DEEP FOCUS

Tenth Issue

AVD NEWSLETTER

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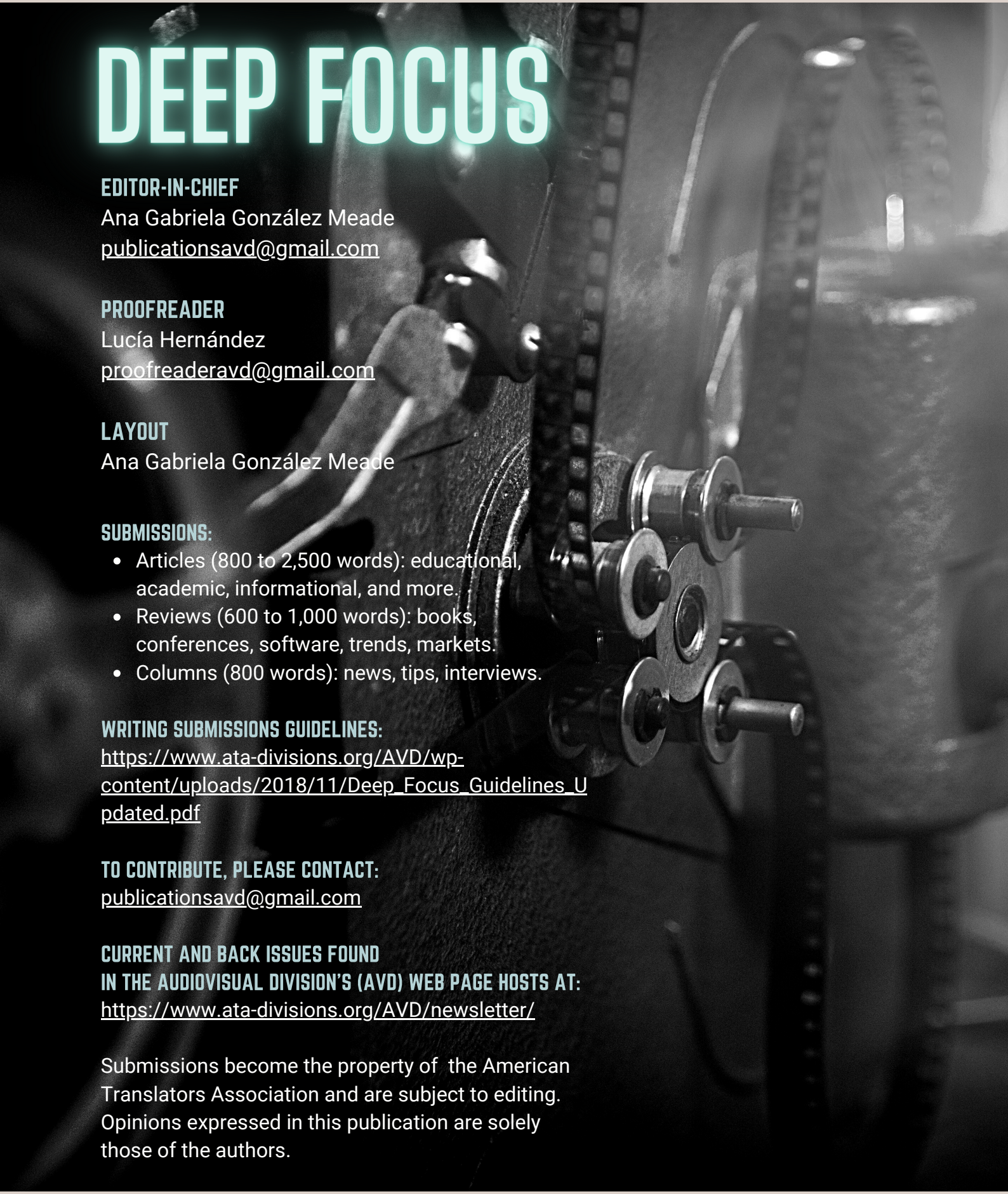

DEEP FOCUS

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Translation environment tools (TEnTs) are challenging other traditional subtitling tools with robust applications to translate common filetypes while using translation memories and termbases and sharing resources in real time with your team. But do they offer a solution for all cases AV translators face daily?

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Arabic audiovisual translation dates back to the late 19th century. Over 100 years later, media accessibility awareness is still behind in a region rich in audiovisual content. This article discusses challenges in increasing accessibility for blind and visually impaired Arab audiences.

PAGE 10 BY MARIELLA DI BUA

Translators facilitate communication among different cultures, which are conformed by different kinds of individuals. In their work, linguists need to adjust the message to fit the widest range of people. Taking an Easy-to-Read approach when translating audiovisual content can be a channel to reach much more diverse audiences.

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Subtitling: Concepts and Practices

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The renowned authors themselves take us on a tour through this recently launched smash hit book, inspired by their highly successful *Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling.* This new multimedia package reflects the developments in practice and research that mark subtitling today, while considering a way ahead.

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Behind-the-Scenes Hero:
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Lucía Hernandez met with Quico Rovira-Beleta and talked about his 35-year career translating blockbuster films and series for Spanish audiences. They discuss keeping fans top-of-mind, the challenges and satisfaction of intertextuality in sagas, and when your work transcends the screen.

AVD NEWS

We Kicked off 2021 with 2 More Instagram Lives

PAGE 17 BY DANIELA COSTA

Social media brings us closer in these uncertain times. The Audiovisual Division launched a series of Instagram Live sessions with renowned guests. This article goes through the highlights of the first two interviews of 2021 and reaffirms how wonderful it is to work in AVT.

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LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

DEBORAH WEXLER

Are interpreters or subtitlers better at respeaking?

I was asked this question at ATA's 60th Annual Conference in Palm Springs by our Distinguished Speaker that year, Pablo Romero Fresco.

My answer, "Interpreters for sure."

Less than a year later, I got certified by the Universidade de Vigo as an interlingual respeaker (live subtitler).

If you had asked me that same question after that, I would have answered the same way: that interpreters would make better respeakers. This was based on my experience during that fascinating semester when I learned how to respeak, not only Spanish-Spanish content (intralingual), but English-Spanish (interlingual), too. And this was after never having been trained as a simultaneous interpreter.

I asked my teacher Hayley Dawson for her opinion, and she sent several articles my way that touch on that point. I found that the answer is not so black and white.

Agnieszka Szarkowska and Łukasz Dutka, in their presentation at the Rome Respeaking Conference, reported that during their 2014-2017 respeaking project they found no conclusive evidence that interpreters are better respeakers (Szarkowska et al 2015).

In a subsequent article, the same authors wrote that interpreters did receive higher scores, but differences were not as pronounced as they expected. To them, both the high performing interpreters and the high performing subtitlers turned out to be good interlingual respeakers (Szarkowska et al 2018).

Also, Hayley Dawson and Pablo Romero Fresco stated that successful respeaking training is dependent on the individual's performance and ability to learn the task-specific skills, and not on their professional profile (Dawson, Romero-Fresco 2021).

Advantages and Skills to Learn

For me, the clear-cut difference between translators and interpreters is that the former need to be professional writers, while the latter need to be professional speakers. It's writing and speaking skills that make them the linguists they are today. And respeaking falls smack dab in the middle of these.

During my certification, the advantage I held as a subtitler was that I already knew segmentation, truncation, and punctuation rules, as well as how to utilize ID and sound effect tags used in SDH files (subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing), and how to use subtitling software.

When you dictate to Dragon, you have to pause for the program to start writing. This is where knowing how to segment (where to break the text lines) comes in very handy. Truncation is needed to shorten what you are hearing because you have to respeak much faster than the original speaker. And my punctuation skills proved invaluable because when you dictate, you need to state all the punctuation marks orally, like this: "Hi comma ladies and gentlemen period capital letter When I was born comma there were clouds in the horizon period capital letter Do you think it will rain today question mark." And you do this while the speaker keeps talking in the background!

On the other hand, the advantage held by my interpreting colleagues were the skills that I had to acquire: a working memory, listening and speaking at the same time, enunciation, and simultaneous interpreting theory and concepts. The enunciation bit was very surprising to me, because I found that I slur the endings of words, which meant that Dragon misrecognized most of my verb conjugations (I did get better eventually).

Both subtitlers and interpreters needed to learn new skills, like how to use and train Dragon, how to create and import terminology lists (like the vocabulary to respeak soccer matches!), how to speak with a flat tone (my interpreter colleagues had been trained not to do this), and to pause every couple of seconds either to allow Dragon to catch up or to correct misrecognized words on screen.

According to Hayley, the task-specific skills necessary for interlingual respeaking are research mining, knowledge of current affairs, cultural knowledge, multitasking, live translation, dictation, language, source language comprehension, target language expression, error correction, editing, short-term memory, critical analysis, and reflection (Dawson 2020).

If you asked me the same question today, I would say that both interpreters and subtitlers, given the proper training, would make great interlingual respeakers. Respeaking is just like playing an instrument, you just need training and then practice, practice, practice.

If you are interested in getting certified, two universities currently train respeakers online: the Universidade de Vigo in Spain, and the University of Antwerp in Poland.

These programs will open doors not only for working audiovisual translators, but also for those interpreters that want to explore this new profession. All the authors I reviewed think that interpreters would do a fabulous job as respeakers and would find great job opportunities in this new field.

A special shoutout to all of those interpreters who want to broaden their horizons, go kayaking in the new audiovisual waterway and have a terrific time during the adventure. And don't forget to invite your friends, the subtitlers!

Deborah Wexler
AVD Administrator

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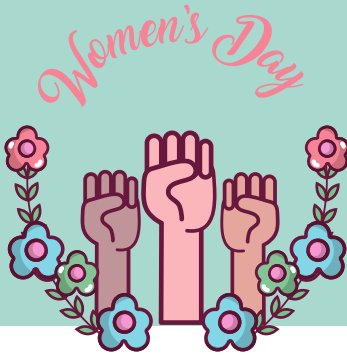
EDITORIAL

ANA G. GONZÁLEZ MEADE



Dear colleagues,

Springtime is here and we're happy to bring you our first *Deep Focus* issue of 2021.

As we come upon the one-year anniversary of the pandemic onset, things are finally looking up with vaccination expanding worldwide. We can actually dream of achieving herd immunity somewhere down the line.

What's more, our industry has been slowly getting back on its feet and productions have started resuming, so our recently-impacted workload is also, gradually, picking up.

The International Women's Day commemorates the fight for women's rights. This Spring issue is dedicated to a long line of brave women in the long-time struggle and to women far and wide for bringing nurturing, resilience, inspiration, love, tenacity, courage, and hope to the world since the beginning of time. May we all receive the equality, love, appreciation, and respect we deserve.
A shout-out to the overwhelming majority of women in our profession!

For our tenth issue, we gave our newsletter a bit of a makeover to make it more reader-friendly, so you will now find editions open with articles, followed by columns, interviews, reviews and, last but not least, our Division's updates. All duly classified and labeled in the table of contents.

This new edition features engaging articles on subtitling tools, Arabic audio description, inclusion in AVT; a superb review of the smash hit *Subtitling: Concepts and Practices* by its very own authors; an interview with dubbing royalty from Spain; and our Live Events Coordinator with the highlights from our latest AVD's Instagram Live events.

As always, we intend for this effort to bring fellow audiovisual translators together, to unite us, and to allow for knowledge exchange and transmission across our ever-growing translation field.

Happy Easter and hooray for women!

Ana Gabriela González Meade
Deep Focus Editor

Revisiting Translation Environment Tools (TEnTs) for Subtitling: Can We Use TMs and TBs to Translate TV Series?

BY DAMIÁN SANTILLI

I've always loved technology, and during my years at university studying translation back in the early 2000s, I quickly realized that I would always be able to link my passion for computers with translation. Additionally, I have always also been a movie buff, so that's why I knew I had to become a subtitler. Luckily, I have been able to both experiment with and teach translation technology to students and colleagues and work as a professional subtitler since 2007.

When I started subtitling and dealing with my first clients, I was surprised to learn that they would not demand that I use any specific software. Nonetheless, I decided to dive into Subtitle Workshop and the like and spent several years subtitling with free software. Simultaneously, I was working as a technical translator using CAT Tools, and teaching them at university and other places, so it always baffled me that there wasn't a subtitling-specific CAT tool. In recent years, as we moved towards translation environment tools (TEnTs), it became more and more apparent that we needed to integrate translation memories (TM), termbases (TB), and all the other tools these systems offer, into subtitling environments.

In 2019, I decided to check the state of play of translation tools for my presentation at HispaTAV in Barcelona, and I was glad to see that the leading translation software companies offered some alternatives using TMs and TBs for subtitling. Today, I'm going to be revisiting the subject for *Deep Focus*.

Cover for the author's presentation at HispaTAV 2019 (at UPF, Barcelona). Full conference available here: https://tinyurl.com/hispatav2019

We have the technology. Let's use it!

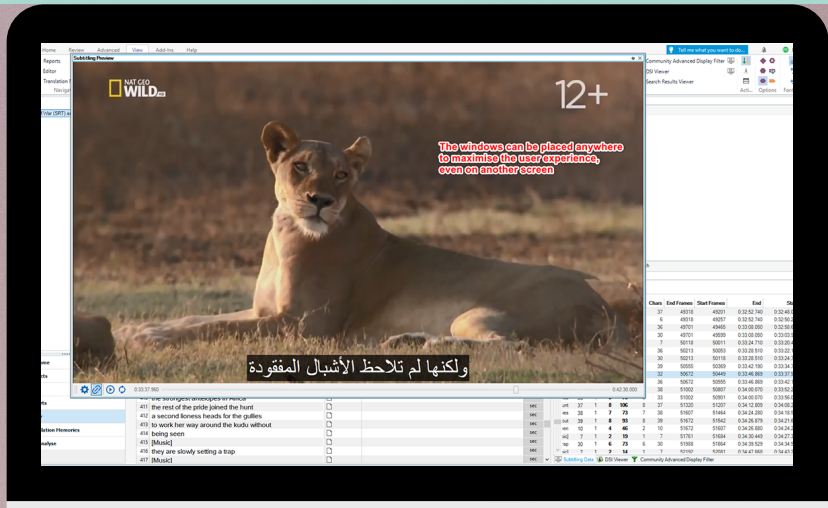
As a subtitler and technical translator myself, I find it hard to believe that we spent so many years not using TMs and TBs in subtitling projects. Luckily, that's changing in some areas, particularly for projects where a timed text file is provided. I've been able to translate some subtitling projects using Trados Studio, and I imagine that some LSPs are also using memoQ. But my main concern here is that, as a freelance subtitler, we don't always deal with timed text files. When you're working with direct clients, like an independent movie director or a production company, there's seldom a need to create a timed text file in the original language, so you usually produce an SRT file in the target language. This is where we fall short, as no translation tool available offers a combination of speech recognition technology and TMs and TBs to create translation units when working directly from source audio and not from a timed text file. Nonetheless, I encourage anyone reading this article to use available tools when subtitling into your target language from a timed text file.

I will talk about possibilities for the future a bit more at the end of this article, but now I want to focus on what we can do with the tools we have available at the moment.

Using TMs and TBs for Your Subtitling Projects

Traditionally, you could always add an SRT filter to a CAT Tool to translate these files, but it really wasn't such a good idea to do so, because you didn't have control over simple things such as segmentation or time code editing, and you couldn't even preview the video in the same software. All of that changed a couple of years ago with the introduction of Studio Subtitling in Trados Studio and the Video Preview tool in memoQ. So, let's say you have a series of webinars you need to translate or a whole season of a TV series, and you'll be needing to create a team of 3 or 4 subtitlers to make the deadline. If–and this is a big if– the client provides timed text SRTs, you should probably stop using Subtitle Edit, or even EZTitles and the like, and jump into Trados Studio or memoQ, and carry out the project using translation memories and termbases, which, by the way, you can easily share in real-time with your colleagues without having to buy a professional version of the software. Both Trados Studio Freelance version and memoQ translator pro will suffice.

Currently, Trados Studio offers, in my opinion, the most comprehensive utility for subtitling projects with its Studio Subtitling app. While memoQ only allows you to translate SubRip (SRT) files and custom-made XLSXs, it offers a module for creating custom filters for files like Advanced SubStation Alpha (ASS), SubStation Alpha (SSA), Spruce Subtitle File (STL), WebVTT (VTT), and other common subtitle file types. On the other hand, Trados Studio offers support for ASS, SRT, VTT, STL and YouTube (SBV). So, while you're welcome to try memoQ if you've never used a translation environment tool for subtitling, I will swiftly guide you through Trados's utility.



Trados Studio's Studio Subtitling

The first thing you need to do is visit the SDL AppStore website (https://appstore.sdl.com/) and login into your account, or if you have the latest version of Trados Studio, you will find the AppStore embedded right into the tool, and you can access it on the Welcome screen. Once you're in the AppStore, you'll need to download and install the Studio Subtitling app and the filetypes you'll need. I suggest you install them all, just in case. After the app is on your Trados Studio, you just need to open a file for translation as you would normally, and then, in the Editor, you'll have to click on View > Subtitling Preview, to activate the video preview window, and then View > Subtitling Data to see information like the start and end times of subtitles, characters, words, WPM, CPS, CPL, etc., which you can change, if you need to.

Then, you can create as many translation memories and termbases as you want, share them among your team, and take advantage of the same features you would use while translating any technical document. This can be extremely helpful, given the right working conditions, as you can reduce terminology problems, and depending on the subject you're dealing with, you might even save a lot of time using Trados Studio's upLIFT technology (TM matching based on fragments). This is also true, obviously, when working with memoQ, but remember, only with SRT files.

Okay, but I don't work with timed text files. What can I do?

I've been passionate about the subject of using TMs and TBs for subtitling for a while now, mainly because I have plenty of direct clients, and as I mentioned before I don't usually get timed text files. Recently, I have had projects where my client wanted me to translate their videos into English, but also needed a closed caption file in Spanish. In those cases, I was able to use a translation environment tool, but in most situations, I've been dealing with my files in Subtitle Edit and Ooona. At least they offer robust QA options and even machine translation.

So, I have to say that there's not much you can do if you're like me and want to integrate TMs and TBs into your workflows. And here, the question is: what would it take to use TMs and TBs for all of my projects? Well, the answer is kind of simple, and there's no need to reinvent the subtitling wheel. We need software, whether it's a translation tool like memoQ or a subtitling tool like Subtitle Edit, that adds a speech recognition feature that helps you create a timed text source file. I mean, it's not that difficult, since YouTube, Facebook, and others are already creating timed closed caption files. You just need to have this in your subtitling software and then you'll be able to create translation units, even though the speech recognition quality might not be the best.

So, Is the Future Almost Here?

Well, the problem is that we need three things: excellent subtitling software, a speech recognition feature, and a robust translation tool that can manage translation memories, termbases, and other common features. But those three things are usually sold by three different companies, and it might not be as easy as it seems to create one tool that combines Google's speech recognition technology with Ooona's professional tools for subtitling and captioning, and Trados' or memoQ's translation software suite.

Sure, some streaming companies are already using translation memories, termbases, and machine translation and Ooona may soon incorporate speech recognition technology, but there's always going to be something missing, right? Maybe it's a missing feature, or maybe you can only access those features if you work for a particular company.

Maybe the future is almost here, and developers will surprise us soon. I can only hope that, if this technology arrives in the next couple of years, it is accessible to freelance translators and not only to big companies.

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Arabic Audio Description: Challenges and Possibilities

BY HEBA SAFWAT ALATTAR

A Brief History of Arabic Audiovisual Translation

Arabic audiovisual translation (AVT) appeared with the emergence of cinema in Egypt back in 1896. Early movies were accompanied by the voice of *elmefahematy* who would simultaneously interpret the intertitles of silent foreign movies and, later, foreign dialogues. The practice evolved to presenting the first professionally-subtitled feature film *Romeo and Juliette* translated by Anis Ebeid in 1944. It was phenomenally successful and started a new phase in the practice of film translation in the Arab world. As for dubbing production, the American movie *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* was the first film dubbed in Egypt back in 1936 (Gamal 2007). Later, AVT services spread to other countries in the Arab region and now providers are mainly in Amman, Beirut, Cairo and Dubai (Gamal 2007).

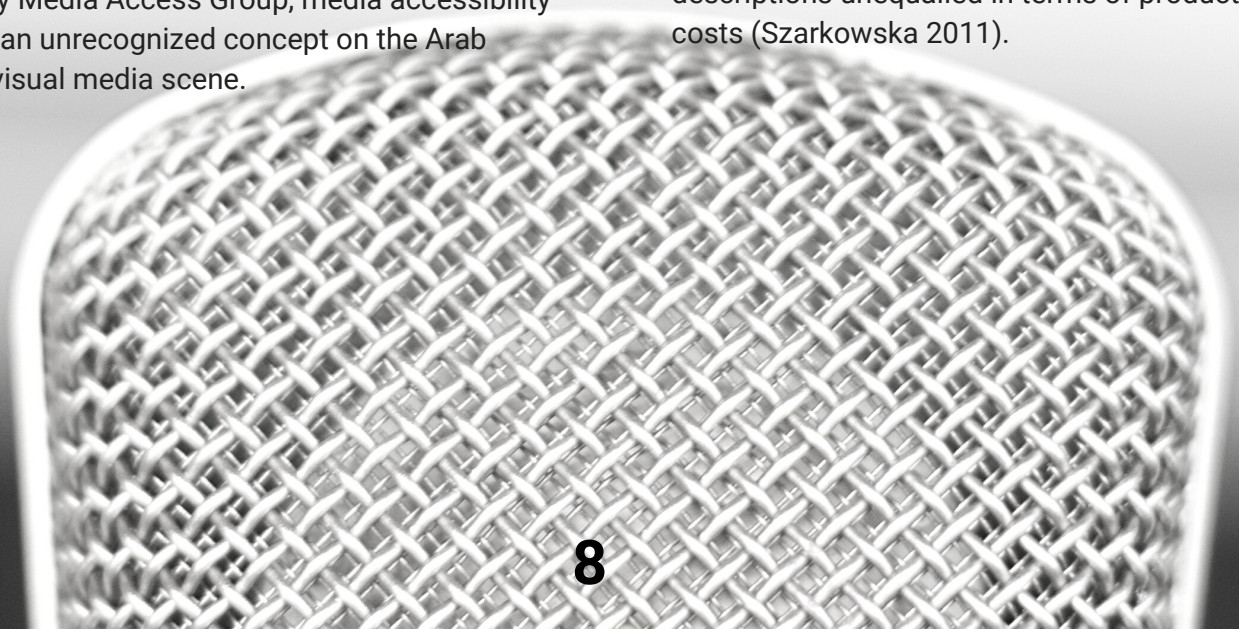
Despite a long history of Arabic AVT, the field has not evolved to meet the needs of Arab deaf and blind audiences. Over 40 years after the earliest SDH and audio description productions in the USA by Media Access Group, media accessibility is still an unrecognized concept on the Arab audiovisual media scene.

For Arab deaf and hard of hearing audiences, sign language is largely used to make media content accessible. However, SDH will not be difficult to promote because of its low cost and uncomplicated production process. In fact, Arabic audiovisual content, particularly online and more specifically commercial videos, is increasingly provided with transcriptions. This can be a way to draw attention to the concept of accessibility and a good step toward producing professional SDH.

Challenges Facing Audio Description Production

On the other hand, accessibility for the blind and the visually impaired is far behind. Audio description (AD) is a time-consuming and costly process (Matamala and Fernandez-Torne 2015). With no binding legislation for Arab media accessibility, choosing to offer audio description will come down to costs and profitability. One of the ways to increase adoption of Arabic AD is to research strategies and technologies that can produce cost-cutting workflows. Translation of recorded AD has proven to serve that purpose (Jankowska, Milc, and Fryer 2017). By using English as pivot language, this would greatly reduce the cost of providing audio descriptions for foreign films. As for describing original Arabic productions, translation is irrelevant and other solutions need to be explored.

One solution that could be helpful is text-to-speech (TTS) technology. Synthetic speech provides an alternative to human-voiced audio descriptions unequalled in terms of production costs (Szarkowska 2011).



This can encourage Arab producers and distributors to invest in the service without being so anxious about revenues. Speaking of Arabic TTS, Arabic pronunciation relies mainly on *tashkeel* (diacritics) to denote *harakat* (vowels). In the absence of *tashkeel,* a wide range of pronunciations for words are possible. However, a number of Arab and non-Arab software companies have made remarkable progress in this area by integrating an automatic *tashkeel* generator in TTS software. The quality of these programs in voicing Arabic audio descriptions needs to be tested by examining its reception by blind and visually impaired audiences.

On top of that, unfamiliarity with AD is one of the challenges facing its adoption, as audiovisual content accessibility is little known to Arab blind and visually impaired audiences. AD providers should engage with them to promote the concept of accessibility and raise their awareness about their right to an equal viewing experience.

Regional Productions

Despite the challenges, the Arabic AD scene is not totally stagnant. In a number of Arab countries, several AD productions have been made for various types of content. For example, the Marrakech International Film Festival was an early AD adopter and audio described participating films in some editions since 2009. In 2015, Orbit Showtime Network (OSN) declared it would be providing AD for some of its shows. In 2018, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information launched a project to audio describe shows broadcasted on Kuwaiti TV. Netflix has also audio described original Arabic titles. This managed to draw attention to the feature and can help promote the service among a large audience that is expected to reach 12.27 million in 13 Arab countries by 2025 (Video on Demand 2020).

Additionally, steps have been taken for producing AD for theatre and museums. In 2018, the Egyptian Ministry of Culture announced that it was providing one of its largest theatres with equipment to make shows accessible to audiences with different disabilities including blindness. Guided by the experience of the Omero Tactile Museum in Italy, in 2019 the Egyptian Museum in Cairo collaborated with the Italian Centre for Archeology in Cairo on a project named Masar Almakfofeen (Route for the Blind). The project made a number of the Museum's artifacts accessible to blind visitors through pre-recorded audio descriptions and panels with descriptions in braille. One of the project team members hopes to apply the experience to all Egyptian museums (Independent Arabia 2019).

The Need for Steps Forward

After 10 years of AD productions, AD remains largely unknown to the majority of Arab audiences. None of these providers have created clear guidelines on how the service should be done. Apart from the AVT MA program at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, no Arab institution offers training in AD and those available are limited to each provider's internal teams.

Merely claiming leadership in AD production won't do the service any good. This should be followed by providers collaborating, exchanging expertise and working toward laying down clear standards for AD production. Now is the right time to experiment and draft guidelines that help perfect the practice and move it forward. Without guidelines, audio description will continue to be an ad hoc practice and no guidance will be given to the work of AD professionals (Gamal 2007).

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Boosting Inclusion through Easy-to-Read Texts in AVT

BY MARIELLA DI BUA

It is often said that translation bridges gaps between different cultures. And that it helps to spread information with the peoples of the world. We also refer to translation as a tool that allows access to information through the power of words in written and oral channels. Today, acknowledgment of this power makes it possible for us to recognize translation as a means of social inclusion.

But in order to reach social inclusion through words, the texts we produce should comply with the principles of universal design. Universal design refers to an environment —and the buildings, products and services within that environment— that is designed and built in such a way that it may be accessed, understood and used by as many people as possible, in the most independent manner, in the most different situations, without the need to adapt or use any special devices. Universal design takes a two-level approach: user-awareness —design that includes as many people as possible, regardless of age, size, or physical, sensory or intellectual ability or disability— and customization —design that avoids the need for adaptation to particular users. This means that it shouldn't pose any barriers, and can be grasped by multiple generations regardless of cognitive capacity. Believe it or not, this concept of universal design can be embedded in the translation process, whether we are working with verbal, visual and/or audiovisual channels.

So, how does this universal design approach apply to the audiovisual translation arena? When acting as a bridge between source and target texts, audiovisual translators can work towards social inclusion by employing simplified or Easy-to-Understand (E2U) language. In her article, "New Taxonomy of Easy-to-Understand Access Services" (Bernabé 2020), Rocío Bernabé Caro proposes a first definition of E2U access services: “Easy-to-understand access services use simplification methods, verbal or nonverbal, to make audiovisual content accessible for users with the widest range of cognitive characteristics and capabilities.”

Easy-to-understand language can be applied in the form of Easy-to-Read (E2R) text; for example, to translate subtitles for people with cognitive disabilities or to prepare narration for audio description for people who are blind and also have intellectual disabilities. Easy-to-read texts are texts that are carefully developed for people with reading difficulties or learning disabilities. Easy-to-read texts normally follow rules that lead to simplicity. They are composed of short sentences, simple images, explanation of complicated terms if there are any, large font size —avoid fancy fonts or italics— and minimal design elements, to name some of the main characteristics. Easy-to-read texts can be found in written material, images, typography, and can be targeted to different groups: from people with intellectual disabilities —as already mentioned—, dyslexia and learning disorders to primary or secondary school students, older people or even immigrants who are not very familiar with the language in question.

In general, when translating audiovisual content, we face some space and time constraints. If we are working with easy-to-read texts, we shall favor universal design features. Such features include choices regarding style, language, design and format. Vocabulary, grammar and structure need to be simple. In our role as translators, we can become champions of easy-to-read texts, and implement these features in our work. Translation to easy-to-read text may be different from conventional translation, but it requires the same translation competencies.

In order for translators to offer a good, accessible text, it is necessary that they be acquainted not only with the source and target languages and their usage, but also with accessibility and access services, disability, vulnerable environments, and the needs of the target audience. Speaking of which, let’s not forget that only the actual audience has the authority to state whether the final product is easy to read and understand, so validation is always a core aspect of the job. It is recommended then that when working in this field, we include a proofing step by a person who will be the target audience of our text. This is the moment of truth, since participation and assessment by the target audience will determine whether our translation fulfills its easy-to-understand purpose.

We know the audiovisual era isn't slowing down. On the contrary, more and more, we are turning to a mélange of materials that appeal to our sight and hearing. And considering that audiovisual content is as diverse as the people who consume it, this is a great time to make audiovisual content available accessible for all. Tailoring the material in such a way that it reaches a broader range of the population will only boost a more inclusive society.

Reference

Bernabé, R. (2020). New taxonomy of easy-to-understand access services. *MonTI. Monografías De Traducción E Interpretación,* (12), 345-380. https://doi.org/10.6035/MonTI.2020.12.12

Mariella Di Bua is an English to Spanish Translator, born and raised in Argentina. Since 2003, she has been working as a freelancer for different SMEs, and for the last 11 years, fashion and sustainability have shaped her specialization. At present, she is taking courses on subtitling translation and Audio Description.

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Introducing "Subtitling: Concepts and Practices"

BY JORGE DÍAZ CINTAS & ALINE REMAEL

BOOK REVIEW

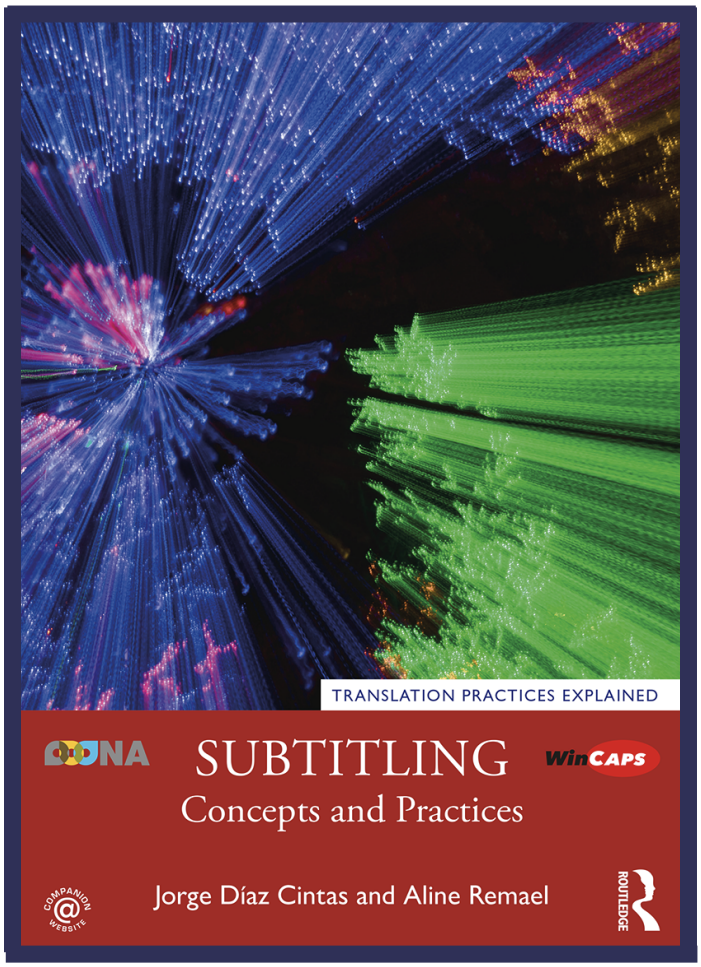
Subtitling has been around since the first half of the 20th century and has taken on many shapes and forms since then. With online activity increasing in virtually all domains of our pre-eminently audiovisual globalized cultures, its importance is growing exponentially.

Subtitling: Concepts and Practices provides students, researchers, practitioners and anyone with an interest in media, language, audiovisual translation, language technology and intercultural communication with an introduction to the theory and practice of subtitling informed by the latest research. The core concepts and exercises it supplies will allow its users to acquaint themselves with subtitles' technical, linguistic and cultural features. The book offers concrete subtitling strategies for dealing with specific translation problems and contains a wealth of examples in numerous languages. It also explores state-of-the art translation technologies, their impact on the profession and discusses how these technologies meet the current socio-political, multicultural and multilingual challenges of audiovisual productions.

The book is a truly multimedia package. It comes with a companion website that contains additional resources, including video clips, dialogue lists, a glossary of concepts and terminology used in the industry, a wide range of exercises with answer keys and much more. It also provides complimentary access to a major desktop subtitle editor, Wincaps Q4, and a leading cloud-based subtitling platform, OOONA.

Wincaps Q4 is a professional subtitling software program developed by Screen Subtitling Systems and widely used in the broadcast market worldwide. OOONA, a cloud-based ecosystem, allows users to create subtitles from scratch, translate from templates, review subtitles created by someone else, and burn subtitles into video without having to download any software. It is thanks to the authors' long-standing experience in subtitling research and practice, as well as their collaboration in numerous AVT projects, that both companies have agreed to become an integral part of this new Routledge subtitling package. Having access to two professional and complementary subtitling technologies will give practitioners-to-be a head start in the industry and supply researchers with the technological know-how that must inform contemporary AVT research.

Although English is the vehicular language of the monograph, examples taken from subtitled films and TV series are provided in a wide range of languages, with back translations.



Because subtitling traditions vary from country to country and even from company to company, writing about subtitling for an international audience is certainly ambitious and means that some generalization is inevitable. Yet, the degree of variation is relative and professional practices are beginning to converge due to globalization and technological advancements. Most differences in professional practice do not really affect the fundamentals of subtitling, and learners who have acquired an insight into these specific issues will be armed with transferable skills that can be applied in many different contexts.

We explore the most relevant academic challenges of this very specific form of translation and raise a number of fundamental research questions. Despite its reliance on technology, subtitling also requires flexible and creative linguistic skills as well as a solid background in intercultural communication.

The book is divided into nine chapters that start with questions or issues for preliminary discussion or reflection and end with graded exercises that reflect on subtitling theory and offer a first inroad into subtitling practice. To ensure easy navigation, the book and website are intimately interconnected and follow the same structure.

Chapter 1, *Reconceptualizing subtitling,* offers an introduction to the fast-changing global world of audiovisual translation (AVT) and its increased importance as a research domain within Translation Studies. It conceptualizes what subtitling is today, distinguishes it from other forms of AVT, surveys the different types of subtitles that commonly appear on viewers' screens and includes a classification on the basis of different parameters.

Chapter 2, *Professional ecosystem,* aims to present the reader with an outline of the typical steps that are followed when subtitling an audiovisual production, contrasting old and new practices when appropriate.

Chapter 3, *The semiotics of subtitling,* provides essential information about film as a complex multimedia text, combining the semiotics of the moving image and sound as well as the multimodality of language. Subtitles must be designed and timed to interact with all these sign systems in a coherent manner. Within this context, the chapter discusses why and how multimediality not only constitutes a challenge but also holds opportunities that subtitlers must learn to use to their advantage.

Chapter 4, *Spatial and temporal features,* highlights the importance of subtitling conventions to ensure consistency, and explores the key spatial and temporal limitations that define this professional practice. It examines spatial issues related to the layout and positioning of subtitles, their font type and size, the number of lines per subtitle and the maximum number of characters per line. As for the temporal dimension, the focus is placed on the task of spotting, the function of timecodes, the various subtitle display rates and reading speeds, the significance of shot changes and other features.

Chapter 5, *Formal and textual features,* focuses on the main lexical, syntactical, and typographical characteristics that define the formal presentation of subtitles on screen and separate, highlight and clarify written text. It also offers advice on the formal rendering of songs, letters and other written documents, as well as numbers, abbreviations, symbols, measures and weights.

Chapter 6 is devoted to *The linguistics of subtitling* in a broader sense and discusses the different options available to carry out text condensation; a typical occurrence in subtitling that will depend on the film genre, the dialogical features of character interaction and the specific context of the scene.

The concepts of cohesion and coherence are also explored in the field of subtitling and advice is provided on how to carry out line breaks within and across subtitles.

Chapter 7, *Subtitling language variation and change,* is the first chapter of two centering on specific translation issues. It begins by defining language variation, the most common forms it can take, the narrative purposes it may serve and how subtitling can deal with these. It then discusses the subtitling of songs, which hold a challenge of their own as texts written to be sung have additional parameters, often involving playful linguistic features.

Chapter 8, *Subtitling cultural references, humor and ideology,* discusses these three interconnected but unstable concepts in the sense that they evolve with time, can be considered from many angles and appear to have dissimilar meanings for different people and communities. Like marked language more generally, these features are common traits of audiovisual productions and present context-dependent challenges for subtitlers.

Chapter 9, *Technology in motion,* explores the rapid evolution of specialist software, machine translation and cloud-based platforms in the audiovisual translation industry, drawing attention to the impact these technological advances are having in new AVT ecosystems and translators' workstations.

And here the brief journey through the book and the website ends, though we hope it also signals the start of your subtitling adventure. We trust you'll enjoy it.

Jorge Díaz Cintas & Aline Remael

Dr. Aline Remael is Professor Emeritus in Translation Theory and Audiovisual Translation at the University of Antwerp Department of Applied Linguistics/ Translation and Interpreting.

She is the founder of OPEN, the departmental Expertise Centre for Accessible Media and Culture and former chief editor of *Linguistica Antverpiensia NS - Themes in Translation Studies*. Her main research interests and publications are in audiovisual translation and media accessibility, as well as translation theory and, more specifically, the study of translation as a multimodal practice. She has been a partner in numerous European accessibility projects focusing on audio-description, accessibility management and live subtitling with speech recognition (ADLAB, ADLAB PRO, ACT and ILSA). In 2018 she received the ESIST Jan Ivarsson Award for invaluable service to the field of audiovisual translation.

Jorge Díaz Cintas is Professor of Translation and founding director (2013-2016) of the Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS) at University College London. He is the author of numerous articles, special issues and books on audiovisual translation. He is the Chief Editor of the Peter Lang series New Trends in Translation Studies and a member of the European Union Language Industry Expert Group (LIND). He is the recipient of the Jan Ivarsson Award (2014) and the Xènia Martínez Award (2015) for invaluable service to the field of audiovisual translation.

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Behind-the-Scenes Hero: The Cinematic Universe of Quico Rovira-Beleta

BY LUCÍA HERNÁNDEZ

INTERVIEW

When I meet Quico Rovira-Beleta for a chat in December, he begins by telling me that like many audiovisual translators of his generation, he didn't go to school for audiovisual translation. "At the time, audiovisual translation programs didn't exist," he recounts. "I studied biology. Arachnology, actually. The study of spiders. Can you imagine?" Actually, I can. As a translator myself, I know that expertise is born in pretty unexpected ways and if it's any consolation, I'm certain this knowledge came in handy when he translated several installments of the *Spider-Man* franchise.

Quico, who is based in Barcelona, has been translating films for Castilian Spanish audiences since 1985. In his 35-year-long career, the prolific subtitling and dubbing translator has over 1500 movies and series to his name. And though superheroes and science fiction are what he has come to be known for, his work is quite diverse, and was particularly so at the beginning. The first movie he worked on was *Rocky IV,* followed by *The Princess Bride,* and *Labyrinth.* Then came the franchises including the *Mission: Impossibles,* and the *Ocean's.* "I was only 17 years old when the original *Star Wars* trilogy came out" he tells me, with a longing in his voice.

"It was [when I translated the *Star Wars* prequels] that I gained the trust of Lucasfilm. After that, everything Star Wars has passed through my hands:

The Mandalorian, the *Clone Wars* movies (he also supervised the *Clone Wars* series), and *Episodes 7, 8, and 9."* And just when he began to consider himself Star Wars' go-to in Spain, he was offered the opportunity to translate for what he aptly called their "enemy": Star Trek. If he was ever torn, he didn't let on, "The fans of one don't get along with the fans of the other, but I've done both and I get along with everyone."

His allegiances are laid bare, however, when he tells me about translating for Marvel, "I am a lifelong fan of Marvel, right from the beginning. I prefer them to DC Comics." Quico's first Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) film was *Iron Man 2* and since then he has translated 18 of the 23 releases.

With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

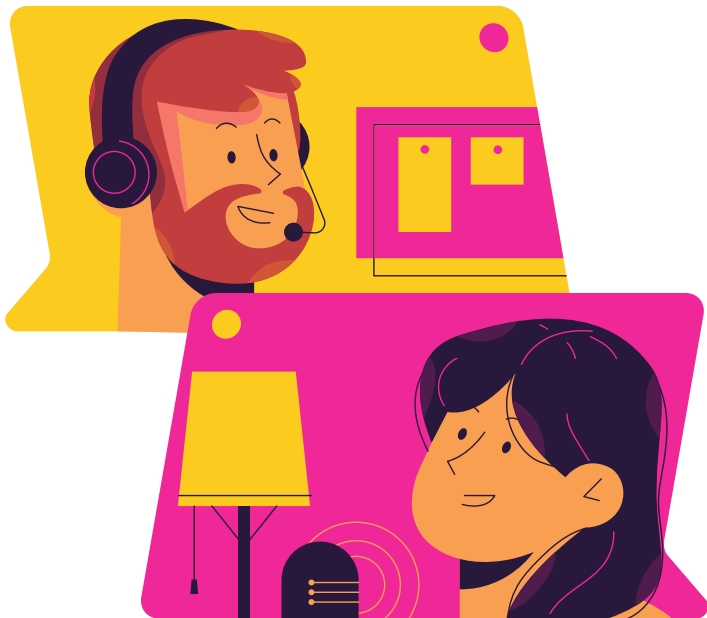
Quico told me, "when you're working on a film with fans—the sort that has millions of articles published before you even get started, like was the case for *The Mandalorian,* it's a challenge." Marvel is no different. "Marvel has lots of fans that not only love Marvel but know absolutely everything about both Marvel Comics and the Marvel Cinematic Universe." And everything about Marvel is a lot. At first, the movies referenced the comic books. Now 23 MCU films in, they reference previous films, crossover films, and tv series as well.

Such a vast universe and knowledgeable audience could be intimidating, but Quico is more than up for it. "It's a challenge, but it's an appealing challenge." It's clear that to Quico, the challenge is the best part of the job, "It's like a puzzle. I become obsessed. The greater the challenge, the more work it takes, the more I like it. Give me something harder. Get my brain working." And when you hear Quico talk about the fans, you know he's rising to the challenge for them. They inspire his work. "When you translate, you have to have the fans in mind at all times. Always. You can never forget about the fans. Keeping them top of mind makes you more careful."

Quico's Superpower: Intertextuality

And fans notice. "You found the line from *Iron Man 2* and put it in *Avengers: Endgame!"* he recounts, filled with pride. With 15 years between these two movies, it's no easy feat. But it's in these connections where Quico thrives. He's even drawn the interest of academic research. When I spoke to Yeray García Celades, an audiovisual translator who took on the subject for his master's thesis, he told me his statistical analysis found that in *Iron Man 2* (translated by Quico), 100 percent of the comic book references were found and translated, while the Spanish version of the original *Iron Man* (before Quico started translating for MCU) missed 33% of them.

While Quico insists that you don't need to be a fan to translate well, he acknowledges that it helps. His ability to detect references seems supernatural, "I'll read a script and get a feeling, almost an intuition. It's as if the text were in bold. This line is from the comic! The intertexts start to find you even when you're not looking for them." Then, he knows exactly where to look for what he needs. He tells me that he recognizes a line from the comic book and finds how it was previously translated, "so that the audience can connect the film with the comics they read when they were 15 years old." I can't help but think he sees his 15-year-old self in the audience. The way he giddily lists the resources he accesses, it's clear that documentation is not just a challenge but fun for him, an adult with access to the comic book library of his childhood dreams.



For MCU, he draws from the *Marvel Encyclopedia,* the *Marvel Database,* the *Enciclopedia del Universo Marvel,* and a website managed by the Spanish publisher of the comics.

He also knows that for sagas, his documentation serves not only him but will help those that come after him. He has contributed to an internal Star Wars glossary that now contains over 5000 terms. He also consults with experts at both Disney and MCU.

To Infinity and Beyond

While Quico made a name for himself on the big screen, his greatest joy is when he transcends it. The lines he writes sometimes become sound clips for children's toys, as was the case with the *Toy Story* films. He loves it when audiences take a line he has written and make it a part of their everyday life. To him, they are, "practicing intertextuality without even realizing it."

He told me about a time he was in a nightclub and the last song of the night came on. Thanks to his translation, "I Like to Move it Move it" from *Madagascar* is just as catchy in Spanish as it is in English. That night, everyone in the club happily moved it moved it into the night, never having realized how much influence he had on them, and of course, they on him.

Lucía Hernández is a freelance audiovisual and marketing translator based in Toronto, Canada. She has worked with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Vice Media, and Fairtrade Canada on documentaries and corporate video as well as interpreted at the Toronto International Film Festival, Hotdocs International Documentary Film Festival, and Caminos Theatre Festival. She has completed M.A.s in Translation Studies (Glendon College) and Spanish Literature (Queen's University) and is certified for Spanish to English translation by the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario.

Quico Rovira-Beleta has been an audiovisual translator and adapter since 1985. He taught for the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)'s Master on Audiovisual Translation from 2003 to 2016. He was a founding member of the Spanish Association of Audiovisual Translators and Adapters (ATRAE). He has translated or adapted over 1500 titles and is the official translator of Star Trek, Star Wars and Marvel. He is the winner of 2 ATRAE Awards (in 2013 and 2015), the 2019 IRENE Dubbing Award and the 2020 Xènia Martinez Award of Honor.

AVD NEWS

We Kicked off 2021 with 2 More Instagram Lives

BY DANIELA COSTA

January: Dubbing with Elodie Powers

We started 2021 by interviewing Elodie Powers, Director of Global Streaming and Broadcast at Keywords Studios. She shared with us how COVID-19 affected their dubbing and post-production process and how her team dealt with new circumstances.

The company has teams in China and Italy, so they had a headstart on managing remote work. To achieve their goals, they implemented a system based on enhanced communication and testing new things every day.

We addressed the challenges of recording voices remotely and how working from home or even at a studio with new social distancing requirements changed the energy of everyone involved.

Elodie stressed the fact that technology played a vital role during this pandemic because technical teams were always able to find creative solutions when they encountered problems.

We talked about the differences between dubbing a video game and dubbing a film or series, the challenges of lip-sync, the role of the translator of dubbing scripts in the creative process, and how to work with songs in dubbing scripts.

Elodie also shared her criteria for selecting translators for specific tasks, and how experience, passion, and research play a vital role in this process.

February: Re-speaking and Accessibility with Pablo Romero Fresco

Pablo Romero Fresco, director of the GALMA (Galician Observatory for Media Accessibility) Research Center, shared with us his insights on three research areas: inter- and intralingual live subtitling or live captioning, accessible filmmaking, and creative media accessibility.

We started by talking about the fundamentals of respeaking, how to use specialized speech recognition software to produce live subtitles, and the emerging trend of using automatic live captioning without human intervention.

Pablo gave us interesting tips on how to start respeaking, and familiarized us with the whole process, from dictation to producing high quality live subtitles.

We also discussed new trends due to COVID-19 including growing demand for interlingual live subtitles, highlighting an increased need for adequate working conditions and rates.

Then we moved on to discuss accessible filmmaking. Pablo believes translators should work hand in hand with directors as part of the creative process. Of course, this is not always the case, but if directors or creative teams incorporate translators into their process, the outcome will be very rewarding for everyone involved.

Pablo also explained creative subtitles and how subtle or evident changes in positioning, color, and font can create a completely different viewer experience.

To watch the full interviews, follow the Division's Instagram account, @ata_avdivision, and check them out on IGTV.

See you next time!

Daniela Costa is an Argentine English<>Spanish translator and attorney at law. She has been working as a freelance subtitle translator for major subtitle localization companies since 2000 and has translated and proofread blockbuster films and series for theatrical release, dvds, Blu-ray and streaming. She is currently taking a masters in audiovisual translation at the University of Cadiz. She is also the Live Events Coordinator of the ATA Audiovisual Division.

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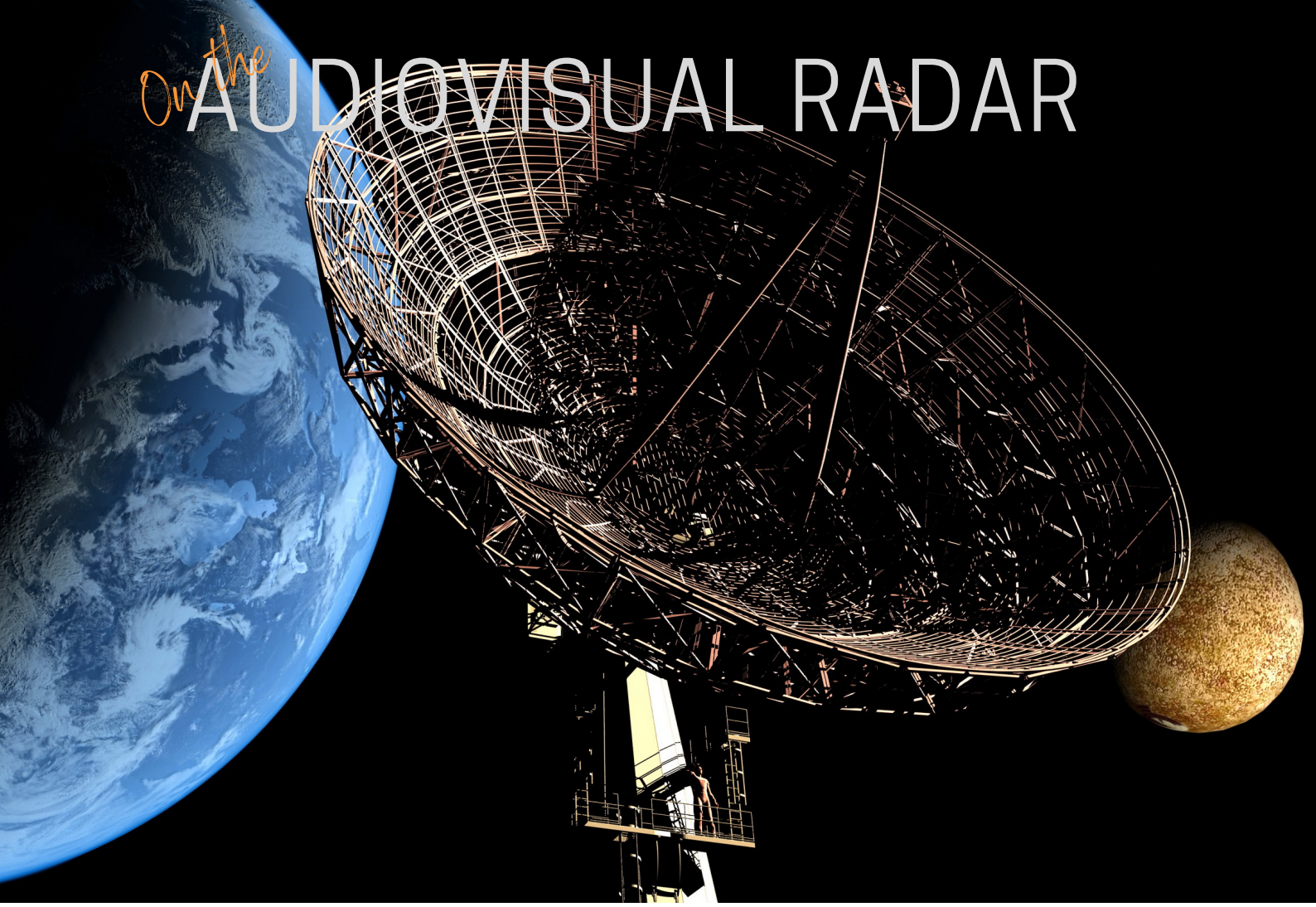


1) ITI Conference 2021 - Evolving in Changing Times - eConference
Institute of Translation and Interpreting, UK

When: May 12 - 14, 2021
Where: Milton Keynes Business Centre, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes, MK
Description: Across three days, there will be two tracks of inspiring and thought-provoking talks for translators and interpreters, as well as several panel sessions, translation slams and networking sessions, and the presentation of the ITI Awards.
https://www.iti.org.uk/conference-2021.html

2) 5th International Edition Translation Symposium
Audiovisual Translation and Computer-Mediated Communication: Fostering Access to Digital Mediascapes

When: May 20 - 21, 2021
Where: University of Palermo, Italy
Description: The symposium aims to explore the links between new forms of translation and the language of the multiple digital discourse types inhabiting the cyberspace (Maci 2013).
https://www.unipa.it/dipartimenti/scienzeumanistiche/.content/documenti/sinossiPalermoEN_29012021.pdf

3) 5th E-Expert Seminar in Translation and Language Teaching about LGBTQ+ Issues in Modern Languages and Translation Education
University of Córdoba, Spain and University College London, UK

When: June 16, 2021
Where: e-Conference
Description: The Seminar aims to create a shared space for reflection on topics related to translation and language teaching. The conference will be held in English and Spanish using a real-time video conferencing tool to add files, share applications, and interact with a virtual whiteboard.
http://www.uco.es/ocs/index.php/tlt5/5eexpert

4) Łódź-ZHAW Duo Colloquium on Translation and Meaning
UNIVERSITÀT DE BARCELONA

When: Sep 2 - 4, 2021
Where: ZHAW, Winterthur, Switzerland
Description:The ZHAW session of the Łódź-ZHAW Duo Colloquium has an applied orientation to this year's central theme Contextuality in Translation and Interpreting.
http://www.duo.uni.lodz.pl/

5) APTRAD International Audiovisual Translation Conference

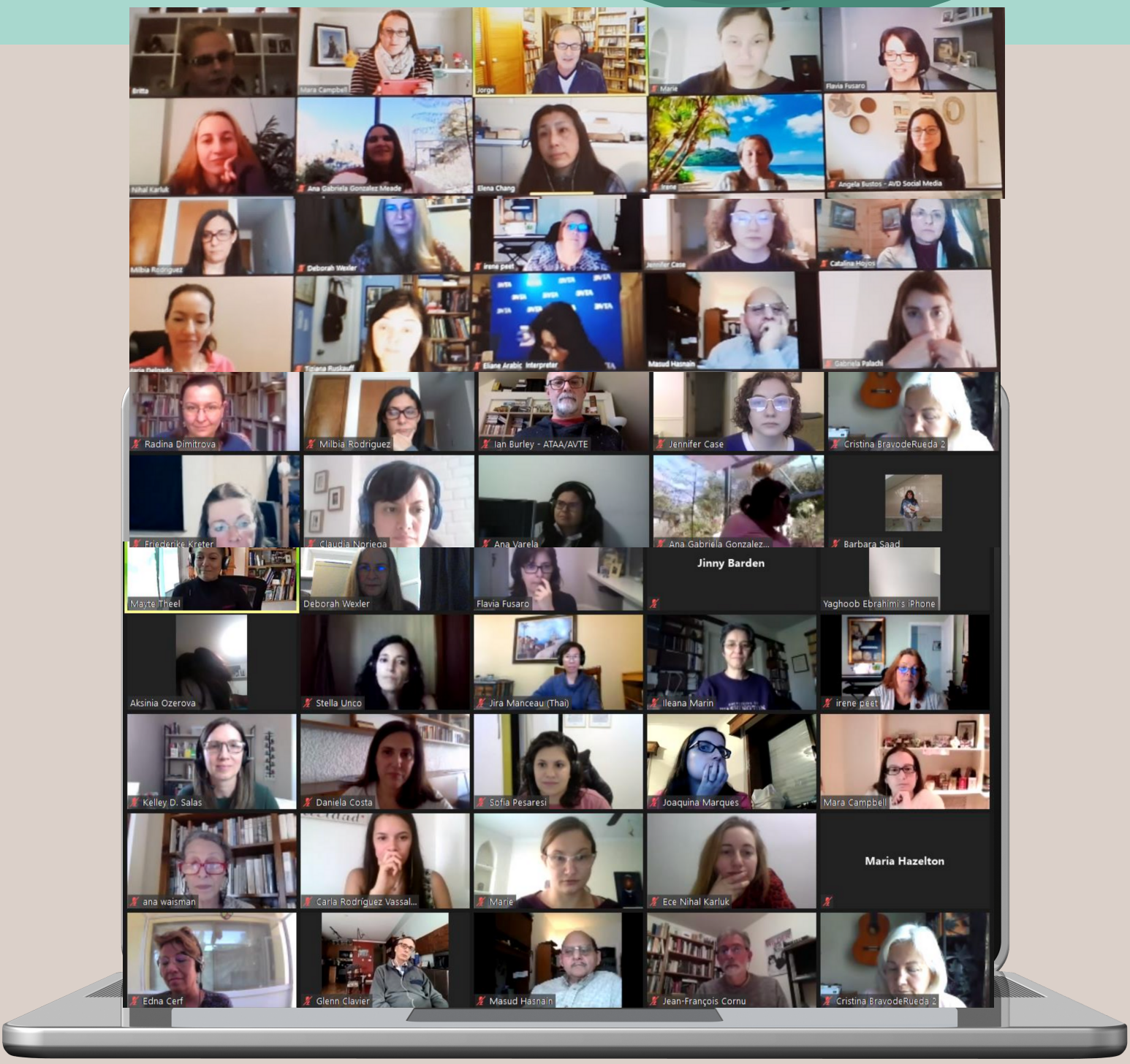
When: September 10 - 11, 2021
Where: ISCAP, the Porto Accounting and Business School, Porto, Portugal
Description: Let us together explore the old and new paths and prepare for the future of audiovisual translation to the fullest extent, without fearing the unknown. Join us to break new ground in audiovisual translation, in what will be an historic event for AVT and its professionals!
https://aptrad.pt/1stAVTIntConf/

6) 13th Languages & the Media Conference and Exhibition

When: Sep 20 - 22, 2021
Where: Radisson Blu Hotel Berlin, Germany
Description: Throughout its 25-year long history, Languages & the Media, the Biennial International Conference on Audiovisual Language Transfer in the Media, has established itself as Europe's leading conference in the AVT industry and is a vibrant hub for exchange, learning and discussion.
https://www.languages-media.com/

AVD'S ONLINE EVENTS

OUR JANUARY HAPPY HOUR: SATURDAY 30TH
OUR FEBRUARY HAPPY HOUR: SATURDAY 27TH
OUR MARCH HAPPY HOUR: SATURDAY 27TH



The AVD has been bringing audiovisual translators together with happy hour meetups via Zoom, and we will continue moving forward. Unwind with friends and meet new people. Join us for our coming happy hour meetups for a relaxed chat among colleagues from all over the world, where we talk shop (or not!) and share our passion for audiovisual translation in a private Zoom meeting room, and then split up into smaller groups.

Follow us on social media to catch us every month!

AUDIOVISUAL DIVISION

What we're up to

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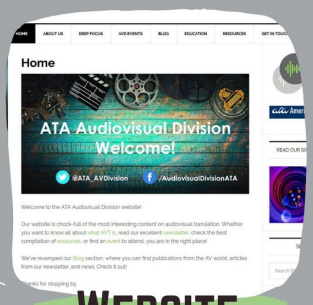
- Newsletter
- Resources
- Events
- Publications
- Division activities



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audiovisual

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a. Send an email to avdforummoderator@gmail.com

b. Mention your full name and your ATA member number

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