

## **AVT in the Media:**

### **Emergencies through conflicting words and contradictory translations**

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Connected with a project on mediating emergencies (Federici 2016) and crisis communication (O'Brien 2016), this paper introduces approaches to study the use of audiovisual materials translated in online versions of daily newspapers in Italy. The first section of this paper discusses the journalistic context in which the audiovisual translations (AVT) of news are used; the second section introduces the theoretical trajectories to study these modes of audiovisual translation, from potentially using critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the textual features, to multimodal analysis of the translation modes in the current mediascapes (Pérez-González 2014). The third section illustrates key concepts that emerged from the investigation of a corpus of journalistic materials, which included embedded audiovisuals focused on emergencies and international responses.

The paper intends to show methodological shifts in studying representations of emergencies in translated news through the complex lenses of audiovisual translation modes. Embedded news items, audiences' interaction, and complex networked mediascapes in the confluence of different journalistic styles, expectations, and cultural settings create the illusion of transparent translations, whereas the source news items have been remarkably altered. This paper uses a number of mini case studies in order to elicit the vast number of research questions that emerge when looking at the role of audiovisual translation and of translators in relation to the description and representation of international crises.

#### **1. Journalistic Context**

Journalistic language can never be entirely neutral. Online journalistic language constructs its meanings through a set of multimodal channels. In this context, the language of translated audiovisual materials in online newspapers is subject to reductions and interpolations in which the potentially conflictual choices of an ideological nature are difficult to disentangle. These three generally accepted statements lead to a range of observations in this paper that investigates more contradictory areas of 21<sup>st</sup>-century journalistic practices involving translation. The contradictions over the quality of translation and modes used relate to using established and new translation modes to react to the pace of news-making organizations; they also raise concerns about the visibility and reliability of language mediators involved in the audiovisual translations of clips to be published respecting the time constraints of online newspapers. This article refers to the context of Italian online newspapers and, with a range of examples, illustrates the use of unusual AVT modes in this national context. These modes present many features of committed journalism, citizen journalism (Allan 2015), combined in the complex decision-making (Davier 2015) and linguistic processes of a current journalistic practices (Perrin 2013). By studying some of the audiovisual

translation modes adopted in Italian national daily newspapers (over a range of articles from *Repubblica.it*, *Corriere.it*, *LaStampa.it*), this contribution explores questions regarding the methodological problems to be faced when attempting to investigate criteria for selection and use of AVT modes in order to render news on emergencies and crises. These parameters are interconnected with editorial policies in reporting news over crises and with the editorial choices used when prioritising news of national interest for the receiving audiences. The context considered in this article is nation-specific but evidence suggests that the increase in news videos (Kalogeropoulos *et al* 2016; Patterson 2007) would entail similar concerns and changes in AVT practices world-wide. Journalistic translation research (as defined by Valdeón 2015) has at times focused on televised news broadcasts (to name a few, see Conway 2010, 2013; Kang 2007, 2012; van Doorslaer 2012; Zhang 2011). Hence, the case study here is not used for descriptive purposes or to seek ways of showing the universal nature of some approaches, but rather to show how reflections on the multimodal nature of online newswriting, and the role of translation within it, need to address a whole range of new questions in terms of methodology. In collecting the documentary evidence for the paper several criteria for selecting illustrations were considered as important:

- 1) Audiovisual materials had to come from online news dailies that represent the digital version of traditional nation-wide, widely read Italian newspapers.
- 2) Interventionist journalists, ‘activist collective’ journalism (Perez Gonzalez 2014), journalators (van Doorslaer’s definition, 2012), or amateur translators were not considered in the sample.
- 3) Materials had to refer to crises that have ‘news value’ in Italian political discourse, which in turn assume social value in their presumed readership.
- 4) Commercial traditional press is subject to a set of constraints (Holland 2013) that can be partially overcome in online news –the texts selected had to be hybrid and multimodal texts that showed prominent examples of translated audiovisual materials.

The simplified corpus of journalistic materials, collected respecting the parameters described above, include embedded audiovisuals focused on emergencies and international responses that prominently feature translations, sometimes foregrounded to the first page of the newspapers. The extreme examples in section 4 were extracted from a pool of 65 potential examples collected between February 2016 and October 2016; they offer macroscopic illustrations of the spread, breadth, and distribution of the phenomenon across different daily newspapers and different innovative uses of AVT modes. The samples include some culture-specific concerns, as well as widely covered international events, that overall reflect the current concerns among journalists and scholars of journalism studies regarding the role of ‘mixed’ media news writing. For these reasons, this contribution has to look at the journalistic context first.

By considering mainstream news media, this paper engages with traditional forms of journalism that are evolving within the current phase of ‘transition’ (Kuhn and Nielsen 2014) experienced in particular by political journalism in Western Europe – including journalistic reporting on diplomatic as

well as crisis in international politics. Following Belizer (2015), as well as Kuhn and Nielsen (2014), the premise of the present study is that the current changes in the digital landscape and in news organizations are not a ‘crisis’ but an open ‘transition’; the decrease of commercial income and the closure of some traditional press forms have not had the same effects across the globe – the Italian system has indeed changed but it also has retained some stylistic and interpretative features in its mainstream journalism that allow me to carry out this analysis in relation to concepts of transition and not of digital revolution. The transition experienced in news organizations that have had to find ever stronger commercial partnerships to *survive* the new multimedia landscape has also led to the proliferation of interventionist and iterative journalism, beyond the paradigm of ‘citizen journalism’ that emerged around a decade ago (Allan and Peters 2015), and new notions of cosmopolitan journalists (Lindell and Karlsson 2016). These forms of journalism are shaping news making especially in the areas that report global concerns as connected and interlinked with the local issues to which they may exert influence.

There is ever-growing evidence in the work of infield operators, as reported by the Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities Network, for instance, that news translation plays an increasingly complex role in humanitarian and crisis response operations. News making extends to support an additional function of ‘informative role’ when emergencies disrupt societies; the problem lies with the definition of crisis and disruption, unless these are narrowed down to catastrophic natural disasters only. In this view, the commentary and interpretative role of news-makers as watchdogs of politicians should leave some space to the informative function on reporting facts of public usage. Yet discursively this stance is difficult to hold. Verbs, adjectives, nouns, active and passive moods all correspond to more or less conscious choices to initiate what M.A.K. Halliday (1994) calls ideational functions of the language; the function that presides the interpretation of any given utterance tends to give it a value for the sender and receiver of the message. These functions become more visible in time-pressed translations of multimedia contents, which are embedded in online newspapers. Time pressures have an impact the choice of which ‘crisis’ to cover, ‘how to’ cover it, and which role should factual information and roles of ‘public services’ fulfil without prejudice to freedom of press are intricately difficult to distinguish. Furthermore, Cadwell and O’Brien (2016) have shown that translation, performed either by volunteers or commercial translators, becomes crucial when emergencies erupt. In crises, when complex communication infrastructures break down, and satellite or internet connections may be significantly reduced if not annulled, televised news and radio news take on the role of conveying crucial *information*, rather than news stories or news events. These are not factual reports on the events, but rather provisions of information on where to find access to essential goods, medical support, and legal information (for instance, on missing family members). Communities speaking languages other than the one used in the local mainstream news would need news translation to find out information; these communities are mixed and could consist of foreign language teachers, business people, tourists, and so on who would not normally require language proficiency in the national language(s) for the country in which they are temporarily residing (Cadwell and O’Brien 2016). Knowing what is happening via

journalistic sources re-establishes an ephemeral, utilitarian, and tenuous relationship of trust with news media organizations – whereas this trust has been considerably eroded in the last two decades. The role of hybrid audiovisual translation materials in mainstream media then comes to serve different functions, for which there is a growing call in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction (2015-2030) and adds new focus on access to information (discussed in Mysiak *et al.* 2016). This function is recognized by the Sendai Framework as humanitarian and crucial to prepare, sustain, and support countries in crises; translation and translators have core roles to play in these, possibly more than journalists. However, the journalistic depiction of the international crises go through a translatorial mediation at some point; in news videos, the point of mediation is made visible and obvious for the audiences.

In analysing the current audiovisual translation practices in the Italian context (which is per se a country subject to recurrent natural disasters and affected by long-lasting crisis in international migratory movements), examples show that the current hybridised translational approaches fit in with the expectations of the Sendai Framework; at national level the 5.8 Richter-scale earthquake of 24 August 2016 and the 6.6 Richter-scale earthquake of 30 October 2016 in Italy have seen some evidence of this *information* role (e.g. publications of the lists of missing people and of hospitalised people on online newspapers). They are used to inform – as in the recent August 2016 earthquake in Amatrice, Italy – and to communicate on a crisis of political relevance to Italians as in the case of Regeni (discussed below). Both users and communication aids in disasters reveal shifting trends in audiovisual modes, as participatory relationships between news media organizations and their standard audiences, as well as their oppositional, emerging voluntarist audiences have influenced the use of audiovisuals such as video news and in turn the reliance on more common translation modes.

Journalism studies takes for granted that Italian news media are ‘polarised’ (Mancini 2005) and that 89% of audiences use televised news to obtain their information (Cornia 2014: 48). It is legitimate to wonder why there is such wide-spread use of audiovisual materials in online versions of traditional national newspapers. Or why so many of these audiovisuals are presented with very visible translations? According to a sophisticated overview study of the Italian media context, by Alessio Cornia (2014), the traditional ‘opinionated’ and ‘polarised’ paradigm of Italian mainstream media continues to be relevant for those areas of the Italian audiences that are politically active, engaged in their relationship with political issues. The Italian Institute of National Statistics (ISTAT 2014) shows that the most committed groups of people that engage in politics and read online news are groups aged 25-35 and those aged over 60, with a core shared feature: both groups have high levels of education. Eco (1973) originally pointed out that the political language of the Italian traditional press possesses the function of a close, in-group code of communication between political parties. Items on national newspapers were coded messages exchanged in a linguistic variety of Italian that was almost unintelligible to the largest part of the population, but reached the ‘audiences’ of the individual newspaper and of the intended receiver(s) of the sender’s coded message. As Caimotto (2016) suggests, this form of in-group communication has pervaded the Italian journalistic system even in terms of its translation of foreign news. Hence, crises and disasters are

reported on with the intent of inscribing them into the political discourse relevant to their Italian readers (a common form of reframing, as in Kang 2007, but with extreme purposes in the national context). These established habitus of Italian news organizations permeate their current recourse to audiovisual materials and their translation embedded in the multimodal syntax of their online versions. The commercial and tribal audience is the same (Orengo 2005), hence commercial and video clips are targeted to the like-minded people who are the bedrock audiences to which the newspapers address their news articles; although this praxis is common in most journalistic traditions, in the Italian system it is called the ‘1500-reader audience’ (Forcella 1959, quoted and translated in Hallin and Mancini 2004:96). Cornia (2014:50) emphasises that ‘Despite the fact that the Italian daily press has always reached a narrow audience and that it is currently facing a general decline in circulation, it still remains an important area within the national political communication system.’ In other words, the means of communication have changed and moved from paper to digitized, online versions, yet their intrinsic functions and audiences have remained virtually the same as those in-groups of senders-receivers described by Eco. The multimedia content, especially its parts focused on foreign affairs, speak to an élite audience that is educated, politicized, and belongs to the relatively small proportion of Italians who regularly use the internet (see DESI data for 2016, in Figure 1).

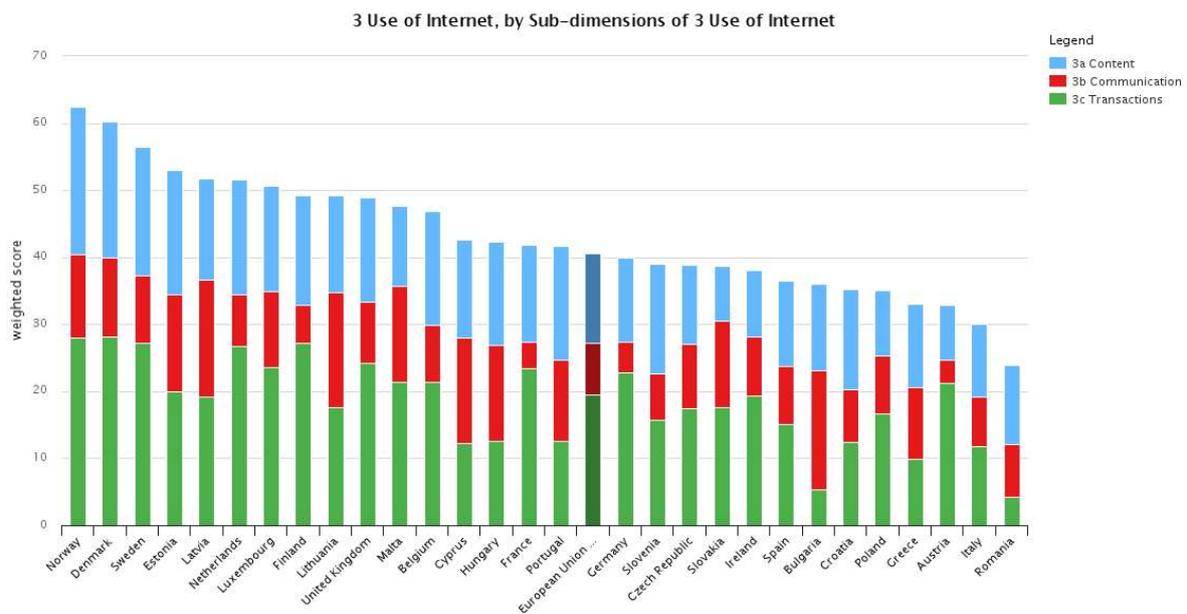


Figure 1. Definition: DESI Use of Internet Dimension calculated as the weighted average of the three sub-dimensions: 3a Content (33%), 3b Communication (33%), 3c Transactions (33%), (2014-2016). Source: European Commission, Digital Scoreboard. <https://digital-agenda-data.eu/datasets/desi/visualizations>.

The ‘opinionated journalism’ (Cornia 2014:54) of Italian newspapers is equally aimed at their likeminded readers, who belong to the tribe that shares the same ideology (van Dijk 1997), as well as some readers of the ideology opposite to the newspaper for self-confirmation of the distance from the *other* point of view. The digital materials comply with this form of journalism for insiders, thus ‘[Italian journalists] mix the reported facts with their personal evaluations – in order to offer to their audience a distinctive interpretation of what is going on in the political arena’ (Cornia 2014: 55). The proximity of

political journalists with the politicians of reference is not uncommon in political journalism, possibly this is the norm (Kuhn and Nielsen 2014). The Italian specificity is that politicians and their press offices represent *ad personam* sources of information for the political journalists of their same political leaning. In order to be able to report on political debates, Italian newspapers regularly end up building news reports through reciprocal readings and rewritings, so that the opinions expressed in the political debate by opposing parties or factions are represented through the reporting initiated by each function in its preferred newspaper. Newspaper reports seem to rewrite news from each other, thus initiating a type of press-centric spiral. This approach skews the use of data from translations (for instance the issue of multiple conversions of units of measures, discussed in Federici 2010) or translated sources. This unique approach to journalistic sources is critically perceived in the Anglophone tradition of journalism studies ‘Sources and sourcing practices differ across cultures: [...] Italian journalists actively choose sources who will better advocate their cause’ (Zelizer and Allan 2010:143-144). The foreign, international affairs are re-framed into these mechanisms that give news value only in relation to the political significance of the event for the Italian political (not even social) arena. These mechanisms of political analysis do not domesticate the other, but because, for journalists, news items assume news value only when they are expendable in the Italian political arena, the *voluntarist* and activist use of biased translations is merely part of the editorial practices. The interventionist approaches discussed in Perez Gonzalez (2014) are at times only partially outside the official news-making channels in Italy and some early initiatives have been taken over by standard news-making organizations – such is the case with *YouReporter.it*. This platform for participative journalism includes news videos uploaded by from witness or citizen journalists; it was a limited company but has been taken over by the RCS Media Group S.p.A, a major editorial force in Italy, that currently owns major newspapers in Italy and Spain (including *Corriere della Sera* and its online version *Corriere.it*). *YouReporter.it* is now a hybrid source for several national broadcasters (TV and online press) thus creating a hybrid platform that was once free and interventionist is now getting closer to news-making corporations, whilst retaining its bottom-up approach to news gathering.

In this developing mediascape, Cornia (2014: 56) underlines the significance and permanence of the frame of ‘political conflict’ as the dominant frame within which any foreign news has to be reconfigured, and whereby in France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom the frame is the same for 20% of all news distribution, 40% of all Italian political news abide by this frame, a figure that is double that of comparator countries. In this highly recognizable context, a specific note on internet access levels becomes necessary. Italians have a very low rate of internet access, which has shrunk rather than grown in proportion to other European states (see DESI figures). Online news access varies in the principal newspapers from 600 thousand to 1.2 million daily hits; some data refers to unique hits, but there are discrepancies with news video on the online content as counters do not seem to be accurate. The concerns on studying reception numbers and responses of audiences are at the core of many research questions; they cannot be addressed in this contribution. In this specific online context characterised by nation-specific journalistic practices, with relatively low rates of access to online content for

communication and information, the growth of interactive components and news videos on online Italian newspapers is remarkable, also for the direct impact it has on AVT modes, and for its configuration as a 'last resort' to attract more readers by innovative techniques (as well as the semi-participative platforms described), as explained in the next section.

## 2. Audiovisual Translation Modes and Fashions: the journalistic problem

Increased number and peaks of news video content are common trends in news making (Kalogeropoulos *et al.* 2016) and they naturally tend to be proportionally higher in news items related to breaking news on erupting crises – for instance, terrorist attacks, wars, disasters, and diplomatic standoffs. The proliferations correspond to increasingly creative uses of AVT modes. The English term 'mode', as in translation mode, in its Latinate form offers a useful assonance with the Italian 'moda', meaning 'trend, fashion.' Arguably, in audiovisual translation the notion that translation modes are a question of habit and national traditions, though part of changing traditions, is relatively consolidated in relation to the discourse on audiovisual materials for entertainment and infotainment (film documentaries, nature and historical documentaries, and so on). Were we to switch focus to the perception of these modes as ephemeral trends and preferences, hence *mode*, fashions that are exposed to change we would be better positioned to engage with potentially new avenues of response and reception research based on freer mental constructions. The choice of one mode over another is certainly dictated by external factors rather than intrinsic values on the chosen modes or evidence-led analyses of the 'best option' for the demands and expectations for source language products (see Bogucki 2015: 193-94, on Polish voice-over mode). In the debate over dubbing and subtitling traditions for commercial audiovisual translations in Italy, the concept of choice as dictated by habit is well-documented and substantiated by a number of studies in audience preferences and expectations (see Antonini and Chiaro 2009: 97). Parini (2015: 49) in discussing multilingual fictional films suggests that the emergence of changing habits in some Italian audiovisual contexts could be the beginning of a revision of the causal relation between tradition, financial choice, and selected mode. Indeed, production processes are complex and subject to a number of agents, some of whom decide without any attention to assessing the benefit of one mode over another. Yet the use of subtitling, voice-over, and lower quality dubbing is emerging beyond the fundubbing and funsubbing domains (Massidda 2015), and the use of news videos globally grows and demand for their translations equally grows.

In the context of journalistic translation, the use of audiovisual materials shows an acceptance of the parameters of choice by purposes, which entail the use of a variety of AVT modes, depending on the translation purpose to be achieved. There is evidence of a refreshing attitude towards translation modes, as news videos make use of a broader variety of modes, among those available (contrary to examples of unchangeable practices of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, critically discussed in Federici 2009, 2011). Solutions are not a priori tradition-driven or market-demanded options; translation modes seem to be adopted without a specific, consistent, biased, or imposed preferred option. Of course, this positive element in the plurality

of choice is accompanied by quality concerns, referring to respect for working conditions, rewards, as well as quality and qualifications of the translators involved in these processes dictated by the incremental speed of reaction expected in news-making contexts.

Quality assurance of audiovisual materials embedded in online versions of the dailies has never been a concern for journalists who do not perceive translation separated from their work, but merely a sub-ordinate aspect of their writing duties (see McLaughlin 2013; Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). The increase of mixed multimodal elements in online versions of the traditional press has not corresponded so far to an increase in the academic analysis of this wide-spread phenomenon. Pérez-González (2014a) discusses the interventionist ‘active collectives’, which have produced subtitles of news as an alternative to institutional and traditional news organizations, and highlights the emergence of both a new demand and a new offer for these interventionist news makers. Both the journalistic context elicited in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** above, and the data on internet usage in Italy (see Figure 1), which depicts nation-specific approaches, are needed to consider these emergent phenomena against a rise of participatory activities within the forums of the traditional, polarized Italian press in its online versions. In the intensive 15 years of journalistic translation research, a range of studies have focused on writing practices (from Stetting 1989 to Holland 2013), on news agencies and translators (Bielsa 2007; Bassnett and Bielsa 2009), on televised news (van Doorslaer 2012). There is less evidence of analyses focused on the multimodal contexts of online press. Arguably, these modes can be considered as evidence of the powerful influence derived from the ‘emergence of non-linear models of communication’ that Pérez-González (2014a:209) sees as having profound ‘implications for audiovisual translation practices’, which is also manifested in the hybrid positions of such platforms as *YouReporter.it*.

The phenomenon is equally linked with the traditional press and its attempts to defend its role in the political arena, especially in relation to attributing ‘relevance’ and news value to news coming from abroad. This action of appropriation for re-framing purposes goes hand-in-hand with the increased acceptability of multiple audiovisual translation modes that arise from the activities of anti-establishment collaborative crowds working in the Italian fansubbing and fundubbing communities. The re-appropriation of the right to establish newsworthiness goes through the adoption of new, initially participatory innovations in the use of alternative translation modes. Cornia (2014:57-60) suggests that video broadcasts online are a strategy adopted by the traditional press to raise the declining numbers of readers. In other words, by acknowledging the prevalent consumption of televised news, the sector of online newsmaking has increased its ‘tv.com’ areas in the daily newspapers thus endeavouring to keep readers interested to their textual content whilst consuming also short news videos. With the constant increase in (relative) unique accesses to the online newspapers (comparing Audipress<sup>1</sup> data from 2010 to

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<sup>1</sup> Audipress is the official survey of the Italians’ habits in relation to purchase of and access to daily newspapers (in digital and press versions) and magazines. Its data focus on reading patterns of daily newspapers, ‘weekend’ issues, weekly, and monthly publications including 125 national and local news outlets. Audipress is a private company that is externally audited by three institutions specialised in statistics and verified by a third external body; the findings of Audipress regular surveys are then submitted to the Italian Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni, the

2016), news makers consider using multimedia to complement the written offering as appropriate in the multifarious context of news consumption.

The use of multimedia especially clips allows journalists to compete again for scoops and breaking news with televised news broadcast especially on commenting foreign affairs. These clips offer partial substitutes to the decline of the foreign correspondent as a journalistic figure (Archetti 2012). It also allows journalists to spin the source text message by framing it *before* anybody else does. Undeniably, quality of rendering cannot be a core consideration for the time constraints and the new modes chosen. Quality assurance of the translated audiovisual can be overlooked but the obscure struggles to justify the regularity with which errors or slips are always in favour (see Section 4 below) of the target-language reframing and of the opinionated, polarised frame determined by the editorial policies of the newspapers and of its audiences' expectations are very much perceivable.

The news videos considered in this study work as a sample of 'novelties', which is neither comprehensive nor in-depth, as its primary objective is to raise the question of what methods we should adopt to analyse the position and function of foreign news videos and their translation in current news-making practices. They are macroscopic examples of narratives of crises reframed for Italian audiences. Firstly, their connection with the theme of 'crisis translation' – within the parameters of a broader project engaging with the multi-fold issues of identifying roles and *modus operandi* of those who translate in crises (Cadwell and O'Brien 2016; Federici 2016; O'Brien 2016). Secondly, they reflect the spread and variety of translation modes that 'interventionist activities' in the news mediascapes (Pérez-González 2014a) have brought to the front pages of both online national and local newspapers. Thirdly, they present different legacy trails that move from the translated audiovisuals into national re-framing and then move towards the self-referential national press in Italy leaving a set of influential clues that cannot be examined without having recourse to new research methods. Finally, their discursive stance can be considered according to observer-centred methods from critical discourse analysis and potentially from recent, revised forms of multimodal analysis.

### **3. Methodological impasse: multimodal analysis, circulation, and audience**

Alternative AVT modes bring forward the necessity for innovative methodological approaches to study them. When carrying out an investigation into texts published into online newspapers, the methods used to look at the linguistic makeup of the articles, their stylistic and political origin in the Italian context, and the additional complexity of a multimodal framing soon lead me to focus on a range of methodological doubts. How can we study these phenomena without falling in too many simplifications of what a complex system of production and consumption of news actually is? This section engages with the methods considered, prior to introducing the analysis carried out on data obtained from one of these

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ombudsman for communication. The data present their weaknesses as any statistical data but they are the most accurate for the Italian context.

methodological approaches; the illustrations that follow in the next sections show the potential productivity of such an approach as well as its intrinsic limitations.

To discuss translated news in the Italian news media landscape, previous works have considered imagology (Filmer 2016), critical discourse analysis (Federici 2010), re-framing (Orengo 2005), corpus-based comparative approaches (Caimotto 2016). The definition of critical discourse analysis that is better applied to such studies was given in Weiss and Wodak (2003: 12), ‘studies in critical discourse analysis are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds and orientated toward different data and methodologies’. Fowler (1991) was among the first to focus on critical discourse analysis of news items from an Hallidayan linguistic perspective (1973). Probably cognitive linguistics (von Hoek 1999: 134) intended as ‘explicating the intimate relationships between language and other cognitive faculties’, will be more regularly considered when integrated to multi-sensorial data collection methods. These intertwined cognitive faculties are in fact activated by the multimodal messages of the news videos in different ways from the text-dominated news items. They deserve multisensorial data analysis but so far no extensive research in this direction exists; there are studies on the cognitive load of re-speaking live news to produce immediately accessible subtitled translations of TV broadcasts (Szarkowska *et al.* 2016), but not on audience reception of news.

Currently, the issue of assessing audiences’ responses to the Italian press rests on the premise that even the general public, beyond the insiders and the political actors who read the representations of political conflicts from many news outlets, that is the core readers of daily newspapers are polarised (as described in Section 2 above); hence there is a belief that the average reader is a known entity and has a relatively high level of education, as the majority of the general public prefers TV broadcast of news as their dominant, if not only, source of news. For Cornia (2014:30) ‘Italian information consumption, even today, is marked by a high level of selective exposure to the news’. This selection is conscious and explicit. Arguably, all news systems rely to a degree of affiliation and subscription to the editorial line of the chosen news organization – the sharing of the same Hallidayan ideational function of language. Such discursive affiliation of individuals to the narrative frames provided by their *chosen* providers of news represent a construction of reality shared by the in-group people (van Dijk 1997). This in-group, consisting of readers, news-makers, journalists, witness journalists, creates the external relations that determine the pre-existing context in which the translation reframes the foreign into their narrative, as a set of internal discursive relation. ‘The analysis of external relations is the analysis of their relations with other elements of social events and, more abstractly, social practices and social structures’ (Fairclough 2003:36); the analysis of the translation could be an analysis of the internal relations in the reframing.

As the ‘conflictual’ frame is twice as wide-spread as in many other European news-making traditions, the Italian readerships’ sense of belonging corresponds to a ‘tribalisation’ of the news (Orengo 2005). For Cornia (*ibid* 58) digitization of news media has further radicalized this Italian phenomenon. In a way, we could read these results in terms of the uninterrupted fluidity of the social phenomena, where digitization and globalization are not static but rather dynamic phenomena in continuous change

determining new hybrid texts reflecting the current complexity of reality (Marais 2014), as well as hybrid readerships consisting of ‘young’ and ‘old’ age-based groups who access instant news at the same rate with different systems of validation and rejection of the messages at play.

In this context, translation of foreign news short-circuits the system. As 45% of newspaper journalists in traditional and online newspaper pressrooms are political journalists in Italy (Corvia 2014:58), translation-mediated news items of political significance risk undermining the journalists’ role as ‘insiders’ and their function in the journalistic reporting of political events; hence the need for a stronger conflictual reframing than in other news organizations in Western Europe. Desk journalists and ‘churnalists’ (Nielsen and Kuhn 2014:13) prevail over other actors in these practices. Sources are websites of other news makers, as much as news agencies, and they become central to providing materials to be interpreted from the foreign and its reframing in the conflictual narratives of antagonistic Italian politics. Translated news items nevertheless leave what could be defined as a ‘legacy trail’. They leave in their wake a pathway of linguistic cues (at times a paragraph, other times a sentence, often just two- three-word collocations) that are picked up by the other opposing, rival, and antagonistic Italian news makers to establish an entirely Italy-focused use of the news from abroad (see the issue of multiple conversions of measures of speed in Federici 2011). We are not looking, then, at source texts and target texts within whichever loose definition we may wish to attribute them: written source texts and target texts as recognizable and full texts are the exceptions (signed by the translators; and from October 2016, *Corriere.it* has presented news about the Italian earthquake in an English version – though the phenomenon is not consistent or congruous). When we seek translated news from abroad, we normally find snippets, soundbites of news that propagate their influence across the self-referential mechanisms of Italian press, as soon as one of the newspapers picks up the news from abroad and initiates the process of legitimization, whose legacy trail will then be visible in a number of national and local news items across different newspapers.

As an example of this practice, left-wing oriented national daily newspaper *la Repubblica* (2<sup>nd</sup> most read press paper, 1<sup>st</sup> for online circulation) feeds its interests in framing news from the United Kingdom by rewriting and editing materials that *The Guardian online* has analysed as a criticism of what the *Daily Mail online* is discussing that day: the source is known but it is already a doubly mediated text. Through convoluted passages of acculturation and appropriation of the foreign, the Italian left-wing newspaper re-frames the already framed materials that *The Guardian online* has selected as a source of editorials. This morsel of foreign news begins then to establish its own parallel life in the legacy trail it leaves from *la Repubblica* to *Corriere* (1<sup>st</sup> most read press paper, 2<sup>nd</sup> for online circulation), and the discourse then reverberates into online dailies, thus giving space to more extremist ideas (*Il Giorno, Il Fatto*) or less widely-circulated but highly influential newspapers’ expressions of powerful lobbies (*La Stampa*, part of the Agnelli group). Tracking these morsels of translated news is not easy, especially for the purpose of full contrastive and comparative studies. They present several methodological challenges; a bilingual corpus of source and target texts of news cannot be built up as many of the news agencies released in English enter

into the Italian media through an Italian-language national press agency (ANSA), which *possibly* provides the first translation of the news from abroad. These items from the press agency then become the sources for the Italian discussions of the foreign news items. No bilingual corpora of English, French, Spanish, Arabic, or Chinese news into Italian can easily be built, as full translations are rare exceptions to the rule in the written texts. The data has to be extracted from a monolingual Italian corpus of news, once any morsel of foreign news has been identified, selected for study, and collected into a partial corpus – which leaves little scope to consider corpus-based techniques of analysis. The news videos represent text-heavy hybrid forms of communication, whose immediacy of uploads leave them more exposed to being studied as ‘translated materials’, because their translations are visible.

Although we can presume a standard understanding of the notion of *audience* by considering the sense of belonging to an in-group of likeminded people with similar political ideals (as described in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**), more complex and authentic models of audience presuppose considering the position of those who reject their views and buy into those of the opposite. These are the out-group of people who read newspapers of different leaning in order to reinforce their expectations and predictions of finding *different* interpretations of events according to the opposed worldview. This approach could lead us to consider the notion of audience response accepted within Journalism Studies; however, this approach is limiting. The analyses of forums and social media would potentially offer a more multifaceted form of response. They remain only qualitative and reductive as approaches, as they do not represent a movement away from the normal study of the in-group/out-group dynamics which are automatically interrelated with the notion of expected readership and audience for the particular newspapers in whose forms the readers have participated. The analysis of social media responses to foreign news could be an alternative – by investigating proliferation, distribution, and spread of memes and feeds these approaches could complement the analysis. However, they equally widen an existing issue: these immediate forms of communication regularly betray only partial readings of articles or events that are being commented on. The impossibility of considering these reactions as reactions to the news but rather as emotive reactions to the ‘thought’ of a news makes them of little interest from this perspective, as they are more interesting as social dynamics of copying mechanisms (Bentley *et al.* 2011).

Whatever can or cannot yet be said about the audience, we are left to look at what audiences can *read* and view out of news videos. In this perspective, the option of conducting research through Critical Discourse Analysis techniques would remain appealing; though exercised with a full, self-reflective awareness that it introduces immediately a strong subjective stance in the criticism proposed, and its consequential reflections. From its early days, critical discourse analysis of news has considered the international dimension in which news discourses emerge. In his *News Analysis* (1988) van Dijk carries out a series of attempts at scrutinising the evolution of one worldview on international events by analysing news reports published from a sample of worldwide news makers. The analysis was revolutionary in a sense but also showed a surprising silence on the issue that this scrutiny was in fact carried out on a range of translations into English.

Over 15 years separate Stetting's early cursory focus on the hybrid translational processes described as 'transediting' (1981) occurring in the production of news flows, from Schäffner's watershed article (2004) considering the role of CDA as a tool to acknowledge the position of translation in reporting the foreign. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, globalisation and global translation trends became an ever-present phenomenon open to epistemological reflections on how it affected long-established practices. The current access to news items of hybrid and multimodal media is immediate; it is expected to provide views of the foreign as delivered by the news within seconds of the event happening. The phenomenon began to be studied for the intrinsic interconnections between distant societies, their languages, and their representation in the bubble of the news immediacy from the 1980s onward, with reflections on news translation gradually following the seminal reflections on the linguistic impact of journalism and the importance of 'news as stories' (respectively in the influential Fowler 1991; Bell 1991). Such deceptive immediacy is ever more evident in audiovisual contents embedded in online dailies. They are different from clips designed, directed, and edited to appear on televised news, the translation of which have come under scrutiny (Kang 2007; van Doorslaer 2012) and from the multimodal materials of news agencies, whose role in the news-making life cycle has also come under extensive scrutiny (to name but a selection Bielsa 2007; Bielsa and Bassnett 2009; Clausen 2003; McLaughlin 2013, 2015).

A critical discourse analysis of the text in these audiovisuals would appear well-suited for a number of reasons. Italian linguists (Loporcaro 2006) demonstrate the prevalence of textuality in Italian online news. Although news items have become accessible on the internet, the language and textual features of the news items themselves have not evolved into a different *medium* of communication, but the text-dense news items appear on digital platforms rather than on paper. The use of a new means of communication does not presuppose nor entail alternative stylistic or syntactic norms - though research on press offices' use of social media may soon reveal some changes to these paradigms. Hence, even the audiovisual materials embedded in online news are text-dense and their translations are based and driven by the hierarchical importance of the *text* as a written sign. Both the lack of standards and time for quality assurance of the translations of these audiovisual materials have led to an enhanced form of *hybridity*. On the one hand, they do not to comply with the expectations, habits, and traditions of audiovisual translations for commercial purposes (as discussed in Section 2) and on the other hand the source texts are considered as *written texts* which only happen to be oral. They do not even fall within the oft-used linguistic definitions of the journalistic varieties for broadcasting (such as written texts to be spoken, scripts to be performed orally, radio speeches, or the other linguistic varieties that undergo adaptations in translation).

As emerged from the examples considered in Section 4, which represent a select range of materials that show prominent translations, which are text-dense and manipulated, the emphasis on their textual nature underpins the translation choices. These choices then undergo the well-known manipulations realised to legitimise the editorial stand of the Italian news organisation that publishes them (Caimotto 2016; Federici 2011; Orengo 2005; McLaughlin 2015).

At this intersection, Vald on’s 2015 overview of the Journalistic Translation Research so far meets with the methodological issues of studying AVT in news media proposed in this paper. Vald on (2015: 640) stresses that an early (earliest?) attempt to work on subtitled news took place in 1998, ‘Kwieci n studied voice-over in a variety of [Polish] media programs on the one hand, and printed news translations in the *Forum* magazine on the other. He aimed to describe the many domesticating strategies present in audiovisual products and news translation’. An analysis of televised news translations discussing the complex inter-relational networks affecting translation as part of journalistic writing and editing processes is given in Kang (2012) with a case study from South Korea. Kang (2012:441). reminds the readers that ‘interpretation, representation, and attribution of meaning, especially vague or opaque meaning, in media translation is sensitive to institutional forces that play an important role in creating an intellectual context for conflict.’ These forces are very active and, in a perhaps paradoxical way, very explicit about their presence in the Italian news organizations. Any method of analysis needs to consider this specificity of the Italian context.

At this very point in the investigation, we face the awkwardness of a methodology that needs to take into consideration more variables that its current methods allow it to do. Towards the end of the 1990s, among scholars of journalism and communication studies, the unprecedented growth of news reporting from around the world led them to underline the sense of immediacy that such growth brought about. At the moment of writing, this concept has become so strongly embedded as to feel common place. However, the subtle distinctions between perception of proximity and immediacy, and the unchanged reality of distance and complexity that these concepts initially hid have become more evident. The possibility of reacting or interacting ever more immediately to news from everywhere in the world led early researchers to postulate a conclusive interconnection of the phenomenon of international news making with the rampant phase of economic globalisation. The global news phenomenon called for a redefinition of concepts, first of all of ‘news’. By asking what is ‘news from around the world’, Van Ginneken (1998:40) argues ‘News is usually said to concern the “really important events”. This answer seems satisfying until one comes to realize that it is not at all obvious what is “real”, what is “important”, or what is an “event”’. Other voices had already begun to acknowledge the phenomenal shrinking of notions of distance as well as those of space (Cronin 2006), which ultimately lead to our current, and arguably flawed sense of news immediacy (see Federici 2016: 1-3). News translation contributes to making this sense of immediacy exponentially more deceptive of the true spatial-temporal distance between people and places, which is not a problem, until this deception permeates other spheres culminating in simplifications of the cultural distances that continue to exist and to enrich our complex world. In this simplification and deception, the usage of audiovisual materials with immediately translated content equally feeds the sensation of a non-mediated communication that goes in lieu of any cultural and anthropological reasoning on the significance and poignancy of considering that much distance remains from the source message.

The potentially conflictual nature of the position of foreign news, caught between the interest for the foreign and the need for relevance to the local, seems to be dissipated in the national reframing within which translations operate. The translated news must and eventually does fit in with the opinionated standards of the Italian framing of the news. Audiovisual materials offer a unique resource to ensure that their perceived immediacy and their openness to manipulation - justifiable by referring to constraints of both editorial and temporal nature. The perception of immediacy is given by the foreign news in a globalised audiovisual rendering (paraphrasing Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007: 229-230). Are journalists expected to be global and cosmopolitan or are they still relying on existing paradigms to define themselves? It is interesting to notice that a convergence of scholarship in both translation studies and in journalism studies towards issues of local and global belonging with recent publications (respectively van Doorslaer 2016 and Lindell and Karlsson 2016). In Journalism Studies, the complex agencies in any form of news productions have been long since the focus of many studies. According to Lindell and Karlsson (2016: 3)

An abundance of previous research illustrates that ownership, workplace hierarchies and organization, peer pressure, information subsidies, audience and advertising considerations, amongst many other things, influence what stories are told and how (Shoemaker and Reese 1996; Schudson 2003). Hence, there might exist a gap between journalists' normative (global) outlook and their practice since they are neither fully autonomous nor completely isolated individuals.

The double screen of immediacy, in the speed of transmission of news from around the world and the fact that translations appear to make these news items and their implicit culture-specific issues transparent, permeates the examples of AVT modes used for the news videos described in the following section.

#### **4. Examples**

In organizing the preliminary set of examples of novel uses for AVT modes embedded in online newspapers, this article selected illustrations that are emblematic. This is a preliminary study to be followed by a further-reaching and analytical study of broader corpora, which will entail more in-depth discussions of the phenomenon in order to understand in full its reverberations. The description of the phenomenon remains a priority as it serves to take stock of the innovations and of the challenges they entail from the point of view of journalistic translation research. The evidence considered here is not strictly speaking statistically significant, but it is highly significant from a qualitative point of view as the 8 months considered in the study have seen a regular increase in publication of translated news videos. Furthermore, they are all visible translations, yet offered as a 'transparent tool' to access the original foreign news. As they are concerned with breaking news, they rely on ad-hoc translators to deal with the crises that generated the news abroad. Evidence of direct involvement of professionals is difficult to

gauge, the quality produced is limited and only the exceptions, the signed articles in translations, refer to commentaries and editorial pieces rather than to breaking news. By studying the translation modes adopted in *laRepubblica.it*, *Corriere.it*, *LaStampa.it*, which are respectively the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> most widely read (or distributed) online newspapers (and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively on paper format; cf. Audipress 2014), this paper touches upon questions regarding the methodological problems faced by any attempt to investigate the modes of audiovisual translation used to render news on emergencies and crises from English, Arabic or French audiovisual sources and are edited for use as online contents in daily newspapers. Four macroscopic illustrations of the hybridity and fluidity of AVT modes in online Italian press in the current practice are used; none can be comprehensively discussed in detail; the illustrations intend to map the new extremes (but of growing visibility) in AVT modes adopted in the news video translation, for what appears to be an unregulated area of practice, which is free from the conventions of commercial AVT modes.

#### ***4.1 Text translation and subtitles***

One particular diplomatic crisis, in which the use of translation in a journalistic setting became prominent, was the tragic death of Giulio Regeni, doctoral student at Centre for Development Studies of the University of Cambridge. Regeni was conducting research in Cairo when he disappeared; his body was found mutilated as a result of extreme torture in a ditch alongside the Cairo-Alexandria highway on the outskirts of Cairo on 3 February 2016. The Egyptian enquiry on his death did not involve Italian investigators as expressly asked by triggering the diplomatic agreements in place between Egypt and Italy. This refusal and the concerns about the circumstances of this death in the independent press in Egypt rose suspicions from the very beginning; Italian journalists and the political debate led to an interruption of diplomatic relations between the two countries in April 2016. Daily reports on the Regeni case appeared between February and May 2016, with a peak around March when the Egyptian authorities reported that the suspected killers of Regeni had been involved in a shootout with the police and had been shot. Members of the family of the individual killed in these circumstances were arrested after releasing interviews in which they also voiced their suspicion about the investigation. The circumstances of these killing were queried by several Egyptian news outlets, and *Daily News Egypt*, an independent online, anti-establishment, and interventionist news organization put together a documentary with interviews with the relatives of the ‘suspected killers’ who died in the shootout with the police. On 9 April 2016, the documentary was released and picked up by the Italian newspapers. Around 20:00 EST the news made it to the front page of *laRepubblica.it*, there was a link to the news video accompanied by another link to the PDF file of the translated transcript of the film documentary (see Figure 2). The Egyptian variety of Arabic in the interviews is challenging for both its phonetic specificity that may be challenging to some Arabic-native speakers who are not familiar with this variety, and for the audio

quality.<sup>2</sup> The translations into Italian show many lacunae in rendering the source text; they can be attributed to using an Arabic speaker unfamiliar with the local, oral variety, but the fact that it was also used to produce substandard subtitles for the news video version shows that the visibility of the translation does not lead to considerations about verifying its quality over time. In fact, a comment on the poor quality of the interpretation of the Arabic, which was placed under the video 45 minutes after the newspaper had uploaded it, disappeared from the forum which was subsequently closed to comments.

The screenshot shows the homepage of la Repubblica.it on an iPad. The main headline is "Terrorismo, Abrini confessa E' lui 'l'uomo con il cappello' foto" with subtext "Il complice di Salah a Parigi era anche all'aeroporto di Bruxelles" and a video link "Video L'arresto ad Anderlecht, altri 4 fermi". Below this is a video player for "Regeni, sui tabulati scontro tra i pm" with subtext "Accuse dai familiari dei 5 uccisi dalla polizia: arrestati video / traduzione". To the right, there is a sports section with a headline "Allegri e un pezzo di scudetto diretta Milan-Juventus 1-1" and subtext "Il Chievo affonda il Carpi Genoa vittoria salvezza L' Inter passa a Frosinone". The page includes navigation menus for various sections like "Politica", "Economia", "Sport", and "Spettacoli", along with a search bar and social media links.

Figure 2. Breaking (translated) news.

There is evidence that the use of a visible translation has attracted readers to engage with the text in the forum, within an hour of activating the video (see Figure 3). The journalistic practice here shows however an attention to both the importance of a full text translation, which is added as a document linked to the front webpage of the newspaper, and the use of subtitles in the news video. The audiovisual translation presented here shows how the journalistic need of reporting breaking news urgently clashes with a lack of planned responses to sourcing translators.

<sup>2</sup> I am very grateful to Dr Khaled Al Shehari, of Sultan Quboos University in Oman, for his great help with a full translation and stylistic analysis into English of the original Egyptian documentary. Access to native speakers of Egyptian was necessary for Dr Al Shehari, himself a native-speaker of Arabic, and it was very clear that sensitive passages that present ambiguous information in the documentary are difficult to render because of these constraints.



Figure 3. Translation in the spotlight

From the point of view of audiovisual translation, the example shows how there is no visible concern with current, minimum standards of subtitling quality as accepted in the industry in Italy (see Figure 3: no respect of syntax, with all subtitles starting with a capital letter, no respect of the characters expected in Italian (39-42), plus the spotting of the whole video appears to be mechanical and never checked by a subtitler). Little doubt exists that the spotting and the subtitling of the news video were not carried out by a professional subtitler. The time constraints do not justify the quality of the AVT. The use of the hybrid written and AVT translation confirms a form of reticence, from those who used to be the journalists of *carta stampata* [paper press], to trust the multimodal messages of AVT. The journalists' choices seem to register a total absence of concerns regarding using more habitual AVT modes, such as dubbing and subtitling. The journalists' choices seem to be underpinned by a sense of protection towards the newspapers' legal position (possibly deciding to acknowledge implicitly the use of a written translation to generate the subtitles). Furthermore, their belief in the superior clarity of the written word seems to be implicit in the equal level of visibility given to both the link to the video and to the translation on the opening page of the newspaper. The translation had clearly news value per se; its textual component visually equal to the video component; yet the response to the urgency of publication seems to be non-dissimilar to the collectivist and interventionist approach of informal, alternative, and anti-establishment translators – described in Perez Gonzalez.

[Politica](#) [Mondo](#) [Cronaca](#) [Economia](#) [Sport](#) [Motori](#) [Spettacoli](#) [Tecnologia](#) [Natura](#) [Fun](#) [Salute](#) [Cucina](#) [Istituto Luce](#) [D](#) [Edizioni locali](#)

[SPECIALE](#) [LA MORTE DI CASALEGGIO](#) [AMMINISTRATIVE 2016](#) [GOVERNO RENZI](#) [TRIVELLE](#) [CASO REGENI](#) [PANAMA PAPERS](#) [ELEZIONI USA 2016](#) [IMMIGRATI](#) [FB LIVE](#)

**LO SPECIALE Egitto** (571 video)

**9 APRILE 2016**  
**Regeni, l'intervista ai familiari dei 5 presunti assassini uccisi dalla polizia egiziana**

Al Cairo, chi tocca i fili dell'affaire Regeni muore. O, nella migliore delle ipotesi, finisce in una galera. Chi chiede «la verità» o denuncia la menzogna, paga. Se «verità» e «menzogna» non coincidono con il canovaccio scritto in queste otto settimane dagli apparati della sicurezza egiziani e dal Ministero dell'Interno. Accade così che, nelle stesse ore in cui il Procuratore generale del Cairo Mostafà Soliman annuncia con enfasi che il rispetto degli articoli 57 e 58 della costituzione impedisce la consegna di celle e tabulati telefonici alla Procura di Roma, ma non certo «la volontà di continuare a cooperare per il raggiungimento della verità», i familiari di due dei cinque disgraziati uccisi dalla Polizia alla vigilia di Pasqua, il 24 marzo, e "serviti" come assassini di Giulio finiscono in galera. Colpevoli – secondo quanto riferisce il [Daily News Egypt](#) – di aver calunniato il Ministero dell'Interno e gli apparati di sicurezza nelle loro interviste concesse alla giornalista Basma Mostafar del sito DotMisr. Testimonianze decisive per fugare ogni dubbio sulla macchinazione (di cui il ritrovamento dei documenti di Giulio doveva essere la prova regina) e svelarne i dettagli. Uno su tutti. Che almeno uno dei cinque uomini "uccisi in un conflitto

Voi dite che loro sono specializzati nel rapire stranieri, Questi quattro sono degli ignoranti, come avrebbero fatto

05:52 / 07:59

167

Visto 15.314 volte

Speciali » Egitto

**GLI ALTRI VIDEO DELLO SPECIALE** [Tutti](#)

Figure 4. Breaking subtitles rules.

## 4.2 Subtitles on rolling texts

In the aftermath of the terrorist attack of 22 March 2016 on Brussels Zaventem Airport in Belgium, Italian daily newspapers activated a number of different approaches to news reporting from Belgium.

**CORRIERE TV**

HOME [TV](#) [NEWS](#) [LE CITTÀ](#) [ECONOMIA](#) [SPORT](#) [SPETTACOLI](#) [LA LETTURA](#) [CULTURA](#) [SCUOLA](#) [SCIENZE](#) [TECNOLOGIA](#) [SALUTE](#) [MOTORI](#) [MODA](#) [CUCINA](#) [EXPO](#) [ARCHIVIO](#)

**DIRETTA**

**Attacco a Bruxelles, morti e feriti in aeroporto e metrò**

Le deflagrazioni hanno colpito lo scalo internazionale Zaventem nella hall delle partenze. Bomba alla fermata Maelbeek, vicino alle sedi delle istituzioni Ue | *CorriereTV*

2065

**ALFIM TV** **CORRIERE TV**

**ALERTES MAXIMALES EN BELGIQUE**

**RITROVATE ARMI ALL'INTERNO DELL'AEROPORTO LUOGO DEGLI ATTACCHI**

**I PIÙ VISTI**

**DAL MONDO**  
**Bruxelles: la gente in fuga...**  
 22 marzo 2016

**SPETTACOLI**  
**La stoccata di Filippa...**  
 21 marzo 2016

22 MARZO 2016 [LINK](#) <http://video.corriere.it/bruxelles-due-esplosioni> [EMBED](#) [EMAIL](#)

Figure 5. Live-feed from RTL TV

Many newspapers, especially the three most-widely read national newspapers activated forms of live-feeds (tv.com journalism) for broadcasting either with speaking head journalists who work as their regular foreign correspondent for the written news items, or with live feeds from online broadcasts of TV news broadcasts from Belgian TV channels. In Figure 5 it is possible to see a snapshot of the activity by *Corriere.it* that activated a form of subtitles on the rolling titles and the oral speech conveyed live (*diretta* at the top right corner of the snapshot) by RTL. The use of block capital black letters on a white background could be interpreted as a way of mimicking the register of RTL's own rolling titles or an attempt to maximize the visibility of the text in the multiple frames within which it was embedded. The subtitles appeared for several seconds (more than 15) on screen and respected some conventions of subtitling, whilst they could have used a re-speaking system.

### 4.3 Voice-over and written translation



"Ero sulla metropolitana, c'è stata un'esplosione, tutti si sono buttati a terra, poi una seconda esplosione. Ero nel primo vagone che stava per partire quindi non ho visto, non so dove si trovasse la bomba esattamente. Sto bene". Questa la testimonianza di una ragazza che si trovava nella metropolitana di Bruxelles al momento dell'esplosione. La giovane, che parlava ai giornalisti in francese, non è rimasta ferita ma era molto spaventata e parlava fra le lacrime.

Figure 6. La Stampa.it video interview of survivor to the Brussels attacks on 22 March 2016.

*LaStampa* adopted a number of AVT modes in order to report on the 22 March terrorist attack. In Figure 6, the dramatic interview captured after the bombing in Zaventem Airport was uploaded on *LaStampa* using both a voice-over of the French original and a verbatim translation of the voiceover as a long caption. These clips appeared regularly during the hours following the terrorist attack on the international airport. Italian online newspapers were using different audiovisual materials – including live video broadcasts of their journalists from Brussels – to keep their readers informed of the events as they unfolded. Among the numbers of AVT modes of providing their journalistic services to Italian audiences, *LaStampa* used one mode that is rarely used in the Italian context, besides forms of live interpreting,

which is the voice-over technique. It is possible to interpret the unnecessary addition of the translation in the position of a caption as a testament to the unusual use of the voice-over mode that needed to be compensated by means of text. It could also be evidence of the predominance of ‘written’ texts in the extensively multimodal world of hypertext, discussed with reference to the text-heavy Italian website in Tavosanis (2011). In both interpretations, it is evident that the multimodal context enables the online version to adopt a lesser used AVT mode and complement it with the security of the written word. The resulting choice does not hide the ideational power of discourse: the written word, especially when translating materials from a different language, seems to be perceived as more powerful than its oral version, be it a translation or not. This interpretation may be slightly extreme, but the evidence in the news videos suggest that Tavosanis’s work on text-dense multimodal communication (2011) as well as Loporcaro’s work on Italian news (2006) converge on one issue: Italian journalists *della carta stampata* [of the paper press] may be writing on a different medium, but they still consider themselves more importantly as producers of written texts on paper (be it digital or real paper).

#### 4.4 Rolling subtitles



Figure 7. RepTV, use of rolling subtitles

One last illustration of the variety of the AVT modes used in online Italian newspapers comes from the US presidential debate of October 2016. Figure 7 shows the use of rolling subtitles that moved from the right to the left of the screen to enable left-to-right reading. In this snapshot, there is the example of how *Repubblica.it* reported one of the events surrounding the US presidential elections of 2016. In October 2016, the Republican candidate Donald Trump was in the spotlight for a leaked 2005 conversation recorded between Trump and Billy Bush, whilst they were shooting a segment on the set of *Days of Our*

*Lives*, in which Trump endorsed sexual harassment as a privilege of wealthy individuals, and referred to a ‘married woman’ who had refused his aggressive approaches. On Friday 7 October, it was revealed that the bluntly objectified woman in the recorded conversation between Mr Trump and Mr Bush was entertainment journalist Nancy O’Dell, who co-hosted Access Hollywood with Mr Bush at the time. Brought into the controversy, which made news worldwide, Mrs O’Dell issued a statement on 8 October and later a 50-second opening to the *Entertainment Tonight* broadcast, which was picked up by *RepTv* – of *laRepubblica.it* – and translated. The medium used is not that of standard subtitles but that of news rolling subheadings, moving from right to the left of the screen. They represent a verbatim rendering of O’Dell’s statement and do not take into account reading speed or any such notions as the 7-second rule for subtitling. The text is to the letter but its readability is highly compromised by the medium chosen. To attract the readers’ attention, the right-side panel of the screen as shown in Figure 7 above offers a synopsis of the statement. O’Dell is listing women’s right to be recognized for their skills and capabilities, including ‘intelligence’, which the snapshot above shows is present in the rolling subtitles but not in the summary in the right, which is rather confusing as the core message of this political and public relation crisis was relevant to the debate about the election as well as to the ongoing, Italian debate on gender equality.

## 5. Conclusions

The sample shows an ongoing process of swift adaptation of new AVT modes to respond to the growth of accompanying news videos to written online news items. This is a significant journalistic phenomenon recorded in digital versions of traditional daily press. Although the sample discussed here is undeniably too small to use for generalisations, the typologies of modes presented show a complex multimodal tendency in representing foreign events by mixed AVT modes. The sudden visibility of alternative AVT modes seem to respond to the need for urgency in reporting breaking news in crises; these modes may also challenge readers (who are transformed into viewers in online news). Indeed, the study of the viewers’ responses and reactions to the messages is the next stage to understand what, if any, emotional impact the transfer of these type of crisis messages has on general audiences. In terms of audiences, the counters for the news videos in the examples here discussed seem to indicate that even among the many potential readers of the main national newspapers (expressed in averages of millions in the Audipress reports), the readers/viewers interested in translated news videos represented small percentages of the audience, ranging between 1.5% and 3% of the overall potential number of readers. Also, the counters did not seem to distinguish unique hits from repeated hits, so the real figures may even be lower. The issue as to whether news videos are successful mechanisms to regain some readers in for traditional press outlets in their digital format may need to be considered from the perspective of journalism studies and translation studies alike. It may be possible that the introduction of news videos, leading to additional choice of format for news items in the digital press, does not entail an automatic endorsement and adoption of these new contents. From the point of view of AVT, this consideration should lead

researchers to test whether the unusual modes, or the quality issues in the rendering of the news videos, could act as obstacles to their spread and reach among the potential audiences.

The phenomenon here introduced deserves further analysis. The shifts described in selecting lesser common AVT modes as journalistic responses to emerging crises that need immediate reporting result from the textual hybridity which is prevailing, even though the hybrid messages still considerably rely on written signs for translations. The translatorial shifts in the news videos do not occur out of disregard for professional competence (not employing professional translators) nor out of disinterest towards offering a translation output of quality – at least, it can be certainly argued that these are not the only reasons. Equally, these shifts are highly visible and cannot be simplistically connected to the crisis constraints: even if technology allows for immediate voice-over or rolling titles, when these are accompanied by written texts, there is a duplication of work, any efficiency rule that would dismiss repetitive or dispersive translation efforts in favour of supporting approaches that would help journalists to ensure high quality of rendering in the limited time available seem to be overlooked. The increased use of unusual and hybrid AVT modes suggests that the necessity of accommodating a foreign message that comes from far away within the tribal boundaries of Italian journalistic discourse may prevail over concerns on quality of rendering. The phenomenon could also be interpreted as a recognition that translations of news happen, they are visible, and their shortcoming are of secondary importance, compared to the journalistic priority of giving immediate access to foreign news items.

It is true to say though that the phenomenon also shows many signs of the resilience of old journalistic means (the written word) in the context of online news, for which visible textual signs can hide and add confusion on the video message because ultimately the verbal sign is journalistically perceived as more powerful. The translations and examples discussed here show the specificity of the Italian phenomenon, as the need to make discourse close to home and relevant to the Italian readers is twice as marked than in other journalistic traditions. There is equally the need to remember that similar phenomena happen in most European broadcasting systems in which the local, national multilingualism create different target audiences. Undeniably, the universal growth of the use of news videos in daily online press needs to be studied from a translatorial point of view, as the representation of emergencies and sudden crises is not only a humanitarian concern, but it is a growing political concern because it engenders automatic and populist responses to what is foreign, when the visible translation hinders or simplifies the complexity of the foreign message.

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