

Latino Representation in American TV Series: Dubbing Multilingual Identities from English/Spanish into Italian

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Abstract

The present paper explores the audiovisual translation of multilingual TV series, in particular of US products which feature characters of Latino origin – i.e., Mexican, Venezuelan and Cuban – whose speech includes the use of Spanish. It focuses on dubbing, from English/Spanish into Italian, through the investigation of a small but relevant corpus of TV shows, namely ABC's *Ugly Betty* (2006-2010), The CW Channel's and subsequently Netflix's *Jane the Virgin* (2014-2019) and the original Netflix's *One Day at a Time* (2017-2020), spanning a period of 14 years. The paper aims to trace clues to a possible diachronic evolution in dubbing language variation, through the qualitative analysis of instances of multilingualism in significant episodes from these series. Within a Descriptive Translation Studies framework (Díaz-Cintas 2004; Assis Rosa 2018) and adopting a combination of theories (Venuti 1995) and taxonomies (Corrius and Zabalbeascoa 2011; Chaume 2012; Ranzato 2016), the paper illustrates the macro- and micro- translation strategies and techniques employed to render the multicultural background of characters, conveyed in the source texts at the levels of marked accents, code-mixing, code-switching and entire dialogues. Findings suggest that, in the dubbed episodes, the multicultural identity of the characters is increasingly preserved in the most recent Netflix series. Results are interpreted in relation to issues of diversity and representation, within a paradigm of audiovisual translation as a social activity and an intercultural experience.

Key-words: multilingualism, AVT, dubbing, TV series, Latino, representation, identity.

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades, the number of English audiovisual (AV) products in which communication takes place in more than one language has risen substantially, leading to a “multilingual turn”

(Meylaerts 2006: 2). In both films and television series, it is not rare to find characters with a multicultural background, reflected in their use of language(s). This phenomenon indexes demographic changes in contemporary societies (Chaume 2012: 131) and arguably a growing cultural acceptance of diversity. In the United States, while traditionally TV companies have catered to source audiences exclusively in English, the immigrant society of Latino origins populating the country has increasingly been portrayed through their dual-language speaking background. With the expansion of the on-demand streaming site Netflix, this tendency has grown at a fast rate. Drawing on these momentous changes, the present article aims to explore what happens when such multilingual audiovisual products travel across geographical borders and are addressed to a new target audience through translation.

Translating language variation has been recognised as one of the greatest challenges for translators and adapters. Within audiovisual translation (AVT), the issue of ‘multilingualism’ has gained ground in the past decades (see Pérez L. De Heredia and De Higes-Andino 2019). However, while the phenomenon has been amply examined in films (e.g., Heiss 2004, 2014; Dwyer 2005; Taylor 2006; Ranzato 2006, 2010; Federici 2009; Baldo 2010; Monti 2014, 2016; Díaz-Cintas 2011; Corrius and Zabalbeascoa 2011; Minutella 2012; De Higes-Andino *et al.* 2013; De Higes-Andino 2014; Bonsignori and Bruti 2014; Zabalbeascoa and Voellmer 2014; De Bonis 2014a, 2014b, 2015; Parini 2015; Bruti and Vignozzi 2016; Beseghi 2017), less attention has been paid to multilingual TV series (e.g., Ranzato 2006; Pérez L. De Heredia 2015, 2016; Manfredi 2018, 2021; Beseghi 2019). Furthermore, the diachronic evolution of dubbing multilingualism has not attracted the same interest, especially with regard to its development in the short term.

This paper deals with dubbing from English into Italian, a mode that has been recently reassessed in the AVT world (see Ranzato and Zanotti 2019). The focus is on American TV shows where (American) English dialogues are variously intermingled with (Latin American) Spanish, more specifically ABC’s *Ugly Betty* (2006–2010), The CW Channel’s *Jane the Virgin* (2014–2019), then released on Netflix, and the original Netflix *One Day at a Time* (2017–2020) – which span over 14 years. In the three TV shows, to a different extent, fictional speech includes the use of Spanish at the levels of marked accents,

code-mixing through culture-specific items or interjections, code-switching and entire dialogues, to reflect the Latin American background of their main characters, namely Mexican, Venezuelan and Cuban respectively.

2. Latino representation in American TV series

In the US, Latinos¹ have long been marginalised and stereotyped in English-language television, being either invisible or misrepresented (Beltrán 2016: 23). Although the Latino society grew from 2.8 to 11 per cent of the population, Latino characters only represented one or two percent of prime-time roles from the 1950s through the early 1990s (Beltrán 2016: 24). Concurrently, Latinos tended to be stereotyped characters such as criminals or servants, with cases witnessing a slightly changed perspective in the 1990s. However, even in the early 2000s, although Latinos had become the largest minority group in the nation, they remained underrepresented as protagonists on TV programmes, with a few exceptions, notably the series *George Lopez* (2002-2007) and *Ugly Betty* (2006-2010). In general, in the 21st century, popular series – namely *Lost* (ABC, 2004-2010), *Desperate Housewives* (ABC, 2004-2012) and *Modern Family* (ABC, 2009-2020) to name just a few – included Latino characters that nonetheless remained far from representing all-around diversity. Only recently, also thanks to the growing influence and impact of the Hispanic TV audience, characters on television have started offering a wider view of US Latino experience. As a matter of fact, after the working-class families of the earlier multicultural shows, later series have engaged with multiple Latino roles, from the middle-class professionals of *Scrubs* (NBC, ABC, 2001-2010) and *Dexter* (Showtime, 2006-2013) to the wealthy family of *Cane* (CBS, 2007-). More significantly for the present purposes, multilingualism has become a privileged means to convey multicultural identities, as in *My Name is Earl* (NBC, 2005-2009) and *Prison Break* (Fox, 2005-2017), where Spanish jokes and code-switching between Spanish and English are left untranslated for the English-speaking audience. At a time when a third of US Latinos are first-generation immigrants, stereotypical and culturally marked Latino characters – less assimilated, working-class or

¹ In the article, I will use the masculine as neutral for simplicity's sake.

brown, with exaggerated characteristics such as broken English, heavy accents, and colourful outfits – have become less frequent on TV shows (Beltrán 2016: 32). For instance, the most recent dramedy *Jane the Virgin* (2014-) seems a sign of progress: the critically lauded series displays more convincing culturally hybrid identities on the screen and “offers the promise of more well written, culturally authentic, and empowering Latino-oriented TV narratives in the years to come” (Beltrán 2016: 24).

Nevertheless, it may be argued that the more traditional networks are not the sole places in the scenario of Latino-oriented series, as production and distribution of TV content since the 2010s have increasingly moved beyond television, towards cable networks and streaming platforms. In more recent times, especially the on-demand streaming site Netflix has released multilingual series where characters switch between English and Spanish, including the crime drama *Narcos* (Netflix, 2015-2017), the multilingual humorous sitcom *One Day at a Time* (2017-2020) and the comedy-drama *Orange is the New Black* (2013-2019), whose characters use both Hispanic English and African American Vernacular English. Therefore, a multitude of characters in American TV series currently speak in Spanish, either through one or more dialogue lines that add authenticity or through an entire conversation, with or without subtitles, or even through the expression of their bicultural hybridity embodied by Spanglish. In order to identify practical instances of representation of multiculturalism on the small screen, in both source texts (STs) and target texts (TTs), a theoretical framework grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Sociolinguistics and Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) is deemed necessary, and will be outlined as follows. SFL provides the foundation of the concept of language variation, Sociolinguistics offers definitions of the types of language variation occurring in multilingual settings and DTS (Díaz-Cintas 2004; Assis Rosa 2018) gives the conceptual framework to explore the issue of multilingualism in TV series.

3. Language variation

A seminal approach to the analysis of language variation was provided by Halliday *et al* (1964), who put forth a distinction between varieties according to the ‘user’ and the ‘use’ of language. User-

related varieties (named ‘dialects’) are linked to ‘who the speaker or writer is’, whereas use-related varieties (labelled ‘registers’) are linked to ‘what the speaker or writer is doing’ (Halliday and Hasan 1985: 41). Any ‘dialect’ is characterised by lexical, grammatical and phonological characteristics, including ‘accent’, which refers to the “articulatory and acoustic features” of language (Gregory and Carroll 1978: 12).

User-related varieties were studied from a translation point of view by various scholars, including Catford (1965), who argued that in dialect translation the criterion to be fulfilled is “‘human’ or ‘social’ geographical”, rather than “purely locational” (Catford 1965: 86–87). Hatim and Mason (1990) also explored the issue of language variation in relation to translation and focused on the aspect of ideological choices and implications inherent in translating geographical dialects. They argued that the most common strategies to deal with geographical varieties might cause problems (Hatim and Mason 1990: 40–41) as normalising a geographical dialect might result in a loss in the TT, whereas replacing that variety with a TL one might produce unintended effects.

In DTS, the notion of ‘multilingualism’ has been applied to both interlingual and intralingual varieties. The wide range of language variation featured in AV products has been discussed by Corrius and Zabalbeascoa (2011: 117), who introduced the concept of ‘third language (L₃)’ (Corrius 2005) to refer to any linguistic solution different from both L₁ and L₂ (i.e., the language of the ST and of the TT), be it a standard language, a dialect or any other form of language variation.

3.1. Code-switching, code-mixing and Spanglish

Multilingual communities, in their daily and family conversations, frequently use code-switching and code mixing; when they are represented on screen, such sociolinguistic phenomena become recurring discourse strategies. Code-switching refers to the act of using two or more languages either across speech turns or between sentences; code-mixing indicates switches within the same sentence or clause (Myers-Scotton 1997). Their use and function may vary: code-switching is often due to situational and stylistic constraints, thus the switch may be determined by either a specific socio-cultural

situation or by affective reasons, while code-mixing tends to occur for referential needs.

With specific reference to the Hispanic communities living in the US, distinct cultures sharing the same space also produce so-called ‘Spanglish’, defined by linguist Zentella (2016: 31-32) as “an in-group and informal style of speaking among Spanish-English bilinguals that honours the rules of both Spanish and English” and “consists primarily of some adapted and unadapted English loan words inserted in Spanish, some Spanish loans in English, loan translations, a few borrowed structures, and switches between Spanish and English, usually at sentence boundaries, but also within a sentence.” Such discourse strategies and their rendering in the Italian dubbing will be discussed in section 5 below.

4. Aims and methodology

The aim of this paper is to investigate, albeit in a small corpus, whether language variation has been tackled differently in the Italian dubbing from a short-time diachronic perspective, over a period which entailed major technological changes that produced new media platforms and a new vision of multilingual and multicultural societies, more open to diversity in both the source and target contexts.

It adopts a descriptive TS methodology (Díaz-Cintas 2004; Assis Rosa 2018), carrying out a qualitative study based on the illustration of the macro-strategies used in the most successful seasons of three TV series and on the analysis of the most relevant micro-strategies employed in selected episodes². Macro-strategies to classify instances of language variation in the TTs are placed on a continuum from the most foreignising to the most domesticating pole (Venuti 1995). In order to categorise the micro-strategies and techniques used by the AV translator to convey instances of multilingualism, the analysis exploits a combination of different taxonomies. The languages involved in the STs and TTs are identified according to Corrius and Zabalbeascoa’s (2011: 119-120) model, which includes five possibilities in translating multilingual AV products, summarised as follows:

² For space reasons, the investigation will focus on the verbal code, without touching upon multimodal discourse analysis.

- a) $L_3^{TT^3} = L_2$ (when the L_3 of the ST coincides with the L_2 of the TT)
- b) $L_3^{TT} = L_3^{ST}$ (when the L_3 of the ST remains unaltered in the TT)
- c) $L_3^{TT} = L_1$ (when the L_3 of the ST is substituted with the L_1 in the TT)
- d) $L_3^{TT} \neq L_1, L_3^{ST}, L_2$ (when the L_3 of the ST is *not* rendered through the L_1 , the same L_3 or the L_2)
- e) $L_3^{TT} = \emptyset$ (when L_3 segments of the ST are deleted in the TT)

Given that multilingualism in the present study also features instances of code-switching and code-mixing, in which both the L_3 and the L_1 are involved, the categories above will be expanded to include $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_1)$ – when the sociolinguistic phenomenon is maintained intact in the dubbed version – and $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_2)$ – when the elements in the L_3 are retained while L_1 expressions are translated into their equivalent in the L_2 .

Moreover, AVT modalities are analysed on the basis of Chaume's (2012: 132) classification of the techniques used by AV translators to convey language variation, in particular subtitling (into standard or non-standard L_2 or into L_3), dubbing, re-dubbing, liaison interpreting or no-translation. Finally, the translation of cultural references draws on Ranzato's (2016) taxonomy, which encompasses the strategies of loan and substitution, among others. I find such a combination of taxonomies a useful tool for the present analysis, since translating AV multilingual texts invariably entails choices among a range of languages, modalities and cultural-specific aspects.

5. Dubbing multilingual identities

Latino characters provide a representative sample of how television deals with portrayals of multicultural and multilingual identities. Translating such instances of language variation into another language (L_2) for dubbing represents a great challenge, involving sociolinguistic, cultural, political and ideological issues. In the next sections, three TV series populated by Latino characters will be

³ In the categorisation, the focus is on the L_3 from the perspective of the TT. This criterion explains the reason why the ST is referred to only when the L_3 of the ST is (not) maintained in the TT.

examined, i.e., *Ugly Betty* (season 1), *Jane the Virgin* (seasons 1 and 3) and *One Day at a Time* (season 1).

5.1. *Ugly Betty*

The dramedy *Ugly Betty* is the American adaptation of the Colombian telenovela *Yo soy Betty, la fea* (1999), which has been translated into multiple languages around the world. It tells the story of 22-year-old Betty Suarez, who manages to work at Mead Publications for the fashion magazine *Mode*, while living in Queens, New York, with her non-native working-class family, consisting of her widowed father Ignacio, originally from Mexico, her older sister Hilda, an unemployed single mother, and her tween nephew Justin. Although not widely, the multilingual background of *Ugly Betty*'s characters is featured through various linguistic choices.

The father Ignacio, fond of cooking Mexican food, drinking coffee and smoking cigars, watches original Latino *telenovelas*, but does not speak Spanish on the show, not even when the family travels to Mexico to deal with his status of illegal immigrant in the US after 30 years. Ignacio speaks a flawless English with a marked Mexican accent and essentially limits his use of Spanish language to code-mixing, by inserting words such as *empanada*, *tortilla* and *buñuelos* into his speech. During heightened emotional moments, he also sprinkles his English with interjections such as ¡*Dios mío!* ('My God!'), or terms of address such as *mi amor* ('my love') and *mija* ('dear'), the latter an appellative used by fathers (or mothers) in Central America, Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela for addressing a daughter (www.lexico.com).

Although the protagonists of the second and third generations are American citizens, their language use differs: Hilda speaks with a barely noticeable accent, likely to convey her lower education, and usually addresses her father with the appellative '*papi*' ('dad'); conversely, both Betty and Justin understand the Spanish of *telenovelas* but speak only English. In the Italian dubbing of the series, all accents are standardised, while instances of code-mixing are generally preserved through a loan strategy.

In the case of the heroine, her Latino identity is sometimes stereotyped by other characters, for example by the receptionist and then co-worker Amanda, who uses broken English the first time

Betty enters Mead Publications premises, assuming that a brown girl with colourful and non-fashionable dresses could only be a messenger. Amanda also stereotypes Betty's origins by adopting an exaggerated Spanish accent and, in one episode, hints at Betty's Latinidad with a cultural stereotype pertaining to South America, when she warns the heroine not to spoil important documents with *chimichurri* – “a savory Argentinean sauce or marinade” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com>), a cultural-specific reference which becomes a loan in the TT. During Amanda's visit to the heroine's home, she mispronounces the typical Spanish greeting *Hola* and is corrected by Mr Suarez, who offers her a delicious Mexican *flan*, i.e., a caramel custard (<https://www.gourmetsleuth.com/features/mexican-food-and-cooking-terms>), as can be seen in example 1:

Example 1) *Ugly Betty*, Season 1, Episode 4

ST	TT
IGNACIO: These must be your friends from the Mode.	IGNACIO: Devono essere i tuoi amici di la Mode.
BETTY: Just Mode dad. This is my father Ignacio and my sister Hilda.	BETTY: Solo Mode papà. Mio padre Ignacio e mia sorella Hilda.
AMANDA: Hola. [pronounced with an English accent]	AMANDA: Hoolaa.
IGNACIO: It's <i>hola</i> . [pronounced with a Spanish accent]	IGNACIO: <i>Hola</i> .
AMANDA: No, there's an 'h' in it. [...]	AMANDA: No, c'è un'acca' davanti. [...]
IGNACIO: Betty, maybe we should offer your friends a snack, we have <i>flan</i> .	IGNACIO: Betty, forse dovremmo offrire ai tuoi amici uno spuntino, abbiamo il <i>flan</i> .
AMANDA: What's <i>flan</i> ?	AMANDA: Che cos'è un <i>flan</i> ?
IGNACIO: It's a delicious custard.	IGNACIO: È una crema deliziosa.
AMANDA: Oh, bring it!	AMANDA: Ah, la voglio!

Code-mixing also involves other characters who wish to connect with Latinidad, such as Marc (who works at *Mode*) when he visits the Suarez family with his newly arrived mother, pretending that

Betty is his girlfriend to hide his homosexuality. The short dialogue is reproduced in example 2:

Example 2) *Ugly Betty*, Season 1, Episode 18

ST	TT
MARC: Hey, Mr Suarez.	MARC: Salve, Signor Suarez.
IGNACIO: Call me <i>Papi</i> . Too much?	IGNACIO: Chiamami <i>Papi</i> . È troppo?
MARC: This is my mom, Jean Weiner.	MARC: Lei è mia madre, Jean Weiner.
MRS WEINER: Yes, we... we talked on the phone. I love your home. It's so... <i>festivo</i> .	MRS WEINER: Ci siamo parlati al telefono... Adoro la sua casa, è così... <i>muy bonita</i> .

Mrs Weiner, to describe the Alvarez family's house, rich in Mexican elements, uses a Spanish term such as *festivo* ('festive'), albeit in its masculine form. The choice of code-mixing is maintained in the Italian version, although with another Spanish element, *muy bonita*, much more popular for the Italian audience. The choice of substitution might be explained with the fact that a loan of the same word *festivo* might have produced an ambiguous effect, given the similarity with the Italian word *festiva*.

In the dramedy, there are other Latino characters, such as the attractive and ambitious Sofia Reyes. From humble Latino origins (she is the daughter of a Mexican housemaid), she is in pursuit of success and uses Daniel Mead, the son of the boss at Mead Publications to help her on her way. When Daniel and Sofia first meet, although he is immediately attracted to her, he mistakes her for a maid, a common cultural stereotype, provoking Sofia's reaction, as seen in example 3:

Example 3) *Ugly Betty*, Season 1, Episode 7

ST	TT
SOFIA: Oh, and what gave it away? Was it my accent?	SOFIA: Che cosa mi ha tradita? La mia cortesia?

Since Sofia's Latino phonological traits are not conveyed in the TT, the Italian version replaces the reference to her accent with her manners, specifically her courtesy, applying the substitution strategy and conveying an ironic effect. In one episode, Sofia uses code-switching when insulting Daniel and calling him "a presumptuous, chauvinistic, *payaso*, *prepotente*, *insolente*, *creído*, *presumido*, *vanidoso*" (Season 1, Episode 7): the Spanish adjectives have been kept in the Italian TT, in the same sequence of loans.

5.2. *Jane the Virgin*

Another success, first broadcast by The CW Channel then released on Netflix, is the American series *Jane the Virgin* (2014-2019), an Anglicised romantic dramedy loosely adapted from the Venezuelan *telenovela* *Juana la Virgen* (RCTV, 2002), in a sarcastic subversion of the genre. *Jane the Virgin* depicts the lives of three generations of women of Venezuelan origin who live in Miami and belong to the Villanueva family: Jane – a 23-year-old who works as a waitress, is studying to become a teacher and dreams of being a writer – her 39-year-old mother, Xiomara, an aspiring pop singer, and her 66-year-old devout Catholic grandmother, Alba, who migrated to the US with her husband. The comedy is also populated by other Latino characters, such as Rogelio de la Vega, a *telenovela* actor who turns out to be Jane's father and the Latin Lover Narrator, who comments on the story and guides the viewers into the intricacies of the plot. In the US, the show received critical acclaim and was viewed as a programme devoted to both English-speaking Hispanic viewers and a wider multicultural audience. *Jane the Virgin* is markedly multilingual, insofar as it includes a wide range of intralingual and interlingual varieties.

Alba, the protagonist's *abuela*, generally speaks Spanish, her mother tongue, with a Latino accent, which is not exaggerated for comic purposes but seems to have the function of portraying a realistic first-generation character. After living many years in the US, Alba understands English and, on some occasions, she also speaks it; however, she deliberately chooses to use her native language, most likely to preserve her Venezuelan identity. In the English ST, Alba's

turns in Spanish are part-subtitled⁴ in English. In the Italian TT, following Corrius and Zabalbeascoa's (2011: 119) taxonomy, " $L_3^{TT} = L_3^{ST}$, the language remains unchanged, it is repeated". It should be noted that the Latino accent might be perceived broadly as 'Spanish', with no connotation of variety, hence with a potential loss in terms of cultural identity. The strategy is carried out through the conservation of the original track, or through dubbing, sometimes combined with subtitling. As a matter of fact, Spanish dialogues are maintained and sometimes part-subtitled in the first season, occasionally (in the most relevant scenes) in the second, while in the third season they are not subtitled, producing an extremely foreignising effect for the Italian audience. Alba also inserts English words into her Spanish speech, as typical of Spanglish, as in the following case:

Example 4) *Jane the Virgin*, Season 1, Episode 12

ST	TT
JANE: <i>Abuela</i> , that's mean.	JANE: <i>Abuela</i> , ma che dici!
ALBA: <i>Eh no, eso no es mean, es la verdad.</i>	ALBA: <i>Eh no, eso no es mean, es la verdad.</i>
SUB: No, it's not mean, it's the truth.	SUB: No, non sono crudele, è la verità.

This may be considered an instance of $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_1)$ code-switching, where both Spanish and English are maintained and explained through part-subtitling. It also occurs that English elements are translated in the TT, leaving Spanish intact, a solution which requires re-dubbing (see Chaume 2012: 132), as shown in example 5:

⁴ 'Part-subtitles', or 'open subtitles', "are appended to part of the dialogue only, are planned from an early stage in a film production and are aimed at the film's primary language audience" (O'Sullivan 2007: 81).

Example 5) *Jane the Virgin*, Season 3, Episode 14

ST	TT
JANE: Hey, <i>Abuela</i> !	JANE: Hey, <i>Abuela</i> !
ALBA: Mm.	ALBA: Mm.
JANE: What's wrong?	JANE: Che succede?
ALBA: <i>Lo que pasa es que 'I went for it' con Jorge y fue humillante. Claramente no está interesado.</i>	ALBA: <i>Lo que pasa es que "mi sono buttata" con Jorge y fue humillante. Claramente no está interesado.</i>
SUB: What's wrong is 'I went for it' with Jorge. And I was humiliated. He's clearly not.	[o]

In this scene, Alba is disappointed because Jorge, a man she likes, does not seem to be interested in her. In the ST, she peppers her Spanish with an English idiomatic expression that her daughter and niece had previously suggested. The expression is translated into a direct equivalent, dialogue is re-dubbed in Italian and thus the effect of code-mixing between two languages is maintained.

The second generation is embodied by Xiomara, Jane's mother, who speaks English with a barely perceivable Latino accent. However, she shows that she is attached to her Latino origins when she sings in Spanish. In the Italian version, Xiomara's accent is neutralised, while the Spanish songs are maintained, with no subtitling.

Jane, born and educated in the US, only speaks English, without a Latino accent. She generally understands Spanish, although she is not fully bilingual and, as also Beseghi (2019: 58) points out, occasionally finds it difficult to express certain concepts in the language of her family. Both Xiomara and Jane, in turn, make use of code-mixing, when they insert Spanish terms into English to express greetings, kinship terms or food names. Xiomara's and Jane's code-mixing and code-switching are basically reproduced in the Italian TT.

Outside the matriarchal family, Rogelio speaks Spanish in the *telenovelas* he interprets and with Alba, while he uses English with a strong Latino accent in his everyday life, where he also resorts to code-mixing. In the TT, while his Spanish lines are preserved, his Latino accent disappears, with a loss in terms of representation of his Latino identity. Similarly, other characters use code-mixing,

for instance Mateo, Jane's son in the third season. The boy, representative of the fourth generation, only speaks English, but often employs kinship terms to address members of his family, such as *abuela* ('grandmother') and *bisa*, abbreviation of *bisabuela* ('great-grandmother'): while the former is usually maintained in the TT through a loan, the latter is neutralised and translated into the Italian equivalent, *bisnonna*. An interesting role is played by the Latin Lover Narrator, who functions as a 'diegetic interpreter', since he carries out an "act of (oral) interpreting which takes place within the story world through the agency of a character in the narrative" (O'Sullivan 2011: 80-81), as in the following instance:

Example 6) *Jane the Virgin*, Season 3, Episode 18

ST	TT
ALBA: ¿Nunca soñaste en tener una boda grande, eh?	ALBA: ¿Nunca soñaste en tener una boda grande, ah?
SUB: Never dreamed of a big wedding, eh?	[o]
XIOMARA: You save this thing?	XIOMARA: L'hai conservato sul serio? Oh.
ALBA: Mm. Me acuerdo de ti y de Slutty Cristal cuando tenías diez años...	ALBA: Mm. Me acuerdo de ti y de Slutty Cristal cuando tenías diez años...
SUB: I remember you and Slutty Cristal at 10 years old...	[o]
NARRATOR: Before she became Slutty Cristal, I hope.	NARRATOR: Prima che diventasse Cristal facilona, spero.

In this scene from season 3, Alba and Xiomara are talking about the upcoming wedding with Rogelio. Alba recalls one of Xiomara's old friends, who was nicknamed in English as 'Slutty Cristal'. In the TT, this may be classified as an instance of $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_1)$: code-mixing remains unchanged, the track has been maintained, and thus also the dual languages. However, the Italian translator takes the chance to exploit the role of the diegetic narrator, who explains the meaning of such a descriptive name: 'Slutty Cristal' is hence translated as *Cristal facilona* in its second occurrence. Only his marked Latino accent is invariably lost.

5.3. *One Day at a Time*

One Day at a Time (2017-2020)⁵ was a remake of the feminist family sitcom with the same title of the 1970s; it was dubbed into Italian as *Giorno per giorno* and released on Netflix. The story is set in Los Angeles, where a multi-generational Cuban-American family lives. The Alvarez family consists of Penelope, a former Army nurse and an Afghan war veteran, her unconventional 15-year-old daughter Elena, her tween son Alex and her vital mother Lydia, who is strongly rooted to her Cuban origins, from music and dance to food and coffee.

As a first-generation immigrant, Lydia speaks a variety of English, with a marked Cuban accent, which is conveyed in the TT, although through a more general Spanish accent. Moreover, the character often code-switches to Spanish, giving a realistic flavour to the character: entire lines of dialogues are spoken in Spanish, with no form of translation in the ST or the TT, while others show instances of code-switching. For example, while speaking in her Cuban English, Lydia switches to Spanish with fragments of clauses, as with *es una cosita*. In sociolinguistic terms, Lydia often uses Spanglish, adding Spanish elements at both lexical and grammatical levels, such as in the following examples:

Example 7) *One Day at a Time/Giorno per giorno*, Season 1, Episode 3

ST	TT
LYDIA: <i>Gracias</i> very much.	LYDIA: <i>Gracias</i> moltissimo.

Example 8) *One Day at a Time/Giorno per giorno*, Season 1, Episode 3

ST	TT
LYDIA: You go on! I will pray for your eternal soul. And then call <i>el</i> Uber.	LYDIA: Questa mattina mi sono fatta un giretto su un coso chiamato <i>el</i> Uber.

⁵ After 3 seasons on Netflix, in 2020 the series moved to Pop cable TV.

In example 8, Lydia achieves a comic effect when she uses the Spanish deictic *el* ('the') with the contemporary globalised item 'Uber', a ridesharing company also known in Italy, effectively recreated in the Italian TT. In addition, Lydia typically employs code-mixing to refer to cultural-specific items, as in the case of food names, such as *ropa vieja*, *pastelito*, as well as *un cafecito*. As a pious Catholic, she also uses the Spanish names of Popes, such as *Juan Pablo* and *Benedicto*, to refer to John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

The other members of the family generally speak English, although they understand and speak Spanish, even the youngest member: in one episode, Alex is involved in a short dialogue with his grandmother in Spanish. In the TT, the Spanish dialogues are neither dubbed nor subtitled, preserving the cultural identity of the characters. A very cultural-specific item which plays a major role in the story and regards Alex's sister is *la quinceañera*, i.e., "a celebration of a girl's fifteenth birthday that is traditionally observed in Latin American cultures to mark her transition to adulthood" (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>). This term is widely repeated in the first episode, sometimes abbreviated as *quince*, when Elena is exhorted by her traditional *abuela* and by her mother to celebrate it. The Spanish items are transferred in the Italian dubbed text, which maintains the strong links with the Latino culture.

Code-switching is also used by Penelope, who speaks English and intermingles Spanish fragments, such as ¡*Mira!* ('Look!') or ¡*Claro!* ('Sure!'). Likewise, code-mixing is employed by all members of the family, who frequently use Spanish kinship terms, such as *mami*, *papi*, *papito*, *abuela*, *abuelita*, consistently maintained in the Italian TT through loans. Moreover, they often adopt Spanish exclamations and interjections, with the function of expressing emotions: typical examples are ¡*sinvergüenza!* ('cheeky girl!') (episode 1), *comemierda* ('asshole', 'shithead', episode 2), *bobo* ('silly', 'stupid', episode 8), and *puta*, used in this example as an informal interjection (episode 2), all left untranslated in the Italian version. A further example deserves attention:

Example 9) *One Day at a Time/Giorno per giorno*, Season 1, Episode 3

ST	TT
PENELOPE: By the time you're done with Mass, and you've said hello to <i>fulano y fulana</i> , it's five o'clock.	PENELOPE: Quando la funzione è finita e hai salutato <i>fulano y fulana</i> , si son fatte le cinque.

In the ST, Penelope uses an idiomatic Spanish expression, *fulano y fulana*, which corresponds to 'so-and-so' and could be seen as an instance of Spanglish. It is maintained in the Italian TT, creating an extremely foreignising effect. While the Hispanic part of the ST audience could understand, the Italian audience is completely excluded and only a general flavour of multilingualism can be grasped.

In the series, multilingualism is also conveyed at the level of metalanguage, as example 10 illustrates:

Example 10) *One Day at a Time/Giorno per giorno*, Season 1, Episode 1

ST	TT
LYDIA: You make me sound like I have an accent.	LYDIA: Qui mi stai imitando come se io avessi un accento.

In this scene, Elena is mimicking her *abuela*, who replies referring to her accent. The translation almost maintains the metalinguistic reference, consistently with Lydia's Spanish accent in the Italian TT.

In general, all Spanish dialogues, lines, instances of code-switching and code-mixing are maintained in the Italian TT. There are also exceptions, such as in the scene when Lydia recalls her first encounter with her husband Berto: in the flashback, while the ST dialogue remains intact, Italian subtitles offer a translation.

5.4. Discussion of findings

Summing up, from a translational point of view, the analysis has revealed that overall, attention is paid to preserving language

variation according to the user, meaning interlingual and intralingual varieties, especially at the lexico-grammatical level. In other words, along a cline of domestication *vs.* foreignisation, the three TV products appear to be increasingly foreignising, in the ST and especially in their Italian translation. In terms of Corrius and Zabalbeascoa's (2011) taxonomy, $L_3^{TT} = L_3^{ST}$ seems to be the preferred method to convey the multicultural identity of the Latino characters. It is amply used when the STs – particularly *Jane the Virgin* and *One Day at a Time* – contain entire dialogues in Spanish.

Code-switching, mainly featured in the two most recent series, has been substantially reproduced, especially with an effect of $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_1)$, when both Spanish and English have been maintained in the target version and of $L_3^{TT} (+L_1) = L_3^{ST} (+L_2)$, when English expressions have been translated into their direct equivalents. In addition, code-mixing, featured in all three series when regarding cultural-specific references, has been transferred with the loan strategy, with limited examples of substitution.

From a diachronic perspective, it is interesting to notice that even accents, traditionally and notoriously ignored for various theoretical and practical constraints, have been partly conveyed, at least in the Netflix's series *One Day at a Time*. While the vocal characterisation of *Ugly Betty* and *Jane the Virgin* has undergone a process of neutralisation in the dub, the *abuela* Lydia of *One Day at a Time* retains her cultural identity in the dubbed version by speaking Italian with a Spanish accent. This aspect leads to different solutions when it comes to conveying metalinguistic issues: if in *Ugly Betty*, where accents are not reproduced, we find a substitution (see example 3), in *One Day at a Time*, where Lydia speaks with a Spanish-Italian accent, the metalinguistic element is maintained (see example 10). However, even when linguistic variation is conveyed at the lexico-grammatical, phonological and metalinguistic levels, the dialectal specificity of Cuban Spanish is inevitably lost.

Interestingly, *Jane the Virgin*'s first and second seasons offer part-subtitles, which are generally maintained in the first, partially in the second dubbed versions, while they are eliminated in the third. This choice might be interpreted as an effort to place emphasis on the multilingual nature of characters in Netflix's products.

With respect to Chaume's (2012) taxonomy, most multilingual situations cater for "(re)dubbing L₃ dialogues lines into L₃", with the result of producing a multilingual dubbed product. Apart from the instance of part-subtitles in *Jane the Virgin*, albeit drawn from the ST, we have also encountered instances of subtitling, as in the case of a flashback in *One Day at a Time*, which was relevant to the plot.

6. Final remarks

This paper has sought to trace clues to a possible diachronic evolution in dubbing, from English into Italian, multilingualism of multicultural TV shows produced in the US and featuring Latino characters, spanning a period of 14 years. The three TV series under investigation suggest a move from Latino stereotypical figures of the 2000s to more realistic characters of the last few years. Although the present qualitative analyses will need to be quantitatively substantiated by research on larger corpora, the series sampled in the present article illuminate how television representations engage with multicultural identities in contexts where target viewers are not necessarily familiar with the L₃, i.e., Spanish. This study follows prior research into the reproduction and representation of identities in terms of race, ethnicity, class and especially gender (Pérez L. De Heredia 2015, 2016; Pérez L. De Heredia and De Higes-Andino 2019), dealing with a different language pair (English>Spanish) and other AVT modes, such as subtitling (De Higes-Andino *et al.* 2013). Within the limitations of a case study, the paper has shown the validity of a diachronic perspective in exploring multilingualism in TV series (Pérez L. De Heredia 2015), given that the tendency to reproduce diversity seems to appear linked to the fast evolution in recent times.

In her article, "Where have all the varieties gone?", Chiaro (2008) remarked:

[w]hen faced with translating linguistic variation on screen, the general tendency is the occurrence of a disappearance act, a Houdinesque illusion which occurs in ST where time and time again, the issue of difference is swept neatly beneath the proverbial carpet to remain politely ignored. But the problem is that ignoring variation doesn't make it go away. (Chiaro 2008: 10)

After over a decade, the picture seems partly changed, as a result of globalisation and new technologies that have favoured the spread of multiculturalism across borders. As this paper has illustrated, especially in the most recent shows released on Netflix – i.e., *Jane the Virgin*'s third season and *One Day at a Time* – characters are neither assimilated to the mainstream American culture nor to the Italian L2 context. It might be argued that, since “Netflix has decided to make diversity a top priority” (https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/z4gmw5/why-netflix-has-decided-to-make-diversity-a-top-priority) and its audience seems to be willing to accept it (see González-Sobrinó *et al.* 2019), such an exchange also encompasses a certain amount of constructive estrangement. It might be claimed that, with a foreignising dubbed product, the viewer's comprehension may be compromised, especially because audiences are not homogeneous in terms of familiarity with the languages and cultures involved. Furthermore, an alienating effect is likely, since Italian viewers cannot rely on a similar environment of Spanish and Italian cultures cohabiting, and thus greater ‘suspension of disbelief’ might be needed. However, the ultimate goal of dubbing such multicultural TV series seems to overcome the cultural and linguistic barriers and encompass a broader focus on representation (Pérez L. De Heredia and De Higes-Andino 2019). Such a perspective suggests an increasing switch from difference to diversity, which the media might help radicate in older and especially younger generations. In light of this, foreignisation in the translation of multilingual TV products might be interpreted as a social and cultural mission of AVT, which has increasingly been viewed as a social activity (Díaz-Cintas 2012) and, as Ranzato and Zanotti (2018: 2) point out, plays a key role “as a mode of intercultural exchange”. Recently, issues of AVT as intercultural mediation have been thoroughly explored by Guillot and Pavesi (2019), who illustrate the interplay between the cross-cultural and intercultural components. As the scholars argue, AVT entails “a dual undertaking, which includes accounting for [it] both in its potential to mean as a distinctive and autonomous expressive code and in its potential to affect perception interculturally” (Guillot and Pavesi 2019: 498). Reception studies, following De Higes-Andino *et al.* (2020), are urgently required to get insights into the audience's perception and gauge the impact of dubbed multicultural TV series on Italian viewers.

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