Film Translation: Dubbing vs. Subtitling

-Dubbing as a form of domestication
Subtitling as a form of foreignisation
Domestication vs foreignisation

- Whether domesticating or foreignizing in its approach, any form of audiovisual translation ultimately plays a unique role in developing both national identities and national stereotypes.
- The transmission of cultural values in screen translation has received VERY LITTLE ATTENTION in the literature and remains one of the most pressing areas of research in translation studies.
- Mona Baker and Braño Hochel (1997: 76)
Types of film translation

- There are two major types of film translation: dubbing and subtitling; each of them interferes with the original text to a different extent.
- On the one hand, DUBBING is known to be “The method that modifies the source text to a large extent” and thus makes it familiar to the target audience through domestication.
- It is the method in which "the foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth and movements of the actor in the film“ e.g: the dubbing of American or Korean movies into Bahasa Indonesia.
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Domestication is here understood—after Lawrence Venuti—as "translating in a fluent, 'invisible' style in order to minimize THE FOREIGNNESS of the target text" (Munday 2001: 146). The result is that all foreign elements are assimilated into the dominant target culture, thus “Removing`” the target audience of crucial characteristics of the source culture.
On the other hand, subtitling

- On the other hand, subtitling, i.e. Supplying A translation of the spoken source language dialogue into the target language in the form of synchronized captions, usually at the bottom of the screen,

- It is the form that alters/changes the source text to the least possible extent and enables the target audience to experience THE FOREIGN and be aware of its 'FOREIGNNESS' at all times.
Interlingual and open

- Film subtitling is characterized as: INTERLINGUAL AND OPEN, which means that SL linguistic material (speech, other linguistic material) is transformed into TL subtitles.
- According to Shochat and Stam (1985:41), "the interlingual film experience is perceptually "BIFURCATED": we hear another's language while we read our own."
Classification Of Countries
By Translation Modes They Employ

- First, there are the source-language countries, which in the contemporary world means English-speaking countries such as the United States or the United Kingdom, where hardly any films are imported.
- The foreign ones tend to be subtitled rather than dubbed. In Britain, film translation does not appear to be a significant issue as the great majority of imported films are American and require no translation.
Second, there are the dubbing countries, and this group comprises mainly French-, Italian- German-, and Spanish-speaking countries (sometimes referred to as the FIGS group), both in and outside Europe.

In these countries the overwhelming majority of films undergo the process of dubbing. This is mostly due to historical reasons since "in the 1930s dubbing became the preferred mode of film translation in the world's big-market speech communities" (Gottlieb 1997: 310).
The notable France’s policy

- There are several factors that contributed to the fact that France decided to adopt dubbing when it comes to translating foreign films.
- First, "France always felt it had a cultural mission within the film art form" (Danan 1991: 610). The French seem to be one of the few nations deeply concerned about THE PURITY OF THEIR CULTURE and they strive to protect it from any foreign (read: mostly American) influence.
Second, "standardised French was (...) historically a successful instrument of political and cultural centralisation" (Danan 1991: 612).

Furthermore, many French speakers believe that their language is superior, and some French speakers appear to be truly convinced that it has remained the lingua franca; at least that seemed to be true some years ago. This view still persists in the official circles, which is reflected in how the Académie Française perceives its role now.
This policy is in an attempt to keep the supremacy of the national language as the expression of cultural, political and economic power.

Also in Germany and Italy, governments adopted regulations promoting or even enforcing dubbing as the mode of film translation. In Spain, between 1936 and 1975 showing films in a foreign language was officially banned "because of the evil effects that film release can produce on society"
Thanks For Your Attention.