Thai TV series brought to Spanish-speaking audiences

A study of fansubbing practices

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the complexities of the fansubbing of Thai TV series into Spanish as a representative case of two underexplored areas in Translation Studies: non-professional translation and pivot translation. Using a descriptive approach, this thesis carries out a comparative analysis of two Thai TV series, their English pivots and subsequent Spanish fansubs, complemented with extratextual resources. The findings shed light on the following issues: the blurring boundary between professional and non-professional audiovisual translation, the prevalence of source-oriented translation, and the influence of the fansubbing mechanism on the pivot translation process. The fansubbers' genre expertise and collaborative workflow help them overcome challenges in pivot translation, namely the mediation of cultural references and linguistic differences and the particularity of self-censorship in Thai media. By offering insights into the translations initiated by audiences, this study not only reveals the target viewers' expectations in this underrepresented language combination, but also highlights potential innovative solutions that may inform professional practices.

Resumen

La presente tesis pretende indagar las complejidades del fansubbing de las series de televisión tailandesas al español, como un caso representativo de dos áreas marginales de los Estudios de Traducción: la traducción no profesional y la traducción indirecta. A partir de un enfoque descriptivo, este estudio se centra en el análisis textual comparativo de dos series tailandesas, la versión intermedia en inglés y los fansubs en español, junto con recursos extratextuales. Los resultados hacen hincapié en diferentes aspectos: la frontera difusa entre la traducción audiovisual profesional y no profesional, el predominio de la traducción orientada al texto original y las influencias del mecanismo del fansubbing sobre la traducción indirecta. El dominio del género textual y el proceso colaborativo ayudan a los fansubbers a superar los retos de la traducción indirecta, principalmente la mediación de los referentes culturales, las diferencias lingüísticas y la autocensura en las producciones tailandesas. Mediante el análisis de las traducciones realizadas por el público, este estudio no sólo demuestra las expectativas del público meta de esta combinación lingüística poco estudiada, sino que también destaca soluciones creativas que pueden inspirar las prácticas profesionales.

Resum

Aquesta tesi té per objectiu indagar les complexitats del fansubbing de les sèries de televisió tailandeses a l'espanyol, com un cas representatiu de dues àrees marginals dels Estudis de Traducció: la traducció no professional i la traducció indirecta. A través d'una aproximació descriptiva, aquesta tesi se centra en l'anàlisi textual comparativa de dues sèries tailandeses, la versió intermèdia en anglès i els fansubs en espanyol, juntament amb recursos extratextuals. Els resultats ressalten els següents aspectes: la frontera difusa entre la traducció audiovisual professional i no professional, el predomini de la traducció orientada al text original, i les influències del mecanisme del fansubbing sobre la traducció indirecta. El domini del gènere textual i el procés col·laboratiu ajuden els fansubbers a superar els reptes de la traducció indirecta, principalment la mediació dels referents culturals, les diferències lingüístiques i la particularitat de l'autocensura a les produccions tailandeses. Mitjançant l'anàlisi de les traduccions produïdes pel públic, aquest estudi demostra les expectatives del públic meta d'aquesta combinació lingüística poc estudiada, i també destaca solucions creatives que poden inspirar les pràctiques professionals.

Table of contents

List of figures

List of tables

Key terms and abbreviations

AV	Audiovisual
AVT	Audiovisual translation
DoT	*Diary of Tootsies,* Season 1 (2016)
E	Episode (of a TV show)
EN	English (language)
Fansubbing	Subtitling by fans
Hm	*Hormones the Series* (2013-2015)
ITr	Indirect Translation (translation of a translation)
Pivot translation	Indirect translation in AVT
S	Season (of a TV show)
SDH	Subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
SP	Spanish (language)
Subtitling	If not specified otherwise, "subtitling" in this thesis refers to interlingual subtitling
SVOD platforms	Subscription video-on-demand platforms
TH	Thai (language)
TS	Translation Studies
TUF	Thai Underground Fansub

Introduction

Non-professional translation practices – ranging from literary translation undertaken by individuals for negligible financial rewards, adult and child language brokering performed by family members of immigrants, to fansubbing and fandubbing provided by emotionally and affectively engaged fans – have long existed. As a subdiscipline within Translation Studies which is "largely concerned with professional translation" (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva, 2012, p. 157), non-professional interpreting and translation used to be disregarded, perceived as unworthy of academic investigation, or viewed as a threat to the profession. Despite a growing academic interest in recent years, research in this area "has clearly suffered from a somewhat lesser interest than its professional – and therefore less controversial – counterpart" (Antonini et al., 2017, p. 3).

In the media, the abundance of non-professional translation plays an integral part in shaping today's complex mediascape. The development of Web 2.0 and the digitalisation of the media have contributed to the emergence of "prosumers" (Denison, 2011a, p. 455), or consumers that actively participate as media content producers and circulate their versions. The role of these empowered consumers has led to the "re-configuration of the publishing and media marketplaces" (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva, 2012, p. 152).

Fansubs or subtitles created voluntarily by fans (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Orrego-Carmona & Lee, 2017), have attracted academic attention as a disruptive, grassroots phenomenon. Early fansubbing practices, which are closely associated with Japanese anime programmes, are characterised by norm-defying, creative textual features and are often viewed as a subversive practice against mainstream professional subtitling. Dwyer (2017, p. 135), for instance, conceptualises fansubbing as "an errant or improper form of AVT that is currently reconfiguring the paradigms and politics of the screen and translation industries". The emergence of fansubs has challenged the traditional top-down distribution of mass media and encouraged the circulation of audiovisual products in a non-linear network.

From the viewpoint of Translation Studies, as fansubbers freely choose texts to translate and circulate among like-minded audiences, they can be regarded as self-commissioned translators, thus breaking away from the traditional model of "patronage" (Lefevere,

1992) in which a clear separation is made between the roles of the translators and the commissioners who initiate the translation process (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva, 2012, p. 151). In some cases, fansubbing has been taken as viewers' subversion of official translations that do not cater to their preferences. Fansubbing of anime in the United States precisely emerged out of the fans' protest against the "deodorizing" official translation (Dwyer, 2012, p. 229). In other cases, fansubbing introduces viewers to texts in the markets into which official distributors have not ventured, hence the absence of officially commissioned translations. Despite the controversy surrounding its legality and quality, fansubbing can be considered beneficial to the industry in locating potential markets (Denison, 2011a).

Although fansubbing is generally characterised by norm-breaking textual features and questionable quality due to the amateur nature of the translators, it is a complex phenomenon and the growing number of studies since the 2010s has testified to the exceptions across languages and genres. Italian fansub groups, for instance, adhere to style guides that are similar to mainstream subtitling conventions (Massidda, 2015, pp. 50–55). A case of well-received fansubs in China proves to be an exception to the general notion that fansubbers prioritise a source-oriented approach, since the fansubbers imposed the ideology of the target culture to shift the translation away from the source culture (Chang, 2017). Conversely, unconventional textual features have made their way into some mainstream media productions (Díaz-Cintas, 2018; Pérez-González, 2014, pp. 270–275). This increasingly fuzzy boundary between fansubbing and its professional counterpart calls for a re-evaluation of the binary perception that strictly separate the two practices.

The Thai>English>Spanish (TH>EN>SP) fansubbing, which is the object of this study, is the intersection of two pressing topics in Translation Studies: non-professional translation in the media and indirect translation (mostly referred to as "pivot translation" in the industry). Similar to non-professional translation, indirect translation tends to be overlooked in Translation Studies as it is often deemed less prestigious than direct translation. However, the need to join non-professional translation with indirect translation is undeniable as they are both commonly practiced, especially in commercial AVT in the age of on-demand video streaming platforms.

Seeing several Thai TV series subtitled into Spanish by fans struck me as an unusual transfer of Thai cultural products. Some of the country's films and series that had been exported to other Asian countries did achieve enormous success, for instance, พี่มาก..พระโขนง *[Pee Mak Phrakhanong: Pee Mak]* (2013)*,* the highest-grossing Thai film that gained immense popularity in Southeast Asia (GTH, 2013), and ฉลาดเกมส์โกง *[Chalat Games Kong: Bad Genius]* (2017), which enjoyed tremendous success in East and Southeast Asia (Taipei Times, 2017). However, Thai TV shows are often limited to regional distribution within Asia and are barely known to international viewers.

In Spanish-speaking countries, to the best of my knowledge, there has been no record of Thai TV shows being distributed via mainstream television channels. When this research began in late 2017, fansubbing was likely the Spanish-speaking viewership's only conduit for access to Thai TV series. The official distribution of Thai shows worldwide did not start until 2018, when the media streaming platform Netflix signed a multi-licensing agreement with GMM Grammy, one of Thailand's most influential media conglomerate companies (The Nation, 2018). After that, a few Thai series became available for viewing in Spain and Latin America via Netflix. However, numerous Thai series had already been introduced to Spanish-speaking viewers and circulated on the Internet even before then, thanks to fansubbers who produced Spanish subtitles without any monetary gains.

Among videos of Thai series with embedded Spanish subtitles dispersed across video-sharing platforms such as YouTube and Dailymotion, I have located a few fansub groups with their own websites dedicated to subtitling Thai films and TV shows into Spanish. At the textual level, the works by the group called Thai Underground Fansub (TUF) stood out thanks to the fansubbers' innovative approach. Figures 1 and 2 display screenshots of an explanatory headnote and a translation of on-screen texts using titles that are designed to blend with the visual components. The interventionist, visually impactful approach sparked my curiosity to discover more about fansubbing in this language combination.

Figure 1. Headnote (Hm S1 E1) by TUF
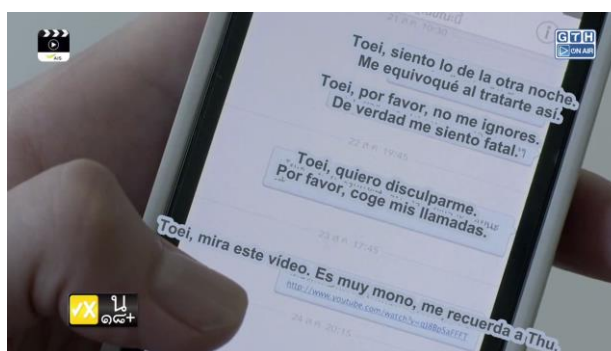
Figure 2. Integrated titles (Hm S2 E5) by TUF

Despite the mushrooming in recent years of studies on fansubbing in diverse genres and linguistic settings, TH>EN>SP fansubbing remains underexplored. Few studies have been carried out on audiovisual translation (AVT) in the Thai<>Spanish language combination. The first one is Kerdkidsadanon's (2015) doctoral thesis on the quality of Thai (professional) subtitles of the Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar's films, and the second one is Panyasiri and Rangponsumrit (2022) on the functional equivalence of cultural references rendition in a Thai film. The dearth of research on AVT in this language combination is not surprising, given the scarcity of media exchange between the two linguacultures.

The lack of contact between the two linguacultures might be reflected in the fact that even professional subtitles in the opposite translational direction, that is, from Spanish into Thai, were similarly produced using pivot translation via English subtitles. Although TH>SP fansubbing may cater to a niche audience, investigating the production of non-professional subtitles in this language combination will shed some light on several issues that would be valuable to add to AVT literature.

Firstly, studying fansubbing as a form of non-professional translation can give us "an opportunity to learn more about how audiovisual translation *can be done,* rather than to simply document how the industry *wants it done*" (Pérez-González, 2014, p. 234). Since fansubs are carried out by audiences themselves, their textual characteristics most likely reflect what the audiences have been accustomed to and what they expect from a translation, which can be informative for professional practices.

Although Hollywood productions and English-language content still dominate the mediascape, the surge of subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) platforms has opened up more space to cater for niche audiences. The global success of non-English speaking films and series, such as Spanish series *La casa de papel* [*Money Heist*] (2017-2021) and South Korean series *Squid Game* (2021) point to the changing trends towards the popularisation of non-English content worldwide. Netflix plans to invest more resources in numerous original productions around the world, including a few Thai originals, while the number of subscribers who watch non-English shows keeps growing month after month (Schneider, 2018).

Still, in AVT, insufficient attention has been paid to the translation of non-English content, and even less in non-professional settings. Apart from the multitude of studies on anime fansubs and their attention-grabbing textual features, other studies on fansubbing largely focus on English-language productions, such as Italian fansubs of American TV series (Dore & Petrucci, 2022; Massidda, 2015; Massidda & Casarini, 2017), Spanish fansubs of an American sitcom (Orrego-Carmona, 2015), Swedish fansubs of English-speaking films (Pedersen, 2019), Brazilian fansubs of American shows (Bold, 2012), and Chinese fansubs of English-speaking shows and films (Chang, 2017; He, 2017). To keep up with the changing trend towards the proliferation of non-English content from around the world, it is necessary to broaden AVT research horizons by shifting the focus to reverse language transfer from underrepresented linguacultures.

Secondly, the case of TH>SP fansubbing represents a complex relationship between professional and amateur AVT. While early studies on fansubbing seem to have juxtaposed the fan activity with professional practices due to its deviation from mainstream subtitling conventions, recent research has shifted away from the binary paradigm and has begun to acknowledge the blurring boundary between the two, for

instance, in terms of efficient workflow and hierarchical internal organisation of the fansubbing communities (Li, 2015; Orrego-Carmona, 2016b), and in terms of translation decisions (Dore & Petrucci, 2022). In the TH>EN>SP fansubbing case, the fact that Spanish-speaking fansubbers employed both fansubs and official subtitles as pivot subtitles demonstrates the close relationship between the two and may challenge the preconception of fansubbing as a resistance force against professional AVT.

Thirdly, while there has been some research on pivot AVT, its amateur incarnation has not received the same level of academic interest. There is still a need to develop systematic textual analysis to provide insights into how pivot AVT is carried out in non-professional settings.

In previous studies related to fansubbing, the pivot translation process has been mentioned only in passing; unorthodox, norm-defying features in the ultimate target text have been acknowledged without the recognition of the pivot translation mechanism or possible influence from the pivot texts. This thesis attempts to bridge the gap in the field by examining the nature of fansubs in the TH>EN>SP transfers and their relations to the pivot translation process.

Given the cultural distance between Thailand and the Spanish-speaking world and the infrequent transfer of AV products in either direction, this fansubbing practice can be considered a unique phenomenon worthy of academic investigation. As a pioneering study of fansubbing in this underrepresented language combination, this research will hopefully contribute to enriching the literature on AVT in terms of diversity and provide a better understanding of the current media translation scenario.

Situated within the product-oriented branch in Holme's (1988) 'map' of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), this thesis aims to describe and identify the nature of the fansubbing of Thai TV series into Spanish as a form of pivot translation, using a case study of fansubs carried out by the group Thai Underground Fansub (TUF).

Specific objectives are as follows:

- Give an overview of Thai media flows and the presence of Thai productions in the international mediascape, both through official and unofficial channels.

- Compile the prototypical traits of fansubbing from literature in AVT and Media Studies to develop parameters for the analysis of the TUF fansubbed corpus.
- Determine what prototypical traits of fansubs are applicable to the TH>EN>SP fansubs by the TUF group.
- Verify possible convergence between professional subtitling and fansubbing.
- Compare the ultimate source text, the pivot, and the ultimate target text to detect any discrepancy in the pivot translation chain and their implications.

The corpus for the textual analysis comprises two TV series: the first and second seasons of *Hormones the Series* (2013-2014) and the first season of *Diary of Tootsies* (2016), both of which add up to over 30 hours of audiovisual materials. The analysis involves two versions: the one with English subtitles (the pivot text) and the other with Spanish fansubs (the ultimate target text). For *Hormones,* the transfer was from English fansubs, while *Diary of Tootsies* was translated from official English subtitles.

Although the main focus of this study is product-oriented, extratextual resources have been taken in to account to complement the comparative textual analysis and shed some light on the other two interrelated branches of DTS as observed by Toury (2012): the process- and function-oriented aspects. The paratexts created by fansubbers on their website to accompany their translated videos and online interviews with some of the group members helped clarify the reasons behind some of the translation decisions and the translation process. Meanwhile, data on the selection of texts to translate and the sociocultural context of the TH>SP fansubbing practice offered insights into the functions of the translation.

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces AVT with a focus on the subtitling modality and the implications of non-professional practices in the digital age. It also discusses the advent of numerous forms of subtitling on the Internet, or "cybersubtitling" as termed by Díaz-Cintas (2018), and the shift in the role of the audience from passive to active viewers who also participate in creating and distributing their own versions of media texts. Against this background, different approaches to the fansubbing phenomenon are reviewed: empirical product-oriented studies, sociological approach focusing on the translators, and reception studies focusing on audiences. The chapter also contains a review of indirect translation and its intersection with AVT.

To contextualise the TH>SP fansubbing phenomenon, there is a need to discuss the presence of Thai television shows in the international mediascape. Chapter 2 first gives an overview of the fansubbing phenomenon in the Spanish language and then discusses the implications of fansubbing as a mechanism that has facilitated the Thai media flow in international settings. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the main fansubbing communities that focused on translating Thai audiovisual content into Spanish. Their shared characteristics are discussed based on concepts and terms from Media Studies and Translation Studies.

The third chapter focuses on the theoretical frameworks that undergird the analysis and the methodology. As fansubbing is often conceptualised as a disruptive, norm-defying phenomenon, it is necessary to address the concept of translation norms and revisit concepts that constitute mainstream subtitling conventions. On the other hand, prototypical features of fansubs from previous studies are discussed and established as parameters for analysis. In this chapter, Chaume's model of signifying codes in audiovisual text (2012) is applied as a useful tool that brings to the fore the complexities of fansubs and advocates an analysis that goes beyond the transfer of linguistic elements. This chapter ends with a discussion of the methodology and the details of the selected corpus.

The findings from the TUF case study are presented in chapters 4-6. Chapter 4 maps the characteristics attributed to professional subtitling and fansubbing onto the TH>SP corpus, with the focus on the formal aspect of the subtitles. The results reveal the creative and interventionist approach in fansubs, which challenges the concepts that underlie mainstream subtitling conventions. This chapter further presents textual evidence that highlights the convergence between professional and amateur practices, focusing on the case of *Diary of Tootsies*. The preliminary findings from this part of the analysis, which have been reviewed and expanded in section 4.4 in this thesis, was published in 2022 in the journal *Między Oryginałem a Przekładem* (Leksawat, 2022).

Chapter 5 delves into genre expertise and the source-oriented translation approach in fansubs which is evident in the pivot translation chain. Informed by Dwyer's outline of the "overarching traits of fansubs" (2012), the analysis focuses on the transfer of cultural

references, linguistic features of the Thai language, and nonverbal and intertextual elements.

Finally, chapter 6 addresses the complexities specific to the conservative nature of the Thai media and the fansubbers' interventions to mediate taboo themes and censored elements. The findings are summarised in chapter 7, and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Before moving on to the first chapter, I would like to clarify issues concerning the presentation of non-English quotations in the thesis. First, I have translated quotations from Thai or Spanish into English and inserted the original versions in the footnotes. Quotations translated by others are indicated in the text. In the analysis, back translations of examples from Thai and Spanish are placed in square brackets [].

Lastly, the Thai language has its own writing system but lacks a universal system for transliteration into the Latin alphabet. Even the characters' names in the corpus are sometimes written differently in the same English-subtitled version (e.g., Seeban or Sriban in *Diary of Tootsies,* Dao or Dow in *Hormones*). To avoid inconsistency, this thesis follows the romanisation system promulgated by the Office of the Royal Society of Thailand (Office of the Royal Society, 1999). The system does not take into account the tones since it was not created for didactic purposes; however, it is widely accepted as the standard transliteration for official signs and publications and coincides with most of the transliterations that appear in the corpus.

1. STATE OF THE ART

To situate the fansubbing phenomenon as part of non-professional translation practices in the media, this chapter will discuss previous research in AVT in relation to the active role of media consumers and the ensuing proliferation of collaborative amateur translation practices. The focus will be on the conceptualisation and the implications of fansubbing in AVT and Media Studies.

As the selected texts for the analysis in this thesis are indirect translation (ITr), the intersection between ITr and AVT will also be reviewed.

1.1 Audiovisual Translation as a field within Translation Studies

From "a virgin area of research" as observed by Delabastita (1989, p. 206) in one of the pioneering research works in the early days of the field, AVT has seen dramatic advancements over the past few decades.

According to Chaume (2018b), fragmented contributions to AVT emerged near the end of the 1950s with the monograph by Simon Laks (1957) and a specialised issue in *Babel* (1960). Over the past decades, research in AVT has grown exponentially. Numerous international conferences have been held to connect academic perspectives with practitioners in the industry, for instance, *Languages and the Media* (since 1996) and *Media for All* (since 2005). In 1995, the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) was established to promote research, didactics and professional standards in AVT at the international level. In 2018, the ESIST launched the first academic journal dedicated to AVT: *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* (JAT). With such progress, AVT has come of age as a legitimate and independent area within Translation Studies.

AVT now encompasses, according to Pérez-González (2014), "a variety of transfer methods" or modalities: subtitling, revoicing (includes dubbing, voice-over, narration, free commentary, and simultaneous interpreting), and various forms of media accessibility (subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH), respeaking and audio

description). Bartoll (2015, pp. 63–65) expands the list to include remakes, consecutive interpreting (in the radio, television or live events and film festivals), and written summary, given that they are used to translate audiovisual texts, although they do not pertain exclusively to audiovisual translation. Another area that has gained increasing visibility in the field is video game localisation (e.g. Mangiron, 2018; O'Hagan & Mangiron, 2013).

According to Chaume (2018b), AVT has faced four methodological turns over time: descriptive turn, cultural turn, sociological turn, and cognitive turn. These turns have been developed together with the progress in TS. From initial identifications of specific features in AV texts as opposed to written ones, the influence of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) shifted the focus from the source text to the target text. Holme's notion of product-oriented studies (1988) and the descriptive methodology from literary translation proved fruitful for AVT research. The same applies to Toury's notions of norms at work in the translation process (Toury, 1995; 2012). Studies that explore AVT practices based on norm theories include Karamitroglou's research (2000) on translational norms in television channels in Greece, Sokoli's (2005; 2011) comparative study of subtitling norms in Greece and Spain, and Pedersen's research on subtitling norms in Scandinavia (2011).

With the following cultural turn, also in line with the research trend in Translation Studies, scholars began to explore issues such as ideology, identity, gender, and censorship, among others. Díaz-Cintas (2013) conceptualises AV translators as intercultural agents and mediators and explores how their ideology could affect the manipulation of the target text.

The next turn is the sociological turn, which focuses on "the role of the translator and the power mediating in the selection, translation and adaptation of an audiovisual text, as well as the new active role of audiences, which are now producing new types of translations" (Chaume, 2018b, p. 42). This third turn coincides with what Pérez-González (2014, p. 233) coins the "demotic turn" which highlights the active participation of the viewers who also take on the role of media producers. This thesis tackles the phenomenon that emerged within this sociological turn.

With the cognitive turn, increasing experimental research that associates AVT with cognitivism has been conducted, especially in the area of media accessibility (Díaz-Cintas et al., 2010) and reception studies (Di Giovanni & Gambier, 2018). The experimental methodology allows the researchers to verify the audience's preferences in relations to established translational norms.

Using a mixed method of eye-tracking and questionnaires, Künzli and Ehrensberger-Dow (2011) designed an experiment to test the legitimacy of mainstream subtitling norms, specifically the limitation of the number of characters per line and per minute. Two sets of subtitles were used to test the audience's reception capacity: conventional subtitles according to mainstream subtitling norms and innovative ones that include both subtitles and surtitles, which provide metalinguistic information. The results indicate that more information load in subtitling did not produce negative effects on viewers' reception capacity, implying that "movie watchers are able to process a larger amount of textual information without being distracted from the plot than is generally assumed" (ibid., 2011, p. 197).

The findings in Künzli and Ehrensberger-Dow (2011) imply that, in terms of viewers' processing capacity, there is room for innovative additional titles and that the established time and space constraints in mainstream subtitling conventions might be excessively restricted.

Despite the various branches and the multidisciplinary approaches in AVT at present, the field has largely been focusing on professional AVT. The complexities of non-professional AVT and their implications have gained academic attention only in the last few years. Besides fansubbing, a few studies have tackled amateur AVT phenomena such as fandubbing (Baños, 2019; Wang & Zhang, 2016) and romhacking, or video game localisation by fans (Muñoz Sánchez, 2015).

In the context of media convergence, which implies "boundary-breaking relationships between media companies, media technologies, media producers and consumers" (Deuze, 2009, p. 470), these media translations initiated by non-professionals are gaining more and more visibility, and it is necessary for scholars to keep up with the rapidly changing mediascape.

As illustrated in this section, AVT has been influenced by the methodological turns in TS and overlaps with other areas such as interpreting studies and indirect translation (ITr). As the object of study in this thesis involves ITr, previous research on the topic within TS is briefly reviewed here before moving on to the detailed terminological discussion and the intersection with AVT in section 1.2.

The majority of research on ITr centres on literary translation, mainly conducted from the historical approach (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 122; Pięta, 2019, p. 25). However, in reality, ITr practice exists among numerous genres and media in today's globalised context, and its significant role in cultural transfer cannot be overlooked. The main motivation is the lack of translators in certain language combinations, for instance, in the transfer between European and non-European cultures during the 16th to 20th century (St André, 2009, p. 232). Other possible reasons include the availability of the ultimate source text, the geographical and/or structural distance of the languages in question, the power relations between all the language-cultures involved in the translation chain, and the economic reason (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 114).

The reasons why the ITr phenomenon has received far less attention than direct translation mainly involve the practitioners' generally negative perception of ITr and the methodological issue for researchers:

1) The view of ITr practice as "a necessary evil" (St André, 2009, p. 230) or a "low prestige" practice (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 122) which derives from the notion that the source text holds a privileged status over the translation. Thus, ITr implies that the translation tends to move away even further from the original, causing more distortions than a direct translation.

2) The methodological complications. As observed by Assis Rosa et al. (2017), seemingly simple descriptive research on ITr is a complex process. First of all, the researcher needs to be competent in the ultimate source language, potential mediating language(s), and the ultimate target language. They also need access to paratextual resources, including the translator's biography, information on the publishers and the market at that specific period of time. Ultimate target texts are sometimes camouflaged, and it is difficult to identify if a text in question is an ITr and which texts are used as mediating texts. More complications arise in cases where, instead of using only one mediating text, various texts

are consulted to produce the ultimate target text, the product defined by Dollerup (2000) as "support translation." In AVT, identifying and retrieving the pivot version may be as complicated because the pivot may overlap with other modalities, for instance, subtitlers may have to translate from the pivot script for dubbing or voice-over (Vermeulen, 2012).

In recent years, ITr has become an emerging investigation trend within translation studies. Fragmented research that touched upon the topic is reviewed and discussed in key publications that aim to consolidate the conceptualisation of ITr and the methodological and terminological issues (Assis Rosa et al., 2017; Pięta, 2017, 2019). Another recent key publication is *Indirect Translation Explained* (2022), the first comprehensive handbook that tackles ITr in real practices and offers insights on ITr training in different areas, including literary translation, scientific-technical translation, localisation, audiovisual translation (subtitling), and interpreting.

In addition, the IndirecTrans Network was established in 2016 and has contributed to a better understanding of ITr practices and facilitated collaboration between international researchers, which will hopefully lead to the establishment of ITr as a subdiscipline in TS (*IndirecTrans*, 2017).

1.2 Indirect Translation

The terminological discrepancy to refer to ITr as "a translation of a translation" is evident in previous studies on ITr since the concept is "still largely undertheorized" (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 113). Toury (2012, p. 161), for instance, foregrounds the use of the term "indirect translation" in his seminal publication on Descriptive Translation, but also uses "intermediate translation," "mediated translation," and "second-hand translation" interchangeably. Other terms in previous research include "retranslation" (Gambier, 2003), "pivot translation" (Gottlieb, 1997; Grigaravičiūte & Gottlieb, 1999; Vermeulen, 2012), and "relay translation" (Dollerup, 2000, 2014; Zilberdik, 2004).

a) Terminological discussion

In an article that aims to establish a harmonised conceptualisation and terminological standardisation, Assis Rosa et al. (2017) review the terms used by TS scholars and

observe that, quantitatively, the term "indirect translation" is predominant in research on the issue, which is in line with results from Ringmar (2007). However, "relay translation" seems to be favoured in entries of TS handbooks and encyclopaedias, for instance, St André (2009) in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies,* and Ringmar (2012) in *Handbook of Translation Studies*.

Following the concept of "relay interpreting," Dollerup (2000, p. 19) suggests the term "relay translation," which is defined as "a mediation from source to target language in which the translational product has been realised in another language than that of the original." Dollerup differentiates this term from "indirect translation." While in "relay translation," the intermediary translation is intended for its own audiences or consumers, "indirect translation" is limited to cases in which the intermediary translation "has no legitimate audience" and is only to be used by the translator to the ultimate version (ibid.).

However, as Pym (2011) observes, the term "relay" highlights the production of the mediating text instead of the ultimate target text, which is, in fact, more significant. This rationale resonates with the terminological proposal put forward by Assis Rosa et al. (2017, p. 115) to designate "indirect translation" as an umbrella term for "a translation of a translation."

The concept, which builds on Gambier's concise definition (2003, p. 57), is intended to be flexible and inclusive. It does not differentiate the profile of the intermediating text (whether the text is produced for consumers other than the ultimate target text's translator), for example. Instead, the term encompasses a variety of ITr practices which can be classified according to three parameters: the number of intervening texts, the number of intervening languages, and the choice of intervening languages. This means that apart from a translation from L1>L2>L3, "indirect translation" in this case also involves practices such as back-translation (L1>L2>L1), interlingual translation of intralingual modernisation (L1>L1>L2), and retranslation (L1>L2>L2).

The disadvantage of this broad conceptualisation is that it might result in fuzzy borders: "such a degree of flexibility may raise the problem as to where exactly ITr ends and, for example, retranslation begins" (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 121). Nevertheless, the complex scenario of ITr practices is rightfully addressed. Another convenience of this terminological choice is that "indirect translation" is a straightforward antonym of "direct

translation," which facilitates a clearer classification. To designate the texts and the language in the translation chain, the terms proposed are: "the ultimate ST/SL > mediating text/language > ultimate TT/TL" (ibid.)

The authors note that the preference for different terms seems to vary in diverse areas of the translation industry. In AVT, there is a tendency to favour the term "pivot translation" in the industry. In the academic sector, the same term has been employed by various scholars, as seen in Grigaravičiūtė & Gottlieb (1999), Vermeulen (2012) and (Casas-Tost & Bustins, 2021). In addition, the recent publication *Indirect Translation Explained* (2022) by the same group of academics also employs the term "pivot translation" in the context of AVT.

In response to the proposal by Assis Rosa et al. (2017, p. 114), to avoid unnecessary addition to "the already rich repertoire of terms and their meanings," this thesis adopts the term "indirect translation" as an umbrella term to refer to the translation process and product in general, and uses "pivot translation" to refer to the process and product when it comes to AVT. To refer to the first translation, which is used as the source text for the subsequent/ultimate translation, the terms "pivot text/language/subtitles" are used.

While some scholars use the term "retranslation" interchangeably with "indirect translation," the two terms are differentiated in this thesis. "Retranslation" is considered here as "a translation for which the same ST has been rendered into the same target language at least once before" (Pym, 2011, p. 90) or "the act of translating a work that has previously been translated into the same language, or the result of such an act" (Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2009, p. 233). Although the concept may overlap with ITr, as broadly defined by Assis Rosa et al. (2017), retranslation is not necessarily produced from an intermediary language. While the textual analysis in this thesis focuses on a translation chain of three languages (L1>L2>L3), retranslation is considered here as a distinct practice (L1>L2>L2) and the two terms will not be used here as a synonym, to avoid confusion.

b) Indirect Translation in Audiovisual Translation

AVT is one of the areas where ITr can be considered "standard practice" (Pięta, 2017, p. 204). In Europe, it is common to use English translation as a pivot version to translate subtitles of films spoken in lesser-known languages, such as Asian and Easter European

languages, into the ultimate target language. Possible factors resemble those mentioned in studies focusing on ITr in literary translation: the scarcity of translators who have sufficient ultimate source language competence, economic reasons, and time pressure (Chaume, 2018a; Vermeulen, 2012). Despite the acceptance of ITr as normal AVT practice, research on the topic is still scarce and fragmented.

Following the perspective that associates ITr with greater distortions and distance from the source text, several studies have addressed the quality and accuracy of indirect subtitling. Gottlieb (1997, p. 128) identifies four "potential pitfalls" in pivot subtitling as follows:

1. repetition of translation errors present in the relay-language subtitles;
2. transfer of pivot-language features not acceptable in the target language;
3. transfer of segmentation incompatible with the target-language syntax;
4. transfer of subtitle layout and cueing inferior to existing national standards.

Focusing on voice-over modality, Grigaravičiūte & Gottlieb (1999) explore how ITr affects the translation of a Danish series into Lithuanian via English pivot script. As voice-over is a non-synchronous translation modality, it does not necessarily require condensation and reduction strategy, and the majority of the corpus indicates full translation in structural aspects and full correspondence in semantic aspects. However, about 29% of the dialogue in the corpus was not transferred to the Lithuanian translation due to reduction and elimination.

In these cases, both the pivot script and the final translation tend to adopt "standardization and condensation techniques" (Grigaravičiūte & Gottlieb, 1999, p. 78) which result in the loss of elements such as slang, cursing, sexual connotations, and redundant oral features from the pivot script, and even more of these elements were lost in the ultimate target text. Only in very few exceptional instances that the Lithuanian translator manage to insert elements that were present in the Danish dialogue but had been lost from the pivot script. Errors that are made in the pivot text are passed through to the ultimate target text in Lithuanian. In some cases, even though the pivot text offers a correct translation, it can still be ambiguous and leads to misinterpretation by the ultimate translator.

Similar results are found in Zilberdik's study (2004) on Hebrew subtitles of a Danish film with English pivot translation. Discrepancies between the ultimate ST and TT include

semantic errors, misinterpretations of culture-bound elements, and toning down of references to sex and foul language (which matches what Grigaravičiūte and Gottlieb (1999) call "standardization"). While some errors can be attributed to the nature of ITr, regardless of the language combinations, others are specific to the language combinations involved. For instance, the fact that the personal pronoun in English "you" does not indicate gender or number results in an ambiguity that causes errors in the Hebrew translation (the use of the plural "you" instead of singular and the use of masculine "you" instead of the feminine one).

Although these empirical studies have confirmed the susceptibility of ITr to all types of errors in media translation, Gottlieb (1997, p. 132) observes that the option may yield a better ultimate target text, provided that the pivot version in question is of good quality and helps clarify the semantic complexities. This resonates with cases in relay interpreting that discard the negative effects of ITr on the ultimate target texts. Dollerup (2014), in his discussion on indirect translation, observes from personal experience that errors in simultaneous conference interpreting using relay are low and are rather caused by unclear renditions by original speakers, which in turn affect the first translation. Seleskovitch and Lederer 1989 (quoted in Kerdkidsadanon 2015, p. 69) also reveal that interpreters who translate from relay give a clearer and more coherent translation, as the pivot already simplifies the structure and eradicates repetitive or rhetoric elements from the ultimate source text.

While conference interpreters who translate from relay benefits from being in the same time and place with the speaker, the mediator, and the recipient, and they can observe nonverbal cues such as gestures, tone of voice, or even the reactions of the audience, AV translators who work with ITr can also observe other textual elements that contribute to the meaning-making process. In fact, as translators are able to rely on semiotic signs such as pictures and sounds which should help them decode the message, ITr is expected to cause fewer errors in comparison to ITr in written texts (Zilberdik, 2004, p. 32). Thus, it might be a generalised conclusion to state that ITr will always result in poor-quality target text regardless of the text types and modalities.

Chaume (2018a) shifts the focus away from a quality-oriented approach and draws attention to the complexity of how retranslation and indirect translation are interlaced in

real AVT practices. Focusing on the retranslation of feature films into Spain's co-official languages (Catalan, Basque, and Galician), the author points out that instead of a retranslation proper from the ultimate source language, these translations are increasingly carried out as an indirect translation through a Spanish version.

The main reason is often connected to "poor working conditions, e.g. time pressure, demands for quick turnaround, low fees, etc." although the translator's lack of ultimate source language competence might be involved (Chaume, 2018a, p. 16). The linguistic proximity between Catalan, Galician, and Spanish allows the translators to pick up the same translation solutions used in Spanish. Therefore, in some cases, translators might use both texts in the translation chain to produce their own version, for instance, translating from the ultimate source language and consulting the Spanish version as a reference for specific translation solutions. This exemplifies that what Dollerup (2000) denominated "support translation" does not only exist in literary translation but is also relevant in today's professional subtitling practices. Similar to what occurs to other text types, AVT that is carried out via a pivot version might involve more than one text in the production chain, which contributes to shaping the ultimate target text.

Among the studies on ITr in AVT, one research that is particularly relevant to this thesis is Kerdkidsadanon's doctoral dissertation (2015), which evaluates the quality of the ultimate target subtitles and the possible linguistic and cultural interference from the mediating language. The study draws on a corpus of three Spanish films by the renowned director Pedro Almodóvar, their pivot subtitles in English, and the subtitles in Thai. The language combination which involves Spanish-English-Thai is the same as the fansubbing phenomenon in this thesis.

Although the corpus represents the opposite direction of translation, the results bring attention to a few issues that influence the translation in this language combination. First, even though Kerdkidsadanon's corpus deals with professional subtitles, the subtitling is carried out as pivot translation via English subtitles, similar to the case of Thai TV series fansubbing into Spanish. The choice of indirect translation reflects the infrequent media flow and the lack of cultural contact between the two poles.

Second, the use of mediating language causes detectable cultural and linguistic interference in the ultimate target subtitles. The translation of cultural references into Thai

relies on the translation strategies adopted in the pivot language. In cases when "domestication" or target-oriented strategy is used in English pivot subtitles, Thai subtitles translate the generalised reference. For instance, the name of the pastry "bamba" is rendered as "cream cake" in English and later in Thai subtitles. Similarly, the transliteration of proper names into Thai relies on the pronunciation in English, which does not coincide with the information transmitted via the audio channel in Spanish and may cause a distraction to viewers. On the other hand, cultural references in Spanish that are retained in English subtitles are often omitted or generalised in Thai subtitles; for example, "chorizo" is preserved in English but becomes "snack" in the Thai version (Kerdkidsadanon, 2015, pp. 257–260).

There is evidence of error transfer from the pivot version to the ultimate target text; however, the majority of errors are made by the Thai subtitler while translating from the correct mediating text. Foul language, which needs to pass a "double filter" from Spanish to English to Thai, is also mostly attenuated or omitted in the Thai subtitles, resulting in the loss of "flavours" of Almodóvar's film characteristics.

The types of errors found in this corpus not only involve the typical mistranslations and loss of elements from the ITr process but also include unnecessary addition and overtranslation. Several subtitles in Thai are inserted to match with visual elements and the context, although neither the source dialogue in Spanish nor the pivot text in English contains the messages. These additions are only found in the Thai subtitles for DVD (not in the subtitles for cinema), and they coincide with the additions in Thai dubbing scripts for DVD.

Kerdkidsadanon's findings reveal the production chain of the translation for the DVD version: the Thai subtitles for cinema are used to produce Thai dubbing scripts for DVD, which are later adapted into the subtitles for DVD. The ITr process becomes problematic in this case: since the Thai subtitler does not know Spanish, it is difficult to rule out the unnecessary additions meant for the synchronisation in dubbing.

As discussed above, previous research suggests that ITr poses more than sufficient pitfalls, even for professional translators, and fansubbing has frequently been associated with low quality from the beginning. Nevertheless, recent works revealed that fansubbing does not always prove to be of lower quality than its counterpart (Orrego-Carmona,

2016a), and some of its features may be useful to apply in professional scenarios (Massidda, 2015). In any case, both ITr and fansubbing are peripheral areas that need further academic attention, as their existence plays a substantial role in the fast-paced globalised context of today's media consumption.

As Chaume (2018a) points out, Translation Studies, as an academic discipline in its own right, should be able to describe and explain all phenomena that occur within the field, including peripheral practices such as indirect and mediated translation. In other words, scholars within the field "should strive to cover all those modes of language and culture transfer that take place within human communication via translation, from one source language into another or more" (ibid., p. 17). Against this background, investigating the fansubbing phenomenon in this underexplored language combination could contribute to challenge general translation studies to be more inclusive.

1.3 Non-professional practices in Translation Studies

Non-professional interpreting and translation (NPIT) is a research area that is gaining increasing interest within TS. From the translation of literature to media translation, non-professional practices have always coexisted with their counterpart. In an attempt to establish TS as a scientific discipline, professional translation practices, professional norms and systematic training have become prioritised, while the non-professional counterparts remain at the periphery. Despite the controversy that views these practices as lesser or even a threat, it is undeniable that "[n]on-professional translators and interpreters have played a very important role in facilitating economic, commercial, cultural and religious exchanges throughout history" (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva, 2012, p. 151).

a) Terminological discussion

In this thesis, the term "non-professional translation" is used to indicate the nature of the translation practices as opposed to professional ones. This term is adopted following the establishment of NPIT studies as a subfield within TS. Following the first academic conference that specialised in NPIT in 2012 and the subsequent publication of two

volumes on the phenomenon in diverse settings (Antonini et al., 2017; Antonini & Bucaria, 2016a), NPIT has claimed its place as a segment within TS.

The term is widely used to address the phenomenon in a wide range of contexts, as shown in the compilation of articles *Non-professional Interpreting and Translation* (Antonini et al., 2017): child language brokering in institutional settings, volunteer interpreting in disaster aid, volunteer interpreting in religious services, and interpreting by untrained persons in medical consultations. In media translation, NPIT includes phenomena such as fansubbing (Orrego-Carmona, 2016b; Wongseree, 2020), fandubbing (Wang & Zhang, 2016), non-professional interpreting in radio interviews and films (Antonini, 2016), and crowdsourcing, which refers to a problem-solving form that seeks contributions from voluntary participants on the Internet (O'Hagan, 2016).

"Natural translation" was coined to define the translation done by untrained bilinguals when it first attracted scholarly attention as an object of study in 1976; however, the implication of an innate capacity does not make it the most suitable umbrella term (Antonini et al., 2017, p. 4).

Among a variety of terms used in literature, "non-professional translation" was chosen as the most appropriate term due to its generic nature to cover a variety of practices (Antonini et al., 2017, pp. 6–8). More importantly, the term does not indicate as strong prejudices that other terms may hold.

The term "unprofessional," for instance, carries a negative and judgmental connotation that would only diminish the importance of the practices within TS. "Ad hoc" and "informal translation" are too narrow, sicne the former implies the immediate and unplanned context, which do not always apply, and the latter discards the existing operations in institutional settings such as medical consultation and immigration interviews (ibid.).

The problematic aspect of the term "professional translation" is which criteria should be used to define professionalism. In other words, what requisites does a translator need to complete to be considered a professional? According to Pérez-González and Susam-Saraeva (2012, p. 151), the two main parameters that characterise non-professional translators are the lack of formal training in translation and the lack of financial

remuneration. Along the same line, Antonini et al. (2017, p. 7) posit that the focus of the definition "non-professional" is "on the who, rather than on the how," which implies the sociological approach to the phenomenon and the attempt to leave aside the prejudice on the quality of the translation products.

"Amateur translation" is another term that does not carry a negative connotation. It also suggests the inclusion of situations in which professionally trained translators or interpreters engage in unpaid practices in informal contexts. In this thesis, to comply with the already widely used term in previous literature, the term "non-professional translation/subtitling" will be mainly used. In addition, the term "amateur translation/subtitling," which appears in numerous studies in AVT, will also be used interchangeably.

With these parameters in mind, various other terms can be used to refer to professional subtitling: "industrial subtitling/industrial AVT" (Dore & Petrucci, 2022; Pérez-González, 2012), "commercial subtitles" (Pérez-González, 2007a) and "official subtitles" as those commissioned and released by the media producers or distributors.

b) Collaborative practices in the media

Collaborative practices in the media are the result of the advent of technology that allows people to gather and connect with others over the Internet to carry out specific translation tasks, exploiting tools such as free subtitling programmes and media editing applications to produce their own versions.

Collaborative practices can also emerge from the consumers' own initiatives. Examples include the three core practices of fan translation in AVT: fansubbing, fandubbing, and videogame romhacking (Dwyer, 2018). These practices can also be solicited by corporates and media providers. Representative cases include web-based crowdsourcing translation, such as the case of Facebook, Wikipedia, and the subtitling of TED talk videos. In these cases, the difference from professional translation practices is that people voluntarily participate in translation tasks without receiving monetary benefits.

c) Cybersubtitling: the myriad forms of subtitles

As AVT grows hand in hand with the progress of technology, new forms of practice that have emerged continue to bring new challenges into the field. The traditional definition of interlingual subtitling as written translations of what is said and shown on screen now needs to be revisited. Although it is still difficult to reach a clear-cut classification and definition set for the myriad of subtitles proliferating on the Internet at present, AVT scholars have acknowledged many of these novel forms of subtitles and their potential to influence the media industry.

Díaz-Cintas (2018) proposes "cybersubtitling" as an umbrella term that encompasses the various types of subtitles present on the Internet. These subtitles challenge the traditional purpose, functions, and format of mainstream subtitles. Apart from the "genuine subtitles" or subtitles that serve a translational purpose, this model of cybersubtitling recognises the "fakesubs," defined as subtitles that "openly offer false information with the ultimate objective of entertaining the viewer" (ibid., p. 135). The concept is similar to what Chaume (2018b) calls "funsubs" which are generally produced for parody.

Apart from humoristic purposes, some forms of amateur subtitling practices serve political and ideological causes by subverting the narratives presented by the mass media. Pérez-González (2013) names them "activist subtitles," while Díaz-Cintas (2018) calls them "guerrilla subtitles". Along the same line, Chaume (2018b, p. 49) mentions "fake subtitles" that "often conceal a political agenda by distorting real news coverage and engaging with specific ideological spaces developed by recent crises" and "honest subtitles" created to supposedly reveal the real intentions behind politicians' discourses.

Among these newly emerged subtitling practices, fansubs are "the more traditional and best known" type, with a significant number of studies carried out so far (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 133). The following sections will discuss the consequential role of the audience and give an overview of previous studies that have adopted different approaches to fansubbing.

1.4 Redefining the audience

The shift in the role of the audience after the advent of Web 2.0 and the development of digital technology was key to the emergence of fansubbing practices and other numerous forms of non-professional AVT. To contextualise the phenomenon, it is necessary to discuss the conceptualisation of the audience and their contribution to the circulation of audiovisual texts.

Contribution from Media Studies highlights the shift from passive media spectatorship to active consumerism. Empowered by the widespread use of digital media technologies, viewers are now allowed to "archive, manipulate and recirculate media content – in such a way that each personal copy of an audiovisual text has now the potential to provide a unique reading experience" (Pérez-González, 2012b, p. 7). Consequently, top-down media distribution is no longer the most relevant mechanism in the digital media era, as viewers are enabled to create and distribute their own version directly to other audiences in a non-linear model.

The participatory culture adopted by media consumers is central to the "media convergence" paradigm (Jenkins, 2006), which concerns the changes in the technological, social, and cultural aspects regarding the circulation of media content. According to Jenkins, old media has not been substituted by new media technologies. Instead, both coexist, and consumers navigate their way through the tension between the top-down corporate-driven process force and the bottom-up consumer-driven process.

Deuze (2009) argues for the application of the convergence concept to contemporary media culture as opposed to the traditional dichotomy that strictly separates production from consumption. The dynamic nature of media convergence is illustrated as follows.

> Media convergence must also be seen having a cultural logic of its own, blurring the lines between economics (work) and culture (meaning); between production and consumption; between the competition and cooperation ('coopetition') implied in creativity, commerce, content and connectivity; between making media and using media; and between active or passive spectatorship of mediated culture (Deuze, 2009, pp. 474–475).

Within this mediascape, the boundary between the roles of users/audiences and producers/translators is no longer clear-cut. In the context of fan translation, apart from viewing their favourite shows, fans appropriate and remediate their own versions of content through practices such as fan fiction, fan videos, or fan translation (Casarini, 2014). In these cases, the fans take on the role of "prosumer," which derived from the combination of the terms "producer-consumer" (Denison, 2011a, p. 455). Their practices can also be viewed as "co-creation," which exemplifies "the phenomenon of consumers increasingly participating in the process of making and circulating media content and experiences" (Banks & Deuze, 2009, p. 419).

In this renegotiation of active viewers' identities, fansubbers, especially for Japanese anime, do not hesitate to claim their authorship and status as co-creators. In Pérez-González's study (2012, p. 10), textual evidence shows that anime fansubbers proudly "flag up their agency" and claim the translation as their own by exploiting visual resources. Insertion of glosses and personal comments indicates the incorporation of fansubbers' own interpretations into their version, as an addition to transferring spoken dialogue or written texts.

The dimension of power relations within the fansubbing communities adds up to the complexity of the phenomenon. Although fansubbing derives from grassroots online communities and the democratisation of technology, the level of participation is not always equal, and the power relations within the community are not balanced. Even if the group starts as a simple, unstructured online community of like-minded people, the different degrees of commitment and expertise of each member eventually create rules or fixed hierarchies in large online communities (Orrego-Carmona, 2015, p. 21).

Studies on large fansub groups in China reveal a complex hierarchy and designation of specific roles for each participant within each online community. According to Wang and Zhang (2017, p. 309), members of a fansub group in China are regulated within a vertical structure of the community depending on factors such as their length of membership, their level of commitment, and their contribution to the group. In Li's doctoral thesis (2015, pp. 160–183) focusing on The Last Fantasy, one of the most influential Chinese fansub groups, the hierarchical membership categories is explained in detail. These categories

are based on "merit and effort," the expected contribution for each tier, and the (non-monetary) benefits for members.

Within a fansubbing community, a distinction needs to be made between translating and non-translating fans. The first ones are "community contributors," which are active viewers that participate in activities such as translating or editing the subtitles, while the second group refers to "subscribers and lurkers" who view the content without contributions (Wu, 2017, p. 118).

Orrego-Carmona (2015, p. 22) notes the different degrees of participation by members of non-professional subtitling groups. At the top, there is the main subgroup of contributors who are highly dedicated to the community's activities. The second group are occasional collaborators who do not contribute as much. The last group are numerous "lurkers who benefit from the translations".

However, there is further complexity within the relations between actively translating fans and lurkers. Non-translating fans do not only enjoy the benefit from the availability of free translations without support to the community. In a study of Thai fan communities that subtitled Korean TV shows (Wongseree et al., 2019), interview data reveal that non-translating fans develop a close relationship with fansubbers, share their values, emotional connection, and support the fansubbers when complications due to legal issues arise. For instance, non-translating fans actively participated in seeking alternatives to distribute fansub works when the previous version was removed due to copyright reasons.

On the other hand, Švelch (2013, p. 305) observes the "inherent inequality between the translator-creator and the ordinary, non-contributing user" in the user reviews of *Game of Thrones* fansubs in Czech produced by a self-taught fansubber. The fansubber's status as an expert and the absolute support from the fans of the show serve as a validation of the quality of the subtitles he produced. Although these subtitles may not meet the mainstream subtitling standards and errors can be detected, non-translating viewers mostly refrain from criticising the quality of the fansubs because of their gratitude towards the fansubber and his extensive experiences and dedication to subtitling.

This observation is made here because a similar type of power relations is reflected in the interviews with the TUF fansubbers and from their interactions with the general viewers

through the comment sections on the group's website. Similar to Švelch's findings (2013), the majority of non-translating fans who left their comments on TUF's page expressed abundant gratitude towards the fansubbers. However, not all was about praise and appreciation. As TUF fansubbers did not prioritise rapid turnaround time for their subtitles and offered no schedule for new fansub releases, there were occasional comments from impatient non-translating viewers who urged and pressed the fansubbers to quickly upload new episodes. One of the group administrators confirmed in the online interview that they even received threatening messages on social media.

While the TUF fansubbers usually responded that they were doing what they could, there was at least one occasion that they took a confrontational stance. In the comment section of the second episode of เดือนเกี้ยวเดือน [Duean Kiao Duaen: 2 Moons the Series][1], one viewer asked when the fourth episode would be uploaded, while another viewer commented that the fansubbers took such a long time before uploading the third episode. The reply under the fansubbers' official account is translated below.

> I believe that there are questions that are not asked out of politeness. And if they are asked, find a way so it does not sound like you were paying for this. […] All of us who are doing this have to sleep, live, study, and work. Especially the last one, where they actually pay us for the work done. If there is no new episode, it is because it hasn't been possible. And for anyone who doesn't like it, there's a door that you can use to get out of here. This is the last time I will reply to comments like this. The rest will be sent directly to spam.[2]

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[1] https://thaiundergroundfansub.wordpress.com/2017/05/20/serie-212-2-moons-the-series-ep-02-sub-espanol/

[2] "Yo creo que hay preguntas que no se hacen por educación. Y si se hacen buscar la manera de que no suene a una exigencia como si se estuviera pagando por esto. […] Todos los que hacemos esto tenemos que dormir, vivir, estudiar y trabajar. Principalmente el último donde de verdad nos pagan por hacer el trabajo. Si no es está el nuevo episodio es porque no se puede tenerlo. Y al que no le gusta hay una puerta que puede usar para irse. Es el último comentario del estilo que respondo. Los demás serán enviados a spam directamente."

The quoted response reflects the fansubbers' awareness of their merit as contributors of free labour, their superior status in the power relations since they are the ones who decide what to translate and when to release the translation, which comments would remain on the page and which would be removed or marked as spam. On several occasions, some supportive viewers took action to defend the fansubbers along the same line by mentioning their dedication and free labour, and that non-translating viewers had no right to make such a demand. This conflict exemplified here shows, as previously mentioned by Švelch (2013), that the perception of fansubbing communities as a site of equal participation for all is idealistic.

1.5 Fansubbing within Translation Studies

Fansubbing is considered a form of "user-generated translation," as defined by O'Hagan (2009, p. 97) as "a wide range of Translation, carried out based on free user participation in digital media spaces where Translation is undertaken by unspecified self-selected individuals". Consequently, fansubbing no longer matches the traditional landscape of professional translators who work according to the commissioner or client's requirements.

Originating from the combination of the terms "fans" and "subtitling," the term "fansubbing" has undergone shifts in definition over time. According to Orrego-Carmona and Lee (2017, p. 3), "fansubbing, which is the first term used to refer to a non-professional subtitling, makes a reference to the subtitles created voluntarily by fans for fans." The earlier definition reflects a close and exclusive link to Japanese animation or anime, such as the one offered by Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz-Sánchez (2006, p. 37): "a fansub is a fan-produced, translated, subtitled version of a Japanese anime programme."

Such an intrinsic association with anime is understandable, considering the historical account of the phenomenon. Fansubbing emerged in the 1980s as fan-made subtitles of Japanese animation or anime in the US (Dwyer, 2018, p. 438). According to a detailed historical account of anime fansubbing in the US by Leonard (2004, 2005), the first known fansubbed video was *Lupin III* from 1986. Japanese animations entered the US via official distribution before 1975, but they were adapted to cater for children. There were changes in storylines and names, "Americanizing foreign products" (Leonard, 2004,

p. 7), as well as heavily editing that resulted in "sanitization" of the shows (ibid.). At the beginning of the 1980s, the official anime distributions from Japanese companies were diminished, and fans came up with their own translation and distribution in videotape format.

Before fans had access to the technology that enabled subtitling production, fan translation of anime had been carried out in various modalities: booklets containing dialogue lines (Leonard, 2004), written translation synopses, and live interpreting (Dwyer, 2018, p. 439). As part of the fandom movement, fansubbing became a means for fans to produce and distribute what they viewed as more "authentic" translations, as opposed to the heavily domesticating official versions. It was also a means to access the products that were not available on the market.

With the widespread use of the Internet, anime fansubbing grew significantly in the 1990s, and with the development of digital technology, the practice proliferated across different languages and genres. From a practice "by fans for fans," fansubbing has expanded to translation "by fans for all" (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 133) for the consumption of the general public.

Although fan AVT developed in parallel with professional AVT, the practice is often deemed "marginal, peripheral and 'improper'" (Dwyer, 2018, p. 436). In the past decade, however, this perception has shifted, and numerous studies on fansubbing in diverse language pairs and genres have demonstrated a growing academic interest in the topic. This section will discuss how the fansubbing practices have been investigated in relation to TS. The discussion is divided into the text-based and empirical approach, sociological approach, reception research, and finally, the implications of the phenomenon in the media industry.

a) Product-oriented studies and empirical approach

Attracted by unconventional textual features that break away from mainstream subtitling norms, AVT scholars began investigating fansubbing practices by providing a descriptive account of the product and the fansubbers' working process. In line with the development of the fansubbing phenomenon itself, initial research draws on anime fansubs. These early studies examine unique textual features such as the placement of the subtitles that are no

longer limited to the bottom of the screen, the use of diverse fonts and colours, the addition of explanatory head notes and glosses, and direct communication to the viewers through translator's notes or comments (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Ferrer Simó, 2005).

As fansubbing later attracted growing attention from scholars from various language pairs and different approaches, subsequent studies have expanded to a wider context, such as amateur subtitling of popular English-speaking TV shows (mainly from the US) into many languages across the globe.

Comparative analysis between the fansubbed version and the official version of the same show has become a common method, and the notion of translation norms has been central to the textual analysis. In such comparative analyses, mainstream subtitling conventions are often used as a benchmark to determine how fansubs deviate from the norms. One of the most extensive comparative works is Massidda's book-length study (2015), in which she compares the official subtitles on DVD to the fansubs produced by ItaSA and Subsfactory, two large fansubbing communities in Italy. The main discrepancies, among others, are the fansubbers' aim for a foreignising approach, which is deemed more faithful to the source text than the official version and less spacial constraints since they accept higher number of characters per line.

Another contribution of this study is the evolution in the quality of fansubs over time, to the point that it surpasses the translation choices made by professional subtitlers (Massidda, 2015, p. 94). The unexpected, recurring inaccuracy in the official version in the corpus contradicts the popular expectation that official versions are always of better quality. Furthermore, textual evidence leads to the belief that professional subtitlers might take advantage of the availability of amateur subtitles on the Internet by using them as rough drafts.

Similarly, the convergence between professional and amateur practices is central to Dore and Petrucci's case study (2022) of the American series *The Handmaid's Tale*. The analysis draws on official subtitles, official dubbing, and fansubbed versions of the show. Focusing on the rendering of religious references, text-internal references, and coarse language, the findings reveal substantially similar trends in translation strategies employed.

Another framework that has been adopted for the textual analysis of fansubs is multimodality (Pérez-González, 2014). Multimodal theory has been applied in subtitling and stress the importance of the interconnection of nonverbal elements and the meaning-making process through each mode, which is divided into sub-modes and medial variants. In fansubbing, a multimodal approach helps to systematically identify and analyse exactly which elements are manipulated by fansubbers in their translation.

Pérez-González (2007b) is a pioneer in applying multimodal theory to explain the fansubbers' innovative use of meaning-making resources in their translations. For instance, within the "language mode," fansubbers opt for dynamic writing as a medial variant to create karaoke-driven titles.

Josephy-Hernández (2017), on the other hand, narrows his focus to the sub-mode "graphemes" or letters on screen in anime fansubs. Graphemes are particularly abundant in certain anime shows, especially as explanations and rendering of onomatopoeic sounds. Apart from the translation of these graphemes, Josephy-Hernández identifies four more categories that were added by fansubbers: 1) karaoke subtitling for opening and ending songs, 2) explanation included within the subtitles, 3) translator's note, and 4) additional information such as fansubbers' opinion, which he calls "excessive fansubbing" (ibid., 81).

Both studies bring to the fore concrete textual evidence of how anime fansubbers' "creative and unrestrained freedom" (Josephy-Hernández, 2017, p. 102) opens up the possibilities of translation solutions when faced with the challenge of AV text complexities. The findings are consistent with the observation by Massidda (2015, p. 59) that "what professional subtitlers discard a priori as a textual and graphic violation may end up constituting a new experimental field in translation."

Multimodal theory offers a detailed set of terminology to detect media manipulations through different sensory channels. Still, with very detailed descriptions of each meaning-making unit within the AV text, multimodal annotations only seem apt for the analysis of brief instances of AV materials.

Although fansubs are generally associated with creative traits that are not found in mainstream subtitles, not all of them display unconventional features. In Pedersen (2019),

from the analysis of 16 Swedish fansubs of ten English-speaking films, no evidence of creative elements has been detected, except for two cases in which the fansubbers included a smiley in the subtitle. The author observes that "fansubbing creativity seems to be very much features of anime fansubbing, however, and it is unclear how much of that can be expected for other audiovisual genres and languages" (Pedersen, 2019, p. 53). With an emphasis on the complexity and the heterogeneous nature of fansubbing, Pedersen's study concludes that exploring the textual characteristics of fansubs is still relevant, since different language combinations and genres might not share the same traits.

Considering what has been reported in previous literature regarding the textual features of fansubs, it seems that fansubbing can be classified into two categories: anime fansubs from Japanese into English and Spanish (often associated with creative features), and non-anime fansubs, which often involves fansubs of internationally popular English-speaking TV shows into non-English settings (tend to adhere more to professional subtitling guidelines and prioritise a fast release to reach the audiences before the official version). This classification, however, might be too simple when considering studies from Asia that point to greater diversity. Wongseree (2016), for instance, mentions the translation of impact captions in Korean shows by Thai fansubbers, a strategy that resonates with the innovative features common in anime fansubs.

In almost all fansubbing case studies, the textual analysis is complemented by other methods of data collection, such as online interviews, to obtain information on the translation process, which is also a fascinating aspect of fansubbing mechanism. Parallel to the descriptive approach, recent studies on fansubs are moving towards a detailed analysis of the issues that are associated with the sociological and cultural aspects of translation, such as humour, censorship (Massidda, 2015), and cultural references (Gao, 2020).

b) Quality assessment

Another common approach, especially in early studies, is the quality assessment of the fansubs based on error detection. The findings often suggest that fansubbing, as part of amateur subtitling, has much inferior quality comparing to its professional counterpart.

The rationale is that it contains numerous translation errors and does not conform to professional subtitling conventions, which determine widely accepted quality standards.

Drawing on an analysis of errors found in the amateur subtitling of an English-speaking film into Polish, Bogucki (2009) concludes that the quality of the amateur version is notably inferior to the professional one, most likely due to the low quality of the source material, the insufficient linguistic competence of the subtitler, and his or her unfamiliarity with the professional subtitling norms. Díaz-Cintas and Muñoz-Sánchez (2006) hold a more positive stance towards fansubbing but also dedicate a section to examine translation errors in Japanese anime fansubbing into Spanish. The errors, in this case, suggest that the ambiguity created in the indirect translation from Japanese to English to Spanish is a negative factor.

With the emergence of more and more novel forms of media translation in recent years, thanks to empowered viewers, scholars have adopted a more positive attitude towards amateur subtitling. Still, as occurred in professional translation, quality is a recurrent debate. Pedersen (2019) analyses the quality of Swedish fansubs of English-speaking films by applying the FAR model, a quality assessment tool for interlingual subtitles that evaluates three parameters: Functional equivalence, Acceptancy, and Readability. This systematic model assigns penalty points to errors of various degrees. Professional subtitles of the same films were also analysed with the same model, and the error scores were compared. The results demonstrate a wide range of quality within the Swedish fansubs corpus, but, on average, they are of much lower quality than the official version. The area with the lowest quality score is readability, as the fansubs contain cases of excessive number of characters per second that entail an extremely high reading speed, unacceptable for professional standards.

Pedersen's study (2019) is significant as it demonstrates the possibility of assessing fansubbing with a systematic model and provides empirical evidence of the quality differences between fansubbing and the professional subtitles of the same shows. However, it still reflects that professional standards are used as a rigid measurement tool to judge the quality of amateur subtitling, and one of the unique features of fansubbing is that it is the translation provided by some of the viewers themselves, so the viewers' expectations of quality might be different from what professional conventions dictate.

In any case, quality can also be a subjective matter. As exemplified by Švelch (2013), non-translating fans regard the fansubs as good enough, and they are more than willing to overlook the translation errors as they acknowledge the fansubber's dedication to free labour of translation. They also appreciate the fansubber's expertise in the material. Furthermore, Orrego-Carmona's (2014, p. 62) study shows that viewers are aware of the inconsistencies of non-professional subtitles' quality, particularly in terms of translation errors and incomplete translation, but they seem to tolerate such quality because these subtitles are available for free and in many cases are launched before the official translation.

c) Sociological approach

In line with the sociological turn in AVT (Chaume, 2018b), scholars began to research the role of translators and the power relations involved in AVT, especially in the context of the democratisation of technology that empowers the viewers to adopt a new active role as co-creators.

In fansubbing, active viewers do not only engage in translation activities without monetary compensation. Many of them also maintain online platforms where they distribute their free works using their own money. The sociological approach has contributed to unveiling the motivations behind the fansubbers' dedication to free labour. It also provides insights into issues such as the organisational structure of a fansub group, the workflow and task distribution, and the collective identity of fansubbers. The data collection methods often include questionnaires, surveys, and interviews with the agents of translation.

Locating fansubbing communities as online field sites, several scholars applied netnography, or virtual ethnography, as a methodology to investigate fansubbers' motivations, their profiles, their identity, and their forms of collaboration. Netnography may involve various research methods: participant-observation, interviews, questionnaires, archival data collection, among others (Kozinets, 2010). The advantage of this methodology is that researchers immerse themselves in the community or closely observe the participants and offer their perspectives from within the community, which may differ from what outsiders perceive.

Baruch (2021) conducted a virtual ethnography on Viki.com, the unique streaming site which started off as a non-profit platform and later turned into a for-profit company. The methodology includes a site observation during two years and interviews of fifteen subjects who participated in the site's subtitling process. While Viki.com earn money from its streaming service, collaborating fansubbers do not obtain any financial compensation, and they are aware of the situation. From an outsider's perspective, the scenario can be viewed as an exploitation of users' labour, and several academics have addressed ethical concerns regarding free labour in media translations. Dore and Petrucci (2022), for instance, mention possible consequences of deprofessionalisation and piracy, while Massidda (2015, pp. 17–18) argues that crowdsourcing projects led by for-profit companies, such as Facebook, are unethical since they exploit the free labour of specialised users.

However, the data from the virtual ethnography reveal the complexity of the collaboration between the audiences and the media industry and contradictions to the abovementioned perception. Instead of unpaid labour, collaborating fansubbers themselves perceive their engagement with the media company as "a fair and mutually beneficial 'exchange'" (Baruch, 2021, p. 698). They gain other types of rewarding compensation such as friendship, self-improvement in language and technological skills, and recognition from their peers and non-translating viewers. Baruch (2021, p. 697) argues that excluding fans from the company's financial remuneration is "what makes their fandom valuable and authentic in the eyes of the fan community".

Henthorn (2019, p. 529), who also focuses on ViKi.com as a case study, addresses how fans operate as "affective labor" as they gain satisfaction and pride from the fact that their translations are widely distributed commercially. From ViKi users' comments, Dwyer (2017, p. 176) concludes that "ViKi's commercialism doesn't cancel out community, and those involved still identify as passionate fans and subbers." Furthermore, legalising and monetising the community yield positive results since they contribute to the fan activities' legitimacy and visibility in the media industry (ibid.).

Another study employing virtual ethnography is Wongseree's (2020) research on Thai fansubbing communities that translated Korean TV programs, with a focus on the impact of technology on fansubbing practices within the Actor-Network Theory framework. The

findings from this socio-technical approach highlight the crucial role of technology in sustaining the fansubbing practice even though the community has to face legal issues.

Netnographic methods include the integration of the researcher as one of the community members instead of the limited role of an observer from the outside. In her doctoral thesis focusing on The Last Fantasy, a large and long-standing fansub group in China, Li (2015) joined the group as a new member and actively socialised and participated in the fansubbing activities while obtaining data from the field work. As reviewed in her later publication (Li, 2017, p. 45), a substantial benefit of this level of engagement is the access to the member-only forum, which contains massive digital resources such as the source text materials, the prescriptive translation guidelines, and the interactions between translating members. While this approach allows access to valuable materials and insights from continuous interactions with the participants in the community, the challenge lies in navigating between building relationships with the participants and keeping distance as a researcher (Li, 2017, pp. 51–52).

The findings from Li (2015; 2017) bring attention to the collective identity of the fansub group, the multi-layered hierarchy that governs the group's activities, and the selective process to decide on new participants, which does not quite conform to "the rhetoric surrounding participatory culture that "anyone can participate"" (Li, 2015, p. 229), but leans more towards the recruitment procedure in a professional setting.

Although amateur subtitling practices, especially in a restrictive mediascape such as China, are often associated with civic activism and the revindication of democratisation, Li's study reveal that these motivations were not predominant. Instead, the Chinese fansubbers were driven by their personal interest in viewing and translating foreign content and later developed a sense of belonging to the community over time (Li, 2015, p. 233).

Applying the same immersive approach to a fansub group that offers Chinese translations of Spanish media, Zhang and Cassany (2017) provide a detailed description regarding the hierarchical organisation of the community and the distribution of tasks into subgroups within the fansubbing workflow according to each member's competence: transcribers, reviewers, timers, translators, editors, and typesetters.

d) Reception studies

Although scholars in AVT have acknowledged the importance of research focusing on the audiences early on, this branch of AVT has only been established recently, with the trend towards a more systematic approach (Di Giovanni, 2020). Common methods in audience-based research include eye-tracking and direct participant observation. These experimental methods are often combined with self-report statements through questionnaires for the triangulation of data.

Reception studies have been carried out to explore diverse modalities in AVT, especially in media accessibility. Only a few studies are conducted on non-professional subtitling, supposedly because of the formerly marginal status of fan practices.

A study on the reception of fansubs is Caffrey's doctoral thesis (2009) which aims to investigate the effects of pop-up gloss, a representative feature often found in Japanese anime fansubs, on viewers' cognitive and processing effort. The findings suggest that pop-up glosses help viewers gain a better understanding of culturally marked items. At the same time, viewers need more processing effort to keep up with the simultaneous presence of additional gloss and subtitles in the videos, which pushes them to read faster and skip a large number of subtitles.

To compare the audience's reception of professional and non-professional subtitling, Orrego-Carmona (2015, 2016a) performed an experimental study using eye-tracking, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews to determine whether viewers are able to distinguish between professional subtitles and non-professional ones. The results confirm the progress of non-professional subtitling, which is at the point where audiences are not able to distinguish it from its professional counterpart.

The limitation of experimental studies is that the viewers' profile has to be limited, for instance, Orrego-Carmona's research was conducted with young, educated participants. Therefore, the findings might not apply extensively to all viewers. In any case, they are sufficient as a starting point to question the practicality of the widely accepted mainstream subtitling norms in the media industry.

1.6 Implications of fansubbing practices in the media industry

The dubious legal and ethical aspect has been widely discussed since early studies on fansubbing (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006). As fansubbing essentially involves unauthorised usage of copyright content, the most controversial issue is probably its intrinsic implication of piracy which is generally perceived as negative by the media industry. Free access to fan translation is often viewed as inconvenient for the industry because its consequence is direct competition with official products. In fact, some copyright holders have taken action against fansubbers' activities. For instance, the case of a lawsuit against Undertexter.se, a fansubbing website in Sweden in 2013. The copyright holder of the films in question won their case as film dialogue is under protection by the Berne convention, and the distribution of fansubs, which reflect the original dialogue, was considered illegal (Pedersen, 2019).

However, the issue of authorship, piracy, and legitimacy of fansubbing is still debatable. Fansubbers may claim their legitimacy in cases where the shows they choose to translate are only distributed within the shows' domestic market (Denison, 2011a, p. 451). Anime fansubbers in the US, for instance, aimed to subtitle only the shows that are not officially translated and distributed in the U.S, to avoid conflicts with the copyright holders and uphold their legitimacy. The Anime News Network (ANN) in the United States established a set of guidelines for fansubbing ethics: the "New Ethical Code for Digital Subtitling" which declares that the purpose of fansubbing should be "introducing fans to new texts and offering English translations where otherwise unavailable," and when official versions are released, fansubbing activities should cease in order to avoid competing openly with the industry (Denison, 2011a, p. 459).

The rule to stop the recirculation of fansubs when a title is licensed coincides with the guideline mentioned in Leonard (2005), a paper that details the development of anime fansubbing in the US. Striving to distinguish fan practices from mere piracy, the norms established by ANN specify that fansubbing should only be carried out as voluntary work without expecting any rewards in return, not even recognition. ANN's guidelines seem to only serve as an ideal because, in practice, each fansub group claims the authorship of their work and competes for recognition (Denison, 2011a). In addition, despite the fact

that fansubbers stopped sharing their translations, distributors did not follow suit, making the picture even more complex (Leonard, 2005).

As a mechanism that brings new content to audiences outside the reach of official exports, fansubbing can also be viewed acknowledged positively by the industry, as occurred with Japanese *anime* fansubbing in the 1990s (Denison, 2011a, p. 450). In fact, fansubbing was a driving force behind the popularity of anime in the periods when official Japanese distributors abandoned the US market (Leonard, 2005).

In the beginning, copyright holders willingly turned a blind eye to the circulation of fansubs, as apparently there were no confrontations between the two parties. As Lee (2011, p. 1140) points out, "[s]uch tolerance from the industry corresponded with fansubbers' consensus that fansubbing was a form of promotion that, ideally, should lead to support for the industry by motivating fans to buy the official VHS or DVD." The copyright holders only shifted their position later when fansubbing activities proliferated with the help of digital technology, and anime had already gained huge popularity that fansubbing practices were deemed damaging to the industry rather than beneficial (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006, pp. 44–45).

More importantly, anime fansubbing in the US proved to the industry the potential of online distribution and the audiences' demand for simultaneous streaming worldwide to replace the inefficient region-based model (Lee, 2011, p. 1141).

Another similar case is the rise of Korean dramas and popular culture in Turkey thanks to fansubbers' initiatives. The fansubbing activities were the major contributor to introducing and spreading the popularity of Korean dramas to the point where they caught the general public's attention and became mainstream. This phenomenon eventually led to a strong presence of the Korean Wave in Turkey and the subsequent imports of other Korean cultural products, including pop music and food. The trend drove the Turkish national television channels to produce adaptations from Korean dramas, which resulted in remarkable success (Duraner et al., 2017, pp. 146–152).

A factor that determines the acceptability of fansubbing activity is the sociocultural context and the perception of piracy in different parts of the world. In Thailand, for instance, piracy might be considered "a helping hand to gain access to copyright content

for lower income people," and fan translation practices can be taken as "an ethical act mainly directed to produce translation for the benefit of other fans in online communities" (Wongseree, 2017, p. 31).

On the other hand, the piracy facilitated by non-professional subtitling may also contribute to the audiences' changed consumption behaviour. Orrego-Carmona (2018) argues that non-professional subtitling and piracy are crucial factors in establishing a new viewing behaviour and the subsequent expansion of the market. Instead of traditional "appointment viewing" established by TV shows and cinemas, audiences who consume fansubs are able to decide when to watch the show and how much of it at their own pace, or even binge-watch several episodes or the whole show in a row.

The audiences changed habits triggered the media industry to adapt and respond to their needs:

> [t]he growth of video on demand as a distribution method serves as an example of the influence that piracy networks have on legal distribution channels. Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and HBO Go are examples of services that have adopted mechanisms inspired by the grassroots movements to serve the new needs of the viewers and adapt to the changing market (Orrego-Carmona, 2018, p. 329).

Conversely, fansubbing are perceived in many cases as viewers' resistance to the media industry. The most popular example, again, is anime fansubbing in the US, as it is a reaction against the heavily domesticating approach provided in mainstream official subtitles. Similar situations can be perceived in the Italian fansubbing context. The predominant dubbing modality in the country is associated with a smooth, target-oriented translation which is not considered authentic enough for some viewers. The emergence of fansubbing communities is allegedly an opposing reaction to dubbing "as a form of resistance against its supposed authenticity" (Massidda, 2015, p. 38).

The fansubbing phenomenon is anything but homogenous, and it is not surprising that while fansubbing in a specific genre and region represents resistance against state censorship, the same practice in another part of the world contains subtle self-censorship and perpetuates the values imposed by the State itself.

Fansubbing in China, for instance, is generally viewed as a subversion against the government's censorship enforcement which strictly controls the distribution, import and exports of TV shows and films. By introducing new foreign shows to the country's popular culture, fansubbing becomes a "force against state domination" (Wang & Zhang, 2017, p. 306).

However, at the textual level, this conceptualisation of fansubbing does not always apply. Drawing on an extensive corpus from *The Big Bang Theory,* a popular TV sitcom from the US, and its Chinese subtitles carried out by various fansub groups, Chang (2017) discovers that the Chinese fansubbers rely on domesticating translation strategies as conceptualised by Venuti (1995). Textual evidence reveals a tendency to substitute the cultural reference in the source text with Chinese elements. The fansubbers also incorporated in their translation the traditional Chinese values such as nationalist, communist and patriarchal ideology, which were not present in the source text. Still, this version of fansubs was well-received by viewers in China.

These findings are contradict the conceptualisation of fansubbing as a subversive practice that aims at preserving as many elements of the source text as possible to achieve a more "faithful" translation. In turn, Chang's case demonstrates the diversity of fansubbing practices and the necessity to explore beyond the Eurocentric context.

Furthermore, fansubbing has an impact on official translations in terms of both processes and products. In cases of anime fansubs, the official translation that came out after the fansubs needed to adopt terms and names from the fansubs that were already popular among fans (Ferrer Simó, 2005). This reflects the viewers' perception of fansubbers as experts in the material and the acceptance of their genre knowledge, as observed by Dwyer (2012). In Italy, fansub groups that strive to launch their translations of popular TV shows from the US as quickly as possible became a competitive force that pressured official subtitling entities for a quicker turn-around time (Massidda, 2015). This leads to progress in subtitling, which has been overlooked since the predominant modality in Italy is dubbing.

Based on diverse studies on fansubbing discussed in this chapter, the following parameters are proposed to account for the complexity and heterogeneity of the fansubbing phenomenon.

1) Distribution formats: fansubs are available as open subtitles/hard subtitles or closed subtitles. The hard subtitles are encoded within the videos, and viewers have to download the whole video file. The closed subtitles, on the other hand, refer to subtitles that viewers can turn on and off. They are mostly available as separate *.srt* or *.sub* files, which viewers can download and activate in their media player.

From previous literature, the genre of the shows seems to influence the distribution format. Subtitles of popular English-speaking productions are mostly distributed as closed subtitles, for instance, fansubs provided by ItaSA and Subsfactory in Italy (Massidda, 2015), Undertexter.se in Sweden (Pedersen, 2019), and Legendas.tv in Brazil (Bold, 2012). Conversely, fansubs that involve Asian media and languages are usually found in hard subtitle format; for example, anime fansubs into English and Spanish, Thai fansubs of Korean TV shows (Wongseree, 2016, 2020) and Spanish fansubs of Thai content.

The reason behind this probably lies in the niche nature of the subtitled content and the language with non-Latin alphabets, which pose difficulties for viewers in obtaining the video files on their own. Embedding their subtitles into the videos also allows fansubbers to exploit visual resources for aesthetic aspects and additional mediations.

Another possible reason is that Anglophone TV shows and films which dominate the global media are also more sensitised to piracy. Distributing only the subtitle files reduces the risk of the product being removed from the Internet, although there has been evidence of a Swedish fansubbing site which was taken down and prosecuted due to copyright infringement despite their distribution of only subtitle files (Pedersen, 2019). Dore and Petrucci (2022, p. 879) report a similar case in Italy: the fansub group ItaSA was taken down in 2018 even though they only uploaded subtitle files, not media files, and other major Italian fansub groups also ceased their subtitling activities.

2) Need for speed: with the competitive nature of fansub groups, some strive for the shortest turnaround time, producing what Dwyer (2017, pp. 145–146) terms "speed sub". Some anime fansub groups even released their translations the same day the show was broadcast in Japan (ibid.). While it might be logical at first thought to assign the other category as "quality fansub," the term is not the most appropriate as the issue of quality in translation is a slippery ground. As Dwyer (2017, p. 145) aptly points out, speed

subbing groups "equate near to instantaneous access with a 'quality' viewing experience, whereas for many other groups, quality is measured in relation to the accuracy and texture of the translation itself". Therefore, the distinction here might simply be made between fansub groups which prioritise quick release time and those that do not.

3) Norm deviations: as discussed earlier in this chapter, although prototypical fansubs are norm-breaking and contain unconventional textual features, not all fansubs conform to these traits. Those who adopt the mainstream subtitling conventions might be called "pro-am," from "professional-amateur subtitles" according to Orrego-Carmona (2016b).

4) Workflow organisation: the working process within a fansubbing community is also a widely researched topic. Apart from the conceptualisation of fansubbing as collective labour, the organisation of workflows in a fansub group is an aspect comparable to professional subtitling. Fansubs can be produced either by one person, by a small group in which participating members carry out different tasks, or by large groups with complex hierarchical internal structures and clearly assigned roles.

In conclusion, even though fansubbing is one of the most well-known practices within non-professional AVT, it is still a complex and diverse phenomenon that needs to be explored, especially in less Anglocentric and Eurocentric settings.

2. THAI>SPANISH FANSUBBING PHENOMENON

This chapter provides an overview of the TH>SP fansubbing phenomenon by exploring the non-professional subtitling practices in Spanish; the media flow from Thailand to international audiences thanks to non-professional translations, piracy, and the current official distributions. The chapter concludes with a descriptive account of the main fansubbing communities that focus on subtitling Thai shows into Spanish and an analysis of their shared characteristics.

2.1 Non-professional subtitling in Spanish

The presence of fansubbing into Spanish is acknowledged in early papers in AVT on the innovative features and the production of anime fansubbing. In terms of the translating process, anime fansubs were carried out both as direct translations from Japanese audio and as indirect translations via English fansubs into Spanish (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Ferrer Simó, 2005). While anime fansubbing in the US stood out as non-profit activity, the same practice in Spain did not entirely conform to the same principle. According to Ferrer Simó (2005, p. 29), fansubbed anime were sold in VHS and DVD formats in shops and at conventions such as Salón del Manga in Barcelona.

The convergence between fansubs and official subtitles in Spanish has been evident. As reported by Ferrer Simó (2005), although translation and orthotypographic errors in fansubs are frequent, the work carried out in fansubs sets the norm for official versions. Since fansubbed versions of anime shows had become available before their official versions were released, the audiences were already familiar with the fansubbers' translations of certain terms and names. To keep the audiences satisfied, the distributors needed to consider the audiences' expectations and demanded that the official version adopt the same terms (ibid.).

More recent research shows that anime fansubbing is still thriving in Spain among young people, in parallel with a variety of international fan practices, including fanfiction, fandubbing, and scanlation, which refers to a fan translation of Japanese *manga* or comics in which the images are scanned, the source text is edited out and substituted by the

translation (Zhang, 2019). Zhang's research draws on interviews with fansubbers and fandubbers in Spain, and screen recordings of fansubbing activities to explore their collaborative work in relation to their learning process. Engaging in fansubbing and fandubbing practices allows the participants to acquire language skills (Japanese, English, and Spanish) through listening to the source text and translating, as well as learning to collaborate in an organised manner.

More importantly, the study confirms that indirect translation using English pivot subtitles remains a common translation process in Spanish fansubbing, instead of direct translation from languages like Japanese, Korean, or Chinese. Apart from the fansubbers' lack of knowledge of the ultimate source language, Zhang (2019) also brings attention to other factors that encourage indirect translation: the English subtitle files already have incorporated time code, which facilitates the synchronisation between the subtitles and the video. Greater similarities between English and Spanish also help with the linguistic part. Furthermore, English is the lingua franca for fans to communicate with like-minded people from other parts of the world and enables collaborations regarding materials and technical processes.

Virtual space plays an integral part in the process of fansubbing and the distribution of fan-made content. According to Zhang (2019), fansubbers prefer using websites and online forums to store their content and interact among themselves and with non-translating viewers. Other social networks that they use to communicate with viewers include private Facebook groups, Facebook fan pages, Instagram, Twitter, and Discord. Vimeo and Dailymotion are video-sharing platforms that are commonly used by fansubbers because their copyright policy is less strict than YouTube.

Zhang (2019, pp. 134–135) classifies fansubbing in Spain into three types. The first one is called "fastsubs" due to the fansubbers' priority to release the subtitles as quickly as possible. They are usually subtitles for TV series. The second type is "good subtitles," which are mostly associated with anime and prioritise quality over quick release. The last type is "pirate fansub," which are not fan-made subtitles but instead taken directly from official online anime distributors such as Crunchyroll, Yowu, Selecta Visión, and Amazon Prime Video.

The distinction between fansubbers prioritising quick turnaround time and those who prefer more meticulous attention to the translation is also relevant for languages other than Spanish. Many recent studies identify the increasing trend of global fansubbing that eventually influences the media industry to reduce the time gap between the release of the originals and the officially subtitled versions (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 122; Dwyer, 2018). However, the terminological aspect of this classification might be problematic. On the one hand, if the definition of "fansubs" is "subtitles created by fans," then the "pirate fansub" should not be included because they are essentially subtitles illegally extracted from the official versions produced by professionals. On the other hand, the denomination of the second type as "good subtitles" might result in unnecessary negative implications for other types.

In any case, the inclusion of pirate subtitles as a form of fansub implies that the lack of an official version of the material in the target culture is not the sole motivation that prompts people to consume amateur subtitles. For TH>SP media flow, there is also a case in which fansubbers provided subtitles for the content that was already available through official distribution. The TV series *The Judgement* was first aired on GMM 25 channel in Thailand in August 2018 and was launched as a Netflix original series in November 2018 (Netflix Media Center). The show was available when accessed from Spain with "European Spanish" subtitles. At the same time, the show also became available in Latin American countries such as Mexico (Hurtado, 2018).

Regardless of the existing official distribution in Spanish, the fansubbers chose to subtitle this series, apparently using the raw video file from Netflix itself. As the screenshot below shows, the media provider's logo is visible at the beginning. According to the credit title at the beginning of the show: "Raw y subs al inglés: Ray," the fansubbers translate using English fansubs as pivot subtitles, not official subtitles from Netflix. The fansubbers' version shows evidence of Latin American or neutral Spanish through the use of the pronoun "ustedes" instead of "vosotros".
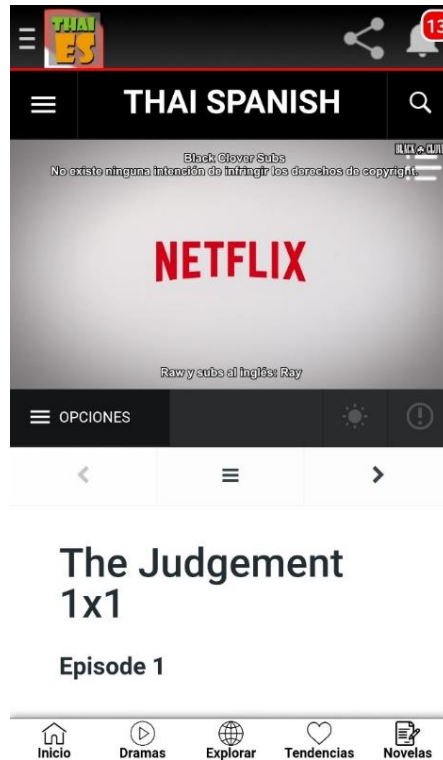
Figure 3. Screenshot of the application launched by fansubbers

In addition to the classification according to the genres and fansubbers' main priorities, another parameter to take into account is the variety of the target language. In the industry, the subtitling and dubbing of the same show are often offered in more than one version to cater for Spanish-speaking audiences in different parts of the world. The first one is Spanish from Spain, which can be indicated as European Spanish, Iberian Spanish or Peninsular Spanish. Other varieties are Spanish from specific Latin American countries, mainly Mexico and Argentina, where the film industry is most advanced in the region (Fuentes-Luque, 2019). The last one, and possibly the most controversial, is neutral Spanish or standard Spanish" (español neutro), which is defined as "a prefabricated language variant that sought to merge the significant features of the most prominent varieties of Spanish" (Chaume, 2018a, pp. 20–21). According to Fuentes-Luque (2019), neutral Spanish came out as a convenient solution for AVT distribution, to offer just one version for all Latin American countries.

In fandom, the concept of "español neutro" is not only restricted to Latin America. Cassany (2019a, p. 237) uses the term to refer to a variant of Spanish that does not contain slang or expressions that are specific to a Spanish-speaking country or region and is

intended for Spanish speakers from any continent. This variant of Spanish is employed in fansubbing and other fan translation practices such as scanlation and videogame translation, as the fans are aware that their audiences are Spanish speakers from all continents. Neutral Spanish is also encouraged by non-professional subtitling communities working with AV texts other than anime. The Latin American group aRGENTeaM, for instance, subtitles TV shows from the US and specifies the use of neutral Spanish as a rule in their translation guidelines, although the group originated in Argentina (Orrego-Carmona, 2011, p. 31).

Apart from anime fansub groups, non-professional subtitling of other genres into Spanish also proliferated in recent years, probably thanks to a large number of Spanish speakers all over the world. Some fansubbing communities are organised in a hierarchical structure and operate with a translation workflow comparable to those of professional subtitling, as observed by Orrego-Carmona in his extensive works on aRGENTeaM group (Orrego-Carmona, 2011, 2016b).

2.2 Thai TV shows and their export

Traditionally, six free television channels are operating in Thailand: Channel 3, 5, 7, 9 (Modernine TV), 11 (NBT) and Thai PBS. The first four are the main broadcasters of television dramas, which have been "a staple of the nation's TV landscape for over four decades" (Jirattikorn, 2018, p. 7). These productions tend to be called "*lakorn nam nao"* (polluted soaps)" by Thai people due to the over-acting, melodramatic plots and unrealistic portrayal of life, namely luxurious and extravagant settings (ibid.).

The majority of Thai television dramas can be identified as melodramas, considering that they prioritise sensational plots, dramatic turning points, and exaggerated acting to appeal to the viewers' emotions (Soontornviriyakul, 2008, p. 13). The characters are stereotypical: a handsome, idealistic chivalrous hero, a beautiful, selfless heroine, and a villain who always goes after the protagonists and behaves in an excessively aggressive way.

Soontornviriyakul's observation is still applicable to the television dramas produced and aired nowadays, over a decade later, although the female protagonist characterisation has

undergone a significant change; contemporary versions of television series portray the heroine as an "alpha female type" who is more assertive and vindictive, although still beautiful and selfless (Saejang, 2019, p. 99). In practice, Thai producers classify the series into several sub-genres: drama, romance, comedy, horror, action, historical period, and series for special occasions (Soontornviriyakul, 2008, pp. 14–15).

a) New genres and the arrival of digital channels and streaming platforms

A major change in the Thai television industry took place in 2014 when Thai digital channels were launched, with the plan to eventually substitute analogue channels when they reached sufficient coverage, approximately in 2020, according to the NBTC - National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (Tortermvasana, 2019).

The introduction of digital channels allowed the number of channels to grow from 6 to up to 48, resulting in even more intense competition in the Thai broadcasting scene (Kaewthet et al., 2018, p. 268). While the long-run analogue channels obtained their digital channel licenses and keep running in parallel, they compete with seven new channels that also broadcast television dramas in the same prime-time slot (from 20.30 to 22.30): ONE 31, PPTV, MONO 29, Channel 8, THV, Workpoint TV, and GMM25 (Saejang, 2019, p. 101).

Parallel to the launch of digital TV channels, Asian pan-regional over-the-top (OTT) video streaming platforms also proliferated in the 2010s. One of the early players in the market is Line TV, owned by Line Corporation, a company based in Japan originally known for the Line instant messaging app, which is the most popular in Thailand and Japan. Line TV was launched in Thailand in 2015 and ceased to operate at the end of 2021. The streaming service was later incorporated into Line, the most popular communication application in Thailand, which now includes texting features, news, OTT video streaming, online shopping, and even online banking.

Other leading streaming platforms in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries include Viu, founded in 2015 in Hong Kong and started operating in Thailand in 2017, and WeTV, which is the international version of the Chinese giant media provider Tencent. These platforms offer content from South Korea, Thailand, Japan, and China,

allowing free viewing for audiences located in their operating regions, and a premium subscription model to access more content.

These platforms stream content from media producers and partner with local studios to produce their shows for regional markets. Many of them gained popularity in Thailand and other Asian countries before reaching international English-speaking audiences through fansubbing, especially the *Boys' Love* (BL) sub-genre, which will be further explained in this chapter. Examples include แปลรักฉันด้วยใจเธอ [*Plae Rak Chan Duai Chai Thoe: I Told Sunset About You*] (2020), produced by Nadao Bangkok under a partnership with Line TV, miniseries โคตรแฟน [*Kot Faen: Close Friend*] (2021) produced by Boxx Music and Viu, and พฤติการณ์ที่ตาย [*Pruetikan Thi Tai: Manner of Death*] (2020) by TV Thunder in collaboration with WeTV.

The expanded media scene and the fierce competition to capture viewers' attention opens up space for a variety of TV productions other than the typical melodramatic series or soap operas. Apart from traditional melodramas or *Lakorn,* other productions such as series and miniseries have gained visibility in the past few years. *Hormones* (2013-2015) is an example case of a teen TV series that became a tremendous success in Asia and paved the way for following teen dramas that break away from the melodramatic formula.

A new sub-genre in Thai productions that has become exceptionally successful in the past few years is called "*Boys' Love* (BL) series" or "Y series". As the name suggests, the storyline of a BL series portrays a love story between two male characters. This genre originated from the Japanese "Y fiction," which includes the homoerotic relationship between male characters ("Yaoi") and between female characters ("Yuri"). The strong influence of Japanese entertainment in Thailand contributed to the emergence of the Thai version of Y fiction, which was eventually adapted into TV series and gained a considerable number of foreign fans when exported.

The emergence of the BL series, at first glance, might be perceived as part of a pro-LGBT movement that promotes gender equality by breaking away from heterosexual ideal romances. However, instead of a realistic portrayal of same-sex relationships, BL often romanticises the relationship between two characters who are strictly assigned gender-normative heterosexual roles: one is portrayed as the dominating masculine in the

relationship, and the other as the submissive and feminine one. BL fiction and shows are mainly produced and consumed by heterosexual women (Jirattikorn, 2018). According to Taesillapasathit and Wongkom (2017), Y fiction often serves as a way for women to seek refuge and romance fantasy within a collectivist, male-dominating and sexually repressive society and culture. The storyline is often limited to coming-of-age drama in high school or university settings.

As the productions of BL thrive in parallel to growing awareness regarding gender equality and LGBT visibility in Thai society, media producers are now moving away from the cliché teenage romance formula, and have begun to experiment with more mature characters and diverse storylines. Examples include พฤติการณ์ที่ตาย [*Pruetikan Thi Tai: Manner of Death*] (2020) which is a murder mystery, and นิทานพันดาว [*Nithan Phan Dao: A Tale of Thousand Stars*] (2021), which portrays a relationship between a forestry officer and a volunteer teacher.

At present, the estimated worth of the BL content market is over one billion baht (approximately 27,318,000 euros), and there is a growing demand in key overseas markets, mainly China, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Latin America (Tortermvasana et al., 2022). The best-known producer of BL series is GMMTV, a subsidiary of the largest Thai media conglomerate GMM Grammy.

The success of Thai BL productions was explosive and led to international fandom dedicated exclusively to the genre and actors who starred in these series. One of the most recent phenomena was the series แปลรักฉันด้วยใจเธอ [*Plae Rak Chan Duai Chai Thoe: I Told Sunset about You/ I Promised You the Moon*], which was launched in 2020 and 2021. Apart from the broadcast in Asian countries, the series was screened at the Queer East Film Festival in London and won several awards in Thailand, South Korea and China (Boonlert, 2022).

The increasing international fandom for BL series resulted in considerable repercussions on Thailand's tourism industry. Many Chinese fans were drawn to filming locations in different provinces and Japanese tour operators already offered tour packages exclusively designed for BL fans to visit those locations (Tortermvasana et al., 2022). At the same time, fansubbing practices contribute to accelerating the Thai BL flow and consolidating

fandom beyond Asia. Apart from fansubbed shows, fan-made videos are scattered over video-sharing platforms. On YouTube, for instance, there are fan-made videos of BL couples that contain multiple options for closed captions: English, Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian, enabling the same video to attract a large number of international fans, transcending the linguistic and geographical barrier.

Another common sub-genre in Thai TV shows is the remakes of popular Asian series, mainly from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. These remakes are usually launched on digital TV channels and online platforms. Although remakes can be considered a modality of AVT, Thai remakes are not limited to local consumption. Some of them were exported to other Asian countries and became a competitive choice among existing Asian versions. For instance, the series วุ่นนักรักเต็มบ้าน [*Wun Nak Rak Tem Ban: Full House*] (2014), which was adapted from a popular Korean drama of the same name, was bought by Tencent Video, a Chinese streaming platform, and later accumulated over 100 million views in 2014 (Jirattikorn, 2018).

The greater competition in the Thai media scene goes hand in hand with the changing behaviour of media consumers who, with the advent of technology, enjoy various options of entertainment. Thais are active Internet and social media users. According to a survey conducted by the government's Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA), in 2021, Thai Internet users spent an average of 10 hours 36 minutes per day on the Internet. Of the time spent on the Internet, online entertainment (watching TV, videos, movies, and listening to music online) ranked second after online communication (Electronic Transactions Development Agency, 2021).

The ubiquitous presence of the screens in Thai people's daily life and the potential of broadcasting on online platforms created new opportunities to reach the audience and opened up the possibilities for niche markets while putting traditional media at risk. In 2015, two digital channels ceased broadcasting as a consequence of substantial debts allegedly caused by the high licence fees, and in 2019, six television broadcasters decided to return seven digital channel broadcasting licenses to the NBTC, after the relief measures established by Thailand's junta that allows a waiver of the remaining licence fees (Toomgum, 2019).

Thai broadcasters became aware of the potential of social media platforms and adapted their strategies accordingly. Voice TV, one of the digital channels to cease broadcasting, announced in a statement that it would continue to provide content on other platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter (Toomgum, 2019). Other broadcasters recognise the need to respond to the audiences' demand by making their content available on as many platforms as possible for digital devices such as tablets and mobile phones.

Facebook Live, YouTube channels, and websites are provided by broadcasters as alternative viewing channels. Some traditional TV channels also launched their own mobile applications. Channel 3, one of the four main television drama broadcasters that continue from the analogue TV system, now offers on-demand re-runs of dramas on their YouTube channel "Ch3Thailand," Line TV, and their own application *Mello* shortly after the broadcast on TV, so that audiences can watch the show at their own pace. Channel 7, another major drama broadcaster does not upload shows on YouTube channel, but instead launched a paid service called *Bugaboo.tv* that allows viewers to stream over 4,500 hours of aired dramas on mobile platforms, Chromecast, and Apple AirPlay (*Bugaboo Inter*, n.d.). The digital channel ONE 31, which belongs to GMM Grammy, the country's largest media conglomerate, also provides re-run dramas on its YouTube channel and website.

b) Regional distribution of Thai TV shows

The broadcasters' strategy to provide their content online not only makes the shows easily accessible for Thais, who are the target audiences, but also allows Thai media flow to reach international audiences and contributes to international consumption. With the absence of official translations, fansubbers step in to break the language barrier and introduce the shows to international viewers. The broadcasters' high-resolution videos on YouTube make it easy for fans to download and add subtitles in other languages before circulating them online. Jirattikorn's study (2016, p. 204) on the consumption of Thai dramas in Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam points out that the availability of the recently aired dramas on YouTube is one of the factors that contribute to the shows' popularity. The study reveals that Thai dramas uploaded to YouTube by Channel 3 and Channel 5 were subtitled by fans into various languages and were widely known in these countries. At the same time, fewer dramas from Channel 7 were translated and were less popular, as the broadcaster did not make the shows available on YouTube.

The significance of non-professional translation practices and piracy in bringing Thai TV shows abroad is undeniable. Traditionally, Thai TV shows are produced mainly to be consumed by Thais, not to cater for the need of international audiences. Moreover, the export of the shows is not initiated nor officially supported by the government. Foreign audiences of Thai soap operas for over two decades include viewers in Laos and some states in Myanmar bordering Thailand. The audiences viewed the shows via Thai satellite television without the need for translation, as their languages hold enough similarities to Thai. In Cambodia and the Shan state of Myanmar, audiences recorded Thai dramas, dubbed them into local languages and then rented or sold the dubbed shows in VCD and DVD formats (Jirattikorn, 2016).

Official distribution of Thai dramas in the region started to grow in the 2000s and gained notable popularity in China and Southeast Asian countries. Subtitled Thai dramas have become present on television channels in Vietnam since 2011 and in Myanmar and Cambodia since approximately 2014. For China, 2003 was the first year Thai television drama was first broadcast on Chinese television. The popularity of Thai dramas soared in 2009 after the soap opera สงครามนางฟ้า [*Songkram Nang Fa: Battle of Angels*] was aired (Saejang, 2019).

The export of Thai dramas also spread to other countries and enjoyed increasing popularity in Asia. By 2015, Thai dramas had been exported to China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Myanmar, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Japan (Jirattikorn, 2016, p. 59). However, official exports still face complications that derive from copyright issues and the restrictions of media policy in the target country. Jirattikorn (2016, p. 49) mentions that the majority of Thai drama's copyrights belong to the broadcasters, not the producers; therefore, the producers cannot make an independent decision to export their shows.

Another complication affects the content: certain types of content are considered sensitive abroad and need to be adapted to pass the censorship of some target countries. In China, for example, homosexual relationships, violence, and representations of supernatural powers or ghosts are not permitted on telecasts (Jirattikorn, 2016). Some of the soap operas that feature gay and transsexual characters were heavily censored, and there is evidence that the storylines in the translated versions were modified to suppress gay

representation (Saejang, 2019). Thai distributors agree that part of the success of a Thai drama abroad depends on how they are edited or self-censored to cater for a given target culture. At the textual level, some parts of the content such as specific swear words need to be edited, since they might be acceptable in the Thai cultural context but completely unacceptable in the target culture (Jirattikorn, 2016).

Such complications, however, do not apply to non-professional subtitling and dubbing. Fansubbing introduced Thai content that would have been restricted or distorted in the official distribution or even banned from broadcasting to audiences in many countries in Asia. Various websites offer Thai dramas subtitled into Vietnamese by groups of fans. Some of those are students of the Thai language and translate the shows directly from Thai, others use pivot languages including English or Chinese. Thai *Boy's Love* series also reached Chinese audiences through non-professional subtitling and were well received (Saejang, 2019, p. 87). The genre has also become popular in Vietnam and Indonesia (Jirattikorn, 2018). In Cambodia, several websites provide Thai drama dubbed into Khmer, Cambodia's official language. It should be noted, however, that not all can be considered fan practices. Some websites are created and maintained active by fans who translate the shows out of their enjoyment without the need for profits, but others aim to make profits from online advertising on their websites (Jirattikorn, 2016, p. 81).

According to Jirattikorn (2018), possible factors that can be accounted for the popularity of Thai television shows in China and Southeast Asia include the broadcasters' increasing necessity to focus on niche markets, a growing economy and cable television networks in the audiences' region (such as in Vietnam and Cambodia), the quality of the shows that has improved over time, and the low price of Thai dramas compared to, for instance, Korean dramas.

Above all, the "notion of cultural proximity" is cited as a crucial factor behind the success of Thai television dramas in Southeast Asia. It should be mentioned that cultural proximity involves similarities in the society's values, which are not necessarily limited to geographical proximity, and the concept has proved an influential factor in media flow. In the case of Korean TV dramas that gained exceptional popularity in Turkey thanks to fansubbing activities (Duraner et al., 2017), cultural proximity is cited as one of the main reasons that attract Turkish viewers. The key message of the shows often resonates with

cultural values that are shared by Turkish viewers, such as the significance of family ties and respect for the elders.

In other parts of the world, Thai TV shows on telecasts seem to be absent. There seems to be no record of Thai TV shows aired on television channels either in European countries or the USA. The situation is similar in Latin America and Central America, until the arrival of Netflix in recent years.

2.3 International official distribution of Thai TV shows: the arrival of Netflix

At present, Thai TV shows are officially distributed at international level through online streaming on Netflix, the media-services provider operating in over 190 countries worldwide (Netflix, n.d.). The important step forward for Thai audiovisual production export was taken when GMM Grammy, Thailand's largest media conglomerate, signed a multi-title licensing agreement with Netflix in April 2018. The agreement will eventually allow over 700 hours of Thai content to reach Netflix's audience around the world (The Nation 2018).

In a video on Netflix's official YouTube channel, the company's Director of Corporate Communications Joris Evers explains that due to the streaming rights that the company has to acquire on a geographical basis, the content on Netflix varies according to the region the viewer is in (Netflix, 2013). In Thailand, therefore, several more Thai TV shows are available for streaming on Netflix compared to when one accesses the platform from Spain, for instance. In Spain, particularly, there are currently a handful of Thai TV shows available, but the number continues to grow. From the beginning of 2019 to the beginning of 2020, the number of Thai TV shows on Netflix Spain grew from 6 to 18. As of 2022, 38 shows are available when searched with the filter "Thais".
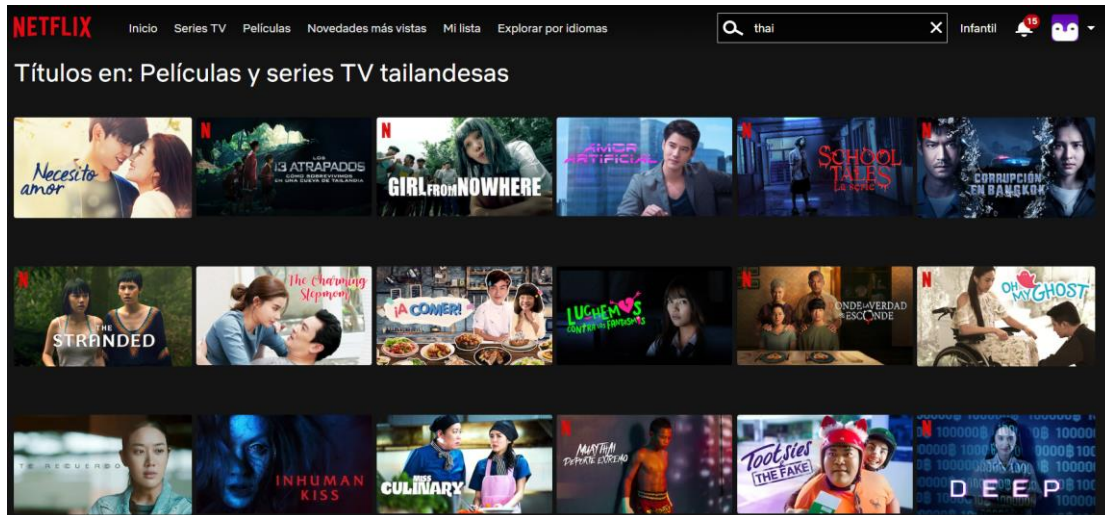
Figure 4. Screenshot of Thai TV shows available on Netflix Spain (November, 2022)

Thai shows on Netflix accessible from Spain were mostly produced by GMM Grammy and its subsidiaries. Other producers include True CJ and Halo Productions. The majority of the shows are series, with a few films available, and one documentary.

During 2018-2019, the first few years after the first Thai content entered the Netflix platform, the translation options offered to viewers were quite limited. By default, viewers located in Spain were able to choose between subtitles in European Spanish, English, Thai (SDH), French, and Arabic. Some shows also provided audio descriptions in Thai. No dubbed version was offered. In the case of Netflix's original series, the options are more extensive. *The Stranded* (2019), the first Thai Netflix original series, was launched with dubbing in English, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Mandarin, and subtitles in European Spanish, Spanish [CC], English, English [CC], Thai [CC], Arabic, and Romanian.

As of 2022, although the default language options still depend on the viewers' location and their language preference settings, when accessing a specific show from web browsers and Apple devices, Netflix's interface will show the list of all the subtitles and dubbing options available.

For Thai shows, a large number of languages have been added to the subtitle options over the years. *The Judgement* (2018), one of the first Thai series available on the platform now offers subtitles in English, Arabic, German, simplified and traditional Chinese,

Korean, Indonesian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, European Spanish, Latin American Spanish, and Italian. Netflix originals, on the other hand, tend to offer even more options. From the observation of the platform since the first shows were launched in 2018, the translation options have increased greatly. *Girl from nowhere* (2018) which was only available in Thai when first launched, now offers dubbed versions in English, Latin American Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Indonesian, and a total of 31 options of subtitles in different languages and language varieties. The increasing number of translation options, even for the shows launched years ago, indicate Netflix's intention to expand the content to as many international audiences as possible.

One factor that enables such rapid workflow in many languages is the pivot translation process and the use of subtitle templates. Template files are subtitle files that are used as the basis for translation into subtitles in other languages. By using the same time codes for multiple languages, subtitling workflow including template files cuts down the production time and cost, and ensures quality control in multiple languages (Georgakopoulou, 2019). Netflix employs a pivot template to "act as a bridge between the source language and target languages when unusual language pairs are in play" (Netflix, 2021c).

From a handful of drama series and films at first, the list of Thai content on the Netflix platform now encompasses a variety of genres: comedy, thriller, horror, and documentary. There are also a few Thai remakes of Korean series such as *Oh my Ghost* (2018) and *Voice* (2019). On the other hand, traditional Thai soap operas which are a staple in local media do not seem to become part of Netflix's selections. In Jirattikorn (2016, pp. 51–55), personnel from the main providers of Thai soap operas admit in interviews that the productions are aimed exclusively at national consumption, but their content happens to attract the attention of consumers in neighbouring countries, hence their popularity in Asia. More and more Thai content, however, is now created to capture an international audience. The creators of the series *Girl from Nowhere* (2019), for instance, stated in an interview that they needed to look for "universal insight" to attract worldwide viewers (Sriwilas, 2018).

Although a limited number of Thai series are currently accessible on Netflix in Spain, it is clear that the streaming giant sees strong prospects for Thai content on the international

market, and it is planning for more. Thai content is part of Netflix's plan to commission and promote non-English original content, aiming to reach around 100 non-English-language series produced across the globe (Schneider, 2018).

In February 2019, Netflix hosted a seminar together with Thailand's National Federation of Motion Pictures and Contents Association on the topic of "Bringing Thai Content to the World," which allowed an opportunity for networking between the company's executives and over 150 professionals from the Thai media creative community. Ensuring Thai content creators of the possibilities to reach global audiences, Erika North, Netflix's director of International Originals pointed out that "Thailand is an important regional and global entertainment and creative hub" (Techsauce Team, 2019).

Netflix's interest in bringing content from Thailand to an international audience materialised when the company announced upcoming productions of its first two Thai original productions: *The Stranded* and *Shimmers*. Netflix's first original series from Thailand, *The Stranded,* was released on Netflix in Spain on November 15, 2019 (La Vanguardia, 2019). The production is a collaboration with GMM Grammy and H2L Media group, with international teams located in Los Angeles, Singapore and Bangkok, and features Thailand's well-known actors. The plot is about a group of teenagers who survive a tsunami on a remote island in the Andaman Sea (Netflix Media Center, 2019).

Netflix also obtained the rights to make a miniseries based on the experience of the twelve Thai boys and their soccer coach who survived a flooded cave in the northern part of Thailand, an incident that attracted global attention in July 2018 (George, 2019). The production is a collaboration with the production house SK Global Entertainment and directed by Jon M. Chu, the director of the film *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) featuring a mostly Asian cast, and Thai director Nattawut Poonpiriya, whose most acclaimed work is the Thai film *Bad Genius* (2017). According to a statement from Erika North, Netflix's director of International Originals, "Thailand is a very important country for Netflix and we are looking forward to bringing this inspiring local but globally resonant story of overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds to life, once again, for global audiences" (Rueb, 2019).

While content from Thailand has finally reached mass audiences overseas via Netflix's official distribution and seems to enjoy strong prospects, a few years before, a number of

Spanish-speaking audiences already enjoyed access to numerous Thai TV shows with subtitles in Spanish online thanks to the work of active media consumers from fansub groups. In fact, when this research began, the subtitled videos uploaded by fansubbers were the only option available for Spanish-speaking audiences wishing to watch Thai TV series.

2.4 Circulation of Thai audiovisual productions with Spanish translation by fansubbers

This section gives an overview of how main fansub groups or individuals contribute to making Thai audiovisual productions available online for Spanish-speaking viewers. These fansubbers can be considered "prosumers" (Denison, 2011a) as they play the double role as media consumers and producers of the subtitled version of the Thai shows. They select the text, translate and distribute the subtitled version, and as shown in detail in chapters 4 and 6, fansubbers manipulate the source text to mediate between the source and the target cultures, to cater for the target audience's perception.

Videos of Thai shows subtitled into Spanish by amateurs are scattered throughout online video-sharing sites and social media such as YouTube, Dailymotion, and Facebook. Many of these videos cannot be traced back to the subtitlers. Some were reposted by accounts that are not part of the fansub group or translators themselves.

a) Main Thai>Spanish fansub groups

Using search engines and the link from one fansub group's social media to another led to a few fansub groups which focus on subtitling mainly Thai shows into Spanish. These groups claim credit for their work and create their website or blog while also using free video-sharing sites and social media to circulate the subtitled videos. Thai audiovisual products that are available on these fansubbers' sites include films, soap operas, television series, and music videos. Television series are most frequently found, but each group seems to have a different focus in terms of genres and audiences. To contextualise the TH>SP fansubbing phenomenon, this section will present the few fansub groups that have their own sites and mainly focus on subtitling Thai shows.

- *Thai Underground Fansub*

Thai Underground Fansub (TUF), as suggested by the name and as described in the About Us section on their website, is dedicated solely to Thai shows (*Thai Underground Fansub*, n.d.-b). The group's platform, which is created on a WordPress blog, offers a Spanish subtitled version of 23 Thai series, 4 films, and other types of content including trailers, music videos, interviews and a novel. All were originally broadcast in Thailand between 2013-2017.

As explained in the About Us section (ibid.), the fansubbers are from various Spanish-speaking countries. Three of the four administrators are from Spain and one is from Argentina. Other contributors are from Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador. Three of the four administrators (and main translators) agreed to provide more information via online interviews. The fansubbers' profiles are shown in Table 1, each one labelled as TUF1 to 3 to protect their identity.

Table 1. TUF fansubbers' profiles

Fansubbers	Country	Profession/training	Role in TUF group
Fansubber 1	Argentina	Art teacher for elementary school students	Translator Administrator (responding to viewers on social media and taking care of the group's webpage and servers) Coordinator (assigning works, preparing raw video files) Recruiter
Fansubber 2	Peru/ Spain	Student (English major)	Translator (subtitled *Diary of Tootsies* and other shows)
Fansubber 3	Spain	Translator (Graduated in Translation)	Translator (subtitled parts of *Hormones* and other shows) Reviewer

Fansubbers 1 and 2 confirmed that they had no experience in translation and subtitling before joinng the group, while Fansubber 3 studied translation at the university in Spain. The fact that one of them was trained in translation and another one studied in a related field (English language) contradicts the preconception that fansubs are produced by individual who has no formal training.

TUF group does not state in the platform whether the subtitles are in Latin American Spanish or European Spanish. In the interview, Fansubber 2 confirmed that the translators aim to produce subtitles in neutral Spanish, as a variety which is comprehensible for Spanish speakers from all continents. She acknowledged that this goal could not always be achieved, and that in the end, the variety used in the subtitles depended on the principal translator of the show. On the other hand, textual evidence shows inclinations toward European Spanish, for instance, the use of the second-person pronoun in plural "vosotros," and terms like "tío" used as a vocative for "mate."

On TUF website, viewers have options between viewing online via video-sharing sites such as YouTube, Dailymotion and Openload, or downloading the subtitled videos. From 2014 onwards, the website which is the main platform where the group distribute the fansub videos has received over 5,300,000 visits (as of 2022).

In October 2017, the group announced an indefinite period of inactivity on their Facebook fan page, and there have been no further updates on either their website or social media (Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube and Dailymotion), although the majority of fansub videos on their website continue to be accessible. All the subtitled series are categorised by the progress of subtitling (in process, finished, paused and future) and by types (series, films, miniseries, short film, music, novel, among others). Some series are left unfinished, with only a few first episodes subtitled.
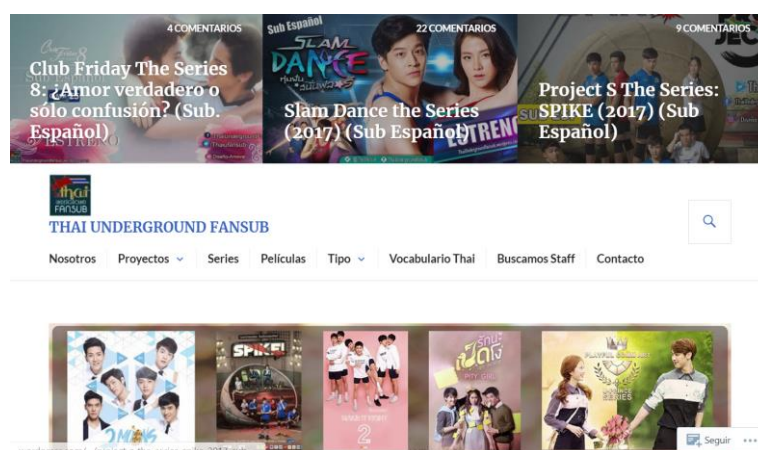
Figure 5. Thai Underground Fansub (TUF) website

The shows the group selected to translate are mainly teen and young adult series of drama or romantic genre, almost all produced by the GMM Grammy conglomerate. A large

number of translated shows were originally aired on GMM 25 channel, whose target audiences are "young adults aged between 18-35 years old and young-at-heart audiences aged 35 years old and older" (*Inverstor Relations: Company's Business*, 2015). Examples include ฮอร์โมนส์ วัยว้าวุ่น [*Hormones Wai Wa Wun: Hormones the Series*] (2013-2015), รักนะ เป็ดโง่ [*Rak Na Phed Ngo: Ugly Duckling Series*] (2015), and *Project S the Series: Spike* (2017). A few BL series are also subtitled, for example, *Water Boyy the Series* (2017) and เดือนเกี้ยวเดือน [*Duean Kiao Duaen: 2 Moons the Series*] (2017).

Each series has the main entry where the fansubbers provide paratextual information including synopsis, genre, cast, original broadcast date, link to trailers and links to entries of each episode. An episode's entry contains links to various servers or video-sharing sites for online viewing (such as Openload, Gavitex, and Dailymotion), and for downloading via external file-sharing servers, accompanied by information that fansubbers consider might help the viewers understand the story in the episode better. In some cases, fansubbers use this space to leave personal comments or explain difficulties they face while translating the episode. In every entry, there is a comment section where some viewers also shared their opinions and participated in discussions.

TUF is the only group among the TH>SP fansubbing communities discussed here that explain their workflow on the website. In TUF About Us section, the fansubbers leave a brief description of their working process, so that the viewers can "empathise a little" with the fansub team (Thai Underground Fansub, n.d.-a). The workflow stages can be summed up as follows:

1) Acquiring raw videos and English subtitles

The group has to obtain the source videos without subtitles, and a reliable version of English subtitles, which can be hard subtitles or soft subtitles in .srt formats. Soft subtitles will facilitate the work and save time as they can skip the timing process, using the existing timing in the English version.

2) Timing or spotting

TUF team uses the free subtitling software *Aegisub* for spotting, which refers to assigning the time for each line of subtitles. The group considers the process relatively easy after

some practice, but it can become complicated when they have to deal with one- or two-hour long videos. *Aegisub* is an open-source subtitling software popular among fansubbers worldwide (cf. Denison, 2011b; Schules, 2014; Wongseree, 2020; Zhang, 2019). As explained in Dore and Petrucci (2022), using free-of-charge, readily available software for subtitling adheres to the non-profit nature of amateur AVT.

3) Translating

In case the fansubbers work with English soft subtitles, they simply translate each line into Spanish. The process is more complicated with hard subtitles, as they need to transcribe the English subtitles while they do the timecodes so that they can later translate the subtitles into Spanish all at once. Another option is to watch the video with English subtitles and translate line by line.

4) Revising

The finished project will be reviewed to prevent errors in spelling and timing. The group states that each fansub video is usually reviewed twice. The process is deemed very significant, as the fansubbers acknowledge that errors in spelling in the subtitles can become a distraction for viewers. Timing is even more important, as timing that is done badly can make subtitles unreadable and, in some cases, can even ruin the whole work.

5) Adding styles and personalised introduction

The fansubbers suggest "decorating" the subtitles with the use of different colours, sizes and fonts to make them more attractive, while they also consider that a simple style is better. Garish colours are avoided, as they may cause a negative effect on the viewers. Another stylish addition is a "personalised intro," where they add the names of the cast at the beginning of each episode, along with some other details such as the group's translation credits and disclaimers at the beginning or the end.

6) Burning subtitles onto the videos, converting raw videos and other technical tasks

This step is a technical process to embed the subtitles in the video. They use a program called *Format Factory* to convert videos into .avi format before burning subtitles onto the videos with *AVI Recomp.* This process may take approximately 2 to 4 hours and may

include other video editing steps, such as trimming or joining various videos, and compressing the finished videos so that they can be uploaded to the servers.

7) Uploading the video

In this step, the video is uploaded to the server which will later allow viewers to download or view it online. The group mentions that selecting an appropriate server is also an important step because, depending on the show, the videos might be prohibited on certain servers due to copyright restrictions.

8) Creating an entry in the blog

The last step is to create an entry on the TUF website with comments and information that they consider would be interesting for the viewers.

Another distinguishing feature of the TUF platform is the entry "Vocabulario Thai" (Thai vocabulary) which explains basic elements in the Thai language and some proper names so that viewers can recognise them when they appear in series or films (Thai Underground Fansub, 2014d). Thai vocabulary explained here consists of specific features of the Thai language such as final particles that indicate the speaker's gender (ครับ [krub or krap] for male speaker and ค่ะ [ka] for female speaker) and vocatives (พี่ [P'] to address an interlocutor who is older than the speaker and น้อง [Nong] for a younger person), greetings, numbers, names of cities and provinces in Thailand, and Thai festivals. Thai alphabets are also presented, with the pronunciation transcribed with Latin alphabets.

- *MLat Latin Fansub*

MLat Latin Fansub is an active fansub group that subtitles Thai dramas into Latin American Spanish and distributes them on their website. The information about the fansubbers is not revealed on the website. As of July 2022, there are over 220 television shows and 11 films on the website. Most of them are *Lakorn* or Thai soap operas. A few series, miniseries and films are also included. With this figure, MLat is the fansub group that provides the largest number of Thai AV products with subtitles in Spanish.

The website is systematically structured, with aspects that resemble a professional online streaming platform. It allows the audience to browse the shows in alphabetical order, by genre and by the year the show was broadcast on Thai television (from 2005 to the

present). Viewers can use search filters within the site to browse shows that already have every episode subtitled, shows that are currently being subtitled, and music videos. Apart from the subtitled shows, the tab MLat News redirects to the fansubbers' blog on wordpress.com which publishes short news in Spanish on Thai entertainment: actors, actresses, and new soap opera productions. The latest post is dated March 9, 2018.
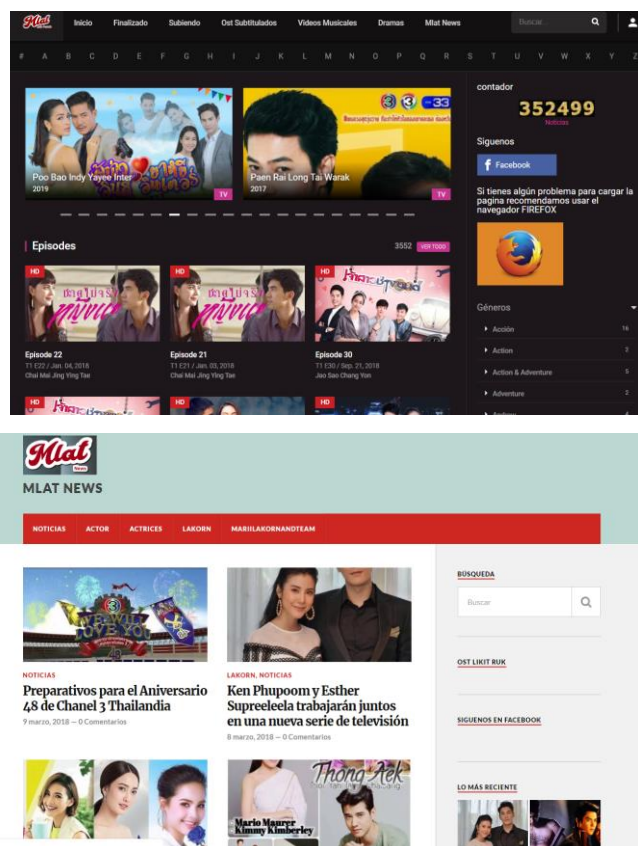
Figure 6. MLat Latin Fansub website and news blog

An entry of each drama contains the promotional photo, the name, the popularity rating from viewers' votes, the tag defining the genre (action, drama, romance, etc.) and the status of the project whether all the subtitled episodes are uploaded or not ("Finalizado" or "Subiendo"). In several entries, viewers can find tags that are the names of famous actors or actresses, such as "Weir," "James Jirayu," or "Aum Atichart". This type of tag makes it easier for fans to browse shows that feature their favourite actors. At the same time, it reflects that fansubbers' preference and interest for certain actors may be part of the motivation to choose specific dramas to subtitle or to even engage in the subtitling activity at all.

Other information in the entry includes the synopsis in Spanish, and the broadcast dates on the Thai television channel. Each episode is uploaded onto two or three different servers and can be streamed online and, in some cases, downloaded.

Similar to the TUF website, there is a space for viewers' discussions and comments in each drama entry, as well as buttons for instant sharing on social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The group also encourages viewers to join their fan community on Facebook. The link on the group's webpage leads to "MLat – Latin Fansub" Facebook page, where viewers can find a link to join a private group called "Lakorn sub español," created in 2014. From the group description, it can be inferred that the Facebook group was created by the fansubbers to work on Thai soap opera subtitling projects and to receive opinions from fansubbers and non-translating fans.

As of December 2022, the group has over 44,000 members and can be considered quite active, with over 1,600 posts to the group over the previous month. Before joining the group, one can view a series of "group rules" which prohibit members from sharing links that are not from MLat or fansub groups they collaborate with. Moreover, members are strongly prohibited from reposting the group's videos for any reason. Only link sharing is permitted, and members who do not follow the rules might be expelled from the group without prior warning.

The rules that are stated in the Facebook group are also incorporated into the texts themselves. In many videos subtitled by MLat, the subtitles at the beginning read: "POR FAVOR NO RESUBIR" (Please do not repost). Another fact that reflects how seriously the group takes credit for their translation is the addition of written text at the beginning of the videos to give credit to the fansubber who translated the video, and to the groups who supplied the English subtitles of the shows. From these credits, it can be inferred that the subtitles were carried out as an indirect translation with English as pivot subtitles.

- *Black Clover Subs*

Black Clover Subs is the newest community discussed here. The Facebook fan page was created in February 2018, and the description specifies that it is dedicated to Asian series and films. Similar to TUF, Black Clover Subs' website was built using the WordPress content management system, but the group is not limited to only Thai shows. Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese content were also included, but the majority is Thai content. Black

Clover Subs has almost 8,000 followers on its Facebook fan page as of December 2022 and works on shows that are broadcast in Thailand from 2013 onwards.

The group seems to focus on teen, coming-of-age series, especially those from the BL genre. Of the 183 series that are offered with Spanish fansubs on the group's website as of July 2022, as many as 82 titles are Thai productions of the BL genre. With other 29 series from Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, BL series makes up to 60% of the group's fansubbed content.

In the case of Black Clover Subs, the role of "empowered viewers" is enhanced even further. The fansub group goes from annotating and making the source text their own by adding subtitles, to creating their distribution channel to circulate their version among fellow viewers in a near-professional manner. In June 2019, the group launched an application in Google Play Store to enable viewers to stream the subtitled shows on their mobile devices without the need to access the website and the file-sharing sites. Apart from general information on each show such as the actors' names and the year the show is launched, the application sends a push notification each time a new subtitled video becomes available. This function, along with notifications from the group's social media, actively prompts non-translating viewers to enter the platform, and strengthens the ties to the fansubbing community.

During 2019-2020, Black Clover Subs offers Thai TV shows with Spanish subtitles on three platforms: their website (for online viewing and download), their mobile application, and a separate Facebook fan page called Thai Spanish, where they upload full episodes. The mobile application, however, stopped working after approximately a year.
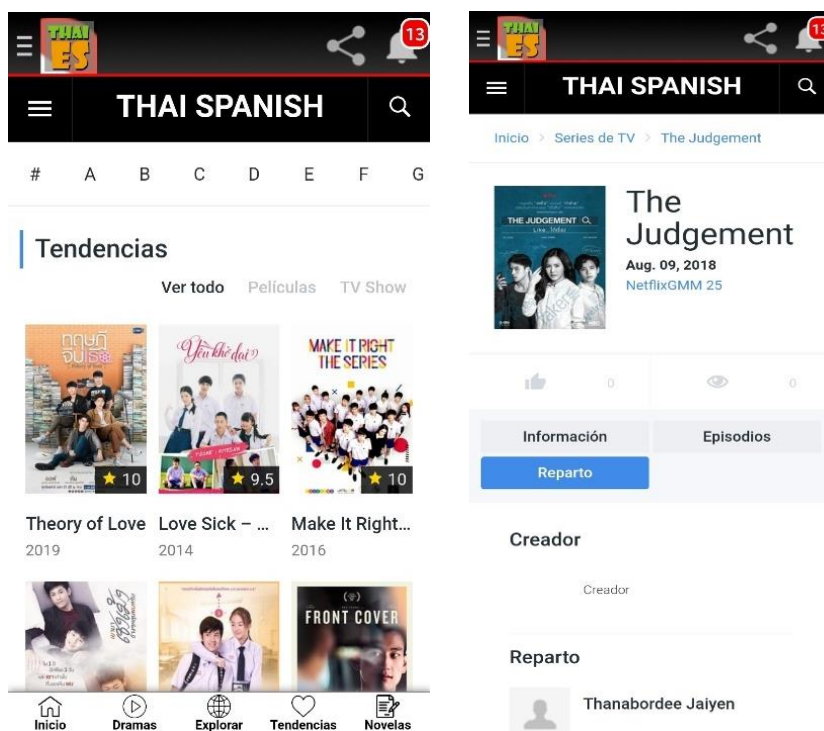
Figure 7. Screenshots of *Thai Es* application

Unlike MLat, Black Clover Subs does not specify the language variety of their subtitles, but from an overview of the subtitles produced by the group, the word choice and forms of address (for example, "ustedes" rather than "vosotros") indicate that the subtitles are not Peninsular Spanish.

In October 2019, the group made available a dubbed version of the film *Bad Genius* (2017) with "audio Latino" along with the usual subtitled version (Black Clover Subs, 2017). As of 2022, the dubbed version has disappeared from the site.
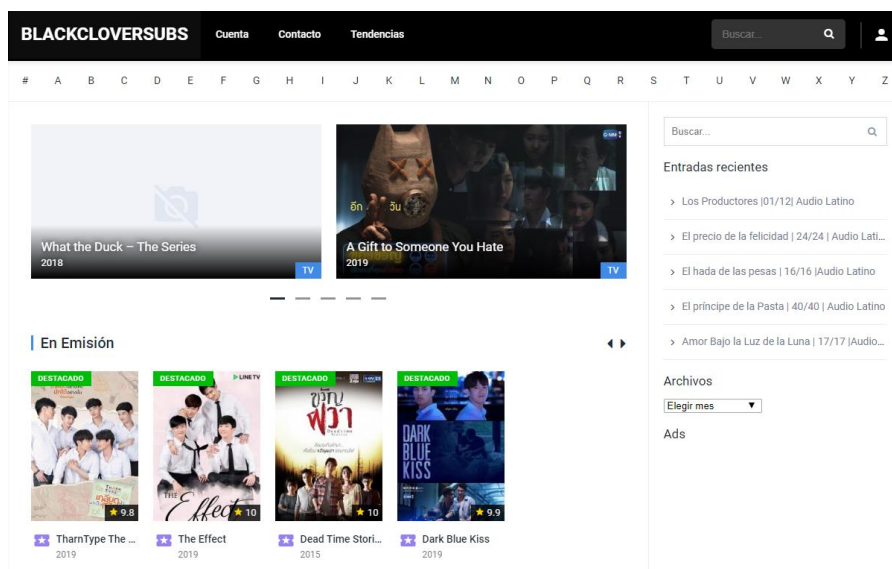
Figure 8. Black Clover Subs website

At the textual level, Black Clover Subs also claims credits for their work by adding the group's name in a headnote, a subtitle containing the website URL at the beginning of the show, and the group's logo in the corner of the screen. In some videos, claims such as "there is no intention of copyright infringement[3]" are followed by "it is prohibited to repost our work on other platforms[4]" (Black Clover Subs, 2019b).

At the end of October 2019, as a reaction to those who "steal our work, change the logos, post our work as others' property and publish it on networks and pages without permission[5]" (Black Clover Subs, 2019a), the group announced a "campaign to raise awareness" on their Facebook fan page, titled "#AgradeceAlSubber" (be grateful to the fansubber) in which Black Clover Subs, along with several other groups, decided to stop subtitling indefinitely. The campaign ended a few days later and the page went back to uploading new fansubbed episodes.

There is no evidence that this fansub group aims to profit from their subtitles, although the group does accept donations from viewers. In the post pinned and published on Black Clover Subs' Facebook fan page on September 27, 2019, the group left a PayPal link that enabled viewers to make donations, saying that "all support is welcome and appreciated" (*Black Clover Subs*, 2019c).

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[3] Translated from: "no existe ninguna intención de infringir los derechos de autor."
[4] Translated from: "prohibido resubir nuestro trabajo a otras plataformas."
[5] Translated from: "nos roban nuestro trabajo, cambian los logos, los publican como propiedad de otros."

- *Thai Pop*

Thai Pop is another group that only subtitles Thai shows. The group's website links to the Facebook fan page which has approximately 13,000 followers as of December 2022. According to their Facebook fan page information, the page was created in 2012 to promote Thai music and everything related to Thailand, including movies, TV dramas and news. Thai Pop's website offers two films, six TV series and one miniseries originally aired from 2011-2017. All nine shows are aimed to attract young audiences, for example, *Room Alone 401-410* (2014) and *U-Prince Series* (2017) which portray university student life. Like other such websites, Thai Pop provides information on the show's title, genre, episodes, producer, cast, and original broadcasting dates in each show's entry.

The difference from other groups discussed here is the technical format of the videos and the subtitles. Instead of leaving links that will redirect to the videos on different servers, Thai Pop incorporates a widget that allows the videos to play directly in each entry, and only allows online streaming without the download option. It is the only group among the four groups presented here that provides the subtitles in closed caption format: viewers can turn them off and on.
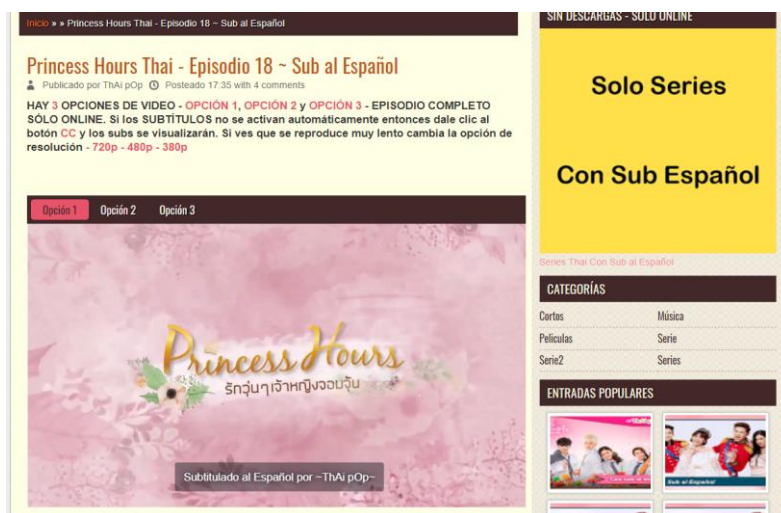
Figure 9. Screenshot of *Princess Hours* (2017) on Thai Pop website

Although fansubbing is generally viewed as a collaborative practice, the whole process of subtitling and distributing the fansubs can also be carried out by an individual, a "one-person agency" as identified by Pérez-González (2017). As TH>SP fansubs involve a

niche audience, the majority of fansub groups are small, some not very active, and oftentimes the fansubs are produced and distributed by individual fansubbers. For instance, at least two individual fansubbers are dedicated to subtitling BL shows from Thailand and other Asian countries. The availability of free subtitling programs, the ready-made content management system such as WordPress and Blogspot, and a plethora of social media also simplify the work in the fansubbing process and enable an individual to take charge of the whole production.

b) Characteristics of Thai>Spanish fansubbing

In conclusion, although the number requires constant updating, it can be confirmed that as of 2022, at least 300 titles of Thai TV shows with Spanish fansubs are available on the Internet. Some fansub groups focus on certain genres such as *Boys' Love*, or soap opera, but all the groups described above share these aspects:

- *Non-profit labour driven by fandom*

All these four online communities identify themselves as fans, and offer the subtitled videos to viewers for free, although donations might be accepted, as in the case of Black Clover Subs. TUF group, for instance, states clearly in the About Us section on their website that "we are a **non-profit** fansub, you can enjoy our projects completely free[6]" (Thai Underground Fansub, n.d.-a).

Another shared characteristic within TH>SP fansub groups is their keen interest in translating not only series and films but also related materials that complement the shows. For instance, trailers, spin-off programs, and most importantly, the OST (original soundtrack), the songs and music used in the series or films. TUF and Black Clover Subs, for instance, subtitled music videos of several songs that appeared in the series they translated. TUF also subtitled short scenes from *Hormones: The Next Gen* (2014) and *Frozen Hormones* (2015) which are reality shows that involve the cast from *Hormones*.

Thai Pop is another group that is motivated by the fans' love for Thai music, media, and culture. In the Facebook fan page description, the group members list their favourite Thai singers and identify themselves as a group of young people with an affinity for Thai music

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[6] Translated from: "Somos un fansub **sin fines lucrativos**, puedes disfrutar de nuestros proyectos completamente gratis."

and aim to promote the music and all that is related, including films, *Lakorn*, and news (*Thai Pop (Música Tailandesa)*, 2012).

In the case of MLat Latin Fansub, the effort they put into updating a separate blog dedicated to Thai entertainment news also reflects their deep interest and affection for Thai actors and Thai productions.

- *Collaborative workflow*

The "collaborative methods" trait put forward by Dwyer (2012) certainly applies to TH>SP fansubs. TUF fansubbers, for instance, revealed each stage of their workflow on their website, and later confirmed in the interviews the distribution of different tasks to each member and the communication via a private Facebook group. Data from the interviews also reveal that, apart from collective labour within the group, there is another level of external collaboration, most importantly, with fansubbers who translate the shows from Thai into English. Working with the subtitlers who produce the pivot version is advantageous because if they agree to share the English version in soft subtitle format, the Spanish fansubbers will be able to use it as a template file, skipping the spotting process. Even fansubbers who work individually possibly collaborate with other fansubbing agents for pivot subtitles.

One of the challenges in pivot translation is that the pivot does not necessarily contain the translation of all the elements in the source text, especially when it comes to official English subtitles. Mostly, official versions do not include translations of the cast in the opening credits, and they only translate the songs that are pertinent to the plot. In the TUF case, the fansubbers collaborated with TH>EN fansubbers to retrieve the English pivot of the missing elements and create the Spanish version with complete information. One example is the various sources of the English pivots mentioned in the description of the show รักนะเป็ดโง่ [*Ugly Duckling: Perfect Match*] (2015) (Thai Underground Fansub, 2015b):

> Thanks to GMM official channel for English subtitles
> Thanks to @wwctmania for the translation of the names in the introduction
> Thanks to Deungdutjai for the English subtitles of the song

- *Indirect translation*

Every TH>SP fansub group discussed in this chapter translated Thai shows via English pivot subtitles and did not camouflage the status of ITr. On the contrary, credits are usually given to the creators or the sources of the English subtitles. TUF group sometimes reveal the version of English subtitles they use in the blog entry of the show, other times they are indicated in an extra subtitle within the videos. MLat group, Black Clover Subs, and Thai Pop mainly add credit for English subtitles at the beginning of their videos. The pivot subtitles can be created by other fansub groups, or official English subtitles provided by the media producers themselves.

- *Concern about fansubbers' visibility and sense of rivalry among different groups*

Previous studies discuss the dubious legality of fansubs and conclude that, although there are grey areas, "in the end, regardless of ethics, or motive, fansubs are technically illegal" (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006, p. 45). TH>SP fansub groups seem to acknowledge the copyright infringement issue, or at least its consequences.

All fansub groups discussed here are aware that their subtitled videos are often banned from video-sharing platforms and servers and have come up with similar strategies to overcome this inconvenience: they make the subtitled videos available through various servers and provide multiple viewing options on their websites. TUF states on their website that certain servers do not allow them to upload the subtitled shows due to copyrights issue and urges viewers to notify them whenever they find any videos that are not accessible anymore, so that the fansubbers will work on re-uploading them (Thai Underground Fansub, n.d.-a).

On April 2017, MLat Latin Fansub posted an announcement video to its YouTube channel to explain that they would not upload their subtitled videos on the platform anymore due to copyright issues[7]. On their website, which only allows audiences to watch the videos online, they usually prepare up to three viewing options in case any of them gets taken down due to copyright infringement. At the textual level, at the beginning

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[7] Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AF88Dbfo0Q

of the videos, every group usually adds the disclaimer: "there is no intention of copyright infringement[8]."

Ironically, while their practices infringe the copyright held by media producers, these fansubbers are hugely concerned with claiming authorship for their translation. Fansubbers' position as prosumers who appropriate the media with their annotations (Pérez-González, 2012, p. 6) is even more visible with the manipulation of the visual element. The common practice shared by the four TH>SP fansub groups is to add the group's name onto the video in an extra subtitle at the beginning and/or at the end of the video. Some groups mimic the officially distributed media by using the format "[group name] presents" followed by the title of the show, or by adding a visual element: the group's logo that stays on the screen throughout the episode, similar to the logo of the source text broadcaster or producer. Some groups such as TUF and Black Clover Fansubs go a step further by adjusting the fonts and the colours to match the mise-en-scène in the introduction of the show.

In the case of MLat Latin Fansub, it is not clear whether the chronological order of the videos coincides with the broadcast year of the dramas, but since หนึ่งในทรวง [*Nung Nai Suang: Only You in my Heart*] (2005), the oldest drama offered on the platform, viewers can find the group's name onscreen throughout the episode. In other shows, they also added the credits for other collaborating fansub groups who provided the English pivot subtitles, and in some cases, credits for those who took charge of the subtitle segmentation.

Figure 10. หนึ่งในทรวง [*Nung Nai Suang: Only You in my Heart*] E1 by MLat Fansub

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[8] Translated from: "No existe ninguna intención de infringir los derechos de autor"

Apart from the group's name, fansubbers add extra subtitles containing the URL of their websites or their social media accounts to redirect the viewers to their sites, in other words, to promote their activities and attract more followers. The usual message by TUF is "to see more Thai projects in Spanish, visit: http://thaiundergroundfansub. wordpress.com[9]." Black Clover Subs has a similar format with slightly different wording: "Find us at www.blackcloversubs.com and www.descargas.blackcloversubs.com[10]."

This practice is consistent with Díaz-Cintas' observation (2018, p. 130) that fansubbing practices, as part of popular culture, "generate and inculcate a sense of community" as well as "a sense of belonging" between people who share the same interest, whether they are passive viewers or those who actively engage in the subtitling activities. As fansubbing activity has a voluntary, unremunerated nature, the motivations are generally attributed to "purely emotional reasons, such as personal interest or the need to feel appreciated" (ibid.).

Similar findings are mentioned in Li (2020) in a study of Chinese amateur subtitling community that translate open online courses. The participating members reveal that "engaging in the group's subtitling activities can satisfy their hunger for knowledge and enjoyment of intellectual discovery" as well as it allows them to befriend likeminded people or even find love (Li, 2020, p. 514).

The data from the interview with TUF fansubbers resonate with observations by Díaz-Cintas (2018) and Li (2020). Two out of three fansubbers stated that their motivations to participate in the group include "educational motivation": improving their English skills. One aimed to learn more about subtitling tools and train oneself to become a translator (Fansubber 2). Other cited motivations are affective: the urge to help the group with the workload after seeing unfinished projects on the website (Fansubber 1) and personal interest and passion for Thai shows (Fansubber 3).

The textual and extratextual evidence found in these TH>SP fansub groups seems to confirm that, among others, the need to feel appreciated is a significant motivation. Various fansub groups claim their credits by inserting the group's name and/or logo.

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[9] Translated from: "para ver más proyectos tailandeses en español, visita:
http://thaiundergroundfansub.wordpress.com/
[10] Translated from: Búscanos "www.blackcloversubs.com y www.descargas.blackcloversubs.com"

MLat Facebook group imposes rules that prohibit viewers from reposting the fansubbed videos under any circumstances, and from even posting links that redirect to other fansub groups' works. Black Clover Subs' campaign against those who "steal" and repost the subtitled videos is another evidence of the fansubbers' demand for respect and appreciation from viewers.

The evidence of how keen the groups are on flagging their authorship implies that fansubbing in this case is not simply about unconditionally "sharing and spreading those materials among like-minded people through cyberspace" (ibid.). Among those like-minded people, a sense of competition or rivalry exists. As shown earlier, TH>SP fansub groups hold a strong sense of originality and authorship in their translation, and, although there is evidence of collaboration between fansub groups, there is also competition among them. This trait confirms what Cassany (2019b, p. 25) observes about fansub communities in Spain: some communities steal translation projects from others or criticise the quality of other groups' fansubs.

- *Empowerment by technology*

Technology plays a significant role in the fansubbing phenomenon and the rapid media flow across continents. Every fansub group relies on free subtitling software and various video hosting servers for media circulation. They also employ an extensive list of social media (Facebook, YouTube, Dailymotion, Twitter) to reach as many viewers as possible.

Among all the groups discussed, Black Clover Subs is the pioneer in creating its streaming platform: a mobile application for Android devices. This phenomenon demonstrates that, empowered by technology, fansubbers have the potential to go beyond translating and distributing their work on ready-made content management websites. Fansubbers' own streaming mobile application demonstrates their potential to compete with services offered by professional practices and blurs the line between amateur and professional translations.

- *Absence of pressure for quick turnaround time*

While studies on fansubbing in other language pairs indicate the increasing competitiveness between fansub groups that drives them to release their translations with the quickest turnaround time possible (e.g. Massidda & Casarini, 2017), the situation does not apply to the TH>SP combination. One of the factors might be the indirect translation

process which leaves the fansubbers dependent on the release of the English pivot subtitles. Also, unlike popular mainstream TV shows from the U.S. that have millions of viewers waiting, Thai shows are enjoyed by niche foreign audiences, and due to the complicated process discussed in section 2.2, before the recent boom of OTT streaming platforms, even official exports take time. With few fansub groups dedicated to Thai shows, and with a large variety of Thai content on the Internet, the shows distributed by each group rarely coincide.

Furthermore, fansubbers do not solely limit themselves to new releases. Older shows that were a great success were also selected for subtitling. Black Clover Subs, for instance, subtitled *The Love of Siam* in 2020, according to an announcement on their Facebook fan page. The movie, which was released in 2007, won multiple national film awards as a groundbreaking drama that openly explores teenagers' sexuality, and was later perceived as a pioneer that paved the way for the Thai BL sub-genre. The same group also began to release subtitled episodes from the first season of *Hormones* (2013) at the beginning of 2022, defining the show as one of the "classics[11]". Similarly, MLat group's ongoing projects as of July 2022 also include series from 2021, 2015 and 2010.

Without the pressure of tight deadlines and strict schedules for new episode releases, fansubbers have more time to experiment with visual resources, producing innovative subtitles and incorporating extra information in the forms of glosses and headnotes.

The case of TH>SP fansubs seems to stand in between the binary classification: the subtitles exhibit the characteristics that are usually attributed to anime fansubs, although the shows are TV series and films, not animations. For instance, the use of explanatory headnotes and glosses is a strategy usually attributed to anime fansub (Díaz-Cintas, 2018; Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Pérez-González, 2007b). In TH>SP fansubbing, a shared characteristic across different fansub groups is the retention of cultural references in Thai and an added explanation using headnotes and glosses.

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[11] https://www.facebook.com/Blackcloversubs/posts/1003423340287001

Figure 11. บุพเพสันนิวาส [*Bupphesanniwat: Love Destiny*] (2018) E2 by MLat Fansub

บุพเพสันนิวาส [*Bupphesanniwat: Love Destiny*] (2018) is a historical Thai soap opera set in the 17th century. At the time, the area which is Thailand nowadays was known as the Ayutthaya Kingdom. In this example, MLat Latin fansubbers choose to retain both the name of the King as it is pronounced in Thai and the final particles used by Thai women in the past (jao ka). "Khun Luang Narai" is the casual name used by Thai people to refer to King Ramathibodi III or Somdet Phra Narai, who reigned the Ayutthaya Kingdom during 1656-1688. The fansubbers add the full names of the King and the years he reigned in the headnote.

A similar strategy can also be found in translations by TUF. In the first episode of *Hormones*, the characters mention Nichkhun, a Thai singer who joined the Korean band 2PM. The fansubbers keep the singer's name as how he is addressed in Thai (with the vocative P' that Thais use to call someone older than themselves) and add a headnote that explains: "Note: they talk about Nichkhun of 2PM group." The use of headnotes and its implications will be discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 5.

Figure 12. Screenshot of a headnote (Hm S1 E8)

From traditional soap operas for domestic audiences to BL series and international co-productions with Netflix, the Thai media industry has undergone significant changes in the past decade. While official export has recently set out to conquer Spanish-speaking audiences overseas, fansub groups are already feeding the niche audience with their subtitled videos.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

According to Holme's map of Translation Studies (1988), this research is situated within the strand of descriptive translation studies, which mainly draws on empirical analysis of existing translations. Among the three sub-areas of descriptive translation studies, the product-oriented approach is adopted for comparative textual analysis of the ultimate source text, the intermediary text, and the ultimate target text. The process-oriented approach supplements the textual analysis with an overview of the fansubbing production process and the fansubbers' statement regarding some of their translation decisions. Lastly, the function-oriented approach informs the discussion of the sociocultural context in which the translations were produced. Although the scale of this research is limited to case study level, mapping the features of the TH>EN>SP language combination contributes to the development of text-type restricted and language-pair restricted theory on a larger scale.

One of the salient features of fansubbing reported in academic literature on AVT is its deviation from professional subtitling norms, although recent studies point to a paradigmatic shift towards the possibility of convergence. Before discussing the fluidity of professional and amateur AVT, this chapter will outline the concept of norms in translation studies and its application to the modality of subtitling as a point of departure.

The notion of norms in Translation Studies, as introduced and developed by Toury (1995; 2012), stems from the conceptualisation of translation as an activity subject to norms influenced by sociocultural factors. Norms are described as "the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community —as to what would count as right and wrong, adequate and inadequate— into performance 'instructions' appropriate for and applicable to concrete situations" (Toury, 2012, p. 63).

According to Toury, norms influence every stage of the translation process. Firstly, "preliminary norms" consist of the "translation policy" or the selection of the texts to translate, and "directness of translation," which concerns the decision to translate directly from the original text or via an intermediary version in another language and the degree of tolerance/acceptance of indirect translation. Secondly, "initial norms" refer to the overall tendency of whether the translators adopt choices that adhere more to the norms

of the source text, resulting in "adequacy," or whether they conform to the norms in the target culture, resulting in "acceptability". Lastly, "operational norms" govern decisions during the act of translation. They are further classified into "matricial norms" which concern the macro-structure of the texts involving the decision whether to translate the text fully or partially, and the segmentation of the text, and "textual-linguistic norms" which govern decisions at the micro level like word choice and sentence structures.

As Hermans (1999, p. 85) points out, identifying norms is not a simple task since "norms are not directly observable." To reconstruct possible norms, Toury (2012, pp. 87–88) suggests two types of sources to investigate translation norms, i.e., textual sources, which are the translated texts themselves, and extratextual sources that encompass "prescriptive 'theories' of translation, statements made by translators, editors, publishers, and other persons involved in or connected with the event, critical appraisals of individual translations, or of the activity of a translator or 'school' of translators, and so forth".

Although the concept of norms and the descriptive model were initially restricted to literary translation, various studies have shown the applicability of the paradigm to AVT. The notion of norms not only draws attention to the sociological factors at play in translation but also leads to an understanding of audiovisual translation as an act of intercultural communication (Agost Canós, 2005, p. 26). Toury's framework has been productive in reconstructing norms in professional AVT practices such as translational norms of television channels in Greece (Karamitroglou, 2000), subtitling norms in Greece and Spain (Sokoli, 2011), and prevalent norms in dubbing culture-specific references into Italian (Ranzato, 2016).

In the growing area of non-professional AVT, the concept of norms has also proved fruitful, especially the one put forward by Chesterman (1997). Going beyond the translation process and translators, Chesterman's concept takes into account the role and expectations of the reader/audience in formulating translation norms, which are divided into product norms and process norms. The product norms or expectancy norms are "established by the expectations of readers of a translation (of a given type) concerning what a translation (of this type) should be like" (Chesterman, 1997, p. 64). On the other hand, process norms or professional norms are viewed as subordinate to expectancy norms and specify how the translator should act in ethical and social terms.

Fansubbing is a phenomenon that exemplifies possible discrepancies or even conflicts between professional norms and expectancy norms. In her extensive research on fansubbing in Italy, Massidda (2015) presents a hybrid proposal for subtitling guidelines that incorporate the features found in fansubs as they reflect the expectancy norms from viewers' demands. This prescriptive proposal strongly encourages source-oriented translation, which contrasts with the "flattening and inconveniently imprecise" style in professional subtitling (ibid., p. 62) as well as the "inaccuracy and excessive manipulation" in dubbing, which is the predominant mode of AVT in Italy (ibid., p.17). Pedersen (2019) also acknowledges that although professional subtitling norms can be applied as parameters for analysis, they might not be ideal as an indicator of quality, because the expectancy norms, in other words, what fansub viewers associate with quality, may be different.

Against this background, this thesis has developed the parameters for textual analysis based on both professional subtitling norms and the prototypical characteristics of fansubs based on studies of fansubbing in other language combinations. The aim is to determine to what extent the TH>SP fansubs conform to or challenge professional subtitling norms and, apart from certain norm-defying traits, what other characteristics they share with fansubbing in other language combinations.

The following subsections will explore the nature of AV texts and the concepts influencing mainstream professional subtitling norms. The third and fourth subsections delve into the prototypical characteristics of fansubs based on previous empirical studies and the recent trend of possible convergence between professional and amateur practices. Finally, the methodology, selected materials, and model of analysis will be discussed at the end of the chapter.

3.1 Audiovisual text components

The challenge in AVT, especially in subtitling modality, lies in the necessity to comply with time and space constraints while accounting for the meanings transferred through various semiotic layers. To avoid the pitfall of preserving only the linguistic dimension

in AVT, it is necessary to outline the complexity of AV texts and its implications for translations.

a) The complex nature of audiovisual texts

Zabalbeascoa (2008) classifies the components of audiovisual text into two types of signs transmitted through two channels, which ultimately form four components: "audio-verbal (words uttered), audio-nonverbal (all other sounds), visual-verbal (writing), visual-nonverbal (all other visual signs)". While the semantic significance of each verbal, nonverbal, audio and visual component might vary depending on the text items and text types, in a prototypical audiovisual text, all of the elements should be combined to carry the same level of semantic load and complement one another. The inseparability of these components poses a challenge for the translator of rendering the meaning of the most relevant items into the target language, which mainly operates only at the verbal level.

Multimodality is another concept that has lent itself to textual analysis of AVT, as detailed in Pérez-González's work (2014). Within this framework, semiotic resources are classified into four core modes: sound, music, image, and language. Each mode is associated with different medial variants and contains a range of sub-modes. For instance, the core mode "image" can be static (still) or dynamic (moving). The static medial variant is realised through sub-modes that include elements, vectors, colour, lighting, size, distance, angle/perspective, and composition, while the dynamic medial variant contains all the aforementioned sub-modes, plus camera panning, camera tilting, camera cuts, visual effects, and body language. Similar to Zabalbeascoa's proposal, this concept acknowledges the importance of the "inter-modal correlations" of visual and verbal elements beyond the language core mode and the need to consider them in the process of AVT (Pérez-González, 2014, pp. 213–215).

Along the same lines, Chaume (2004) integrates a paradigm from Film Studies which calls attention to signifying codes in film language that affect translation choices in subtitling and dubbing. This perspective highlights the importance of "code interaction," or the interplay between all the verbal, nonverbal, audio, and visual elements. As with Zabalbeascoa's classification (2008), Chaume's signifying codes are differentiated according to the channel through which they are transmitted: acoustic or visual.

According to Chaume (2012, p. 172), "what really concerns the translator is the influence of these semiotic signs on the linguistic code, the dialogues, since translators can only manipulate dialogues." However, this concern may not be shared by fansubbers since subtitling programmes popular among them, such as *Aegisub,* allow various options to style the subtitles and manipulate the visual elements of the source text. Unconventional translation solutions that defy the parameters of mainstream subtitling might be devised as a result. The application of Chaume's signifying codes will allow for systematic identification of the interplay of textual elements and the solutions adopted in TH>SP fansubs.

Initially proposed for mainstream dubbing and subtitling, this framework also proves relevant to subtitling for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH), audio description (AD) (Tamayo & Chaume, 2016) and dubbing in video games translation (Pujol-Tubau, 2017). This implies its extensive applicability and viability to fansubs. In addition, the integration of film studies into this framework is parallel to the concepts of creative subtitling (McClarty, 2014) and abusive subtitling (Nornes, 1999), which are central to the fansubbing phenomenon.

The signifying codes framework will be explained in detail in the following subsection along with the implications of the codes' interplay for the subtitling modality and the possible application to the analysis of fansubs.

b) Signifying codes of film language

This theoretical framework, put forward by Chaume (2004) and later refined by Chaume (2012), defines an audiovisual text as "a semiotic construct woven by a series of signifying codes that operate simultaneously to produce meaning" (Chaume, 2012, p. 100). The interaction of the different signifying codes, including nonverbal ones, can affect any modality of AVT. As stated by Chaume (2012, p. 118): "[t]his approach leads us to conclude that the linguistic code, despite its predominant role in any audiovisual text, is but one more code at work in the construction and later transfer of meaning in audiovisual texts."

The following table lists different types of signifying codes, which are transmitted through either the acoustic channel or the visual channel.

Table 2. Signifying codes in AV text (Chaume 2012)

Acoustic channel	Visual channel
Linguistic code: speech	Iconographic code: icons, indices, and symbols
Paralinguistic code: nonverbal components of voice	Photographic code: changes in lighting, perspective, or colour
Musical code: songs and soundtrack	Planning code: types of shots
Special effects code	Mobility code: proxemic and kinetic signs
Sound arrangement code: source of the sound	Graphic code: text written on the screen
	Syntactic code: editing

There are other signifying codes present in an audiovisual text, such as technical code that refers to the format of the medium (Casetti & Di Chio, 1991); however, following the model in Chaume (2012) and Tamayo and Chaume (2016), only signifying codes that have a direct impact on the translation will be included.

The codes that are transferred through the **acoustic channel** are:

- *Linguistic code*

This code refers to speech in the film that viewers can hear including characters' dialogues and monologues and the narrator's voice. Translation problems that arise solely from the linguistic code, such as multilingualism, cultural references, wordplay, and humour, are not considered specific to AVT, since they can also be found in translations of other text types (Chaume, 2004, 2012). What is specific to AVT is that the linguistic code is presented simultaneously with other codes, and the meaning as a whole is formed by a complementary or even contradictory relationship between these codes.

The particularity of subtitling modality is that the linguistic code in the source text is retained instead of substituted by the translation. This co-existence of the source text and the target text makes subtitling an instance of "vulnerable translation" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 77), the conceptualisation of which will be discussed further in section 3.2.

- *Paralinguistic code*

The paralinguistic code consists of nonverbal features that accompany speech like the volume, rhythm and tone of the voice, silence, pauses and sounds such as coughs or sniffs.

In mainstream subtitling, the pauses and rhythm of dialogues determine the spotting of subtitles, as well as the use of ellipsis for unfinished sentences or small pauses. In non-professional subtitling, such conventions in synchronisation may not be observed to the same extent. In SDH, information conveyed by paralinguistic code, such as an ironic tone, has to be included in parentheses at the beginning of the subtitle (Tamayo & Chaume, 2016, pp. 311–312).

- *Musical code*

Musical code includes songs with lyrics and incidental music. In professional subtitling, the critical factor determining whether a song should be translated is whether the lyrics are relevant to the plot (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). Fansubs, on the other hand, do not necessarily conform to the norm that permits only a maximum of two lines of subtitles in each frame. Therefore, fansubbers have the option to provide translations of both linguistic code and musical code at the same time. In these cases, song lyrics may be added as separate titles and presented simultaneously with the subtitles of the characters' speech. Another innovative solution for musical code, which is typical in anime fansubbing, is the karaoke-style subtitles that contain both the transcription and the translation of the lyrics, presented in a dynamic format (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006).

- *Special effects code*

This code may cause translation problems when it interacts with linguistic code in a way that conditions the translation, for example, when a sound effect is used as part of a wordplay for a comedic purpose (Chaume, 2012, pp. 106–107). In addition, musical and special effects codes may signal the appearance or characterise an object or a protagonist by linking specific sounds with the image (Pujol-Tubau, 2017).

- *Sound arrangement code*

This code is related to the source of the sounds (on-screen or off-screen) and whether they are diegetic (being part of the story) or non-diegetic (being perceived by the audience but not by the characters in the story). The sound arrangement code is a significant condition in dubbing because on-screen voices need to be synchronised with the characters' lip movement. While it is not as crucial in mainstream subtitling to differentiate on-screen and off-screen sounds, off-screen speech is usually distinguished with an italic typeface.

The second part of the signifying codes includes those transmitted through the **visual channel**:

- *Iconographic code*

This code can be subdivided into icons, indices, and symbols. Each is described as follows:

> **Icons** are signs or likenesses that stand for an object by signifying or representing it either physically or by analogy. Images (including characters) are icons.
>
> **Indices** represent their objects regardless of whether or not they resemble them, but only by virtue of real connections or relationships of contiguity with them (such as the relationship of smoke and fire).
>
> **Symbols** are signs referring to the objects they substitute by convention, like the representation of the earth by a globe. (Chaume, 2012, p. 110)

In many cases, the iconographic code, in combination with the linguistic one, becomes a restriction that conditions the translation. In mainstream subtitling, translators are not generally required to verbalise the iconographic code unless it is indispensable for viewers' comprehension. In fansubbing, especially in anime, translators are keener to render the meaning of items in the iconographic code, such as a description of culture-specific items, to respond to viewers' interest in the source culture (Ortabasi, 2007).

- *Photographic code*

The photographic code consists of the perspective and the use of colour and lighting, which may result in a difficult task for translators in several cases. For example, a colour can be associated with different concepts in different cultures, adding another layer of meaning. Different types of lighting and colours may distinguish between the narratives in the past and present, as well as between reality and dream. The lighting may create a wordplay when combined with the linguistic code. A change of perspective generally requires a change of subtitles (Tamayo & Chaume, 2016, p. 321). The lighting and the colour also condition subtitles' readability.

- *Planning code*

The planning code refers to the types of shots, for instance, extreme close-ups, close-ups, medium shots, or long shots. As observed by Tamayo and Chaume (2016, p. 322), in mainstream subtitling, the type of shot used with the graphic code determines whether the subtitler translates the graphic code or not. For instance, a close-up shot at a text on screen frequently implies its relevance to the story and the necessity to translate it. A change of shots is also the cue for a transition to a new subtitle.

- *Mobility code*

The mobility code consists of the movement of objects or characters within a shot or the camera's movement while filming (Tamayo & Chaume, 2016, p. 323). This code includes proxemic signs, which refer to the movement of the characters closer or further to each other or the point of reference, and kinesics signs, which are the characters' body movements and mouth articulation. In mainstream subtitling, when various characters are present on the screen with simultaneous dialogues, the distance of the character to the camera helps the translator decide which speech to translate, since one subtitle may contain the speech of only two different characters. On the other hand, the characters' gestures may cause a translation problem when the body language in the source culture does not carry the same meaning in the target culture.

In Foerster's study (2010, pp. 92–93) of creative subtitling, there is evidence of dynamic subtitles, which move according to the movement of particular objects on the screen, for a stylistic purpose. In fansubbing, the translators enjoy similar freedom to go beyond the

standard limitation of static subtitles. Thus, a probable strategy is to create subtitles that integrate with the visual elements and provide a greater aesthetic for the translated version.

- *Graphic code*

Graphic code refers to the verbal messages shown on the screen. They can also be called "captions" (Chaume, 2004) or simply "text on screen" (Chaume, 2012, p. 117; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 60). The graphic code can be subcategorised into titles, intertitles, texts, and subtitles.

According to Casetti and Di Chio (1991, p. 97), titles are written texts that appear at the beginning and the end of the film. They may contain information about the production such as the cast, credits, or disclaimers. Intertitles are texts that appear between scenes, commonly used in silent films to verbalise characters' dialogues and describe the images (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 26).

Texts, or inserts, are written messages that can be diegetic, for instance, part of objects such as newspapers, road signs, or banners. They can also be non-diegetic, such as written on-screen narration. Subtitles refer to subtitles included in the source text, generally placed at the bottom of the screen to translate messages in the language that differs from the source language. These subtitles can also be called "forced narrative subtitles" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 26), the term which is also adopted in Netflix's timed text style guide. They include translations of foreign language dialogues, sign language exchanges between characters, and non-diegetic inserts in a foreign language.

The translation of the graphic code depends on how it interacts with other codes. In general, translations of the graphic code in mainstream subtitling are marked by uppercase letters to differentiate them from translations of the linguistic code. However, depending on its interplay with other codes, such as the planning and mobility codes, or its relevance to the story, translators might also leave the graphic code untranslated (Tamayo & Chaume, 2016, p. 326).

Absent from Chaume's classification of signifying codes in AVT are "connotative codes," introduced by Casetti & Di Chio (1991, p. 98), that are highly relevant to fansubbing; this subcode refers to characteristics of the graphic code: the size of the

letters, the possible movements of the text, or the fonts. This connotative layer contributes to creating meanings and influences the mood of the scene and has been employed in fansubs for aesthetic effects.

- *Syntactic code*

The syntactic code or editing determines how the scenes are combined to convey the plot and the narrative. Translators might find an appropriate solution to a translation problem in a specific scene in other scenes that follow. The "audiovisual punctuation marks," such as fade-ins, fade-outs, and wipe-offs, also condition the subtitling: the widely accepted norm in mainstream practices requires that the translator begin a new subtitle after a punctuation mark (Chaume, 2004, p. 22). As fansubbing is less norm-governed, the extent to which subtitlers follow this convention for spotting varies depending on each group's guidelines.

A translation problem in AVT may originate from the linguistic code alone or a simultaneous interplay of several codes. While professional subtitling is limited to adding graphic code, fansubbing sometimes goes beyond the addition of written text and includes modifications of nonverbal visual elements in the source text. In the preparation process revealed by Thai Underground Fansub, for example, fansubbers sometimes edited the "raw" video files they retrieved by merging separate parts of an episode into one to make the whole episode available for viewers. Naturally, this leads to changes in the syntactic code.

In addition, as fansubbing allows more room for creative solutions, fansubbers come up with more options to render the interplay of signifying codes. An example might be the translation of lyrics, part of the musical code, in separate subtitles, using a different placement, font, and colour to distinguish them from the subtitles that contain the translation of the spoken dialogue simultaneously. Another example is the translation of graphic code by placing the translation near the inserts or replacing them, using similar fonts and styles to blend the translated text into the mise-en-scène, while transferring the linguistic code into the target language using traditional subtitles at the same time.

3.2 Mainstream subtitling features

As official translations commissioned by the media producers or distributors, professional subtitles are expected to meet parameters such as quality assurance, accuracy, and production speed. These well-established subtitling conventions have become the standard determining the quality of subtitles, especially in Europe.

In the context of the digital age, viewers can access audiovisual content through all types of devices, while diverse options to manipulate on-screen texts have become available not only to professionals in the industry but also to general media consumers. Although there have been attempts in favour of innovative approaches to subtitling, as will be further discussed in section 3.4, they have not been widely applied to mainstream practices. Minor changes such as higher subtitle display rates have been implemented, but since quick turnaround time and cost-effectiveness are prioritised in the industry, the formal aspects of most interlingual subtitles made for mainstream TV shows and films remain unchanged.

Gottlieb (1997, p. 95) refers to interlingual subtitling as "diagonal translation" since it involves a modal shift from spoken to written, apart from the linguistic transfer. As a consequence, time and space constraints are essential factors that shape the subtitling conventions for professional practices. The rendering of speech in written format and the fact that the translation is presented as an addition to the source text, not a substitution as in written translation or even dubbing makes subtitling "a unique translational genre" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 61). This section will revisit the concepts that affect mainstream subtitling conventions.

a) Subtitles' readability and legibility

One of the core objectives of mainstream subtitling conventions is to produce subtitles that are easy to read and do not distract the viewers from other elements on the screen. The minimum duration of subtitles contributes to legibility by preventing the flashing effect (Karamitroglou, 1998). On the other hand, the maximum duration of six or seven seconds per one subtitle is intended to prevent viewers from re-reading it. The minimum gap between each subtitle is also required "to allow the viewer's eye to register the

appearance of a new subtitle" (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). The fixed placement, fonts, and colours of the subtitles are arranged for optimal legibility since viewers will know exactly where to look for the subtitles. Furthermore, the clear, easily readable fonts and bright colours make the written texts stand out from the images.

The display rate, minimum and maximum duration of the subtitles and the space between each subtitle vary depending on the companies and are subject to change over time. According to the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998), a set of prescriptive subtitling norms published with the approval of the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST), a subtitle should have a minimum duration of one second and maximum duration of 7 seconds. In an updated version of Díaz-Cintas and Remael's fundamental work on subtitling concepts and practices (2020, p. 105), the authors observe a recent change in the industry from the traditional rule of six-second to five-second maximum duration, due to viewers' familiarity with subtitling modality. The display rate has also increased from the long-standing norm of 12 characters per second (cps) to up to 17 cps, while the limit on the number of characters per line has increased to 42 (Szarkowska et al., 2020).

Another salient feature of the subtitling modality is modification at linguistic level. To achieve optimal readability for viewers within limited time and space, text reduction strategies are indispensable. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020) provide a list of different text reduction strategies including a partial reduction from condensation and reformulation, and a total reduction from omission at word and sentence level. However, recent research on viewers' receptions and cognitive processing suggest a possible divergence between expectancy norms and professional norms (Chesterman, 1997) regarding textual information. To elaborate, a study conducted by Szarkowska et al. (2020) reveals that, for professionals, good-quality subtitles are associated with a high degree of condensation, whereas viewers prefer subtitles that maintain as much information as possible.

At the linguistic level, simple syntactic units are preferred in order to facilitate readability (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). This concept involves simplification of the phrases and segmentation according to grammatical units. The subtitling standards proposed by Karamitroglou (1998) suggest that the entire sentence should ideally be in one subtitle. If

this is not possible, the segmentation should occur "at the highest syntactic nodes possible," for instance, separating the subject from the predicate instead of the article from the noun.

b) Vulnerable translation

The coexistence of interlingual subtitles and the source text results in a "vulnerable translation," according to Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, pp. 77–78), in the sense that this juxtaposition allows the audience to compare the translation to the source text. The comparison may invoke criticism, especially in cases where the audience is familiar with the source language, such as subtitling from English, since the audience most likely expects the subtitles to comply with the source text in terms of length and register. In addition, due to limited time and space, resorting to "metatextual interventions" such as adding footnotes or glosses to provide further explanation for the viewers is not a common practice in mainstream subtitling.

For TH>SP fansubbing, "vulnerable translation" might not be as relevant in the ultimate target text since Thai is not a widely known language among Spanish speakers; both professional subtitlers and fansubbers need a pivot version through which Thai can be translated into Spanish. However, vulnerable translation might come into play during the process of translation from English into Spanish. The (in)congruity between Thai audio and English pivot subtitles might be questioned by fansubbers who are interested in Thai culture and language and may be able to capture a few words or phrases. Textual evidence, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5, shows the fansubbers' capacity to recover a few terms and cultural references mentioned in the Thai audio but are generalised or omitted in the English pivot subtitles.

c) Translator's visibility

The *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (1998) clearly states that the name of the subtitler and the organisation responsible for the subtitling should appear in the show's credits. However, in practice, the visibility of subtitlers is still questionable. As observed by Orrego-Carmona (2016b, p. 225)(2016b, p. 225), listing the subtitler's name in the credits in TV shows "is still far from being a golden standard in professional subtitling". Díaz-

Cintas (2018, p. 140) also states that subtitlers in traditional media "tend to remain anonymous".

A similar situation applies to SVOD platforms. Netflix's style guide for subtitles mentions that the translator's name should appear after the show ends. In practice, the subtitler's name usually appears after the full credit of the show, and the platform's autoplay feature automatically skips the credits to play the next episode by default. Thus, the subtitler's name is visible only when the audience actively chooses to view the credits until the end. On the other hand, Amazon Prime Video's guidelines (2019) directly exclude translator credit.

In contrast, non-professional subtitlers ensure their credits are visible. In Orrego-Carmona's empirical study (2016b) of aRGENTeaM, a large fansub group that distributes subtitle files in Spanish, the subtitles contain both the translator's pseudonym and the name of the fansub group. Certain Spanish fansub groups of Thai TV series seem to go even further by employing visual resources to claim their visibility. As discussed in chapter 2, the group names are inserted at the beginning of the show and are usually displayed during the whole show.

The addition of headnotes and glosses, some of which are fansubbers' personal comments, also draws viewers' attention to the presence of subtitles as they cross the diegetic space. As pointed out by Pérez-González (2014, pp. 254–255), these non-diegetic titles hint at mutual recognition as a basis of relations between the producers and the viewers and "provide prosumers with a space to inform, amuse, exhort or otherwise attend to the expectations of their viewers" .

Mainstream subtitling conventions seem to view subtitles as a "graphical disturbance" and, consequently, dictate that good subtitles should pass unnoticed by the viewers (Massidda, 2015, p. 59). In addition, an unconventional approach to subtitling "risks alienating the viewers, and invisibility is favoured as a way to guarantee that audiences have a positive viewing experience and that commercial interests are protected" (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 140). With the development of technology, a different approach has been suggested, such as McClarty's proposal (2012, 2014) to incorporate "creative subtitling" in professional practices, but such radical change has not made its way into mainstream

subtitling, possibly due to its inherent demand for longer turnaround time and higher cost, which are not favourable for the industry.

d) Synchronisation with the source text

As shown by Chaume's signifying codes in section 3.1, subtitling is conditioned by various elements in the source text. For instance, spotting in subtitling is subject to the speed of the dialogue and the cuts (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). Karamitroglou's subtitling standards (1998) also specify that "subtitles should respect camera takes/cuts that signify a thematic change in the film product and, for this reason, they should disappear before the cuts."

Since dialogues in AV texts are complemented by other meaning-making components, reductions in interlingual subtitles do not necessarily result in loss of meaning. However, details such as speech register may have to be compromised.

Temporal and spatial constraints also mean that when relevant information is presented simultaneously with more than one film code, for instance, a graphic code (a written text) and a linguistic code (a character's dialogue), professional subtitlers are allowed to choose only one type of information to translate. In contrast, amateur subtitlers, who are not subject to this norm, may resort to headnotes or glosses to keep all the information.

3.3 Prototypical characteristics of fansubs

Although the heterogeneity of fansubs across languages and genres has become evident over time, fansubbing continues to be considered a disruptive phenomenon, with a few recurring prototypical characteristics that are frequently documented in literature. The creative, norm-defying characteristics of fansubs are those that have attracted academic attention in AVT since the beginning (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Ferrer Simó, 2005; Pérez-González, 2007a). Having inspected the salient features of anime fansubs, Dwyer (2012, pp. 226–230) proposes a model that comprises four "overarching traits" of fansubs. This model is utilised as a starting point for the analysis of TH>SP fansubs in this thesis since it tackles not only the formal and translational aspects of the fansubs but also addresses the workflows and the translators.

a) Formal innovation

Formal innovation involves unconventional features first identified by Ferrer Simó (2005) and later expanded upon by Pérez-González (2007a). These traits include use of different fonts and colours for aesthetic purposes or to mark different speakers or language shifts, various placements of the subtitles, and the translator's notes and glosses.

These features serve aesthetic purposes and foreground the translator's interventions – as opposed to the preference to render subtitles as invisible as possible in professional practices. The headnotes and glosses added by fansubbers to explain culture-specific terms and concepts expose viewers to the translator's own interpretation and can be considered the ultimate statement against the effacement of the translator that prevails in commercial subtitling" (Pérez-González, 2007a, p. 271).

For Nornes (1999), these innovative features indicate the potential of untrained amateur subtitlers as instinctive producers of "abusive subtitles," which experiment with language and graphic resources to present a translation that does not attempt to camouflage the otherness in the source text. Mainstream subtitling, on the other hand, is deemed "a corrupt practice" since it provides a translation that is fluent and adheres to the target language.

The free placement of texts in fansubs has provoked a terminological debate on the term "subtitle" itself. Nornes (1999, p. 23) deliberately uses "(sub)titles" to refer to pioneering film translation into Japanese "because they were not always at the bottom of the frame". By the same token, Pérez-González (2007a, p. 270) opts for the term "titling elements" to describe anime fansubs. Finally, Fox (2017) draws on several commercial films with unconventional subtitles to identify different subtitle placement strategies: below focus/speaker, next to focus/speaker, in between speakers, and in speaking direction. In addition, she proposes the term "integrated titles," which highlights the close relationship between the image and the added text that becomes part of the visual composition, and hints at the possibility of placing the text elsewhere besides the lower part of the screen.

Apart from unconventional titles for aesthetic and explanatory purposes, some fansub groups like ItaSA from Italy freely add their comments to the ongoing scene. As documented by Massidda and Casarini (2017, p. 77), the fansubbers' sarcastic comments

create "an extra 'interactive' layer to the viewing experience" that builds a closer relationship with the viewers. The feedback from the viewers is mixed; some enjoyed the humoristic effect of these creative comments, while others considered them a nuisance.

In addition, tight deadlines, a factor that conditions professional subtitling, may apply to fansub groups of worldwide popular TV shows as they compete to release the subtitles as quickly as possible after the show airs. However, fansubbers of niche productions such as anime shows and, in this case, Thai TV series, are not subject to time pressure and are more flexible in producing subtitles with creative features.

b) Collaborative methods

This trait concerns the process of translation in fansubbing. A fansub group's workflow involves assigning different tasks via online platforms to participating members according to their expertise. Their collaborative mechanism includes interactions within the community's online forums and social media groups to resolve translation issues and other technical problems regardless of their geographical distance. Li (2015, pp. 203–206) gives a detailed account of how a large Chinese fansub group developed decentralised workflow management by establishing a first-come, first-served basis and adopting a colour-coding scheme on their online forum, which allows members to identify the status of each task and proceed accordingly. Such systematic, near-professional protocol contributes to swift workflows without unnecessary contact and negotiations while minimising potential conflicts within the group.

The collaborative manner in which the editors in the fansub group give feedback to the translators also encourages an effective learning environment or even creates an accidental space for translator training (O'Hagan, 2008, p. 166). Although the collaborative mechanism seems intrinsic to fansubbing practices as illustrated by a large body of research on fansub groups, it still needs to be verified on a case-by-case basis, since some fans take on all the subtitling and distributing tasks without forming part of a group. Pérez-González (2017, p. 21) argues that these "one-person agencies" deserve "as much scholarly attention as the well-oiled processes of socialisation in organisational collectivities and ad-hocracies," considering their potential to engage with the community of followers.

c) Source-oriented translation

The term initially used by Dwyer (2012) for this recurring trait of fansubs is "foreignization," following Venuti's (1995) theorising of literary translation. The translational binary of foreignisation and domestication refers, respectively, to source-oriented and target-oriented translation approaches.

The term "foreignisation" refers to the translation strategy that aims to bring the target reader closer to the source language and culture by deviating from the norms in the target culture. According to Venuti (1995, p. 20), "[f]oreignizing translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language." In contrast, "domestication" prioritises a translation that reads fluent and familiar, and is well-integrated into the target language and culture. In the same vein, Toury (1995; 2012) distinguishes between "adequacy" and "acceptability" in the initial norm in translation. The former refers to translations that adhere to the source culture norms, and the latter refers to those that are subject to the target culture norms. Other terms proposed are such as "source-oriented" and "target-oriented" translations (Hermans, 1999, p. 77).

The terms "source-oriented" and "target-oriented" are employed in this thesis in accordance with Herman's (ibid.) and Pedersen's (2011) usages instead of "foreignisation" and "domestication," respectively, since they are more straightforward and not value-laden.

In reality, this binary paradigm is not always clear-cut: "[t]he poles of adequacy and acceptability are on a continuum since no translation is ever totally adequate or totally acceptable" (Munday, 2016, p. 179). Nevertheless, what can be substantiated by textual analysis is the tendency of the overall translation choices.

From the outset, fansubbing has been associated with the foreignising or source-oriented approach. As observed by Dwyer (2012, p. 229), fansubbing emerged as an audience-driven resistance against a "culturally 'deodorizing' function" in professional subtitling of anime. Thus, it is logical that "fan translation reflects fans' intense desire to access the original cultural product to achieve textual experience as close as possible to that of the original Japanese target audience" (O'Hagan, 2008, p. 164). The approach is perceived

by the viewers as greater fidelity to the source text, reflecting what Nornes (1999) conceptualises as "abusive subtitling" which retains the "otherness" of the source text and makes it visible to the audience – as opposed to "corrupt subtitling" which does not provide viewers with a foreign experience.

In essence, textual evidence of a source-oriented approach includes the syntax and word order that follow the source language, the retention of honorifics and terms of address specific to Japanese, and the tradition of calling people by their surname rather than first name (Dwyer, 2012). Apart from preservations of these elements from the source language, aversion to text reduction in the subtitles is another indication of source-oriented translation (Pedersen, 2019, p. 5).

Research on fansubbing of other genres has affirmed that foreignisation is also adopted in non-anime fansubbing. For example, Massidda (2015, pp. 83–84) observes that Italian fansubbers attach paramount importance to the "faithfulness to the source text" in their fansubbing of American TV shows insofar as the translated dialogues sound overly literal and unnatural.

The source-oriented approach is not restricted to non-professional AVT; previous research shows that factors such as the status of the language also determine the translator's translational orientation. Drawing on an analysis of cultural reference transfer in subtitles, Santamaria (2001, p. 620) concludes that translations from a minoritised language into a major one tend to be target-oriented, while the transfer from a majority language into a minoritised one is generally source-oriented. Given a growing body of literature that addresses the heterogeneity among fansubbing practices, it is necessary to examine whether the source-oriented approach still applies across languages and genres.

d) Genre expertise

Fansubbers' in-depth knowledge of the materials and genres they translate most likely surpasses professional subtitlers' thanks to their keen interest in the shows and their determination to make them accessible to a wider audience. Guided by their "genre-specific knowledge" (O'Hagan, 2008, p. 177), anime fansubbers provide sophisticated translation solutions that reflect fans' sensitivity towards culture- and genre-specific references that might not be recognised by professional translators who are not as well-

versed in the same popular culture genre. One example is the fansubbers' capacity to render cultural nuances represented by nonverbal elements in the source text (Ortabasi, 2007). Henthorn (2019, p. 527), meanwhile, calls fansubbers "amateur expert fans," who are "volunteers with community-vetted accreditations for their work".

Fansubbers' expertise may also manifest through the creation of hierarchical training programs and mentoring experienced fans offer to others. Massidda (2015, p. 37) similarly refers to fansubbers as "amateur experts" that pose a challenge in the global mediascape.

The relevance of Dwyer's characterisation of fansubs in AVT has endured as recent research on fansubbing largely takes it as a point of departure. The first and third fansubbing traits from Dwyer's proposal (2012)coincide with Pedersen's observation (2019) of three main common characteristics of fansubs when compared to mainstream professional subtitles, or what he calls "prosubs":

- Fansubs are less norm-governed than prosubs
- Fansubs are creative
- Fansubs are more source text-oriented, in other words, foreignising.

As pointed out by Pedersen (2019), these characteristics, especially creativity, are mainly attached to anime fansubs since studies on fansubs of other genres did not yield similar results. Examples include Italian fansubs of popular US television series, which are aesthetically similar to professional subtitles (Lepre, 2016, p. 258), and Swedish fansubs of English language films that are "hardly creative at all" (Pedersen, 2019, p. 1). The same could not be said of fansubbing into Asian languages. Indeed, creative interventions abound in non-anime fansubbing beyond the anglophone media scene. For instance, the translator's notes placed on different parts of the screen in the fansubbing of a Spanish TV series into Chinese (Gao, 2021), and translations of impact captions in the fansubbing of a Korean variety show into Thai (Wongseree, 2016).

3.4 Convergence between professional subtitling and fansubbing

Notwithstanding the dichotomisation between standardised professional subtitling and norm-defying fansubbing, a growing body of research has testified to the increasingly blurred divide between professional and amateur subtitling. Given the heterogeneity of findings from case studies on fansubbing in various language pairs and genres and the ever-changing trends in mainstream subtitling, the binary view might prove too simplistic.

Due to technological advancement that opened up new possibilities in subtitling production, there have been experiments to explore new possibilities for subtitling, some of which deviate from professional conventions and overlap with the prototypical characteristics of fansubs. Díaz-Cintas (2005) documents the emergence of innovative trends in DVD interlingual subtitling such as cumulative subtitles, the use of different colours and the addition of headnotes or topnotes. Drawing on the case of the Russian film *Night Watch* (2004), Foerster (2010) proposes the term "aesthetic subtitling" to refer to subtitles which are integrated with other elements of the films for aesthetically pleasing effects, exploiting visual resources such as colours and movements to highlight the content of the film.

McClarty (2012, 2014) argues in a similar vein for the implementation of "creative subtitles" as an alternative to conventional ones by incorporating the subtitling procedure within the film production instead of the usual post-production elaboration. With subtitles that "fully respond to the styles and themes of the source text" (McClarty, 2014, p. 595), subtitles can become a tool that enhances viewers' filmic experience by reinforcing the narrative, themes, style and characterisation. While the formal aspect of creative subtitles might bring to mind Nornes' "abusive subtitling" (1999), the final aim differs, since the priority of creative subtitles is "to create an immersive experience for the target audience rather than to draw the viewers' attention to the foreignness of the film text, as would be expected of abusive subtitling" (McClarty, 2014, p. 600).

Building on McClarty's concept that intersects with Films Studies, Fox (2017) proposes the term "integrated titles," which emphasises the free placement of the translation on the

screen and prioritises the close relationship between the image and the added text that becomes part of the visual composition. Despite positive feedback from audiences to films such as *Night Watch* and *Slumdog Millionaire,* as mentioned in Foerster (2010) and Fox (2017), the implementation of creative subtitles is the exception – rather than the rule – that remain on the periphery of the industry.

As shown by Díaz-Cintas' typology of "cybersubtitles" (2018), numerous types of subtitles have emerged over the Internet, and viewers have become familiar with the ubiquitous presence of subtitles, most of which might not conform to the established subtitling norms.

The use of onscreen text to relate narratives in today's AV content suggests the influence of amateur subtitling on the professional domain. Pérez-González (2014, pp. 270–275) introduces the concept of "cross-fertilisation" to define the incorporation of performative onscreen texts, a typical feature of fansubbing, into a mainstream media production. Apart from the performative texts employed in the original version as discussed by Pérez-González, such features have been incorporated for translational purpose in mainstream productions in recent years. An example is the translation of the text messages in the American series *You* (2018) on Netflix. These text messages pop up in bubbles on the screen and are frequently accompanied by the sender's voice-over. When accessed from Spain, these text messages appear in Spanish instead of English, including when the audio is set to English or when the English SDH is selected.

Another case of similar influence of amateur subtitling in mainstream media is the use of subtitles for parodic purposes or what Díaz-Cintas (2018, p. 135) terms "fakesubs" has made its way to a traditional TV show in the form of "honest subtitles".

By the same token, there have been fansub groups which operate according to subtitling guidelines that are quite similar to professional norms. Take, for example, an Argentinian fansubbing community aRGENTeaM that produce subtitles of US films and TV shows (Orrego-Carmona, 2016b) and several Italian fansub groups focusing on subtitling series from the US (Massidda, 2015). This type of fansubs is termed "pro-am," by Orrego-Carmona (2015, 2016b), which is short for "professional-amateur subtitles," as they strive to imitate the characteristics of professional subtitles rather than expressing creativity and innovative approaches.

In terms of the translation process, the "collaborative methods" in Dwyer's compilation (2012) of fansubbing traits can be considered comparable to professional practices. Furthermore, recent case studies of fansubbing point to more and more systematic collaborations within communities. Large fansub groups such as aRGENTeaM operate on complex hierarchies, assigning well-defined roles and ranks to each participant and creating an internal training system for new members (Orrego-Carmona, 2016b, pp. 220–221). Moreover, in contrast to the general view of fansubbing as an open space for collaborative practices in which anyone can participate, screening new potential contributors with admission tests has become a trend for various fansub groups (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 137). In this context, upward mobility is possible as subtitling agents can be promoted from amateur to professional. Indeed, some fansubbers were eventually hired and therefore shifted their status to professional subtitlers (Casarini, 2014).

Massidda's hybrid proposal (2015, pp. 57–63) is another attempt to combine the best of professional subtitling and fansubbing features to cater to the demands of Italian viewers. This prescriptive proposal maintains the traditional formal aspects of professional subtitling (the placement, duration, punctuation, and segmentation of subtitles) and prioritises the source-oriented translation strategies widely adopted in fansubbing. The core of these guidelines is that "subtitles would no longer act as guidance, but a vehicle able to convey cultural and linguistic "otherness" where the touch of the subtitler is made visible" (Massidda, 2015, p. 63).

The suggested strategies include rendering cultural references using loan words, neologisms, and explanatory notes if necessary. Omissions should be minimum, except for repetitions, false starts and redundant elements in the dialogues. Additionally, the maximum number of characters per line is raised to 45, following the guidelines adopted by two Italian fansub groups, supposedly to reduce the need for omissions.

Compared to the concepts of creative subtitling and abusive subtitling, Massidda's hybrid proposal is more practical to implement in the industry, as it seeks a compromise between the preservation of source culture and the need for fast turnaround time and cost-effectiveness by dispensing with the unconventional use of visual resources such as different fonts and text colours and the free placement of subtitles. However, it is unclear whether the model is developed to reshape mainstream subtitling norms in general or only

to respond to a small group of audiences who are already involved in fansubbing, as "niche audience" is mentioned as the target group (Massidda, 2015, p. 63). Furthermore, the linguistic aspect also needs further delimitation to determine the degree of adherence to the source text.

Against this background, instead of applying professional subtitling conventions as a quality standard, this thesis attempts to examine the fluidity between professional and non-professional practices by mapping the characteristics attributed to professional subtitling and fansubbing onto the TH>EN>SP corpus.

3.5 Methodology and materials

This study focuses on a comparative textual analysis between the texts in the pivot translation chain to examine the shifts in the linguistic and cultural transfer as well as to detect a possible convergence between professional and non-professional subtitling. Additionally, extratextual resources including the fansub group's website and online interviews with the fansubbers have been used to complement findings from the textual analysis regarding issues such as the production process of fansubs, the translators' profiles and the rationale behind certain translation decisions.

In previous studies on fansubbing, it has been demonstrated that one of the productive methodologies to study the working process in fansubbing phenomenon is field research (Massidda, 2015) or netnography (Li, 2015), in which the researcher collaborates as a member of a fansubbing community and participates in their activities. The advantage of this methodology is its ability to offer an insider's viewpoint and a thorough understanding of the fansubbers' identity, motivations, as well as the group's structure and organisation.

Nevertheless, this sociological approach has not been used in this research. The first reason is to avoid interference in the group's working dynamics and the translator's profile. From the overview of existing TH>SP fansubs and initial contact with the groups, it was confirmed that the fansubbers in Thai Underground Fansub (TUF) and Marii Lakorn (MLat), two most productive groups in this language combination, are native Spanish speakers who translate into their mother tongue using English as a pivot

language. Conversely, as a native Thai speaker, I would translate directly from the source text audio without English subtitles, which would significantly change the workflow for both groups. Therefore, this study has been conducted from the standpoint of an outside observer rather than a community member.

Questionnaires and interviews are other common methods employed to research fansubbing practices. Since fansubbing arose as a result of technological development and Internet use, questionnaires and interviews conducted online – as opposed to face-to-face – are favoured. In her study on the network of fansubbers in China, Li (2017) argues that due to the familiarity of online community members with the virtual environment, online questionnaires seem to be preferred over questionnaires on paper or via telephone. Furthermore, the data obtained can be used for analysis without the need for additional process such as transcription, which, in turn, means lower likelihood of human error in data entry.

The same reasons can be applied to the present case of TH>SP fansubbing, especially given the geographical dispersal of fansubbers and viewers. Since the fansubbers were geographically scattered across Spain and various countries in Latin America, the interviews and/or questionnaires were only possible online. Additionally, this method requires no physical contact with the interviewees and ensures their anonymity, which they may consider crucial as they are involved in fansubbing, a practice with dubious legality.

For the above reasons, online interviewing was used in this study to gather information about the fansubbers' profiles, their motivations for producing and consuming Thai series, the group's work process and reflections on specific translation decisions.

Initial contact was made through the e-mail address that the group provided on their website. After receiving no response, I contacted them via the group's Facebook fan page using Facebook Messenger. A member of the TUF group replied and linked me up with two more members of the group who agreed to participate in the online interview.

In total, three members of the TUF group were interviewed. The first one defined his role as versatile: translator, collaborator, recruiter, and group administrator who took care of the website and social media. The second one was the translator who subtitled all episodes

of *Diary of Tootsies,* and the third person was a translator and reviewer whose works included a few episodes of *Hormones*. More details on their profiles can be found in chapter 2 (see Table 1).

To summarise, the working process in this study consists of these stages:

- Locate TH>SP fansub groups using search engines and social media
- Establish preliminary contact with the fansubbers
- Identify the texts in the pivot translation chain and select the materials for textual analysis
- Develop the model of analysis and analyse the textual and extratextual sources
- Conduct online interviews with the fansubbers

a) Textual analysis

By using search engines and surveying various video-sharing platforms, the two most established TH>SP fansub groups were located: TUF and MLat. Due to the availability of the materials and the fansubbers' willingness to collaborate, only the fansubs created by the TUF group were selected for textual analysis in this research. TUF's fansubbed video files were of high resolution, and unlike those offered by MLat, they were ready for download, which enabled offline storage of the materials and facilitated the analysis process. TUF also offered richer paratextual information on their website and the platform showed more interactions between the fansubbers and non-translating fans through the comment section.

One of the challenges in studying indirect translation is identifying the ultimate source text, the mediating text(s), and the ultimate target text. In some cases in literary translation, indirect translations may be hidden and presented as "pseudo-direct translations" (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 123). In others, the exact version(s) of the mediating text is not revealed, and it is complicated to trace back.

In the case of fansubbing, the ultimate target text is added directly to the video with Thai audio, which constitutes the ultimate source text. Therefore, the complicated part was identifying the mediating text. In literary translation, paratextual information plays a crucial role in this matter, mainly when it contains an explicit reference to a third language (Assis Rosa et al., 2017, p. 123). With this in mind, the TUF website was examined as

paratext. The ITr in this case is overtly presented: the fansubbers gave a detailed explanation of the pivot subtitling with English as the pivot language in a post, and they openly discussed the (limited) availability of English subtitles for certain shows, which affected their workflow. For several shows, the website specified the versions of English subtitles used.

While TUF did credit their sources of English subtitles in approximately half of their projects, the credits were not marked or listed systematically. Some were mentioned on the website, as an entry that accompanies the subtitled video. Others were added as a subtitle in the video, either at the beginning, later during the opening titles of the show, or at the end. In addition, even when the English subtitle sources are make known in the ultimate target text, the ephemeral nature of online media and the copyright infringement issue in fansubbing make it difficult to retrieve the pivot English subtitles.

Part of the group's fansubs was translated from the closed captions provided on the production company's official YouTube channel. These captions, which could easily be extracted as separate subtitle files, are convenient to access and use as a template. Still, the production house only offer their shows in this format for a limited time period, and this implies the limitation of the textual materials. This is the case with shows such as *Room Alone* (2014) and *Ugly Duckling: The Perfect Match* (2015). Although TUF cited the YouTube closed captions as the pivot, both shows were removed from the channel as of 2019.

It is even more complicated to trace when the pivot version used is also fansubbed. Firstly, several fansubbers or fansub groups post their works on various video-sharing platforms instead of running their own sites. In some cases, they sign their translations with a pseudonym that does not match the one they use in their social media accounts, thereby further hindering the retrievability of their works during an online search. Secondly, the fansubs of Thai shows are generally circulated in hard subtitles format, possibly because the Thai language has its own alphabet, and it is quite difficult for foreign viewers to search for the shows by themselves had the fansubbers provided only the subtitle files. This results in copyright infringement being easily detected by video-sharing sites. As a consequence, fansubbed videos are frequently removed from those sites in no time.

Moreover, the show producers themselves have taken action to put an end to the fansubbing activity. In 2015, TUF communicated to their fans that one of the Thai fansubbers that used to provide them with English subtitles had received a legal warning from the Thai show producer and had been compelled to stop subtitling the shows and delete all the subtitled videos from the Internet (Thai Underground Fansub, 2015a). This fansubber happened to be the one who translated *Hormones* Season 2 and, by the time this research began, she had already removed her fansubbed catalogue from her website. The fansubber of the first season of *Hormones* had also closed his or her account on YouTube, and the TUF fansubbers did not store the English subtitles they used.

It was only possible to retrieve both seasons of *Hormones* from YouTube and Dailymotion, as some users who did not seem to be linked with the fansub group uploaded the whole seasons. Thanks to the translator's pseudonym at the beginning of the show and several additional titles that contain disclaimers, these videos with embedded English fansubs could be identified as the pivot used by TUF. These videos were eventually banned from YouTube on copyright grounds and were no longer available as of 2019.

Another complication in the text analysis process is the quality of pivot files. For instance, the English fansubbed videos of the second season of *Hormones* have undergone certain manipulations, possibly to avoid copyright strikes. As a result, the visual content occupies only half of the screen space and is blurry, as shown in Figure 13. Moreover, the display speed has been lowered. The shot in Figure 13 is timestamped 00:15:57 in the English version, whereas in Spanish, the same shot appears at 00:12:57. Consequently, the English pivot video does not correspond to the Spanish fansubs when displayed side by side, which has made the analysis process quite laborious.

Figure 13. Screenshot during the analysis of EN and SP fansubs (Hm S2 E3)

The TUF group announced an indefinite hiatus in October 2017 and has not resumed their translation activity since. Although the subtitled videos are still available for online viewing and download on the group's website, there have been very few updates in their other social media channels including their Facebook fan page and Twitter account since the aforementioned announcement of a hiatus. MLat, on the other hand, remains active, but the materials on their websites are only available for online viewing. The English pivot version for each show is not disclosed on the platform and is rarely written in the fansubbed videos. In addition, I did not receive a response from the group after preliminary contact, which made it difficult to trace the pivot versions and gather extratextual materials.

After the initial contact via e-mail and direct message with the TUF fan page on Facebook, the TUF group coordinator agreed to participate in my research project and linked me up with two more fansubbers for interviews and additional materials. One of the fansubbers who agreed to participate provided Spanish subtitle files of *Diary of Tootsies* in .ass format (produced using Aegisub) and informed me about the exact version of the English pivot during the online interview.

Apart from textual evidence, extratextual sources are also valuable for studying indirect translations. The posts on TUF website, as mentioned above, reveal the tense dynamic between the amateur subtitlers and the copyright owners. Extratextual sources used in this study include paratexts such as synopses and the translator's notes that accompany each subtitled video on the TUF website, their *About Us* section on the web page, as well as statements from fansubbers that were obtained through online interviews.

b) Model of analysis

As presented in the introduction, the main objective of this thesis is to systematically describe the nature of TH>SP fansubs in relation to professional subtitling and what has been reported in the literature regarding fansubbing. The comparative textual analysis was carried out using the ultimate source text (video with Thai audio), the pivot text (video with English subtitles), and the ultimate target text (video with Spanish fansubs), with a focus on textual evidence that matches or contrasts with the prototypical features

of fansubbing. The parameters for the analysis have been adapted from Dwyer's (2012) and Pedersen's (2019) compilation of fansub traits as follows:

1) Formal innovation and deviation from professional subtitling conventions
Textual evidence of the creative approach in fansubs and their deviation from professional subtitling conventions can be detected by examining the technical aspects of the subtitles. Informed by Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2007; 2020) classification of different aspects of subtitles, the analysis firstly takes into consideration the spatial dimension that includes the number of lines and position of subtitles on the screen, alignment of subtitles, font types and colours, and the maximum number of characters per line. Secondly, the temporal dimension including the synchronisation, the duration of subtitles, the subtitle display rates, and the shot changes is considered. The last parameter is the orthotypographic requirements, such as punctuation and abbreviations.

2) Source-oriented translation
This trait can be detected in the transfer of cultural references, the linguistic interference from the mediating and the ultimate source text, and the degree of reduction and reformulation in the subtitles.

3) Translators' genre expertise
This trait is also manifested through the transfer of cultural references, especially the detection of non-verbal references and intertextual elements. Genre expertise includes the fansubbers' capacity to overcome challenges in ITr such as the structural differences of the three languages, interferences, and possible errors from the mediating text.

As the "collaborative methods" in Dwyer's model is a process-oriented framework, the concept is discussed separately in chapter 2 as part of the background for TH>SP fansubbing phenomenon.

Adopting the terms from Chaume's signifying codes of film language outlined in section 3.1, the analysis does not focus solely on the transfer of the verbal components (linguistic code and graphic code) into subtitles, but also takes into account the interplay of other signifying codes and the way they are rendered through the pivot translation process into the Spanish fansubs.

115

c) Selected materials

The TV series selected for analysis are the first two seasons of *Hormones* (2013-2014) and the first season of *Diary of Tootsies* (2016). Brief explanations and justification of the selection are as follows.

- *Hormones the Series* (2013-2014)

ฮอร์โมนส์ วัยว้าวุ่น [*Hormones Wai Wa Wun: Hormones the Series*] is a coming-of-age TV series aired in Thailand during 2013-2015. The story takes place at Nadao Bangkok, a fictional school, and revolves around a group of adolescents in their first and second year of high school. A few key characters were later added to the second season, as old characters progress to another academic year.

Each of the three seasons of the show consists of 13 episodes, with an additional introductory episode (Episode 0) and another special episode on the production process (Episode 14).

The plot centres on controversial issues that were not usually portrayed explicitly in traditional Thai media. According to the director of the first season, Songyos Sugmakanan, "the series plays an integral part in Thailand's culture, primarily because the issues it touches upon – teenage sex, drugs and general hormonal confusion – are not usually discussed at home or in school" (Hodal, 2013). The series was selected for analysis due to its content, popularity, and international circulation in which fansubbing played a crucial role.

The first season was launched in 2013 on GMM One (GMM Grammy's digital TV channel) and YouTube Live. The production was a collaboration between the GTH film studio and the talent management company Nadao Bangkok.

Even though the show was aired on the digital channel GMM One, which was a new player at the time when other free TV channels —established since the analogue era— were much more popular. The special episode of *Hormones* Season 1 that aired in August 2013, three months after the first episode, shows screenshots of previous episodes on YouTube that have racked up five to seven million views each. In the wake of the show's phenomenal success, the second and third seasons followed in 2014 and 2015, both

directed by Kriangkrai Vachiratamporn. In addition, two spin-off programmes were released: first, *Hormones: the Next Gen* (2014)*, a reality show focusing on the casting process for new talents to join the second season of the show as main characters; and *Frozen Hormones* (2015), another reality show that follows the main cast on a trip to Japan.

The show's cinematography is bold and realistic in its depiction of teenage life, making the show stand out as revolutionary in relations to the mainstream soap operas that revolve around melodramatic plots in Thai free TV.

The boom of this teen drama was not confined to Thailand. Thanks to fansubbing into English, Chinese, and Vietnamese, *Hormones* gained a solid fan base in China and some Southeast Asian countries like Laos, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Songyos, the director of the first season, stated in an interview that the extraordinary success of the show in Asia may be attributed to its availability on YouTube, because the show became accessible to viewers worldwide.

Figure 14. Poster promoting *Hormones the Series* S2[12]

Hormones is a representative case of an AV production that benefited from fansubbing practices as the fans' translation and distribution introduced the show to foreign audiences and paved the way for official export. In the early stages, GTH, the copyright holder, seemed to view the fansubbing phenomenon positively as evidence of the series' popularity. The special episode (Episode 14) which is the closure of the first season, includes footage of the fansubbed videos in English and Vietnamese to show how the

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[12] Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/HormonesTheSeries

series was spread to international viewers and became a phenomenon in Southeast Asia (Sugmakanan, 2013). After the first season was aired in Thailand, *Hormones* was officially exported to Vietnam and was warmly received when broadcast on local TV (Sanook, 2014).

Following the show's successful distribution abroad, GTH became more cautious with copyright infringement. For the second season of the show, the production company offered more viewing options within Thailand, but restricted international access. It was still transmitted on YouTube Live, but was no longer accessible from outside of Thailand nor uploaded on the video-sharing platform, which disappointed the fans, including those living in Thailand, since the production house no longer provided free options for a rewatch. Other viewing options included the digital channel GMM Channel 25, the satellite TV channel GTH On Air, and the application AIS Movie Store (Positioning, 2014).

Yongyoot Thongkongtoon, GTH's executive, revealed in an interview (Kom Chad Luek, 2013) that the company started producing official English subtitles to use as a template for potential international export, as they had been offered distribution deals from distributors in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam, and China. According to an interview with one of the TUF fansubbers, GTH took action against fansubbers who subtitled their shows into English, but the Spanish-speaking group has not been targeted yet. Nevertheless, the interviewee speculated that when GTH sets its sights on the Spanish-speaking market, it may happen.

Since 2018, *Hormones* has been among the series available on Netflix in Thailand following the multi-licensing agreement that GMM Grammy signed with the streaming service in April 2018 (The Nation, 2018). According to the statement by the director of international originals at Netflix Asia-Pacific, GMM Grammy's content "will find a global audience on the Netflix service, where our members across 190 countries will discover new and exciting storytelling from Thailand". Netflix users in Spain do not have access to this series as of 2022. However, considering the statement from the Netflix personnel above, it is likely to happen soon.

Since only the pivot versions of the first and second seasons could be retrieved, the corpus does not include the third season nor the special episodes like Episode 0, which contains

presentation of the characters and interviews with the director and the actors, and Episode 14, which shows the series' impact and behind-the-scenes footage.

- *Diary of Tootsies the Series* (2016)

ไดอารี่ตุ๊ดซีส์ [*Diary of Tootsies*] (2016-2017) is a comedy series about a group of four queer friends in search of true love. The story is based on anecdotes told on a Facebook fan page บันทึกของตุ๊ด [*Toot's Diary*] whose owner has become a public figure with over 1.9 million followers on the page (as of October 2022).

The term "tootsies" in this context is an old Thai slang for a prominent Thai queer identity: gay men who express themselves using feminine mannerisms, employ female markers in speech, and may, but not necessarily, cross-dress. The term also includes men who undergo processes such as hormones intake to appear more feminine, and post-operative transsexual women. Currently, only its shortened form ตุ๊ด [toot or tut] is more generally used, together with the synonym กะเทย [kathoey]. Depending on the context, both terms may carry derogatory connotation.

The story revolves around a group of four queer friends: Gus, Kim, Golf, who identify themselves as "toot," or "kathoey," and one lesbian, Natty. After Gus, Kim and Golf coincidentally go through a breakup with their respective boyfriend at the same time, they all agree to embark on their quest for new love in the busy city of Bangkok.

The series seeks to create comedic effects mostly by exploiting the stereotypes of "tootsies" that have been perpetuated in Thai media: the main characters express themselves with feminine mannerisms in a funny, loud and dramatic way. They are also explicit about their sexuality, or even their promiscuity. Nonetheless, it also incorporates the realistic dimension of their day-to-day struggles against the bias and discrimination that still persist in Thai society.

Diary of Tootsies was produced by GDH559, a subsidiary of GMM Grammy. The production house GDH was launched in 2016 as a joint venture by two of three partners from GTH studio, the production company of *Hormones*. The new company was formed by "nearly all creative people and executives on board" (Rithdee, 2016) and currently holds the distribution rights of former productions by GTH.

Diary of Tootsies was aired on a digital TV channel, LINE TV application, and GDH channel on YouTube. The series comprises two seasons in total, both directed by Piyachart Thong-uam (who later changed his name to Kittiphak Thong-uam, which is the name that appears in the credits for the film sequel *Tootsies & The Fake* released in 2019). Of all these productions, only the first season was used in the analysis since it was the only part the TUF group subtitled into Spanish.

Figure 15. *Diary of Tootsies* cast[13]

Diary of Tootsies was selected for this study as a case that exemplifies the convergence between professional and amateur subtitling. It is one of the cases in which fansubbers translate from official subtitles. Apart from the videos with embedded subtitles, the fansubber who had translated the series provided me with the final version of Spanish subtitles in *.ass* format, which has been very useful in the analysis of technical aspects. The fansubber agreed to give an interview online, which offered insights into the translation decisions and workflow. The English pivot subtitles were the official closed captions provided by GMM Grammy on their YouTube channel and were available for download as separate text files.

In summary, the textual analysis draws on the following materials.

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[13] Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/DiaryTootsies

Table 3. Summary of materials for textual analysis

Title	Year	Episodes	Duration	English subtitles	Spanish version
Hormones the Series [ฮอร์โมนส์ วัยว้าวุ่น] Season 1	2013	13	50 minutes/ episode	TH Angel (Hard subtitles)	TUF (Hard subtitles)
Hormones the Series [ฮอร์โมนส์ วัยว้าวุ่น] Season 2	2014	13	70 minutes/ episode	KudaLakorn (Hard subtitles)	TUF (Hard subtitles)
Diary of Tootsies the Series [ไดอารี่ตุ๊ดซีส์] Season 1	2016	12	25 minutes/ episode	Official subtitles from GDH YouTube channel (closed subtitles)	TUF (Hard subtitles and closed subtitles in *.ass* format)

d) Tools

The following list contains the necessary tools for the research.

- *Aegisub*

This free subtitle creator and editor software was necessary to view Spanish subtitle files provided the TUF member who subtitled *Diary of Tootsies*, as the files were in Aegisub Advanced SSA subtitles (.ass) format.

- *Subtitle Workshop*

This subtitling software was used to combine multiple subtitle files to facilitate comparative analysis in the case of *Diary of Tootsies*. The production company made all the episodes available on the GDH YouTube channel with their official English subtitles in closed captions format. Each episode was officially uploaded as four separate videos but the TUF fansubbers combined the four parts and uploaded them as one video. Joining the English pivot subtitles into one file allowed me to add the English subtitle track to the Spanish fansubbed videos and view one video with subtitles in two languages simultaneously.

- *4k Video Downloader*

This program enables video download from YouTube and Dailymotion, with the video's closed captions in a separate *.srt* file. In this research, the software was used to download the source language videos and the English pivot videos.

- Media players

Programs such as The KM Player and VLC Media Player were used to view the videos and English subtitles.

4. PROFESSIONAL AND NON-PROFESSIONAL SUBTITLING FOR THAI TV SHOWS

The chapter explores the formal aspects of TH>SP fansubs as a representative case of the media flow initiated by non-professional subtitlers. The first part of the analysis is to verify whether the general assumption that fansubs present significant deviations from professional subtitling norms applies to TH>SP fansubs. To do so, this chapter revisits the mainstream professional subtitling conventions and establishes them as parameters for the analysis. The second part compiles the textual evidence of "formal innovation" (Dwyer, 2012), one of the prototypical traits of fansubs, and proposes a classification of different types of titles that constitute fansubs.

Initially, this part of the research set out to investigate the possible norm-breaking nature of Spanish fansubs, which is the ultimate target text in the indirect translation process. However, as the study progressed, the findings pointed to complexities beyond the dichotomy between the professional conventions as a quality benchmark and the fansubs as the complete opposite. As discussed in Section 4.4, the comparative analysis of the texts in the translation flow, which involves both official subtitles and fansubs, indicates the fuzzy border and the possible convergences between professional and amateur subtitling.

4.1 The implications of pivot translation

Before delving into the textual analysis, we will look into the pivot translation process, which is a shared characteristic between subtitling by professionals and fans in TH>SP, as mentioned in chapter 2. Pivot translation is habitual in the media industry, but it is also known as more susceptible to errors and mistranslations than direct translation, since it goes through cultural and linguistic transfer twice (Kerdkidsadanon, 2015; Vermeulen, 2012).

According to Pięta et al. (2022, p. 136), the workflow in the media industry is based on "centralized subtitle creation," which uses template files to produce subtitles in various languages. The template file is a subtitle file with the timecodes incorporated, usually in

English. With the template files, the subtitling tasks are divided into spotting and translation. Using template files in English is habitual in professional AVT practices, as it reduces costs and speeds up the translation process (Georgakopoulou, 2019). For the same reason, this practice is also adopted in fansubbing. TUF, for instance, stated explicitly on their website that they use the pivot English subtitle files as subtitle templates whenever they are available, since these files allow the fansubbers to skip the spotting process altogether (Thai Underground Fansub, n.d.-a).

In Netflix productions, it is common to use English subtitle templates as a pivot for translations into other languages. To optimise the translation quality, the company provides guidelines for these templates, which are separate from the guidelines for general interlingual subtitles. The main difference is that subtitle templates contain annotations "in order to provide additional context to translators" (Netflix, 2021c). In addition, the guideline for the pivot language template emphasises the retention of "cultural references, names, locations, nationalities, titles etc." as per the source audio, accompanied by explanatory annotations.

To verify the pivot translation process and language combinations for TH>SP subtitling on Netflix, I contacted the subtitler of *Girl from Nowhere* (2018), one of the first Thai productions that became available on Netflix in Spanish via e-mail (A. López Estudillo, personal communication, September 13, 2021). The subtitler confirmed that the English subtitle template was used as a pivot. It came with the comments made by the TH>EN translator to explain cultural references and provide literal translations of certain Thai expressions. The information in the comment section includes, for instance, the implications of the places, the food, and the brand names. This English template, in this case, doubles as interlingual English subtitles displayed on Netflix. However, the subtitler pointed out that these comments depend on the translator who produced the direct translation. Unfortunately, the comment sections do not always include sufficient information.

Although the same level of quality control of the pivot subtitles was not possible in amateur subtitling, TUF fansubbers acknowledged the significance of the English pivots. They expressed concern about the quality of the pivot version on many occasions, including during the interview with the researcher. The subtitler of *Diary of Tootsies*

commented that the quality of the English subtitles they obtained was mostly not good, and the fansubbers had to make the dialogue seem natural in Spanish. This comment is consistent with the textual evidence. For instance, the English fansubs that served as a pivot for *Hormones* Season 1 contain frequent grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and unnecessary punctuations that hinder readability. Moreover, they often contain transcribed words from Thai and Thai final particles.

Table 4. Grammatical errors in EN pivot (Hm S1 E1)

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
สองคนนี้เค้าเหมาะกันจริงๆ เลยอะ [These two look great together.]	**This 2 are really suitable... !**	Esos dos quedan muy bien juntos. [These two look great together.]
- จ้า ไปดูทีวีรอก่อนก็ได้ เดี๋ยวแม่เอาไปให้ [Sure, you can go watch TV. I'll bring it to you.] - ค่ะ [Okay.]	**- Yes,….go watching TV for relaxing …I'll bring cupcake for you there. - Ka**	- Bueno…ve a ver la televisión para relajarte. Luego te llevaré un cupcake. [Well...go watch the television to relax. Later I'll bring you a cupcake.] -Vale. [Okay.]

The quality of the English pivots clearly affects the subsequent translation into Spanish. Similar to the results reported by previous studies on pivot AVT (Gottlieb, 1997; Zilberdik, 2004), mistranslations in the English pivots are mostly transferred to the Spanish version. The grammatical errors also result in ambiguous meaning that hinders the Spanish-speaking fansubbers' comprehension.

Table 5. Mistranslations in EN pivot (Hm S1 E11)

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
นี่น้าพิณ [This is Aunt Pin.]	**Mother Pin -**	Mamá Pin. [Mother Pin.]
เรื่องที่เกิดขึ้นน่ะ เราไม่ได้ตั้งใจ [What happened was not my intention.]	**I didn't mean thing that all happened…**	No quería decir lo que dije. [I didn't mean to say what I said.]

In the first example in Table 5, the context is that Khwan finds out that her mother is a mistress, and her father has another family. After the conflict resolves and Khwan's father brings her to meet his other family for the first time, he introduces his legitimate wife to Khwan as "Aunt Pin". The kin term "aunt" is commonly used in Thai culture to call a

woman considerably older than the speaker, although she is not even an acquaintance. The mistranslation from "Aunt" to "Mother," later transferred to the Spanish version, changes the scene's dynamic and portrays a closer relationship between the characters than what is conveyed in the source text. The second example shows how unclear sentence structure leads to misinterpretations and a shift in meaning.

In any case, the advantage of fansubs as pivot subtitles, especially the ones with a highly source-oriented translation tendency, is that they generally incorporate explanatory notes and glosses. In a way, such translations are comparable to annotations in subtitle templates used in a professional workflow. In an online interview, one of the TUF fansubbers made a very positive comment regarding the English subtitles produced by Kuda Lakorn, the TH>EN fansubber who collaborated with them on various projects, including *Hormones* Season 2. Kuda's subtitles are highly rated and even deemed more desirable for TUF than official subtitles due to the abundance of translator's notes, which are perceived as high quality by the Spanish-speaking fansubbers. This perception coincides with the professional subtitler's view, as she explained her preference to work with templates that contain many annotations (A. López Estudillo, personal communication, September 13, 2021).

The interactions between the TUF fansubbers and non-translating fans on their website indicate that the TUF group carefully selected their English pivots instead of simply translating from any English subtitles they could find. They tended to keep using the works from the same subtitlers whenever possible, even if it led to a delay in launching the Spanish version. TUF group also prioritised the official English subtitles by the Thai media providers whenever they were available.

Regarding translation workflow, professional subtitling has to undergo several stages of quality check, both in linguistic and technical aspects (A. López Estudillo, personal communication, September 13, 2021). As detailed in chapter 2, TUF fansubbing process also includes a revision stage to rule out the spelling and grammatical errors. Since the group is small, one person might take on several roles over time. For example, one of the three TUF fansubbers who participated in the interview took on several functions: administrative tasks, such as responding to comments on social media, recruiting new

members, assigning works, and working with raw video files, apart from translating a few episodes. Another one used to be both translator and revisor.

In the interview, the fansubber of *Diary of Tootsies* mentioned that the revisor advised on specific translation problems; for instance, the decision to use colour-coded subtitles to mark different languages (discussed in Section 4.3) was the idea of both the translator and the revisor. After comparing the subtitle files, which are the translator's finished draft, with the subtitles embedded in the videos, which are the final version, the findings indicate that the role of the revisor is not restricted only to spelling and grammatical corrections, as shown in the TUF website. For instance, the headnotes were added in the final version since they are not present in the fansubber's files. In addition, the revisor rewrote sentences, substituted certain words with others, and changed the segmentation.

Despite the quality control mechanism, many translation errors are present in TUF fansubs. Apart from the abovementioned error transfers from the pivot subtitles, there are cases of mistranslations that occurred only in the transfer from English to Spanish. While the English version correctly reflects the message in the source audio, Spanish-speaking fansubbers possibly misinterpret the message.

Table 6. Mistranslations in EN pivot (Hm S2 E11)

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
POP: แต่ถ้ามึงไม่ได้รัก มึงก็ไป ไป ไหนก็ไป! [But if you don't love her, get lost!]	If you don't, then leave! Just get the fuck out!	Pero si no la quieres, entonces déjala ir. ¡Simplemente mándala a la mierda! [But if you don't love her, then let her go. Just tell her to fuck off!]
TAR: พักห้านาที [Five-minute break.]	Let's take five, guys!	¡Coged uno cada uno! [Take one each!]

In the first example in Table 6, Pop is scolding Tar for mistreating Kanompang, who is Tar's girlfriend and Pop's sister. Pop tells Tar to get lost, but in Spanish, the message becomes: "just tell her to fuck off". In the second example, Tar is practising with the school band when Kanompang brings them some snacks, so he allows the band to take a five-minute break, and the image shows everyone grabbing the snacks. It seems that the

Spanish fansubbers misunderstood the idiom "take five" and, based on the visual, substituted the phrase with "take one each," referring to the snacks.

Overall, although TUF fansubbers did not have any written prescriptive guidelines, the fansubbers strive to produce translations of quality. They introduced mechanisms comparable to the ones in professional subtitling, namely the recruitment test, the selection of quality pivots, and the quality check by revisors. With these findings, the TH>SP fansubs are another case that adds to the claim that fansubs do not necessarily oppose the professional translation environment and may operate under professional-like mechanisms (Orrego-Carmona, 2016b).

4.2 Thai>Spanish fansubs and their deviations from professional subtitling conventions

As presented in chapter 3, a salient feature of fansubs is their deviation from professional subtitling conventions. Since there are no overlaps between the list of series and films translated by TUF and those available in Spanish on Netflix, it was impossible to conduct a comparative analysis of the same show with professional and amateur translations. Due to regional restriction, both series in the corpus are available only when accessed from Thailand, with no Spanish subtitles provided. Therefore, the analysis was carried out by comparing the Spanish fansubs by the TUF group to the professional subtitling conventions in literature. In addition, Netflix's timed text style guide (TTSG) was considered since it represents the mainstream subtitling counterpart in the TH> SP language combination.

In the era of mass media, "the boundaries of audiences and audiovisual markets could often be mapped onto the borders of nation-states" (Pérez-González, 2014, p. 72). AVT norms were set by public service broadcaster and varied at national level according to each broadcaster's in-house guidelines. Prescriptive norms that are taken as quality standards for mainstream subtitling in this period include the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998), which is endorsed by the European Association for Studies in Screen Translation (ESIST) and Karamitroglou's proposal for subtitling standards in Europe (Karamitroglou, 1998). Both have been widely used as references in

professional subtitling for many years and as a benchmark for analysis in cases of amateur subtitling (see Massidda, 2015; Orrego-Carmona, 2016b). Another seminal work that extensively discusses professional subtitling conventions is Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007; 2020).

Later, with the arrival of DVD distribution and global on-demand video streaming services, the norms became "international and determined by market forces" (Pedersen, 2018, p. 86). In the current media scene, the surge of SVOD platforms and digital content has significantly changed the distribution of AV texts. Viewers can access all kinds of shows, series and films through all sizes of screens and devices, and AVT guidelines adopted by major stakeholders of SVOD services such as Netflix, HBO, and Amazon Prime Video are shaping the norms at the international level.

As a service provider currently operating in over 190 countries, Netflix is a significant player in the sector. Consequently, Netflix's subtitling guidelines are undeniably an influential reference to the current prescriptive professional subtitling norms. More importantly, as discussed in chapter 2, the current official distribution of Thai TV shows to Spanish-speaking audiences at a large scale has been possible due to Netflix. With this connection, Netflix's subtitles can be taken as the professional counterpart in this TH>EN>SP combination.

Currently, Netflix offers subtitles in over 30 languages. The company has made the details of their subtitling guidelines or "timed text style guide (TTSG)" public on its website. The TTSGs are divided into general requirements for subtitling and specific guidelines for each language, including guidelines for SDH. Netflix's TTSGs are prescriptive, but it is also open to suggestions from the subtitlers, resulting in constant updates as documented in the change logs. In other words, the TTSGs began as a similar model for all languages and have gradually incorporated local norms through the suggested updates (Pedersen, 2018). Considering Netflix's TTSG alongside the well-established subtitling standards from mass media broadcasting will also reveal the shifts in professional subtitling conventions over time.

The parameters for the analysis are a compilation of previous works on subtitling conventions which set the standard for subtitling in Europe: Karamitroglou's proposal (1998) and the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). These

parameters are grouped following Díaz-Cintas' classification (2012), which summarises the typical characteristics of "standard interlinguistic subtitling". Although the article does not go into much detail, the classification into spatial, temporal, orthotypographic, and linguistic considerations seems the most logical and systematic. The content is consistent with the seminal work in subtitling *Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling* (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2014), but with the focus on Spanish as a target language. The information provided for the orthotypographic aspect is also helpful since it is specific for subtitling in Spanish.

a) Space

- *Position of the subtitles*

Karamitroglou (1998) specifies that the position of the subtitle should be at the lower part of the screen, except when any crucial visual information occupies the space. In that case, subtitles can be placed on the upper part of the screen instead. This placement is similar to Netflix TTSG: subtitles should be placed at either top or bottom of the screen and avoid overlap with on-screen text. However, TTSG is more flexible, as it states that if the overlap is impossible to avoid, subtitles are allowed to be placed where they are easier to read.

The Spanish fansubs by TUF consist of traditional subtitles placed mainly at the bottom of the screen, and other types of titles that are positioned elsewhere. For instance, the top-left of the screen is reserved for song lyrics in *Hormones* and *Diary of Tootsies.*

While professional subtitling conventions are designed to keep the visual elements intact, fansubbers do not follow the same principle. Instead of avoiding tampering with the visual elements, fansubbers boldly manipulate them. When the graphic code is used for narrative purposes, for example, as a form of chat messages on a mobile phone or computer screen, subtitles are placed in the middle of the screen, in the same position as the on-screen texts, covering them completely. As shown in the following example, by selecting such placement for the translation, fansubbers' approach challenges the very definition of subtitles. Instead of presenting the translation as added lines of text at the bottom of the screen, fansubs provide a translation that substitutes the source text.
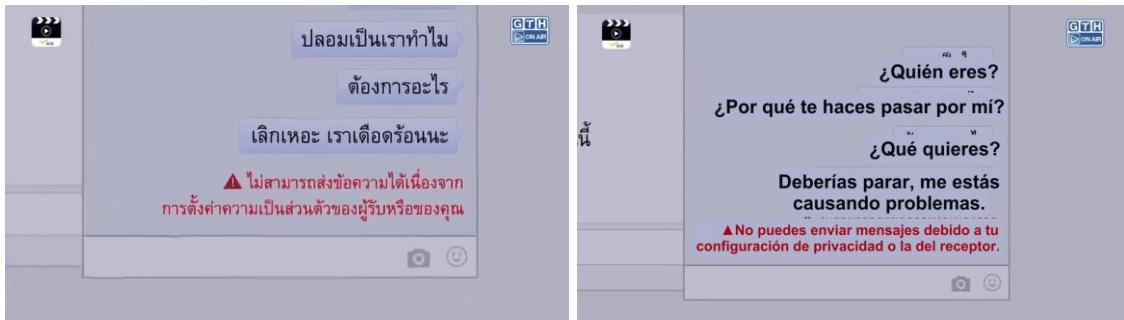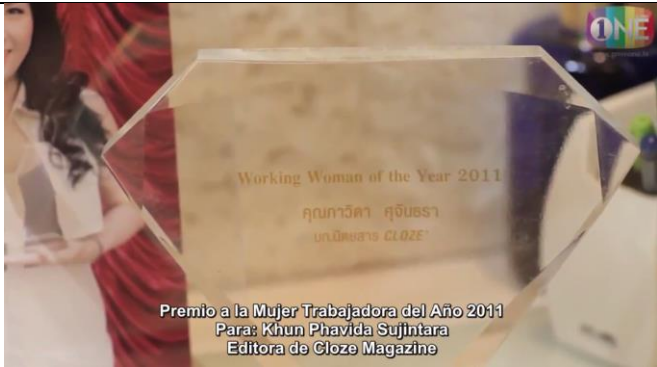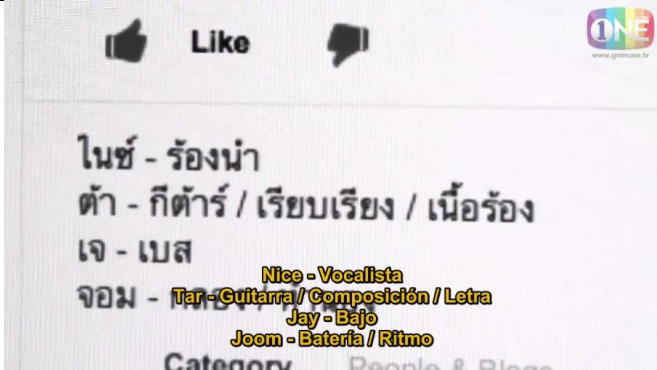
Figure 16. Source text and on-screen text translation in Spanish fansubs (Hm S2 E9)
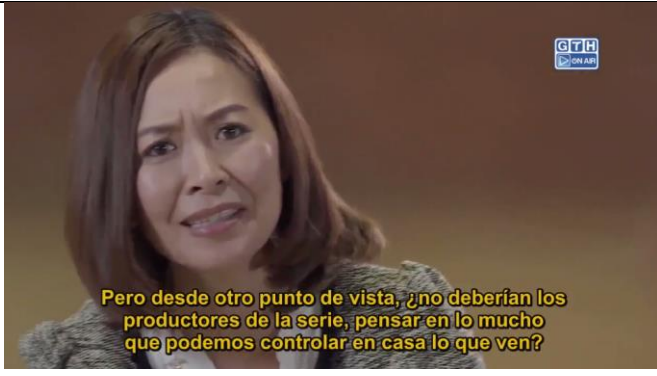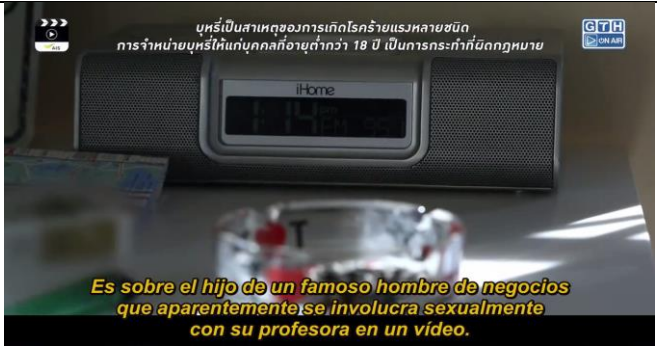
Occasionally, the translations of inserts or on-screen texts are placed at the top of the screen, labelled as "N/T" (Nota de traductor) or translator's note. These placements allow for rendering more than one signifying code simultaneously. While professional subtitlers have to choose only one element to translate using one single subtitle, fansubbers can translate both the dialogue and the lyrics of the song which is playing in the background simultaneously.

- *Number of lines*

The subtitling conventions (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998; Karamitroglou, 1998) and TTSG coincide in the number of lines per subtitle: maximum of 2 lines. This convention applies to most TUF fansubs; however, there are a few instances in which the subtitles exceed two lines. In one exceptional case, the subtitle contains a total of four lines. Subtitles in the corpus that exceed two lines are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. List of subtitles over two lines

Series	Screenshot	Notes
Hm S1 E3		A three-liner is used to translate the graphic code: the label on an award which follows the layout of the text in Thai.
Hm S1 E8		In this scene, the character frantically browses through questions and responses on the Internet. The graphic code is rendered with a three-line subtitle.
Hm S1 E11		The four-line subtitle follows the format of the on-screen text in Thai, which was arranged into four lines.
Hm S1 E12		A three-line subtitle is used to render linguistic code: Khwan's speech.

Hm S2 E1		Another case of a three-liner for linguistic code.
Hm S2 E6		Three-line subtitle is used for news report on the radio. The sound arrangement code is also marked here with italics.

- *Number of characters per line*

According to Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, pp. 97–98), the maximum number of characters per line in a subtitle was traditionally 37 because of the font's width and space. However, with the digital media and the proportional fonts that allow more texts within the same space, the number has become higher. Karamitroglou (1998) suggests 35-40 characters per line to optimise the subtitles' legibility and minimise the requirement for text reduction, while Netflix TTSG allows up to 42 characters per line.

As fansubs tend to adhere as much as possible to the source text, the reduction and omission may not be strictly employed, resulting in long subtitles. Even fansub groups that adopt the guidelines that resonate with professional conventions allow a higher number of characters per line. For example, two main fansub groups in Italy specify in their translation manual that the maximum number of characters per line is 45 (Massidda & Casarini, 2017).

Table 8. Long one-line subtitles in TUF fansubs

Series	Number of characters	Subtitles
DoT E2	61	Ni siquiera se ha dado cuenta de que todo el mundo la odia...
DoT E9	63	¡Izquierda! ¡A la izquierda, allí! ¡Gira a la izquierda, ahora!
Hm S1 E6	77	y no muchos estudiantes pueden disfrutar del clima a esta hora en la escuela.
Hm S1 E7	77	Si realmente quisiera que no te enterases, podría escondértelo perfectamente.
Hm S1 E8	80	Nuestras casas están en la misma dirección, así que vinimos juntos, eso es todo.
Hm S1 E8	76	Tengo planeado entrar en la universidad de Chulalongkorn o en la de Siriraj.

In Spanish fansubs, long subtitles are common. For example, in Episode 8 of *Hormones* Season 2 alone, there are at least ten subtitles of as many as 60-64 characters per line. Episode 9 has 15 subtitles with 60 characters per line and up to 68 characters. In *Diary of Tootsies,* subtitles tend to be shorter, but there are also occasional subtitles of over 60 characters per line. Extreme cases in which fansubs far exceed 42 characters per line include a scene in *Hormones* Season 1, where subtitles of 80 and 75 characters per line were detected.

- *Fonts and colours*

While fonts and colours are not "space," strictly speaking, they are discussed under this parameter because they characterise letters that do occupy space. To optimise legibility, fonts without serifs, such as Helvetica and Arial, are preferred in subtitles, and the white colour is suggested (Karamitroglou, 1998). Such conventions are still adopted in the media industry today. Similarly, the font Arial and the use of white colour for the subtitles are specified in Netflix TTSG. For the Spanish language, in particular, Díaz-Cintas (2003, p. 150) explains that subtitles for films in Spain are usually in white for technical reasons, while another standard colour is yellow. Both colours are typical for subtitles in television and DVD format.

Media technology nowadays allows users to access free subtitling programs, which provide many options to edit the textual features. The subtitling program *Aegisub*, used by several groups, including TUF, allows the subtitlers to assign a specific style to each subtitle. Subtitlers can adjust the primary, secondary, outline and shadow colours of the subtitle and create subtitles inside an opaque box. Taking advantage of the potential media technology offers, TUF applies various fonts and colours to their subtitles.

As Spanish fansubs of the Thai series are integrated into the video in hard subtitle format, it is difficult to determine the specific fonts used and the style. However, thanks to the raw subtitle files provided by the fansubber of *Diary of Tootsies*, it is revealed that there is a systematic assignment of different fonts and colours to the subtitles. *Aegisub*'s style manager tab shows a list of several types of subtitles. The name of each style indicates the function of the subtitles, for instance, "Presentation," "Presentation Names," "Presentation TUF," "Songs," and "Copyright".

In *Diary of Tootsies,* the "[DOT] Caja negra" ([DOT] Black box) is the most used style for subtitles of the linguistic code. The style setting consists of MS Sans Serif font, yellow colour, over a black opaque box. The opaque box was added to improve legibility, since it covers the Thai subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing that come integrated with the source text. For songs, "[DOT] Canciones" format is applied. The font used is different (JasmineUPC) and the white colour with pink outline is also distinctive.

b) Time

- *Duration on the screen*

According to the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice*, the minimum duration is one second, while Karamitroglou (1998) specifies 1.5 seconds to prevent a flashing effect. Netflix's TTSG brings the number down to a minimum of 5/6 of a second per subtitle (e.g. 20 frames for 24 fps). The maximum duration is necessary to prevent the viewer from re-reading the subtitles. For a two-line subtitle, it varies from 6 seconds (Karamitroglou, 1998) to 7 seconds (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998). The latter coincides with Netflix's TTSG.

Thanks to the subtitle files for *Diary of Tootsies* provided by TUF fansubber, it was possible to verify the duration of the subtitles and the display rate using subtitling

programs. Fansubs of this series comply with the maximum duration of seven seconds, except for the subtitles of song lyrics which may exceed the duration limit. In episode 1, for instance, two song subtitles which stay on-screen for approximately 10 seconds are detected:

(DoT E1)

00:14:33.13 - 00:14:43.20   Sólo quiero saber dónde está tu sombra ahora.

00:14:52.74 - 00:15:02.66   Puede que no sea tan difícil que mi corazón lo comprenda.

The fansubs do not respect the norm regarding the minimum duration of subtitles. There are occasional one-word subtitles displayed in less than half a second.

Table 9. Examples of fansubs that do not respect the minimum duration norm

Episode	Time code	Subtitle	Duration
DoT E1	00:04:37.24 - 00:04:37.62	Gus,	380 milliseconds
DoT E2	00:06:54.92 - 00:06:55.38	Golf,	460 milliseconds
DoT E2	00:09:04.96 - 00:09:05.44	¿Qué?	480 milliseconds

- *Reading speed*

The duration of each subtitle stems from the estimation of viewers' reading speed. The display rate of the subtitles can be measured in two formats: words per minute (wpm) and characters per second (cps), and varies according to countries and companies, although the latter is more common in the industry as it is more straightforward (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2018). According to Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p. 108), "calculations done in wpm are usually based on the English language and assume that the average size for a word is five letters." On the other hand, streaming services prefer using the cps measurement to set different display rates according to each language.

In Karamitroglou's proposal, a two-line subtitle containing 14-16 words should stay on-screen for 6 seconds. This translates into 12-13 cps. The longstanding "six-second rule," which specifies that a full subtitle of two lines should stay on the screen for six seconds, is equivalent to 140-150 wpm or 12 cps (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2018).

However, the current trend is a higher display rate. In Netflix's TTSG, the reading speed is set at 17 cps. In Pedersen's FAR model (2017), which is developed to assess the quality of interlingual subtitles, 20 cps or 240 wpm is the threshold for standard error in the display rate because, at that level, viewers' attention would solely be focusing on the subtitles, or would eventually stop using them.

The display rate in Spanish fansubs does not follow professional conventions. In *Diary of Tootsies,* with the availability of the subtitle files, it was convenient to detect the deviations in fansubs in this aspect. *Aegisub* allows users to set the threshold for maximum display rate, among other parameters, for quality control. The subtitles which exceed these control requirements are marked in red. Since the files are not the final version, they had to be compared with the hard subtitle version, which the fansub group's corrector had edited.

The findings indicate that the highest display rate in the series reaches 92 cps, which is in one exceptional case in Episode 6. The subtitle, which contains 13 characters, is displayed for only 140 milliseconds, followed by another subtitle without a gap between the two. Table 10 shows the ten subtitles with the highest display rate in *Diary of Tootsies.*

Table 10. Subtitles with the highest display rate in *Diary of Tootsies*

Episode	cps	Timecode and subtitle
E6	92	00:17:24.90 - 00:17:25.04 Por supuesto.
E10	57	00:09:17.68 - 00:09:20.59 Pero si lo de Kim robando y vendiendo los auriculares de su aerolínea a tiendas de videojuegos es mucho peor.
E12	53	00:19:51.96 - 00:19:53.40 [Title: Me gustaría ver cuando los tootsies batallaban en la pista de baile.]
E12	53	00:22:31.22 - 00:22:32.00 [Voy de rosa. Estoy caminando hacia allí]
E8	46	00:14:34.34 - 00:14:36.18 y bolsas de tela para ayudar a reducir el calentamiento global esperándole.
E8	46	00:17:28.14 - 00:17:29.36 Tenía que cuidar de toda la casa y ocuparme de mi abuela.
E8	45	00:06:28.04 - 00:06:29.70

		- Y aún así tenía la energía para levantarse y estudiar.
		- ¿En serio chica?
E7	43	00:15:25.92 - 00:15:27.46
		Hemos encontrado hombres a punto de cometer una violación en grupo.
E12	43	00:19:47.88 - 00:19:49.88
		[Natty: Me he reido tanto que casi me meo en los pantalones en mitad de la autopista.]
E7	41	00:13:54.74 - 00:13:55.74
		No se va a levantar a abrirnos la puerta.

When applying 20 cps as the threshold for acceptable display rate in professional subtitling, the findings reveal that, of all the subtitles from the 12 episodes, at least 1129 subtitles are over 20 cps, which translates into 22% of the subtitles in total.

Another factor that leads to a high display rate in fansubs is the co-existence of a prototypical subtitle with other types of titles, such as headnotes or song translations. One example of such a norm-breaking situation is a scene in *Hormones,* in which the subtitle (19 characters) is shown with an explanatory headnote (53 characters) for approximately two seconds, resulting in a display rate of over 26 cps.

(Hm S2 E9)

> SP fansub: Ha dicho: "hola ka"
>
> SP headnote: Ka: Terminación que utilizan las chicas para hablar.

- *Gap between subtitles*

Ivarsson and Carroll (1998) indicate that "a minimum of four frames should be left between subtitles to allow the viewers' eye to register the appearance of a new subtitle." In Netflix TTSG, the duration reduces to two frames or half a second.

In TUF works, the convention regarding the pause between consecutive subtitles is not strictly followed. In fact, when checked with subtitling programs, the timecode shows that several subtitles are displayed continuously without any gap.

- *Synchronisation*

Synchronisation of the translation with the source text is fundamental in subtitling modality. The spotting in the subtitle is expected to follow the rhythm of the dialogue and the cuts wherever possible, and subtitles should not remain on-screen longer than the dialogue (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998; Karamitroglou, 1998). Similarly, Netflix's TTSG suggests that "subtitles should sit neatly within shots creating an effortless viewing experience" unless the dialogue continues across different shots (Netflix, 2021d).

Fansubs in *Hormones* Season 1 and 2 and *Diary of Tootsies* tend to synchronise with the dialogue, and the shot changes in accordance with the professional conventions. This synchronisation, however, is not applied in the case of headnotes. These titles of one or two lines which contain non-diegetic information are not spotted according to the shot changes or the dialogues. While the in-time of headnotes coincides with the subtitles, the out-time is occasionally extended depending on the length of the text.

In the following example from *Hormones,* the headnote which explains the term "ANSA" (Spanish acronym for ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations) stays on-screen for approximately 8 seconds, through the changes of subtitles and the shot changes from a close-up shot of different actors to a medium-long shot of the whole group. Instead of synchronising with the shot changes, the duration of the headnote seems to depend on the content. This headnote remains on-screen until one of the characters in the scene changes the subject.

Figure 17. A headnote that stays through a shot change (Hm S1 E8)

c) Orthotypography

While this aspect is not included in the *Code of Good Subtitling Practice*, Karamitroglou (1998) gives a detailed account of punctuation and letter case usage in European professional subtitling. While most punctuations are used the same way as in the written text, punctuations and letter cases in subtitling are also employed to indicate the transfer of different signifying codes. Graphic code, such as written signs, is rendered using upper-case letters. The off-screen sound in the sound arrangement code is marked by italics, and the musical code is indicated by quotation marks embracing italics. Another usage of punctuation specific to subtitling is the dash, which is placed at the beginning of each line in a two-line subtitle to indicate utterances from different speakers. Netflix's TTSG maintains similar specifications. A slight difference is that the translation of song lyrics is italicised, without quotation marks.

For Spanish, professional conventions indicate that the question marks and the exclamation marks need to be inserted before the first character and after the last. This aspect strictly applied to TUF fansubs. Netflix's TTSG also prohibits using question

140

marks and exclamation marks together. However, this aspect does not apply to TUF fansubs.

Since fansubbers are provided with more options to adjust the visual aspect of the translation, they do not always use punctuations similar to what is specified in the professional conventions to mark different signifying codes. Song lyrics, for instance, are not always in italics. Instead, they are presented using a different colour and font. Likewise, on-screen texts are not typically indicated by upper-case letters. Instead, their font, colour, and positioning are adjusted in a dozen different ways, in many cases, to integrate them into the visual elements of the source text.

Another significant difference in TUF fansubs is the substitution of the quotation marks similar to those used in English with the angled quotation marks or "comillas latinas," which are correct in written translation in Spanish but are not adopted in mainstream subtitling.

In summary, the professional subtitling norms from the early 2000s mainly apply to the current ones used by a major player in current SVOD services, except for details, such as the higher display rate and the number of characters allowed in one subtitle. Fansubs, on the other hand, break away from the professional norms and introduce changes in the formal aspect of the subtitles.

4.3 Formal innovation in fansubs

The analysis presented in Section 4.2 demonstrates the deviations of the TH>SP fansubs from mainstream subtitling conventions. In reality, to explore the complexities of fansubs, the parameters based on professional conventions seem insufficient since they are designed for subtitles that are restricted to two lines at the bottom of the screen. The fansubs by TUF contain several other types of titles that exemplify the trait identified by Dwyer (2012) as "formal innovation," which coincides with the creative subtitling approach (Fox, 2017; McClarty, 2014). To outline the complexities of fansubs, a classification of different types of titles found in TH>SP fansubs is proposed in this section, based on the textual evidence found in the selected corpus.

While the parameters below are fixed in mainstream subtitling, fansubbers use them to render different signifying codes, resulting in various types of titles.

- Placement: titles are placed at the bottom of the screen by default. Some titles are positioned elsewhere, depending on their function.

- Font: different fonts in fansubs create aesthetically pleasing effects, blending the translations with other visual elements.

- Colour: various colours are primarily used for aesthetic purposes, similar to fonts. They also mark different languages spoken in the source audio.

- Movement: fansubbers manipulate the mobility code by adding movement to some subtitles.
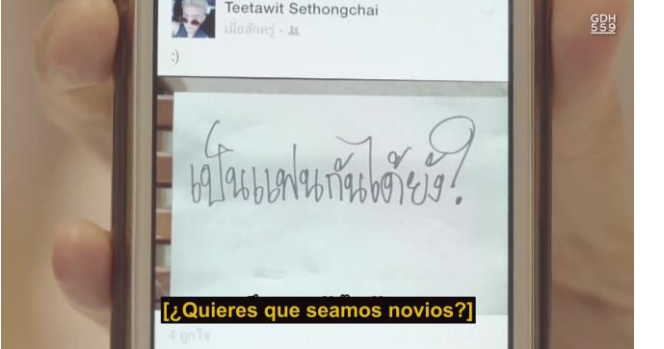
a) Prototypical subtitles
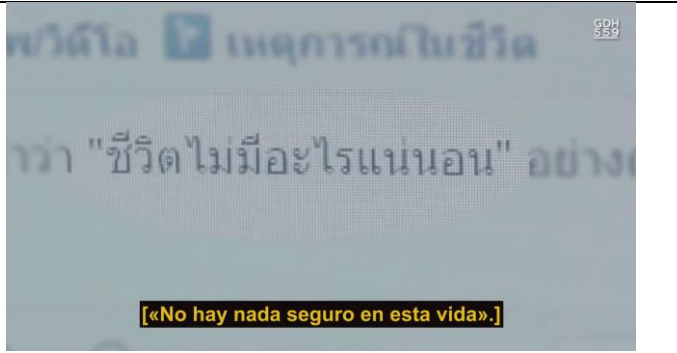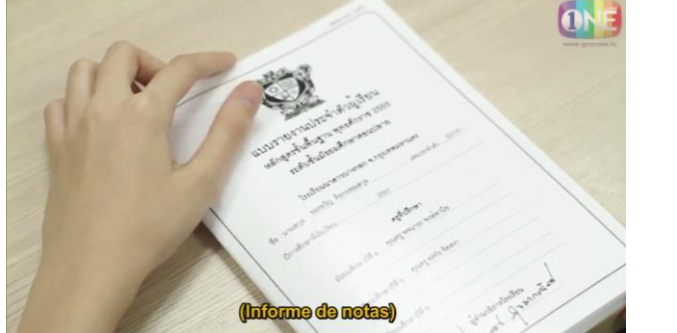
This type of title is most similar to mainstream subtitles. One subtitle generally contains one or two lines of written text and functions as the translation of verbal components of the AV text: the linguistic and graphic codes. In exceptional cases, as mentioned in Section 4.2., one subtitle in TUF's fansubs may contain up to four lines.

In TUF works, there is a tendency to use the same colour and fonts throughout the whole show. In the first nine episodes of *Hormones* Season 1, the colour of the subtitles is white, with a thin dark outline to boost the legibility of the text against the background. In the last three episodes of the first season of *Hormones* and in the whole second season, the colour of the text is changed to yellow, with the same dark outline. In *Diary of Tootsies,* the subtitles are also yellow. The difference is that they are placed over a black stripe to cover the embedded SDH in Thai.

Similar to mainstream subtitles, orthotypographic resources help mark diverse elements of the source text in the subtitles. For instance, italics denote off-screen narration, dialogue uttered by a speaker who is not visible on the screen, or conversations through the phone or the television. While professional subtitling conventions assign specific orthotypography for translating on-screen texts or "forced narratives" (Netflix, 2021a), fansubs are not similarly regulated. Instead of recurrent usage of upper-case letters, diverse formats are used for on-screen text translation in fansubs, as detailed in Table 11.

142

Table 11. Diverse formats for on-screen text translation

Series	Screenshot	On-screen text format
Hm S1 E6		Sentence-case letters
Hm S1 E5		Upper-case letters with double quotation marks
Hm S1 E6		Sentence-case letters with double quotation marks
DoT E5		Sentence-case letters with brackets

DoT E4		Sentence-case letters with brackets and angled quotation marks
Hm S1 E12		Sentence-case letters with parentheses

b) Song translation

Songs are part of the musical code and often convey significant meanings to the plot. In the Spanish fansubs by the TUF group, song lyrics translations are presented as one-line subtitles. In the first season of *Hormones,* diegetic and non-diegetic songs are translated into prototypical subtitles, marked by italics. In *Hormones* Season 2 and *Diary of Tootsies,* the placement of the song translation is fixed at the top left corner of the screen. This placement leaves room for prototypical subtitles at the bottom of the screen.

The font and the colours also help to distinguish the two types of titles in fansubs. The example from *Hormones* Season 2 shows the scene in which Khwan breaks up with Mhog. The characters' dialogue overlaps the (non-diegetic) song that intensifies the mood through the melody and the lyrics. The English version seems to influence the separation of the song translation and the subtitles for dialogue. However, the ultimate design and placement of the song translation in Spanish did not follow the English version. The Spanish version turns out more readable.

Figure 18. Song title placement in ES and SP versions (Hm S2 E13)

In *Diary of Tootsies,* the style for song lyrics is the same throughout the series: white-coloured titles with a pink outline. These titles appear in Episodes 1, 6, and 11. The same format applies whether the songs are inserted as background music or when the characters sing them.

c) Colour-coded subtitles

This type of title has been detected only in *Diary of Tootsies,* Episodes 11 and 12, in which the use of different languages by the characters is essential information for the final plot twist. In these episodes, the default yellow colour is assigned to words spoken in standard Thai, purple for English, and green for Isan, a dialect spoken in the north-eastern region of Thailand. The key character in this episode is Peary, a Thai woman who constantly mixes words and phrases in Thai and English. Her style is reflected by the subtitles that combine more than one colour, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Examples of colour-coded subtitles

Source audio and translations	Screenshots
TH audio: คือพอดีว่าเมื่อกี้ **traffic** มัน **jam** มาก [There has been a lot of traffic jam just now.] **EN pivot:** You know, just now the traffic was jam packed. **ES fansub:** Ya veis, ahora mismo el tráfico estaba a tope. [You see, just now the traffic has been awful.]	DoT E11
TH audio: วันนี้เนี่ยอากาศมัน **so damn hot.** [Today the weather is so damn hot.] **EN pivot:** Today the weather is so damn hot. **ES fansub:** Hoy el clima es tan jodidamente caluroso. [Today the weather is so damn hot.]	DoT E11

d) Integrated titles

Based on Fox's proposal (2017), the term "integrated titles" is employed in this research to refer to the titles designed to blend in with the visual component in the source text, because the term is the most self-explanatory compared to other possible ones from literature. "Authorial titling" (Pérez-González, 2012), for instance, is more generic and also encompasses inserts that are incorporated in the source text for narrative purposes. "Stylised text inserts" (McClarty, 2014) is also a broad term that might overlap with other types of titles, such as song translations and colour-coded subtitles, considering that they are also stylised using different fonts and colours.

These integrated titles are primarily characterised by their aesthetics. In TUF fansubs, integrated titles are generally used to translate graphic code or text inserts. Fansubbers carefully chose the fonts and colours to match the iconographic and graphic codes in the

source text, as shown in the example below from *Diary of Tootsies,* Episode 2. The style and placement that imitate the source text blend the titles with the graphic code in Thai.
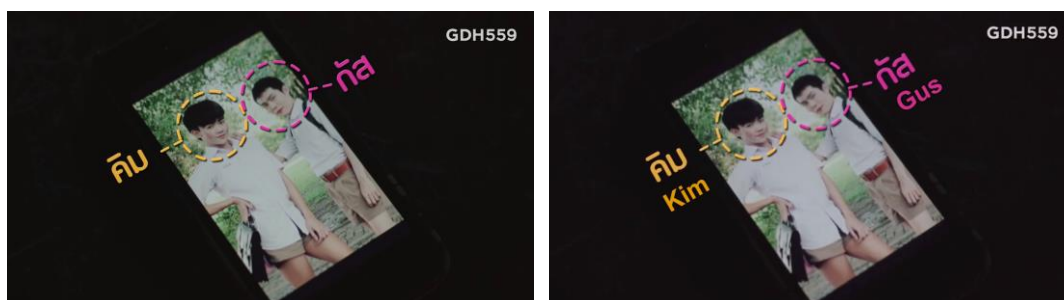
Figure 19. On-screen text translation in EN pivot and SP fansubs (DoT E2)

In *Hormones,* especially in Season 2, the presence of integrated titles is much more frequent. They appear in translations of messages on computer screens, mobile phones, television screens, and written texts on paper. In some cases, the translation appears near the inserts in the source text. In other cases, the translation wholly or partially covers the graphic code in Thai.

Apart from adjusting the font and colours to match the source text's graphic code, fansubbers also consider the mobility code. The example below shows the television screen in the source text, with a diegetic disclaimer message that moves from right to left. In both English and Spanish versions, the translation is placed under the message in Thai and imitates its movement.

Figure 20. Dynamic integrated titles in EN fansubs (Hm S2 E1)

Figure 21. Dynamic integrated titles in SP fansubs (Hm S2 E1)

In another example, the screen shows a post on Facebook, and later, the comments appear one by one. The time-in and time-out of each integrated title synchronise with the cumulative presentation of these comments.

Figure 22. Integrated titles in EN fansubs (Hm S2 E2)
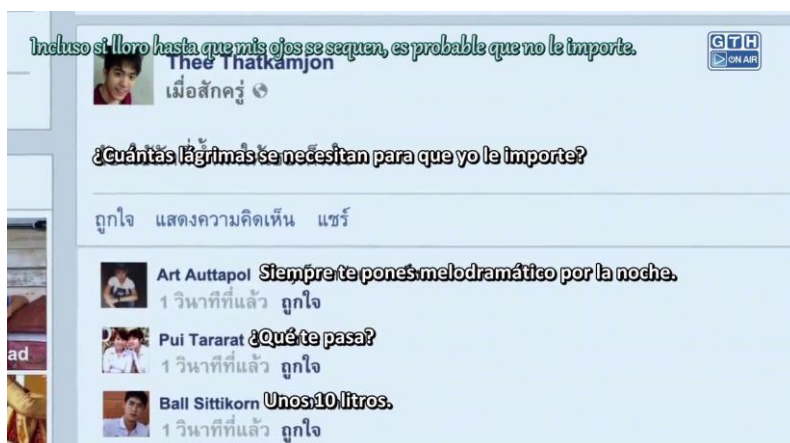
Figure 23. Integrated titles in SP fansubs (Hm S2 E2)

Another function of the titles' colour is to indicate flashback scenes. The adjustment is more noticeable in the English pivot version since the colour of the outline is changed from blue to yellowish brown. In Spanish, the title remains in yellow, similar to the prototypical subtitle, but the dark stroke spreads looks more diffused. This type of titles are found in several scenes in the first and second episodes of *Hormones* Season 2.

Figure 24. Integrated titles in EN fansubs (Hm S2 E4)

Figure 25. Integrated titles in SP fansubs (Hm S2 E4)

Most of the integrated titles found in the Spanish version follow the formats in the pivot subtitles, which, in the case of *Hormones,* are also made by fans. The style and the placement of all the integrated titles in the English version were adopted in the Spanish fansubs. In addition, several instances indicate the Spanish fansubbers' creativity beyond the presentation in the English pivot. Screenshots in Table 13 were taken from the scene where the two girls Dao and Koi take t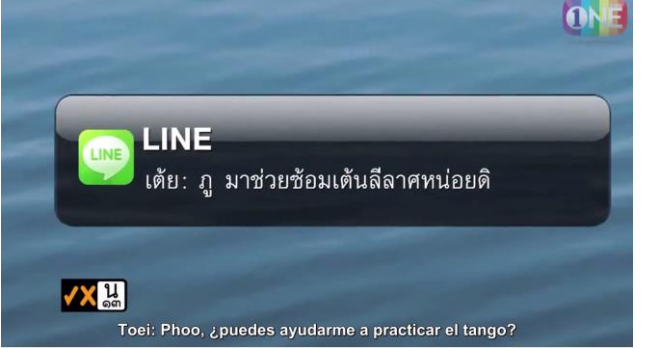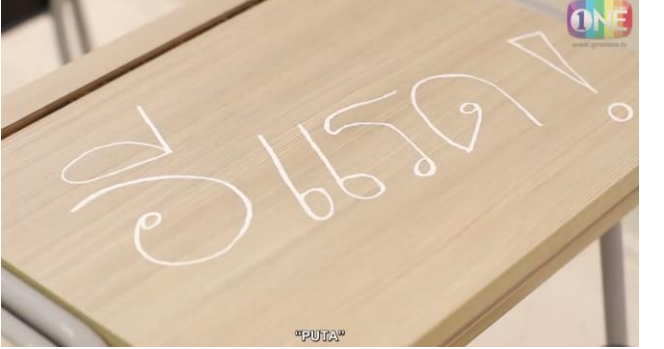urns writing on the same piece of paper during a boring class. While the English pivot renders the written notes with prototypical subtitles, marked by brackets, the Spanish fansubs opt for integrated titles by adjusting the colours of the titles to match the colours of the markers the girls use.

Episodes 8 and 13 present a similar trend. The on-screen texts are rendered as a headnote and a prototypical subtitle, respectively, while integrated titles are used in the Spanish version.

Table 13. Integrated titles by TUF fansubs

Series	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm SS2 E5	[This is so boring:]	Esto es muy aburrido :(
Hm SS2 E5	[I want drunken noodles:]	Quiero fideos instantáneos.
Hm SS2 E13	Yo Fern, how are you doing?	Fern, ¿qué estás haciendo?
Hm SS2 E8	**Mhog Thawit** เชิญพวกมึงมางานประกาศกันด้วยนะครับ วันนี้ 6 โมง 1 ชั่วโมงที่แล้ว · ถูกใจ **Win Chaichana** เย็นนี้เจอกัน เมื่อสักครู่ · ถูกใจ See you this evening. I'm inviting you guys to the announcement event today at 6 pm.	**Mhog Thawit** Chicos, estáis invitados al evento, donde se anunciará el ganador a las 6 pm. **Win Chaichana** Te veo esta tarde. เมื่อสักครู่ · ถูกใจ

In addition to the translation of the graphic code, another function of integrated titles is to present the main actors in the show's opening credits. In the first season of *Hormones,* the titles are in white with a black outline. The format coincides with the colour scheme of the opening credits and the subsequent prototypical subtitles. In the second season of

Hormones and in *Diary of Tootsies,* the integrated titles in the opening credits have more diverse designs. The colours of the titles change according to the colour scheme used for each actor.

Figure 26. Integrated titles in the opening credits of Hm S2

Figure 27. Integrated titles in the opening credits of DoT

e) Headnotes and glosses

Several studies mention translator notes and glosses as a salient feature of fansubs (Ferrer Simó, 2005; Pérez-González, 2007a). Headnotes or top notes are displayed at the top of the screen, while glosses are added in the body of the subtitles or elsewhere (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006). According to Pérez-González (2014, p. 80), "headnotes introduce a non-diegetic dimension into the interlingual and intercultural mediation process." They become a space where the translator can transmit their own messages, interpretations, or explanations directly to the audience.

In TUF fansubs, these notes generally contain a brief explanation of cultural references in the source text, such as actors, celebrities, musical instruments, traditional ceremonies,

food and drink. In TUF fansubs, the translator's notes even include brief definitions of medical jargon.

Regarding the local currency, the Thai baht is always retained in the subtitle, with a headnote that converts the amount into euros.

Headnotes are also a space to explain wordplays and jokes, which are difficult to transfer to English and Spanish. For instance, in *Hormones,* Sprite asks her mother what type of mushroom she wants for the soup. The difficulty in this scene is the character's mobility code that conditions the wordplay: Sprite first points at her ear when she says "wood ear mushroom?" and later points at her chest when she says "or lung oyster?" In Thai, the name of this mushroom translates into "angel mushroom". Sprite playfully uses the pun to refer to herself as an angel, making her mother laugh. There seems to be no problem translating the "wood ear mushroom" because, in Thai, English, and Spanish, the name contains the word "ear," which matches Sprite's gesture. "Angel mushroom," on the other hand, neither exists in English nor Spanish. To solve the problem, the fansubber for the English version puts an explanatory headnote, which is kept and translated into Spanish.

Table 14. Example of headnotes (Hm S1 E8)

TH audio: เห็ดอะไรอะแม่ เห็ดหูหนู หรือเห็ดนางฟ้า	
[What type of mushroom? Wood ear mushroom or lung oyster?]	
EN pivot	**SP fansubs**
Tree Ears mushroom ??	¿Orejas de Judas?
oyster mushroom ??	¿O seta de ostra?
EN headnote	**SP headnotes**
(In Thai language called – Angel Mushroom)	(Nota: 'Orejas de Judas' es un tipo de seta)
	(Nota 2: A la seta de ostra en tailandés se le llama 'Seta de ángel')
	[Note: 'Judas' ears' is a type of mushroom]
	[Note 2: Oyster mushroom in Thai is called 'Angel's mushroom']

Another essential function of headnotes in TUF fansubs is to identify foreign languages. In *Hormones,* there are several scenes where characters speak English, for instance, in English classes at school, in homework sessions, and during Win's storyline in Season 2, Episode 6, which takes place in New York City. *Diary of Tootsies* also contains a few

multilingual scenes, and the headnotes indicate phrases spoken in Japanese and Isan. In Episode 6, the gloss within the subtitle provides a translation of the greetings in Korean.

Table 15. Example of headnotes that mark foreign languages

Series	Subtitles and translator's notes	Back translation
Hm SS1 E9	A veces, encontrar un buen lugar para hacer ejercicio (Nota: Lo está diciendo en inglés)	Sometimes, finding a nice place to workout (Note: She is speaking English)
DoT E6	Anneyeong-krap. (Hola.)	Hello.
DoT E6	Anneyeong-kha. (Hola.)	Hello.
DoT E12	Helado de KitKat de té verde. ¡Increíble! Headnote: (N/T: Están hablando en japonés)	Green tea KitKat ice cream. Amazing! Headnote: (T/N: They are speaking Japanese)

Apart from explanatory notes on cultural references and linguistic features of the source text, a headnote may contain the fansubber's comment. Similar cases have been documented, for instance, in Pérez-González's study on *anime* fansubbing into English (2007a, pp. 271–272), in which fansubbers intervene the viewer's interpretation of the scene by adding a witty comment to the scene. A scene in *Hormones* Season 2 shows the main characters chatting and making jokes while drinking. A headnote that complements the prototypical subtitles reads: "I will not bother to explain this because I can't #DrunkTeenagers."

Table 16. Headnote containing translator's comment (Hm S2 E7)

TH audio: หัวหินเป็นถิ่นมีหอย หอย หอย หอย	
[Hua Hin is a place with seashells, seashells, seashells, seashells.]	
EN subtitles	**SP subtitles**
"Hua Hin is the place with sea--" shells, shells, shells~	"Hua Hin es un lugar con mar…" Conchas, conchas, conchas~
Headnote	**Headnote**
*t/n I'm not even gonna bother explaining this one because I can't. #drunkteenagers	N/T: No voy a molestarme en explicar esto porque no puedo. #AdolescentesBorrachos

As it turns out, the message in the headnote is not the TUF fansubber's opinion; instead, it is a translation from the commentary made by the fansubber of the English version. In any case, the decision to maintain the message in first-person emphasises the translator's presence. The headnote becomes a space that allows the translator to communicate directly with the viewer.

Along the same line, in the following example, the fansubbers use the headnote to justify the absence of translation in this particular instance. In this scene from *Hormones*, Din explains a mathematical problem to Dao while doing homework together. The importance of this scene is not the dialogue but the representation of Din as an intelligent and hardworking student, which helps him gain Dao's mother's trust in no time. The fansubber in English introduces the context and then resorts to grawlixes to avoid translating the details of the question. Faced with missing information in the pivot version, the Spanish fansubber solved the problem by informing the viewer through the non-diegetic space in the headnote: "he is telling her a mathematical formula that has not been translated."

Table 17. Headnote that contains translator's comment (Hm S1 E8)

TH audio	โจทย์ถามว่า เซ็ตของจำนวนเต็มคู่ที่สอดคล้องกับสมการ $Y^2+7y-18=0$ ที่นี้เราต้องหาก่อนว่า อะไรคูณกับอะไร ได้ -18 แล้วลบกันเหลือ 7
	[The question is what is the set of two integers that fit the equation: $Y^2+7y-18=0$. First, we need to find the two numbers that, when multiplied, result in -18, and when one is subtract from the other, the result is 7.]
EN pivot	The math question is ..
	#$$$&$^&##()#(#&&#&#)#)___#(#*&#&#&
SP headnote	(Le está diciendo una fórmula matemática que no ha sido traducida)
	[He is telling her a mathematical formula that has not been translated.]

Some of the on-screen texts are rendered in the form of headnotes. This practice is most common in the second season of *Hormones* and is most likely influenced by the English pivot version, since the fansubber of the English version uses the same format.

Among all translator's notes and glosses in the corpus, the most attention-grabbing one is the one in *Hormones,* Season 1, Episode 13, since it contains five written lines covering the lower half of the screen. The fansubber for the English pivot provided a detailed

explanation of Big Mountain Music Festival, the location for the first season's final episode. The translation into Spanish maintains the same format, resulting in a six-line gloss.
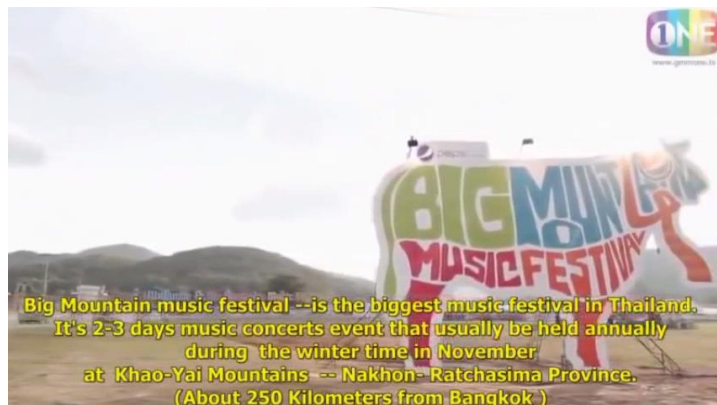
Figure 28. Translator's note in EN fansubs (Hm S1 E13)
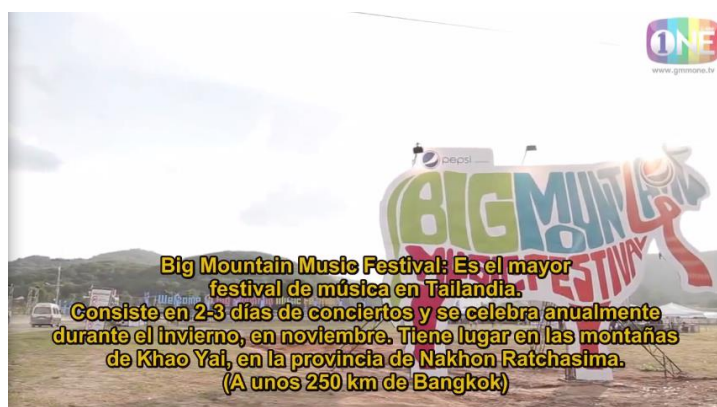
Figure 29. Translator's note in SP fansubs (Hm S1 E13)

f) Credit titles

While other types of titles mentioned above are closely linked to translation, credit titles are added to provide information regarding the translators rather than serving a translational purpose. These titles indicate the name of the fansub group, display copyright disclaimers to justify the group's media use, and promote the group's website and social media. When incorporated as part of the opening credits, the font and the colours are adjusted to blend in with the visual, similar to the integrated titles.

Over time, credit titles in TUF's works have become more abundant and noticeable. In the first episode of *Hormones,* the credit titles appear only once in the middle of the

show's opening credits. From the second episode onwards, more credit titles are added during the end credits, providing the link to the TUF Facebook fan page.

In the second season of *Hormones*, credit titles are detected in three parts of the video: at the beginning of the opening credits, at the end of the opening credits, and during the entire end credits, which last almost four minutes. The same applies to *Diary of Tootsies,* the latest among the three shows. At the end of the episode, viewers will find the links to the TUF website and their Facebook page.

In both shows, the phrase "Thai Underground Fansub presents:" pops up at the end of the opening credits, with a design that blends in with the visual. This addition imitates the presentation in official media distributions, highlighting how the fansubbers appropriate the media and view themselves as co-creators (Banks & Deuze, 2009) by claiming authorship for their translations.
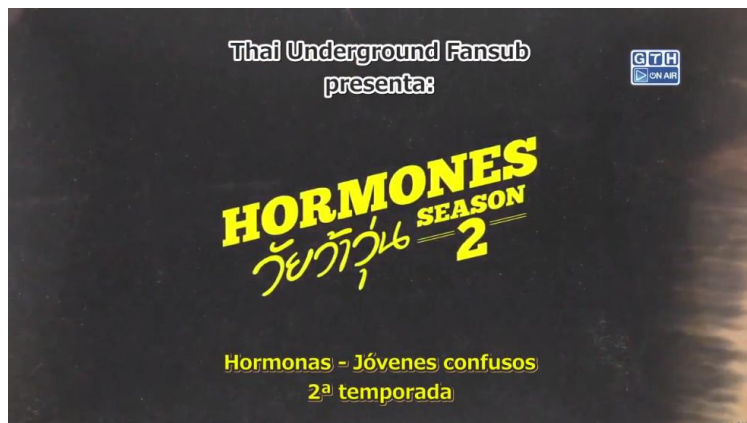
Figure 30. Credit titles in Hm S2

Figure 31. Credit titles in DoT

While TUF only added their credits at the beginning and the end of each show, credit titles are more numerous and aleatory in the English pivot. In addition, each message is more extensive, which reflects a greater concern over the reposts without the fansubbers' permission. The subtitles' legibility in these instances has to be compromised, since the credit titles interfere with the visual and shift the viewer's attention away from the translation. Especially in Season 2, the credit titles are often presented as dynamic text, coinciding with the prototypical subtitles. The dynamic format, however, was not adopted by TUF.

Table 18. Credit titles in EN fansubs

Series	Credit title	Screenshot
Hm S1 E10	English Subtitle -- by -- TH-Angel	
Hm S2 E11	If you are watching this on YouTube and/or didn't get here from @KudaLakorn, this was probably stolen just so they can make money from someone else's hard work!	

In summary, evidence of formal innovation in TH>SP fansubs, as shown in this section, confirms Pérez-González's statement (2014, p. 235) that "[b]y extending their domain of influence beyond the manipulation of written and/or spoken language, amateur audiovisual translators are able to induce changes in the way meaning was distributed across the different constitutive modes of the source text." In TUF fansubs, the co-existence of more than one type of the titles in a shot can be considered revolutionary for subtitling, since traditional subtitling is closely linked to limited space, and reduction and omission have become central to the modality. Fansubbers have demonstrated another

possible option: the translators no longer have to choose which information to convey to the audience.

4.4 *Diary of Tootsies*: a case of convergence between professional and amateur subtitling

While fansubbing is generally situated at the opposite end from mainstream professional subtitling, recent research started to adopt a changing perspective towards the heterogeneity of subtitling practices in the digital age and the possible convergences between the works by prosumers and those offered by the industry.

In the case of TH>SP fansubs, at the extra-textual level, there are certain overlaps in professional and amateur practices. As the SVOD platforms continue to gain a strong presence in the media scene alongside traditional mass media broadcasting, they contribute to accommodating a highly diverse group of viewers instead of the top-down distribution targeting the masses. As noted in chapter 2, Netflix's aim to promote more non-English productions indicates the tendency of media decentralisation, turning the focus away from Hollywood-centric, unidirectional flow in the global mediascape. This dynamic appears to resonate with one of the initial motivations for fansubbing: the effort to fulfil a gap in the market for niche audiences.

In addition, the media streamer's stance seems in line with the many cases of fansubbers who strive to provide an "authentic" and "more accurate" experience of the foreign by providing source-oriented translations (Dwyer, 2012, p. 229). An example case is the company's production of *Thai Cave Rescue* (2022), a miniseries based on real event in 2018 in northern Thailand, which aims at creating a "culturally correct" representation of the story, according to the interview of the production team (Rueb, 2019).

The pivot translation via English is another similarity between the official Spanish subtitles offered by Netflix and works of fansubs. This may largely depend on the company's policy and workflow rather than the limited cultural contact between Thailand and the Spanish-speaking world, but the process confirms the prevalence of pivot translation in AVT in this language combination. The pivot translation process via

English also applies to the reverse flow in professional settings, namely the subtitling of Spanish films into Thai (Kerdkidsadanon, 2015). Furthermore, the subtitling process undertaken by TUF, similar to Netflix, involves the usage of English template files whenever available to facilitate the spotting process.

Furthermore, the translator's profiles, as obtained from interviews with TUF fansubbers, reflect the complexity of delimiting non-professional practices. One of the factors that distinguish amateure practices from professional ones are the translators' lack of training, however, as mentioned in chapter 2, the fansubber who subtitled *Diary of Tootsies* majored in English at the university. With a degree in a related field, the fansubber canot be deemed completely untrained.

At the textual level, the preliminary analysis which was first aimed at discrepancies in the texts within the indirect translation chain revealed more complexities in the TH>EN>SP fansubbing. As the ultimate target text presents deviations from mainstream subtitling conventions, textual evidence of similar deviations has also been detected in the official English subtitles which were used as a pivot.

Following the trend in recent literature on fansubbing that points towards the increasing line blurring between the professional and amateur practices in AVT, this comparative analysis indicates the possible interconnection between professional and amateur subtitling in this language combination.

In *Diary of Tootsies*, the fact that the texts in the pivot translation process include both official subtitles and fansubs foregrounds how closely professional and amateur translation practices coexist, interact, and potentially influence each other. The online interview with the fansubber who translated the series reflects her concern about the quality of the pivot subtitles. The fansubber mentioned in the interview that the English subtitles they use as pivot are not of good quality in general, and it is a relief that the producers of DoT made the English subtitles available. She also confirmed that priority is given to the official version of English subtitles when selecting which version to use as a pivot, since the quality and the accuracy of the pivot subtitles directly impact the Spanish version.

GDH 559, the studio which produced DoT, inherited the staff and resources from its predecessor GTH which had previously seen the immense influence of international fansubs with the case of *Hormones*. The teen drama was widely known in Southeast Asia even before its official export thanks to the fansubbing practices. The producer seemed to hold a positive attitude towards fansubbing and even included screenshots of the fansubs in English and Vietnamese as evidence of "the phenomenon of *Hormones,*" as they call it, in the special episode that gives closure to the first season of the show (Episode 14).

GDH's decision to upload the entire season of the show in high-quality video format on a platform like YouTube, whether deliberate or not, evidently facilitated fansubbers' operations. The high-definition videos (up to 1080p) were suitable as the raw video file, and the official closed captions in English, with incorporated timecode, can be extracted easily for use as a template without the need to transcribe. That said, each episode in GDH's channel is divided according to the original advertising breaks in the digital TV channel into four videos of 5-10 minutes each. The fansubbers decided to intervene with the syntactic code by combining the videos as one file for one episode, and modified the subtitle timecodes accordingly.

The textual analysis in this section draws on the three versions of *Diary of Tootsies* in the translation chain: the ultimate source text with Thai audio, the English closed captions, and the ultimate target text which is the video embedded with Spanish fansubs.

The findings indicate that several textual features that are commonly attributed to fansubbing are also present in the official English subtitles of the show. Moreover, although the ultimate target text displays a variety of creative features as described previously in this chapter, there are instances in which the unconventional features detected in the official English subtitles were not adopted in the Spanish fansubs. Instead, the reverse trend is found: the fansubbers opted for a solution that adheres more to the professional subtitling conventions. This section will map out the unconventional features in the English version and the way they are rendered in the Spanish fansubs.

a) Unconventional use of orthotypography

In professional conventions, "subtitles should not be cluttered with unnecessary punctuation that does not carry any added value and is pleonastic," since excessive use would only take up space and convey the information viewers already perceive via the images and the sound (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 123). Netflix's TTSG indicates similar convention, although more specific: "[d]o not use exclamation and question marks together (?!), please pick the one that suits the intonation or the meaning best" (Netflix, 2021a).

However, this rule of thumb does not seem to apply to DoT English subtitles. Excessive punctuation is used to render the paralinguistic code, for instance, double and triple exclamation marks are employed for dramatic effects when the character shouts or screams. Upper-case letters are also used to indicate the character's loud voice. The same punctuation is transferred to the Spanish fansubs.

Table 19. Unconventional use of punctuation marks

Episode	EN pivot	SP fansubs
E1	Huh!? Snake!?	¡¿Eh?! ¡¿Serpiente?!
E3	Calm down for what!?	¡¿Calmarme para qué?!
E3	Police!!	¡¡La policía!!
E6	Give it to me!!!	¡¡¡Dámelo!!!
E6	I CAN'T HOLD IT ANYMORE!	¡YA NO PUEDO AGUANTAR MÁS!

Other forms of unconventional orthotypography in the official English subtitles include the use of repetitive consonants and vowels to indicate lengthened pronunciation. While in English, it may be more typical to repeat the vowel of the stressed syllable, the repetition in the DoT English subtitles only occur with the last consonant(s) or vowel(s), regardless of the stress. This seems to stem from the influence of the Thai language. In informal settings, such as social media posts or text messages, it is common for Thais to repeat the last letter of a word to imply one's surprise, emphasis, shock, or to make the sentence or phrase sound less harsh. The English pivot presents such feature in various instances as shown in Table 20.

Table 20. Repetitive consonant and vowels (1)

Episode	EN pivot	SP fansubs
E4	Byyyyee!	¡Adiós!
E6	Meowww!	¡Miauuuuu!
E10	Spicyyyy	Picante.
E11	Oh my god! Oh my god! Oh my godddd!	¡Oh Dios mío! ¡Oh Dios mío! ¡Oh Dios mío!
E12	Mother is at Gym Alreadyyy.	Mamá ya está en el gimnasio.
E12	Oh! This is sooo good.	*¡Oh! Está muy bueno.*

In one of these instances, the lengthened pronunciation is deliberately used as a resource to build a stereotypical character for humour. The scene depicts Natty, the only lesbian in the group, while she works as a promotional model in a trade show, known in Thai as พริตตี้ which is the transliteration of "pretty". In Thailand, these promotional models usually speak with a high-pitched voice, using repetitive phrases and lengthened pronunciation to attract people to their booth or to invite them to participate in any activity hosted onstage. The actress who plays Natty deliberately exaggerates these stereotypical features, resulting in a sharp contrast with her normal self in other scenes. In fact, the participant in the game hosted by Natty later makes fun of her prosody because of how annoying it is. Natty's interventions and the corresponding subtitles are listed in Table 21.

Table 21. Repetitive consonant and vowels (2)

Episode 8		
TH audio	**EN pivot**	**SP fansubs**
เรายกกองทัพกันมาเรียกได้ว่ายิ่งใหญ่อลังการ [You can say we have brought a great huge army.]	We brought an army we can say is sooo big and sooo marvelous.	Trajimos un ejército que podemos decir que es muy grande y maravilloso. [We brought an army that we can say is very big and marvellous.]
สวัสดีค่ะ [Goodbye]	Thank youuuu.	Gracias. [Thank you.]
คุณพี่พร้อมนะคะ [Miss, are you ready?]	Miss, are you readyyy?	Señorita, ¿está lista? [Miss, are you ready?]

คำถามต่อไป พร้อมนะคะคุณพี่ [Next question. Ready, Miss?]	Are you readyyy for the next question, Miss?	¿Está lista para la siguiente pregunta, señorita? [Are you ready for the next question, miss?]

As shown in Tables 20 and 21, while the lengthened and exaggerated pronunciation is transcribed in the English subtitles, Spanish fansubs do not always adopt such unconventional spellings. The fansubs seem to adhere more to mainstream subtitling by maintaining standard writing without extra letters. This is recurrent throughout the series, although it cannot be concluded as the norm in the TUF group. For instance, in an example from Episode 6 in Table 20, the fansubbers did opt for the repetitive consonant, similar to several more cases in other series such as *Hormones* (see chapter 6).

In mainstream subtitling, foul language is often toned down or omitted, and for telecast, swear words might be censored using asterisks, abbreviations, or grawlixes, especially in the cases that the expletives are bleeped out (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, pp. 189–190). However, censorship may no longer applies when it comes to SVOD platforms. For instance, Netflix's TTSG for English subtitles states that "dialogue must never be censored" (Netflix, 2021b), and the TTSG for Castilian and Latin American Spanish specifies that "expletives should be rendered as faithfully as possible" (Netflix, 2021a). Censoring words with an ellipsis in the subtitles is only acceptable in case of utterances that are bleeped out in the audio of the source text.

In DoT, while expletives are all audible in Thai, some of them are censored in the English subtitles. While a decision for censorship is in line with mainstream subtitling, there is an inconsistency that seems more identifiable in amateur practices than in standardised ones. Instead of implementing a specific and recurring punctuation to censor the same swear word, at least four different patterns are employed. In contrast, the Spanish fansubs adhere to Netflix's prescriptive guidelines in spelling out all expletives, prioritising readability.

Table 22. Various punctuation patterns for censorship

Episode	EN pivot	SP fansubs
E2	Then you f#ck.	Luego te lo tiras. [Then you fuck him.]
E5	Can friends f*ck with you?	¿Pueden tus amigos follar contigo? [Can your friends fuck you?]
E6	F' my new car!!	¡¡Que le den a mi coche nuevo!! [Fuck my new car!!]
E7	I'm gonna F* her!	¡Me la voy a tirar! [I'm going to fuck her!]
E7	F* her! F* her! F* her! F* her!	¡Follármela! ¡Follármela! ¡Follármela! ¡Follármela! [Fuck her! Fuck her! Fuck her! Fuck her!]

In short, of the various types of unconventional orthography found in the official English subtitles, the TUF fansubbers only adopted the use of excessive exclamation marks, sometimes mixed with question marks, and upper-case letters to convey paralinguistic information.

b) Informal abbreviations

Prescriptive guidelines for professional subtitling do not seem to encourage the use of abbreviations. According to Karamitroglou's proposal (1998), abbreviations in the form of acronyms and apostrophes should be used "only if they are immediately recognizable and comprehensible". This norm persists, as such recommendation is still prevalent in most companies (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 137). Netflix's TTSG (2021a) imposes similar requriement: "[T]he use of abbreviations should be avoided unless there are space limitations."

The DoT's English subtitles flaunt this convention by employing several uncommon acronyms, such as "K.I.A." for "killed in action," "QC" for "quality control" and colloquial "B.O." for "body odour". Additionally, informal abbreviations, the type widely used in text messages and chats such as "OMG" and "Cuz" are present.

Considering that the overall register of the show is informal, with abundant expletives and slang expressions that are common among Thai queer community, these

abbreviations may serve as the subtitler's resources to create a register that fits the tone of the show.

Table 23. Informal abbreviations

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E6		
YOSHI: หาอะไรครับ [What are you looking for?]	What are you looking for?	¿Qué estáis buscando? [What are you looking for?]
GOLF: เต่า อุ้ย! [Turtle, oops!] ทำของตกค่ะ [I dropped something.]	**B.O.**...Oh! I dropped something.	B.O. (Olor corporal) ¡Uy! Se me cayó algo. (N/T: Golf quería decir «Nada», la pronunciación es similar a «B.O.» las siglas de olor corporal en inglés.) [B.O. (Body odour) Oops! I dropped something.] Headnote: (Translator's note: Golf wanted to say "Nothing," the pronunciation is similar to "B.O." the abbreviation for body odour in English.)
DoT E7		
ทหารที่ประมาทเนี่ย ผลลัพธ์คือความตายค่ะ อีคิม [A reckless soldier will face death as a consequence, Kim.]	A soldier who isn't careful deserves to be **K.I.A.**	Un soldado que no tiene cuidado, merece ser eliminado de inmediato. [A soldier who's not careful, deserves to be eliminated immediately.]
DoT E10		
ปิดแอร์ทุกเที่ยง [Turn off the air conditioner at lunchtime.]	Turn off the **A/C** at lunchtime.	Apagamos el aire acondicionado durante el almuerzo. [We turn off the air conditioner at lunchtime.]
DoT E11		
(in English) Oh my God, I don't want to die!	**OMG!** I don't want to die!	¡Dios mío! ¡No quiero morir! [My god! I don't want to die!]
นี่ไง ก็เป็นแบบนี้ ใครจะคบ	**Cuz** she is this way, nobody wants to be her friend.	¿Ves? Como es así, nadie quiere ser su amiga.

[See? Being like this, who would want to be her friend?]		[See? She's like this, no one wants to be her friend.]
DoT E12		
เดี๋ยวกูจะช่วยมึงคิวซีเอง [I will help you with the quality control.]	I will help you **QC** them.	Te ayudaré a elegirles. [I Will help you choose them.]

As shown in Table 23, the Spanish version did not adopt the abbreviation use, except the case of "B.O." in the sixth episode. The abbreviation in English is retained in the fansubs, accompanied by an explicit translation into Spanish and an explanation of the wordplay. In the scene, Golf and Kim are whispering to each other under the table because they suspect that an unpleasant smell they notice earlier is Yoshi's body odour. Yoshi, who is sitting across them, peeks under the table to ask what they are looking for. Golf, caught by surprise, says: เต่า [tao], which literally means "turtle" in Thai, and is also a slang term for body odour. The subtitler into English may have chosen "B.O." to maintain the colloquial register, although the context does not necessarily require an abbreviated word.

The Spanish version retains the abbreviated form, with attempts for explicitations: an additional translation in the parentheses and a headnote to explain the situation. This results in a source-oriented approach complemented with a non-diegetic explanation that is in line with prototypical fansubbing. The fansubbers' approach indicates their intention to make sure that their audience understands the message, although the description of the wordplay turns out incorrect. The wordplay in this case has to do with the double meaning in Thai, not a similar pronunciation of the word in Thai and the word "B.O." in English.

In other cases, the Spanish fansubbers give priority to the standard writing.

c) Translator's notes and glosses

In mainstream subtitling, one of the ideal goals is to pass unnoticed by viewers. Conversely, fansubbers deliberately draw viewers' attention using translator's notes or glosses. These result in interventionist comments that introduce additional non-diegetic information.

In DoT's official English subtitles, additional comments similar to fansubbers' notes have been detected. These comments are not presented as separated headnotes, possibly due to the restriction of YouTube's closed caption format. Still, non-diegetic information was added within parentheses for a similar purpose: to ensure non-Thai viewers' comprehension in instances of wordplay or cultural nuances.

In the first episode, there is a scene when Tee, Gus' boyfriend, breaks up with him. As soon as Gus begs Tee to stay, the shot changes to a medium close-up shot of Tee who repeatedly mouths the word "Toot" in a comical manner. His voice is replaced by the sound of telephone busy signal, which is subtitled into English as follows.

(DoT E1)

> Toot. Toot. Toot. Toot. Toot... (Gay – in Thai slang)

The word "ตุ๊ด" [toot] in Thai, apart from a term for gay men with feminine mannerisms as previously explained, is an onomatopoeia of busy signal. The double meaning is used in this scene as a humoristic element. To let non-Thai viewers capture the wordplay, the English subtitle adds the translation of the word in parentheses.

Additionally, this subtitle demonstrates another trait that does not conform to mainstream subtitling conventions: the lack of reduction. The word "toot" is repeated almost as many times as it sounds. In Spanish fansubs, the same word is written without reduction, similarly to the English subtitles, and the non-diegetic information is translated and presented separately as a headnote, placed at the top of the screen.

(DoT E1)

> SP Fansub: Toot, toot, toot, toot, toot, toot…
> SP Headnote: (Toot: Significa «gay» en jerga tailandesa.)

Another example is a scene in the gym, featuring Gus, Kim, and Golf. Kim finds a match nearby in a dating application, and the man walks over so they can meet in person. The three friends look in horror as the man in a flowery pink crop top introduces himself.

Table 24. Example from DoT E12

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
ปอเอง [It's me, Por.] เรียกแมงปอก็ได้ [You can call me Mang Por.]	It's me Por. **You can call me, Mang Por (Dragonfly)**	Soy Por. [It's Por] **Puedes llamarme «Mang Por» (Libélula).** [You can call me "Mang Por" (Dragonfly).]

It is common for some of the gay men and transgenders in Thailand to modify their names or even change to a new one to build a more feminine identity. "Por" has two meanings in Thai: a dragonfly or jute, and it is a common gender-neutral nickname. On the other hand, "Mang por" tends to be a female name. In this scene, Por's display photo in the dating application shows only his bare muscular torso, which creates an expectation that contrasts with his feminine demeanour and clothing. The visual is enhanced by his soft voice and his cute "dragonfly" nickname. For this reason, the subtitler might have felt the need to convey the meaning of the nickname in English, and the Spanish fansubbers did not miss the opportunity to render this additional information.

Other function of this non-diegetic space in the English subtitles is the indication of foreign languages and dialects in the source text. In the first episode, Gus, Kim and Golf are at the beach when an attractive shirtless Westerner jogs past, catching their attention. Kim refers to the man as "that German sausage" with a sexual innuendo, and then utters a sentence in German, which can be translated to "I am very hungry." Another similar situation occurs in the twelfth episode, when Kim flirts with a young Japanese man in Japanese.

The incorporation of foreign languages in these episodes shows Kim's language skills which fits with his character as a flight attendant who later mentions in the show that his lifelong project is to sleep with men from 80 countries. Kim's comment in German contains no Thai translation.

The English subtitle, on the other hand, provides the phrase in German, and adds the translation in the parentheses. The Spanish fansubs present the same format, but the attention-grabbing discrepancy is the complete and correct transcription of the sentence in German: the addition of "einen großen" which is missing in the English subtitles and the spelling of "Hunger" with a capital H. The accurate rendering may be due to the DoT

fansubber's knowledge of German, which she revealed during the interview. The difference may be slight, but such instance, again, challenges the general preconception of fansubs as the lesser counterpart compared to official subtitles.

Table 25. Rendering foreign languages in EN pivot (DoT)

EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
DoT E1		
Look at that German Sausage.	Mira esa salchicha alemana. [Look at that German sausage.]	
Ich habe hunger **(I'm starving!)**.	Ich habe einen großen Hunger. (¡Estoy hambriento!) [I'm hungry!]	
DoT E12		
(Japanese) KitKat green tea ice cream. Sugoi! **(Awesome!)**	Helado de KitKat de té verde. ¡Increíble! [Green tea KitKat ice-cream. Amazing!]	(N/T: Están hablando en japonés.) [Translator's note: they are speaking Japanese.]
(Japanese) Do you have KitKat green tea ice cream for sale?	¡Oh! ¿Tienes el helado de KitKat de té verde a la venta? [Oh! You have green tea KitKat ice-cream for sale?]	(N/T: Están hablando en japonés.) [Translator's note: they are speaking Japanese.]
So you will 'kimochi iku iku' **(Feel so good)**.	Así te sentirás muy bien. [So you will feel great.]	

In the twelfth episode, the stereotype linked with the usage of English and Isan dialect is the key for humour. Several Thai shows portrays Isan, the dialect spoken in the north-eastern region of the country, as the language stereotypically associated with working-class people who are poorly educated. In contrast, people who speak fluent English are often perceived as well-educated, belonging to middle and upper class in the social hierarchy.

The portrayal of Peary in Episode 11 and 12 is based on this stereotype. Besides her extravagant clothing, Peary's idiolect which comprises English words and phrases mixed with standard Thai characterises her as an upper-class woman with a lavishing lifestyle. When Peary accompanies Gus and his friends to Khon Kaen province, the location for the two episodes, the young woman pretends that she does not understand a word of Isan, the dialect spoken in the area. Nevertheless, after a chaotic incident at a local concert, it

transpires that Peary speaks Isan fluently, which makes Gus and his friends suspect that she might not come from the kind of fancy background as she led everyone to believe.

TH audio: คือบ่มีคนปาก [Why isn't anybody saying anything?]

EN pivot: (Dialect) Why isn't anybody saying anything?

In this scene from Episode 12, Gus, Kim, Golf, Natty, and Peary follow a local out of the concert area in which gunshots are constantly heard. The local asks in Isan where they are staying, but instead of getting an answer, Gus' group goes into panic as all of them misinterpret the words in the dialect. Peary finally loses her patience and replies fluently in Isan. The indication of dialect use is essential in this scene because it is the revelation moment of Peary's identity. With Peary's utterances in Isan for the first time, a surprise sound effect is heard and all the other characters look at her in astonishment.

The dialect is indicated in the English version as an additional part within the subtitle. The Spanish fansubs offer similar information, but with a more creative strategy: the subtitles in these episodes are colour-coded according to the language — standard Thai, English, and Isan. The phrases spoken in Isan are written in green, in contrast to the regular yellow when the audio is in standard Thai.

d) Addition and lack of reduction

As mentioned in chapter 3, text reduction is a crucial strategy in subtitling in order to maintain the synchronisation between the audio and the translation. Additions within the subtitle can be used, for instance, to give viewers a better understanding of a cultural reference they are not familiar with, although evidence from empirical studies has shown that it is not a common strategy in mainstream subtitling (Pedersen, 2011). In DoT, reductions do not seem to be the norm in the English subtitles, since repeated words and phrases are often detected, as shown in the following table.

Table 26. Examples of reduction avoided

Episode	English subtitles
E7	Down it! Down it! Down it! Down it!
E7	Kill it! Kill it! Kill it! Kill it!
E7	Rit. Rit. Rit. We found them.
E7	Go! Slide. Slide. Slide.
E11	Get up! Get up! Get up!
E11	Sunlight! Sunlight! Sunlight!

Moreover, some subtitles contain additional items that are not mentioned in the spoken dialogue. In Table 27, the addition contains a cultural reference "Satang," which is the smallest unit of Thai currency. This item may cause confusion to international viewers as it is not very well known outside of Thailand. The TUF fansubbers seem to detect this potential problem. They chose an explicitation strategy, a decision in line with the source-oriented approach typical to fansubs, by retaining the item and adding an explanatory headnote to clarify the meaning.

Table 27. Additional items in EN pivot

Episode	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E2	สงครามยกที่สอง เริ่ม! [Second round of the battle. Go!]	**Queer** war, Round 2. Fight!	Guerra de maricas, segunda ronda. ¡A luchar! [Queer war, second round. Fight!]
DoT E5	อย่าหวังว่ากูจะจ่ายเงินเพิ่ม [Don't expect me to pay more money!]	Don't expect me to pay **even a Satang** more.	No esperes que pague ni un sólo satang más. [Don't expect me to pay even a Satang more.] **SP Headnote:** (100 Satang = 1 Baht)

These examples show that while the Spanish fansubs do display a tendency towards source-oriented translation and resort to formal innovation to deal with translation problems, they do not always follow the unconventional features in the corresponding English subtitles.

Furthermore, textual evidence displays instances where the source-oriented translation in English subtitles is reversed in Spanish fansubs. One example is the translation of the

word "เท" [tay], which is a Thai slang expression popular among gay community, now commonly used by young people in general. The term, which means to dump or to leave someone, is written in Thai on the screen when it appears for the first time. The narrator proceeds to explain the definition, and the characters keep using it throughout the episode.

In all instances that this slang appears, it is rendered into English by transliteration into "tay," followed by the meaning in English within parentheses. On the contrary, the Spanish fansubbers resorted to transliteration only when the term was introduced. In subsequent scenes, they simply used the word "dejar" which means "dump" in Spanish. In Table 28, the back translation from Thai retains the slang word using transliteration "tay" to mark its use in the context.

It is undeniable that in this case, the fansubbers' translation decision results in smoother, better readable sentences, which are more inclined to the mainstream conventions than the extremely source-oriented approach in the English subtitles that attempt to retain and highlight the Thai slang term.

The case of DoT and its subtitles offers textual evidence of the complexity and fluidity between professional and amateur subtitling. The detection of features that are generally attributed to fansubbing in the official English translation highlights that the dichotomy between professional and amateur practices might be too simplistic, especially in the era of digitalisation that has enabled potential consumers-turned-producers and the myriad forms of media translation.

Table 28. Reversal trend in Spanish fansubs (DoT E1)

Thai audio	English subtitles	Spanish fansubs
พวกมึง พี่แฮคเทกูแล้ว [Folks, Hack "tay" me!]	Girls, Hack 'tay'-ed me!	¡Chicas! ¡Hack me ha «tayeado»! [Girls! Hack "tay"-ed me!]
เทเป็นคำกริยา แปลว่าทิ้ง ["Tay" is a verb, means "to dump".]	Tay' is a verb that means to 'dump'.	*«Tay» es un verbo que significa «dejar» o «deshacerse de algo».* ["Tay" is a verb that means "to dump" or "to get rid of something".]
สามารถใช้กับเรื่องเล็กๆ อย่างเทเพื่อน [It can be used in simple situations like "tay" friends]	It's used in everyday situations like 'tay' (ditch) your friends	*Se usa en situaciones cotidianas como cuando te «deshaces» de tus amigos.* [It is used in daily situations like when you "get rid of" your friends.]
ไปจนถึงเรื่องใหญ่ๆ อย่างถูกแฟนเท [or in serious matters like getting "tay" by the boyfriend.]	or in more serious matters like your boyfriend 'tay'-s (dumps) you.	*O en asuntos más serios, como cuando tu novio te «deja».* [Or in more serious matters like when your boyfriend "dumps" you.]
ห้าปีแล้วมาเทกู [Five years and now he "tay" me.]	5 years and now he 'tay'-ed (dumped) me!	¡5 años y ahora me deja! [Five years and now he dumps me!]
มันเทกูไปอยู่กับกิ๊กชะนีมันแล้ว [He already "tay" me and went with his sidechick.]	He also 'tay'-ed (dumped) me for another bitch!	¡También me ha dejado por otra zorra! [He also left me for another bitch!]
จะเทมันก่อนที่มันจะเทกู [I will "tay" them before they "tay" me.]	And I will 'tay' (dump) them before they 'tay' me.	Y les dejaré antes de que ellos me dejen. [And I will dump them before they dump me.]

4.5 Conclusions

The textual analysis shows that TH>SP fansubbing challenges the longstanding professional subtitling conventions with formal innovation of the subtitles. Significant deviations from the professional subtitling norms include high display rate, long lines of subtitles and the absence of minimum and maximum display duration limits. It is possible that, while these parameters are strongly associated with quality in professional subtitling, fansubbers do not deem them necessary for the quality of the subtitles.

Instead, they seem to value the mediation of as much information from the source text as possible. This is reflected by the way they render more than one signifying code using various types of title simultaneously. In addition, TUF fansubbers introduced the possibilities to solve translation problems while maintaining the aesthetics of the visual through textual features such as integrated titles and colour-coded subtitles. Communicating with viewers in a non-diegetic space using headnotes and glosses is also essential to complement their translation.

Conversely, as shown in section 4.4, while the Spanish fansubs display creative traits, several unconventional characteristics from the English pivot have not passed through the fansubbers' filter. The fact that unconventional features associated to fansubs are also observed in official subtitles implies that amateur practices are, to some extent, creating an impact in the media. Also, the experimental, norm-breaking features that used to be ruled out in professional practices may also prove to be useful for mainstream viewers. On the other hand, as shown by this study and a few others (Dore & Petrucci, 2022; Massidda, 2015; Orrego-Carmona, 2016a), fansubbing is also influenced by subtitling conventions similar to the ones employed in commercial subtitling.

Additionally, as a case of media transfer from an underrepresented language into more hegemonic contexts and languages (English and Spanish), the findings from section 4.4 raise the question of whether and to what extent the subtitling conventions that are widely used and accepted in Anglocentric and Eurocentric mediascape are applicable in professional practices in other parts of the world.

5. GENRE EXPERTISE AND SOURCE-ORIENTED TRANSLATION IN THAI>SPANISH FANSUBS

As discussed in chapter 3, fansubbers' genre expertise or genre knowledge is a trait that shapes their translation decisions. According to Pérez-González (2014, p. 75), genre knowledge, which is essential for media co-creators, refers to "expert skills gained through their familiarity with the values, practices and expectations of fellow group members to enhance collaboration and foster interaction within a given audienceship". In anime fansubbing, genre expertise is typically signalled through textual features such as headnotes or linear notes that denote the fansubbers' knowledge of source culture and their familiarity with the audiences' expectation to learn more about Japan (Schules, 2014). Genre knowledge is closely associated with the aim for source-oriented translation, which seems predominant in fansubbing practices, even non-anime ones (Dore & Petrucci, 2022; Massidda, 2015; Pedersen, 2019).

In addition, informed by Ortabasi's case study on the transfer of visual language in anime fansubs (2007), Dwyer's definition of genre expertise (2012) includes the translator's capacity to transfer the information conveyed by nonverbal visual components, as well as the contextual and intertextual elements.

Drawing on a comparative analysis of the TH>EN>SP corpus, this chapter will look into the textual evidence that reflects the fansubbers' genre expertise and verify whether the source-oriented translation applies to the corpus. The examples are classified according to the related translation problems: the transfer of cultural references, linguistic features of the ultimate source language, nonverbal elements, and intertextual elements.

5.1 Cultural references

Cultural references have been widely discussed as a substantial translation problem. Scholars in Translation Studies have developed a variety of terminology to define the phenomenon, for instance, culture-bound elements, culture bumps (Leppihalme, 1997), realia (Leppihalme, 2011), and culturemes (Nord, 1997). The terms used by AVT scholars include extralinguistic cultural references (ECRs) (Pedersen, 2011) and culture specific

references (Ranzato, 2016). There is still no consensus on nomenclature, and there is much overlap between each scholar's classification of translation strategies or techniques to render these items.

As opposed to written texts, the challenge of rendering cultural references in audiovisual texts lies in the layers of signifying codes beyond the linguistic level. In AVT, Chiaro (2009) is among the first researchers to acknowledge the implications of nonverbal elements, as shown by her definition of "culture-specific references (CSRs)":

> CSRs are entities that are typical of one particular culture, and that culture alone, and they can be either exclusively or predominantly visual (an image of a local or national figure, a local dance, pet funerals, baby showers), exclusively verbal or else both visual and verbal in nature. (Chiaro, 2009, p. 155)

However, as many academics later acknowledged, defining a cultural reference as an item specific to one culture or country may appear too restrictive. With the globalisation and rapid distribution of the media worldwide, a reference that used to be known only in certain geographical areas has become universal.

In *Subtitling: Concepts and Practices,* which is Díaz-Cintas and Remael's updated version of their seminal publication *Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling,* the modification of the definition of the term "cultural references" reflects the concern of the issue of transculturality (Pedersen, 2011) and the close link between linguistic and cultural elements. The definition has been modified from "extralinguistic references to items that are tied up with a country's culture, history, or geography, and tend therefore to pose serious translation challenges" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 200) to "references to items that are tied up with a community's culture, history or geography, and they can pose serious translation challenges" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 202). The amplification of the definition to "community" fits better with the dynamic of AVT in the age of digital media, since it encompasses collectives beyond the limitation of geographical borders. This inclusive definition has guided the detection of cultural references in the analysis in this section.

In AVT, significant contributions to the translation of cultural references in subtitling include Santamaria (2001), Pedersen (2011), Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007; 2020). In addition, Ranzato (2016) proposes a very detailed classification and translation strategies of cultural references for dubbing. The delimitation of the concept of cultural references, the classification, and the taxonomy of translation strategies or techniques used to solve the issue vary in each publication. For instance, Pedersen's "extralinguistic cultural references (ECRs)" (2011) only include verbally expressed cultural references. Ranzato's classification (2016), on the other hand, is much more extensive and also acknowledges intertextual references as a subset of cultural references. She highlights that a cultural reference may be verbal or nonverbal, as well as synchronous or asynchronous (belonging to the same period as the viewers in the target culture or not). For clarity, the mediation of intertextual references and nonverbal (cultural) references are discussed separately in sections 5.3 and 5.4 in this chapter.

Despite the diverse proposals, the taxonomy of translation strategies put forward by all scholars serves as a range of possible solutions "from very literal transfers to complete recreations" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020, p. 207). Pedersen (2011) groups the translation strategies on an axis of source-oriented and target-oriented poles. Such categorisation holds significant implications in pivot subtitling. As Pięta et al. (2022) observe, "domesticating strategies" such as omission, transposition or lexical recreation[14] in the pivot subtitles or templates result in a challenge for the subtitler who has to translate into the ultimate target language.

As widely acknowledged, the translation choices adopted in the pivot usually determine the translation into the ultimate target text. For instance, Kerdkidsadanon's doctoral thesis (2015) on the SP>EN>TH subtitling reports linguistic and cultural interferences from the pivot subtitles: substitutions and generalisations of cultural references in the English version are usually transferred to the Thai version, since these translation solutions have already eliminated the original item from the mediating text. A similar loss of "culture-bound phenomena" is acknowledged in Zilberdik's analysis of pivot subtitling of a Danish film into Hebrew via English, as "the first subtitler's choices narrow the options for the second subtitler" (Zilberdik, 2004, p. 46).

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[14] based on the terms proposed by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p. 207)

To detect evidence of the hypothetical source-oriented tendency in the corpus and the fansubbers' interventions to mediate Thai culture, this section investigates the coincidences and discrepancies between the translation solutions in the English pivot and the Spanish fansubs. The analysis is based on the taxonomy of translation strategies proposed by Ranzato (2016), since it seems the most clear-cut, with fewer overlaps between each item and no complex subsets. For reference, Ranzato's proposal of translation strategies is briefly explained in Table 29.

Table 29. Translation strategies for culture specific references (Ranzato, 2016)

Loan	The cultural reference is left unchanged. In the TH>SP case, this is rendered using transliteration.
Official translation	Use of translation already available and widely accepted in the target culture. Also called "recognised translation" (Newmark, 1988) and "official equivalent" (Pedersen, 2011).
Calque	Literal, word-for-word translation.
Explicitation	Retention of the cultural reference in the source text with added explanation.
Generalisation by hypernym	"[A] specific kind of explicitation which does not add meaning to a CSR but rather replaces it altogether with one or more words having a broader meaning than the given element (hypernym)" (Ranzato, 2016, p. 88).
Concretisation by hyponym	A hyponym is used to make a concept more specific. Also referred to as specification.
Substitution	An item in the source text is substituted by another in the target text.
Lexical recreation	Use of neologism, typically when a neologism appears in the source text.
Compensation	A cultural reference is eliminated at one point of the translation, and compensated for at another point.
Elimination	The reference does not appear in the target text. Also referred to as "omission" by other scholars (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2020; Pedersen, 2011).
Creative addition	"[A] form of authorial intervention" (Ranzato, 2016, p. 95) in which a reference from the target culture is added where there is no cultural reference in the source text.

Cultural references in *Hormones* and *Diary of Tootsies* include Thai celebrities (e.g. มาริโอ้ เมาเร่อ [Mario Maurer], เวียร์ [Weir], ปอย ตรีชฎา [Poy Treechada]), place names (e.g. พัทยา

[Pattaya], บางแสน [Bangsaen], จตุจักร [Chatuchak]), Thai food and drink (e.g. กะเพรา [Kaprao], เฉาก๊วย [Chaokuai], ยาดอง [Yadong]), Thai music (e.g. ฉิ่ง [Ching], ฆ้องวง [Gong wong], รำฉุยฉาย [Ram Chuichai]), and Thai currency (บาท [Baht]).

As both series are set in contemporary Thailand, there are several "transcultural references" which, according to Pedersen (2011, p. 107), are not bound to the source culture. Instead, they are expected to be widely known by members of the source and the target cultures alike, for instance, international celebrity names such as Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga, and Victoria Beckham, and international brands such as Valentino, Chanel and KitKat. In addition, there are allusions to customs and celebrations that originated from European countries and the US, and became well-known internationally, such as April Fool's Day and Valentine's Day.

Since the texts analysed in this research are pivot translations, the cultural reference transfer occurs twice: from Thai to English, and then from English to Spanish. Based on the comparative analysis, four main categories of cultural reference rendering in pivot subtitling are proposed here.

a) Cultural references are retained in all the texts in the translation chain

b) Cultural references are eliminated or replaced in the pivot due to target-oriented strategies, and are also lost in the ultimate target text.

c) Cultural references are retained in the pivot, but not in the ultimate target text.

d) Cultural references are lost from the pivot, but reappear in the ultimate target text.

The findings are presented according to Ranzato's differentiation between "respectful" and "manipulative" strategies (2016, p. 141). Loans, official translations, and explicitations are considered respectful strategies as they preserve the original cultural reference, while others "imply a more substantial semantic departure from the ST" and are thus considered more manipulative (ibid., p. 123). The classification of these strategies into source-oriented or target-oriented varies in different studies. For instance, Lepre (2016, pp. 268–269) considers only the retention of the item as expressed in the source text "unequivocally SL-oriented," and all others "adaptation," except for official equivalent that is considered neutral.

In this thesis, loans and explicitations are associated with the source-oriented approach since they retain the original cultural reference, while official translations need to be considered case-by-case since they may derive from source-oriented strategies such as loans or others such as calque or lexical recreation. Following Pedersen's (2005, 2011) argument, official translations are ready-made solutions that has a special status from authorities' acceptance. For this reason, they are excluded from the source-oriented or target-oriented spectrum. The rest of the strategies may indicate a neutral or target-oriented approach.

a) Preservation of original cultural references

The retention of original cultural references in both the English pivot and the subsequent Spanish fansubs is the most frequently used strategy in the TUF fansubbed corpus, which aligns with the fansubbers' favour for source-oriented translation. 80 instances of loans that preserve the same reference in Thai, English, and Spanish were detected, together with another 29 instances of explicitations and 6 instances of official translations, which amount to a total of 115 cultural references preserved. Examples are given in Table 30. Conversely, target-oriented strategies, which will be discussed in the following subsection b and c, only account for 64 instances.

In cases of loans, the references are transliterated into English and Spanish. Official translations in English are also rendered using official translations in Spanish, such as the name of the film *The Perks of Being a Wallflower,* which is translated in the Spanish fansubs according to the official title in Spanish: *Las ventajas de ser un marginado*.

For explicitations that occur in the transfer from Thai to English, the added information is usually retained in the Spanish fansubs; for instance, จตุจักร becomes "Jatujak Weekend Market" in English and "mercado de Chatuchak" in the Spanish version. Although the transliteration differs and the semantic element "weekend" is removed from the ultimate target text, the same strategy of explicitation due to the influence of the English pivot prevails.

Table 30. Preservation of original cultural references

Loans			
Series	**TH audio**	**EN pivot**	**SP fansubs**
Hm S1 E2	ขอไลน์หน่อยดิ [Give me your **Line**.]	may I have your **line**?	¿Me das tu Line? [Can you give me your **Line**?]
Hm S2 E4	ที่สยามโอเชียนเวิลด์ [At **Siam Ocean World**.]	at..**Siam Ocean World**...	En el **Siam Ocean World**. [At the **Siam Ocean World**.]
Hm S2 E4	หนูก็แค่ตีฉิ่งใส่ก้อยกับดาวค่ะ [I was just playing the **ching** at Koi and Dao.]	I was just playing the **ching** at Dao.	Solo estaba tocando el **ching** delante de Dow. [I was just playing the **ching** at Dao.]
DoT E1	พี่อยากเป็นมาช่า [I want to be **Marsha**.]	I want to be **Marsha**.	Quiero ser **Marsha**. [I want to be **Marsha**.]
DoT E2	ก็ต้องมารวมพลังเซเลอร์มูนให้ครบองค์หน่อยปะ [we have to gather our **Sailor Moon** power]	we all need to gather the power of our **Sailor moon** team.	necesitamos reunir las fuerzas de nuestro equipo **Sailor Moon**. [we all need to gather the power of our **Sailor moon** team.]
DoT E8	วาเลนติโนจริงปะคะ [Are these real **Valentino**?]	Your **Valentino**, is it real?	¿Tus **Valentinos** son de verdad? [Your Valentinos are real?]
Official translation			
Hm S1 E4	**The Perks of Being a Wallflower.**	**"the perks of being a wallflower"** - krub	**Las ventajas de ser un marginado.**
Hm S2 E8	มีแกงเขียวหวาน ปลาสลิดทอด แล้วก็ไข่เจียวกุ้งที่ฝนชอบด้วย [There are **Kang khiaowan**, fried gourami fish, and shrimp omelette that you like.]	**Green curry**, fried gourami fish, and also shrimp fried eggs that you like.	**Curry verde**, pescado frito y huevas de gamba fritas, tal y como te gustan.
Explicitation			
Hm S1 E6	เฮ้ย เจอแล้ว เจอราร์ด [There, found **Gerrard**.]	Hei......**Steven Gerrard**	Hey, **Steven Gerrard**.
Hm S1 E6	เดี๋ยวไปไหว้พระแถวเยาวราช [Let's go pay respect to Buddha in **Yaowarat**.]	Go to the temple at **yaowarat (China Town)**.	Vamos al templo en **Yaowarat (China Town)**

			[Let's go to the temple in **Yaowarat (China Town)**]
Hm S1 E6	เออ เสาร์นี้กูว่าจะไป**จตุจักร** ไปกับกูป่าว [Ah, this Saturday I think I will go to **Chatuchak**. Do you want to go with me?]	Uhmm,.. This Saturday,- I'll go to **Jatujak Weekend Market**.. Will you come with me ??	Ah, este sábado iré al **mercado de Chatuchak,** ¿quieres venir conmigo? [Ah, this Saturday I will go to **Chatuchak market,** do you want to come with me?]
DoT E1	บางแสน [**Bangsaen.**]	**Bangsaen beach.**	En **la playa Bangsaen**. [On **Bangsaen beach**.]
DoT E2	โอ๊ย ล่าสุดเนี่ยนะ ดรีมเวิลด์ [Oh! Recently at **Dream World**…]	Oh! The last time was in **Dream World fun park**.	¡Oh! La última vez fue en el **parque de diversiones de Dream World**. [Oh! The last time was at **Dream World amusement park.**]
DoT E8	เอเชียน ยุโรป หรือแม้แต่**ไทยใหญ่** [Asians, Europeans, or even **Tai Yai**]	Asian, European or even **ethnic minority like Tai Yai.**	*Asiáticos, europeos o incluso de **minorías étnicas como Tai Yai.*** [Asians, Europeans or even of **ethnic minorities like Tai Yai.**]

In some cases, the Spanish fansubbers add an extra layer of explicitation to render the retained cultural reference. A noteworthy instance is an explicitation in the Spanish fansubs in the following example from *Hormones*. In Thailand, it is normal for parents to give two names to their child: one full name, which is usually longer, to use in official documents and formal situations. Another name is a nickname, which is generally shorter. Some nicknames are a short form of the full name, while others have nothing to do with the full name and may refer to mundane items or just random words.

In *Hormones*, the characters are almost always called by their nicknames. Their full names appear only periodically during formal situations, such as when teachers call them in the classroom. In this particular scene, after Toei tells Tar that she is going out with Phu, Tar replies using his full name (Olarn) as a first-person pronoun, and Toei's full name (Thaneeda) as a second-person pronoun. The result is a mocking air of formality, which Toei notes in her response. In the next episode, when it is Tar's turn to tell Toei that he is going out with Kanompang, the characters repeat the same structure.

The characters' full names in both episodes are transliterated in the English pivot according to the Thai audio. In the Spanish version, however, there is a shift in translation strategy. The fansubbers opted for an explicitation instead of a loan by adding each character's nickname before the full name, supposedly to help viewers recognise the names.

Table 31. Explicitation in Spanish fansubs

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S2 E2	โอฬารได้ยินจากปากธนีดาแล้วครับ [Olarn has heard it from Thaneeda's lips.]	This Olarn has heard it from the lips of Thaneeda herself now.	Yo, Tar Olarn, lo escuché de los labios de la mismísima Toei Thaneeda. [I, Tar Olarn, heard it from Toei Thaneeda's own lips.]
Hm S2 E2	เรียกซะเต็มยศเลยนะ [You call me with such formality.]	Why are you using our full names?!	¿Por qué estás usando nuestros nombres completos? [Why are you using our full names?]
Hm S2 E3	ธนีดาได้ยินจากปากโอฬารแล้วค่ะ [Thaneeda has heard it from Olarn's lips.]	This Thaneeda has Heard from the lips of Olarn himself now.	Yo, **Toei Thaneeda**, lo escuché de los labios del mismísimo **Tar Olarn**. [I, Toei Thaneeda heard it from Tar Olarn's own lips.]

Another strategy that points to the fansubbers' genre expertise and highlights the source-oriented translation is the addition of headnotes and glosses. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p. 212) address the use of these notes as "an extreme case of explicitation," which is common in fansubbing and is gradually entering commercial subtitling practices.

The comparative textual analysis reveals that almost all headnotes in the English fansubs were transferred to the Spanish version. More importantly, the TUF fansubbers added their own headnotes and glosses with no help from the English pivot. Some of those are explicitations for Thai cultural elements, such as brief descriptions of Thai ceremonies and festivals, and currency conversions into euros. Others involve explanations of wordplays in Thai, basic Thai words and forms of address, and nuances from the linguistic features of the Thai language (see section 5.2).

The data from the interview and the posts on TUF website indicate that, apart from the fansubbers' own interest and knowledge about Thai culture, a factor that contributed to these annotations is the collaborative method. TUF fansub group collaborated with at least one Thai fansubber, *Kuda Lakorn,* who provided the group with the pivot English subtitle files with timecodes and possibly helped with the extra explanation. Since the collaboration (and the TUF's fansubbing activity) ceased before this research began, the fansubbers who agreed to participate in the online interviews could only speculate in retrospect since the ones who had contact with the Thai fansubber and took care of the explanatory notes were no longer active in the group.

In any case, with the Spanish fansubbers' limited knowledge of the Thai language, it is logical that these annotations are not entirely free of errors. An example case is the differentiation between the terms ครู [Kru] and อาจารย์ [Achan] in *Hormones* Season 2 Episode 3. The difference is subtle even for Thai native speakers, as sometimes these terms are used interchangeably. "Kru" is less formal and is typically used with school teachers, while "Achan" (commonly transliterated as "Ajarn" and "Acharn") is widely used to address those who teach in the university and may be considered an equivalent of "professor". TUF's headnote, however, mistakenly explains that the difference is that "Ajarn" teaches a specific subject.

Despite occasional errors, these extreme cases of explicitation indicate the TUF fansubbers' attempt to bring the target viewers as close to the Thai language and culture as possible. Extra annotations were purposely added to cater to their audience's needs, which do not necessarily match those of the English-speaking one. For instance, the headnote in the following example. The scene is when Gus, Kim and Golf pose in front of a mirror before giving a dance show at a company party. Their bodysuit resembles the

one Britney Spears wore in the music video *Oops!... I Did It Again*. The dialogue, quoting the lyrics from the song, is delivered in English.

Table 32. Example from DoT E4

	Source audio and EN pivot	**SP fansubs**
GOLF:	Britney, oops I done it again.	Britney, «Oops! I done it again».
KIM:	I DID IT AGAIN!	«I did it again!»
		Headnote (N/T: Golf intenta cantar la canción de Britney Spears pero se equivoca, Kim le corrige.)

TUF fansubbers marked the quoted lyrics in the dialogue with angled quotation marks and added a headnote to explain the situation: "Golf tries to sing the song by Britney Spears but he makes a mistake, Kim corrects him." An English-speaking viewer will not need this explicitation. Still, as later confirmed via an online interview, the TUF fansubber was well aware that some of their audiences have no English knowledge at all and may need this clarification to understand the scene.

A similar intervention is detected when Pop's full nickname in *Hormones* is revealed. In the scene, Pop introduces his sister, Kanompang or Pang, to his friends. One of them points out that the siblings' names do not seem to belong. Kanompang then reveals that Pop's nickname is actually "Popcorn," which refers to food, just like her name which means "bread". Pop's friends burst out laughing at the funny nickname. The English pivot only explains the name "Kanompang" in a headnote, since it is a Thai word. On the other hand, the Spanish fansubbers added two headnotes: the first for "Kanompang," and the second to explain what "Popcorn" means in Spanish, to guide their viewers who may not understand English.

Figure 32. Headnote from Hm S2 E1

b) Interference from target-oriented strategies in the pivot

The interference from the pivot occurs when the target-oriented approach applied in the English pivots is transferred to the subsequent Spanish version. Examples from the corpus include cultural references that are rendered using generalisation, substitution, and creative addition in the English pivot. The Spanish fansubbers then translate from the cultural references that have already been adapted further away from the ultimate source text.

- *Generalisation by hypernym*

Generalisations in the English pivot often mean the loss of original cultural references, as the items are rendered using hypernyms, which are later transferred in the Spanish version. In the corpus, the items that are rendered with this strategy are what Ranzato classifies as "source culture references," which are less identifiable by the target audiences, in this case, by both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking audiences. These references include Thai music, place names, food and brands. For instance, รำฉุยฉาย [Ram chuichai], which is one of the numerous traditional Thai dance shows, is translated as "a Thai traditional dance" in English. The Spanish fansubbers, influenced by the English pivot, also rendered the item similarly in Spanish. Other examples are given in Table 33.

Table 33. Examples of generalisations

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E4	รำฉุยฉายออกไปไหมล่ะหา อีช้าง [**Ram Chuichai**, perhaps, Elephant?]	Perhaps a **Thai traditional dance**, Horton?	**Un baile tradicional tailandés**, ¿Horton? [**A Thai traditional dance**, Horton?]
DoT E9	ก็ตรงจุฬาฯไง [At **Chula**.]	At **the university**.	*En la universidad*. [At **the university**.]
DoT E11	วันนี้ป้ากะจะพาพวกหนูไปดูวง หมอลำ [Today I plan to take you to see a **Molam** band]	Today I want to take you to see **a country music show**.	Hoy quiero llevaros a ver **un espectáculo de música regional.** [Today I want to take you to see a local music show.]
DoT E12	สถาบันสอนภาษาชื่อดังย่านราช ดำริ [a famous language school in	at a well known [sic] language institute in **downtown**…	*en un instituto de idiomas muy conocido del centro* [in a very well-known language institute **in the centre**]

186

	Ratchadamri neighbourhood.]		
Hm S1 E10	รู้ป่ะ กิน**มาม่า**มากๆ อะ ไม่ดีนะ [You know, it's not good to eat a lot of **Mama.**]	Do you know...it's not good to eat **the instant noodle**	¿Sabes que no es bueno comer **ramen instantáneo**? [Do you know it's not good to eat **instant noodle**?]
Hm S2 E1	อย่าลืมซื้อ**ขนมเบื้อง**มาฝากขนม ปังด้วยนะคะ [Don't forget to buy **Kanom Bueang** for Kanompang.]	*Please do not forget to purchase **Thai crepes** for Kanompang.*	*Por favor, no olvides comprar **crepes tailandeses** para Kanompang.* [Please don't for get to buy **Thai crepes** for Kanompang.]

- *Substitution*

Substitutions are frequently employed to render references in Thai entertainment and references concerning religion. Thai celebrities and actors are replaced by international personalities with similar associations. For instance, in the last episode of *Diary of Tootsies,* Golf posts three hashtags in the caption for his gym photo. In each one, Golf mentions a Thai actress or celebrity who is an attractive fitness enthusiast: Pu Praya, Araya, and Ploy Chawa. These names are substituted with female iconic American celebrities: Beyoncé, Kendall Jenner, and Taylor Swift. All three American references are transferred to the Spanish fansubs. The hashtags are clearly shown on the screen; however, the substitution is possible because Thai does not use Latin alphabets, and the audience cannot detect the discrepancy between the graphic code and the subtitles.

Table 34. Examples of substitutions

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E2	นี่มึงแต่งตัวมาร้านกาแฟ หรือ แต่งตัวมายืนเป็นสองคนสุดท้าย เดอะสตาร์ [Are you dressed to come to a coffee shop or to be one of the two finalists of **The Star**?]	You're so dressed up to buy coffee or to be one of the two finalist [sic] of **The Voice**?	¿Vas tan elegante para comprar café o para ser una de las dos finalistas de «**La Voz**»? [Are you dressed this fancy to buy a coffee or to be one of the two finalists of **La Voz**?]

DoT E3	ถ้าพี่เวียร์เดินผ่านละกูกินอยู่ทำไง [What if **P'Weir** passes by when I was eating?]	What if **Brad Pitt** walked by while we're eating?	¿Y si **Brad Pitt** pasa por aquí mientras estamos comiendo? [What if **Brad Pitt** passes by while we're eating?]
DoT E4	แล้วผมทรงรินลณีนี่คืออะไร [And what's up with this **Rinlanee** hairdo?]	And what's up with this **'Lady Gaga'** hairdo?	¿Y qué pasa con este peinado a lo **Lady Gaga**? [And what's up with this **Lady Gaga** hairdo?]
DoT E12	#ปูไปรยาก็สู้ไม่ได้ #อารยาอย่า หวัง #พลอยชวะไปนอนลูก [#PuPrayaCannotBeat Me #ArayaDon'tTry #PloyChawaGoToBed]	#BeyonceCannotBeat Me #KendallNoHope #TaylorJustGoTobed	#BeyoncéNoPuedeVencer me #KendallSinEsperanza #TaylorVeteYaALaCama [#BeyonceCannotBeatMe #KendallNoHope #TaylorJustGoTobed]
DoT E3	หลวงพ่อคะ ช่วยลูกช้างจับโจรได้ที เถิด [**Luang Po**, please help me catch the thief.]	**Oh Lord**, please help Horton to catch that thief!	**¡Oh, Señor!** ¡Por favor, ayuda a Horton a capturar a ese ladrón! [**Oh Lord**, please help Horton catch that thief!]
DoT E3	ขอบคุณหลวงพ่อค่ะ [Thank you, **Luang Po.**]	Thak you, **Lord.**	Gracias, **Señor.**
DoT E12	สาธุ [**Sathu.**]	**Amen.**	**Amén.** [Amen.]
DoT E12	อนุโมทนาค่ะ [**Anumothana.**]	**Bless you** then.	**Que Dios te bendiga.** [God bless you.]

The references related to Buddhism, which is followed by the majority of the Thai population and is deeply rooted in Thai culture, are substituted by those from the Christian religion, which is more familiar to English-speaking viewers. Phrases closely linked to Buddhism are replaced by terms that function more or less the same in Christianity (e.g. สาธุ [sathu] > Amen > Amén).

In the example from DoT Episode 3, Golf uses the word หลวงพ่อ [Luang Po] to pray to the amulet that he thought has just been stolen. The term is a form of address for Buddhist

monks. In the English and Spanish version, the translators replaced it with the concept of God, which does not exist in Buddhism.

In all these cases, the substituted items in the English pivot result in a shift to more international references. With their transculturality, they are transferred to the Spanish version.

- *Creative addition*

Ranzato (2016, pp. 95–96) considers creative addition "an extremely manipulative practice" which may be used according to the translator's subjectivity or to serve specific functions in dubbing, such as increasing the humorous effect. In the TH>SP fansubs, there are cases of creative additions to synchronise with the visual element.

In *Diary of Tootsies*, Gus first presents Natty, the only lesbian in the group, to the audience, saying that she is good at playing ฉิ่งฉับ [Ching Chap]. The name of the Thai musical instrument "Ching" (small cup-shaped cymbals) mentioned here is widely used to indicate sex between lesbians, similar to "scissoring" in English. In the translation, a loan would result in the loss of the key message, since the expression is specific to the Thai language and culture. However, substitution is not optimal in this case because the visual shows Natty playing the Thai instrument together with a tomboy. The English subtitles, in this case, resort to creative addition. The name of the American band "Scissor Sisters" compensates for the lost connotation of the Thai instrument Ching, while "using 'cymbals'" keeps the translation synchronised with the visual.

The Spanish fansubbers' intervention is extreme explicitation: keeping the reference "Scissor Sisters" and inserting a headnote which explains that the band is from the U.S. and implies a lesbian sexual position (scissoring). function of the reference is to highlight Natty's sexual orientation as a lesbian. Considering their lack of Thai language skills, they may view "Scissor Sisters" as a reference in the Thai text and decide to employ a source-oriented strategy while explaining its implications to their viewers.

Table 35. Creative addition (DoT E1)

TH audio	ถนัดเล่นดนตรีไทย โดยเฉพาะฉิ่งฉับ
	[Good at playing Thai musical instruments, especially Ching Chap.]
EN pivot	She's talented at playing Scissor Sisters using 'cymbals'.
SP fansubs	*Se le da bien tocar Scissor Sisters usando unos platillos.*
	[She is good at playing Scissor Sisters using cymbals.]

Figure 33. Screenshot of the scene discussed in Table 35 (DoT E1)

Other instances of creative additions in the English pivot are transferred to the Spanish fansubs, as shown in Table 36.

Table 36. Creative additions

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
DoT E3	เชี่ย ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ [Shit! How sacred!]	Shit! **Praise the lord.**	¡Mierda! **Alabado sea el Señor.** [Shit! **Praise the Lord.**]	
DoT E5	อย่าหวังว่ากูจะจ่ายเงินเพิ่ม [Don't expect me to pay more money.]	Don't expect me to pay **even a Satang** more.	No esperes que pague ni un sólo satang más. [Don't expect me to pay even a Satang more.]	(100 Satang = 1 Baht)
DoT E11	นี่พี่อ้อยพี่ฉอดปะคะเนี่ย [Are you **Pi Aoy, Pi Chod**?]	Are you **DJ Aoy-DJ Chod, the dear abbeys** or something?	¿Eres **DJ Aoy y DJ Chod, las queridas abadías** o qué? [Are you DJ Aoy and DJ Chod, the dear abbeys or something?]	

- *Elimination*

According to Pedersen (2011, p. 95), eliminations ("omissions" in his term) pertain to neither the source-oriented nor the target-oriented poles. However, considering Nornes' concept of abusive subtitling (1999), the implication of this translation strategy is to leave out an unfamiliar item from the target text, which contributes to creating a translation that reads fluently and fits within the target culture instead of giving the viewers a contact with the foreign. Ranzato (2016, pp. 225–226) also associates eliminations in dubbing with manipulative strategies that result in departures from the source text. For all these reasons, the case of elimination is included within this subsection.

Even if fansubbing is more flexible with the length of the subtitles and the time they stay on-screen, fansubbers still maintain the synchronisation of the subtitles and the source text. Therefore, as observed by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p. 216), the space and time limitations of the subtitling modality may contribute to the choice of eliminations.

Eliminations in the English pivot generally affect the subsequent Spanish version. In *Diary of Tootsies,* partial elimination of the neighbourhood name "Rangsit Khlong Hok" occur in both English and Spanish. In the example from *Hormones,* the name of the Thai dessert "Khaoniao piak" is eliminated and substituted by an utterance that does not coincide with the Thai audio, although it goes with the context. The pivot fansubbers' invention is later transferred into Spanish. What might explain the fansubbers' decision is that the item may be too complicated to render as a loan or an explicitation, considering that it is mentioned only in passing, with no pertinence to the plot, and never shown in the visual. A similar intervention occurred to the name of the university "Mahidol" in the last example in Table 37.

Table 37. Examples of eliminations

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E 9	ไหนบอกว่าไปรังสิตคลองหกไง [Didn't you say you were going to **Rangsit Khlong Hok**?]	Huh? You told me you were going to **Rangsit.**	¿Huh? Me dijiste que ibas a ir a **Rangsit.** [Huh? You told me you were going to **Rangsit**.]
DoT E12	เราอาจจะกลายเป็นผีเฝ้าเวทีหมอลำไปแล้วก็ได้ [We might have turned into the	we might've become ghosts possessing the show stage.	podríamos habernos convertido en fantasmas que poseen el escenario.

191

	ghosts that possess the **Molam** stage already.]		[we could have become ghosts that possess the stage.]
Hm S1 E9	ข้าวเหนียวเปียกด้วย [It's **Khaoniao piak**.]	Wow… it's my favorite..	Wow, es mi favorito. [Wow, it's my favourite.]
Hm S2 E8	มาเรียนดนตรีมหิดลกับกูดิ [Come to study music at **Mahidol** with me, then.]	Wanna join me then?	Entonces, ¿quieres unirte a mí? [So, do you want to join me?]

c) Target-oriented strategies in the ultimate target text

The Spanish fansubs sometimes depart from the source-oriented strategy adopted in the English pivot and shift the translation towards a more target-oriented approach. These cases rarely occurred: only six cases in the corpus, which are shown in Table 38.

The majority of target-oriented strategies used in the transfer from English to Spanish are generalisations. For instance, the official translation "skytrain" in the English pivot, which refers to Bangkok's elevated rapid transit system, is rendered as "train station" in the Spanish version, and "mangosteen," which is tropical fruit common in Thailand, becomes "some fruit" in Spanish.

The most attention-grabbing case is the rendering of the reference "April Fool's Day" using substitution. The cultural reference is substituted with "el día de los inocentes" (in English: Holy Innocents' Day or Childermas), which is a tradition in many Spanish-speaking countries and involves a similar custom of pranking people, but takes place in December instead of April.

Table 38. Target-oriented strategies in Spanish fansubs

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S1 E7	ม้าไปส่งไผ่ที่รถไฟฟ้าด้วยนะ [Drop me at **the skytrain**, Mom.]	drop me at skytrain station,...Mom	Déjame en **la estación de tren**, mamá. [Drop me at **the train station**, mom.]
Hm S2 E1	ละครก็คือละคร [A **soap opera** is a soap opera.]	A **lakorn** is a lakorn.	Una **serie** es una serie. [A series is a series.]

Hm S2 E2	ทานมังคุดก่อนค่ะ [Have some **mangosteen**.]	Have some of these **mangosteen**, honey.	Te traje **un poco de fruta**, cariño. [I brought you **some fruit**, honey.]
Hm S2 E8	มีแกงเขียวหวาน **ปลาสลิดทอด** แล้วก็ไข่เจียวกุ้งที่ฝนชอบด้วย [There's green curry, **fried snakeskin gourami fish**, and Shrimp omelette that you like.]	Green curry, **fried gourami fish**, and also shrimp fried eggs that you like.	Curry verde, **pescado frito** y huevas de gamba fritas, tal y como te gustan. [Green curry, **fried fish**, and fried shrimp eggs that you like.]
DoT E9	มึงจำไม่ได้เหรอ **เอพริลฟูลเดย์**เมื่อปีที่แล้ว [Don't you remember? **April's Fool Day** last year…]	Remember **April's Fool Day** last year?	¿Recordáis **el día de los inocentes** del año pasado? [Do you remember **the Day of the Innocents** last year?]
DoT E12	ทางเดียวที่กูจะมีผัวได้ คือกูต้องไปสาย **Men's Health** แบบแจ็คแฟนฉัน [The only way I'm going to get a husband is to go **"Men's Health"** style like **Jack Fanchan**.]	The only way I'm going to get a hubby is by going the way of **Men's Health**.	La única forma que tengo de conseguir un marido es yendo por el camino de **la salud masculina**. [The only way I have to get a husband is to go the men's health route.]

In the last case from *Diary of Tootsies,* Golf mentions "Men's Health" while at the gym with Gus and Kim to affirm his determination to get in shape. The magazine is international, with the Spanish edition of the same name (Men's Health España). The word-by-word translation in Spanish might be considered a calque, resulting in a generalising effect because the connection to the magazine and its theme is lost. In the same utterance, another cultural reference "Jack Fanchan" which refers to a Thai actor was also eliminated in both English and Spanish versions.

The target-oriented approach adopted by the Spanish fansubbers is uncommon compared to the two previously mentioned cases: the preservation of the original cultural references, and the ones in which the decisions in the Spanish version correspond to the English pivot.

d) Retrieval of original cultural references in the ultimate target text

In these cases, the original cultural references are not preserved in the pivot subtitles due to the subtitler's decision for target-oriented strategies. The original references, however, reappear in the ultimate target text. Although only two instances have been detected in the TH>SP corpus, they are worthy of attention since such cases are counterintuitive within pivot translations.

As observed by Pięta et al. (2022, p. 143), the target-oriented strategies in the pivot subtitles tend to be imperceptible for translators who are not familiar with the ultimate source language, and typically result in the loss of original cultural references in the ultimate target text. In fansubbing, textual evidence of the reverse trend may point to the fansubbers' potential to detect the original cultural references and their attempt to shift back to the ultimate source text.

The first case is the reference "Dek-D" [เด็กดี] which is an online forum popular among Thai teenagers. The fansubber of the English pivot applied the generalisation by hypernym "the teen web". Instead of relying on the pivot, the TUF fansubbers retrieved the original reference and changed the translation strategy to explicitation by retaining the website's name (with accurate spelling) and providing an explanatory headnote.

Table 39. Retrieval of cultural references (Hm S1 E1)

TH audio	เห็นกระทู้รูปที่เค้าเอาไปลง**เด็กดี**ป�ะ พี่ขวัญน่ารักมากอะ
	[Have you seen the photo thread that they posted on **Dek-D**? Khwan is very cute.]
EN pivot	Have you seen her pictures posted in **the teen web**?
SP fansubs	¿Habéis visto sus fotos publicadas en **Dek-D**? [Have you seen her published photos on Dek-D?]
SP headnote	[Dek-D = dek dee, que literalmente significa "jóvenes buenos" es un foro muy popular en Tailandia para gente joven]
	[Dek-D = dek dee, which literally means "good young people" is a very popular forum in Thailand for teenagers]

The other case is the translation of an item in on-screen text from *Diary of Tootsies*. In Thai, the pronunciation of the number 5 [ห้า: ha] sounds the same as the onomatopoeia of laughter [ฮ่า: ha]. Therefore, Thais use the number 5 (starting with at least two of them so

that it reads "haha") to indicate laughter when communicating through text messages and posts on social media. In the scene, the visual is the entire screen of a Facebook post, with cumulative comments that pop up one after the other.

The reference "55555" in the second comment was eliminated from the English pivot, as the translation reads: "See? I knew there's something wrong with her." No voiceover or narrator is reading the comments, only the sound of Facebook notifications, which means that there is no hint of the laughing sound via the audio channel. However, as shown in the screenshot below, the TUF fansubbers brought back the reference "555555" by using the laughing sound in Spanish: "Jajajaja," which serves the same function and can be considered an official equivalent.

Figure 34. Screenshot of the on-screen text from DoT E12

5.2 Linguistic features of the ultimate source language

Previous studies on fansubbing call attention to the retention of Japanese linguistic features in anime fansubs as evidence of source-oriented translation (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez, 2006; Dwyer, 2012). These include Japanese honorifics, the tradition of calling people by their surname, and retentions of Japanese words complemented by explanatory notes. Beyond anime fansubbing, Wongseree (2017, pp. 142–143) also reports a similar approach in which Korean honorifics are transliterated into Thai in the fansubbing of a Korean TV show.

The findings in the TH>SP corpus are consistent with these previous studies. Several Thai phrases, kin terms and final particles are often preserved in the Spanish version, sometimes complemented with additional headnotes or glosses.

a) Basic Thai phrases

The source-oriented translation is predominant in the English pivot fansubs, especially in the first season of *Hormones*. Several Thai phrases, such as greetings, expressions of gratitude, and encouraging expressions, are transliterated entirely into English, including the sentence particles at the end. In the first example in Table 40, the fansubber even added a brief explanation within the parentheses to differentiate the forms of greetings in formal and informal settings.

Table 40. Examples of Thai phrases

Episode	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S1 E2	ป๊า หวัดดี	Dad.... Waddee -- (Short for sawasdee)	Papá.. Hola
Hm S1 E2	หวัดดีครับพี่เทียน	- Sawasdee krub… P' Tien	Hola P'Tien.
Hm S1 E4	ขอบคุณครับ	- Khob Khun Krub , ...Khob Khun ka ...	Gracias.
Hm S1 E6	เต้ย หวัดดี	Toei...Waddee	Toei... hola.
Hm S1 E7	สวัสดีค่ะ	- sawasdee ka - Sawasdee ja	- Adiós. - Adiós.
Hm S1 E8	ขอบคุณนะ	Khob Khun na …	¡Gracias!
Hm S1 E9	สู้ๆ นะ	Fighting !! --- (Su su na)	¡Suerte!

In these cases, the Spanish fansubbers substitute the transliterations with the corresponding translations into Spanish. Although the TUF fansubbers mentioned their lack of Thai language proficiency in the interview, they are knowledgeable enough to produce accurate translations of these essential phrases. They also present these phrases on their website under a section titled "Thai vocabulary".

b) Forms of address

The profusion of forms of address is a distinguishing feature of the Thai language. Personal pronouns in Thai are more abundant and complex than in English and Spanish,

since the choice of personal pronouns reflects the social hierarchy, seniority, and the relationship between the interlocutors. One of the most common pronouns, which also functions as an honorific before a person's name, is คุณ [Khun]. Frequently employed in a formal register, the pronoun "Khun" expresses the speaker's respect for the interlocutor and the distant relationship between the two.

Another unique element of the Thai language is the usage of kin terms (Smyth, 2014) to address anyone as though they were family members. The choice of kin terms varies depending on the interlocutor's gender and age difference. If the interlocutor is not of the same age (especially if they are older than the speaker), it is considered disrespectful to call them only by their name. To convey politeness, the speaker needs to add a kin term, the pronominal "Khun," or an occupation term before the name. Kin terms are also used as first and second-person pronouns.

For instance, a woman who is more or less the same age as the speaker's mother can be called ป้า [Pa] (mother or father's older sister) or น้า [Na] (mother's younger sister or brother). The word ลุง [Lung] (mother or father's older brother) is added in the same way to the name of a man approximately the same age as the speaker's parents or slightly older. In *Hormones*, these kin terms are translated into English and are often omitted or substituted with Spanish terms. For instance, in the first season of *Hormones,* Episode 8, ลุงเศริฐ [Lung Sert] and ลุงไพศาล [Lung Paisarn] are translated into English as "Uncle Sert" and "Uncle Paisarn". In Spanish, the kin terms are changed into the more distant "Sr. Sert" [Mr Sert] and "Sr. Paisarn" [Mr Paisarn].

The most common set of kin terms that appear throughout the series in the corpus are พี่ [Pi] which means older brother or sister, and น้อง [Nong], which refers to younger brother or sister. Thais often spell the first term in Latin alphabets as *P'* and the second term as *Nong* or *N'*. In the English version of both seasons of *Hormones,* fansubbers recurrently use these abbreviated forms that maintain the Thai flavour, although they sometimes resort to literal translation (e.g. "young bro" for "Nong") and eliminations.

In the Spanish fansubs, forms of address that are marked in English are rendered using similar transliterations, namely "P'," "Nong," and "Khun," while occasional eliminations are also detected, as shown in Table 41. The most attention-grabbing cases, however, are

the transliterations of these terms in Spanish despite their absence in the English pivot. Table 41 shows two instances in which the word "Nong" is not marked in the English version, and is rendered as "young bro". In Spanish, the term appears as a transliteration from Thai, reverting the target-oriented approach in the English version.

In addition, in one of those two cases, the Spanish fansubbers also inserted a headnote to explain the meaning and usage of the term "Nong". Such intervention gives the viewers another informative layer regarding Thai culture without the need to rely on a note or a gloss in English.

Another similar case is the translation of the word "Pi" in *Hormones,* Season 1, Episode 2. The term is translated as "brother" in the pivot version and transliterated as "Phǐ chāy" in the Spanish fansubs. This is the only case in the corpus where the spelling seems to follow the romanisation approved by the Library of Congress and the American Library Association (The Library of Congress, 2011). In this case, there is a slight error: the word in the audio is "Pi" or "Phǐ" which does not mark the person's gender. "Phǐ chāy," on the other hand, means "brother". Thus, the transliteration does not correspond entirely to the audio, and the headnote (which indicates that the word can also mean "sister") is not wholly accurate.

Table 41. Translation of forms of address (1)

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
Hm S1 E1	แกๆ แกดูดิ **พี่ขวัญ**ไว้ผมยาวแล้วน่ารักเนอะ [Hey, look, **P'Kwan** already has long hair. So cute.]	girls... look at **P'Kwan** !!...She has her long hair… so cute !!	¡Chicas...mirad a **P'Khwan**! Tiene el pelo largo. ¡Es tan guapa! [Girls...look at **P'Khwan**! She has long hair. She is so beautiful!]	(P' es un término que se usa en Tailandia cuando te diriges a una persona mayor que tú) [P' is a term that is used in Thailand when you speak to a person who is older than you.]
Hm S1 E2	น้องๆ **น้อง**ใช่มือกีตาร์ในคลิปที่เล่นเพลงอกหักที่อัพเมื่อคืนใช่ป้ะ [**Nong, Nong,** are you the guitarist that played the song "Heartbroken" that was uploaded last night?]	**young bro**,… are you the one who played the quitar [sic] in the song "Heartbroken" – that uploaded last night?	**Nong Nong**… ¿Eras tú quien tocaba la guitarra en el vídeo que subieron cantando "Heartbroken"? [Nong Nong...was that you playing the guitar in the video they uploaded singing "Heartbroken"?]	Nong Nong: "Hermano pequeño" pero no necesariamente en entorno familiar, también se puede llamar así a alguien menor que tú. [Nong Nong: "Little brother" but not necessarily in family settings, you can also use it to call someone younger than you.
Hm S1 E2	จำเอาไว้นะ อย่ามายุ่งกับแฟน**พี่กู**อีก [Remember, stay away from my **P'**'s girlfriend.]	Remember, ... don't ever come near my **brother**'s girlfriend again !!	Recuerda... ¡No vuelvas a acercarte a la novia de mi **Phì chāy** nunca más!	Phì chāy o P' significa hermano/a mayor, no necesariamente en el ámbito familiar, llamas así a las personas que son mayores que tú. [Phì chāy or P' means older brother/sister, not necessarily in family settings, you use it to call people who are older than you.]

Hm S1 E12	น้อง ซีสเคป บิ๊กเมาเท่น [**Nong**, Seescape, Big Mountain.]	**Young bro** -- go see the Seescape …at Big Mountain	**Nong**, ven a ver a Seescape en Big Mountain. [**Nong**, come to see Seescape in Big Mountain.]
Hm S1 E7	คุณปู่ต้องบำรุงตัวเองเยอะๆ นะคะ [**Khun Poo** (used as second person pronoun "you") have to eat a lot.]	**Khun Poo** have [sic] to eat a lot….	*Khun Poo, tienes que comer mucho.* [**Khun Poo**, you have to eat a lot.]
Hm S2 E3	โถน้องขนมปัง [Aw, **Nong Kanompang**]	Aw, poor **nong Kanompang**!	¡Aww, pobre Kanompang! [Aww, poor Kanompang!]
Hm S2 E7	คุณเต้ย ธนีดา กมลไพศาล [**Khun Toei** Thaneeda Kamolphaisarn!]	**Khun Toei** Thaneeda Kamolphaisarn!	¡**Khun Toei** Thaneeda Kamolphaisarn!
Hm S2 E8	ช่วงนี้มีของไหมพี่ [Do you have the stuff these days, **P'**?]	Do you have the stuff in stock, **p'**?	¿Tienes algo para mí, **P'**? [Do you have anything for me, **P'**?]
Hm S2 E11	พี่ [P']	P'.	P'.
Hm S2 E11	พี่เต้ยชอบพี่ต้าเหรอ [P'Toei (used as second person pronoun "you") like **P'Tar**?]	Do you like **p'Tar**?	¿Te gusta **P'Tar**? [Do you like **P'Tar**?]

In *Diary of Tootsies,* the presence of kin terms, again, points to the source-oriented tendency. In the official English subtitles, kin terms are omitted or substituted by English options, such as "Mr." or "Sis." Table 42 compiles the numerous instances in which TUF fansubbers replace them with transliterations.

The most significant example is the rendition of the kin term อีเจ๊ [I che]. This term is a combination of the word เจ๊ [Che] (older sister), which is widely used in Thai families of Chinese origin, and the particle อี [I], which adds a derogatory tone. Replacing the term with "P'" still retains the correct meaning of older sister and brings the viewers closer to the Thai culture when compared to the English translation

Table 42. Translation of forms of address (2)

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E2	สวัสดีค่ะพี่แชมเป้ [Hi, **P'Champey**.]	Hi Champey.	Hola, **P'Champey**. [Hi, **P'Champey**]
DoT E4	โอเคค่ะ พี่มอลลี่ [Okay, **P'Molly**]	Okay. Molly.	Vale. **P'Molly**. [Okay, **P'Molly**]
DoT E5	คือผมขอเบอร์พี่มาจากพี่สีบานน่ะครับ [I got your number from **P'Seeban**]	I got your number from Mr Sriban.	Conseguí tu teléfono gracias a **P'Seeban**. [I got your number from **P'Seeban**]
DoT E6	พี่กัส [P'Gus]	Gus.	P'Gus.
DoT E8	เพราะว่าต้องไปร่วมงานเอ็กซิบิชันของพี่สีบานกับท็อป [Because I have to go to **P'Seeban's** exhibition with Top]	Because I have to go to an exhibition with Mr Seeban and Top.	Porque tengo que ir a una exhibición con **P'Seeban** y Top. [Because I have to go to an exhibition with **P'Seeban** and Top.]
DoT E12	ตุ๊ดอย่างอีเจ๊แชมเปญน่ะ [a *toot* like **i che Champagne**]	doing it with **big Sis Champagne**	hacerlo con **P'Champagne** [doing it with **P'Champagne**]

Apart from kin terms, occupation terms (teacher, doctor, monk etc.) are also used as pronouns or as an addition to the name. One example is in *Hormones* when Phai becomes a monk for a brief period, and another monk calls him by adding the occupation term พระ [Phra], which means "monk," before his name. The following table shows the occupation

terms maintained in the English pivot and subsequently in the Spanish fansubs. However, the Spanish fansubbers may also opt for substitutions with a Spanish term, for instance "Profesora" instead of "Kru".

Table 43. Translation of occupation terms

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S1 E3	ครูอ้อขา [**Kru** Aor…]	**Kru** Aor…ka ?	**Profesora** Aor... [**Professor** Aor...]
Hm S1 E7	อ้าว พระไผ่ ตื่นสายซีท่า [**Phra Phai**, woke up late, didn't you?]	**Phra Phai**...just wake up...	**Phra Phai**, ¿te acabas de levantar? [**Phra Phai**, you have just woken up?]
Hm S1 E8	เชิญนั่งเลยครับทิด[15] [Sit down, **Tid.**]	Please sit down krub,… **Mr. Monk** ---- ha ha	Por favor, siéntese **Sr. Monje.** [Please sit down, **Mr Monk.**]
Hm S2 E3	แม่ว่าไปบอก**ครูนิพนธ์**ดีกว่าไหมลูก [I think you'd better tell **Kru Niphon**.]	Why don't you let **kru Niphon** know about this?	¿Por qué no le hablas a **kru Niphon** de esto? [Why don't you tell **kru Niphon** about this?]
Hm S2 E3	ครูปิ่นฝากมาบอกว่าไฟล์งานของเต้ยมีปัญหา [**Kru Pin** asked me to tell you that there's a problem with your file.]	**Kru Pin** asked me to let you know that there's a problem with your project.	**Kru Pin** me pidió que te dijera que había un problema con tu proyecto. [**Kru Pin** asked me to tell you that there was a problem with your project.]
Hm S2 E3	แต่กรณีนี้ เราไม่สามารถจะเรียกตัว**อาจารย์ปิยะพล**มากล่าวหาได้ [But in this case, we cannot just call **Ajarn Piyaphon** here and accuse him.]	But I can't simply accuse **ajarn Piyaphon** of this.	Pero no puedo acusar a **ajarn Piyaphon** así porque sí. [But I cannot accuse **ajarn Piyaphon** just like that.]

c) Sentence particles

Sentence particles appear at the end of an utterance. They can be classified into three categories: question particles, polite particles, and mood particles (Smyth, 2014). The

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[15] The word "ทิด" [tid] is substituted by "Mr. Monk" in English and translated as such into Spanish. This might be due to the fact that "tid" has a very specific meaning: it refers to a man who has been ordained as a buddhist monk and later left the monk status.

ones that are most frequently marked in English and Spanish translations are the polite particles, which indicate the register and the speaker's respect (or the lack thereof) towards the interlocutor, thus reflecting the relationship between the two speakers. The most recurrent polite particles in the corpus are ค่ะ [ka] and ครับ [krap (commonly transliterated as "krub"]. Conventionally, the first one is used by female speakers while the second one is used by the male, but in certain situations, the usage that does not conform to this norm conveys additional nuances such as the speaker's mood, identity, or relationship with the interlocutor.

In the pivot version of *Hormones* Season 1, the translator opts for a highly source-oriented approach and frequently transcribes these sentence particles in the English subtitles. In the second season and in *Diary of Tootsies,* "ka" and "krap" rarely appear.

The TUF fansubbers only bring attention to these particles when it comes to atypical usage pertinent to the story. In the first example in Table 44, Sprite introduces Phai to her mother as her "toot" or gay friend. To play the part, Phai, a heterosexual male, greets Sprite's mother using the sentence particle "ka," which is a common practice among effeminate gay men.

In Episode 12, when Phai speaks to Nik, who is Sprite's toddler sister, the same particle "ka" he uses indicates his tenderness towards the baby. Finally, the examples from Episode 9 are from the scene where Sprite instructs Mikey, her gay friend, to pretend that he is interested in a girl and send flirtatious text messages to her.

Although there is no additional information in the English pivot in these instances, the Spanish-speaking fansubbers could provide accurate explanations in the headnotes.

Table 44. Examples of polite particles[16]

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
Hm S1 E3	หวัดดีค่ะ	Sawasdee Ka...	Hola.	*Saluda con la terminación "ka" como hacen las chicas. Los chicos saludan con "kub" [He greets using the ending "ka" like girls do. Boys greet with "kub"]
Hm S2 E12	หวัดดีค่ะ ชื่อนิกเหรอคะ	Hello~ Your name's Nik?	Hola. ¿Te llamas Nik?	N/T: Phai le está hablando a Nik con la terminación -ka que usan las chicas, lo que resulta muy adorable.[Phai is talking to Nik with the ending -ka that girls use, which turns out very adorable.]
Hm S2 E9	ครับด้วยมึง ครับ	Add a krub too.	Pon también krub.	Krub: Es la terminación que utilizan los chicos al hablar. Los gays no la suelen utilizar. [Krub: Is the ending that boys use when they speak. The gays do not usually use it.]
	มันบอกว่า สวัสดีค่ะ	They said, "Hello ka."	Ha dicho: "Hola ka"	Ka: Terminación que utilizan las chicas para hablar. [Ka: ending that girls use in speaking.]
	หวัดดีคร้าบบบ	"Hi krubbbbb."	"Hola krubbbbb."	
	เรียนไหนครับ	"Which school do you go to krub?"	"A qué escuela vas krub?	

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[16] Back translations from Thai and Spanish are not provided because they coincide with the English pivot.

In *Diary of Tootsies,* a more target-oriented approach is adopted in the English pivot, such as substitutions. Guided by their genre expertise, the Spanish-speaking fansubbers are able to capture the implications of these particles and intervene to bring viewers closer to the source text.

In Episode 3, Golf and Gus try to convince a police officer that they are heterosexual men, so that the officer would not mistake them as gay prostitutes in the neighbourhood. Golf is doing well until the officer accidentally breaks Golf's new compact makeup base. The use of "krub" is the turning point of the hilarious situation because Golf, who is furious, no longer cares to conceal their gender. The phrase "Why call him Mister!?" in the English pivot results in a slight shift: it implies that Golf decides to stop being polite to the police officer, which is functional in creating humour, but the nuance of the sexual identity is lost. The Spanish version, on the other hand, retrieves the lost particles and provides accurate and relevant headnotes to explain the situation.

Similarly, in Episode 6, Yoshi, a tomboy who loves Korean culture, combines the particle "krub" with the greeting in Korean to express that he feels more identified as a man. Again, these instances indicate the fansubbers' preference to shift the translation back to the ultimate source text, even when the pivot text does not provide the information.

Table 45. Examples of polite particles

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
DoT E3	ครับ ครับทำไม [Krub? Why krub?]	Mr? Why call him Mister!?	¿«Krap »? ¡¿Por qué dices «krap »?! ["Krap"? Why do you say "krap"?]	(N/T: «Krap » es la terminación que usan los hombres. Las mujeres usan «Kha ».) ["Krap" is the ending that men use. Women use "Kha".]
DoT E6	อันยองครับ [Annyeong krub]	Annyeong guys.	Annyeong-krap (Hola.)	(Recordatorio: La terminación «krap » te identifica como chico.) [Reminder: the ending "krap" identifies you as a man.]

Mood particles are another type of sentence particle retained in the English pivot. According to Smyth (2014), they "represent a major obstacle for the serious learner. Their function is often conveyed in English purely by intonation, so they cannot easily be translated." The particle นะ [na] in the examples below express emotional engagement between the speaker and the interlocutor. In the first example, it indicates the speaker's pleading. Combined with the polite particle คะ [ka], the first example could be translated into English as "Please?" In the second example, the particle นะ [na] reflects the speakers' gratitude towards the interlocutor. In both cases, the TUF fansubbers did not follow the source-oriented approach; instead, they provided a Spanish translation that corresponds to the context.

Table 46. Examples of mood particles

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S1 E2	นะคะ นะคะ นะคะ	Na ka?	¿Puedes? [Can you?]
Hm S1 E3	ขอบคุณนะ	Thank you... na	Gracias. [Thank you.]

5.3 Nonverbal elements

In anime fansubbing, the fansubbers' account of the nonverbal elements and their attempt to convey the meaning is a trait that differentiates them from the professional subtitlers who only focus on text-based translation (Ortabasi, 2007). Similarly, in the case of TUF fansubs, the ultimate target text reflects the fansubbers' awareness of the significance of nonverbal elements.

First, an iconographic code is subtitled in the first episode of *Hormones,* Season 1. In the scene, Win enters a store to buy some condoms before approaching a girl who is one year his senior. The camera shows the shelf full of products which are quite obvious. Still, considering that the transaction takes place in only three seconds, the fansubbers may want to ensure that the viewers do not miss this information, and insert a subtitle to make it explicit. The caption "(Condom)" is added in the English pivot and later transferred to the Spanish version as (Condones) [Condoms].

Another case is when a cultural reference is presented in the iconographic code, and the fansubbers opted for explicitation to verbalise the item. It is the first scene of Episode 8

of *Hormones* Season 2. The first shot is a close-up shot of a bowl of soup, and then moves on to Din's hand which is scooping one of the chicken feet in the soup with a spoon, while Dao refuses to try it. The dish is a type of spicy soup with herbs and chicken feet called ต้มยำซุปเปอร์ [Tomyam Super]. The conversation in Thai, as shown in Table 47, does not contain the name of the dish, but the English pivot adds the name of the dish and a gloss within the parentheses.

Table 47. Nonverbal element rendered in fansubs (Hm S1 E8)

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs	SP headnote
DIN: ถึงหน้าตามันจะอัปลักษณ์นะ [It looks ugly,]	It looks awful...	Tiene un aspect horrible, [It looks horrible,]	
DIN: แต่ลองกินน่ะ แล้วจะติดใจ [But give it a try and you will like it.]	but this " Super Tomyum" (Chicken feet tomyum curry) is delicious !!	pero este Super Tomyum está buenísimo. [but this Super Tomyum is very delicious.]	(Super Tomyum: sopa tailandesa con patas de pollo.) [Super Tomyum: Thai soup with chicken feet.]

Figure 35. Fansubs rendering iconographic code (Hm S1 E8)

Apart from rendering iconographic code, fansubbers identified cultural references transmitted through musical code in three instances. All of them are translations from the information in the English pivot. The first one is in the first episode of *Hormones*. The scene depicts a standard practice in Thai schools: students lined up to respect the flag and sing the national anthem. A subtitle that reads "(Himno nacional tailandés)" [Thai national anthem] appears while the students sing together. Although the anthem has lyrics, the fansubber's mediation frames it as a nonverbal element.

The other two were also presented as translator's notes. They provide the names of two Thai bands who are playing in the Big Mountain Music Festival scene in the last episode of *Hormones,* Season 1: Slot Machine and Big Ass. Considering that TUF not only subtitled TV series, but also uploaded music videos of the songs that appear in the series with Spanish subtitles, it is most likely that although the name of the bands are not crucial to understand the plot, it is relevant for the target audiences, since they are interested in Thai music.

Figure 36. Musical code rendered in EN fansubs (Hm S1 E13)

Figure 37. Musical code rendered in SP fansubs (Hm S1 E13)

Another mediated nonverbal element is the mobility code. In *Hormones,* Season 2, Tar and Pop are negotiating the time when Tar has to bring Pop's sister home after a date. While they refer to 8 pm and 9 pm, their gestures indicate numbers 2 and 3. In Thai, apart from the official 24-hour clock, there is an informal, traditional Thai way of indicating time. The Thai system divides the hours according to the sound of ancient instruments that mark each hour in daytime and nighttime. 8 pm can be called 2 ทุ่ม [song thum], and 9 pm is called 3 ทุ่ม [sam thum]. For a non-Thai viewer, the mobility code does not coincide with the linguistic code, which is the only code rendered in the subtitles. Aware of this contradiction, the fansubbers of the Spanish version add an explanation in Spanish

on the page that contains the link to the subtitled episode, which is the space they use to communicate with the viewers. This note, however, seems to be the TUF group's own research, as the information is not found in the English version:

> Some of you may have noticed that Pop and Tar use two and three fingers to indicate 8 pm and 9 pm, respectively. This is because, in Thailand, they have another way to tell the time when they talk to each other. For formal issues or TV programme, they use the 24-hour clock[17]. (Thai Underground Fansub, 2014a)

Figure 38. Mediation of the characters' gestures (Hm S2 E3)

As the TUF fansubbers often faced ambiguity in the pivot English subtitles, they sometimes relied on nonverbal elements to produce accurate translations. The first example is a scene from *Hormones,* Season 1. The word "bike" that appears in the pivot could refer to either a bicycle or a motorcycle, but in the following scene, viewers see Phai riding Tar's motorcycle. With the help of the visual, the TUF fansubbers chose the correct word. In Season 2, Episode 1, however, the fansubbers did not have a visual clue and ended up with a mistranslation.

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[17] Translated from: "Algunos podréis haber notado que Pop y Tar utilizan dos y tres dedos para indicar las 8 pm y 9 pm, respectivamente. Esto se debe a que en Tailandia tienen otra manera de indicar la hora cuando hablan entre ellos. Para asuntos oficiales o programación de televisión. utilizan el reloj de 24 horas."

Table 48. Nonverbal elements rendered in fansubs (2)

Series	Thai audio	English pivot	Spanish fansubs
Hm S1 E4	เฮ้ยต้า กูยืมมอไซค์มึงหน่อยดิ [Hey, Tar, let me borrow your motorbike.]	Hei...tar !! .... May I borrow your bike ??	¡Tar! ¿Me dejas tu moto? [Tar! Can I borrow your motorbike?]
Hm S2 E1	แล้วไอ้เรื่องที่ลื้อขอซื้อรถมอเตอร์ไซค์ก็เอาเงินแต๊ะเอียลื้อไปซื้อซะ [About the motorcycle you asked me to buy for you, buy it with the money you got from Chinese New Year.]	As for the bike you asked me to buy for you, use your New Year's money.	Respecto a la bici que me pediste que te comprara, utiliza tu dinero de año nuevo. [About the bicycle you asked me to buy for you, use your New Year's money.]

According to Pięta et al. (2022, pp. 139–140), one of the main challenges in pivot AVT is the structural difference between the original, pivot and final languages. In *Diary of Tootsies,* the Spanish fansubbers' attention to the nonverbal visual element guided them through this inconvenience. In the scene, Golf asks Gus and Natty to help him capture a man who has supposedly stolen Golf's necklace. Golf tells them the man is wearing a polo shirt with British flag prints.

The problem is that, in Thai, the nouns do not necessarily indicate whether it is in single or plural form unless classifiers are added. Therefore, the Thai dialogue could be translated into either "a polo shirt with a British flag" or "a polo shirt with British flags". The subtitler who translated into English may have only the Thai script to work with or did not pay attention to the iconographic code, since the translation of the flag print in singular does not coincide with the visual. The Spanish version, however, reverts to the correct rendition.

Table 49. Nonverbal elements

Series	Thai audio	English pivot	Spanish fansubs
DoT E3	มันใส่เสื้อโปโลลายธงชาติอังกฤษ [He wears a polo shirt with (a) British flag (s).]	He wears a Polo shirt with a British flag on it.	Lleva puesto un polo con un montón de banderas británicas. [He wears a polo with a lot of British flags.]

5.4 Intertextual elements

Intertextual elements in the corpus include references from various Thai shows and songs which are produced under GMM Grammy conglomerates (e.g. GTH/GDH, Grammy Gold), possibly to promote their past productions. For instance, in *Diary of Tootsies,* Episode 10, Gus narrates Golf's story after Golf is infected with HIV by comparing his situation to the character Pala from *Hormones,* Season 3, a student who is infected with HIV and stays healthy due to regular medications.

In DoT Episode 6, Top takes Gus for a day trip around Bangkok to snap photos of the locations that appear in the films he likes. Mentioning the significant age gaps between them, Top compares Gus to the lead actress in the film รัก 7 ปี ดี 7 หน [*Rak Ched Pi Di Ched Hon: Seven Something*] (2012) and compares himself to the actor who is her love interest in the film. In these cases, the context for each reference is quite evident in the dialogue, and the fansubbers followed the strategy in the English pivot by retaining the intertextual elements with no additional explanation.

An example from *Hormones* Season 2 shows that the Spanish fansubbers went further than simply relying on what is provided in the pivot version. In this scene, Phu is reading posts from Tar's Facebook timeline and pauses at one particular comment, which refers to the name of the song that Tar composed for Toei the year before. The song's release takes place in the previous season of *Hormones.* There is no additional explanation in the English pivot, and the name of the song เพดาน [Phedan], which was translated into "ceiling" in the first season, is rendered with a different word: "The Roof". This lack of continuity is not surprising, as the fansubbers who subtitled the first and the second season of the show in English are not the same people, and the producer did not provide an official English title for the song.

The Spanish fansubbers, on the other hand, captured the significance of the reference and inserted a headnote to remind the viewers. They also made it explicit that "the comment hints that Tar is trying to win Toei back."

Table 50. Intertextual element (Hm S2 E4)

TH on-screen text	แหนะ ๆ ๆ กลับมาปีน "เพดาน" เหรอครับพี่ต้า [Hey, hey, hey, are you back climbing the "ceiling" again, P'Tar?]
EN pivot	Ahaha, Trying to climb to "The Roof" again, p'Tar?
SP fansubs	Ahaha, ¿estás intentando subir "Al techo" otra vez, P'Tar?
SP headnote	N/T: "Ceiling" (Techo) era el título de la canción que le compuso Tar a Toei en la 1ª temporada. El comentario insinúa que Tar está intentando conquistar a Toei de nuevo. ["Ceiling" (Techo) was the title of the song that Tar composed for Toei in the first season. The comment hints that Tar is trying to win Toei back.]

The TUF fansubbers also address intertextuality by supplying information at the extratextual level. They provide extensive descriptions on the page that contains the link to the fansubbed video.

In the following example, a particular song gives a subtle meaning to the scene and adds depth to the character. This scene takes place shortly after Pop's breakup with his girlfriend. Pop is sitting with Tar on the beach. Tar, noticing that his friend goes silent and the ambience becomes gloomy, jokingly compares Pop's demeanour to a protagonist in a sad music video and asks Pop the name of the imaginary song. Pop replies with "ขอใจเธอแลกเบอร์โทร" [*Ko Chai Thoe Laek Boe Tho: Your heart for a phone number*] which is an upbeat Thai country song about falling in love with a stranger. To understand the irony, the audience needs to know the song and notice the complete contrast to Pop's current feelings. Mentioning such a cheerful song implies that Pop strives to be the group's funny entertainer and hardly allows himself to show his sensitive side. Tar has to remind him afterwards that it is acceptable to feel miserable sometimes. The TUF fansubbers help fulfil this gap for the viewers by providing a link to the song on YouTube.

Table 51. Intertextual reference (Hm S2 E7)

	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Tar:	ว่าแต่มึงอะ เล่นเอ็มวีเพลงอะไรอยู่ [What about you? What music video	What about you? Which song's playing your head right now?	¿Y tú qué? [What about you?] ¿Qué canción suena en tu cabeza ahora mismo? [What song is playing in your head right now?]

	are you starring in right now?]		
Pop:	ขอใจเธอแลกเบอร์โทร [Your Heart for My Number]	**Your Heart for a Phone Number**	**"Tu corazón por un número de teléfono."** ["Your heart for a phone number."]
Tar:	เศร้าบ้างก็ได้นะมึง [It's okay to be sad sometimes.]	It's okay to be sad sometimes, ya know.	Es normal estar triste de vez en cuando, ya sabes. [It's normal to be sad sometimes, you know.]

At the beginning of *Diary of Tootsies,* Episode 7, Top plays the guitar and sings a song with Gus while at the beach with Gus's friends. The name of the song is not mentioned in the video, but the fansubbers posted it on the page, revealing that it was from the film *Heart Attack* [ฟรีแลนซ์...ห้ามป่วย ห้ามพัก ห้ามรักหมอ] (2015) which Top mentions earlier in Episode 6 during the photo trip with Gus.

Apart from songs, a short scene from a Thai drama is inserted at the end of *Diary of Tootsies,* Episode 5. The camera shows Gus watching a scene in which a young man breaks up with his boyfriend because their parents disapprove of their homosexual relationship. The scene, with subtitles in both English and Spanish versions, is shown for approximately 45 seconds before Gus's phone rings. The scene does not seem to affect the plot in any significant way; however, it foreshadows Gus and Top's relationship, as it later ends because of Top's family's disapproval. Although TUF fansubbers did not give an explicit explanation, they provide viewers with complete information about the show: "the lakorn that Gus is watching at the end of the episode is 'Ruk Pad Pun Kao' (Love 8009) from the year 2004. In the lakorn there was a gay couple, John and Tee[18]" (Thai Underground Fansub, 2016).

The fact that the TUF fansubbers use the Thai term *Lakorn* to define the show *Love 8009* [รักแปดพันเก้า] is another element that hints at their genre knowledge. In the section *Thai Vocabulary* on their website, the fansubbers accurately acknowledge *Lakorn* as a telenovela or melodrama, a genre that is different from "series," which are more realistic

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[18] Translated from: "El lakorn que está viendo Gus al final del episodio es 'Ruk Pad Pun Kao' (Love8009) del año 2004. En el lakorn había una pareja gay, John y Tee."

in terms of the plot, acting, and characterisation. The transliteration of the name of the show from Thai is also correct.

With the translator's notes mentioned above, TUF fansubbers demonstrate their knowledge of "genre-specific references" (O'Hagan, 2008) in the Thai media and assume the role of cultural mediators who help the viewers access the original viewers' world by providing them with an extra layer of encyclopedic knowledge. TUF fansubbers provide not only brief descriptions of the songs and shows that are mentioned in *Hormones* and *Diary of Tootsies*, but also incorporate external links to redirect the viewers to the original music video or a cover version by the actors. They even included a song that is played in the background in a nightclub (Hm S2 E5).

The format of the notes, on the other hand, reflects the TUF fansubbers' awareness of their viewers' needs. Putting the descriptions as extratextual notes on the web page instead of inserts within the fansubbed videos result in an optional addition that caters for the diverse needs of the audiences. Viewers who hold a deep interest in Thai entertainment will most likely appreciate this extra layer of information. At the same time, these descriptions are not forced on those who may only want to enjoy the content of the shows.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated the textual evidence of the TUF fansubbers' familiarity with the Thai language and culture: the additions of headnotes without relying on the information from the pivots and the accurate translations of basic Thai phrases. In addition, the genre expertise is manifested through the fansubbers' sensitivity towards the semantic load in the visual elements, the transfer of intertextual elements, and the fansubbers' capacity to provide viewers with detailed, relevant paratexts.

In the Spanish fansubs, the source-oriented approach is reflected through the predominance of loans and abundant explicitations in rendering cultural references, as well as the retrieval of original cultural references that are lost in the pivot, which is considered atypical in pivot translations.

Pięta et al. (2022, pp. 139–146) give an extensive list of the challenges brought about by subtitling templates in pivot AVT. They include structural differences between the languages in the indirect translation chain, lost information due to condensations in pivot subtitles, missing cultural background, domesticating strategies in pivot subtitles, error transfers from the pivot subtitles, unhelpful annotations, locked templates that fix the spotting of the subtitles, and mismatch between the source audio and the pivot due to the subsequent change during the production.

In the TH>EN>SP fansubs, there are several error transfers, lost information, and mistranslations in the ultimate target text due to ambiguity in the lexis, case, and gender from the translation through English. Still, the findings in this chapter reveal that fansubbers manage to overcome these challenges in many cases thanks to their genre expertise.

As a final note, while official subtitles are more accurate and offer better readability, using fansubs as a pivot can also be advantageous, since it reduces the problem of target-oriented strategies. Furthermore, the English fansubs are full of annotations that explain the linguistic and cultural background, an ideal characteristic for a subtitle template. Apart from the TUF fansubbers' own research, working with the English pivot that contains recurrent transliterations of the Thai phrases, forms of address and final particles no doubt contributed to their familiarity with the Thai language and built their genre knowledge.

6. MEDIATION OF TABOO AND CENSORED ELEMENTS IN THAI>SPANISH FANSUBS

One of the recurrent themes in AVT literature is that fansubbing can be considered a site of subversion of the mainstream media control and state censorship (Antonini & Bucaria, 2016b, pp. 11–12). Subtitles created by fans "promise to reject textual manipulation, for example in the form of censorship and omission of cultural references" (ibid., p. 12). Various cases of fansubbing communities in China, for instance, represent "a force against state domination" in the media scene by making numerous foreign television series and films available in Chinese (Wang & Zhang, 2017, p. 306).

These observations result from the comparison between the textual characteristics of fansubs and professional subtitles under the censorship of the target culture. The general tendency of fansubbing to adhere as much as possible to the source text in an attempt to introduce "authentic" and "faithful" foreign text to the audience suggests a subversion against media censorship. The case of Italian fansubbing (Massidda, 2015), for instance, demonstrates the potential of fansubbing as a resistance to the target culture's censorship, as the fansubbers operate without any control from the state or the media industry.

The case of TH>SP fansubs, however, posits another complex scenario. One of the notable aspects of the Thai productions is its hypersensitivity toward the depiction of what the Thai mainstream media deems as taboo issues: representation of sex, drug and alcohol consumptions, and the use of profane language, among others. Such hypersensitivity leads to state censorship and self-censorship by content producers through textual manipulations in Thai audiovisual products.

This form of censorship applied to national broadcasting has not been extended to the international SVOD platforms: *Hormones* and *Diary of Tootsies* which are available in Netflix in Thailand do not present the same textual manipulations as the local version which was appropriated and translated by fansubbers. While the professional subtitlers do not have to deal with this conflict, the fansubbers have to navigate through the ideological manipulations imposed in the source text and negotiate between the source-oriented approach and the ideological manipulations.

This chapter assesses the manner in which taboo issues are presented and (self-)censored within Thailand's restrictive mediascape, and analyses the translation choices Spanish-speaking fansubbers adopted for the ultimate target text and the implications of the pivot translation.

The qualitative analysis is based on the framework of audiovisual translation components (Zabalbeascoa 2008) and the signifying codes of film language (Chaume, 2012; Tamayo & Chaume, 2016) previously presented in chapter 3. First, the relevant sociocultural context is discussed, followed by an analysis of instances of censorship detected in the corpus. Finally, the fansubbers' interventions in the Spanish subtitled version are analysed in comparison with English subtitled version.

Besides textual resources, the analysis takes into account the fansubbers' statements from online interviews and the posted comments that accompany each entry where the TUF fansubbers uploaded the Spanish subtitled episodes, as they are extratextual resources which reflect the translator's decisions.

6.1 Media censorship in Thailand

State censorship in Thailand aims for a representation of an ideal national Thai identity and culture that upholds morality and orderliness, and is employed "in the name of preserving national unity, state legitimacy, and political stability" (Tong, 2014, p. 50). As Käng (2012, p. 484) aptly states, "there is a widespread belief that media have a strong influence on shaping social norms. Government policy encourages sanitising visual representations in the hopes of moulding normative behaviour."

The incorporation of themes that require scenes to be masked, blurred, and concealed in the media include "[s]acrilegious, politically sensitive and culturally inappropriate themes" (Käng, 2012, p. 484). The censorship practice in Thailand –which is highly controversial– went as far as blurring the image of the shoes in an anime show, since in Thai culture, it is considered rude to show the sole of the foot to other people or use it to point at something (Ashcraft, 2013).

Films and television shows in Thailand are classified into different ratings by the Ministry of Culture (Käng, 2012, p. 484). The media content, on the other hand, is regulated by

the National Broadcasting & Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), an independent state regulatory body established in 2011 (Tong, 2014, p. 44).

Specifically, Section 37 of the Thai Public Broadcasting and Television Businesses Act (2008) prohibits airing programmes that are antithetical to the "good morals of the people". The section, with unofficial translation for educational/comprehension purposes, is quoted below.

> Broadcasting of programmes containing issues induced to overthrow the administration under the democratic form of government with the King as Head of State or having effects on the State security, public order or good morals of the people or having the nature of obscenity or causing serious deterioration of the mind or health of the people shall be prohibited.

The said Act also gives the NBTC the authority to suspend programmes that violate these regulations, as well as to "order the licensee to carry out rectification work as appropriate or suspend or revoke the license as the case may be" (ibid.). The use of ambiguous wording in the legislation, instead of detailed and specific guidelines, leaves the final decision to the Commission's interpretation.

According to Tong (2014, pp. 47–49), the censorship applied to *Lakorn* is an "ambiguous and somewhat arbitrary" process that involves the show producers (self-censorship), the broadcasting channel (internal censorship), and the state regulatory body (external censorship). The corrective measures commonly used by the censorship committee in each television channel include "blurring out images of cigarettes, alcohol, weapons (mainly knives and guns), and partial nudity, cutting the sound when there is offensive or abrasive language, and adding a disclaimer for an illegal activity (i.e. gambling)," although the extent of the censorship varies (Tong, 2014, p. 48). These editings, which can be considered self-censorship, are applied before broadcasting, and there is no external system to review the content before airing. The role of the NBTC is to intervene after the broadcast in case the show receives complaints on its inappropriateness.

Although the series in the corpus do not strictly belong to the soap opera genre, they most likely undergo similar censorship process, as the channels broadcast several soap operas and similar corrective editings have been detected.

6.2 Taboo themes in *Hormones the Series*

As explained in section 3.5, *Hormones* became one of the most controversial shows in the Thai media, since the censorship is even more strict when adolescents are involved. The series did not take long to spark the debate on the appropriateness of the content.

The NBTC admitted receiving "a number of complaints about the sexually suggestive contents of the TV show" (Khaosod English 2013). In fact, a member of the NBTC was reported to express concern: "*Hormones* put indecent thoughts and images into the minds of the audience, violating article 37 of the Thai Public Broadcasting Act" (Bangkok Post, 2013). Thai media specified that controversial scenes include those which hints at students having sex in school, students buying birth control pills and images of illegal abortion centres (ibid.). The authority's reaction led to rumours that the series would be banned.

In August 2013, during the production of the second season, the NBTC requested a meeting with the show's director and the broadcaster as part of the investigation whether the series has violated the broadcasting law. The director of the NBTC later revealed that "the producer needs to evaluate themselves first, and the NBTC will evaluate the content aired to the public" (Khaosod English 2013). The intervention from the authority resulted in more extensive post-production textual manipulations and disclaimers in the second season of the show, in the form of self-censorship to avoid further sanctions from the state regulatory body.

Another consequence from the authority's intervention was the content rating change. The first season of *Hormones* was rated as "น๑๓", which is equivalent to PG13. The shows in this category are required to air between 8.30 pm to 05.00 am, according to the TV content rating system imposed by the NBTC and published in Thai Government Gazette in 2013. The logo of the television content rating is shown before the show begins, accompanied by the disclaimer: "the following show is appropriate for audience aged 13

and over. It might contain images, sound, or content that require viewer discretion. Audience younger than age 13 should be advised[19]" (*Announcement of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission*, 2013).

When the second season of the show was released, the rating was changed to "น๑๘+" which can be compared to PG 18 and engendered a more restricted air time (10.00 pm to 05.00 am) and a more extensive disclaimer.

In *Hormones,* (self-)censorship can be detected in audio and visual components throughout Season 1 and 2 regarding the following issues.

a) Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use

The iconographic codes relating to the consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs are constantly manipulated in both seasons of *Hormones.* Problematic scenes are not cut out, but the objects such as tobacco, alcohol bottles or glasses are either blurred or pixelated. In some cases, apart from tampering with the images, disclaimers are appended at the bottom of the screen.

The severe censorship might stem from the country's strict regulation of tobacco and alcohol distribution and advertising, especially when it concerns the underage population. In Thailand, the legal drinking and smoking age is 20. The sale of alcohol is prohibited in schools, universities, and student residences, among other areas, while all forms of tobacco advertisements and displays are also prohibited (World Health Organization, 2018).

Based on the government's policy to proscribe the depiction of degenerate behaviour onscreen for fear that it will adversely influence its citizens. However, instead of eliminating the scenes altogether, content warnings were inserted to warn viewers of the inappropriate behaviour. In real life, despite the strict regulations, seeing minors smoking or drinking is not uncommon in Thailand, and *Hormones* attempts to reflect this reality.

One of the first scenes in Season 1 show a few students smoking in the classroom. The cigarettes are not clearly visible to the viewers, as they are pixelated, but the action was

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[19] Translated from: "รายการต่อไปนี้เหมาะสำหรับผู้ชมที่มีอายุ ๑๓ ปีขึ้นไป อาจมีภาพ เสียง หรือเนื้อหาที่ต้องใช้วิจารณญาณในการรับชม ผู้ชมที่มีอายุน้อยกว่า ๑๓ ปี ควรได้รับคำแนะนำ"

clear enough and viewers can still see the smoke. Another extreme case is a drinking scene where the alcoholic beverage is blurred and the disclaimer text lasts through almost eight minutes.

Figure 39. Censorship of alcohol (Hm S2 E5)

The following table compiles all disclaimers which appear at the bottom of the screen in the scenes regarding consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs in *Hormones*.

Table 52. Disclaimers regarding alcohol use in *Hormones*

Scene	Disclaimers in Thai	Back translation
Hm S2 E5	สุราเป็นเหตุให้เกิดการทะเลาะวิวาทและอาชญากรรมได้ การจำหน่ายเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ให้แก่บุคคลที่มีอายุต่ำกว่า 20 ปี เป็นการกระทำที่ผิดกฎหมาย	Alcohol can lead to quarrels and crimes. Selling alcohol beverage to any person under the age of 20 is illegal.
Hm S2 E5	บุหรี่เป็นสาเหตุของการเกิดโรคร้ายแรงหลายชนิด	Cigarettes are the cause of many types of severe diseases.
Hm S2 E6	บุหรี่เป็นสาเหตุของการเกิดโรคร้ายแรงหลายชนิด การจำหน่ายบุหรี่ให้แก่บุคคลอายุต่ำกว่า 18 ปี เป็นการกระทำที่ผิดกฎหมาย	Cigarettes are the cause of many kinds of severe diseases. Selling cigarettes to any person under the age of 18 is illegal.
Hm S2 E6	การใช้สารเสพติดมีความผิดร้ายแรง ต้องโทษจำคุก และเป็นอันตรายถึงแก่ชีวิต	Using narcotics is a serious offense penalised with imprisonment and causes death.
Hm S2 E6	ยาเสพติดส่งผลกระทบต่อความสามารถในการควบคุมอารมณ์และก่อให้เกิดอาการซึมเศร้า	Narcotics have effects on emotional control capacity and causes depression.

Hm S2 E7	เป็นเพียงความคิดเห็นของตัวละคร มิใช่ข้อเท็จจริง ผู้ปกครองควรให้คำแนะนำ การใช้สารเสพติดมีความผิดร้ายแรง ต้องโทษจำคุก และเป็นอันตรายถึงแก่ชีวิต	This is only the character's opinion, not facts. Parental guidance is needed. Using narcotics is a serious offense penalised with imprisonment and causes death.

The last example depicts an extreme case of censorship due to the fact that the disclaimer appears despite the lack of visual representation of problematic items. In this scene, a medium close-up shot depicts two characters talking on a rooftop: Kwan, an exemplary student and Win, her rebellious friend who always challenges the system and gets in trouble. Kwan is curious about Win's drug use and he explains the effects the drugs have on him, which include opinions that may appear to encourage drug use. He also adds that some people are habitual to drugs and consider its use normal.

The disclaimer remains onscreen throughout the conversation. Including a disclaimer (visual-verbal element) which evidently opposes the character's opinion (audio-verbal element) may not be considered a censorship strategy per se. These disclaimers presumably serve as a means for the producers to disassociate themselves from apparently unscrupulous actions and opinions being presented onscreen, in order to protect the show from state censorship.

b) Sex

Sex is a common taboo in the Thai society, and depicting sex in school for purposes other than to relate a moralistic lesson can be perceived as outrageous. A study on attitudes of Thai adolescents and parents towards sex education issues confirms that Thai parents mostly avoid discussing the topic, partly because of the restriction imposed by the core values in Thai culture (Sridawruang et al., 2010). Sex education in the country is, unsurprisingly, geared towards "abstinence rather than to campaign for safe-sex awareness" (Bumrungsalee, 2013, p. 73).

These values are reflected in the Thai media. Traditionally, "love scenes" in Thai soap operas which have long dominated prime airtime in Thailand almost never go further than a kiss, which, in fact, are filmed with the help of camera angles in many cases. *Hormones* no longer belong to soap opera genre, but the series, nonetheless, exists in the same restricted mediascape. Another possible reason behind heavy censorship regarding sex is

that the characters (and several lead actors) were underage. In addition, in the conservative sphere of the Thai society, there tends to be a strong judgement on teenage love and sex, and the idea that it should be avoided, as it leads to distraction from studies or even an obstacle to a student's educational achievements.

Hormones goes beyond depicting the relationship between heterosexual couples. It includes representations of homosexual couples and the confusion the teenage characters experienced while they explore their sexuality. However, sexual intercourse is never explicitly shown and nudity is avoided at all costs.

In the eighth episode of Season 1, there is a scene when Dao, a student in second year of high school, loses her virginity to Din, a classmate from a cram school. The closest act entailing sexual implications is when Din plants a quick kiss on Dao's cheek while they are sitting side by side on Dao's bed, both fully clothed in cartoon-print pyjamas. Shortly after, the shot changes to the cartoon sketch of a couple in bed, the ideal love scene that Dao had drawn earlier, which does not depict nudity (see Figure 40).

Figure 40. Dao's drawing (Hm S2 E8)

The series resorts to various iconographic codes to allude to sex and emphasise its distressing effect on Dao's feelings. The red circle of blood stain on Dao's bed sheet confirms that they engaged in sexual intercourse. It becomes an image that reminds Dao of the choice she made and now regrets. The blood stain reappears in several scenes afterwards. In the following scene, when Dao is having breakfast with her parents, the image of the blood stain emerges again after she looks at a round container of strawberry jam. Another iconographic code employed in the same scene to convey sex is a fried egg. Dao freezes when she is about to eat the fried egg with knife and fork and, in the end,

cannot bring herself to eat it. Later, a close-up shot portrays the Dao's father using a knife to cut the egg and the yolk oozing out. The image makes reference to a colloquial expression in Thai, "เจาะไข่แดง" (pierce the egg yolk), which implies "penetrate a virgin woman".

In Season 2, sexual activities are portrayed more explicitly, supposedly because the rating was raised to PG18. In any case, disclaimers were added to the image with the message that reproached the characters' behaviour. One of the significant scenes is portrayed in Episode 11, when Tar wants to end the relationship with his girlfriend Kanompang. The two are in a deserted classroom and Kanompang tries to change his mind by taking their student uniform shirts off while kissing him. Tar ends up rejecting her without letting things go further. The camera never shows anything lower than the actress' shoulders, and her tank top which she wears under her shirt is never taken off. The disclaimer in this scene reads: "the characters might show inappropriate behaviour. Parents should closely supervise minors[20]."

The disclaimer introduces a non-diegetic layer of reproaching commentary to what is being shown, and creates a significant contrast with the photographic code. The disclaimer, occupying two lines, is written in white and placed at the bottom of the screen. The colour makes it conspicuous due to the dark lighting of the scene. The disclaimer remains onscreen for over a minute, from when the couple start kissing until Tar pulls away, puts his shirt back on, and covers Kanompang's shoulders with hers. The written message is emphasised further by the addition of a visual-nonverbal element: the content rating logo "น๑๘+", which indicates PG18, appears at the bottom left of the screen and glides across before it disappears. Although the logo remains only for five seconds, its movement can distract the viewers' attention from the actors.

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[20] Translation from: "ตัวละครอาจมีพฤติกรรมที่ไม่เหมาะสม ผู้ปกครองควรให้คำแนะนำแก่เยาวชนอย่างใกล้ชิด"

Figure 41. Disclaimer in Hm S2 E11

The addition of disclaimers reflects the content producer's and broadcaster's cautiousness in the portrayal of every scene related to sex, especially in case of same-sex teenage couples. In the fourth episode of Season 2, Dao and Koi, two girls who are best friends and start to have feelings for each other, end up kissing in Dao's bedroom. The disclaimer reads: "individual circumstance. Parents should advice minors."

In the same episode, another homosexual couple, Phu and Thee, presumably have sex in the school dorm room. The camera shows the two actors kissing, then cuts to the image of the room's window with the lights off. In the next shot, Toei (Phu's girlfriend at the time) finds them in the dorm room. When she opens the door, the camera pans from the clothes scattered on the floor to Toei's shocked expression. The two teenagers are revealed; asleep, cuddled, and bare-chested. This image is accompanied by a different disclaimer: "Inappropriate behaviour for minors. Parents should give advice."

The same message ("inappropriate") also appears in Season 2, Episode 2, when Thee caresses Phu who seems to be asleep and Phu stops Thee's hand before it reaches inside his pants.

Some of the viewers questioned whether the disclaimers reflect discrimination against male homosexual couples on the creators' part, because in similar scenes, the girls' kiss is labelled as "individual circumstance" whereas the boys' kiss is deemed downright "inappropriate" (Kapook, 2014). There was no official explanation from the producer nor the censorship authority, but some viewers tried justifying that the stronger warning message in Phu and Thee's kiss scene is owing to the fact that the scene takes place in the school and both the characters are in the school uniform, which emphasises their status as students. The aforementioned scene that depicts a kiss between a heterosexual couple

in the classroom is also labelled "inappropriate". Moreover, although not explicitly shown, the scene clearly indicates that the Phu and Thee end up having sex, while Dao and Koi do not.

c) Abortion

To contextualise, at the time of *Hormone*'s broadcast, abortion in Thailand was legal only when the pregnancy potentially compromises the woman's physical or mental health or when the pregnancy is the result of criminal offences, including rape or incest. Except for these conditions, women who choose to end their pregnancy and medical personnel or anyone who perform abortions on these women encounter potential fines and imprisonment. This law was relaxed in 2021 to legalise abortions before the first trimester in the course of a woman's pregnancy (Suhartono & Ives, 2021).

In Thailand's social values, which is closely related to Buddhism, abortion is perceived as "a life-destroying act" which constitutes a severe sin in Buddhism (Whittaker, 2002, p. 46). As the majority of Thais identify themselves as Buddhists, the religious influence plays a significant part in framing the act as immoral and unacceptable (Arnott et al., 2017).

The stigma adopts a more critical nature when teenagers are involved. *Hormones* brings up this controversial issue in the eighth episode of Season 1, after Dao's first (presumably unprotected) sex, she visits an illegal abortion clinic and comes across another woman who underwent the abortion process. Such depiction is enough for the authorities to raise concerns. The only manipulation of the visual elements in the whole scene is when a bin in the operating room, which is supposed to contain a discarded foetus, is blurred.

Acute self-censorship can be observed in Season 2 after the intervention of the NBTC. In Episode 12, Fern gets pregnant after a one-night stand with Phai and they meet to discuss their decision. The scene takes place in a coffee shop and no sensitive images or sexual content is depicted. When Phai explains his willingness to find a job and support Fern and the baby, no disclaimer is shown. However, as soon as Fern says "เราคงเก็บเขาไว้ไม่ได้อะไผ่" (I don't think I can keep him/her, Phai), a disclaimer emerges at the bottom of the screen: "Abortion performed without medical supervision is immoral, illegal and can lead to

death[21]." The text is displayed for over five minutes during their discussion which concludes with the decision to terminate the pregnancy. The disclaimer disappears at the end of the scene when Phai clicks "order" to obtain illegal medication for abortion from a website.

This example represents cases where censorship does not only result in the manipulation of the visual elements or the iconographic codes, but also interferes with the audio-verbal elements or messages delivered through the linguistic codes. With the addition of the non-diegetic warning text, the viewer encounters contradicting messages from two different channels simultaneously.

The scene depicts the two teenagers as a mature couple having a reasonable discussion and the dialogue reflects how the parents' narrow-mindedness forces their children to make a decision on their own instead of making it conducive for them to open up to their parents and involve them in figuring out a solution together. Conversely, the disclaimer distracts the viewer's attention from the subtle message that the show attempts to convey, providing instead a flat and condescending message that neglects the complexity of issues pertaining to teen abortion and condemns the choice.

Censorship on iconographic codes related to abortion are observed in the same episode. The abortion pill is blurred. Fern is never depicted consuming the pill, as the camera focuses on Phai who is in the same room and the disclaimer communicating the danger of abortion appears again.

d) Profane language

One distinctive characteristic of the Thai language is the numerous personal pronouns which mark the register of the speech and determines the seniority level, social hierarchy, and the intimacy between interlocutors (discussed in details in chapter 5). *Hormones* predominantly employs informal register. The adolescent protagonists, especially the male characters, constantly use vulgar pronouns such as มึง [mueng] (you) and กู [ku] (I/me) when talking to each other. Swear words are also occasionally used as well.

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21 Translated from: "การทำแท้งที่ไม่อยู่ในความดูแลของแพทย์เป็นเรื่องผิดศีลธรรม ผิดกฎหมาย และสามารถทำให้เสียชีวิต ได้"

The implementation of measures to censor profane language was observed only in season 2, although the same words appeared several times in season 1 and went uncensored. The offensive word that was muted the most is "เหี้ย [hia], which literally refers to Asian water monitor – a kind of large lizard. The word has significant insulting connotations. The manipulation of audio-verbal elements is noticeable, since in at least five cases, the swear word in the middle of the sentence is muted. For instance, this can be observed in the dialogue when Pop reproaches Tar for breaking his sister's heart.

Table 53. Muted swear word (Hm S2 E13)

TH audio	Back translation
POP: มึงก็ไม่ต้องมาทำเหี้ยกับน้องสาวกูพอ	Just don't fuck around with my sister anymore.
TAR: กูไม่กล้าทำเหี้ยมากไปกว่านี้แล้วเว้ย	I won't dare to fuck around ever.

The medium close-up shot enables the viewers to see Pop's lips when he pronounces the swear word, but the particular word cannot be heard. Although the sound is removed quite subtly, the word used is evident to Thai natives, because the insult is part of a verb and the sentence is left incomplete. Similar effect is observed when Tar replies using the same word. The foreign viewers who watch with the subtitles on are likely to miss this audio-verbal manipulation.

6.3 Taboo themes in *Diary of Tootsies the Series*

Diary of Tootsies is one of the few Thai TV series in which all the main characters are queer. As mentioned in section 3.5, although there are moments of drama and realistic portrayal of relationships, a large part of the humour in the show is attributed to the stereotypical characterisation of Thai "tootsies" or effeminate gay men. The jokes and hilarious moments in the show often involve taboo issues, especially sex.

Censorship in this show is less strict when compared to *Hormones,* even though it is rated at PG18, similar to *Hormones* Seasons 2 and 3, possibly because the story portrays adult characters, not minors. Even though the show plays with various taboo themes, the comedic approach and the characters' humorous tone attenuate the offensive effects.

Another factor to consider is the use of official English subtitles as the pivot, which may lead to stronger self-censorship than the pivot fansubs in *Hormones*.

a) Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use

Censorship of alcohol consumption is applied in a similar manner to *Hormones,* but with less degree of consistency. The first episode opens with Golf, who is recently dumped by his boyfriend, drinking beer alone by the beach, before Gus, Kim, and Natty join in. All get drunk together and stay at the beach until dawn. No disclaimer about alcohol consumption is added throughout the episode. The visual element is not tampered: the beer bottle images are not blurred, even in close-up shots.

Censorship is applied to the visual component only in Episode 2, in the scene where all the main characters gather to drink in a bar: the glasses containing alcohol are blurred.

Figure 42. Examples of censorship in visual element (DoT E2)

The only instance when a disclaimer is added is in Episode 7, when all the main characters drink illicitly distilled alcohol. The disclaimer appears on the screen below the two-line SDH, and stays for approximately two minutes while the images show each character taking a shot of Thai moonshine one by one, while all the others are cheering. The message reads: Warning: alcohol can provoke brawls and crimes[22].

b) Sex

The show openly addresses sex throughout the twelve episodes, mostly as a topic associated with humour. The following example is the scene when Kim and Golf try to put each other in a bad light to win over Champey, who both of them find very desirable.

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[22] Translated from: "(คำเตือน: สุราเป็นเหตุให้เกิดการทะเลาะวิวาทและอาชญากรรมได้)"

230

The conversation openly jokes about sex and politically incorrect content. Kim attacks first by making up stories that Golf often hooks up with African men.

Table 54. Example of sexual references (DoT E2)

TH Audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
CHAMPEY: แอฟริกันเลยเหรอครับ ได้ยินมาว่าเรื่องขนาดของเขาเนี่ย ขึ้นชื่อเลยนะฮะ น้องกอล์ฟรับไหวเหรอครับ [African? I heard that they are famous for their size. Can you handle it, Golf?]	African? I heard they are known for having really big ones. Can you handle it, Golf?	¿Africanos? He oído que son famosos por tenerla realmente grande. ¿Puedes manejarlo, Golf? [Africans? I have heard that they are famous for having really big one. Can you handle it, Golf?]
KIM: ไหวอยู่แล้วค่ะ [Of course.]	Definitely.	Claro que sí. [Of course.]
ตูดนางน่ะผ่านมรสุมมานานนับปี รถเมล์ฟรีเข้าไปกลับรถในตูดนางนะคะ ยังมีที่เหลือให้หลงเลยค่ะ [Her ass has survived years of monsoon. Even if free buses take a U-turn inside her ass, there's still enough space left to get lost.]	Her ass has handled a hurricane of activity over the years. Even buses can U-turn inside that tunnel of hers And there's still enough space in there to get lost.	Su culo ha manejado un huracán de actividad a lo largo de los años. Incluso autobuses podrían dar la vuelta en su túnel y todavía habría espacio para perderse ahí dentro. [Her ass has handled a hurricane of activity over the years. Even buses could turn around in her tunnel and there would still be space inside to get lost.]

A partial self-censorship in the official English subtitles is detected here. The vulgar word "ass" is repeated twice in the source text, but is transferred using the equivalent in English once. In the second sentence, the word is substituted by the figurative "that tunnel of hers," whose function is possibly to tone down the vulgarity, since it is much shorter to repeat the same word. The Spanish version follows the pivot version quite closely.

Following the example above, in Episode 2, there is a scene that shows Kim making out with Champey. No disclaimer is present when sexual practices are referred to in the dialogue, implied, or shown on the screen. The humorous twist is when Kim recognises Champey's tattoo and realises that Champey is in fact the senior gay that he and Gus used

to call "big sister" back in their school days. Although there is no added disclaimer text, the image and the dialogue are carefully designed not to be too explicit. Kim's voice-over narration that accompanies the image is occasionally interrupted by Gus who is listening to the story and subtly censors the content whenever Kim is about to go too deep into details.

Viewers see Kim and Champey rip each other's shirt off and about to kiss while Kim narrates: "he pushed me against the wall, and he was going to kiss…" but when Gus interrupts by guessing what would have gone wrong, Champey and Kim freeze. Kim turns and discards what Gus says, and the scene continues without the kissing actually taking place. Later on, when Kim says: "the moment when I went down on him, about to use my tongue to…" Gus snaps: "Kim, you don't have to give me that much detail." Pixilation is not needed because the camera angle allows Champey and Kim's bodies to be hidden behind the sofa.

Episode 3 presents a curious case in which prostitution, an illegal activity in Thailand, is depicted and joked about openly. In this episode, Golf believes that his gold necklace has been stolen by a street hustler he had paid to have sex with earlier. Golf decides to call Gus and Natty to help retrieve the necklace. The three friends end up confronting a policeman on patrol who is convinced they are street hustlers themselves.

The scene depicts one of the infamous streets in Bangkok where male prostitutes linger during the night waiting for their clients, how they negotiate the price with a potential client in quite an explicit way, and how they flee when a policeman passes by. However, from one hilarious moment to another, this episode somehow manages to survive censorship.

While the example in Table 54 shows that a vulgar word might be toned down in English subtitles, it does not seem recurrent throughout the series. In several instances, the opposite occurs: sexual references are rendered more explicit in the official English subtitles than what is conveyed in the source audio. These cases contrast with observations from previous studies, for example Massidda (2015), that professional subtitles are inclined to eliminate or tone down strong language and sexual references. Spanish fansubs, on the other hand, maintain the level of explicitness comparable to the pivot subtitles.

Table 55. Example from DoT E9

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
แต่มึงอย่าลืมนะ หลังจากที่มันอก หักเนี่ยมันก็เที่ยวกระเจิดกระเจิงเลย นะ [But don't forget, after his heart was broken, **he partied like crazy**.]	But don't forget after his heart was broken, **he partied and slept around a lot.**	Pero no olvides que después de que le rompieran el corazón, **fue mucho de fiesta y se acostó con muchos tíos.** [But don't forget that after they broke his heart, **he partied a lot and slept with many guys.**]
แล้วไหนจะอีเด็กโบ๊ตตี้ที่วังนั่นอีกอะ [And what about that boy Boaty at the Palace?]	And what about Boaty who **he paid to have sex with.**	¿Y qué pasa con Boaty? **El chico al que pagó para tener sexo.** [And what about Boaty? **The guy he paid to have sex with.**]

In this scene, Natty is discussing with Gus and Kim whether Golf has actually tested positive for HIV or the whole story is a prank. Natty uses the verb เที่ยว [teaw] which means "travel". The word can be a short form of เที่ยวกลางคืน [teaw klang kuen] which is "travel" and "night" combined and refers to going out clubbing or partying. The word "teaw" alone does not necessarily mean hooking up or sleeping around. It depends on the context. In this case, Natty does not explicitly mention any sexual practices, leaving it to the audience's interpretation. In English subtitles, "partied a lot" would suffice, but the sexual part is made explicit by adding "slept around," which is then transferred to Spanish.

In Natty's second sentence, a cultural reference in Thai is eliminated and substituted with an explicit statement referring to sex. Natty is referring to the incidents back in Episode 3, when Golf paid for Boaty's sex service. She identifies him as "that boy Boaty at the Palace". The word วัง [wang] means "palace," but in this context, it specifically refers to วังสราญรมย์ [Saranrom Palace], a zone in Bangkok that has become infamous as the place to pick up male sex workers from the street. In English, the subtitles offer a clarification that the source audio does not contain: "Boaty who he paid to have sex with," which again is rendered accordingly in the Spanish version.

Other examples of sexual references being made more explicit in the subtitles are in the second and the twelfth episodes. In the first case, Golf uses the verb จิก [chik], a slang term that roughly means "to hit on" someone. In the English version, the phrase is replaced

with "hook up with anybody," which, unlike the source text, clearly indicates sex. The Spanish translation "echar un polvo" maintains the same degree of explicitness as the English version. Similarly, in the twelfth episode, the source dialogue does not mention "hook up" nor imply sexual connotation in any way. The "hook up" part is added in the English subtitles and then translated into Spanish.

Table 56. Sexual themes made explicit in EN subtitles

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E2		
มาเที่ยวทีไร กอล์ฟต้องคอยแบกมันกลับห้อง เลยไม่มีเวลาจีกใคร [Every time we go out, I have to carry him back to his room, so I don't have time to hit on anyone.]	Every time we go out, I've to carry him back to his room and have no time to hook up with anybody.	Siempre que salimos, tengo que llevarle de vuelta a su habitación, y no tengo tiempo de echar un polvo. [Whenever we go out, I have to take him back to his room, and I don't have time to have sex.]
DoT E11		
คนเราคบกัน มันไม่ได้มีแต่เรื่องนั้นรึเปล่าวะ [There's more to a relationship than just that stuff.]	There is more to being a couple than just sex.	En una pareja hay más cosas que sólo sexo. [There is more to a couple than just sex.]
DoT E12		
และกูขอโทษ ที่ผู้ชายชอบเทมึงมาหากู [And I'm sorry that guys always leave you for me.]	And I'm sorry that guys always dump you to hook up with me.	Y siento que los tíos siempre te dejen para enrollarse conmigo. [And I'm sorry that guys always dump you to hook up with me.]

In short, although references to sex are abundant throughout the show, strong censorship is not imposed, supposedly because of its comedic genre.

c) Nudity

As discussed in the previous section, although the show addresses sex in quite an explicit way, nudity is avoided. However, it is present as part of the main humorous moment in

two episodes. In the first episode, the main characters are on the beach while Golf, wearing Natty's bikini, is in the sea with a German man who he is trying to seduce. Golf tries to get out of the water without realising that the bikini bottom has been carried away with the sea waves. The images are carefully censored: the full frontal nudity is blurred, and in the following shots, even when Golf later has Kim's shirt tied around his waist to cover his private part, when he turns his side to the camera, his bottom is still censored with pixels.

Similar gag returns in Episode 4 with the same character. Gus, Kim, and Golf are hired to dance in a company dinner, and the fierce movements during the performance end up ripping Golf's tight body suit off and his buttocks are exposed to the audience without his knowing. In the close-up shots showing the moments when the outfit begins to tear apart, and the final dance move when Golf turns his back to the audience, the actor's bottom is completely covered with blurred pixels.

Figure 43. Pixellation to blur nudity (DoT E4)

d) Profane language

The four main characters use the vulgar first-person pronoun กู [Ku] and second-person pronoun มึง [Mueng] to talk to each other throughout the series, as well as the informal sentence particles วะ/ว่ะ [Wa]. The use of these pronouns and final particles reflects their close friendship and their down-to-earth personality, which contributes to a realistic characterisation.

Offensive words abound in this series, but no swear word is muted. The strong swear word เหี้ย [Hia] which is muted in several instances in *Hormones,* for example, can be heard loud and clear in a scene in Episode 4, in which a taxi driver gets furious after a motorcycle hits his wing mirror and speeds away.

One of the most common offensive words in this series is อีดอก [I Dok]. It is formed by the vulgar prefix "i" and what literally translates to "flower". It is a shortened, attenuated form of ดอกทอง [Dok Thong] (literal translation: golden flower) which is an equivalent of "slut" in English. "I Dok" generally holds a strong derogatory connotation, its use has become common among effeminate gay men, and, depending on the context, the word can even be used as an exclamation with no intention to insult anyone, or in a playful tone between close friends.

Thai media censorship extends to manipulations in SDH in Thai, although this trait does not directly impact the English and Spanish translations. A number of swear words are partially censored in the incorporated SDH, particularly the two derogatory words discussed above. The words are written with a low dash to substitute the consonant, while maintaining the vowels, for instance, อีด_ก instead of อีดอก. Other kinds of manipulations include eliminations of vulgar pronouns and pejorative vocatives, and toning down swear words.

In the official English subtitles, swear words are freely used to maintain the informal register, except for instances that contain the word "fuck". In these cases, subtitlers opted for a form of censorship that resonates the one applied to the SDH: the incomplete spelling of the swear word. While in the SDH, a consonant is replaced with a low dash, in English subtitles, punctuations such as asterisks and apostrophes are used. In contrast, Spanish fansubs eliminate the censorship by freely using the taboo words in Spanish, spelling them all out.

Table 57. Various punctuation patterns for censorship

Scene	TH audio/TH SDH	EN pivot	SP fansubs
DoT E2	หาแล้วก็ลากกันไปยิ้มไง [Then you go with him to fuck.]	Then you f#ck.	Luego te lo tiras. [Then you fuck him.]
DoT E2	เช็ดเครก [Shit.]	F*ck me!	¡No me jodas! [Fucking kidding me!]
DoT E5	เพื่อนยิ้มมึงได้ไหม [Can friends bang you?]	Can friends f*ck with you?	¿Pueden tus amigos follar contigo? [Can friends fuck you?]
DoT E6	ช่างหอยรถใหม่มันสิ! [To hell with my new car!]	F' my new car!!	¡¡Que le den a mi coche nuevo!! [Fuck my new car!!]

6.4 Forms of textual manipulations and fansubbers' interventions

As previously shown, censorship in the corpus has affected various elements of AV text. In this section, the translation of scenes that are subject to censorship is classified according to the four audiovisual text elements.

a) Manipulation of audio-verbal components

Instances of muted swear words, which only occurred in *Hormones,* are categorised as audio-verbal intervention. The following examples show that fansubbers' translation is not aligned with the imposed censorship.

Table 58. Translation of muted swear words

Series	TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
Hm S2 E13	มึงก็ไม่ต้องมาทำเหี้ยกับน้องสาวกูพอ [Just don't fuck around with my sister anymore.]	Just don't fuck around with her feelings anymore.	No vuelvas a joder a mi hermana nunca más. [Don't fuck around with my sister ever again.]
Hm S2 E13	กูไม่กล้าทำเหี้ยมากไปกว่านี้แล้วเว้ย [I won't dare to fuck around ever.]	I wouldn't have the nerves to fuck around with her again.	No tendría las agallas para joderla de nuevo. [I wouldn't have the guts to fuck around with her again.]

Hm S2 E3	คนเหี้ยแบบนี้ เราปล่อยไว้ไม่ได้แล้วเว้ย [We can't let an asshole like this get away with it.]	We can't just let this asshole walk free.	No podemos dejar que ese gilipollas se salga con la suya. [We can't let this asshole get away with it.]
Hm S2 E8	ไอ้สัตว์ [Asshole.]	Fucking asshole.	Que te den. [Fuck you.]

Muting swear words disrupts the relationship of complementarity (Zabalbeascoa, 2008) that constitutes the meaning of the scene. The visual-nonverbal components display the characters' lip movements complemented with their frustrated expression, yet the offensive word, which is the expectedly a part of the audio-verbal element, disappears.

The decision to transfer the vulgar register to the written form implies the subversion of censorship measures that attempted sanitising the dialogue, although there is insufficient evidence to conclude whether the subversion has been a deliberate act guided by the fansubbers' ideology. In any case, rendering the expletive explicitly enables the constitution of a complete sentence, which contributes to a greater degree of complementarity, a different effect from what the ultimate source text offers.

Furthermore, expletives are even stressed in both English and Spanish versions of the subtitles at the moment when the character pronounces them with emphasis. In the following example, Tar pronounces the insult loudly, with prolongated final vowel. To synchronise with the paralinguistic code, the fansubbers of both versions employed unconventional orthotypography: adding several final vowels to convey the high pitch and the elongated sound. The word in the following is literally translated to "animal". It is a common pejorative and is equivalent to calling someone a jerk or an asshole. It can also be used casually between close friends in a non-derogatory manner.

Table 59. Stressed swear word (Hm S2 E11)

TH audio	EN pivot	SP fansubs
ไอ้สัตว์	Assholeeeeee.	Idiotaaaaaaa. [Idiot.]

b) Manipulation of visual-verbal components

Especially in *Hormones* Season 2, the visual element is manipulated by the incorporation of various disclaimers at the bottom of the screen in the scenes that involve alcohol, tobacco, drug use, sex, and abortion. The visual verbal element adds a layer of non-diegetic comment that distracts the viewer's attention from the images and sound, and reproaches the content being portrayed.

In most cases, the disclaimers are untranslated. Since their placement at the bottom of the screen coincides with the conventional positioning of the subtitles, the Spanish fansubs overlay the disclaimers and partially cover them. Similar practices can be observed in the English version. Figure 44 below shows how subtitles are superimposed on the disclaimers in the scene where Fern and Phai discuss abortion.

Figure 44. Subtitles overwriting disclaimers (Hm S2 E12)

Despite the fact that the English pivot does not contain translations or any indications of the pop-up disclaimers, the TUF fansubbers provided the translation in the paratext. The information is found in several entries on their website where they uploaded the translated episode, among the notes that contain explanations about specific translation decisions and the translator's personal comments on the plot, the characters, and the actors.

Similar to what occurred with cultural reference transfers (discussed in chapter 5), this can be yet another indication of the fansubbers' genre expertise. Their comments, as shown in Table 60, also demonstrate the background knowledge regarding the controversy of *Hormones* and the reasons for heavier self-censorship in the second season of the show.

Table 60. Translated disclaimers in the paratext

Series	TUF fansubbers' message	Back translation
Hm S2 E2	Para los que quieran saber qué dice el texto que aparece durante la escena de cama, es una advertencia. También apareció en el primer episodio y aparecerá durante los próximos. El texto dice: «Esta es una actividad inapropiada para los adolescentes. Los padres deben aconsejarles.» Es simplemente una advertencia, en ocasiones demasiado exagerada, pero GTH esta temporada se está cubriendo bien las espaldas para no recibir críticas tan duras como en la primera temporada.	For those who want to know what the text that appears during the bed scene says, it is a warning. It also appeared in the first episode and will appear during the next ones. The text says: "This is an inappropriate activity for adolescents. Parents should give them advice." It is simply a warning, sometimes too exaggerated, but GTH this season is protecting itself well so as not to receive as harsh criticism as in the first season.
Hm S2 E3	La primera advertencia está relacionada con el alcohol: «El alcohol puede ser la causa de peleas físicas y actividades criminales. La distribución de alcohol a los menores de 20 años es ilegal.» La segunda aparece en la secuencia se kru Pin y Toei: «El asalto sexual es ilegal e inmoral. Los padres deben aconsejar bien a sus hijos sobre el asunto.»	The first warning is related to alcohol: "alcohol can cause fights and criminal activities. The distribution of alcohol to those under 20 years old is illegal. The second one appears in the scene of Teacher Pin and Toei: "sexual assault is illegal and immoral. Parents should advise their children about the issue."

In one exceptional case, the fansubbers chose to conceal the disclaimers altogether. In the sixth episode of season 2, the story focuses on the motivations that compel Win to begin using drugs. Teenagers are depicted buying drugs in the park and partying under the influence of drugs and alcohol. It is the only episode featuring a permanent disclaimer that remains onscreen throughout the whole episode from the beginning. The white-coloured warning is written in italics over a black stripe at the bottom of the screen. The

message can be translated as: "content not appropriate for minors. Close parental guidance required[23]."

When drugs or alcohol are shown, a second disclaimer appears at the top of the screen. This episode is the only case in which the TUF fansubbers criticise the censorship mechanism in the source text in their website: "the warning said that the plot of this episode is inappropriate. Still, they were not satisfied and decided to put more warnings at the top of the video from time to time[24]."

In this episode, the TUF fansubbers' decision regarding the censorship attempt differs from the English version. While the English subtitles are placed above the permanent disclaimer, the TUF fansubbers chose to intervene by covering the message with a black stripe and placing the subtitles in the same position. An example below is the shot when Win is handed drug for the first time and the visual component is tampered with two lines of different disclaimers at the same time.

Figure 45. Visual manipulations and EN fansubs (Hm S2 E6)

Figure 46. Visual manipulations and SP fansubs (Hm S2 E6)

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[23] Translated from: "เนื้อหาไม่เหมาะสมกับเยาวชน ผู้ปกครองควรให้คำแนะนำอย่างใกล้ชิด"

[24] Translated from: "La advertencia decía que la trama de este episodio era inapropiada. Aun así, no se habían quedado a gusto y decidieron poner más advertencias en la parte superior del vídeo de vez en cuando."

The justification for the fansubbers' decision to cover the permanent warning can be drawn from extratextual resource: the notes on their website reveals that the fansubbers view the warning text as annoying in the sense that it takes up space on the screen and makes it difficult to read the subtitles (Thai Underground Fansub 2014e). They even uploaded a screenshot of to show their viewers how a disclaimer in the source text looks like, to justify their decision of concealing it.

While the decision to cover the disclaimer entirely can be viewed as a subversion to the imposed censorship, the fansubbers' complaint implies that their disapproval may stem from their concern with aesthetic aspect rather than a firm ideological stance against censorship. Apart from the permanent and occasional disclaimers, many parts of the dialogues in this episode are in English and there are also embedded Thai subtitles for those dialogues, taking up even more space.

In other episodes, the disclaimers that pop up in certain scenes are left untouched, and the fansubbers' criticisms of the practice are almost always linked to their concern that the disclaimer gets in the way of the subtitles, for instance, "I am sure that you are as fed up as I am with the warning texts on the screen. I hope it does not make reading the subtitles too difficult[25]" (Thai Underground Fansub, 2014b). This expression indicates yet another contradiction in the fansubbing practice, since the fansubbers themselves often cover various parts of the screen at once with unorthodox uses of titles such as headnotes and integrated titles, together with prototypical subtitles.

Furthermore, the fansubbers' attitude toward the disclaimers is not always adversarial. In the third episode of Season 2, the main plot is that Toei, a female student, is almost raped by a male teacher. The fansubbers agree that at least one warning message is essential, and they provide a translation in the notes for both disclaimers that appear in the source text. They even suggest that there should be another disclaimer stating that viewers should not imitate Toei's plan in trying to get the abuser caught in action by herself instead of seeking help from others.

In *Diary of Tootsies*, despite various episodes containing alcohol consumption, a disclaimer has been added only in the drinking scene in Episode 7, in the space below the

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[25] Translated from: "Estoy segura de que estáis tan hartos como yo de los textos de advertencia en pantalla. Espero que no dificulte mucho la lectura de los subtítulos"

SDH in Thai. TUF fansbus partially covers the disclaimer with a black stripe, but such decision does not count as a subversion of the censorship since the stripe is employed throughout the series, to cover the embedded SDH and make the Spanish subtitles easier to read.

Figure 47. Screenshot of DoT E7 from GDH's official YouTube channel

Figure 48. Screenshot of DoT E7 by TUF fansubs

In short, judging from the data available in this corpus alone, the fansubbers' textual intervention regarding the visual-verbal manipulation in the source text is inconsistent and inconclusive of their ideological stance. Such discrepancies may require a larger amount of data to trace regularities and draw an accurate conclusion.

c) Manipulation of visual-nonverbal components

In both seasons of *Hormones,* manipulation of visual-nonverbal elements can be observed in instances when contentious items, such as cigarettes, alcohol, and abortion pills, are pixelated or blurred. In both English and Spanish subtitled versions, the manipulated

images remain unaltered. Similarly, in *Diary of Tootsies,* there is no change in the pixelation that covers nudity and occasional images of alcoholic beverages.

In such cases, the reason for the unaltered visual might be the fansubbers' limited resources to tamper with the visual elements of the content. Subtitling programmes enable the addition of visual elements to the AV text but not the restoration of the original visual that has been pixelated.

d) Manipulation of more than one type of component simultaneously

In several instances, various elements are simultaneously manipulated in the source text. The first case includes the scenes where images of taboo items are blurred or pixelated (visual-nonverbal element) and a warning message is included (visual-verbal element).

The second case entails the introduction of every episode of *Hormones*, Season 2, which displays the content rating and a general disclaimer. Such indication of the content rating is obligatory in Thailand. The logo of each type of rating, its presentation, and the exact wording for the disclaimer is specified by the NBTC (*Announcement of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission*, 2013). In the first season of *Hormones,* which is rated at PG13, the introductory disclaimer is not translated either in English or Spanish version. However, in the second season, it is translated in both English and Spanish versions.

The introduction lasts approximately 20 seconds and contains a disclaimer in both the written (visual-verbal) and the spoken (audio-verbal) form, along with a large logo of the PG18 rating (visual-nonverbal). The spoken message is prolonged and can be translated as: "the following programme is appropriate for people aged 18 and above. It may contain images, audio or content that depict inappropriate behaviour, violence, sexual content, and profane language and require viewer discretion. Viewers under 18 years old should be advised[26]."

In both the English and the Spanish versions, the spoken disclaimer is translated entirely in the subtitles, although their segmentation varies. The English version consists of two

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[26] Translated from: "รายการต่อไปนี้เหมาะสำหรับผู้ชมที่มีอายุ 18 ปีขึ้นไป อาจมีภาพ เสียง หรือเนื้อหาที่ไม่เหมาะสมด้านพฤติกรรม ความ รุนแรง เพศ และการใช้ภาษา ซึ่งต้องใช้วิจารณญาณในการรับชม ผู้ชมที่มีอายุน้อยกว่า 18 ปี ควรได้รับคำแนะนำ"

subtitles of two lines and one line respectively, while the Spanish version presents a single subtitle of four lines.

Figure 49. EN translation of content rating
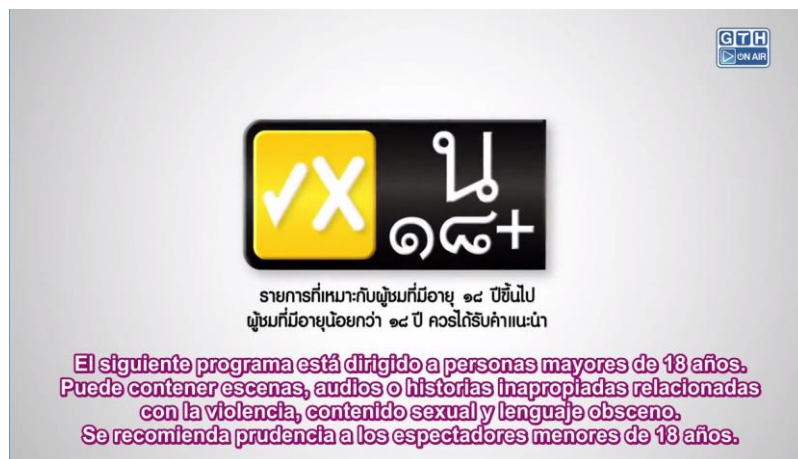
Figure 50. SP translation of content rating

The obligatory content rating is followed by another disclaimer from the show's producer, stating that the characters, their behaviour, the locations, and the plot are entirely fictional and bear no resemblance to people in real life. This disclaimer is also translated in the pivot version and transferred to the Spanish subtitles. In Thai, the heading คำเตือน (warning) stands out as it is written at the top of the screen with a large font.

The glaring effect of Spanish fansubs is not reflected in the English subtitles due to different fonts and colours as shown in Figures 51 and 52, Spanish fansubs, on the other hand, separate the word "Advertencia" and insert it as the title at the top of the screen, written in capital letters to capture the viewers' attention. The placement and the style

chosen convey a closer presentation of the graphic code to the source text than the English subtitles.

Figure 51. EN translation of the disclaimer from the show's producer
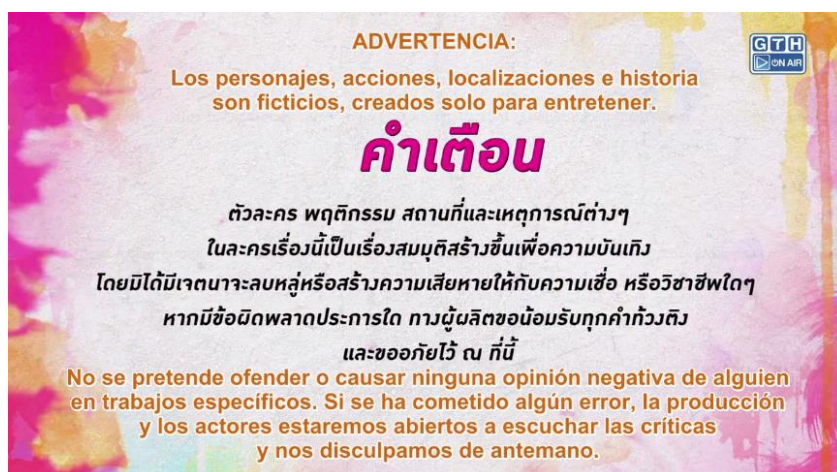
Figure 52. SP translation of the disclaimer from the show's producer

In *Diary of Tootsies,* the same message appears in the obligatory introduction for PG18 rated shows. The difference lies in the translation. While in *Hormones* Season 2, Spanish fansubbers transfer the complete disclaimer into subtitles, in *Diary of Tootsies* neither the audio-verbal nor visual-verbal components in the introduction are translated. Instead, viewers find several lines of titles that are not translation, but various messages from the fansubbers.

Figure 53. Introduction containing disclaimers (DoT)

The back translation from the Spanish text inserted at the top of the screen reads: "brought to you by Thai Underground Fansub. There is no intention of copyright infringement."

At the bottom of the screen, the texts can be translated as: "To view more Thai projects in Spanish, visit: http://thaiundergroundfansub.wordpress.com/ Thank you for watching!"

Instead of rendering the disclaimer from the Thai media control into Spanish, fansubbers use this space to maximise their visibility, insert their own disclaimer to protect themselves from copyrights issue, and promote their work and platform by redirecting interested viewers to their website. This can be considered textual evidence that indicates how these fansubbers shift their role from viewers to "co-creators" of the content, in line with the argument put forward by Pérez-González (2012) concerning anime fansubbing.

6.5 Conclusions

The two Thai TV shows analysed here exemplify the implementation of (self-)censorship in Thai media that operates on various components of AV text: audio-verbal, visual-verbal, visual-nonverbal, and in some cases, on more than one component at a time. Forms of censorship include tampering with images of taboo items, muting swear words, and adding non-diegetic messages that contradict the ensemble of other semiotic codes in the text. Whether these strategies succeed in making the content more appropriate for viewers is debatable because the manipulation of the AV components generates a clear

contradiction within the diegetic instead of eliminating the taboo items. Consequently, the method draws viewers' attention to the taboo themes even more.

Table 61. Instances of censorship and TUF fansubbers' renditions

AV components affected by (self-) censorship	Instances of textual manipulations	TUF fansubbers' renditions
Audio-verbal components	- Muting swear words	- Using swear words in the subtitles - Highlighting swear words according to the paralinguistic code, using orthotypographic resources
Visual-verbal components	- Adding non-diegetic disclaimers	- Concealing the disclaimer - Providing the translation of the disclaimers in the paratext - Suggesting a different disclaimer
Visual-nonverbal components	- Pixelating and blurring problematic items	- No intervention
More than one type of components	- Adding written warning in addition to pixelating visual items - Including spoken and written disclaimer - Adding written warning in addition to the PG18 logo	- No intervention with pixelated visual items - No translation of written disclaimers and no intervention with the logo - Translating the spoken disclaimer

From the textual and extratextual evidence examined in this chapter, it can be inferred that fansubbers are aware of the textual manipulations which derived from censorship from the source culture, but their translational decisions lack the regularity that confirms a definite ideological stance against the imposed censorship. The same introduction which contains the show rating and disclaimers, for instance, is rendered differently in each season of *Hormones* and in *Diary of Tootsie*: from translating the entire disclaimer, not translating at all, to appropriating the space to claim the group's visibility.

Two main interventions where an attempt at censorship is subverted in the Spanish fansubs are the written swear words in the subtitles (when the words are muted in Thai) and the visual editing to cover a permanent warning message entirely. These interventions seem to occur only when the censorship attempt interferes with the aesthetics and the readability of the subtitles.

Overall, fansubbers tend to show a conformist stance and give priority to transferring as many elements of the source text as possible to the target viewers. Extratextual resource shows that fansubbers translate certain disclaimers for their audience in the blog entry, show their understanding of the necessity to add those disclaimers, and even suggest a more suitable one. It seems more likely that the fansubbers prioritise providing the audience with as much information on the content of the ultimate source text as possible, and said information also includes the censorship attempt from the Thai media.

Regarding the implications of the pivot translation, the influence of the English pivot is evident in both series. In *Hormones,* swear words muted in the source audio are written in the English fansubs and transferred to the subsequent Spanish fansubs. In *Diary of Tootsies,* taboo elements such as sexual references and swear words that are made more explicit in the pivot are later rendered with similar explicitness in Spanish. In cases where censorship applies to the English pivot, Spanish fansubbers do not conform to the attempts of censorship and use the full word in their translation.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter seeks to summarise the research findings, reflect on the contributions and limitations of the study and conclude with suggestions for future research.

7.1 Research findings

The outward media flow of Thai TV shows was characterised by the influence of piracy and non-professional translation initiatives. As discussed in chapter 2, while the official export of Thai shows faced restrictions and textual manipulations to comply with the regulations in the target countries especially within Asia, fansubbers as self-appointed translators filled in this gap by introducing Thai productions to audiences in many countries including English and Spanish speakers worldwide.

Similar to what has been reported on anime fansubbing, the copyright holders initially turned a blind eye to piracy as the audiences' initiatives helped them venture into unexplored markets (Leonard, 2005). In the case of *Hormones,* its production team even acknowledged the fansubs as proof of the show's popularity at the international level. However, after securing export deals, their stance changed, as reflected by the decision to limit access to the second season of the series for viewers outside Thailand.

Observations of four main TH>SP fansubbing communities and their translations revealed that although some groups favour specific genres such as *Boys' Love*, or Thai soap opera *Lakorn*, all of them engage in unpaid labour driven by fandom and empowered by the democratisation of technology. Regarding the language combination, according to the translation credits in their platforms, they all translate into Spanish via English pivots.

Other shared characteristics include the fansubbers' concern about the group's visibility and a sense of rivalry among different fansubbing communities. While research on fansubbing groups in other languages— especially those translating popular English-speaking TV shows —indicates the tendency to prioritise quick turnaround time, none of the TH>SP fansubbing groups observed here shares this trait. The sense of rivalry does not stem from the need to release the translation before other groups. Instead, it seems to concern the fansubbers' authorship over their translations and their determination to be seen and appreciated by non-translating viewers.

Focusing on the case of TUF, extratextual resources and online interviews with the fansubbers confirmed that the Spanish fansubs were products of pivot translation, with English as the mediating language, since the Spanish-speaking fansubbers did not know Thai. However, they had a basic understanding of Thai culture and entertainment, which constituted an object of their interest.

Given the heterogeneity of fansubbing practices across languages and genres, the complex nature of the TH>SP fansubs as pivot AVT in non-professional settings requires an updated, more sophisticated analysis to expand the repertoire of descriptive translation studies. The parameters for the analysis have been developed based on what have been reported in Media Studies and Audiovisual Translation regarding the prototypical traits of fansubs. One of the most recurrent characteristics is the deviation of fansubs from mainstream subtitling conventions. Others include formal innovation, collaborative methods, source-oriented translation, and genre expertise according to Dwyer's proposal (2012).

To verify the norm-defying nature of TH>SP fansubs, mainstream subtitling conventions have been revisited in chapter 4. Based on Díaz-Cintas' summary of standard interlinguistic subtitling (2012), subtitling conventions have been grouped into those pertaining to time, space, and orthotypography. The temporal, spatial, and orthotypographical specifications of current professional subtitling practices were drawn from the widely recognised guidelines on professional subtitling standards in Europe (Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998; Karamitroglou, 1998), as well as Netflix's timed text style guide, since the platform's subtitles represent the professional counterpart of the TH>SP combination.

The results confirm the norm-defying nature of the TH>SP fansubs, since they break away from most parameters specified in the professional subtitling conventions. Extremely long subtitles are common in TUF fansubs. Some of them contain up to four lines, and others far exceed the recommended reading speed. The duration of a subtitle on the screen ranges from less than half a second to approximately ten seconds, and there is often no lapse between two subtitles. Most importantly, the TUF fansubs introduced innovative features that do not fit in with the existing parameters of mainstream subtitling conventions.

The fansubs by TUF can be regarded as conforming to the professional conventions in terms of synchronisation and standard orthotypography. Textual and paratextual resources show that fansubbers take into account legibility and readability of subtitles, although not to the same extent as professional subtitlers. They mindfully selected fonts and colours that are clear to read, even for integrated titles, and highlighted the importance of correct punctuation usage. However, TUF fansubbers do not seem to associate legibility and readability with the display rate and the length of subtitles, since the two parameters far exceed the range recommended in mainstream subtitling conventions.

To recap, formal innovation in the Spanish fansubs has been expressed through use of different fonts, colours, placements, and movements, often resulting in titles that blend in with the visual elements as though they were part of the source text. These titles not only serve aesthetic purposes, but also exemplify creative translation solutions like colour-coded subtitles to mark different languages in the source audio. The diverse placement of the titles brings into question the definition of "sub"titles, which is consistent with Nornes' observation (1999). At the same time, formal innovation opens up the possibility for subtitlers to translate more than one signifying code simultaneously, eliminating the dilemma often faced by professional subtitlers over which information to keep and which to discard. Against this background, this research has proposed a classification of textual elements in fansubs based on the findings from *Hormones* and *Diary of Tootsies*, which can also serve as a potential range of translation solutions for creative subtitling.

The collaborative methods mentioned by Dwyer (2012) have been evident in TH>SP fansubbing. Tasks were distributed according to each member's competence and the end products were often credited as the collective's work. While other studies reported hierarchical structures and clearly-assigned roles in large fansub groups (Li, 2015; Zhang & Cassany, 2017), the TUF group seems to be more flexible as one member may assume various roles and there is no clear hierarchical structure within the group. Due to the challenges of pivot translation process, the collaborative methods in TH>SP fansubs are extended to include coordination with other fansub groups of different language combinations such as TH>EN fansubbers to obtain subtitle templates, for one thing.

In addition, the fansubbers' genre expertise and collaborations with other fansub groups allowed them to retrieve resources for elements that were not included in the English

pivot such as song lyrics, introductions of the main cast, and explanatory head notes. As analysed in detail in chapter 5, numerous cases of the Spanish fansubbers' interventions to preserve Thai cultural references in the fansubs show that they strived to bring viewers closer to the ultimate source text, despite the challenges of the pivot translation process. Only in a few cases did the Spanish fansubbers opt for target-oriented strategies to render the cultural references preserved in the pivot subtitles.

Chapter 6 reveals that, even in cases where (self-)censorship was imposed in the source text, fansubbers seemed to prioritise the source-oriented approach, translating even the content warnings in scenes that depict taboo themes. They only subverted the censorship attempts when these messages affect the aesthetics of the visuals. In contrast to the general assumption regarding the subversive nature of fansubs, the TUF translation decisions lack consistency that could authenticate their ideological stance against the imposed censorship.

In short, the analysis of the TUF fansubs revealed the patterns that match all these prototypical traits of fansubs. Furthermore, TUF fansubbers are keen to provide viewers with rich paratexts and redirect them to intertexts such as music videos of the songs used in the soundtrack, and interviews with cast and crew members.

The complexity of this TH>SP fansub case lies in the fact that while the fansubs clearly deviate from mainstream subtitling conventions in many aspects, they also present overlaps between the non-professional and professional ecosystems.

As Chaume (2018a) argues, investigating peripheral practices may serve to undermine some assumptions that have been taken for granted in the discipline, and broaden the scope of Translation Studies. The case of TH>SP fansubs has shed light on several issues.

First, unlike the case of anime fansubbing in which the fansubs emerged as resistance to professional subtitling, or the case of Italian fansubbing, which combats what fans view as "unfaithful" translation in dubbing (Massidda, 2015), TH>SP fansubbers appreciated the quality of the official English subtitles and prioritised using them as a pivot. This welcoming attitude and preference may have to do with the source-oriented nature of the official English subtitles, which coincides with the fansubbers' preference.

The discrepancies in the pivot translation chain suggest a blurring boundary between professional and non-professional AVT rather than a clear-cut contrast. In the case of *Diary of Tootsies,* the official English subtitles which were used as a pivot display characteristics generally attributed to fansubs. These include additional information that crosses the diegetic space and unconventional use of orthotypographic resources. Contrary to the general assumption about the norm-breaking nature of fansubs, TUF fansubbers transfer some of these unconventional subtitles from English into Spanish by adopting solutions that adhere more to the mainstream subtitling conventions.

At the sociological level, the profiles of the TUF fansubbers also indicate certain convergences with the professional settings. One of the interviewed fansubbers studied Translation and another majored in English, which could be considered relevant education and training for translation tasks.

These findings highlight the complexity of fansubs and challenge the notion of the binary opposition between professional subtitling practices that are associated with a series of constraints and lack of creativity, and fansubbing practices that are regarded as the opposite. In other words, this case of the *Diary of Tootsies* fansubs adds to the trend of convergences, cross-fertilisation (Pérez-González, 2014) or fluidity (Dore & Petrucci, 2022) between professional and non-professional AVT.

Another issue is the implications of the fansubbing mechanism that shapes pivot translation in a counter-intuitive manner. In line with previous studies on pivot AVT, interferences of the English pivot and mistranslations originating from the ambiguity in the English pivot have been detected in the ultimate target text in the corpus. Target-oriented strategies in the pivot, such as generalisations of cultural references or substitutions for more international ones, result in the elimination of original references in both the pivot text and the ultimate target text.

However, the influence of the English pivot does not always prevail. As shown by various examples in chapter 5, the fansubbers' genre knowledge helped them overcome the shortcomings in the pivot AVT process. The discrepancies in the three versions include extra explanations of Thai linguistic features and cultural references (verbal and nonverbal) which were provided by the Spanish fansubbers despite their absence from the English pivot version.

More importantly, the textual evidence shows that the TUF fansubbers were able to retrieve the cultural translation that has been missing from the English pivot. Thus, they discarded the target-oriented approach adopted in the pivot and shifted the ultimate target text back towards the source-oriented pole.

This case of TH>EN>SP fansubs illustrates that it is possible to overcome the shortcomings stemming from the inevitable "double filter" (Kerdkidsadanon, 2015) in pivot AVT if the translators are given an informative and source-oriented pivot version to work with in combination with their knowledge about the source text and its sociocultural context. In the case of *Hormones,* English fansubs that served as pivot version are comparable to a mediating text equipped with useful annotations, which coincides with an ideal specification for subtitling templates in professional practices (see Pięta et al. 2022).

Another notable aspect is the TUF fansubbers' sensitivity towards the semantic load of nonverbal elements. They demonstrated the capacity to perceive audiovisual translation as a whole and not simply the transfer of the linguistic code, which is, in fact, an ideal scenario for mainstream AVT as argued by Zabalbeascoa (2008).

Following the terms and classifications from Chaume's (2012) model of signifying codes, the TUF fansubbers rendered various signifying codes beyond the linguistic one. First, they employed orthotypographic resources to indicate the presence of paralinguistic code: the volume and lengthened sounds for emphasis. Musical code which is considered a cultural reference, such as the Thai national anthem, is marked in the subtitle, and soundtrack lyrics, including those of opening songs, are always translated alongside lingusitic codes and graphic codes.

As for the signifying codes transmitted through visual channel, TUF fansubbers verbalised iconographic code in a few instances (see chapter 5), and styled the subtitles to reflect the photographic code, for instance, in the scenes depicting flashbacks (chapter 4). The dynamic titles that imitate the movement of the on-screen texts in Thai suggest that fansubbers also took into account the mobility code of the AV text, as discussed in chapter 4 and 5. Additionally, in the case of *Diary of Tootsies,* fansubbers made changes to the syntactic code by combining four separate videos (as provided in GDH's YouTube channel) into one for each episode.

Lastly, the formal innovation found in the TH>SP combination contradicts Pedersen's observation (2019) that creative textual features which have characterised the fansubbing phenomenon since the beinning seem to be emblematic of anime fansubs and not prevalent in fansubbing of other genres and languages. Considering that the literature on fansubbing largely tackles either anime or popular English-speaking TV shows, the findings from this research have contributed to the diversity of the research body and highlights the necessity of research beyond the scope of Hollywood-dominated English texts.

7.2 Future research

While the case study method in this research has contributed to the mapping of the complexities involving TH>SP fansubs in detail, there is a need for further research using a more extensive and diverse corpus to test the validity of patterns detected in this first limited corpus. Another valuable method to carry out a product-oriented analysis is a comparative study involving different versions of the same show including, for instance, one translated by professionals and another by fans, which has not been possible in this thesis due to a lack of sufficient materials. However, with the rapid increase of Thai content on streaming platforms and the emergence of new fansub groups, this approach will likely become viable soon.

Another promising approach to explore unconventional features in fansubbing is a reception-based study that employs experimental methods, focus groups or surveys, along with cognitive data to evaluate the audiences' preferences or reactions. This method has been proved to be viable in the comparative study of professional and non-professional subtitling conducted by Orrego-Carmona (2015), which concludes that the quality of the two versions is quite similar to the point where viewers cannot tell them apart.

The advantage of this approach is the potential to assess the audiences' preferences for the features of formal innovation and determine whether they yield positive viewing experiences or demand an unnecessary cognitive effort, especially when the creative features such as integrated titles and headnotes are presented simultaneously with prototypical subtitles with high reading speed. While the classifications from this thesis reflect the fans' preference for interventionist and source-oriented translation,

experimental studies can take a step further to explore the preferences of general, non-fan viewers in the context of media transfer between culturally distant language communities. This method will help assess whether general viewers welcome features of formal innovation and source-oriented tendencies in fansubbing, or if traditional mainstream subtitles remain the optimal choice.

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Appendix

Consent form for the online interview with three fansubbers from Thai Underground Fansub group

Documento informativo

Título del estudio: Thai TV series brought to Spanish-speaking audiences: a study of fansubbing practices (Series de televisión tailandesas presentadas a espectadores hispanohablantes: estudio de prácticas de fansubbing)

Investigadora responsable del estudio: Animmarn Leksawat

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Director de la tesis: Dr. Patrick Zabalbeascoa Terran

Institución: Universitat Pompeu Fabra

¿Cuál es el objetivo del estudio?

El presente estudio investiga la subtitulación de las series tailandesas al castellano realizada por los aficionados hispanohablantes o *fansubbers*.

¿Qué procedimientos se emplearán para la recogida de datos?

Se recogerán datos a partir de los siguientes instrumentos:
- Entrevistas.
- Recolección de textos audiovisuales disponibles en la plataforma del grupo de fansubbing (vídeos y subtítulos).
- Recolección de recursos extratextuales en la plataforma del grupo de fansubbing (textos escritos en la página web del grupo).

¿Qué incomodidades, riesgos o beneficios comporta participar en este estudio?

Las técnicas que se emplearán no son invasivas y no implican ningún riesgo para el participante. La participación en el estudio no tendrá ninguna repercusión y solo será de utilidad en la producción de datos científicos.

Confidencialidad de los datos

Los datos personales facilitados se tratarán de forma confidencial. En cualquier momento, el participante podrá ejercer su derecho de acceso, rectificación o cancelación de los mismos mediante comunicación escrita con la investigadora responsable del estudio.

Para proteger su privacidad, la información almacenada será anónima y se etiquetará con un código alfanumérico y con un pseudónimo. Esta información solo se empleará dentro del contexto del proyecto. Los datos del participante no serán comunicados a terceros bajo ninguna circunstancia. Si los resultados del proyecto se publican, la identidad del participante será confidencial.

Carácter voluntario de la participación

La participación en este estudio es de carácter voluntario no remunerado. El participante tiene el derecho de retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento sin tener que dar explicaciones y sin que esto tenga repercusión.

Consentimiento informado

Yo, _____, expongo que he leído el documento informativo que se me ha entregado; que he podido realizar preguntas sobre el estudio; que he recibido suficiente información sobre el estudio en el que participaré y que no tengo más dudas sobre el mismo.

Comprendo que la participación en el estudio es de carácter voluntario y que puedo retirarme del estudio en cualquier momento sin dar explicaciones y sin ninguna repercusión para mí.

Presto libremente mi conformidad a participar en el estudio.

DOY MI CONSENTIMIENTO para participar en este estudio.

DOY MI CONSENTIMIENTO para que el nombre del grupo de *fansub* del que formo parte esté mencionado en este estudio y reconozco que este hecho podrá permitir que otros identifiquen la plataforma y las actividades del grupo.

Nombre y apellidos del participante:

Fecha

Firma

....

Nombre y apellido de la investigadora: Animmarn Leksawat

Fecha

Firma