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Estudio de caso sobre el proceso de doblaje en el mercado peruano: una
perspectiva polifónica

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación es el primer estudio de caso sobre el proceso de doblaje en Perú. Sobre la base de los modelos de proceso de doblaje de Chaume (2004) y Taylor (2015), y las pautas para elaborar un guion para el doblaje descritas por Cerezo et al. (2016), se analizó el proceso de doblaje implementado por la empresa peruana Torre A en dos películas mediante entrevistas a los agentes de ambos proyectos y el análisis de documentos de la empresa. Los resultados indican que, si bien la ejecución de los proyectos de Torre A coincide en gran medida con los modelos teóricos sobre la estructura procesual del doblaje, ambos procesos fueron determinados por el encargo de cada cliente, principalmente con respecto al carácter de negociación comercial, los aspectos técnicos y la traducción y adaptación. Los resultados muestran, además, la versatilidad de los agentes y una menor compartimentalización de sus funciones, ya que participaron en más de una fase del proceso. Finalmente, para evaluar la calidad de ambos procesos de doblaje, Torre A prestó atención a aspectos textuales, artísticos y técnicos según los criterios del cliente y los agentes. Así, la calidad del proceso se vio influenciada por el nivel de involucramiento de cada cliente y el tiempo del encargo, que condicionó la actividad de los agentes. Esta investigación aporta a la discusión sobre la calidad del doblaje en función al encargo y contribuye a cubrir el vacío teórico sobre los procesos de doblaje en América Latina.

Palabras clave: doblaje interlingüístico; proceso de doblaje; agentes del proceso de doblaje; calidad del proceso de doblaje

ABSTRACT

This research is the first case study on the dubbing process in Peru. Based on the dubbing process models by Chaume (2004) and Taylor (2016), and the guidelines to prepare a dubbing script described by Cerezo et al. (2016), the dubbing process for two films implemented by the Peruvian company Torre A was analyzed. This was carried out through interviews with the agents from both projects and the analysis of the company's documents. The results suggest that project execution in Torre A is largely similar to the theoretical models concerning the dubbing process structure. However, both processes were determined by each client's order, which mainly influenced the commercial negotiation nature, technical aspects, as well as the translation and dialogue writing phases. Furthermore, the results show agents' multitasking and less role compartmentalization due to their participation in more than one phase during the process. Finally, in order to assess quality in both dubbing processes, Torre A considered textual, artistic and technical aspects according to the clients and agents' criteria. That way, process quality was influenced by the level of involvement of each client and deadlines, which conditioned the agents' activities. This research contributes to the discussion on dubbing quality in terms of client orders and helps filling the theoretical gap about dubbing processes in Latin America.

Keywords: interlinguistic dubbing; dubbing process; dubbing process agents; dubbing process quality

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1 INTRODUCTION

Professional dubbing has only recently emerged as an industry in Peru, except for a few previous efforts that could not continue due to local factors. In the 1980s, the radio and television station Radio Programas del Perú (RPP) began dubbing Brazilian audiovisual products (Doblaje Wiki, n.d.). However, a nationwide financial crisis prevented the project from moving forward, while countries such as Mexico and Argentina—already powerhouses of Latin American dubbing (Iglesias 2009; Fuentes-Luque 2019; Scandura 2021)—further bolstered their presence as regional dubbing centers. Despite the prominence of these countries, Peruvian dubbing has resurfaced, as exemplified by the companies Big Bang Sound (the dubbing unit of Big Bang Films), Jack Studios, and Torre A. The latter is an interesting case of a company with no previous experience offering comprehensive dubbing services but that has taken specific actions and implemented workflows to carve out a space in the dubbing market while gaining industry experience. Since its founding in 2014, Torre A has provided voice talent for close to 30 films and has dubbed four films as of 2021 (Doblaje Wiki, n.d.). Its first two projects were *I Am the King (Yo soy el rey)* (Jang 2012), a South Korean historical and comedy film dubbed in 2017 from Korean into Spanish (using English pivot-language subtitles), and *Air Bound (La gran aventura de Gamba)* (Komori and Kawamura 2015), a Japanese animated film dubbed in 2018 from English into Spanish. Since the target market included only Latin American countries (Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay), these films were dubbed into neutral Spanish (Scandura 2021, 45).

Torre A represents a critical case for further developing audiovisual translation studies. Critical cases, according to Robert Yin (2003), have atypical features and exist in specific contexts; therefore, they contribute to “testing a well-formulated theory [that] has a clear set of propositions as well as the circumstances within which the propositions are believed to be true” (Yin 2003, 40). The theory being tested is that of the dubbing process, a phenomenon addressed in research carried out mainly in Europe (Paolinelli and Di Fortunato 2005; Gendron 2006; Meyer-Dinkgräfe 2006; Chaume 2012; Koppejan 2012; Catania 2014; Ferrer Simó 2016; Spiteri Miggiani 2019). These process-driven studies describe a sequence or structure of activities carried out by a group of agents to dub a product in a given country. The agents themselves are a topic of research because of their profiles and roles, e.g., the profile of dubbing actors or directors (Bosseaux 2015). Studies of dubbing have also taken place using genetic analysis (Richart 2012; Zanotti 2014; De los Reyes 2015), which focuses

on the series of modifications introduced into a script in the target language by different agents during the dubbing process. In contrast, Latin American research into dubbing is not extensive. There are publications on the history and practice of dubbing focusing on Argentina (Fuentes-Luque 2019) and Mexico (Nájar 2005), as well as research on neutral Spanish in dubbing processes in Argentina, Venezuela, and Mexico (Scandura 2021). Studies of the context of audiovisual translation (not centered on dubbing) have also been carried out in Colombia (Orrego et al. 2010; Abril 2013), Venezuela (Almenar and Muscolino 2010), and Argentina (Arrieta 2016). Such research provides a general overview of dubbing and does not focus on the process or the professionals involved. Consequently, there are no descriptive studies that provide an in-depth look into the dubbing processes implemented in Latin America, particularly in Peru.

Sociological approaches can be applied to audiovisual translation. They focus on matters such as the profile analysis of the agents involved as well as their working conditions, context and social positions, and level of autonomy (Chaume 2018b, 51). Frederic Chaume, himself a proponent of sociological approaches, uses the Bakhtinian concept of “dialogism” to explore the role of the audience in the communicative event of watching a dubbed product (2007). According to Chaume, the dialogical space established by the audience and the dubbed product (translated text) is characterized by cooperation and conflict, through which individuals construct their own interpretations of the translated text and decide whether the text is appealing or not. Jorge Díaz Cintas (2018), in turn, uses the Bakhtinian “carnival” to understand new subtitling practices catalyzed by recent technological developments and by the transformation of past consumer passivity into productive content-related roles. As part of the changes in audiovisual translation products and processes, Díaz Cintas includes the factor of linearity and specialization conventionally associated with professional translators. Against this new backdrop of “prosumers” (producers and consumers), the level of specialization required for subtitling is blurred due to new subtitler profiles (“fansubbers”). The same occurs with audiovisual processes, since the speed of audiovisual (post-)production tasks allows for a simultaneity of activities and content production that differs from the sequential, relatively slower activities and content production associated with professional audiovisual translation (Díaz Cintas 2018, 131). Bakhtinian concepts—such as “carnival,” monologism, dialogism, and polyphony—are useful for gaining new insight into contemporary changes in social practices and audiovisual translation, as Mikhail Bakhtin’s

theoretical standpoints have contributed to questioning hierarchies and revealing the intricacies of translating (Kumar 2015).

The purpose of this study is to explore the dubbing process employed by Torre A, an emerging Peruvian firm whose workflow and agents do not reflect the dubbing process as depicted in the literature. The agents involved in the roles as well as the phases and subphases of Torre A's workflow will be examined using empirical data collected from the agents involved in the projects *I Am the King* and *Air Bound*. These two projects, being the first carried out by the firm, present relevant but atypical features not depicted in linear models of dubbing. An assumption of this research is that the linear dubbing process, as it is conventionally described, corresponds to the experience of consolidated industries and standardization of tasks and professional profiles that reinforce a particular notion of quality. This idealized picture of the process reinforces the monological discourse surrounding the quality of dubbing as well as the idea of audiovisual translation project processes as sequential (the waterfall model). The methods employed allow us to reconstruct an alternative process using agent voices and arrive at an understanding of dubbing production as a polyphonic or dialogical event, a divergence from the conventional monological model of the "project." Ultimately, the findings of this study demonstrate that emergent dubbing companies, such as Torre A, benefit not only from a conventional approach to project management but also from the inclusion of agile actions and versatile agents in order to implement a hybrid approach to dubbing project management (Kuhrmann et al. 2017). Our review of the literature indicates that this is the first case study in Peru that describes the activities carried out by dubbing process agents.

2 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE DUBBING PROCESS

In the language industry, the translation process is conceived of as having a three-phase structure. First, a series of administrative activities take place prior to translation. These activities include receiving a commission and negotiating with a client (Gouadec 2007; Ferrer Simó 2016).

Second, from a functionalist perspective, the translation phase can be understood as the communicative need and action that trigger the processes of linguistic and cultural mediation with the goal of producing a target text that must conform to the initial commission (Reiss and Vermeer 2014; Nord 2018). Finally, the post-translation phase consists of delivering a final product and charging for the services rendered (Gouadec 2007). This abstraction of the

process, which mainly reflects the results of academic research, is found in the UNE-EN ISO 17100:2015 (AENOR 2015a) standard, which determines the requirements to be met by any translation service provider—both freelance translators and translation agencies—to guarantee a quality service. This translation process model is comparable to project management operational models in that the notion of translation quality depends upon adhering to a set of sequential tasks.

In the audiovisual translation field, the operational chain is characterized by work with both acoustic and visual channels. Therefore, audiovisual translation requires several actions and a wide and varied network of specialized professional profiles. The diversity of fields from which this group of agents comes is most evident in dubbing: a translator will work on a team comprised of a project manager, a dialogue writer, a dubbing director, a dubbing assistant, voice actors, and a sound engineer (Bosseaux 2015; Spiteri Miggiani 2019). Due to this complexity, the existing theory also provides for abstracting phases (Taylor 2015, 251) that group together the tasks carried out by the agents fitting the profiles involved in the dubbing process. These phases are pre-production, which begins with receiving a commission and ends with preparing the final draft of the dubbing script; production, or the dubbing activity itself, performed by voice actors; and post-production, which consists of the editing and mixing of recordings.

Christopher Taylor's (2015) model is the starting point for a comprehensible description of the dubbing process because each phase can be divided into more specific tasks or "subphases;" this makes it easier to locate a certain point in the dubbing process timeline. In the following paragraphs, the dubbing process structure will be described using Taylor's model along with Chaume's (2012) proposal, which offers a broad view of the process by including the administrative side of dubbing. These ideas will be further supplemented by the proposals of other authors, such as Anna Matamala (2011) and Giselle Spiteri Miggiani (2019).

The first pre-production subphase, as proposed by Chaume (2012), is the purchase of audiovisual material (e.g., a film, program, or television series), in which the client buys the rights to a product in order to broadcast it in a different language (Gouadec 2007). The client then assigns the project to a dubbing studio (Chaume 2012), which is usually provided with the audiovisual material and the original script (Spiteri Miggiani 2019). In the third subphase, the team that will work on the project is assembled—including the voice casting

talent—and tasks are scheduled (Gouadec 2007; Chaume 2012). The translation subphase then follows. It involves preparing a preliminary version of the target text that will be modified during the remaining process (Richart 2012; Cerezo et al. 2016). The fifth and last subphase is dialogue writing, which consists of providing the target text with more naturalness and synchronizing it with the screen characters' lip movements (lip synchrony) and body movements (kinesic synchrony), as well as with the length of each intervention (isochrony) (Matamala 2011). This last subphase can also be carried out simultaneously with translation by a single agent, who is usually a translator (Chaume 2006). In addition, the script is segmented into takes, i.e., divided into portions of dialogue lines (Spiteri Miggiani 2019, 110), and dubbing symbols are inserted to guide agents during voice recording (Matamala 2011). Both forms of script modification depend on a country's conventions (Chaume 2012).

Production consists of the voice recording subphase (Chaume 2012), during which voice actors interpret the translated and adapted script, i.e., they read it aloud while trying to convey the emotions of the characters on screen. These agents work under the supervision of a dubbing director and a dubbing assistant (who can be called depending on national practices), along with a sound engineer (Chaume 2012; Bosseaux 2015; Spiteri Miggiani 2019).

Finally, post-production begins with sound mixing. In this subphase, the sound engineer embeds the recorded tracks in the audiovisual material and edits them in terms of synchrony, volume, and sound effects (Bosseaux 2015; Spiteri Miggiani 2019). The next subphase is quality control, in which the dubbed product is checked at the technical level (Spiteri Miggiani 2019, 8). Lastly, the final product is delivered to the client, who may request retakes—to rerecord one or more lines (Matamala 2011)—as deemed necessary (Ferrer Simó 2016).

	Taylor (2015)	Chaume (2012)	Matamala (2011)	Spiteri Miggiani (2019)
Pre-production		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of audiovisual material • Project assignment • Role assignment and task scheduling • Translation • Dialogue writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role assignment and task scheduling • Translation • Dialogue writing • Review and correction of script 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation • Dialogue writing • Task scheduling (for actors)
Production		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice recording 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice recording • Review of recorded version 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice recording
Post-production		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound mixing • Delivery of final product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound mixing • Final viewing and acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound mixing • Quality control

Figure 1. The Dubbing Process as Presented in the Literature

As seen in Figure 1, the dubbing process can be reconstructed drawing on existing theory, in which one author adds to the ideas of another. This conception of dubbing both depicts and simultaneously standardizes the tasks and agents involved in the process. The tasks and performance of dubbing project professionals are also subject to quality criteria. These are understood as the factors that must be considered when preparing a final product acceptable to clients, dubbing agents, and the audience. According to Chaume (2007), these expectations regarding the dubbed product relate to translational and linguistic (synchrony, coherence, naturalness, fidelity), artistic (performance and dramatization), and technical (appropriate volume, clear voices, absence of interferences) factors. These general dubbing conventions or standards have implications for translation, where they have led to the traditional understanding of dubbing as a form of constrained translation (Titford 1982; Mayoral, Kelly, and Gallardo 1988). Furthermore, they shape the qualitative and expected horizon of a dubbed product when considering the basic components of the concept of quality: meeting the expectations of the client or consumer through a product that has the characteristics established as part of the project (White and Mack 1996; Juran 1998; Project Management Institute 2017).

As indicated by Chaume (2004, 62), the dubbing process proposed in different publications unfolds as a generic sequence. This means that the current theoretical models constitute an

ideal representation of the process in which any potential eventuality (understood as a “risk” in project management theory) is excluded. Consequently, it is unclear what possible variations in this linear model may exist. In this regard, Rocío Baños (2020, 2) indicates that dubbing is usually depicted in the literature as a “compartmentalised activity consisting of several one-way processes.” Tasks tend to be placed at a specific time in the process without the possibility of “going back” to improve or modify certain aspects or of carrying out different activities concurrently. In addition, the abstraction of dubbing processes usually focuses on the operational dimension of projects, without considering the other critical dimensions that also make up audiovisual translation processes, such as the management of time, people, risks, and communication.

In fact, time is a dimension that has become increasingly relevant in the language industry, as “[t]echnological advancement [...] has changed the landscape in terms of workflow processes and settings [...], quality and productivity as performance metrics, and the very agents involved in content creation” (Angelone, Ehrensberger-Dow, and Massey 2020, 3). The dubbing industry is no exception to this. Delia Chiaro (2008) indicates that industry turnaround times are short because audiences expect to see audiovisual products (such as films and television series) in their own language at the same time or shortly after the release in the source language. In this respect, Spiteri Miggiani (2019) points out that an audience’s expectation of speed makes many people search for such productions on the web. For this reason, the dubbing workflow has been speeding up to compete with fandubbing or fansubbing, new forms of audiovisual translation developed by fans, the products of which are usually completed in a shorter time so they can be released on the internet and their free access guaranteed (Díaz Cintas 2018).

3 MONOLOGISM, DIALOGISM, AND POLYPHONY

Taking up Chaume’s idea of a generic sequence (2004) as well as his call to rethink the canonical limits of (audiovisual) translation at the textual and procedural levels (Chaume 2018a), various ways of approaching descriptive research into translation processes must be proposed. This is necessary due to the tasks and operations that have recently been conceptualized in the research arena. These include media adaptation, transmedia, and transcreation (Chaume 2018a) as well as volunteer subtitling, cybersubtitling, and crowd subtitling (Díaz Cintas 2018). The emerging modalities of audiovisual translation are in a state of productive tension with theoretical dubbing models, i.e., linear models of dubbing

processes in which tasks are expected to be undertaken in a specific way. Additionally, descriptive studies of these operations and processes reinforce the idea of a general linear or sequential model. The ways dubbing processes are described are strikingly similar throughout the literature in terms of the monological discourse revealed by these depictions.

Monologism, polyphony, and dialogism are key concepts in Bakhtin's literary criticism. These, however, can also be used to analyze textual material in qualitative studies where several participants share their voices and standpoints regarding common and/or individual experiences. As mentioned above, a monological discourse stands for only one point of view and is usually associated with fixed or unchanging ideas. The convergence of ideas typical of monologism happens because there is a predominant discourse—a sovereign subject of discourse (Bakhtin 1986)—that is conventionally used when addressing a phenomenon. Dubbing as a linear process can be thought of in terms of conventional cascading approaches to project management.

Polyphony and dialogism are a response to monologism. On one hand, polyphony can be used as a methodological precept when conducting social research and when research participants are the main sources of information. A researcher performing such a study must then ensure that the relevant voices or “consciousnesses” related to an eventness are collected. On the other hand, dialogism can be used as an analytical strategy once the voices have been gathered. The researcher must make sense of how these different perspectives account for what the subjects have experienced. The ensuing analysis of voices must have a dialogical orientation to favor an encounter between two or more consciousnesses (Bakhtin 1984).

Polyphony and dialogism may be used as methodological and analytical concepts to exploit the tension derived from theoretically established dubbing models uniting “ideas, thoughts, and words [that pass] through several unmerged voices, sounding differently in each” (Bakhtin 1984, 265). These voices have something relevant to say about alternative ways of approaching dubbing projects in markets where dubbing and audiovisual translation in general are novel practices. In these markets, the integration of actions, professionals, and resources is a critical phenomenon in opposition to the traditional way of understanding the dubbing project and the routes to achieving quality. As stated by Amith Kumar (2015, 15) in his proposal linking Bakhtinian theory with translation studies, “[d]ialogue is a form of understanding human relations that are never static, but always in the process of being made

or unmade. It is an epistemological device that accounts for the meaning and significance of human existence in an ‘unfinalizable’ world.” From this theoretical point of view, it is possible to explore—dialogically—dubbing production that diverges from monological accounts.

4 METHODOLOGY

This case study was conducted by applying qualitative methods within the interpretative paradigm. It took place at the agency Torre A, which was founded in March 2014 as a result of the professional voice acting experience of its partners in the Peruvian audiovisual production firm Big Bang Films. As indicated in the introduction, Torre A is a critical case that allows for establishing proposals that confirm or offer alternatives to existing theoretical dubbing process models. This will be done by exploring the particular features of the dubbing projects for the films *I Am the King* and *Air Bound*—the only projects the firm had carried out at the time we began this study. Information on Torre A was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted between August 2018 and January 2019 in Lima, Peru. Exhaustive sampling was employed. The interviewees were seven individuals involved in the previously mentioned dubbing projects. Interviews were conducted in Spanish using interview guides with two main sets of questions: a set of general questions for all the agents and specific sets of questions addressing these agents’ roles.

Based upon the information gathered, the primary roles of agents were determined by their training and previous experience; however, they also performed roles that did not exactly correspond to their specializations. Figure 2 contains the professional profiles of the agents who participated in both projects. During the interview period, the project manager was interviewed on five occasions, although only two interviews had been originally planned for this participant. We decided to interview him an additional number of times because he was present throughout the dubbing process and was familiar with each role.

Role	Specialization related to main function	Dubbing-related experience
Project manager	Communication science degree and dubbing workshops	Advertising and commercial voice-over, voice acting, and acting
Translator/ dialogue writer	Translation and interpreting degree and dubbing workshops	Freelance translation
Actor 1	Voice talent and dubbing workshops	Advertising and commercial voice-over and performance
Actor 2	Audiovisual communication degree and dubbing workshops	Participation in dubbing workshops
Actor 3	Communication degree and dubbing workshops	Advertising and commercial voice-over and acting
Dubbing director	Filmmaking degree and dubbing workshops	Advertising and commercial voice-over, production management, and assistance
Dubbing assistant	Audiovisual communication degree and dubbing workshops	Fandubbing
Sound engineer	Systems engineering degree and dubbing workshops	Advertising and commercial voice-over and acting

Figure 2. Torre A's Agent Profiles

After transcribing the interviews, we carried out a content analysis that permitted us to formulate inductive categories related to the tasks that the agents carried out during both dubbing projects. The data collected were also analyzed in Spanish. The interview quotes included in the following sections were translated by a professional translator and then verified by the researchers.

The following sections contain a “dialogical” interpretation of the participants’ experiences regarding the dubbing process. The notion of dialogism, as explained previously, motivates a reading of the interviews that goes beyond the formal sentence; furthermore, it allows us to understand the agents’ utterances concerning how they shaped the dubbing projects. This manner of reading interviews is based on the idea that the sentence, as a unit of measurement of language, does not provide direct insight into the active response position of the speaker

(Bakhtin 1986). Therefore, the analysis will focus on the subjects' utterances in relation not only to their functional roles, but also to their agency when making decisions and acting proactively. This will allow us to reconstruct both dubbing projects by paying attention to the dialogue resulting from the interplay of agent voices.

5 VERSATILE AGENTS IN A CHANGING MARKET

Based on the interview analysis, the ways in which the agents involved in both dubbing projects fulfilled different roles is worth highlighting. Figure 3 shows the role distribution for each agent in both projects. The project manager appears as one of the main agents in these projects, given that his profile allowed him to fulfill tasks that diverge from the traditional division of the (pre/post-)production phases. These roles included operational tasks, such as controlling the software used for voice recording, as well as voice casting and voice acting proper. Furthermore, his role in the quality control subphase is relevant to how quality management—which is usually developed as a parallel process—in *Air Bound* was also embodied by the project manager across the board. This means that he not only played a general supervisory role and reviewed the dubbed product but also intervened at specific moments to evaluate how it was playing out from different perspectives. Another relevant agent is the translator/dialogue writer, who also worked as a dubbing actor: “In both [projects], I had two roles, well, three, actually, as a translator, then I became a dialogue writer, and also a dubbing actor. So, I had the chance to see how the translation came to life in the booth” (Translator/Dialogue Writer 2018).

Agent (main function)	Additional roles/participation in other subphases	
	<i>I Am the King</i>	<i>Air Bound</i>
Project manager	Dubbing assistant, casting, actor, and sound engineer	Actor, sound engineer, and quality control
Translator/ dialogue writer	Dubbing actor	Dubbing actor
Actor 1	Quality control	Casting
Actor 2	Dubbing assistant, translation, and dialogue writing	[Had no additional roles.]
Actor 3	[Had no additional roles.]	
Dubbing director	Actor, dialogue writing	Actor
Dubbing assistant	[This position was not considered for this project.]	Actor, sound engineer
Sound engineer	Actor	Actor

Figure 3. Roles of Agents in the Projects under Research

As shown in Figure 3, the projects are characterized by overlapping roles for a single agent. Agents did not occupy improvised roles; they pointed out that their main roles primarily aligned with prior training and experience (see Figure 2). However, they did mention that due to a lack of more specialized human resources and the need to perform various tasks, they also assumed roles that did not directly pertain to their profiles. This versatility counters general quality standard guidelines such as UNE-EN ISO 9001:2015, which points out the importance of “ensuring that these individuals are competent” to take on a specific task “based on relevant education, training, or experience” (AENOR 2015b, 19).

In the case of Torre A’s projects, this versatility can be related to the time and human resources available to the firm when it began work on its first projects. Each project had a different turnaround time, though interviewees mentioned a lack of time for both projects. Agents had one week to deliver the final product for *I Am the King* and one month for *Air Bound*. The difference in time available for each project may suggest that time management

was not consistently effective. As a result, tight deadlines were experienced during the different subphases, particularly in the case of *Air Bound*.

In the words of actor 1, the versatility of his profile worked for the initial stages of the *Air Bound* dubbing project. Notwithstanding, he also recognized an improvement in project management when new agents became responsible for the direction and translation tasks: “At that time, being a young firm, we all kind of did everything; so, I was part of the process of voice casting, of visualizing the film. However, later on, a director, a translator came on board and I became part of the dubbing of the film [*Air Bound*]” (Actor 1 2019).

In addition to the circumstances inherent to a new firm, Torre A’s agents explained that they had to adapt their skills to cover certain roles and move the project forward. This occurred due to the lack of more specialized human resources:

Although he was the director, I took care of the casting in this case because I kind of understood the profile, I had already seen the film twice. He was busy, so he couldn’t get so involved until later, when we were close to recording. So, I did a little bit of the preliminary work. Obviously, I passed it on to him for review, not that I made such a decision, right? (Project Manager 2019).

The way in which the agents assumed different roles so that the projects could be completed paints versatility as a positive element in both cases. Versatility as a productive dimension (opposing standardized processes) is related to the contributions of agents to the projects using their initiative and skills. Their perception of self-efficacy and their commitment to projects that they perceived as innovative in Peru also led to an appreciation of their contributions and a desire to assist with additional tasks. According to the dubbing assistant (2019), “it was [recording] session after session. And the recording and casting phases are very tedious. But we still had to do it well and fast, so that clients know that here the product is developed correctly once you ask for it.”

Mentions of innovative dubbing projects in Peru are found in the testimonies of all project agents. Interview responses show differences between an idea of “here” (the Peruvian market) and “abroad,” mainly in relation to the Mexican or European (Spanish) market. The notion of innovation allowed agents to muster additional motivation to cover dubbing tasks corresponding to different subphases. They assumed responsibility for projects to meet client expectations without rigidly following linear workflows:

I simply said to myself, “This has to be perfect; this is not going to be at the same level as the demos we used to do. This has to shine; this has to be excellent [...]” And with the rest of my colleagues, we didn’t stop until we were totally satisfied [...]. Then, there you also realize that [...] those of us who are dubbing are really new to this. We’re training while working on it because it’s the only way to be a good dubbing actor (Dubbing Director 2018).

In the case of the translator, the tasks she had to complete also point to a lack of resources (such as time) and specialized profiles (audiovisual translators and dialogue writers). Referring to the translation process of *I Am the King*, she noted that “the translation was not ready at the time of recording. I was recording, and I was still translating, adapting the translation for dubbing [...]. The deliveries were small, I would do one part and they would start recording that part. It shouldn’t have been like that” (Translator/Dialogue Writer 2018). The idea that the project “should not have been like that” refers to project management following a linear workflow, in which operations have resources allocated to them in a relevant manner. As for *Air Bound*, the translator also mentioned a lack of time as the reason for outsourcing the rough translation. This reflects another characteristic of the Peruvian dubbing market: “I had to do the editing because they were just entering the audiovisual field [...]. So, they would do a translation, so to speak, a general or a rough translation and I would do the final editing” (Translator/Dialogue Writer 2018). Therefore, the role of the translator not only included working with limited time, but also reviewing the work of translators with no prior audiovisual translation experience.

Although information on how the agents valued their colleagues’ work was not collected, it is important to highlight how significant the presence of the translator was during the recording subphase. According to the project manager (2019), the presence of the translator/dialogue writer during the recording process (while performing her role as an actor) meant that she was always consulted regarding script adaptation decisions at the relevant times. As a result, she could validate her target text in terms of meaning and naturalness. Finally, the testimony of the dubbing director also demonstrates the importance attributed to the translator and the translation:

In short, good translation and dialogue writing save us a lot of work. That aspect is essential so that what is said can be understood. Because if something is not well adapted, a joke, for example, it will land flat and you will lose your audience and all

the work will be in vain. Good dialogue writing, a good translation, lip-syncing save us a lot of work, and I'm grateful to any translator who knows this and does an impeccable job (Dubbing Director 2018).

The dubbing director clearly conceives of a "good translation" as a textual product aimed at an audience for a specific purpose. This reveals an idea of quality implicit in both projects; dubbing quality is mainly understood as functional and consumer-centered. This general conception can be better explored by considering how both projects were carried out and how the agents contributed to achieving a quality product.

6 RECONSTRUCTION OF THE DUBBING WORKFLOWS

The dialogical and polyphonic approach to the agents' accounts can be used to create a diagram of the processes employed in both of Torre A's dubbing projects. Figure 4 should be then understood as the convergence (dialogism) of the agents' different standpoints (polyphony) regarding the dubbing workflows of *I Am the King* and *Air Bound*. Despite the apparent linearity of these workflows, it should be noted that difficulties arose in each phase (in terms of human and temporal resources), resulting in the formulation of strategies needed to make the projects viable. On one hand, the most relevant strategy is versatility, as reported by the participants themselves. On the other, the most controlled aspects correspond only to administrative tasks, while those with a more looping or iterative nature begin with translation tasks.

Dubbing, a new market and profession in Peru, as constantly mentioned by the agents, is closer to a looping process precisely because the agents acknowledged that they were learning as they worked. This notion of circularity is related to Christiane Nord's translation diagram (1991, 34). Considered as a looping model, the translation process is made up of different circuits or itineraries composed of setbacks used to revise or correct the text being written. In both dubbing processes, certain tasks were repeated, while some subphases were executed simultaneously to meet deadlines.

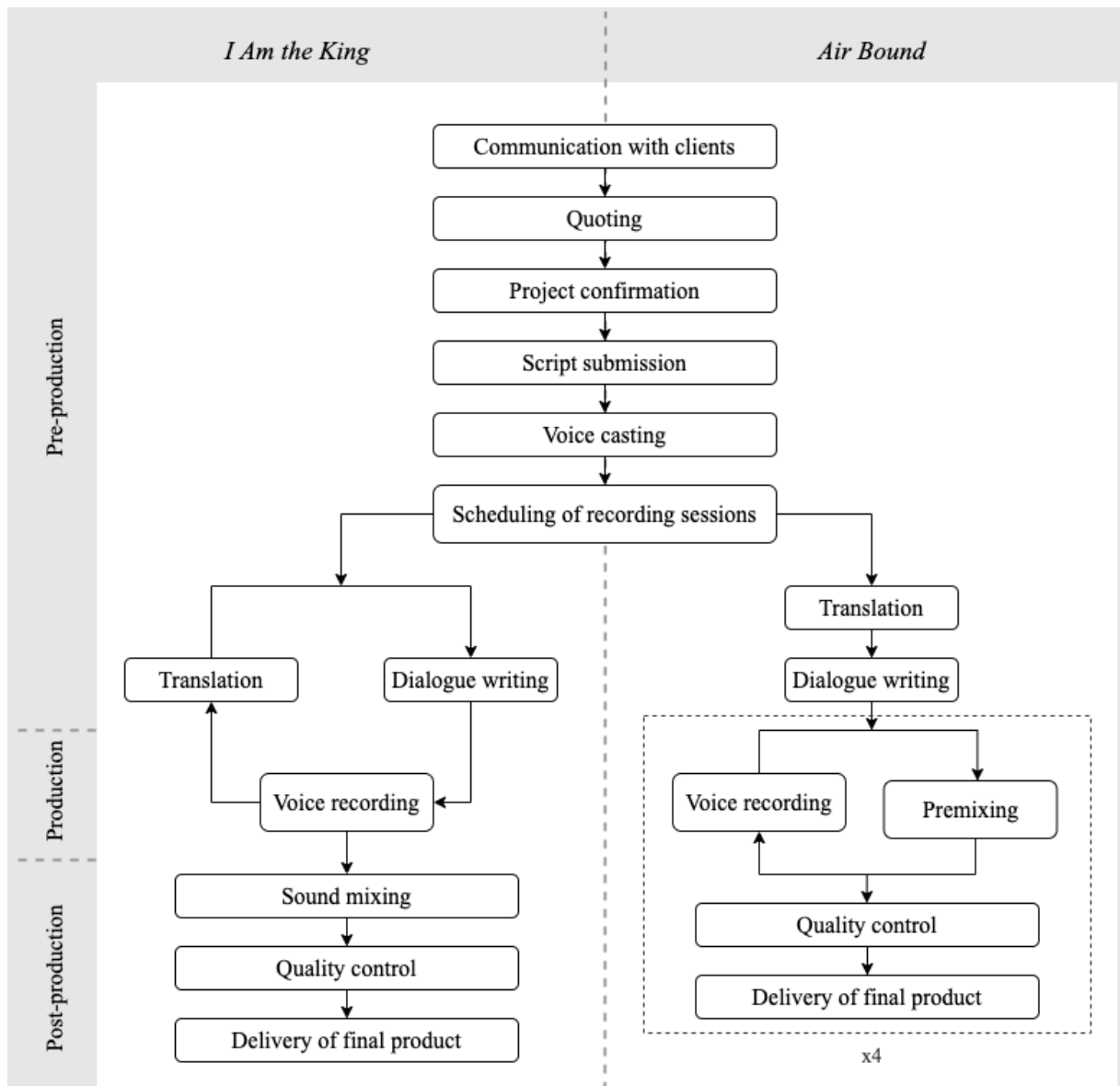


Figure 4. Torre A's Dubbing Workflows

Standardized dubbing elements do not only correspond to the sequence or structure of the tasks performed but also to the procedures followed in certain phases of the process. Both projects carried out by Torre A included elements that stand out for deviating from these theoretical proposals. These relate to the agents' activities and their levels of intervention.

First, it is common to segment a translated and adapted script into takes or loops for economic reasons and to facilitate the actors' performance (Chaume 2012; Cerezo et al. 2016). However, this criterion was not used while drafting the script for either project: "In *Air Bound* and *I Am the King*, we didn't have a script segmented into 'loops,' as they are

called in Mexico. [...] I mean, it had line divisions. [...] But they weren't loops. A loop can include lines by three different characters [...]" (Project Manager 2019).

The project manager indicated that takes were not used in either project and that actors were paid per hour. The reason for this could be that, as these were their first projects as a dubbing studio, they still had to adapt their practices to what was more recommended in the industry:

Regarding the actors, they are paid abroad per loop, [...] that is, [...] a determined number of lines [...]. Here, we adjust to the Peruvian method, which is the number of hours worked, which is different, but we've tried to adapt it a bit. We're still looking for a way of adapting it to what is done abroad because it's more convenient for actors (Project Manager 2018).

The micro-textual dimension of text segmentation into loops or takes can be equated to the layout a translated text for dubbing must have so that it can be read by actors. However, besides these formal conventions, text segmentation is a key feature of the dubbing industry because it influences how different tasks are carried out (e.g., the performance of a voice actor) and even how financial decisions are made regarding the costs of a dubbing project (Chaume 2012). Since most of the agents involved in both dubbing projects identified themselves as voice actors (see Figure 3), it is understandable that Torre A is still adapting to a "more convenient" way of paying actors. It is possible that, when including new criteria from the industry abroad, they will start using text segmentation not only as a payment metric but also to improve the material actors use to perform. Additionally, they could also evaluate whether segmenting the text would be a helpful or more effective way of managing project costs.

Secondly, directors are usually the only agents who have the authority to modify the translated and adapted script during voice recording, sometimes because they are also in charge of dialogue writing (Spiteri Miggiani 2019). Actors may suggest changes and provide opinions, but all amendments are made at the discretion of the director (Nájar 2005). However, in the case of Torre A, in addition to the dubbing director, the translator/dialogue writer was responsible for analyzing the suggestions made by the cast and for modifying the script:

There are changes that are made in the booth because I may have not conducted dialogue writing properly or it may have been too long or too short, or the actor is

having a hard time pronouncing a word [...]. That usually happens too. But in this case, I was lucky enough to be consulted. I was asked, “Does this work? Does this not work? This was changed. Is that okay?” (Translator/Dialogue Writer 2018).

Also, actors do not usually have access to the script before entering the recording booth (Actor 3 2019; Actor 1 2019). However, some actors in the cast of *I Am the King*—besides the translator—participated in the translation and dialogue writing subphases because they spoke some English: “I also helped a little in dialogue writing for *I Am the King*. In that case, all of us who spoke English helped because the subtitles were in English” (Dubbing Director 2018). In the case of *Air Bound*, certain actors also had the script and the audiovisual material before taking on their roles, as opposed to the way things are typically done in countries where dubbing is a well-established industry. This resulted in an advantage for the agents of both projects, as they were better prepared to play their characters:

In *Air Bound*, the preparation was basically [unintelligible] and they told me, “You are Ace.” [...] since we had the privilege of having the script and the material beforehand, I was able to see the film before. That doesn’t always happen. I saw the whole film before, so I was able to get into the character of Ace. I already knew everything Ace did in the whole film [...] (Actor 2 2019).

Finally, the client can be present in some subphases (Koppejan 2012), such as voice recording and sound mixing (Meyer-Dinkgräfe 2006). In the case of *Air Bound*, this external agent was a film producer who was present remotely. He carried out his own quality control by reviewing and correcting the finished script and audio tracks produced during the recording. The bibliography consulted indicates that clients sometimes supervise the project in the production and post-production phases, but not during the drafting of the script. Therefore, Torre A is a special case: “Before starting, we submitted the script for approval. He even changed things. Normally, clients don’t get involved, but he changed things. We sent him extracts of some characters, and he corrected them [...]” (Project Manager 2019).

Although during interviews the project manager, actor 1, and actor 2 indicated that there is a specific quality control subphase, the reconstruction of the workflow of both projects revealed quality control actions carried out by different agents. In fact, agents reported that quality is assessed throughout the entirety of each project. For example, the translators who prepared the rough translation for the *Air Bound* project reviewed their own final product.

The translator/dialogue writer then reviewed that rough translation and conducted the dialogue writing subphase, resulting in a script that was subsequently evaluated by the client. The dubbing director also assessed the quality of the translated script at an artistic level while guiding the actors during the recording subphase. Likewise, the actors said they controlled for the quality of the script by introducing changes to facilitate their performance. Finally, the sound engineer and the agents who collaborated in the post-production subphases controlled for quality at a technical level. While revising one's work before delivering differs from quality control tasks as understood in the audiovisual translation industry, the agents considered this to be an ad hoc quality assurance system sustained by their motivation and responsibility towards the project. However, this way of controlling for quality may also reveal different (and rather limited) quality assurance being implemented in both projects.

Despite being trained for a specific role, the agents considered quality criteria that did not only fall within the scope of their professional profiles, but also covered the three general categories of quality assurance in dubbing projects: the linguistic or textual, the artistic, and the technical. This type of synergy among the agents participating in an audiovisual translation project is what Baños (2020) has called “collective agency.” In the case of Torre A's first two projects, it is characterized by a “fluid and constant cooperation [...] throughout the whole process” (Baños 2020, 14). Also, regarding the conventional or theoretical dubbing process, the workflows deriving from the participants' accounts are an exception to the norm. This highlights the interconnection among all the phases of the process and the roles of the agents, who do not play a fixed role as described in the literature. On the contrary, these agents are versatile because they are familiar with all elements that have an impact on dubbing.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Interviews with agents involved in Torre A's dubbing projects depict a different way of conceptualizing processes that are usually represented as linear workflows segmented into specific tasks and profiles. Due to the emergent nature of the Peruvian dubbing market, it was necessary to opt for an exploratory approach and remain open to the experiences of the professionals who performed different roles in both projects. Interviews with these participants resulted in a polyphonic register—a corpus consisting of interviews with the agents—that was then analyzed to give voice to each agent. The dialogic discourse visible in multiple interview responses revealed a productive tension regarding two aspects not

usually found in standardized translation processes and in dubbing theory. It was discovered that the looping nature of the observed processes and the versatility of the involved agents can also contribute to quality control during dubbing projects. These projects still met client expectations, although some agents performed additional tasks that did not necessarily fit their professional profiles.

This result can also be related to the agile methodologies often used instead of traditional/linear software development processes. According to these methodologies, projects with a single team composed of fewer than ten members can focus on individuals and interactions through empowerment and customer value while welcoming requirement changes (Kuhrmann et al. 2017). For instance, in this case study, the agents revealed they had resorted to this strategic way of overcoming a lack of resources through work driven by their self-efficacy and motivation to participate in innovative processes. The decisions made by the agents do not seem to be intentional but rather a result of the circumstances affecting both projects. Therefore, neither of the Torre A projects aligns with the monological register reflected in the existing theory, which does not consider eventualities that occur in real-life projects.

Another factor related to the agents' standpoints is a sense of accomplishment derived from being good at their work and being able to make decisions that benefited the projects. This was the case for the translator/dialogue writer, who demonstrated a sense of pride in how her skills and understanding of audiovisual translation made her work different and relevant to both projects. This indicates that, through practice and adjustment, there is a degree of specialization that can be identified by the translator/dialogue writer herself. She acknowledges how specialized tasks had a positive impact not only on the project, but also potentially on her own professional profile. The translator/dialogue writer's role, which encompassed the quality control tasks she carried out, was grounded in her self-efficacy, sense of responsibility, and decision-making.

Additionally, in both projects, there was less compartmentalization of roles because roles were not limited to the agents' specializations, but rather influenced by a lack of human and temporal resources. This led to improved productivity for both projects in the face of tight deadlines. Time constraints affect most dubbing projects (Chiaro 2008) and, in this specific case, they led to the assumption of secondary roles according to the agents' skills and availability. Mabel Richart (2012) points out that each participant in the dubbing process

prepares their own final product because they develop their own internal process in the corresponding phase. However, due to the transversality of roles at Torre A, there are “final products” that cannot be attributed to a specific agent. Furthermore, a final product establishes the end of an individual’s role, and, in Torre A, different agents participated until the culmination of each process.

Finally, as mentioned before, a linear quality control protocol was not followed at Torre A. Each agent was responsible for assessing their own performance and that of third parties when they took over secondary roles. It may be argued that, without a general quality control stage, Torre A projects lack a quality assurance system. Nevertheless, one of the most important findings of the study is that, in both projects, the agents acted in accordance with their own notions of quality related to the expectations inherent in their professional profiles and training. This finding reflects a view of quality not as the result of specific quality control subphases but as continuous improvement achieved by the agents while they learn from experience and engage with stakeholders (SCRUMstudy 2017). Moreover, since each agent identified important quality-related tasks, they ensured that quality was an inherent part of any deliverable they were responsible for. Thus, this first dubbing case study in Peru shows a looping dubbing process that consists of developing the dubbed product and assessing quality at the linguistic, artistic, and technical levels. This phenomenon occurs within a context where dubbing does not yet constitute a consolidated market or industry. The looping nature of the process meant that continuous improvement was achieved by repetitive testing, which favored the probability of achieving the expected quality levels (SCRUMstudy 2017).

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