Non-professional Subtitling of Virtual Communities

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Abstract

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This paper proposes a critical approach to non-professional subtitling practices in virtual communities created by web-users after the Egyptian Revolution in January 2011. The paper draws on a number of growing research interests such as the emerging web created virtual communities, the complexity of the translation of audiovisual media content, and the socio-political cultures of non-professional/amateur subtitling of the media content of these virtual communities, and relates them to the now extensive field of interpreting studies. It first provides an overview of the growing importance of audiovisual translation and its communicative effect. Such a communicative effect is often discussed within the realm of the complex semiotic ensemble of audiovisual materials. The concept of subtitlers' cultural/political engagement in their renderings is discussed with examples in subtitled extracts for the media virtual communities of Mosireen and Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution. The aim of this paper is to examine non-professional subtitling as a tool for local empowerment and how it contributes to the political and cultural construct of the society. Discussion of subtitled extracts is extended beyond the traditional technical/linguistic codes of professional subtitling by contextualizing it within a wider socio-political environmen
Keywords: virtual communities, audiovisual translation, subtitling, non-professional/amateur subtitling

الملخص باللغة العربية

واقترحت هذه الورقة مقاربة نقدية للممارسات العنونة غير المهنية في المجتمعات الافتراضية التي تم إنشاؤها من قبل المستخدمين على شبكة الانترنت لشريك بعد الثورة المصرية في يناير ٢٠١١. وتستند الورقة على عدد من البحوث تزايد الاهتمام مثل الصنفرة الويب المجتمعات الافتراضية، ومدى تعقيد الترجمة من وسائل الإعلام السمعية البصرية سعيدة، والثقافات الاجتماعية والسياسية لترجمة الأفلام غير المهنية / للهواة وسائل الإعلام سعيدة من هذه المجتمعات الافتراضية، وبورت م الآن إلى الميدان واسعة من تفسير الدراسات. لأول مرة يقدم لمحة عامة عن تزايد أهمية الترجمة السمعية والبصرية وتأثيره التواصلية. هذا له تأثير التواصل وكثيرا ما تناقش DANS LE عالم من مجموعة معقدة السيميائي للمواد السمعية والبصرية. ويناقش مفهوم الالتزام الثقافي / السياسي ' subtitlers في الاداءات منها مع الأمثلة في مقتطفات مترجمة لوسائل الإعلام المجتمعات الافتراضية من Mosireenوكلمات النساء من الثورة المصرية. والهدف من هذه الورقة هو دراسة العنونة غير المهنية كأداة لتمكين المحلي وكيف يساهم في بناء السياسي والثقافي للمجتمع. تم تمديد مناقشة مقتطفات مترجمة وراء رموز / الفنية التقليدية اللغوية للترجمة المهنية من قبل الإطار لفي غضون "البيئة الاجتماعية والسياسية الأوسع.

كلمات البحث: المجتمعات الافتراضية، والترجمة السمعية والبصرية، العنونة، غير المهنية / ترجمة الأفلام الهواة

1.Introduction

Advanced interactive technologies, no doubt, greatly contributed to permeating present media landscape. The emerging media landscape of digitization and internationalization allowing non-professionals to produce and share their individual and collective identities through interactive websites, represents a drastic shift away from traditional media platforms such as television talk shows. Most importantly is the growing social interaction of this interface, where small network virtual communities engage in political/social group discussion or comments. Web users of these communities have embraced the internet to circulate a wide selection of ideologies without any clear forms of expression of their message. The uploaded videos on these websites are usually subtitled by volunteers who are members/non-members of these communities who know two languages and subscribe to the same narrative affinity of the media content of these websites. But here rests the question that has preoccupied scholars recently; how can these new media interactive technologies be evaluated with regards to their 'honest' and 'true' media content? Although this question is crucial and at the very core of the construction of narratives across media, there is a remarkable expansion in this new media landscape.

A good example of such virtual communities is the created and co-created interactive websites characterized by

user-generated content production and sharing since the early days of the Egyptian Revolution in January 2011. Revolutionaries and political activists used the internet interface to project/share their viewpoints in words, photographs, video clips and sound tracks. Needless to say, the devastating speed of disseminating information or reflections on particular events has greatly contributed to the shaping up of the public revolt at that time. No wonder that some foreign news reports have named the Egyptian revolution as 'the Facebook Revolution' or 'the Virtual Revolution'.

The creators of these virtual communities not only created a collective space on the internet to project/share their viewpoints to empower civic engagement on the street level, but also disseminated their collective identity to wider foreign audiences/viewers through the subtitling of this media content. It is worth noting here that the reeling question of the truthfulness of media content in interactive sites overshadows translation scholars' argument with regards to audiovisual translation of this media content carried out by non-professional or amateur translators who are volunteers in the first place (Perez-Gonzalez 2006, 2007, 2012, and Perez-Gonzalez & Susam-Saraeva, 2012). In this context, Perez-Gonzalez & Susam-Saraeva (2012) give a rather general definition of non-professional translators and interpreters as individuals who did not receive any formal translation training and work for free. However, they are not simply a cheaper

alternative to professional translators as they are actively involved in the distribution of news and the spread of social networks and virtual communities on the internet with wider audiences in the foreign context, and this takes away from the neutrality of 'narration' as they may be subject to 'cause or agenda' bias. It is also worth to add here that they are "ordinary citizens [who] become increasingly involved in the co-creation of media content" (Perez-Gonzalez, 2013b: 4).

Perez-Gonzalez (2007) clearly associates himself with this line of research. He shows scholarly interest in studying the role of translated media content, especially by amateurs, in the media societies:

> Although globalization theorists have closely scrutinized the instantaneity of global flows and their influence on the configuration of new audiences, media sociologists have turned their attention to the involvement of creative citizen consumers in the production and distribution of media content – including the implications of these participatory practices for the socioeconomic status of media professionals; but for all the emphasis on the increasingly global scope of media flows, the contribution of translation to the reception of broadcasts across different *locales* remains

underexplored. (**2007: 158,** *emphasis in the original*)

In the same vein, Zabalbeascoa (2010) argues the need to discuss translation in appropriation to the issues of effective communication. Investigating media translation would open up new pathways:

> After all, defining the limits of translation matters less than understanding how people communicate, how they seem to want to communicate, how they respond to different forms of communication, and what can be done (theoretically, technologically and otherwise) to improve communication, education, entertainment, and our understanding of art. 'Media for all' is a brilliant way of putting it in a nutshell. (2010: 30)

In any attempt to discuss translation in its communicative capacity, audiovisual translation can occupy a more central position. Audiovisual material provides a greater awareness of human verbal and nonverbal communication and interaction. Thanks to technological progress, audiovisual translation of various multimodal and multi-semiotic materials has become easy and accessible. However it is also worth mentioning, over the last ten years, the emergence of interactive virtual communities has likely promoted a virtual network of amateur or non-professional audiovisual subtitlers,

who willingly or unwillingly consciously or unconsciously, continue to mediate conventional considerations of the audiovisual practices. Through translational decisions, non-professional/amateur translators have brought about great changes in subtitling practices – let alone their endeavors to re-conceptualize the original according to their own positioning. This paper is set out to investigate the indications of the practices of non-professional subtitlers rather than vis-à-vis the professional practices

2. Research Questions

1- How the hidden implications of non-professional/amateur subtitling practices can be studied beyond the traditional technical/linguistics codes.

2- How the concept of interplay between different semiotic modes of the audiovisual material in non-professional/amateur subtitling accounts for the shaping up of political and cultural construct of the society?

3. Research Objectives

In terms of communication, the prominence given to audiovisual productions in today's society makes them an ideal and powerful vehicle for the transmission, not only of factual information, but also of assumptions, moral values, commonplaces, and stereotypes; one of the many reasons why they stand out as an object deserving of research. (Diaz Cintas, 2012: 280)

From this quote we can discern the central importance of subtitled audiovisual material which allows new voices to be heard all over the world and invites more research in the field.

Against this background, this paper is set out to examine subtitling practices by non-professional translators who seek to mediate their own profiles. The analysis below aims at investigating the role of non-professional subtitles' of the new forms of social and political engagement with media content of the selected virtual communities. Such an engagement is manifested whether by bringing into sharper specific representation of the original in the subtitles which communicate a particular political construct, or by deploying particular frames in their subtitles which achieve a different social construct.

4. Related Studies

4.1 Audiovisual Translation

Before attempting any analysis of subtitled material, it would be logical to give a brief overview of audiovisual translation. Since the emergence of the first serious research on subtitling by Lake in 1957, a great interest has been triggered in the field of audiovisual translation AVT, however, the last twenty years, prolific scholarly endeavors have been materialized in exponential publication of articles and books on AVT (Diaz Cintas, 2009). Researches during the early period in the history of AVT adopted a distinctively professional

perspectives focusing on the audiovisual translator. In the 1980s and 1990s, technical aspects and latest technical developments at the time were introduced to the field. However, the proper beginning of 'AVT's golden age' was in 1990s (Diaz Cintas, 2009 & 2012). The field of AVT at that time and after is flooded with true scholarly contributions, numerous conferences, and PhD dissertations. No longer being considered as a minor specialization in Translation Studies, many universities have started to offer audiovisual courses and degrees. Of the several modes available for audiovisual translation such as dubbing, voiceover, and subtitling, the latter seems to be the most common and prevailing mode (Diaz Cintas, 2010). Developed by the digital revolution of the 1990s and the prolific audiovisual industry; cinema, television, internet, and so forth, AVT has become a resolute area of research (Diaz Cintas, 2012). More interestingly, audiovisual translation has found synergies with multimedia materials such as video games, internet communication, fansubs, and webtoons (Diaz Cinats, 2008).

Communication and communicative effect are often discussed within the realm of meaning-making or the semiotic ensemble. How audiences interpret the media content of the audiovisual material is recently argued within the framework of how this content is phrased visually and aurally. In this respect, audiovisual translation is gaining more visibility in shaping the communication process of screen material in a

multicultural and multilingual environment. Diaz Cintas (2009: 8) further elaborates "It is not an exaggeration to state that AVT is the means through which not only information but also the assumptions and values of a society are filtered and transferred to other cultures". Of a particular note is the fact that AVT depicts and conveys the stereotyping about social categories such as women, blacks, Arabs, etc., and make them accessible to wider audiences.

Non-professional/amateur subtitling closely associates with the new term 'fansubbing'. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007) argue that fansubbing practices are the significant consequence of the rapid development of subtitling programs which have become much more affordable and accessible on the internet. Although first used solely for the subtitles of the Japanese *anime*, fansubbing has now included any instance of subtitling produced 'by fans for fans', or as preferred by many as instances of 'subbing' and not subtitling (Diaz Cintas and Remael, 2007). Fansubbing is not unrelated to amateur subtitling in their contribution to popularize an area of particular interest and make it accessible to wider viewers/readers (Bogucki 2009). These new ideas that come from outside the Code of Good Subtitling Practice, allow new trends to infiltrate into the practice which then enter the commercial realm (Foerster 2010). The most important characteristics of fansubbing is that fansubs share some of the characteristics of conventional subtitling but they take

advantage of digital technology and use different codes in subtitles such as coloured lettering for different languages, different font, abbreviations, glosses at the top of the screen and others. Perez-Gonzalez explores amateur subtitling as "a site for the articulation of different interventionist and monitorist practices, whether prompted by aesthetic or political activist agendas" (2012: 336). He further designates fansubbing as 'aesthetic activism'. One can then say that added aesthetic features to non-professional/amateur subtitles come under the domain of fansubbing.

4.2 Audiovisual multimodality

The mode-generated complexity of subtitling lies in the semiotic system of the audiovisual material. In other words, what is said verbally has to be transported into a written text. Furthermore, visual and acoustic sign systems of what we see on screen conceptualize our perception and build our response towards it. This combination of verbal and non-verbal dimensions of communication with visual and acoustic channels establishes the basis of audiovisual multimodal nature. The study of verbal and non-verbal resources in audiovisual material has been mainly informed by semiotics, where different semiotic channels are at interplay to give the meaning. In the literature, audiovisual material is best described as multimodal texts. Elsewhere, (Mansour, 2014) the concept of multimodality and multimodal transcription which accounts for the different meaning-making modes of communication

such as language, image, music, and colour is discussed on different text types such as graphic books. The perception of how to read, view or understand the potential meaning in multimodal texts is recently decoded in the multimodal transcription theory (Baldry & Thibault, 2005) and the principles of visual grammar (Kress & van Leuuven, 1996), which combine social semiotics and systemic functional grammar to account for the semiotic organization of multimodal texts. However, in this context it is fair to mention that in audiovisual material, the image seems to carry more weight than the word. Not surprisingly, the consumer of audiovisual material is best described as a 'viewer' rather than a 'reader' or a 'hearer' (Diaz Cintas, 2008, 2 & 3). On a further note, Diaz Cintas (2008) emphasizes the power of words in audiovisual material: "sometimes unnoticed but nevertheless carriers of meaning and messages. They may reset for a period, remain inactive, but they slowly work their way into the conscious of the viewers/hearers/readers." (2008: 4). Whether the emphasis on words or images, audiovisual translation calls for facilitation of the message carried by the multiple signifiers of the multimodal material.

In subtitling, such an intersemiotic system is rather problematic. It is often said that subtitlers have to be aware of the combination of other visual signs such as gestures and postures (paralinguistic factors) in the development of the story or the program. Furthermore, non-verbal semiotic dimensions

might alternate in the meaning-making of the story such as the background of the frame, the colour and so forth. It is also conceivable that in the case of subtitled material, all said semiotic systems have to contribute with written rather than spoken words to meaning-making of the screen narrative or programme, or as put in Diaz Cintaz and Remael words 'subtitles have to become part of this semiotic system' (2007: 45). Later on Diaz Cintas (2012) confirms the significance of the semiotic ensemble of the audiovisual material in which language is only part in subtitling: "linguistic fabric is only part of the whole semiotic composite" of audiovisual material and that subtitling which does not fully consider this feature "would spell disaster" (Diaz Cintas, 2012: 280).

Following this line of thought, any attempt to put subtitling within a defined taxonomy of translation activities is likely to be too simplistic. The concept of the interplay between the different semiotic modes of the audiovisual material opens the door for a rather critical approach to subtitling. The risk involved in having a normative definition of subtitling practices lies in the complexity of maintaining a constant link between the written text at the bottom of the screen and other sign systems. Apart from technical/linguistic considerations, this co-existence probably makes it unrealistic to account for professional practices, or to draw a clear demarcation line between professional and non professional practices. Nevertheless, researching the technical/linguistic manipulation

in non-professional subtitling to serve particular positioning may explore more hidden issues in relation to the construct of particular political and cultural realities. Hence, the analysis below will follow this line of thought.

5. Data and Methodology

The role of subtitling as a tool of growth and presence of new dominant ideologies and emerging values that re-construct the mainstream public discourse is worth investigating. Diaz Cintas (2012:286) further elaborates: "Subtitling has become simultaneously a means of global acculturation exploited by the big multinationals and also a tool for local empowerment". Drawing upon an example from the search for volunteering subtitlers (non-professionals) by the *Mosireen* project in Egypt, Diaz Cintas (2012) argues that non-professional subtitlers in such cases capitalize on the narrative affinity of prospective contributors and hence "they are *pièce de résistance* against the powers" (2012: 286), and a tool for realizing their contributors objective "empowering the voice of street-level-perspective" (*Mosireen project*; cited in Diaz Cintas, 2012: 284).

Against this background and to examine subtitling practices by non-professional translators, examples in the analysis below are selected from subtitled activists' virtual communities *Mosireen* and *Words of Women from the Revolution*. *Mosireen* is chosen to investigate the role of non-professional subtitles in communicating a particular political construct. Whereas, *Words of Women from the Revolution* is

selected to examine how non-professional subtitlers bring into sharper specific representation of the original which achieves different social construct.

To activate civic engagement after the Egyptian Revolution, a group of filmmakers and activists established a non-profit media collective *Mosireen* after the outset of the ex-Egyptian President Mubarak. It supports citizen media of all kinds and encourages ordinary citizens to record events as they happen in front of them and upload it on the group's website. The objective of this group is explicitly expressed on their home page: "to challenge state media narratives" (mosireen.org). But while it may be possible that *Mosireen* subscribe to the broad narrative of the 'Egyptian Revolution against tyranny and oppression', this media collective has an affinity to a different positioning as will be discussed in the examples below.

In an attempt to re-contextualize women's issues in the Egyptian society, a media collective website *Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution* presents English/Spanish/French subtitled audiovisual texts which resonate strongly with the construction of a new collective identity of the Egyptian women and their growing sense of themselves as equal human beings. The project is described on its facebook page as 'an audio-visual Herstory project, to remind history' (facebook.com/HerstoryEgypt). Their main objective is explicitly expressed as:

Women are part of every society and form a part of the social, political and   economic spectrum. It is history that tends in most cases to ostracize the participation of women and keep them in the shadow while highlighting the   participation of men and attributing leading roles exclusively to them. This is   why we are documenting Herstory. (http://www.indiegogo.com/project/)

It started in 2011 with loaded videotapes on Youtube channel by making media collective of interviews with different women who took part in the Egyptian Revolution and joined the facebook on June 13, 2011. In their fundraising webpage, founders clearly expressed their aims in the following words:

We are making history, might as well write ourselves! This project intends to   shed   light   on and document the participation of women in the Egyptian   revolution and to document their experiences as part of the historical memory. It   is also a tool for women empowerment everywhere and a source of researches,   students and everyone interested   in   the   matter. (www.indiegogo.com/herstoryegypt,   emphasis added)

These series of short episodes (10-16 min) are primarily shot to document the women's narratives about their participation in the Egyptian Revolution. Each episode is a

short profile of the female narrator in Arabic with subtitles. The female narrators talk about their personal experience and their participation in the events of the January Revolution in a spontaneous and natural way, which present a well balanced reflection of diversified profiles. The photography and narration though simple and straightforward, contribute to producing a very intense picture of ideological and societal differences in Egyptian women. The diversified ideologies and cultural/religious inclinations are visually manifested in the variety of the interviewed women; in 'hijab', in 'niqab', Christian, liberal-looking, mother-daughter, and others. The interviews are marked by diversified discourses of the interviewed females, i.e. code switching between English and Arabic, explicit language, pop-culture reference, and local swear words. Such a variety seems plausible for breaking the societal stereotype of the Egyptian women as passive submissive citizens.

The discussion of the examples below goes beyond the technical/linguistic considerations of subtitling to the implications of non-professional subtitling on contextualizing the topic within a wider socio-political environment. The analysis aims to discuss subtitling as a tool of transporting local empowerment and playing a role in cultural resistance against conventional stereotypes. To achieve this aim, the analysis will focus on how non-professionals appropriate (add/omit/intensify) in their renderings to promote the viewers'

affinity with their shared narratives. The analysis will also examine the verbal/non-verbal features of the subtitled extracts, hence the examples below include screen captures from the two websites of *Mosireen* and *Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution.*

6.Analysis

6.1 Political construct

As discussed before the new technologies have manifests on the websites of virtual communities which are created by individuals who share same beliefs or ideologies. Such websites have participatory media content, in other words, individuals are invited to upload media materials that resonate with their cause or objectives. They are also dedicated to 'citizen media' or 'participatory media', a term which "covers a wide range of activists of non-professional citizens who lay a claim to an area of public life and politics and seek to transform it in some way" (citizenmediamanchester.wordpress.com). To make their voice heard all over the world, volunteering (non-professional) subtitles are provided in different languages to the media content of these websites. *Mosireen* group is a case in point.

On an uploaded video on *Mosireen* website titled إنقلاب و لا استمرار للثورة (A Coup or a Continuation of the Revolution?), a narrator comments on the scenes of June 30, 2013 Revolution. The scenes are accompanied by English subtitles. Although the title alludes to the dominant concept of the military intervention on June 30, 2013 as a defense of the people's

protest against Morsy – the Egyptian President with a Moslem Brotherhood (MB) background - and not a coup, the media content of this video subscribes to a competing concept. The scenes and the comments capitalize on the progressive resistance against the return of the military to rule Egypt. A closer examination of the subtitles of this video seems to manifest a magnified representation of the original.

The narrator argues that the military has always allied with the MB but puts the latter to the front to avoid taking responsibilities if things went out of control. The video attempts to subtly promote the notion that there was a kind of a hidden deal between the military and the MB. In the subtitles of three successive scenes, a deliberate linguistic intensification is noted as shown in the following example:

Arabic comments (min1.05 to min 1.12)

English subtitles

وفى نفس الوقت ماحدش يتدخل فى ميزانيتهم ومصانعهم واقتصادهم

At the same time, no one scrutinized their budget or interfered with their factories and economic activities.

وده اللى كان بيضمنهلهم دستور الإخوان

This lack of oversight was guaranteed by the brotherhood constitution.

اللى كان جزء مهم من ثمن الصفقة اللى تمت بينهم

which was a large part of the bargain between them.

The hidden deal between the military and the MB is rendered in the subtitles with rather precise and sharp words, such as ماحدش يتدخل is rendered as 'scrutinize' or 'interfere', and the implicit reference to what the military wants in the colloquial Arabic item ده is made explicit in the subtitles as 'this lack of oversight'. This over-explicitness is attempted to capitalize on the audience expectations of something hidden between the military and the MB. The subtlety intended in the original seems to be uncovered in the subtitling

Another point that is worth investigating is the synchronization of the image (non-verbal) and the added subtitles (verbal) that differ in the subtitled version than in the original (the synchronization of the image with the voice-over commentary) which also affects the meaning-making of the narrated story about the relation between the military and the deposed President Morsy as discussed in the example below.

Screen capture (1): "A Coup or a Continuation of the Revolution", min 2. 26 (mosireen.org)

In the above frame, the interplay between the image (non-verbal), which alludes to a good relation between the military and the deposed President, and the spoken Arabic commentary الحقيقة هى... من أهم الأسباب اللى خلت القيادات العسكرية يضحوا بالاخوان (in fact one of the most important reasons which makes the military abandon the MB) is rendered in a different structure in the English subtitle as shown in screen capture (1): "In fact the military did not abandon the Brotherhood". On the surface, the condensation and the approximate linguistic representation of the original speech in a more declarative mode 'did not abandon' in the subtitles seem on the surface to comply with the technical constraints of screen space and time. However, the interplay between the English declarative sentence (verbal) and the image of a close conversation between

the deposed President and the military man (non-verbal) brings into a more intensified reproduction of the original narration which subscribes to the whole message of the video that the military did not abandon the MB because of their total failure but because of their attempts to monopolize power and hence violated the terms of their deal with the military.

GRAFFITI: Gaber, say hello to Youssef and Mina [killed by the police or army]
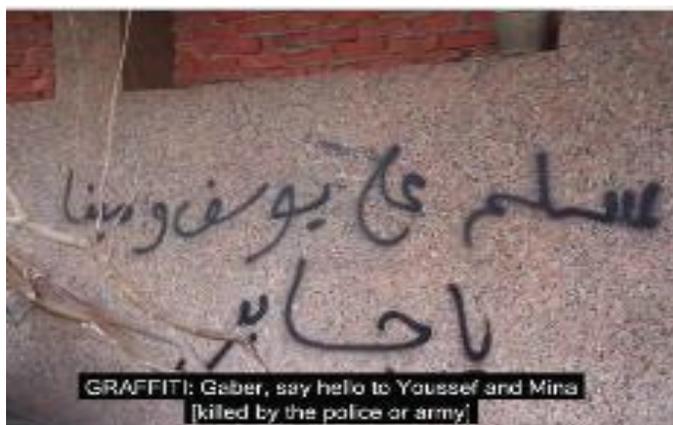
Screen capture (2): "A Coup or a Continuation of the Revolution?", min 2.26 (mosireen.org)

In the above example, an intensified verbal semiotic resource "Gaber, say hello to Youssef and Mina [killed by the police or army]" is added in the English translation of the graffiti. Instead of a static visual mode in the original, the subtitler mediates a rather specific perception of the image of the graffiti by adding information about Youssef, Mina and Gaber – iconic figures of the martyrs of the Revolution – being killed by the police or army. Subtitling here aims to make the audience more aware of the core evidence that foster the

activists' disposition, i.e army kills people and hence their heroic intervention on June 30, 2013 was only to serve their return in play.

However, it is fair to mention that these may be isolated moments in the subtitles but they are points where the subtitler's intervention, whether consciously or unconsciously, is rather significant. It has become evident that non-professional subtitling is actively involved in mobilizing audiences around a competing concept that challenges the dominant discourse at that time.

6.2. Cultural construct

The tension between the oppression of the Egyptian women and the quest to have their voices heard is illustrated in the opening screen shot of each episode on the website of *Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution* as in screen capture (1) below.

كلمات نساء من الثورة المصرية

Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution

Herstory... to remind History

Screen Capture (1): design of the semiotic ensemble of the representation of the women's episodes on the Youtube channel

The opening screen shot of each episode is designed with a semiotic ensemble that challenges the stereotyped representation of women's issues and seeks to intervene in the reception of the uprising of women in the Arab world. The interlink between verbal (words of women) and non-verbal (images of gagged mouths and open-wide ones) semiotic sources here is rather indicative in terms of passing the message to the viewers that women will no longer tolerate oppression and mouth shut. There is a subtle amount of information communicated though the visual signs of the four images of women that convey a multimodal meaning behind the direct translation of the title of the video clips series. The non-verbal elements in the images on the left of the screen capture (1) above narrate women's struggle between gagged mouths and shouts. More likely, viewers of this series would expect words of women as shouts against their long oppression and strong calls for their liberation.
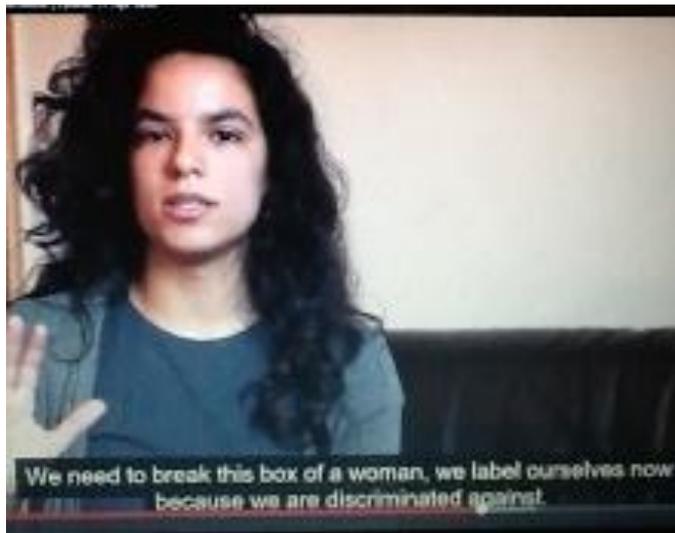

You should think of yourself outside of the label of a woman

Screen Capture 2: Realization of sharp short messages. *Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution*, **episode 7, min 9.07 (youtube.com)**

The representation of teenagers' revolutionary spirit against women's injustice in the Egyptian society in episode (7), screen capture 2 above, is one of the ideologically charged episodes. A young female revolutionary narrates her own story of the Egyptian Revolution giving an opposing portrait of women as passive receivers of others' protection. The narrator achieves this in both visual and verbal terms. The paralinguisitic dimensions that accompany her language, such as voice quality (coarse and medium pitch which reflects more confidence), gestures (swaying hands in connection with emotional response), and facial expressions (seriousness verses smiles for communicating sarcasm) depict the separate profile of the teenager narrator. The linguistic distinctiveness of the narrator, e.g the use of sharp and slangy phrases 'حيتشفخكو' (beaten up), 'يا سم' (shame on you), and the youth language of code switching between Arabic and English 'by default لإنك', risk بـ أنا قاعده', 'utopia حالة' is not produced in the English subtitles.

More important than normalization of such linguistic features in subtitles which might be referred to the linguistic constraints of rendering non-standard speech in writing or the common belief that explicit slang language might be more offensive in a text than when verbalized, is the over-explicit linguistic frames used by the subtitler in relation to the speaker's attempt to defeat the societal stereotyping of women. As shown in screen capture (2) above, the Arabic comment by

the speaker 'لازم تفكرى فى نفسك بره إنك ست' is rendered as "you think of yourself outside the label of women". 'label' here is an over-explicit frame of women's space in boxes where they are labeled as women. Labels provide information about the product on which they are affixed. Moreover, products of the same nature usually have the same labels. 'outside the label' is a clear call to all women to free themselves of this 'label' or 'cage' of their societal stereotypes.

The same happens in the screen capture (2) below, the narrator addressing the Egyptian woman on how to think of herself out of the label of woman as stereotyped by the society, she used 'out of the box'.

We need to break this box of a woman, we label ourselves now because we are discriminated against.

Screen capture (2): Sharp realization of women's appeal.
Words of Women from the Egyptian Revolution, episode 7, min 9.19 (youtube.com)

The teenager delivers a clear message to women saying (we go out of being a نخرج بره موضوع الست.. هى الست بيحصلها تمييز woman… woman is discriminated against). Again the subtitler conveys the speaker's message with rather deliberate frame and adds more intensified sentence "We need to break this box of a woman, we label ourselves now because we are discriminated against". The words 'label' and 'box' in the subtitles are subjective additions to render a reinforced representation of the reality of the Egyptian women to which they must revolt.

It seems that non-professional subtitles play an effective role in the articulation of a new social construct in relation to the societal stereotype of women. In another episode, a 64 year old female narrator (screen capture 3 below), the narrator's precise accusation to the Egyptian society of women's sexual subjugation is clear in her comment تفضل الست مركوبة لان هما بيعتقدوا انها مركوبة جنسيا. The subtitler here opts for adding the doer of this act of subjugation; 'the society' in "The women will remain subjugated by society because they believe she is sexually subjugated". Although it is clear that the subtitler seems to have adopted a more literal translation of the original, however the words 'subjugation' and 'sexual subjugation' have more negative connotations in English and allude to the prosody of dominance and the downgraded position of women in the society. Bringing into linguistic choices which mediate sharper context in the target language 'subjugated' with the

addition of a direct agent 'society' is another attempt by the subtitler to mediate the perception of women's image that serves his/her ideological interest.

The woman will remain subjugated by society because they believe she is sexually subjugated.

Screen capture (3): *Words of Women from the Egyptian revolution*. **Episode 3, min 5.57 (youtube.com)**

Discussion of the examples above may have proved that non-professional subtitling attempts to foster new forms of social and civic engagement in the subtitled audiovisual material of the new web-generated media space of virtual communities.

As discussed above, non-professional subtitling is made possible with a wide range of freeware computer programmes to create subtitles and which allow easy insertion of subtitles. With the aid of such free programmes, non-professional subtitlers witnessed more freedom in their renderings where issues of subtitling strategies and quality are overlooked. Discussions as to whether non-professional subtitling has

followed the conventions or not have been replaced in the analysis by a more emphasis on critical analysis of the implications of the non-professional renderings. Nevertheless it is worth mentioning that on the surface, violation of these conventions by non-professional subtitlers may be justified by their little experience, which proved to be not always the case. A closer examination, however, would reveal an attempt to mediate the spoken texts to serve the subtitler's own political and ideological positioning. Non-professional subtitling in this sense represents a platform of civic engagement at the media interface of the internet which projects common interests and topics.

7. Conclusion

Internet interface and users-generated media give rise to new forms of subtitling which need to be studied from different perspectives than the linguistic one. Scholarly research into the range of motivations veiled under the translator's linguistic choices has increasingly been pushed towards the core of cultural/ideological studies rather than technical/linguistic considerations.

Audiovisual media and its subtitles seem to play a great role in the re-realization of political and cultural concepts, such as challenging dominant political concepts and societal stereotypes as discussed in this paper. The analysis has also proved that subtitles can greatly contribute to perpetuating

new reality and framing rigid stereotypes into new opposing ones. It has become clear that non-professional subtitlers seem to add a particular vision, whether consciously or unconsciously, conceived through their convictions.

It can also be claimed that non-professional subtitlers of new users-generated media seem to subtly contribute to the political and cultural construct of the societies. They are more of active intercultural mediators – with knowledge of two languages – who actively shape their ideological discourse to another culture. Following this line of thought, more focus on socio-cultural implications of the linguistic choices of non-professional subtitles better interpret the reasons behind these ideologically motivated changes.

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