

Translating non-native varieties of English in animated films.

The Italian dubbing of *Madagascar 3: Europe's most wanted*

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Abstract

This paper will explore the representation of non-native varieties of English in Dreamwork's animated film Madagascar 3 (2012) and will investigate the strategies adopted by Italian dubbing professionals. Language variation is often exploited in films and in animated films in particular to provide characterisation, to construct identities and to trigger humour. Linguistic varieties and accents play an important part in defining characters and are often conveyors of stereotypes (Lippi-Green, 1997). In Italian dubbing the translational norm seems to be that of levelling out different varieties by using standard Italian (Chiaro, 2008). However, comedies and animated films constitute an exception to this homogenizing norm, as they convey linguistic variation to some extent. In particular, although Italian dubbing professionals usually refrain from using Italian regional dialects or regional accents in order to avoid unintended effects and stereotyping, they sometimes resort to ethnolects, foreign-accented Italian, or Italian regional dialects, thus adding a further layer of meaning to the dubbed version. By analysing the representation of the non-Anglo-American characters and their dubbing into Italian in Madagascar 3, the paper seeks to ascertain whether non-native varieties of English or ethnolects (Salmon, 2000) are reduced, neutralised or conveyed and highlighted in the Italian dubbed version. The paper will also draw on interviews with dubbing professionals in order to understand their approach to language variation and to multilingualism in films, as well as their role in shaping the representation of 'otherness' in the Italian dubbed versions.

Keywords: Language variation; ethnolects; animated films; dubbing; dubbing professionals

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyse the representation and recreation of non-native varieties of English in Dreamworks' animated film *Madagascar 3: Europe's*

most wanted (2012) and to investigate the strategies adopted in the Italian dubbed version. Varieties of English can be of different types, i.e., geographical, social, temporal or diachronic, standard or non-standard as well as ethnic. The concept of ethnolect has been put forward to refer to “ethnic varieties of the majority language”, that is, varieties which signal that the speaker was born in a country but belongs to a specific ethnic group and has a different native language (Salmon, 2000: 68-69) or that the speaker was not born in the country. The paper will focus primarily on the linguistic portrayal of foreign characters or characters belonging to specific ethnic groups, i.e., ethnolects. It will explore how characters who are non-native speakers of English are portrayed in this animated film and how their ‘otherness’ is rendered in dubbing, i.e., whether specific linguistic features used in the original version are reduced, neutralised, conveyed, highlighted or rewritten for the Italian audience. The film *Madagascar 3* has been chosen precisely because it is set in different countries (Monte Carlo and the United States) and portrays characters of various nationalities and ethnicities. The methodology adopted in this study combines a linguistic examination of the film dialogues with paratextual information, i.e., data gathered through personal interviews with *Madagascar*’s dubbing director and actor Massimiliano Alto and with other translators, dialogue writers, dubbing directors and dubbing actors that work on animated films in Italy. The following professionals were interviewed between 2015 and 2018: Massimiliano Alto (dubbing director and actor, musician), Elena Di Carlo (translator and adapter), Chiara Gioncardi (dubbing actress), Marco Guadagno (dubbing director and actor, adapter), Massimiliano Manfredi (dubbing director and actor, adapter), Marco Mete (dubbing director and actor, adapter), Roberto Morville (Creative Director, Disney Character Voices International, translator and adapter), Serena Paccagnella (translator, adapter and dubbing assistant), Alessandro Rossi (dubbing director and actor, adapter), Carlo Valli (dubbing director and actor, adapter). These interviews and observation of dubbing sessions provide insights into dubbing practices and help to understand the factors that impinge upon the final product. The analysis of the representation of non-native language varieties and dubbing strategies is thus based on repeated viewing of *Madagascar 3* in English and in Italian, a linguistic analysis of the transcription of the film dialogues and interviews with dubbing professionals.

2. Language variation in films and in Italian dubbing

Scriptwriters often use conventionalised linguistic features and traits, such as different language varieties, to supply information “to audiences about character and location” (Hodson, 2014: 7). As pointed out by several scholars, different types of language varieties and accents in films are adopted “as a quick way to build character and reaffirm stereotype” (Lippi-Green, 1997: 85), to provide a setting for

the story and also to trigger humour (see also Kozloff, 2000: 82; Hodson, 2014: 6-7).

When an audiovisual text is transposed into another language, for a different culture and audience, language variation or the presence of a third language (L3) is one of the most difficult and challenging features to deal with for screen translators (Chiaro, 2008; Corrius and Zabalbeascoa, 2011; Heiss, 2004). As pointed out by Chiaro, “a common strategy to deal with variation is simply not to deal with it and homogenize it into the standard, mainstream variety of the target language” (2008: 23) (see also Pavesi, 1994, 2005). The neutralisation of linguistic variation and the use of standard Italian can thus be considered the first and most common strategy in dealing with linguistic variation, in particular with native varieties of English. Since opting for a target language regional dialect may result in adding unwanted and different social connotations to a character, and as one-to-one equivalents across cultures do not exist, the translational norm in Italy is that of neutralising geographical variation. Moreover, in Italian dubbing there is a tendency to adopt a sociolinguistically, regionally unmarked Italian. Dubbing actors must display proper diction, perfect elocution and a neutral accent, devoid of any regional inflection. For this reason, the language of dubbing has been defined as “un italiano per tutte le stagioni” (Raffaelli, 1996), i.e. “an Italian for all seasons”. Professionals also perceive it as a language that nobody speaks (Alto, personal communication, 2016), a non-existent language (Morville, personal communication, 2016), a language that differs from real everyday Italian (A. Rossi, personal communication, 2017). The tendency to avoid regional pronunciation in Italian dubbing is also due to the fact that, as argued by creative director Morville, “il doppiaggio è come il montaggio: non deve attirare l’attenzione su di sé” (personal communication, 2017), that is, dubbing and film editing should pass unnoticed. This frequent absence of regional markers in the language of dubbing contrasts with their presence in Italian television and cinema products, where geographical varieties of Italian and sometimes even dialects can be heard (Pavesi, 2005: 28; Rossi, 2006: 293).

A second strategy to deal with variation is to resort to a target language regional dialect, chosen among a few recurrent ones. Several scholars (Pavesi, 1994, 2005; Chiaro, 2008; Parini, 2009, forthcoming; Rossi, 2006; Ferrari, 2010 among others) have highlighted that, although the norm in dubbing is to neutralise variation and to use standard Italian, thus homogenising the speech of the characters, a few stereotyped regiolects such as Sicilian, Neapolitan, Romanesco are sometimes used. These regional Italian dialects are usually exploited either in comedies for humorous purposes, to convey a comic flair to a character, or in mafia or gangster films with Italo-American characters, to represent stereotypical thugs or mobsters. As observed by Chiaro (2008: 15):

the clichéd variety of English spoken by Italo-Americans, so common in US screen products, is one of the screen varieties which is consistently

replaced with a form of Italian strongly marked with a Sicilian accent and syntactic structures typical of Sicilian. The negative stereotypes implied by such a choice are evident, but presumably opting for this preference does tend to be true to the original skopos.

The use of Italian with a Sicilian accent and regional lexis and syntax to dub Italo-American gangsters has thus become a dubbing stereotype, a convention. Alternatively, a Neapolitan accent might be used, as is the case for the popular American TV series *The Sopranos*, based on ethnic stereotypes, where the Italian American Mafia boss Tony Soprano is dubbed with a Neapolitan accent or dialect (Ferrari, 2010: 109).

Other cases in which the neutralising and homogenising norms are not applied and domestication is achieved through the use of Italian regional varieties are *My Fair Lady* (1964) and the American TV series *The Nanny* (1993-1999). In the dubbed version of *My Fair Lady* the protagonist's contrived Cockney variety is localised using "a non-existent Italian language" (Ranzato, 2010: 114), while in *The Nanny* Jewish American Fran Fine is turned into a woman from Southern Italy's Ciociaria (Ferrari, 2010). However, these seem to be exceptions to the norm, which continues to be the neutralisation of accents and varieties and the choice of a standard Italian, devoid of any regional inflection or trait.

Some animated films and TV series also exploit Italian regional dialects. For instance, in *The Aristocats* (1970) the stray cat Thomas O'Malley became 'Romeo er mejo der Colosseo', a cat speaking Romanesco dialect (Bruti, 2009), the Italian version of *The Simpsons* (1989-to date) is famous for its large use of Italian regional dialects (Barra, 2007; Fusari, 2007; Puddu and Viridis, 2014; Ferrari, 2010), and in the dubbed version of *Shark Tale* (2004), an animated film that makes reference to *The Godfather* (1972), Italo-American mobster shark Don Lino and his entourage speak with a strong Sicilian accent and use dialect words, while Sykes has a Neapolitan accent (Parini, forthcoming). Another recent animated film whose dubbed version makes constant use of several Italian regional dialects is *Gnomeo and Juliet* (2011), a film in which the story of the star-crossed lovers is linguistically reinterpreted and localised in terms of North vs South divide (Minutella, 2016; Bruti and Vignozzi, 2016).

Dubbing professionals confirm this association between regional accent, humour and comedy and state that they prefer not to use regional accents or Italian dialects. According to them a marked accent has a comic effect, the characters become funny and almost caricatures, therefore it is advisable to resort to it with caution (Galassi, 1994: 66-67; personal communications: Paccagnella, 2016; Alto, 2016; A. Rossi, 2017; Guadagno, 2016; Morville, 2016; Manfredi, 2018).

Animation, however, allows for more freedom and creativity compared to other film genres (Metz, personal communication, 2016; Gioncardi, personal communication, 2015). Dubbing directors and dubbing actors may thus decide, in rare cases, for humorous purposes, to recreate a regional accent, a marked regional

pronunciation or what dubbing professionals call “una sporcatura”, that is, a diction which is not perfectly neutral and is somehow ‘dirty’, betraying the origin of the speaker. Mete points out that when dubbing animation in the dubbing studio dubbing actors try to start from their own dialects and then look for “sporcature” in their pronunciation or “appoggiature” in their modulation of voice (personal communication, 2016). However, resorting to Italian dialects in animated films or comedies must be agreed with the client i.e., the dubbing supervisor or distributor of the film (personal communications: Guadagno, 2016; Morville, 2016; Alto, 2016; Manfredi, 2018; Valli, 2018). Moreover, scholars have observed that only a few characters are given a regional accent (Chiaro, 2008), otherwise the dialogues would become difficult to understand.

A third strategy to deal with linguistic variation, which seems to occur especially with characters who are marked as non-native speakers, is to retain, convey and perhaps emphasise foreign accents or ethnolects. This strategy seems to be chosen in comedies and animated films, again for humorous purposes. As argued by Heiss (2004: 211), “certain genres, such as comedies, for example, are in a certain sense perceived as being detached from reality and therefore offer more room for ‘unorthodox’ solutions in film translation.” Analysing a series of films dubbed into German and Italian, Heiss demonstrates that compensation strategies at the level of lexis, syntax and pronunciation are adopted to “characterise the various ways of speaking of the individual characters in a manner that makes them distinguishable from one another. [...] At a phonetic level it is possible to reproduce typical accents (for example, a German accent or various ethnic accents)” (Heiss, 2004: 111). This strategy is adopted in *Bend it like Beckham* and other multilingual films whose protagonists are Indian, where an Indian accent and non-standard grammar are resorted to in the dubbed version (Minutella, 2012), in the stereotyped foreign accents of the cats in Scat Cat’s band in *The Aristocats* (Bruti, 2009), in the foreign-accented Italian of Puss in Boots and other minor characters in the *Shrek* saga (Minutella, 2015).

It seems reasonable thus to hypothesise that another exception to the homogenising norm in dubbing – and perhaps a stylistic dubbing convention – might be that non-native varieties, foreign accents and ethnolects are connoted: “foreign-accented English in the original versions is often rendered with foreign-accented Italian in dubbing” (Minutella, 2012: 227). The following analysis of *Madagascar 3* will demonstrate that ethnolects or non-native varieties of English tend to be conveyed and reproduced also in the Italian dubbing of this animated film.

3. Non-native varieties of English in *Madagascar 3: the English and Italian versions*

In *Madagascar 3* it is possible to identify several instances of varieties of English, since the protagonists display features of American English, British English and Indian English. While most of the actors voicing the main characters (Alex the lion, Marty the zebra, Gloria the hippo and Melman the giraffe) are native speakers of these varieties, in the case of King Julien an Indian English accent was contrived and comically emphasised by humorist Sacha Baron Cohen. These pronunciation differences among native varieties of English are not conveyed in dubbing and they are all rendered in standard Italian. This confirms the “homogenizing norm” in Italian dubbing for geographical varieties of English (Chiaro, 2008). On the contrary, differences in the speech of these characters in Italian are in terms of voice quality or at a lexical level, in terms of register.

Instances of ethnolect or foreign-accented English, instead, are quite frequent and are conveyed in the Italian dub. In *Madagascar 3* the protagonists land in Europe, in Monte Carlo, and they are chased by the French police led by Animal Control Officer Captain Chantal Dubois – an evil, obsessed woman who wants to kill Alex the lion. The protagonists manage to escape by joining a group of circus animals – the Circus Zaragoza – and getting on their train. The European members of the Circus are Stefano (a supposedly Italian sea lion), the female leopard Gia (who speaks with a foreign accent which is supposed to sound Italian), the Siberian tiger Vitaly (who allegedly speaks with a strong Russian accent and uses some Russian words). The stereotyped foreign-accented English of these characters clearly has humorous purposes and does not pretend to be authentic. In the Italian dubbed version the ‘otherness’ of these characters is signalled by resorting to foreign-accented Italian, i.e., ethnolects are retained and at times emphasised. However, since in the English version Stefano and Gia speak a supposedly Italo-American variety, this unlikely Italian is turned into an unlikely Spanish in the dubbed version. The Russian and French identities are maintained and emphasised through stereotypical and contrived accents, pronunciation, intonation and lexical choices. These, together with some puns on Russian cultural references and the use of French songs, contribute to stressing ethnolects and to creating a comic effect. Non-native varieties are thus conveyed through hypercharacterisation (Parini, 2009: 163).

An example from Captain Chantal Dubois’s lines will illustrate this point. The French Animal Control Officer (voiced by American actress Frances McDormand, dubbed by Barbara Castracane) displays linguistic traits typical of French speakers: she has a strong French accent, intonation and stereotypical French pronunciation (French ‘r’, ‘th’ pronounced as /s/, /z/ or /v/), uses a few French words and expressions (*oui, monsieur, attention, Que-est-ce que c’est?*) and she sings the famous French song “*Non, je ne regrette rien*” in a comic scene in a hospital. Her French

linguistic identity is conveyed and emphasised in the Italian dub through phonetic traits:

Captain Chantal Dubois: <i>Attention!</i> I have found our lion! He is hiding with the circus!	<i>Attention!</i> Ho trovato il nostro leone! Si è nascosto dentro al circo.
Captain Chantal Dubois: Hello, kitty! So, you ran away with the circus. What a cliché.	Ciao, micio! E così sei scappato con il circo. Che banalità.

In the above examples DuBois has a marked French intonation, she pronounces the typical French ‘r’ as a voiced fricative, while the dental fricatives in ‘the’ and ‘with’ are rendered as /z/ or /v/ sounds. In the dubbed version an additional feature is the pronunciation of ‘c’ as /s/ in ‘circo’.

The Siberian tiger Vitaly (voiced by Bryan Cranston in English, dubbed by Fabrizio Pucci) in the English version has a Russian accent, uses a few easily recognisable Russian words (for instance, the word for ‘no’, *nyet*) and incorrect grammar. This linguistic characterisation is conveyed and emphasised in the Italian dub, which provides a hypercharacterisation, as shown by the following examples:

Vitaly: Absolut no outsiders. So wipe that smirn off your face and pop off!	Assolutamente niente estranei. Quindi leva tuo sorrisetto da faccia e sparisci.
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Here Vitaly is addressing Alex the lion, telling him that they cannot join the circus animals and get on their train to escape from the French police. “Absolut no outsiders” is grammatically incorrect. Moreover, Vitaly’s dialogic turn contains puns on Russian cultural references and English phrasal verbs: *Absolut* may refer to a brand of vodka (Absolut vodka), there is a wordplay based on the homophony between “smirn off” and *Smirnoff* (another brand of vodka) and a further pun based on the homophony between “pop off” and *Popov* (a common Russian surname, and a possible reference to a famous physician). The Italian version cannot retain and reproduce the cultural references but conveys humour by recreating Vitaly’s Eastern-European linguistic identity, reproducing a contrived Russian pronunciation and using non-standard grammar. In particular, Vitaly’s Italian displays syntactic errors typical of Russian learners of Italian such as the omission of articles or prepositions plus articles. Examples are: “leva tuo sorrisetto” rather than “leva il tuo sorrisetto” and “da faccia” rather than “dalla faccia”. In the utterance below Vitaly uses the Russian word *nyet* and an incorrect negative construction. In the Italian dubbed version *nyet* is retained (it is a loanword from Russian that has become part of the Italian language) and definite articles are omitted (“il proprietario del circo” becomes “proprietario di circo”):

Vitaly: <i>Nyet!</i> Circus owner no allow stowaways!	<i>Nyet!</i> Proprietario di circo non ammette clandestini!
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The Italian dubbed version clearly hypercharacterises Vitaly by emphasizing his ethnolect. It is an exaggerated and caricatural portrayal aimed at triggering humour. The character speaks with a fake Russian accent in both versions. As explained by dubbing director Alto, the Russian accent is feigned for two reasons: firstly, they had to maintain the effect of the original dialogues and respect the intentions of the producers, secondly, no language advisor was employed in dubbing since this would have considerably raised dubbing costs (Alto, personal communication, 2016).

The language of the sea lion Stefano (voiced by Canadian comedian Martin Short and dubbed by actor Stefano Benassi) in the English version is characterised by an unlikely Italian, or Italian-American: he has a strong, fake Italian accent and uses some Italian words or Italian-sounding words (*sì, scusi, stupido, numero uno, mamma mia, santa Maria*). His syntax is also often incorrect. The English of Stefano displays a series of peculiarities (at the level of pronunciation, intonation, lexis and prosody) which are typical of the variety spoken by Italian Americans and provide a caricatural portrayal of the Italian-American stereotype. Phonetic features such as ‘th’ pronounced as /d/ or /t/, silent *b* (Parini, 2009: 159), the doubling of consonants, the adding of a final vowel sound between words (Rossi, 2006: 326), and the insertion of some Italian words (*scusi, stupido, numero uno, mamma mia*) and some ungrammaticalities (*He fly*). This linguistic representation conforms to the stereotype of the Italian-American. The ‘norm’ in Italian dubbing to turn Italian-American into Sicilian or Neapolitan is not applied here, because Stefano does not comply with the stereotype associated with this language variety: he is not a gangster. Dubbing director Alto (personal communication, 2016) pointed out that it made no sense to have Stefano and Gia speak with a Sicilian accent because *Madagascar* is not *The Godfather*, and unfortunately this regiolect is stereotypically associated with the Mafia.

Moreover, Stefano does not live in the USA but in Europe and he is supposed to be Italian rather than Italo-American. However, his supposed ‘Italianness’ becomes problematic in translation, as the L3 (i.e., the third language spoken in the film) corresponds to the L2 (Italian, the target language). When the L3 in a film is the target language, in our case Italian, dubbing professionals usually replace it with another language, either French or Spanish. Since French (a French-accented English) is the language spoken by other characters due to the setting of the story, and since the circus animals are represented as being ‘foreign’ and not belonging to the same ethnic group, the dubbing director opted for Spanish instead. This choice is also coherent with the name of the circus (*Zaragoza*). The unlikely Italian accent or Italian-American spoken by Stefano is thus turned in the dubbed version into an equally unlikely and exaggerated Italian with a Spanish accent, interspersed with some Spanish and Spanish-sounding words (*escappò, escussame, el, no le guste*).

Stefano's speech in Italian dubbing contains both prosodic, lexical and morphosyntactic features, as can be seen from the examples below (marked features in bold). This linguistic characterisation immediately signals Stefano's foreign identity as being different from the New York zoo animals, though pronunciation features are not always consistent.

Stefano: Wow! Circus <i>americano!</i> You must all -a- be very famous.	Wow! È il circo americano! Dovete essere tutti molto famosi.
Stefano: I don't- a- tink Vitaly likes dat idea!	Oh, no! Credo che a Vitaly no le guste esta idea.
Stefano: I know. It is stupido idea.	Lo so, è un'idea stupida.
Stefano: He would not stop- a- pushing. And one fateful day... he push-a too far! [...] He fly too close to d sun... and he got burnt , literally.	Non smetteva di osare e in un giorno fatale, osò troppo. [...] Volò troppo vicino al sole e si bruciò. Letteralmente.
And he lost everything. His wife, she ran off with a musician, he lost his- a- dignity, his fame, his passion and his fur.	Stefano: E lui perse tutto. Sua moglie escapò con un mussico . Perse la dignità, la fama, la passione, y el su pelo .
Stefano: Si , that means- a- yes.	Eso es , che significa sì.

As can be noted from the above examples, in some cases the non-native traits are neutralised in the dubbed version, but this loss is compensated by introducing foreign features in other parts of the dialogue.

The female leopard Gia is another supposedly Italian-American character turned into Spanish in the dubbed version. In the original film Gia has a slight Italian accent and pronunciation, while in Italian she has a slight Spanish accent and uses some Spanish or Spanish-sounding words. As dubbing director Alto (personal communication, 2016) explains, the film director wanted this character to be voiced by an Italian actress and voice tests took place with Italian actresses, but in the end the American Jessica Chastain was chosen and she had to reproduce an Italian accent, which is inevitably non-native. Dubbing actress Chiara Gioncardi gives her voice to Gia in the Italian version and she contrives a Spanish accent which is clearly and deliberately not authentic. The aim of the dubbed version was to highlight the fact that she was foreign, without claiming any realism (Alto 2016). The following examples illustrate the linguistic characterisation of Gia in English and in Italian (foreign pronunciation or features in bold):

Gia: I admire (h) ow you have inspired d ese animals. [...] and what you said about the passion it was like poetry.	Te ammiro por come hai ispirato esti animali. [...] E lo che hai detto sulla passione era...pura poessia.
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In the English version, the pronunciation of the ‘r’, silent *b* and the pronunciation of ‘th’ as /d/ are phonetic features which provide a hint that Gia is foreign and presumably of Italian origins, while in the Italian dubbed version her foreignness is recreated by using *te* rather than *ti*, *por* rather than *per*, *esti* rather than *questi* (although *estos* would be the correct Spanish word) and *lo* rather than *quello*. In other utterances Gia also uses some prototypical Italo-American words such as *capisci?* and invented words such as *netta* (from ‘net’). In the dubbed version, *yo*, *estar en* and other Spanish words are used as markers of Spanish origins. Phonetic features typical of Spanish speakers of Italian are also emphasised. The examples below will illustrate the tendency to characterise and hypercharacterise Gia’s ethnic origin in dubbing:

Gia: You use a netta !	Wow! Tu ussi la rrete !
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Gia: Vitaly, I may not trust him either, but I am tired of sitting and standing and rolling over.	Vitaly, forse neanche yo me fido, però son stufa de estar seduta, estar en piedi e rotolar su un fianco.
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Gia: You can teach- a -me...Teach- a -me.	Tu me puoi insegnar...Insegn ame .
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As illustrated above, while on the whole in *Madagascar 3* geographical varieties of English (American English, British English, Indian English) are not conveyed in the Italian dubbed version but homogenised as standard Italian, non-native varieties of English or ethnolects (spoken by Captain Du Bois, Vitaly, Stefano and Gia) are conveyed by adopting non-native varieties of Italian where prosodic, lexical and syntactic features are emphasised. Italian-American is turned into a kind of Spanish-sounding Italian. This seems to be common practice in dubbing: ethnolects are retained for comic purposes. Adapter Carlo Valli (personal communication, 2018) explains that in the dubbed version the European characters were made to speak differently from the American protagonists since they are ‘foreigners’ in the original film. The dubbed version had to convey this linguistic differentiation, also adding a few grammar mistakes that help to emphasise foreignness. Dubbing director Alto confirms that the choice of using unrealistic foreign-accented Italian was due to Dreamworks’ requirement to be faithful to the original film and to recreate its humour (personal communication, 2016). Whereas Alto prefers dubbed versions where standard Italian, devoid of any accent, is spoken, Dreamworks wanted to distinguish the language of Europeans from that of the American protagonists, with a particular emphasis on Captain Chantal DuBois’s French identity. An alternative to broken, mispronounced Italian

could have been to employ vocal coaches or language advisors, but this would have obviously increased dubbing costs. Moreover, since the original film did not aim at linguistic authenticity but at triggering laughter by hinting at foreign speakers, the same approach could be adopted in Italian. The choice of voices, of linguistic realism or the use of specific accents are thus influenced by various factors and agents, i.e., economic factors, marketing reasons, the skills of dubbing actors or voice talents, the adapter, the dubbing director and the client, i.e., the distributor and the supervisor of the Italian edition.

4. Conclusions

The analysis conducted in this paper shows that non-native varieties of English are represented and reproduced in the dubbed version of *Madagascar 3*, often through stereotypical traits and sometimes through “hypercharacterization” (Parini, 2009: 163) or compensation strategies. Although the tendency in Italian dubbing is to homogenise and standardise varieties, in the case of ethnolects the linguistic representation of ‘otherness’ is conveyed and emphasised in dubbing. This is achieved by employing dubbing actors who contrive an accent, perform variation and modulate their voices (Chiaro, 2008: 23-24), which is in line with how characters are created in the original version. A homogenising, neutralising approach could not be adopted for *Madagascar 3*, as the film is set in more than one country and portrays characters belonging to different nationalities whose otherness and foreign identity had to be emphasised. Foreign accents were resorted to in dubbing to connote the different ethnicities and changes of places but also to trigger humour, activating Italian stereotypes of other cultures.

Moreover, analysis of the film dialogues and interviews with professionals have revealed that dubbing professionals do not resort to one single strategy when they deal with characters belonging to the Italian ethnic group or with a marked Italian identity. If the Italian-American variety is not associated with gangsters and the characters are meant to be comical, the correspondence Italian-American-Sicilian regiolect is not applied. When Italian-American does not carry negative connotations, is not a direct reference to mafia movies and is not used to voice a criminal, but simply denotes Italianness (the original contains prosodic, phonetic, lexical and syntactic prototypical traits signalling that the character is Italian), then various strategies may be adopted. In *Madagascar 3*, rather than using an Italian regional dialect for Stefano and Gia, the dubbing professionals opted for a shift to another L3 or third language, i.e., Spanish. This study also points out that several agents are involved in the translation/adaptation/dubbing process and that they all bear an influence on dubbing strategies and choices. Interviews with dubbing professionals suggest that dubbing policies regarding the third language may sometimes be decided by the dubbing director, perhaps also by dubbing actors

during the dubbing sessions, or may be required by the client. However, the final decision is taken by the dubbing supervisor.

Future research on translation and dubbing strategies to transpose native and non-native varieties of English is necessary in order to understand trends in dubbing. Is it plausible to hypothesise the norm that non-native varieties or ethnolects are always conveyed and highlighted? Is Italo-American rendered through the stereotypical Sicilian regiolect or are other dialects or languages used? Which ones? What are the reasons behind such choices? What are the strategies for conveying L3 when it coincides with L2? Are specific languages (like Spanish in *Madagascar 3*) the usual choices? Are geographical varieties of English always homogenised into standard Italian? These and further issues should be investigated through the analysis of a large corpus of contemporary animated films. Another fruitful line of investigation would be to compare older vs more recent animated films, to carry out a diachronic study to ascertain whether the professionals' approach has changed over time.

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