necessary, such as with the Star Wars style introduction, the words were left in English on the screen but were narrated in Italian.

What is the culture status of the genre?

According to Van Meter (in Meintjes, 1989: 34) 'the reader must be able to identify the group to which he belongs […] and by so doing identify himself in the literary work'. With regard the film in this study, the slapstick humour used has a fairly high status in terms of popularity in certain age groups, such as with teenagers, kids and young adults. Compared to other films, it does not have a very high status in relation to other genres of films such as thrillers, detective films, and general comedy. As critics pointed out in Chapter 2, Austin Powers cannot be compared to films such as "Lost in Translation", or "Monster". Generally viewers who prefer more intellectual films would not appreciate a film such as this. This is not to say that the creators of the film made it with an audience of little intellect in mind. According to various interviews of the creators of the film as well as to the commentary on the DVD, the intention of the film is, not to fulfil the requirements of a more intellectually stimulating genre, but rather just to entertain. John Lyons (Producer) said:

> *The movie appeals to 8 year old kids in the Midwest, to people who really go to the movies all the time and are really discriminating. It seems to cut across all those boundaries. It is such a hard thing to find a movie like this that appeals to a lot of people and a lot of different groups.*

Seath Green (Actor) said: "The funny stuff is not limited to demographic. And while the younger kids don't necessarily understand if they recognize the bright colours the silly dance numbers. It's fun."

When Dr. Evil says a phrase such as: "Don't mess with me – I'm one crazy mofo. I had to pop a cop cuz he wasn't giving me my props in Oaktown", the viewer does not expect nor is he/she expected to understand what he is talking about, but rather that

he is saying something which does not make sense (characteristic of Dr. Evil). Just as the English viewer has, in a certain sense, to suspend reality (and disregard the rules governing other films and what is expected of them, so too does the Italian audience.

CONCLUSION

This case study of the dubbed version of *Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava* and its original, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, has been theoretically located within the domain of audiovisual translation as an area of study. The first part of the study required an example of audiovisual translation in translation studies. This discussion was limited to the art of dubbing, technical techniques such as lip-sync and nucleus-sync, and audiovisual translation as a product (rather than a process). The study therefore dealt with the film as a translation of an existing text and looked at its cultural impact and the value of its translation in order to determine what the target culture understood from watching the film (with regard to a specific type of film).

According to Delabastita (in Toury, 1985), a translation should serve the needs of the culture which would eventually host it. He modelled his analysis on Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) as a means to describe the differences between the target text and the source text and to explain why the translator made certain choices. An analysis of this nature would highlight that there are many ways in which a text can be translated. These are governed by norms which determine whether or not the translated film of a specific genre has been accepted in the target culture. The primary aim of dubbing is to please the viewer, in other words, to make the new text acceptable in the target culture. The shifts, which occur between the source and the target text, determine its acceptability.

As seen in the analysis, there have been several instances in the film which show that the translators searched for expressions "that have the same function, and are used in similar situations in the target language. In most cases it is necessary to add details or

to rephrase the original text in order to make a good translation" (La Trecchia, 1998: 118-119). This supports the claim presented earlier that dubbing is the re-writing, re-structuring, re-inventing and re-creating of a film and has become an essential requirement in the Italian cinematographic environment (La Trecchia, 1998). A film moves through many stages before the final product is reached. For example, the original script is written, then adapted into a filmed performance which is in turn re-adapted through dubbing, in this case Italian dubbing; it is then released as a new film. The original text finally ceases to exist and is replaced by a "dialogical communication between several texts" (La Trecchia, 1998: 115).

The study looked at the film's role as a commodity and its circulation within the source culture and the target culture. This part of the study was useful in understanding the choices made and the factors which influence the dubbing process in Italy. Despite the invisibility of the dubbing actors and translators involved in dubbing an already successful film, the study attempted to grant dubbing actors and translations the recognition they deserve.

The extent of the dubbed film's impact on different viewers seems to be dependent on how well the film has been dubbed. More specifically, dubbing is often described as an art of translation. According to Richard Killborn (1993, quoted by La Trecchia, 1998: 116), "with dubbing the art is to hide the art" and the best result is achieved when the audience is not aware that they are watching a dubbed film. However, even if a film is dubbed, linking performance to language and also to gestures is not as easy as it may appear to be. Dubbing is focused and only affects the acoustic elements of the film, through which the original acoustic art-work is replaced by a new form of art (La Trecchia, 1998: 116).

With today's intricate filming techniques, the visual impact of a film is high and there is a 99% chance that the viewer will constantly be aware that they are watching a

dubbed film. The audience, therefore, plays a large role in the dubbing process. In Italy, an Italian audience is generally always aware that it is watching a dubbed film since most Hollywood films are dubbed into Italian. Hence, one would have to ask the question: does this really affect the Italian audience's interpretation of the film?

From the analysis carried out in Chapter 3, it is possible to conclude that, despite the many changes in humorous analogies and references, and although lip movements did not always correspond (in some scenes to an extreme) to the visual, the dubbed version of this film managed to maintain the essence of the original version. According to Berger (in Nardella, 1997), in order to understand a joke or something humorous, a listener or viewer would have to read into it to give it meaning. "Listeners to the joke don't necessarily bring this set of oppositions (factors which help you read into a joke) to mind, but they must recognise it if the joke is to make any sense and the punch line is to be effective" (Nardella, 1997: 2). Raskin (in Nardella) said that the effect of the humour is directly linked to a stimulus and a possible world which cause the humorous effect. Thus, in this film, it is the characters, their actions, the world (situations) in which they find themselves, and other contributing factors (such as their ability to use many parodies) which make the film humorous.

As mentioned previously, the film was directed at a particular kind of target audience, in its original English version and in the Italian dubbed version. Something made the film appear to be funny and something about it resulted in the combined (English and Italian versions) gross turnover of approximately 500 billion Dollars. It could be said that what makes the film funny is its diversity and complexity and this allures even the most apprehensive viewer (in other words, the "Lost in Translation" or "Monster" viewer). What attracts the viewer is the humour. The translator thus has one goal when translating a film of this nature - to make the film as humorous as the original version of the film.

In order to ascertain whether the translation of the film achieved this goal and to assign a certain amount of credibility to the case study, focus groups were used to verify what critics and reviewers had concluded with regard to the original and dubbed versions of the film. The use of critiques and reviews retrieved from primarily American and Italian websites presented viewpoints from viewers of these nations. The use of South African based focus groups in conjunction with these critiques and reviews helped in directly assessing the humour used in the film. Ultimately, this assessment allowed for a better understanding of the transference with regard to the value and meaning of the film for the source culture as well as for the target culture from a South African perspective.

It has been previously mentioned that viewers of the dubbed version know that they are watching a dubbed version of a film. However, they immerse themselves in the concept or even the illusion of it not being dubbed in order to enjoy it. People in the Italian audience do not concern themselves with the question of whether the dubbed version is as funny as the original, as long as they laughed. Since a large part of the film is a parody of the James Bond films, and the Star Wars epic, we (the viewers) expect one set of circumstances to materialise because of our experience of these other films, and when these expectations are shattered, we laugh. This is a psychologically natural response (Nardella, 1997 – based on an interpretation of Attardo's GTVH). Humour is the key ingredient in this film; how the language, meaning and expression have changed does not result in eliminating the key ingredient - humour.

When dubbing a film, the aim is not to re-produce the source film but to produce a new film, and a new and unique text.

> *Each text is unique, yet at the same time it is the translation of another text. No text can be completely original because language*

> *itself, in its very essence, is already a translation – first from the nonverbal world and then because each phrase is a translation of another sign, another phrase. However, the inverse of this reasoning is also entirely valid. All texts are original because each translation has its own distinctive character. Up to a point, each translation is a creation and thus constitutes a unique text."*
> (Octavio Paz, 1992, quoted in La Trecchia 1998: 118)

Today translation is no longer about equivalence but about creating a film for the target audience in order to fulfil the needs and expectations of this target culture. The dubbing process of the film *Austin Powers: La Spia Che Ci Provava* has not diminished the intended appeal of the film, but has created a new audience with new expectations.

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