Subtitling

Subtitling

All subtitled programmes are made up of three main components: **the spoken word, the image and the subtitles.** The interaction of these three components, along with the viewer's ability to read both the images and the written text at a particular speed, and the actual size of the screen, determine the basic characteristics of the audiovisual medium. Subtitles must appear in synchrony with the image and dialogue, provide a semantically adequate account of the SL dialogue, and remain displayed on screen long enough for the viewers to be able to read them.
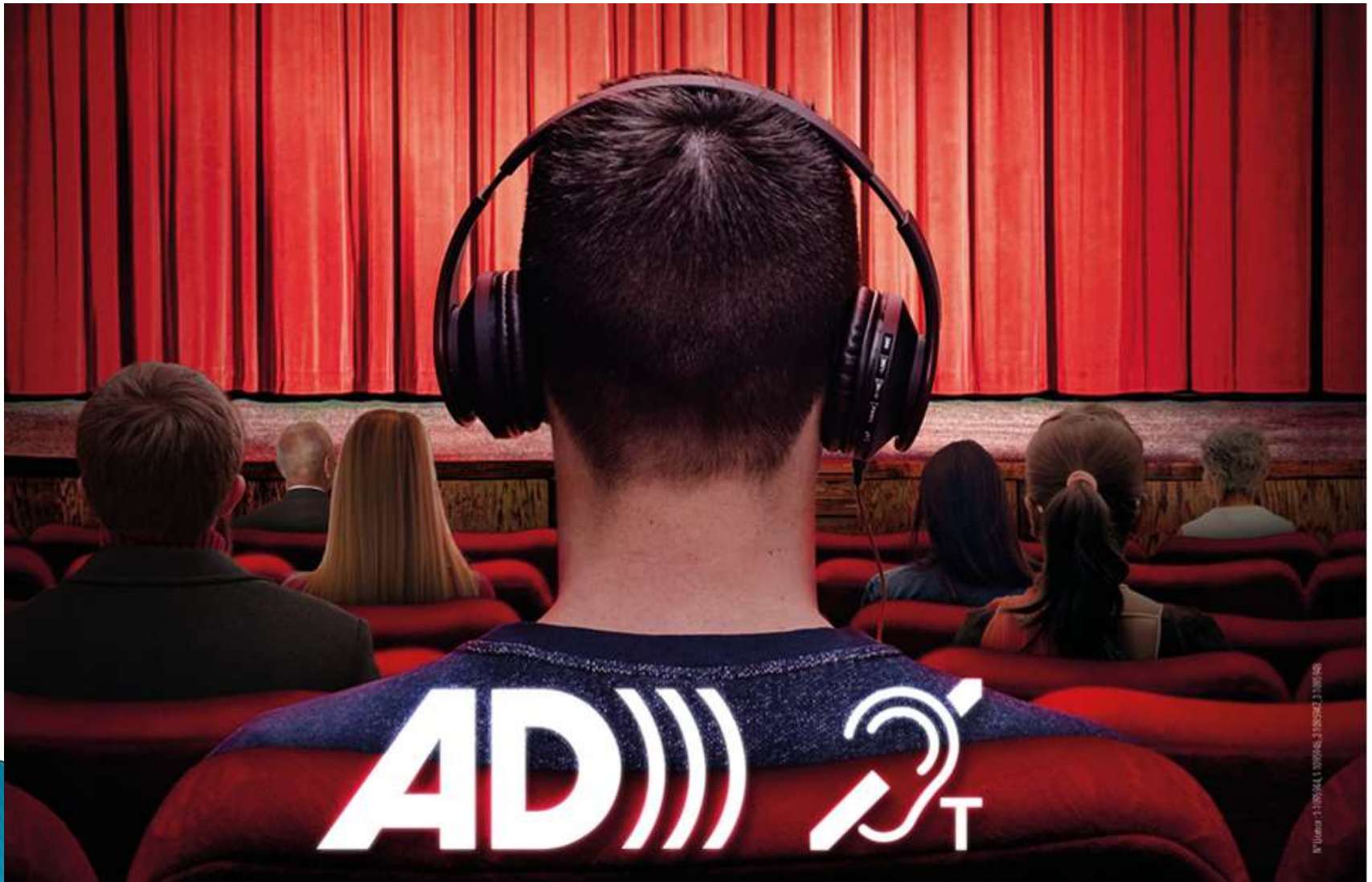
Subtitling

In its inception, AVT was used to encapsulate different translation practices used in the audiovisual media – cinema, television, VHS – in which there is a transfer from a source to a target language, which involves some form of interaction with sound and images. Dubbing and subtitling are the most popular in the profession and the best known by audiences, but there are others such as voice-over, partial-dubbing, narration and interpreting. The translation of live performance was added to this taxonomy at a later stage and that is how surtitling for the opera and the theatre has also come to be included.

Subtitling

New and innovative professional activities such as subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing (SDH) and Audio Description for the blind and the partially sighted (AD) are also making a place for themselves within AVT.

In societies that aim at being more just and inclusive, accessibility has a social function and

means making an audiovisual programme available to people that otherwise could not have access to it. In this sense, to lip-sync, to subtitle or to voiceover a programme shares as much the idea of accessibility as SDH or AD. Only the intended audiences are different.

Audio Description

Subtitling

Finally, computer games and interactive software programmes are taking subtitling to the borders between AVT and localization since these games travel not only subtitled, but also adapted to the cultural sensibilities of the target gamers.
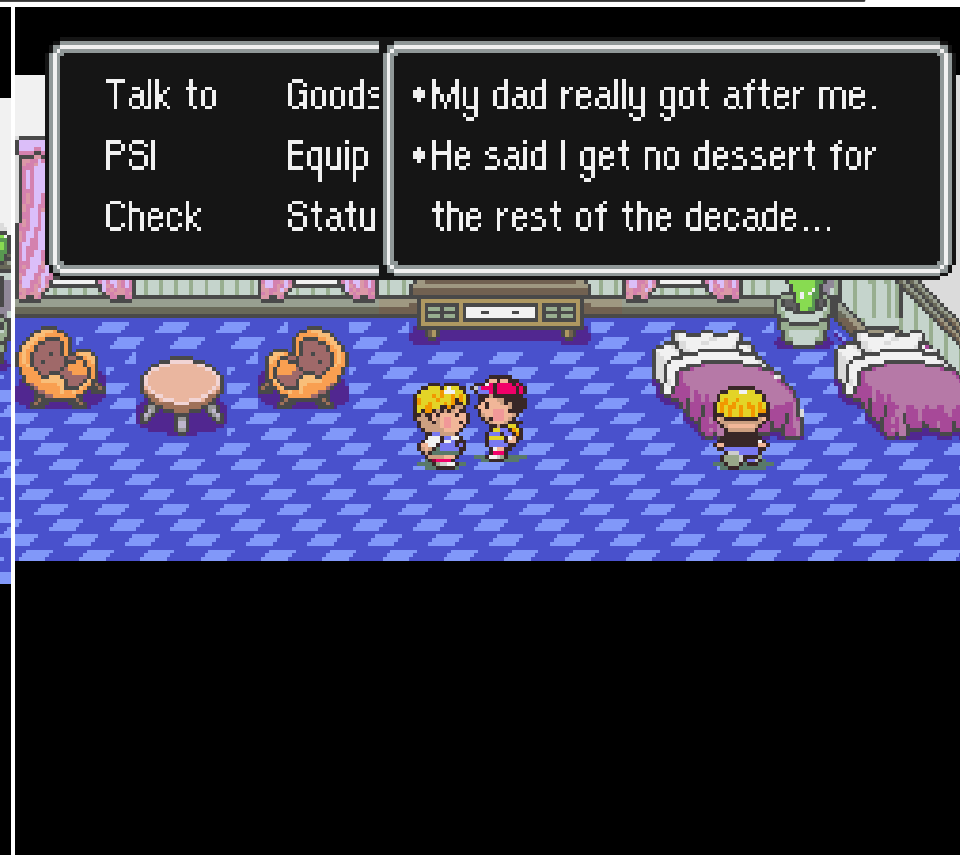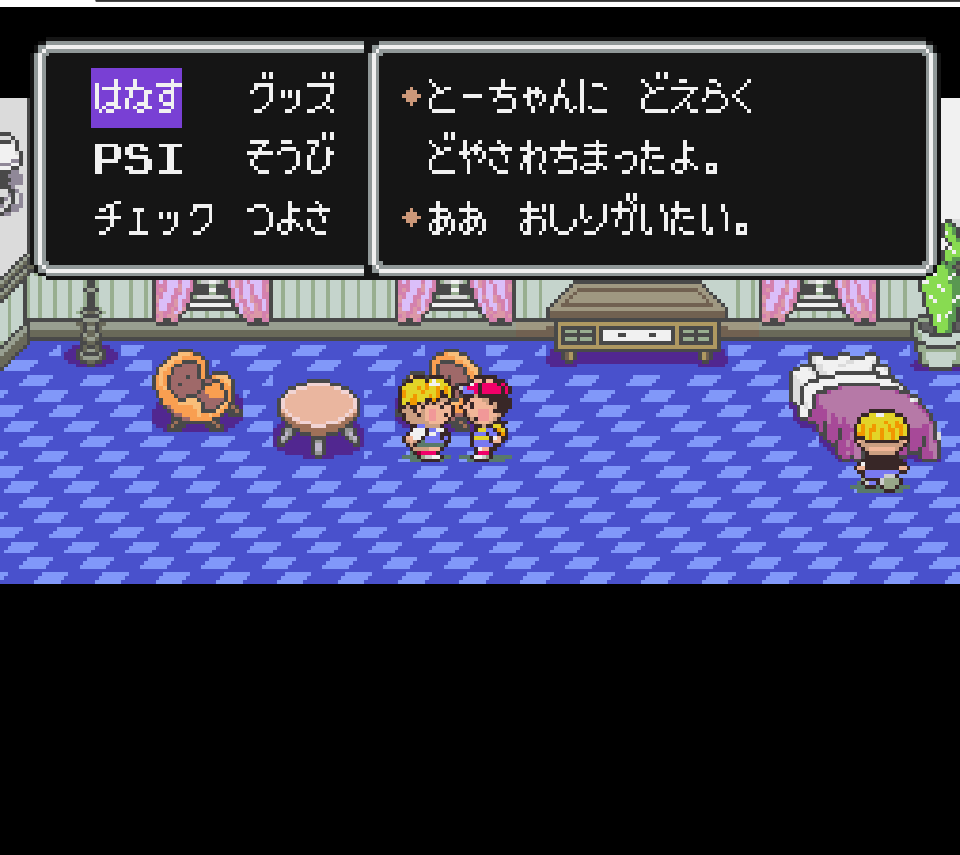
Computer Games

Technical parameters

Open subtitles: the subtitles are burned or projected onto the image and cannot be removed or turned off. The programme and the subtitles cannot be disassociated from each other, allowing the viewer no choice as to their presence on screen.

Closed subtitles: the translation can be added to the programme at the viewer's will. The subtitles are hidden and can only be seen with an ppropriate decoder or when the viewer activates them on DVD.

Phases of Subtitling

-The mechanical and thermal process:

to stamp the titles directly on the images of the film strip. Unfortunately, this process had bad results with poorly defined letters.

Phases of Subtitling

The chemical process:

to apply a thin coating of wax or paraffin to the emulsion side of the finished film copy. The printing plates were placed in a printing press and the plate was fed and heated to a temperature of nearly a hundred degrees and one by one pressed against the paraffin coating at the bottom of the frame which corresponded to the beginning of the dialogue line.

Phases of Subtitling

The optical method:
 to copy the photographed titles directly on the film copy. However, the original film negative was usually not available so they had to re-copy the whole film in order to obtain a new negative.

Phases of Subtitling

The laser subtitling:
 A computer controls a laser beam, and it takes less than a second to write a subtitle of two lines. Laser method is the cheapest method but requires a very good equipment (Cintas, 2008: 79).

Laser Subtitling

Phases of Subtitling

Electronic subtitling:

not engraved on the image but they are superimposed on the screen. Thus subtitles can be projected onto or below the image, in
any language, in any color and – most importantly– without damaging the original copy

Electronic subtitling

The subtitling process

The subtitling process usually starts when a client contacts the subtitling company with a commission. The client could be a distribution company, a television station, etc. In the first stage general details are discussed. First, the subtitling company has to watch the film to make sure that the copy is not damaged, decide the dialogue list and check if there is something else that needs translating too, (such as songs or inserts).

The subtitling process

The next stage is **spotting**, also known as timing and cueing. It consists in deciding the precise moment when a subtitle should appear on screen (in-time) and when a subtitle should disappear from the screen (out-time). This is usually done by technicians who usually do not have a good knowledge of the language spoken in the film.

The subtitling process

A copy of the film and the dialogue is then sent to the **translator**. Moreover, translator sometimes work without having any access to the screen version of the film or from a soundtrack without a copy of the written text. This occurs when clients are afraid that illegal copies will be made or perhaps when there are tight deadlines.

The subtitling process

In the third stage the translator can start translating the text from the source to the target language. Once the translation is over it is sent to the client. The translator was not asked to produce the actual subtitles, but rather the text translation, the translation undergoes an adaptation process. Due to the constraints imposed by the medium a technician or **adaptor** has to adjust the translation to an appropriate subtitling length. (Diaz Cintas & Remael, 2006:98).