

Wow! Ehi, amico. Lascia che ti spieghi... Okay? Già. The English Element in Dubbed Italian. The Case of Animated Films

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate the influence of the English language on the Italian language of dubbed animated films through the presence of direct and indirect borrowings – i.e., Anglicisms and calques – over a period of 27 years. The analysis is based on a corpus of 18 English-language animated films produced by Disney and Disney-Pixar between 1994 and 2019. By analysing the transcriptions of the English and Italian dialogues, the paper examines the degree of Anglicisation of dubbed Italian. It assesses the presence of direct English borrowings, explores the way in which specific words or expressions typical of conversational English are rendered in dubbed Italian, and ascertains whether specific indirect borrowings quoted in the literature on dubbese are actually present in the dubbed dialogues of animated films. The linguistic analysis of the English and Italian dialogues is complemented with comments by dubbing professionals on dubbing practice and on their relationship with the English language.

Key-words: animated films, the language of dubbing, Anglicisms, calques, source language interference, translational routines, creativity, dubbing professionals.

1. Introduction

The English language can leave its ‘fingerprints’ on dubbing (Gellerstam 2005) through direct borrowings, i.e., Anglicisms, as well as indirect borrowings or calques – which can be semantic, structural, pragmatic and of frequency. Studies conducted on several languages have highlighted a widespread and increasing Anglification in screen translation through the presence of both direct and indirect borrowings, in the form of source language interference and Anglicised expressions (Herbst 1996; Duro

Moreno 2001; Chaume and García De Toro 2001; Gottlieb 2005, 2012; Motta 2010, 2015; Minutella 2015, 2017 among others). However, a systematic quantitative and qualitative research conducted on large corpora and focussing on a specific genre has not been carried out so far.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the influence of the English language on the Italian language of dubbed animated films. The choice of animated films is due to the potential linguistic impact that this specific audiovisual text type may have on its young audience (Caruana 2003; Pavesi and Perego 2006; Ferro and Sardo 2008; Motta 2015; Sileo 2015; Pavesi 2018, Minutella 2018 among others). In fact, children tend to watch films more than once and sometimes even to repeat the characters' lines. As a result, the frequent use in dubbed dialogues of certain English words or Anglicised syntactic structures may affect the way in which young Italians speak. However, it is worth noting that the translation, adaptation and dubbing of animated films is a carefully controlled process. Moreover, as pointed out by Pavesi and Perego, dialogue writers belonging to AIDAC (*Associazione Italiana Dialoghisti e Adattatori Cinetelevisivi*) have "an acute sense of responsibility towards the standards of language that viewers, especially young children, are exposed to" (2006: 106; on this issue see also Di Fortunato and Paolinelli 1996; Paolinelli and Di Fortunato 2005 and the material on the AIDAC website¹). Italian dubbing professionals working on animated films appear to believe in the 'didactic' or educational role of the language of dubbing and try to avoid ungrammaticalities (Minutella 2021). The Italian dialogues of dubbed animated films are thus interesting texts worthy of analysis, since they might contain direct English borrowings, while they might be less prone to source language interference and translation mistakes compared with television products (see also Alfieri, Contarino and Motta 2003: 131). In order to explore the Anglicisation of the language of dubbed animated films, this paper focuses on a parallel corpus of 18 Anglo-American animated films produced between 1994 and 2019 by Disney and Disney-Pixar.

¹ <https://aidac.it/documenti/audio-video/>.

The paper will examine the presence of ‘fingerprints’ of English in the form of Anglicisms as well as calques and translational routines, which are “recurrent solutions to translation problems which tend to become overextended” (Pavesi 2008: 94; see also Pavesi 2018). The paper will explore the way in which specific words or expressions typical of conversational English are rendered in dubbed Italian. A preliminary quantitative and qualitative analysis will be carried out, drawing on previous studies on dubbese, source language interference, Anglicisms, calques, translational routines and creativity in dubbing (Brincat 2000; Alfieri, Contarino and Motta 2003; Pavesi 2005; 2009, 2018; Rossi 2006a, 2006b; Bucaria 2008; Forchini 2013; Motta 2010, 2015; Sileo 2015; Minutella 2015, 2017, 2018).

More specifically, the article will investigate the rendering of *okay/okay?*, interjections such as *wow* and *yeah*, familiarisers such as *man*, *mate*, *buddy*, *dude*, *pal*, and the presence of selected instances of source language interference, calques and translational routines quoted in the literature on dubbese such as *amico* (literally *friend*, from *man*), *realizzare* (*realise*), *dacci un taglio* (*cut it out*), *voglio dire* (*I mean*), *già* (*yeah*), *lascia che ti dica/spieghi* (*let me tell you/explain/say*) (Pavesi 2005: 49; 2018; Rossi 2006a: 309-311; Bucaria 2008; Motta 2010, 2015; Minutella 2015).

A further aim of the paper is to understand the factors favouring the presence of Anglicisms and calques in dubbed animated films. It has been noted that the need for synchronisation is not the only reason for calques or translational routines (Minutella 2015; Pavesi 2018). The film plot, setting and type of character, as well as an attempt to avoid repetitiveness in Italian dialogues can affect the presence of an Anglicism or specific calques in Italian dubbing (see Minutella 2015 and 2018). The dialogue writer’s personal style or the client’s specific requests may also play a part in the decision-making process. Dialogue writers are aware of the possible highly influential impact of their work and, as pointed out by Pavesi and Perego, they try to “avoid linguistic formulae, such as the Anglicism ‘ok?’, which would contribute to create dubbese” (2006: 111). In order to provide a fuller picture of the impact of the English language on dubbed animated films, the linguistic analysis of the English and Italian dialogues will be complemented with comments by dubbing professionals on their ‘relationship’ with the English language.

Since the films constituting the corpus are produced within a time span of 27 years (1994-2019), analysis of the transcriptions might also highlight interesting patterns from a diachronic perspective.

2. Methodology

The article focuses on a corpus of 18 English-language animated films produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and Pixar Animation Studios. The films were selected because they are big budget films adapted and directed by different dialogue writers and dubbing directors. The selection was also based on the year of production: the films were released between 1994 and 2019, that is, within a time span of 27 years. Some prequels and sequels were chosen since they allow for a diachronic analysis: in fact, one of the working hypotheses of this study is that films having the same protagonists and belonging to a saga, but produced and dubbed in different times might show a different degree of Anglicisation. *Toy Story* (1995) and its three sequels (1999, 2010, 2019) are a case in point.

The films are listed in the table below, in chronological order. The title (in English and in Italian) is followed by the year of production, the name of the production company and the name of the director(s). The last column contains the names of the Italian dialogue writer and dubbing director. Only one name is provided if the dialogue writer is also the dubbing director.

TABLE I
Animated films corpus 1994-2019

Original English Title/ Italian Title	Year of Production	Production Company	Director(s)	Italian Dialogue Writer and Dubbing Director
<i>The Lion King</i> / <i>Il re leone</i>	1994	Disney	Allers, Minkoff	de Leonardis, Stacchi
<i>Toy Story</i> / <i>Toy Story – Il mondo dei giocattoli</i>	1995	Disney-Pixar	Lasseter	Valli
<i>Mulan</i>	1998	Disney	Bancroft, Cook	Vairano

(continued on next page)

TABLE 1 (continued from previous page)

<i>Toy Story 2</i>	1999	Disney-Pixar	Lasseter, Bran- non, Unkrich	Valli
<i>The Emperor's New Groove</i> <i>/ Le follie dell'impera- tore</i>	2000	Disney	Dindal	Calabrò, La Penna
<i>Finding Nemo</i> <i>/ Alla ricerca di Nemo</i>	2003	Disney-Pixar	Stanton, Unkrich	Valli
<i>Cars / Cars</i> <i>– Motori ruggenti</i>	2006	Disney Pixar	Lasseter	Valli
<i>Tangled / Rapunzel – l'intreccio della torre</i>	2010	Disney	Greno, Ho- ward	Rossi
<i>Toy Story 3</i>	2010	Disney-Pixar	Unkrich	Valli
<i>Cars 2</i>	2011	Disney-Pixar	Lasseter, Lewis	Valli
<i>Break it Ralph</i> <i>/ Ralph Spac- catutto</i>	2012	Disney	Moore	S. and F. Izzo, F. Izzo
<i>Frozen / Fro- zen – il regno di ghiaccio</i>	2013	Disney	Buck, Lee	F. Izzo
<i>Monsters University</i>	2013	Disney-Pixar	Scanlon	Valli
<i>Big Hero 6</i>	2014	Disney	Hall, Williams	Manfredi
<i>Zootopia / Zootropolis</i>	2016	Disney	Howard, Moore	Manfredi
<i>Ralph Breaks the Internet / Ralph Spacca Internet</i>	2018	Disney	Johnston, Moore	S. and F. Izzo, F. Izzo
<i>Incredibles 2</i> <i>/ Gli Incredi- bili 2</i>	2018	Disney-Pixar	Bird	Manfredi
<i>Toy Story 4</i>	2019	Disney-Pixar	Cooley	Morville, Manfredi

Analysis is based on repeated viewing of the films and manual sorting of the data by examining the transcriptions of the dialogues in English and in Italian.

3. Analysis

3.1. Direct Anglicisms

With regard to direct Anglicisms (i.e., direct English borrowings) in the dubbed dialogues, the table below summarises the quantitative data:

TABLE 2
Anglicisms

Quantity of Anglicisms	Films (Italian title)
0	<i>Mulan</i> (1998)
1-9	<i>Il re leone</i> (1994) <i>Alla ricerca di Nemo</i> (2003) <i>Le follie dell'imperatore</i> (2000) <i>Rapunzel</i> (2010) <i>Frozen</i> (2013)
10-19	<i>Toy story</i> (1995) <i>Monsters University</i> (2013) <i>Toy Story 4</i> (2019)
20-29	<i>Cars</i> (2006) <i>Toy Story 2</i> (1999) <i>Toy Story 3</i> (2010) <i>Big Hero 6</i> (2014) <i>Zootropolis</i> (2017)
30-39	<i>Cars 2</i> (2011) <i>Ralph Spaccatutto</i> (2012) <i>Gli Incredibili 2</i> (2018)
Over 40	<i>Ralph Spacca Internet</i> (2018)

In terms of quantity, the dubbed versions of the animated films in the corpus contain a relatively limited amount of Anglicisms, which ranges from zero (only in one film from the 1990s, i.e., *Mulan*) to 40-50 (only in one very recent film, i.e., *Ralph Spacca Internet*). The films containing the highest number of Anglicisms (more than 30) are all produced after 2010. Examination of the Anglicisms found in each film suggests that the quantity and type of English borrowings depends on the setting and plot of the film and on the character's

personality, age and attitude. For instance, films set in past centuries or distant lands, or based on fairy tales, tend to contain fewer Anglicisms, whereas films set in contemporary times and involving technology, the internet and videogames tend to contain a higher number of English words. Most of the Anglicisms used in dubbed dialogues are attested in Italian monolingual dictionaries. This confirms previous studies (Brincat 2000; Pavesi 2005; Minutella 2015, 2018 among others). Exceptions are a few specialised terms, mainly belonging to technology or videogames but also to fashion, which are not attested in Italian monolingual dictionaries. Nevertheless, their meaning can be understood from the images and co-text. For instance, *glitch* and *glitchare* are uncommon words repeated in *Ralph Spaccatutto* whose meaning is explained in the dialogues. The film's protagonist (a videogame character called Vanellope) is a *glitch*, that is, a programme error or malfunctioning, and she sometimes *glitches* (that is, she disappears). Another example is the item of clothing *jeggings* (a blend of *jeans* and *leggings*), which is mentioned in *Zootropolis* to comment on a character's outfit.

3.1.1. Some observations on *okay* and *wow*

In line with the results of previous studies conducted on TV series and on a smaller sample of animated films, analysis of the animated films corpus confirms that the interjections *okay* and *wow* are arguably the most frequent direct Anglicisms in the Italian dubbed dialogues of animated films. They are used in almost all the films and they have a higher frequency than other English borrowings. This may be also due to their large and increasing use in spontaneous Italian conversation and because they are “privileged carriers of orality” (Pavesi 2009). *Okay* is the most frequent Anglicism found in the films. The only films which do not contain any instance of *okay* in the dubbed version are *Il re leone* (a 1994 film set in Africa), *Mulan* (a 1998 film set in China), and *Rapunzel* (a 2010 film based on a fairy tale). These are followed by films with very few occurrences: *Frozen* (a 2013 film whose protagonists are princesses in a Nordic kingdom) and *Cars 2*. Nevertheless, examination of the film transcriptions also confirms that the extensive and often repetitive use of *okay* in the English dialogues tends to be reduced in Italian dubbing. As pointed out in previous studies (Minutella 2015, 2017,

2018), dubbed Italian resorts to several translational equivalents for *okay*. The analysis of the animated films corpus and personal communications with dubbing practitioners (see section 3.1.2. below) suggest that dialogue writers appear to aim at variation and at creating conversations which are less repetitive than the English ones. This is more in line with the stylistic preferences of the Italian language. For instance, in *Alla ricerca di Nemo* (2003), out of the 88 occurrences of *okay* in the English dialogues, 17 are retained in Italian, while over 70 instances are translated with Italian words with similar functions or are omitted. In *Le follie dell'imperatore* (2000), although *okay* is uttered over 50 times in English, in the Italian dubbed version the English loanword is chosen only twice, whereas a plethora of alternative translation solutions are resorted to, as illustrated in table 3 below:

TABLE 3

Translations of *okay/okay?* in the dubbed version of *Le follie dell'imperatore* (2000)

Original version	Dubbed version
Okay	Okay (2) Ecco (3) D'accordo (2) Va bene Ah, bene Bene Dunque Dai No Coraggio Adesso Oh mamma! Ah Resisti Allora Sì

(continued on next page)

TABLE 3 (continued from previous page)

	Lasciamo stare
	Veloce
	Come vuoi
	E via
	Ci siamo
	Omission/zero translation
Okay?	Va bene?

The quantity of the pragmatic Anglicism *okay/okay?* (Andersen 2014) in dubbed dialogues appears to be linked to the plot, setting and character types, more than the dialogue writer's stylistic preferences or year of release of the film. Nevertheless, with regard to the presence of *okay* and *wow* in dubbing, the year of production also appears to influence the number of occurrences in dubbing. For instance, while *Toy Story 1* and 2 (produced in the 1990s) contain less than 10 occurrences of *okay* in the dubbed version, the two films of the saga released in the new millennium contain a higher number of occurrences (18 in *Toy Story 3* and 27 in *Toy Story 4*). An Anglicising approach was adopted for the dubbed version of *Toy Story 4* (2019), where out of 40 occurrences of *okay* in the original dialogues, 27 are retained in the Italian dubbed version. Moreover, 6 instances of *all right* and 1 instance of *got it* are also translated with the Anglicism *okay*. A comparison of the occurrences of *okay/okay?* in the *Toy Story* saga (1995-2019) provides interesting quantitative results, as can be noted in the following table:

TABLE 4
Occurrences of *okay/okay?* in the *Toy Story* saga

Film	Occurrences of <i>okay/okay?</i> in the original version	Occurrences of <i>okay/okay?</i> in the dubbed version
<i>Toy Story</i> (1995)	24	8 + 2 (translations of <i>all right</i>)

(continued on next page)

TABLE 4 (continued from previous page)

<i>Toy Story 2</i> (1999)	35	8
<i>Toy Story 3</i> (2010)	30	18
<i>Toy Story 4</i> (2019)	40	27
		+ 7 (translations of <i>all right</i> and <i>got it</i>)

The table above shows that the presence of *okay* in the Italian dialogues has increased over time. In the two films released in the 1990s there is a limited use of *okay* in Italian, and there are no occurrences of *okay*? with the function of response elicitor. In *Toy Story 3* we can observe an increase in the use of the English *okay* in the Italian dialogues, and in *Toy Story 4* there is a pervasive presence of the Anglicism in the characters' exchanges, both as a response form, a response elicitor and to take turns. *Okay* thus performs a variety of pragmatic functions in the Italian dialogues of the more recent films. Moreover, *okay* is used in Italian also as a translational equivalent for other informal features of spoken interaction (*all right* and *got it*). There seems to be an increase and an overextension of the Anglicism, which may mirror the large use of this discourse marker in contemporary Italian conversation, especially among young people. Other instances of *okay* in the English dialogues are nevertheless rendered with several Italian expressions, as previously pointed out (*va bene*, *sì*, *d'accordo*, *ecco*, *allora*, *va bene?* *Capito?* *ciao*, omission, etc.), and as illustrated in the example below from *Toy Story 3*.

Example 1)

Original version	Dubbed version
<WOODY> Okay, okay! You found me!	<WOODY> Sì, sì, va bene, va bene! Mi hai trovato!

With regard to the emotive interjection *wow* – an informal marker of surprise and awe, the English loan is present in almost all the dubbed dialogues analysed. It is absent only from *Mulan* (1998) and *Le Follie dell'imperatore* (2000). These data seem to suggest

that *wow* has become more pervasive in the dubbed language of animated films. In *Zootropolis* (2016), 6 out of 7 occurrences of *wow* in the original version are retained in the dubbed version. In *Gli Incredibili 2* (2018), 10 out of 11 occurrences in the original version are retained in the dubbed version. Furthermore, it is worth noting that in recent films *wow* is used in Italian dubbed dialogues not only when the English dialogues contain the interjection *wow*, but also to translate the source language interjection *whoa*. This suggests that the source language/source text triggers can include different expressions from the one that initiated the translation equivalence. There seems to be a process of overextension also when direct borrowings are concerned. However, analysis of the transcriptions reveals that occurrences of *wow* in the film dialogues also have a variety of translations in dubbing. These are *wow*, *whoa*, *forte*, *cavolo*, *oh*, *accidenti*, *accipicchia*, *caspita*, *che bello*, *però*, *ciao*, *fischia*, etc. and omission or zero translation. Translation strategies hence appear to aim at variation.

3.1.2. What dubbing professionals say about Anglicisms

The observations on the English impact on dubbed Italian based on analysis of the dubbed dialogues can be supplemented with information gathered from dubbing professionals on their approach towards the English – and the Italian – language. In order to explore the relationship of dubbing practitioners towards English, some semi-structured interviews with dubbing professionals working for the cinema and television² were conducted between 2016 and 2020. Dubbing practitioners were asked whether they used English loanwords in their dubbed dialogues, whether they used *okay* or avoided it, and why, and whether there were any rules or guidelines

² The following dubbing professionals were consulted: Lydia Corbelli (translator and dialogue writer); Elena Di Carlo (translator and dialogue writer); Marco Guadagno (dialogue writer, dubbing director and dubbing actor); Fiamma Izzo (dialogue writer and dubbing director); Roberto Morville (translator and dialogue writer, former creative director for The Walt Disney Company Italia); Maria Grazia Napolitano (dubbing assistant); Serena Paccagnella (translator, dialogue writer and dubbing assistant); Giselle Spiteri Miggiani (translator and dialogue writer); Francesco Vairano (dialogue writer, dubbing director and dubbing actor); Carlo Valli (dialogue writer, dubbing director and dubbing actor).

regarding the amount and type of English words that could be used in Italian dubbing.

All the dubbing practitioners interviewed, and especially those working on animated films, agree that there are no guidelines specifying the amount of foreign (and English) words allowed in Italian dialogues. No shared norms exist. Nevertheless, a translator/dialogue writer working for animated series and television points out that clients may ask in general “to avoid calques” (Corbelli, personal communication, 2018). Spiteri Miggiani also points out that some production companies prefer Italian words to English ones and may give directions such as “replace *wow* or use *fine settimana* rather than *weekend*” (personal communication, 2019). However, these are rare cases. Neither Disney nor DreamWorks, nor other majors working on animated films have a specific policy regarding English or foreign words in Italian dubbing. While during the Fascist period foreign words were banned in Italian dubbed dialogues (see Raffaelli 1996; Ranzato 2016), today no such regulations exist.

All the professionals stress the importance of creating Italian dialogues which sound natural and believable, which respect the setting of the story and which are suitable for each character, conveying their personality. For instance, according to Morville, “dubbing should respect the setting and historical period of the story on the one hand, and the very specific features of each and every character on the other” (personal communication, 2016). As pointed out by Di Carlo, the setting of the story determines the use or avoidance of Anglicisms: “the setting and the historical period are important. We use English words only in stories which are set in contemporary times” (personal communication, 2016). Vairano explains that no Anglicisms should be used in a historical or period film and that the use of an English word is dependent on who the character is. If the character is young, Anglicisms may be used. However, whenever possible, and if an Italian equivalent word exists, the Italian word should be opted for to avoid Anglicisms (Vairano, personal communication 2018).

Many professionals observe that Anglicisms are used if the story is set in contemporary times, if protagonists are young and youth speech is required, if the product is aimed at a young audience, or if the topics/plot are related to technology or a specialised field. In these cases, resorting to English words would be necessary, since

the semantic fields of information technology and the internet contain many Anglicisms (personal communications by Di Carlo 2016, Morville 2016, Paccagnella 2016, Valli 2017, Napolitano 2018, Vairano 2018). As explained by Corbelli, “when there are teenagers, the use of Anglicisms referring to social networks or music is almost obligatory” (personal communication, 2018).

All the professionals interviewed thus agree that the type of product, its genre, the target audience, the setting of the story, the plot and character are the main criteria guiding in the choice of whether to insert Anglicisms in dubbed dialogues or not. However, in some cases, synchronisation might also play a role in this choice. As argued by Morville, “sometimes you cannot find an Italian equivalent which is as concise and effective as the English term. Sometimes you may need a full, long expression or a paraphrase to express the same meaning, and it would be impossible to synchronise the dubbed version. Then, the English word is preferred.” However, according to Morville “these are quite rare cases” (personal communication, 2018).

When asked whether and how often they use *okay*, most of the practitioners say that they use it only in specific settings and if it matches the character’s style. The dubbing professionals interviewed explain that they tend to prefer the Italian equivalents, since the Italian language has its own expressions with similar meanings and pragmatic functions, like *d’accordo*, *va bene* and *certo*. However, they may opt for *okay* if it is suitable for the genre of the audiovisual product, the setting and/or the characters’ age. Vairano explains that he prefers avoiding *okay* in dubbing, but if it is uttered by a young person, then he uses it. On the other hand, if in the original version *okay* is uttered by adults, he opts for Italian equivalent expressions (personal communication, 2018). Paccagnella also explains that “it depends on the content and the type of character who says *okay*. If it is a historical, period film or TV series, then *okay* will never be used in Italian, whereas if it is a product aimed at young people, *okay* will be used a lot” (personal communication, 2017). Paccagnella points out that the choice of discourse marker (whether to opt for *okay*, *va bene*, *d’accordo*, etc.) is also dependent on lip synchronisation constraints, since *va bene* would not match the lip movements of the actors and would thus destroy the illusion of reality dubbing relies on. Another important issue regarding *okay* is that it is extremely

frequent in English scripts, especially at the end of a clause, and sometimes it is reiterated many times in a few lines. In Paccagnella's view, a good Italian dialogue writer should avoid this degree of repetition, which is acceptable in English but not in Italian. The dialogue writer should take into account the stylistic norms of the target language, where a lower degree of repetition is acceptable, and use synonyms (Paccagnella, personal communication, 2017). All the dubbing practitioners interviewed argue that they attempt to avoid repetitions, which are a typical feature of American scripts. These comments by dubbing practitioners corroborate previous findings on the translation of *okay* and *wow* elsewhere (Minutella 2015, 2018), and are in line with the interviews reported by Pavesi and Perego (2006). Similar observations were also made by Freddi (2009; 2012) and on the translation of *realise* by Minutella and Pulcini (2014).

3.2. The presence of calques and translational routines in dubbed dialogues

3.2.1. *Amico* (*man*, *mate*, *buddy*, *dude*, *pal*)

This section examines whether the vocative *amico* 'friend' – a translational routine typical of dubbing originating from the translation of the familiariser *man* – is used in the dubbed versions of the animated films corpus. It also explores which English words in the source texts trigger the use of *amico* and describes the ways in which familiarisers such as *man*, *mate*, *buddy*, *dude* and *pal* are translated. The selection of a range of vocatives rather than only *man* (originally identified as the trigger of *amico*) is due to the fact that these familiarisers are frequently used in spoken conversation, films and TV series (Forchini 2013) as well as in the dialogues of the animated films analysed.

Amico has been found in the Italian dubbed dialogues of 13 out of 18 films. In the corpus, *amico* translates the familiariser *man*, but also (in order of frequency) *buddy*, *pal*, *mate* and *dude*. The dubbing routine *amico* is thus used in the Italian dubbed dialogues of animated films to translate a range of vocatives, not just *man*, and its most frequent English trigger is *buddy*. However, the most frequent alternative translation solutions for the familiarisers *man*, *buddy*, *pal*, *dude* and *mate* are the endearment *bello/bella* and

omission of the vocative (zero translation). English familiarisers are also translated with interjections, familiarisers, first names (*ehi, però, bravo, bambolo, piccolo, piccoletto, amichetto, amico mio, compare, sceriffo, Maciste, Sven, Bruto*) and with the informal vocatives *socio* and *zio*, typical of contemporary youth speech. In *Ralph Spacca Internet* (2018), *socio* (6 occurrences) translates *pal* and *buddy*, while *zio* (1 occurrence) translates *dude*. These data suggest that while the translational routine *amico* is indeed present in dubbed animated films, Italian dialogue writers aim at variation and at avoiding repetitiveness. This confirms previous observations by Minutella (2015) and Freddi (2009) among others.

In terms of quantity, the Italian dubbed versions of *Cars* and *Cars 2* contain the highest number of occurrences of *amico* translating the familiarisers *man*, *buddy*, *pal* and *mate*. In *Cars*, the 9 instances of *buddy* are omitted (3) and rendered with *amico* (6). The examples below from *Cars* illustrate the use of *amico* to translate *buddy*, *man* and *pal*.

Example 2)

Original version	Dubbed version
<THE KING> Hey, buddy .	<THE KING> Ehi, amico .

Example 3)

Original version	Dubbed version
<FILLMORE> Bad trip, man .	<FILLMORE> Brutto affare, amico .

Example 4)

Original version	Dubbed version
<SECURITY MAN> Sorry, pal .	<SECURITY MAN> Mi spiace, amico .

In *Alla ricerca di Nemo* (2003), *amico* occurs 4 times to translate *man* and *mate*. The familiarisers *man*, *mate*, *buddy* and *dude* are very frequent in this film, are used by several characters and often repeated, to provide characterisation. They are translated in Italian by a wide range of translation equivalents, the most frequent one being *bello*.

For instance, the ‘cool’ and relaxed turtle Crush, who speaks in a kind of ‘surfer dude’ speech style, frequently uses the vocative *dude* and sometimes also *man*. Crush’s laid-back style is conveyed in the Italian dubbed version through an informal register and the repetition of the vocative *bello*, which in the Italian version becomes an idiolectal feature of this character. Examples (5) and (6) illustrate this point.

Example 5)

Original version	Dubbed version
<CRUSH> No worries, man!	<SCORZA> Su con la vita, bello!

Example 6)

Original version	Dubbed version
<CRUSH> Dude. Focus, dude. Dude.	<SCORZA> Bello. Metti a fuoco, bello. Bello.

3.2.2. *Dacci un taglio* (*Cut it out*)

Very few occurrences of *dacci un taglio* (*cut it out*) were found in the corpus. In *Toy Story* (1995) *diamoci un taglio* is used to translate *that’s enough*, while in *Le follie dell’imperatore* (2000) *dacci un taglio* translates *give it a rest [up]* (see example (7) below). These are instances of overextension of a calque, a translational routine which conveys an informal register while still being typical of the language of dubbing and not of spoken Italian. However, it is worth pointing out that occurrences of *dacci un taglio* are detected only in older films.

Example 7)

Original version	Dubbed version
<KUZCO> Hey, give it a rest up there, will ya?	<KUZCO> Fa’ il favore, dacci un taglio , eh?

In other films, more natural-sounding Italian expressions are used in dubbed Italian. For instance, in *The Lion King* (1994), rather

than the stock translation *dacci un taglio*, the more natural Italian expression *la vuoi smettere?* is chosen to translate *cut it out*, as illustrated in example (8) below:

Example 8)

Original version	Dubbed version
<SIMBA> Come on, will you cut it out?	<SIMBA> Avanti, la vuoi smettere?

Further examples of natural-sounding Italian expressions used in dubbing to translate *cut it out* are *falla finita* (*Toy Story 3* and *Zootropolis*), *piantala* (*Toy Story 2*), *piantatela* (*Toy Story 4*). *Dacci un taglio* therefore does not appear to be frequently used in dubbed animated films, where a range of more natural-sounding, informal expressions are preferred.

3.2.3. *Già* (yeah)

The translational routine *già*, which has a similar articulatory movement to that of its English trigger *yeah*, is “a quintessential marker of the Italian language of dubbing” (Pavesi 2018: 26; see also Bucaria 2008: 155; Antonini and Chiaro 2009: 111-112). *Già* is frequently used in the dubbed dialogues of animated films, though dialogue writers appear to aim at variation since they translate *yeah* in different ways. *The Lion King* (1994) contains several occurrences of *yeah*, which are translated through various Italian equivalents (*sì*, *certo*, *oh sì*, *oh yeah*, *evviva*, *già*, *davvero?*). The translational routine *già* occurs 11 times in the Italian dubbed version of this film, and it does indeed translate *yeah*, but also *yep* (twice) and *hey*. In *Cars* (2006), *yeah* occurs 93 times in the original dialogues. It is never retained as a direct borrowing, and it is variously translated as *già* (25 times), *sì*, or omitted. *Già* is therefore quite frequent in the Italian dialogues of *Cars*. Moreover, instances of *già* also translate *yep* (1) and *you know* (*eh*, *già*). On two occasions, *già* was added in the Italian dialogues. In a more recent Disney film, *Zootropolis* (2016), *già* occurs 19 times. Its main source language trigger is *yeah* (mostly), though it also translates *yep*, *yes* and *right*. In *Big Hero 6* (2014), *già*

also translates *yeah*, *yep* and *yes*. This occurs in several animated films, thus suggesting a process of overextension of the calque *già*, which has become a translational routine in dubbing (Pavesi 2018). In the corpus, occurrences of *yeah* in the English dialogues tend to be translated with *già* (most of the times), *sì* and omission. Example (9) below, from *Zootropolis* (2016), contains the translational routine *già* and also shows the avoidance of the structural calque *lascia che* + verb.

Example 9)

Original version	Dubbed version
<NICK> Yeah , don't think I didn't notice that little item the first time we met. So, let me ask you a question . Are you afraid of me?	<NICK> Già , e non pensare che non l'avessi notato al nostro primo incontro... Ascolta, rispondi a questa domanda . Tu hai paura di me?

3.2.4. *Realizzare* (to realise)

The films in the corpus contain very few occurrences of the verb *to realise*. They are translated with Italian verbs such as *capire*, *rendersi conto*, *accorgersi*, whereas the semantic calque *realizzare* is never used in the dubbed versions. This is in line with previous results on TV series (see Minutella and Pulcini 2014).

3.2.5. *Voglio dire* (I mean)

Previous studies on dubbed Italian (Pavesi 2005; Rossi 2006a) highlighted the overuse of the literal translation *voglio dire*, rather than the more natural *cioè*, or the loan creation *insomma*, as a translation of *I mean* in dubbed Italian. *Voglio dire* can be considered a structural calque and a frequency calque. However, Bollettieri Bosinelli (2002) suggested that for reasons of synchronisation the word *insomma* (a loan creation) is also often used in dubbed Italian to translate *I mean* since it contains the bilabial consonant /m/ (see also Pavesi 2018). In our animated films corpus, a limited use of the literal *voglio dire* was found, whereas the most frequent translations of the discourse marker *I mean* are *insomma*, *cioè* and omission. For instance, in *The Lion King* (1994), *I mean* is translated as *voglio dire*

(1) and *insomma* (1). The English dialogues of *Frozen* (2013) contain 9 occurrences of *I mean*. The translation strategies in dubbing are zero translation/omission (3), *cioè* (3), *insomma* (2), *voglio dire* (1). In *Zootropolis* (2016), *I mean* is translated mostly with *insomma* (6) and once omitted, never with *voglio dire*. In *Ralph spacca internet* (2018) *I mean* is mostly omitted (5 times), rendered with *insomma* (4) or with *cioè* (1). Less frequent alternative translations in other films are *accidenti, ma, ovviamente, intendo/intendevo, è proprio, è che, non è che, no- dico, beh, siamo sinceri*. The data from the animated films suggest that dialogue writers do not resort to the literal *voglio dire* to a great extent, but rather prefer *insomma* or more natural-sounding solutions such as *cioè* (which conveys the same pragmatic function as *I mean*) or zero translation. Analysis of the animated films thus confirms Bollettieri Bosinelli's observation that the most frequent translation equivalent for *I mean* is *insomma*, which fits in terms of lip synchronisation (Bollettieri Bosinelli 2002).

3.2.6. *Lascia che ti dica/spieghi* (Let me tell you/explain/say)

The typical English expression *let me + tell you/say/explain* has been found in some of the film dialogues. The structural calque *lascia che ti dica/spieghi* (Minutella 2015) is sometimes used in dubbing, although more natural-sounding Italian expressions are also resorted to as translation solutions. The following examples illustrate the strategies adopted by dubbing professionals in animated films. *The Lion King* (1994) contains the expressions *Let me explain* and *Let me tell you something*. They are both uttered by Mufasa when speaking to his son Simba (a cub). In the Italian dubbed version they are translated with the structural calque (*lascia che ti spieghi* and *lascia che ti dica una cosa* respectively). A similar literal translation from English is used in *Le follie dell'imperatore* (2000), when emperor Kuzco says *And let me guess*, which is rendered in Italian with *E lasciarmi indovinare* rather than with the more natural-sounding *fammi indovinare*.

Nevertheless, in several other films we can observe an avoidance of the structural calque. For instance, the structure *let me say/tell you something* occurs twice in the English dialogues of *Cars* (2006), but is never rendered as *lascia che ti dica/spieghi*. More natural-sounding Italian expressions are used instead. *Let me say that*

again is translated into *Ora lo ripeto*, while *let me tell you somethin'* becomes *devo dirti* (example (10) below).

Example 10)

Original version	Dubbed version
<DARRELL CARTRIP> Come on, you know I got a lotta miles on me, but let me tell you somethin', buddy . I never thought I'd see anything like this. Wow! Man , this is exciting!	<DARRELL CARTRIP> Bob, tu sai che io ne ho macinato di asfalto in vita mia, ma devo dirti che non ho mai visto una cosa del genere. Wow! È ultra-emozionante!

Example (10) above is uttered by Darrell Cartrip, a race commentator who “is known for his comedic and lighthearted style of commentary, which often contrasts his fellow announcers’ more serious and traditional approach” (https://worldofcarsdrivein.fandom.com/wiki/Darrell_Cartrip). The use of *lotta* for *lots of*, *somethin'*, *buddy*, the interjections *wow* and *man*, and the adjective *exciting* contribute to his linguistic characterisation through a very informal register. The character’s lines mimic spontaneous informal speech. In the Italian dubbed version, no calques or translational routines are used: *buddy* is not translated with *amico* but rather omitted, *wow* is retained as an Anglicism conveying informality and a youth speech style. Moreover, the calque *eccitante* is not used to translate *exciting*, but the more contemporary, creative and informal *ultra-emozionante* – created by combining the prefix *ultra* with the adjective *emozionante* (*exciting*) – is preferred. This is a good example of how the Italian dialogues of animated films may attempt to reproduce features of spoken Italian, contain a certain degree of informality and creative solutions.

4. Concluding remarks

The corpus overview of animated films carried out in this article has shown that the influence of the English language on dubbed Italian through direct English borrowings is quantitatively relatively limited, and that plot and characterisation seem to be the

determining factors affecting the Anglicisation of dubbed dialogues. This confirms previous studies conducted on smaller samples (Brincat 2000; Pavesi 2005; Rossi 2006; Minutella 2018). Personal communications with dubbing professionals have also emphasised the importance of each character's personality, social background and age, and the film plot and setting in favouring the presence or absence of Anglicisms in the Italian dialogues. Specific semantic fields such as the internet, technology and music, or the presence of young characters and informal contexts, may allow or even require the use of direct English borrowings. Examples are *Ralph spaccatutto* and *Ralph spacca internet*, two films which take place in the world of videogames and of the internet, and thus necessarily call for the use of several Anglicisms belonging to such fields. A further feature that has emerged in the examination of the corpus is the rise in frequency of the interjections *okay* and *wow* in the English dialogues of animated films, and a similar rise in frequency in the Italian dubbed versions. The presence of the English language in the dubbed animated films investigated in the present study appears to consist mostly in pragmatic Anglicisms in the form of interjections and discourse markers. Moreover, our analysis and the comments by dubbing practitioners have confirmed that dialogue writers try to aim at variation and to avoid repetitiveness.

With regard to calques and translational routines, the analysis of selected items has shown that *realizzare* and *lascia che ti dica/spieghi* are rarely used, since alternative verbs and expressions are preferred. On the other hand, the dubbing routine *amico* appears to be used in dubbed animated films to translate *man*, *buddy*, *dude*, *mate* and *pal*, though a variety of Italian vocatives are also resorted to. While Forchini's 2013 study of the translation of familiarisers in films highlighted a decreasing use of *amico* in films produced after 2000, in our animated films corpus this stock translation (a translational routine typical of dubbed Italian) is still present and appears to be inserted in the dialogues to provide characterisation. As regards the presence of *già*, our analysis has shown that in dubbed animated films it is a translational routine. *Già* is frequent as a translation of *yeah* and it also translates *yep*, *yes* and *right*. In the films analysed, instances of *yeah* are variously translated as *sì*, *già*, or omitted. The overuse of *voglio dire* to translate *I mean* was not observed in our corpus, since the English discourse marker is mostly translated with *insomma*.

This preliminary analysis of the animated films corpus suggests that dubbing professionals tend towards variation and creativity, though they do resort to translational routines when they are faced with frequent features of orality (see also Romero Fresco 2009; Pavesi 2018). The influence of the English language on dubbed Italian requires further investigation both in terms of direct Anglicisms and especially in terms of Anglicised structures and translational routines. A more detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis and a diachronic investigation of the animated films corpus is needed.

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