

Audiovisual translation in China: A dialogue between Yves Gambier and Haina Jin

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Abstract

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This dialogue was conducted between Yves Gambier and Haina Jin in April and November 2017, and April 2018 in Beijing, China, in order to give a panoramic view of audiovisual translation in China today, the history of which dates back to the silent film era. Audiovisual translation has played an important role in cross-cultural communication, industrial development and social integration in China. Vibrant audiovisual translation activities can be seen in three main directions: translating foreign audiovisual products into Chinese, translating Chinese audiovisual products into foreign languages and audiovisual translation into ethnic minority languages in China. In this dialogue, the three main translation directions, the status of translators, the role of associations, standards, education and training, as well as further development of audiovisual translation in China will be discussed.

Key words: audiovisual translation, China, directions, policies, modes, AVT development

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Dialogue begins...

Yves Gambier (YG): In the last 20-30 years, audiovisual translation has come into its own as a recognised form of translation. What is the status of audiovisual translation in China?

Haina Jin (HJ): Audiovisual translation in China has a long history of practice dating back to the silent film era. It has long been recognised as a form of translation and has played an important role in cross-cultural communication, industrial development and social integration in China. Audiovisual translation in China has three main directions. One is to translate foreign audiovisual products into Chinese, to be shown in cinemas, television and online channels. This direction has the longest history of practice, appearing soon after the import of foreign films in China at the end of the 19th century. A review of foreign films in 1897 published in *The Game Newspaper* showed the existence of a Chinese interpreter for screening American films (Tianhua Chayuan guan waiyang xifa guishu suojian, 1897). The translated foreign film and television has exerted great impact on Chinese society and Chinese culture since then.

The second direction is to translate Chinese film and television into foreign languages. Like in the literature circle, Chinese filmmakers or film companies tend to translate their films into English or other languages to attract international audiences. In the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese film companies were already adding bilingual intertitles into silent films, usually in Chinese and English, to make profits in the international market and change the stereotypes of China and Chinese people portrayed in Western films. In recent years, China began to implement several audiovisual translation projects at national level, including the Sino-Africa Film and Television Cooperation Project in 2012, the Contemporary Works Translation Project in 2013 and the Silk Road Film and Television Bridge Project in 2014, which are patronised by the state. Sponsored by these projects, a great number of Chinese films, television dramas, documentaries and cartoons are translated and dubbed into over 20 languages, including Swahili, Hausa and Russian, as a way of demonstrating Chinese culture and values to international audiences and reshaping China's image. In these state-patronised projects, English is not the dominant language for the translation of Chinese film and television products. Instead, a number of languages of the Belt and Road countries are used in response to China's Belt and Road Initiative.

The third direction is to translate audiovisual products into ethnic minority languages in China. There are 56 ethnic groups in China, 55 of which are ethnic minorities, in addition to the Han majority. The Han population is 1.34 billion and represents about 91.51% of China's total population. The population of ethnic minority groups is 133,792,200 according to the Sixth Population Census of the People's Republic of China, which represents 8.49% of the population of mainland China (Feng, Cui, Zhang & Ye, 2012). Most of the ethnic groups speak one language, with a few speaking two or even more languages. Among the 56 ethnic groups, Han, Hui and Man use Mandarin Chinese and 53 ethnic groups speak their own languages. Linguists from China Science Academy estimate that 129 languages are currently in use in China (Sun, Hu & Huang, 2007). To achieve ideological, educational

and social purposes and meet the entertainment needs of ethnic minorities, China has been translating audiovisual products into ethnic minority languages such as Mongolian and Tibetan since the 1950s. At present, there are 11 state-sponsored audiovisual translation centres which specialise in translating and dubbing Chinese films into 38 dialects of 17 ethnic minority languages. For example, the Xinjiang Audiovisual Translation Centre for Minority Languages translates and dubs films into Uygur and Kazakh, and the Qinghai Audiovisual Translation Centre for Minority Languages takes dialects of Tibetan, i.e. Khams Tibetan and Amdo Tibetan, as target languages. In recent years, around 800 to 1,000 Chinese films were dubbed into minority languages each year.

YG: I am glad to know the status of audiovisual translation in China is quite vibrant. What is China's audiovisual translation policy today?

HJ: In fact, China has different audiovisual translation policies affecting different directions of audiovisual translation practices. First, in the direction of translating foreign audiovisual products, China has different policies regarding theatrical films, cinema and television products shown on television channels compared with audiovisual products shown on the internet. Hollywood films used to be very popular in China before 1949. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, most Western films, especially Hollywood films, were publicly banned until the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976. It was not until 1994 that the Chinese government allowed foreign films to be shown in Chinese cinemas on a revenue-sharing basis. The policy for selecting revenue-sharing films was that the films should "basically reflect the finest global cultural achievements and represent the latest artistic and technological accomplishments in contemporary world cinema" (Ministry of Radio and Television of the People's Republic of China, 1994). Between 1994 and 2002, the quota was 10 films per year; in 2002, as China prepared to enter the World Trade Organization, the quota was increased to 20 films per year, and in 2012, it rose again to 34 films annually, 14 of which were to be screened in 3D or IMAX formats (The People's Republic of China and the United States of America, 2012). Apart from the revenue-sharing films, a number of foreign films can be shown in Chinese cinemas as buyout films. Chinese distribution companies, usually China Film Group Corporation or Huaxia Film Company, can negotiate a fixed price with an international film producer for local rights; after these are cleared the Chinese distributor gets to keep all the revenues. The quota for buyout films is slightly flexible, but still quite limited. For example, in 2014, 33 foreign films, in 2015, 28 foreign films, and in 2016, 51 foreign films were shown in Chinese cinemas as flat-fee films. For foreign films in cinema, the translation is assigned to the four state-owned film translation and production¹ studios: Shanghai Film Translation and Production Studio, August First Film Studio, Changchun Translation and Production Studio, and China Film Group Corporation. The work is divided relatively equally among them. Apart from films screened in theatre, there are foreign films and television dramas shown on television channels and the internet channels. Films shown on television are mostly dubbed, while the majority of films shown on the internet channels are subtitled. For example, the movie channel of China Central Television, the national television broadcaster of China, imported about 400 foreign films every year since its establishment in 1996 and around 1,000 foreign films were imported through internet channels

such as Youku, Sohu, Tencent or Iqiyi yearly since the booming of the online video platforms in the beginning of the 21st century. The translation for television and online channels is not strictly limited to the four studios and is often subcontracted to private translation or post-production companies. Some video websites such as Iqiyi, Youku and Sohu use fansubbing groups to translate the foreign television products they import.

As for the translation of Chinese films into foreign languages, the general policies are encouraging. As stated in *Film Industry Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China* (2016), the state supports the translation of outstanding Chinese films into foreign languages and will use diplomatic, cultural and educational resources to promote Chinese films overseas.

Chinese film is seen by the state as an important medium to convey Chinese culture, values and the achievements of contemporary China. The state-patronised projects tend to sponsor the translation of films and television products which were recently produced, and to reflect the mainstream values of Chinese society. China has become a major audiovisual production country. In 2016, 772 feature films, 334 television dramas in 14,912 episodes, 120,000 minutes of television cartoons and over 10,000 hours of television documentaries were produced (Zhang, 2017).

As for the translation of audiovisual products into minority languages, the policy is to take it as a public welfare undertaking. The Film Bureau of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China (SAPPRFT) makes annual plans for film translation for ethnic minorities and chooses about 60 feature films and 20 educational films from the list created for public welfare rural screening. After films are selected by the Film Bureau, the 11 audiovisual translation centres for minority languages can select the films for dubbing according to the needs of the local audience and advice from local film companies and screening units. Due to copyright reasons, most of the films provided for minority dubbing are Chinese films, mainly feature films and educational films. In recent years, an interesting phenomenon has taken place: some ethnic groups in China share the same languages with neighbouring countries, such as Korean with South Korea and North Korea, Mongolian with Mongolia, Dai with Laos and Thailand. Therefore, more and more Chinese films dubbed into minority languages have also been shown in neighbouring countries.

YG: That is very interesting. Audiovisual translation here has transformed from a domestic tool for communication into an international communication phenomenon. What about audiovisual translators in China? Are they visible to society? What is their social status?

HJ: Most of the audiovisual translators in China are backstage heroes, as in the rest of the world, although there was a time in the 1980s and early 1990s where dubbing actors and actresses were household names and celebrities. With the popularity of subtitled films, dubbing actors do not enjoy such fame anymore. As for translators, it is hard for a good audiovisual translator to be remembered, but it is easy for him/her to receive criticism for controversial translations. Audiovisual translators

in China have different working conditions: they can be full-time or part-time translators, or amateurs in fansubbing groups. The number of full-time audiovisual translators is very low and they are mainly employed by the state-owned audiovisual translation studios or centres. In recent years, the state-owned audiovisual translation studios or centres have also hired freelance translators or translation companies. Many audiovisual translation practitioners are part-time or freelance translators, who can be teachers or students in universities, staff in a film company, etc. With the popularity of the internet at the beginning of the 21st century, ordinary viewers now have increasing access to foreign audiovisual products at home through various channels and have tools to create and disseminate their translations easily online. Unsatisfied with the slow import and translation speeds, limited choices of audiovisual products and censorship in the official channels, fans began to translate films, television dramas or cartoons they love and to disseminate their translated works online. The activities of fansubbers reached a peak around 2014, followed by a shutdown of YYeTs and shooter websites¹¹ by the Chinese authorities due to copyright infringement. Though deviating from established audiovisual translation conventions, fansubbing groups won the hearts of Chinese viewers with their daring ways of translation and they are often portrayed as heroes of cross-cultural communication.

YG: I notice that a lot of translators who translate Chinese film or television products into foreign languages are Chinese. What are the reasons for this?

HJ: It is common for translators to translate into their mother tongue. However, many translators who are engaged in translating Chinese films and television products into foreign languages are Chinese, as you say. I think there are several reasons for that. First, it is estimated that the foreign language learners in China exceeded 300 million (Li, 2010). With the large number of foreign language learners, China tends to have more bilingual translators who can translate Chinese audiovisual products. Second, it is much more expensive to hire foreign translators than Chinese translators for the audiovisual companies. Third, Chinese people are very proud of their works and fond of sharing them with the rest of the world. Chinese film companies and Chinese translators think it is their mission to translate Chinese films into foreign languages so that Chinese culture and values will be better understood. The same is true for Chinese literature. Most translators of Chinese literature are Chinese. There are foreign Chinese audiovisual translators, such as Linda Jaivin, Tony Ryan, etc. Linda Jaivin is an Australian sinologist and novelist who has translated dozens of high-profile Chinese films since the 1980s, such as Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine* (Hsu & Chen, 1993), Zhang Yimou's *Hero* (Zhang & Zhang, 2002) and Wong Kar Wai's *The Grandmaster* (Ng & Wang, 2013). Good film translators like her are very rare and not affordable for most film and television production or distribution companies. It is more realistic for Chinese film and television companies to use Chinese translators to translate Chinese audiovisual products into foreign languages, who will remain as the main force for translating Chinese audiovisual products for the international market for a long time. There are certain disadvantages in employing Chinese translators to work into foreign languages, such as the use of Chinglish and the recurrence of literal translation. The translation

by Chinese translators may sound unnatural to native speakers and cause communication barriers. An ideal way would be a collaboration between Chinese translators and international translators.

YG: In Europe, there are several associations for audiovisual translation researchers and professionals, such as the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST), the Norwegian Association of Audiovisual Translators (NAVIO), and the French Association of Audiovisual Translators/Adaptors (ATAA). They play a role in uniting audiovisual translators, protecting rights of audiovisual translators and facilitating the research in, and practice of, audiovisual translation. Is there any similar association in China?

HJ: Audiovisual translation is an interdisciplinary field. In China, there is a national translation association named Translators Association of China (TAC). The largest audiovisual association is China Alliance of Radio, Film and Television (CARFT).ⁱⁱⁱ In 2017, the Communication University of China initiated the Audiovisual Translation and Dissemination Council, China (AVTD China) under CARFT with over 20 major audiovisual translation and dissemination institutions including four state-owned dubbing studios, China Radio International, Startimes^{iv} and audiovisual translation centres for minority languages. AVTD China was approved by CARFT and SAPPRT at the end of 2017. Its aim is to promote research and practice in audiovisual translation and its dissemination, to draw up audiovisual translation standards, to protect audiovisual translation professionals' rights, to enhance the awareness of audiovisual translation in China, and to improve media accessibility. Apart from the functions of an association, I think support from the state is also very important for the development of audiovisual translation in China.

YG: In 1995, the Council of Europe planned to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the cinema. I wrote to them to suggest that they hosted a forum on audiovisual translation and they agreed. After that first international forum, held in Strasbourg in June 1995, we have had seminars or sessions in conferences on audiovisual translation every year. However, in the international conferences on audiovisual translation such as *Media for All* and *Languages and the Media*, it is very rare to see Chinese scholars. A conference named *Dubbing and Subtitling in a World Context* took place at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2007. What happened after 2007? Do you have regular audiovisual translation conferences and workshops in China? How do you share your experience worldwide?

HJ: Films and television dramas are seen by the Chinese authorities as important means to reshape the image of China and to convey Chinese culture and values. Since 2015, the Ministry of Culture (MOC) and State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China (SAPPRT) have been organising the Sino-Foreign Audiovisual Translation and Dubbing Cooperation Workshop (SFATD) in collaboration with the Beijing Film Festival (in April) and the Shanghai Film Festival (in June). Every year, about 60 to 70 international experts in the field of translation, film and television studies and industries from different countries are invited to attend the workshops, exchange views with Chinese colleagues, and visit film markets and representative

Chinese film and television companies, with the aim to facilitate cooperation between China and overseas countries in both audiovisual translation research and practice. SFATD workshops certainly have given a boost to the development of audiovisual translation in China. Besides, Chinese scholars have better international vision and funding support today than in the past. More and more Chinese scholars in the audiovisual translation field are participating in international conferences and having exchanges with international colleagues in the future.

YG: Does mainland China have exchanges or contacts with the film industry in Hong Kong?

HJ: The film industry in Hong Kong has produced enormously popular films, especially kung fu films. From 1994 to 2003, Hong Kong Films were shown in Chinese cinemas as revenue sharing or buyout films within the import quota. In 2003, the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (*CEPA*) (2003) was signed between the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. Chinese language motion pictures produced in Hong Kong could now be shown in the mainland without any restriction on import quotas (The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2003). Most of the films produced in Hong Kong are Cantonese films and when they are screened in cinemas in the mainland, they are often dubbed into Mandarin Chinese. After the signing of *CEPA*, the co-production policy between Hong Kong and the mainland is also much more relaxed in terms of staff employment and ratio of investment. The number of co-productions increased from about 10 before 2003 to 54 in 2016, while the total number of film productions in Hong Kong was 68 in 2016 (Hong Kong Trade Development Council, 2017). It means that most of Hong Kong films today are co-productions between Hong Kong and the mainland.

YG: Are there any national standards or procedures for audiovisual translation in China?

HJ: There are no unified national audiovisual translation standards or procedures in China yet. Sometimes, one will see audiovisual products in monolingual subtitles, sometimes in bilingual subtitles and sometimes without subtitles in China. Sometimes subtitles appear in one line on the screen, sometimes in two lines. The colour, size and font of the characters vary according to the different companies, though audiovisual translation standards and procedures do exist in different formats, as created by different institutions. For instance, the Shanghai Film Translation and Production Studio has formed a complete translation procedure in 10 steps to translate a film. Chen Xuyi, the former head of the studio, summarised the requirements for translators and dubbers on the 30th anniversary of the establishment of Shanghai Film Translation and Production Studio as follows: "The script translation has to reflect the flavour, and the dubbing performance has to convey the spirit." (Sun, 2008). Those words are still today inscribed on the wall of the Shanghai Film Translation and Production Studio as the company motto. On the other hand, all the minority language audiovisual translation centres have a uniform procedure for their audiovisual translation process, which is similar to the one used by the Shanghai Film Translation and Production Studio. Other institutions also have their own rules. For example, Huace,

one of the largest private film and television production companies in China, has its own standard regarding colour, size, font, number and position of the characters for each line as well as the technical requirements for the subtitling format of a video. Maybe with the establishment of AVTD China, national audiovisual translation standards will be formed to ensure translation quality.

YG: There are different audiovisual translation modes such as subtitling, dubbing and voiceover. Countries have different preferences for different audiovisual translation modes. In northern Europe, subtitling tends to be the most popular method, while in France and Germany it is dubbing, and in Russia and Poland audiences seem to prefer voice-over. What is the most preferred audiovisual translation mode in China?

HJ: Dubbing was the preferred way of translating foreign films or television dramas from 1949 to 1994. During that period, most foreign films or television dramas were dubbed into Chinese and some of the dubbed lines became catchy phrases, such as “Let Comrade Lenin go first” and “We will have bread and we will have milk” from *Lenin in 1918* (Filipov, Aron & Simkov, 1939) and “Yes, sir.” from *Garrison’s Gorillas* (Caffey, Fenady, Seligman & Mirell, 1967-1968). The main reasons for dubbing as the dominant way during that period of time were the low literacy rate and poor English knowledge of the majority viewers. After 1978, English became a compulsory subject in Chinese middle schools. Since the end of the 1980s, college students have been required by most universities to pass College English Test 4^V in order to graduate. More and more people understand English. After China began to screen Hollywood blockbusters, many people, especially young people, tended to watch the subtitled version in the cinema instead of the dubbed version, in order to feel the original flavour of the films and even use it as a way to learn English. Nowadays, when foreign films are imported into China, they are often translated into two versions: a subtitled version and a dubbed version. It is up to the cinemas to decide whether a dubbed version or a subtitled version will be screened. In order to make more revenues, cinemas will screen what viewers like to watch. As a result, the percentage showing a dubbed version of a foreign film is much lower nowadays, except for animated films. The dubbed version is often watched by children or people who cannot speak English. For cinema distribution, subtitling has become a more popular way of translating foreign films.

Dubbing remains the dominant audiovisual translation method for foreign films and television dramas on television channels, and subtitling is the dominant audiovisual translation method for translating foreign audiovisual products on online streaming platforms. The reasons could be that television has to cater for the whole population, while most of the viewers of online streaming of foreign audiovisual products have a fairly high level of education and a certain command of English. Time and costs must be considered, too. Online streaming platforms broadcast more foreign audiovisual translation products, and some programs are shown nearly simultaneously, such as *Saturday Night Live*. Subtitling does provide a fast and economical solution for online streaming platforms.

As to the translation of Chinese films, subtitling is the dominant method. Most film companies are aware of the international market. When Chinese films are shown in China, bilingual subtitles are already added. However, under the state-sponsored projects initiated after 2012, most films and television products are dubbed instead of subtitled. For example, for the Tanzania market, the four Chinese television dramas *The Beautiful Daughter-in-law* (Sun, 009), *Jin Tailang's Happy Life* (Liu, 2011), *Father's Wish* (Liu & Liu, 2011) and *Mother's Beautiful Days* (Cai & Dou, 2013) were dubbed into Swahili and broadcast by Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), which is the national television network for Tanzania. These four Chinese television dramas are all about modern urban Chinese life. The reasons for using dubbing instead of subtitling for Tanzania include literacy rates, the size of television screening, and the habit of communal watching in villages. The purpose of choosing TV dramas about urban life in contemporary China was to break the stereotypes of China presented in kung fu films and ancient costume dramas, while also increasing the international understanding of modern China and contemporary Chinese people's life. *The Beautiful Daughter-in-law* was a great success. When I did an audiovisual translation training course for Azam television in Tanzania in 2016, I realised that Tanzanian people called Chinese people they met by the names of the characters in *The Beautiful Daughter-in-law*. They were really interested in the modern life of China and wanted to see it for themselves.

As to audiovisual translation for ethnic minorities, dubbing is used by the audiovisual translation centres as the main audiovisual translation mode. Dubbed audiovisual products can be understood by a large majority of ethnic minority viewers. Besides, dubbing here is also considered an important way to preserve and disseminate minority languages. One thing worth mentioning is that subtitles are not added to the Chinese films dubbed into minority languages. The reason may be that there are no written forms for some minority languages. However, only relying on dubbing can sometimes create difficulties. For instance, when written information such as names and places appear on the screen, the dubbing actors have to read the information. Sometimes, their pronunciations of the names and places are mixed with the soundtrack of the dialogues, which will cause misunderstanding and confusion for the audience. Hopefully, in the future, subtitles for minority languages can be added in dubbed films, which may even help ethnic minority audiences improve their command of their languages.

YG: Audiovisual translators require a special set of skills and knowledge. MA training programmes with audiovisual translation are provided by a number of universities in Europe, such as University College London, University of Leeds in the UK, and Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in Spain. Are there audiovisual translation programs provided in universities in China?

HJ: We do have audiovisual translation education in China. The Communication University of China (CUC) is a pioneer in this field. In 2003, CUC started a BA programme in audiovisual translation, an MA programme in 2011, and a PhD programme in 2016. Until now, it remains the only university in China which offers degree programmes in audiovisual translation. But we also see other universities, such as the Shanghai Foreign Studies University and the Beijing Foreign Studies

University offering courses in audiovisual translation. Apart from university education, audiovisual translation training has been provided annually by China Film Group Corporation to minority language audiovisual translation centres since 2013.

YG: We have talked about different directions and forms of audiovisual translation. What do you think are the weaknesses of audiovisual translation in China today?

HJ: China has many strong points in audiovisual translation, such as establishing audiovisual translation centres for ethnic minority groups and the use of audiovisual translation as a way to preserve language diversity, but there are also weak points in audiovisual translation, especially in the field of media accessibility. China has a large population of deaf and blind people. According to China Disabled Persons' Federation, at the end of 2010, the population of visually impaired people was 12.63 million and the population of the hearing-impaired reached 20.54 million (China Disabled Persons' Federation, 2012). Despite the large population (about 33.17 million) in need of accessibility, the current development of media access services is not satisfactory. There are occasional audio description services for films provided by cinemas and libraries in large cities such as Shanghai and Beijing and occasional sign language translation services on television for people with hearing impairments. However, there are no laws or regulations for film, television and internet media providers compelling them to make their audiovisual contents accessible to people with visual or hearing impairments. I am aware that media companies are required to make their audiovisual content accessible to people with visual or hearing impairments to a certain degree in Europe and the United States. China still has a long way to go in the field of media accessibility so that disabled persons can enjoy media products, too.

Apart from media accessibility, game localisation has been almost ignored by trainers and researchers in China. Chinese game players enjoy playing foreign video games and Chinese game companies also seek to expand into overseas markets. Research on game localisation has great theoretical and practical significance.

YG: For a number of years, accessibility was a legal and technical issue in the European Union (28 countries). It took Europe many years to legalise accessible audiovisual media policies and ensure audiovisual products a free and fair distribution. The situation is going to improve in China step by step. With the development of language technologies, new modes are introduced such as live subtitling, audio description and audio-subtitling (thanks to text-to-speech software). Today we have better tools to achieve media accessibility. And as for the game industry, it is already greater than the film industry in terms of turnover and social impact. With time, it will attract more and more academic attention.

HJ: With the development of the internet and digitisation technologies, significant changes have been witnessed in the audiovisual translation field. What do you think are new opportunities and challenges in the audiovisual translation field?

YG: Digitisation has caused changes in the production of media products, such as script writing, production of sounds, pictures and special stunts; but also, in the distribution and projection of audiovisual products as well as in film archiving and restoration. Those changes have brought new demands and new formats to audiovisual translation. Video-streaming, television on demand and podcasting services all require audiovisual translators and service providers to offer a more versatile range of services.

HJ: Machine translation and automation technologies also have made great progress. Recently, a Chinese documentary named *China Reinvents Itself* (Liu & Xu, 2018) is claimed to be the first documentary in the world using artificial voices. The voice was cloned from the late famous voice artist Li Yi. Even acquaintances of Li Yi could not tell the difference between the artificial voice and Li Yi's own voice.

YG: Development in technologies also raises new issues for audiovisual translation, such as copyright issues. For instance, who owns the rights for synthesised voices? For subtitling, the combination of different software (compression + speech recognition + translation software) can speed up the production. It can be more economical and has a faster turnout. Audiovisual translators also need to cope with the changes by adapting to new e-tools and developing post-editing skills.

In the past 20 years, the amount of publications on audiovisual translation has increased significantly worldwide. However, too many studies are still limited to the discussion on linguistic and cultural problems. A large number of important audiovisual issues have not been well researched, such as the interplay between images, sounds and language, and the complexity of audiovisual translation. Besides, research on subtitling has been much more common than on dubbing, which may be explained by the efforts to transcribe the dubbed voice into words first. However, new technologies may help to change the situation.

HJ: In China, the number of academic articles on audiovisual translation has increased dramatically since the 1990s (Liu, Fan & Wang, 2011). A number of books on audiovisual translation have been published by Chinese scholars (Ma, 2005; Jin, 2013; Tan, 2014; Xiao, 2016). Academic research on audiovisual translation in China has discussed various audiovisual translation topics, such as translation strategies and translation history. Translation theories such as relevance theory or the Skopos theory have been applied in the research of audiovisual translation in China. However, most of the research focuses on micro-level discussions. Macro-level topics such as language policy and social functions of audiovisual translation need to be explored. Moreover, most of the articles were written in Chinese and the dialogues between audiovisual translation research in China and the international community are rather rare. Hopefully, Chinese scholars will participate more and more in the international discussion

on audiovisual translation in the future. In your opinion, what can bring new perspectives in audiovisual translation?

YG: Research in translation studies and media studies can bring new perspectives for audiovisual translation. For example, corpus-based translation studies can provide a good way to analyse audiovisual translation, such as the style of a translator or a genre of films. Cognitive research methods such as pupillometry (measure of the pupil dilatation) and eye tracking are useful tools for analysing viewers' reactions in a more scientific and accurate way. Optical pauses, pace of reading, line breaks, presentation time, re-reading patterns, degrees and types of attention (active/passive, global/selective, linear/partial), depending on whether the focus is on the image (iconic attention), on the plot (narrative attention) or on the dialogue (verbal attention), can all be analysed. Besides, in an era of drastic social, technological and environmental changes, oral history may shed new lights on audiovisual translation research, with interviews of audiovisual translation practitioners including translators, dubbing directors, dubbing actors, sound engineers and researchers. Their memories and perceptions can provide valuable oral resources for us and future generations to better understand the complexity and development of audiovisual translation.

Bio notes

Haina Jin is Associate Professor in audiovisual translation at the Communication University of China. Her research interests include audiovisual translation and translation history. She is the principal investigator of two Chinese national social science funded projects on audiovisual translation and has published a monograph entitled *Zhongguo wusheng dianying fanyi yanjiu (1905-1949)* [Towards a history of translating Chinese films (1905-1949)]. She is also the translator of the book *Film and Television Culture in China*.

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ⁱ In China, the term *Yizhi* (translation and production) is used to refer to subtitling, dubbing and post-production. The four studios are often called four *Yizhi* studios.

ⁱⁱ YYeTs (人人影视) is the largest and most popular fansubbing group in China and Shooter(射手网) is a popular subtitle portal.

ⁱⁱⁱ More information can be found in the website of CARFT: <http://www.carft.cn/>

^{iv} Startimes is a Chinese multinational media company with strong presence in Africa and a leading digital TV-operator across Sub-Saharan Africa. By November 2017, Startimes operated in 17 countries and served 10 million subscribers by providing affordable TV products (Chinese Embassy to Kenya, 2017). Startimes has an in-house team to dub Chinese films and TV products into five African languages for its channels in Africa.

^v College English Test(CET) is a national English as a foreign language test for college students in China. It has two levels CET4 and CET6, which requires a proficiency of 4500 and 6500 English words respectively.