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*ELF Reformulations of Italian 'Lingua Franca' Uses  
in the Subtitling of the Migration Movie Lamerica*

ABSTRACT:

This paper enquires into the scripted ELF variation adopted in the English subtitling of *Lamerica* (Gianni Amelio, 1994). The target script reformulates the original interactions through Lingua-franca Italian by means of hybridization processes between spoken Italian lingua franca uses and written ELF rendering that are seen as enabling/failing to realize the complex unequal encounters in contexts of specialized (legal-bureaucratic) communication between low-status Albanians and high-status Italians. The analysis of the spoken interactions rendered into ELF subtitling involves three different, yet complementary dimensions of analysis: the register dimension in the perspective of Halliday's (1978) functional approach and of van Dijk's (1980) processes of deletion, construction and generalization in rendering the original social interactions into ELF subtitling, respecting the technical limits and facilitating accessibility and acceptability of culture-bound concepts either between the participants in the interaction and in the international audience of the subtitled movie; the phonopragmatic dimension (Sperti, 2014) of the spoken interactions to explore the socio-pragmatic processes accounting for illocutionary and perlocutionary implications (Searle, 1983), and the rendering of such dimensions characterizing the cross-cultural unequal encounters (in terms of intonational and prosodic variations, emotional and attitudinal conveyance, paralinguistic and visual information) into equivalent written forms of ELF; and the functional dimension involving the standard and scripted ELF variations used in the subtitles, analysed through the application of a causal model of translation (Chesterman, 2000; Bogucki, 2011), enquiring into the cognitive and pragmatic features of the translator's retextualizations, characterised by relevant lexical and syntactic choices in the attempt to render the participants' status asymmetries. ELF in this case may thus represent a new hybrid mode of spoken lingua franca rendered into written forms in situations of difficult intercultural communication due to power/status asymmetries between the participants.

*Introduction and rationale*

This paper introduces a multimodal analysis of the ELF variations adopted in the English subtitling of *Lamerica*. In the movie, the Italian

businessmen Fiore and Gino come to Albania—impoverished by the recent fall of communism—to launch an imaginary shoe firm. Here, they meet Spiro, who turns out to be an Italian ex-soldier from World War II. While following him, Gino experiences the dramatic socio-economic conditions, inevitably getting closer to Albanian people.

The research focus is on the identification of the role of hybridization in constructing equivalence in translation by means of written reformulations into ELF subtitles of the original oral interactions through Italian lingua-franca (ILF). ‘Hybridization’ signifies the process of translation/interpretation of the socio-cultural asymmetries between the participants to the exchanges. These processes of hybridization between spoken ILF forms and written ELF rendering are considered as either enabling or failing to express the challenging unequal encounters in specialized (legal-bureaucratic) communicative contexts in cross-cultural interactions between low-status Albanians and high-status Italians. In the practical terms of the analysis, this means to consider the different forms of ELF variations in subtitling, including the kinds of ELF registers used to achieve equivalence; and, in a functional perspective, van Dijk’s (1980) rules of summarization (deletion, construction and generalization), applied for translation. The scope of this methodology is to describe the levels of equivalence achieved through summarization of culture-bound specialized concepts, and to motivate these degrees in terms of information giving or eliminating.

The investigation of ‘hybridization’ processes (cf. Provenzano, 2008) is conducted according to three different dimensions of analysis: (a) ILF oral exchanges are firstly examined through a phonopragmatic approach applied to investigate the original characters’ illocutionary and perlocutionary implications (Sperti, 2014); (b) ELF legal-bureaucratic registers are analysed with the aim of enquiring into hybrid processes of adaptation through the reformulation (i.e. simplification or extension) of original spoken interaction in ILF; (c) a functional approach is finally applied to the multimodal and linguistic characteristics of the target subtitled script rendered in ELF.

## *1. Theoretical background*

### *1.1 Phonopragmatics*

The first level of analysis of the original ILF interactions entails a phonopragmatic examination (Sperti, 2014), or a pragmatic-oriented investigation of phonological and prosodic actualizations in ILF of participants’ illocutionary

acts and perlocutionary effects (Searle, 1983). The original spoken interactions are explored in order to identify the interface between prosodic realizations and pragmatic implications in the original ILF exchanges, eventually enquiring into the rendering of the phonopragmatic dimension characterizing the cross-cultural encounters (in terms of intonational and prosodic variations and correlates, emotional and attitudinal conveyance, socio-cultural 'schemata' and status asymmetries, paralinguistic and visual information, intended as kinesic and prossemic features) into equivalent ELF subtitles.

More specifically, the objective is to investigate the role played by the illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions – affected by different culture-based linguistic and paralinguistic features derived from L1 interferences – in the cross-cultural phonopragmatic realizations of the movie interactions, accounting for linguacultural differences in the original conversational ILF variations used by the characters in the selected extracts. Actually, the interface between prosody and pragmatics in cross-cultural settings reveals a culture-oriented discourse construction in oral interactions where a 'lingua franca' is adopted.

A spectral, pitch and formant PRAAT analysis (Boersma and Weenink, 2014) of the conversation moves and acts is carried out by considering phono-prosodic parameters used in different ILF variations. PRAAT is a program for the analysis and reconstruction of acoustic speech signals, which offers a wide range of investigative tools for the acoustic evaluation of speech and voice samples, including spectrographic analysis and speech synthesis and manipulation. It represents here a technical support to the phonopragmatic analysis of the selected exchanges accounting for pragmatic realizations of different acoustic and prosodic parameters, such as: pitch variations (intended as perceptual interpretations of frequency); pitch contour (in terms of perceived intonative patterns); speech rate (number of words per minute); vowel and tonic syllable duration; pause duration at phrase boundaries and its influence on syllabic duration; acoustic intensity (perceived as loudness).

The phonopragmatic design is employed in a migration context where ILF variations are used by characters, with the aim of bridging the gap and the lack of attention for some crucial pragmatic and communicative aspects of spoken interactions revealing important information in terms of role disposal and status asymmetries.

### *1.2 Hybridization through Van Dijk's Macrorules*

The present section focuses on the construct of 'hybridization', by

attempting to define its role in the process of meaning interpretation of some of the relevant cues within the selected movie interactions. Such a process here is meant as an analysis of the various forms of simplification/retextualization of the original ILF exchanges through ELF subtitling, in particular by applying a register analysis (Halliday, 1978) aimed at enquiring into hybrid processes of ELF legal-bureaucratic language reformulation (i.e. simplification or extension) of the original exchanges.

The objective is to focus on the nature of these processes, on how well, if at all, they succeed in realizing the socio-cultural relationships among the characters in the original version. Our focus will be on the strategies applied to reformulate the original meaning of the scripts, through the application of van Dijk's (1980) macrorules, whose essence is to be explained soon afterwards. The ultimate objective is to evaluate 'equivalence', insofar as this is realized semantically or pragmatically, and also in the perspective of any functional change, which is meant to keep unaltered and even enhance the original ILF significance of the statements, or contrarily, subvert it.

This summarizing process is illustrated in this section, through a brief description of the three macrorules, called Deletion, Generalization and Construction, by defining them and also their contribution within this context to determine, in theoretical terms, either (a) the semantic gist of the discourse, or (b) the pragmatic «uptake» of it (Levinson, 1983). What will result is an interesting representation of either a reduction or an enlargement of the original *culture-bound* concepts, for example 'family', 'business' and 'entrepreneurship', 'social welfare', as well as the particular contribution of the macrorules to the specialized ELF context of the scripted interactions.

In van Dijk's (1980) terms, «Deletion» is meant as the elimination of meanings in the resulting text format, whereas «Generalization» leads to the new forms of sentence construction, based on the «resulting predicate as yielded by the meaning of the single propositions of the sequence units», which is finally distinguished from the Construction macrorule. The latter in fact implies that the result is provided by «the joint sequence of the original propositions into a new predicate». Identifying these processes will enable one, in pragmatic terms, to single out the covert ideological processes underlying the occurring changes in translation. What, for instance, the main motivations in re-rendering original legal concepts into new forms of ELF are, and also what kinds of intake or deprivation are yielded from the shift into the 'lingua franca' written forms, as the resulting compromise of the translators' choices.

### 1.3 ELF subtitling: linguistic and pragmatic features

The English subtitles of *Lamerica* aim to reproduce the linguistic and communicative features of the original interactions and to prompt specific effects in the audience by means of a 'scripted lingua franca'. In fact, the differences between the main protagonists' standard Italian and the lexical and syntactic characteristics of the Albanian people's cues actualise the illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions (Austin, 1962), contributing to the audiovisual representation of the power asymmetries and to the audience's identification of the high-status and low-status participants. The adjective 'scripted' is here adopted to define a lingua-franca variation created for film interactions, which tries to respect and share the actual features of the non-native speakers' language in cross-cultural interactions where the high-status participants' cognitive and socio-cultural schemata generally prevail (cf. Guido, 2008). Yet, it is also constructed on the translators' cognitive construct of 'lingua-franca', generally characterised by lexical and syntactic deviations such as the omission of articles, subjects and verbs, or the selection of simple tenses, mainly present and past simple (cf. Iaia, 2015).

By means of the opposition between standard and ELF variations, which integrates the original audiovisual characteristics, receivers can infer the dominant role of the Italian protagonists. In fact, they generally rule the interactions and impose their objectives by focusing on their socio-cultural background to overcome the Albanians' resistance and doubts (interaction 1), or by raising the tone of their voices (interaction 2). On the other hand, the non-native speakers resort to simplified verbal tenses—mainly present or past simple—with fragmented syntactic structures that show «non-conformity to the established norms of grammar» (Seidlhofer, 2011: 94) such as the omission of the 's' in the third person singular, and to hesitations justified by the need to find appropriate words and expressions in Italian (English, in subtitles). Actually, even though the alternation between the standard and ELF variations contributes to the multimodal rendering of the original semantic and communicative dimensions, such translation strategy is not conventional in AVT, for the production of subtitles generally focuses on the respect for their temporal and spatial constraints determining their readability, or the number of words per line (cf. Neves, 2008). As a result, target scripts are generally condensed and do not achieve pragmalinguistic equivalence. Migration movies represent cases in point, because if it is true the omission of the opposition between standard and lingua-franca variations may produce

subtitles that are more comfortable to read, it is also true that the audience has to be acquainted with the acoustic dimension of the source languages in order to recognise the phonological deviations from the standard norms conveying their status of non-native speakers. For those reasons, it is argued that also the non-native speakers' pauses and iterations should be reproduced in subtitles, thus supporting the receivers' interpretation of the original semantic and communicative dimensions.

## *2. Corpus and method*

Three interactions have been selected as fitting specific criteria of analysis and investigation: their ILF phonopragmatic nature and the consequent rendering into ELF subtitling of status asymmetries between the higher-status Italians and the lower-status Albanians; the target-oriented analysis of the reformulated scripts on the basis of summarization macrorules; the functional dimension of the alternation between Standard English and ELF variation in subtitles. Finally, an alternative translation of interaction 3 will be provided, to exemplify the production of an equivalent target script contributing to the multimodal construction of the participants' asymmetric relationship.

## *3. Phonopragmatic analysis*

### *3.1 Case study 1: Fiore, an albanian woman and the interpreter*

Since the phonopragmatic analysis is based on a correlated approach to acoustic analysis and auditory assessment of utterances produced in oral interactions, the following interactions have been treated by means of a first acoustic investigation aimed at defining the main suprasegmental variations characterizing each participant involved in the ILF encounters under examination. Speakers' utterances are examined with the aim of highlighting either pragmatic and illocutionary influences on the prosodic production of linguistic acts, and possible acoustic/auditory attitudes, triggering conflicting positions and possible misunderstandings in inter-ethnic exchanges, further fostered by power/status and knowledge asymmetries among interactants as well as their socio-cultural schemata through which they filter the interpretation of reality (Guido, 2008).

A number of prosodic paralinguistic aspects are considered: use of over-

all voice quality, pitch range, length, pitch movements and articulation rate used to show—consciously or not—attitudes (involvement, tension, anxiety, authority) or emphasize certain sentence parts (by means e.g. of pauses and non-lexical items). Moreover, intonational behaviours (in terms of pitch movements during the course of an utterance or a speech) give considerable insight into sentence phrasing and pragmatic structuring of spoken utterances into smaller tone groups.

In this perspective the participants' linguistic behaviour is examined according to their phonetic and prosodic correlates such as: (i) pitch (in order to verify prominence, i.e. stress and pitch accent, and the perceived correlate of *f0*), (ii) duration (in terms of timing, vowel lengthening, syllable duration, and speaking rate), and (iii) loudness (especially as perceptual correlate of intensity).

What follows are three significant utterances of the speech analysis taken from an extract (00:07:57-00:08:29) of *Lamerica*, when Fiore intends to impose the plan for his illegal business to an Albanian woman and her interpreter, using an ILF formal tenor and appropriate prosodic means. The phonopragmatic features of his 'ILF forms' reveal strong socio-cultural attitudes and asymmetries between Fiore's high status and the Albanian woman's low status. These intercultural discrepancies are realized through the acoustic and prosodic dimension: Western perspective and socio-cultural roles are established by means of pitch variations, pauses, and intonational phrasing.

In (1) the Italian businessman Fiore tries to impose his authoritative perspective:

(1)(.) *Noi dobbiamo dare ad ogni Albanese un paio di scarpe nuove* (.)<sup>2</sup>

The 'majestic' *we* (*noi*) is adopted to involve Fiore's interlocutor in his business plan and is reinforced by the modal verb *dobbiamo* ('we must'), pauses at the boundary tone, slower speech rate and the tonal pitch on *ogni* ('every') in an attempt to emphasize and successfully persuade his interlocutors of his plan. The same phonopragmatic attitude is moreover underlined in (2) and (3) as a tonal climax where the information structure is particularly affected and emphasized by the tonal arrangement:

(2) *Nella fabbrica ci sarà soltanto manodopera locale* (.)<sup>3</sup>

The register analysis shows the use of the future tense (*ci sarà*, i.e. 'there will be'), highlighted by the tonal pitch on the adverb *soltanto*



(‘only’) to give solemnity to Fiore’s illocutionary purposes. The use of the future tense is also employed in (3) where the pitch emphasis on *Albanese* (‘Albanian’) and *prmissima* (‘first’) aims at convincing the listeners of the important economic operation he is willing to undertake:

(3) >Utilizzeremo pellame Albanese di prmissima qualità<<sup>4</sup>

The paralinguistic dimension (in terms of proxemic and kinesic behaviours) is also important in the phonopragmatic investigation of this extract, where the physical opposition between high-status Italian and low-status Albanian is signalled by means of space arrangement (a table separates the seated participants; Fiore stares at the woman underlining his words with hand and eye movements; whereas the Albanian woman often smiles and leans her head).

These segments of speech are examples of the employment of different phono-prosodic strategies speakers activate to fulfil their illocutionary goals not only through the adoption of lexical and syntactic devices, but also through the application of prosodic and acoustic devices (as showed in Figure 1).

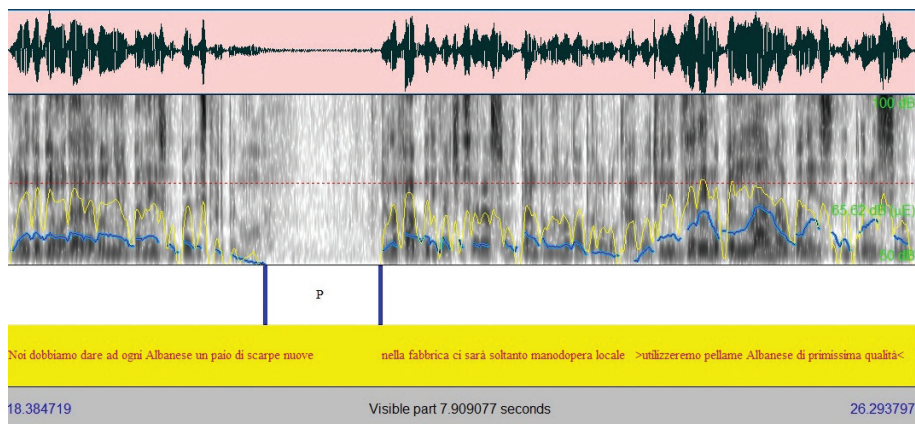


Fig. 1 – The utterance waveform, the  $f_0$  contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turns (1), (2) and (3)

### 3.2 Case study 2: Gino and an albanian doctor

The two extracts (00:34:51-00:35:18; 00:36:48-00:37:01) represent an important cross-cultural encounter among the Italian businessman



Gino and the Albanian female doctor who takes care of Spiro in hospital, as their utterances exemplify the intercultural asymmetries and tension emerging in terms of socio-cultural opposition and 'imposition' of roles and perspectives. Actually, Gino's 'ILF forms' are quite different from those adopted by the Albanian doctor and are characterized by distinctive phonopragmatic features revealing role and pragmatic dispositions. The acoustic and prosodic dimension realizes this role and attitude opposition by means of intensity variations, pauses and disfluencies, high vs. low tonal patterns, speech rate, and pitch movements.

In (4), the phonopragmatic analysis of the doctor's ILF utterance reveals—apart from her linguistic uncertainty—precise illocutionary aims signalled by linguistic and paralinguistic behaviours (cf. Figure 2):

(4) *Ma (..) non grave (..) ora bene (..) bene (..) voi (..) parente?<sup>5</sup>*

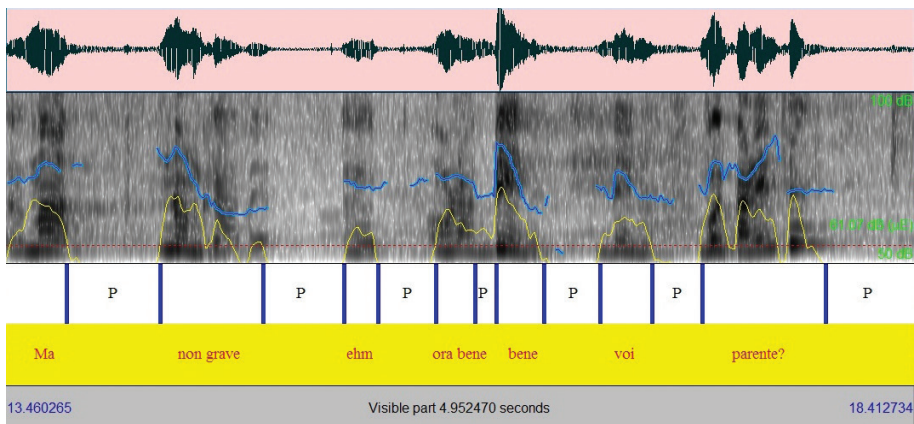


Fig. 2 – The utterance waveform, the  $f_0$  contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (4)

The changing tonal patterns and the high tone on *bene* ('better now') and *parente* ('family') signal the speaker's willingness to establish and maintain the conversation open in spite of her interlocutor's dispreferred reactions in (5) and (6) where Gino's dismissive and mocking tone reveals his intercultural perspective toward the doctor (cf. Figure 3):

(5) *>che vuol dire< qua tutti parla italiano<sup>6</sup>*

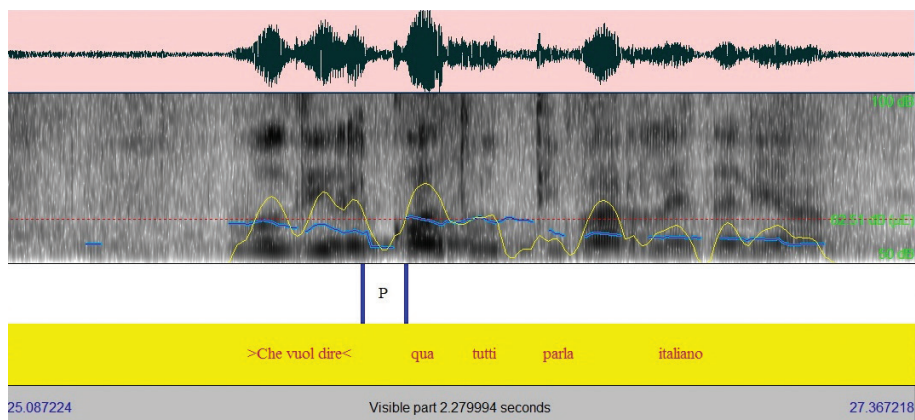


Fig. 3 – The utterance waveform, the  $f_0$  contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (5)

Gino's attitude is clearly showed by his informal tone and above all by the speeded-up *che vuol dire* ('so?') and the mocking form *qua \*tutti parla* ('everyone here talks') where the voluntary syntactic mismatch between the plural subject (*tutti*) and the third person singular (*parla*) aims to mimic – as higher status participant and Italian native speaker – the Albanian doctor's ILF variations.

Some cues after, Gino's patronizing attitude leads him to exaggerate the tonal patterns (especially on *scalzo*, i.e. 'barefoot') of his rhetoric wh-questions to the doctor (also evidently shown in Figure 4):

(6) *E io come faccio a portarmelo via? (.) SCALZO?*<sup>7</sup>

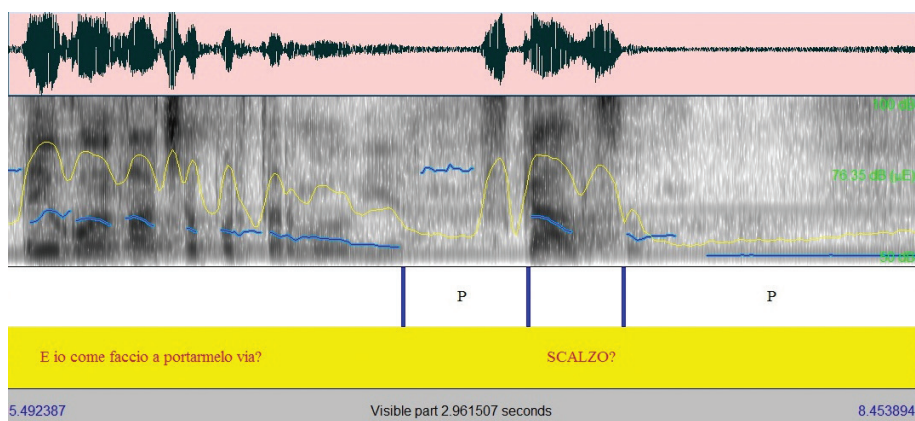


Fig. 4 – The utterance waveform, the  $f_0$  contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (6)

The perlocutionary effects of Gino’s upgrading tone on the Albanian woman are recognizable by her quieter tone, hesitations and repetitions. Moreover, the register analysis of her closing move shows the use of deontic modal verbs and lexical formality to close the interaction and leave the floor (cf. Figure 5):

(7) °*Mi dispiace*° *ma* (.) *non posso aiutarla* (..) °*mi dispiace*°<sup>8</sup>

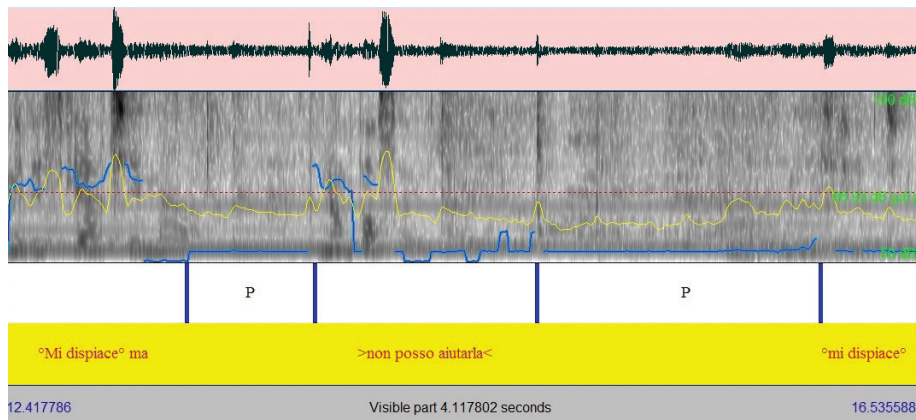


Fig. 5 – The utterance waveform, the *f*<sub>0</sub> contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (7)

The failure of the cross-cultural exchange is dramatically marked by means of both linguistic and prosodic devices: the repetition of *mi dispiace* (‘sorry’) testifies the woman’s involvement in Spiro’s personal history, but also a certain disappointment for his interlocutor’s communicative intensity (in terms of loudness and tonal patterns); however, her usual courtesy is signalled by the use of a formal closing (*non posso aiutarla*—‘I cannot help’) wisely related to long pretonal pauses.

Moreover, the paralinguistic dimension also helps to underline the cross-cultural asymmetry between the characters: the Albanian doctor’s embarrassment is confirmed by her use of spatial and kinesic aspects, such as distance and the avoidance of direct eye contact with her interlocutor, whereas Gino’s higher-status is imposed by means of the physical invasion of his interlocutor’s spatial zone and direct and steady gaze.

### 3.3 Case study 3: Gino and a police officer

The phonopragmatic features of the characters’ ‘ILF forms’ in the

third exchange (01:32:50-01:33:50) reveal a socio-cultural alteration of ‘standard’ gatekeeping roles, when Gino’s illegal business is unmasked and he is interrogated by an Albanian police officer. The acoustic and prosodic dimension shows a shift in the ‘standard’ perspective and a power inversion by means of pause timing and vowel duration, intensity patterns, pitch contour and level.

In (8) the police officer’s summoning move, preceded by a long pause, final vowel prolongation and silence at the boundary tone are easily recognizable:

(8) (..) *nome::* (..) *cognome::* (..) *e dove è nato*<sup>9</sup>

The police officer’s precise and blunt eliciting move (acoustically represented in Figure 6) does not leave room for misinterpretations: after a previous informal exchange, roles are now inverted and the higher status is challenged. The unemotional declarative tone—rhythmically marked—represents precise illocutionary goals.

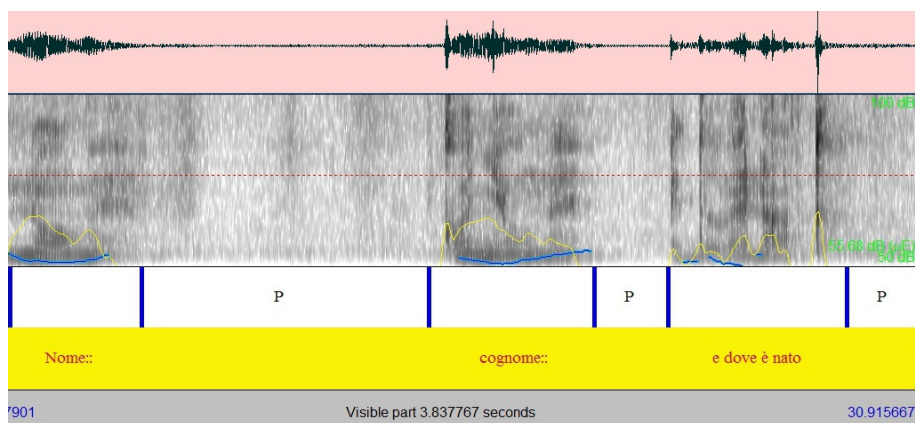


Fig. 6 – The utterance waveform, the  $f_0$  contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (8)

The perlocutionary effects of the police officer’s act in (8) are immediately perceivable in (9) where Gino’s backchannel is prosodically realized as showed in Figure 7:

(9) (..) *>ci lavoro<* (..) *lavoro con loro*<sup>10</sup>

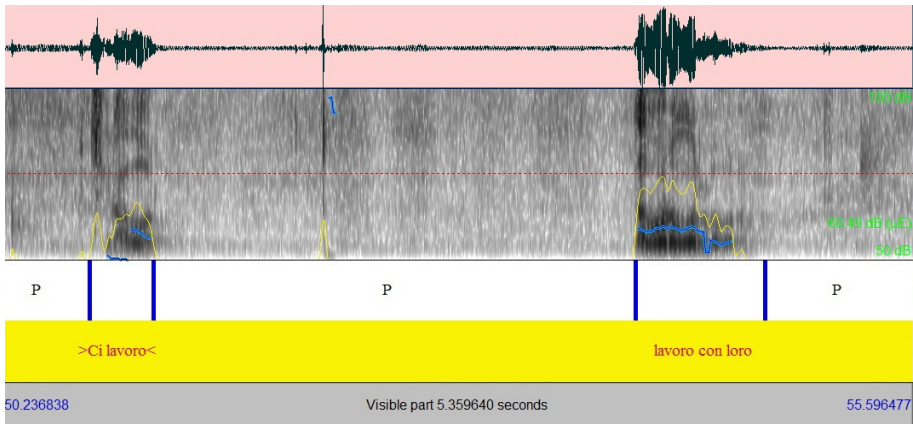


Fig. 7 – The utterance waveform, the f0 contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (9)

Gino's speeded-up talk and the long pause signal a final attempt to restore his initial higher status by trying to repair the subversion of social roles, and by searching in vain for a sort of complicity with the Albanian police officer. However, the informal and dismissive tone and the generic answering (*ci lavoro*, *lavoro con loro* – 'I work there, I work with them') are not appropriate for an interrogation and therefore his attempt is doomed to fail. Actually his interlocutor perceives Gino's intentions and the status inversion is finally realized in (10) where the police officer's linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour is aimed at imposing and making clear the role disposal: the use of the Italian mispronounced imperative form (*\*rispondo* – 'just answer') in suggesting the only answers admitted (*sì:: o no::*, i.e. 'yes or no') contributes to the pragmatic dimension of the utterance, yet mitigated by the downgrading *ti prego* ('please'), pronounced in a considerably quieter tone (cf. Figure 8):

(10) (..) *rispondo* (..) *sì:: o no::* (..) *ti prego*<sup>11</sup>

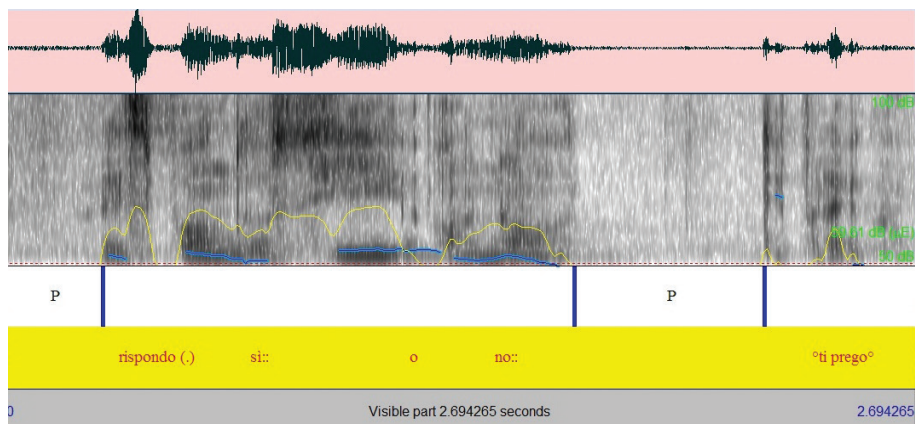


Fig. 8 – The utterance waveform, the f0 contour, the intensity and the spectrogram of turn (10)

Once again, the paralinguistic behaviour—in terms of proxemics and body language—contributes to highlight the pragmatic dimension of the encounter in terms of the Albanian police officer's higher status and unusual Italian submission, by means of tonal patterns, head and eye movements and space disposal (e.g. direct gaze, smiles, batonic hand movements, spatial distance, seated position).

Indeed the three case studies have revealed how phonology and prosody influence the effects of lexical and syntactic choices, as well as pragmatic intentions, in discourse comprehension and socio-cultural perception during cross-cultural oral interactions. The phonopragmatic analysis of the original ILF interactions, therefore, has paved the way to investigate the hybridization processes aimed at a written reformulation into ELF subtitles of the ILF spoken conversations.

#### 4. Analysis of hybridization

##### 4.1 Case study 1: Fiore, the Albanian woman and the interpreter

The aim of this section is to focus on the hybridization processes and the way(s) these are connected to the phonopragmatic analysis of the original ILF interactions. We will look at the lexico-syntactic and functional use of specific linguistic devices aimed at hybridizing (i.e., making accessible and acceptable), culture-bound concepts to an international audience. The method implies also considering the effective application of



the register analysis within a comparative discourse analysis.

One of the most relevant scenes in the movie in relation to the ELF reformulation is the one between Fiore, the Albanian woman and her interpreter. The scene tries to represent the power-asymmetrical relationship between the characters and thus different elements should be taken into account. In particular, we should consider the multiple levels of register interpretation involved within the analysis, which contribute to the making of the meaning. We refer to the idea of business and entrepreneurship embedded and transfigured certainly within the visual elements of the scene (cf. section 6.1), also through the phono-pragmatic approach (see also section 4.1), but here considered from the relevant point of view of ELF 'hybrid' subtitling.

The aim is not to focus on the textual and linguistic aspects of the subtitling per se, but relevantly on the strategies of reduction/addition/enlargement of their entities, in order to understand (a) the nature of the eliminations (where they occur and are collocated at the shifting levels of retextualization from the oral into the written), and (b) the pragmatic consequences that such avoidance of information could have at the level of target reception. The level of hybridization here may probably be interpreted also from the genre perspective (Swales 1990) as in the example of an indirect report of events actualized through the ELF subtitles which provide by addition a context to the event («She say Italian shoes best in world, she see on television», 'Ho visto in tv (.) le scarpe italiane -sono migliori al mondo'). The pragmatic effect is thus different insofar as the sensorial aspect through report is represented.

#### *4.2 Case study 2. interaction between Gino and the Albanian doctor*

The following example from another case study tries equally to focus on the ideological effects of the interaction. The lines quote: «Ah, Italian. How do you say...? Asphyxia, but not serious, better now. You family?» as an example of ELF reformulation in the subtitling of the original ILF concept of '*parente*'. It is interesting to analyse the example from the pragmatic viewpoint, i.e. within the specific situation where it occurs. The situated context is indeed an (ideological) representation of the exchange between the two differing status participants, wherein also social constructs are differently constructed and rendered. The most evident exemplification is the concept of '*parente*', which is rendered with the general term of 'family', the generalization macrorule thus also reducing the original concept into a more general one, although the choice may nonetheless preserve the pragmatic equivalence.



4.3 Case study 3: Gino and Albanian police officer

Hybridization is in fact meant in an extended sense in the development of the plot. As we can infer especially from case study 3, where the specific choices of the translator cannot be seen simply in relation to concepts, but applied to relations to be conveyed/made accessible. In fact, application of van Dijk’s macrorules could be explained here within a systemic-functional perspective of analysis (Halliday, 1994), as this allows one to convey or conceal the original social/asymmetric relationships between the participants by changing the sentence linearity, although with relevant pragmatic consequences. This viewpoint should be explained with regard to Gino’s utterance: «I gave my clothes away» determining a lack of communication, i.e. insofar as the ideological illocutionary force of the original statement is concerned (‘I miei vestiti—li ho dati via’). Such a difference at the level of functional equivalence may represent a difficulty for the target receiver, in the sense of the concept perception and the rendering of the original illocutionary force of the statement. Hence, such a lack triggers the need for a multimodal interpretation (cf. section 6.3), aimed at a clarification of the original meaning and at achieving an integrated ELF meaning interpretation.

5. Analysis of the ELF subtitling

5.1 Case study 1: Fiore, an Albanian woman and the interpreter

Fiore wants to create a shoe factory in Albania, called ‘Alba Calzature’, but his plan is actually a fraud, as he only wants to embezzle the money from aid grants. In the dialogue below, an Albanian woman is going to be convinced to become the company chairman:

	Italian Script	English Script
FIORE:	Signora, a Lei piace la scarpa italiana? Il cuoio morbido, la confezione moderna, il piede che poggia in un velluto.	Do you like Italian shoes? Soft leather, modern manufacturing, feet wrapped in velvet.
WOMAN:	[Parla in albanese]	[Speaking Albanian]

INTERPRETER:	L'ha visto in TV. Le scarpe italiane sono migliore al mondo.	She say Italian shoes best in world, she see on television.
FIORE:	Noi dobbiamo dare ad ogni Albanese un paio di scarpe nuove. Nella fabbrica ci sarà soltanto manodopera locale. Utilizzeremo pellame albanese di primissima qualità: vaccariello, capretto, agnellino... Lei, signora, sarà Presidente della Società 'Alba Calzature'.	We must give every Albanian a pair of shoes. We'll use local manpower in the factory and choice Albanian skins: lamb, kid, calf. And you will be the chairman of our company, Alba Calzature.

Whereas the woman speaks Albanian, her interpreter embodies the non-native speaker who resorts to an Italian lingua-franca variation entailing specific features such as a non-conventional pronunciation and syntax. Consider, for example, the definition of Italian shoes as the «best in the world», where the adjective *migliori* is rendered in its singular form, *migliore*, and not in the correct, plural one. The English variation adopted in the subtitles reproduces the non-standard linguistic features of the source utterances by means of syntactic structures such as the omission of 's' in the third person singular, in «She say[s] Italian shoes», or «[...] she see[s] on television», or the omission of the verb 'to be' and the definite article in the sentence «Italian shoes [are] the best in [the] world». It is here argued that the construction of the interpreter's ELF variation actualises the opposition between the high-status Italians and low-status Albanians from a linguistic perspective, integrating the multimodal representation of the different roles, rendered by means of their spatial arrangement, since a desk separates Fiore and the woman, and the latter politely answers the former's questions. For these reasons, despite obtaining a shorter script due to the spatial and temporal limitations of subtitles, the target version of the interaction under analysis can be considered a pragmalinguistic equivalent to the source script.

### 5.2 Case study 2: Gino and an albanian doctor

After discarding the woman from case study 1 above, Fiore and Gino choose a local old man as the future chairman of 'Alba Calzature'. The latter runs away, though, and is eventually found in a hospital, where a female doctor informs Gino about the old man's conditions:

	Italian Script	English Script
GINO:	È grave?	Is it serious?
DOCTOR:	[Inizia a parlare in albanese]	[Starts speaking Albanian]
GINO:	No, non capisco: parla italiano!	I don't understand, speak Italian.
	Ah, italiano. Come dice...? Asfissia,	Ah, Italian. How do you say...?
DOCTOR:	asfissia... Ma, non grave—ehm... ora bene. Bene. Voi parente?	Asphyxia, but not serious, better now. You family?
GINO:	No, che parente?! Io sono italiano!	No, of course not... I'm Italian.
DOCTOR:	Lui parla italiano con me.	He speaks Italian with me.
GINO:	Che vuol dire? Qua tutti 'parla' italiano. [...] Le scarpe dove sono?	So? Everyone here speaks Italian. [...] Where are his shoes?
DOCTOR:	Non avevo scarpe. Non avevo.	He had no shoes.
	E io come faccio a portarmelo via? Scalzo? Mi procuri un paio di scarpe, le pago. Pago.	How am I supposed to take him away? Could you get me some shoes? I'll pay.
DOCTOR:	Mi dispiace ma... non posso aiutarla.	I'm sorry, I cannot help.

Gino's high status is multimodally conveyed by the integration between his attitude towards the interlocutor and the linguistic perspective. In fact, he sometimes shouts while speaking and even imitates the woman's lingua-franca variation in a disparaging way. For example, in «Qui tutti parla italiano ['Everyone here speaks Italian']», the man resorts to the non-standard «*parla*», the third person singular form that replaces the correct *parlano*, third person plural. As for the subtitles, Gino's disparaging imitation of the woman's language is not rendered, but the asymmetric relationship is actualised by means of the differences between the standard and non-standard variations of English. The man's question, «How am I supposed to take him away?», in fact denotes a correct construction from the lexical and syntactic perspectives, and can be opposed – for example – to the doctor's «You family?», where the fragmented syntax is evident in the lack of verbal forms, if compared to the standard version «Are you family?». Similar features are contained in the utterance «But not serious, better now», where the subject ('he') and verb ('to be') are omitted. Even though the differences between the standard and lingua-franca variations represent the asymmetric relationship between Gino and the doctor, it is here argued that the ELF subtitles actually lack the reproduction of other,

peculiar behaviours of the speakers. For example, when the doctor explains the old man's condition, her hesitation needs to be inferred from the Italian acting, since subtitles omit the repetition of the sentence in «He had no shoes. [He did not]». At the same time, the imperative in the translation of Gino's order is not preserved, and «Could you get me some shoes?» – instead of the equivalent 'Bring me a pair of shoes' – creates a more polite version eventually resulting in a lack of pragmatic equivalence due to the arbitrary choices in the translators' interpretation and retextualization of the original semantic and communicative dimensions.

### 5.3 Case study 3: Gino and a police officer

The following interaction between Gino and a police officer takes place in an Albanian prison and subverts the conventional social roles, as the Italian man is now represented as the low-status participant. This change is multimodally represented by the characters' position in space (the two men are separated by a desk like in case study 1 – cf. section 6.1 above) and Gino's behaviour, which is different from the one he conventionally shows (cf. section 6.2 above). In the subtitles of this scene, the translators reproduce the modified power relation by means of the different features of the Albanian man's English, which lacks the lexical and syntactic characteristics of the lingua franca previously adopted:

	Italian Script	English Script
POLICE OFFICER:	Tuoi bagagli sono sequestrati.	Your bags have been sequestered.
GINO:	Che volete da me?	What do you want from me?
POLICE OFFICER:	Nome, cognome, e dove è nato.	Name, surname and place of birth.
GINO:	Cudrali Luigi, Agrigento, 30 gennaio '63.	Cudrali Luigi, Agrigento, January 30th, 1963.
POLICE OFFICER:	Fai parte di questa società chiamata Alba Calzature?	Have you anything to do with this company called Alba Calzature?
GINO:	Ci lavoro. Lavoro con loro.	I work for them. I work with them.
POLICE OFFICER:	Rispondo sì o no, ti prego.	Just answer yes or no, please.
GINO:	Sì.	Yes.

Despite the different power statuses, in the source version the police officer still resorts to an Italian lingua-franca variation, exemplified by the pronunciation of the imperative verb «Rispondo [‘Answer’]», instead of the conventional *rispondi*, or the fragmented syntactic construction of «[I] Tuoi bagagli sono [stati] sequestrati [‘Your bags were sequestered’]», with the omission of the definite article *‘I’* and the verb ‘to be’ (*stati*). If the subtitles are considered, the subversion of the conventional socio-cultural roles is in the selection of verb tenses that underline the policeman’s higher status. For example, the latter resorts to the syntactically complex present perfect passive in «Your bags have been sequestered», a tense which is not adopted by Albanian speakers in the previous scenes. Besides these syntactic and lexical features, a ‘tenor’ parameter-shift is identified as well, consisting in the alternative focus on the informative, not emotive function of the text. Consider the sentences «This Albanian prison is a very nasty place» and «I gave my clothes away». The former utterance is descriptive and unmarked, whereas the latter does not contain the original focus on the emotive tone, since by postponing the subject and verb in «I miei vestiti—li ho dati via [‘My clothes—I gave them away’]», Gino tries to protest against the subversion of social roles, which he eventually accepts agreeing to the police officer’s requests. Even though the left dislocation of object is a frequent syntactic structure in Italian language, the connotative-pragmatic dimension of its use – namely, the unwilling awareness of the subverted social roles – is conveyed by Gino’s audiovisual dimensions, precisely by his eye movements and tone of voice while speaking.

Finally, some alternative solutions are here proposed for the achievement of a different type of equivalence, rendering the original pragmatic and linguistic features. At first, different tenses are selected: for example, in ‘Your bag were sequestered’, the past simple is preferred to the present perfect, restoring one of the simple tenses that are generally used by non-native speakers (cf. MacKenzie, 2013). Secondly, «I gave my clothes away» is changed as ‘My clothes—I gave them away’ to provide a more equivalent target version. In fact, it is here thought that the subversion of the social roles should not be indicated by the different variations of ELF spoken by the police officer, but should result from the integration between the audiovisual dimension and the linguistic features of subtitles.

## 6. Conclusions

The phonopragmatic analysis of the English subtitles of *Lamerica* has adopted a pragmatolinguistic approach aimed at identifying specific lexical,

syntactic and stylistic features, in order to show different pragmalinguistic strategies applied to the construction of messages through 'ILF forms' in intercultural encounters involving Italian and Albanian speakers.

Furthermore, the analysis has underlined the prevalence of the written mode in the scripted ELF variation adopted in the subtitles, which is determined by the deletion/generalization macrorules, as well as the linguistic actualisation of the original power asymmetries by means of the contrasts between the standard and lingua-franca variations of English. The definition of the ELF variations as 'scripted' is meant to indicate that the non-native speakers in film exchanges generally resort to specific lexical and syntactic deviations according to the translators' cognitive construct of 'lingua-franca'.

Finally, since the reformulation strategies and the respect for the technical constraints of subtitles sometimes lead to non-equivalent target scripts, this paper has also proposed an alternative translation of one of the exchanges under analysis, adopting a cross-cultural approach to audiovisual translation that respects the linguistic, syntactic and functional dimensions of ELF, and which exploits the multimodal construction of audiovisual texts for the production of equivalent target versions.

<sup>1</sup> While the authors are responsible for the design of this study and for sections 1, 3 and 7, and have co-revised the paper, Pietro Luigi Iaia is responsible for sections 2.3, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3; Mariarosaria Provenzano for sections 2.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3; and Silvia Sperti for sections 2.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3.

<sup>2</sup> «We must give every Albanian a pair of shoes». Speech transcriptions symbols in this study are: underlining: emphasis (focus marking, maximum pitch); CAPITALS: louder speech (high intensity); ° °: quieter speech (low intensity); (.): micropause; (..): pause; :: : syllable lengthening; > <: speeded-up talk; (Edwards, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> «We'll use local manpower in the factory».

<sup>4</sup> «And choice Albanian skins».

<sup>5</sup> «But not serious, better now. You family?».

<sup>6</sup> «So? Everyone here speaks Italian».

<sup>7</sup> «How am I supposed to take him away?».

<sup>8</sup> «I am sorry, I cannot help».

<sup>9</sup> «Name, surname and place of birth».

<sup>10</sup> «I work for them. I work with them».

<sup>11</sup> «Just answer yes or no, please».

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