



**UNIVERSITE TOULOUSE JEAN-JAURES**

**Master Etudes Anglophones**

*MEMOIRE DE PREMIERE ANNEE*

# **Popularising Shakespeare: the case of dubbed films in France in the 1990s**

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*2015-2016*

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## Acknowledgements

*All my gratitude goes to Nathalie Rivère de Carles, for the very helpful and wise advice she gave me, and for believing in me when I did not.*

*I would also like to thank Mercédès Marion, Martial Camara and Frédéric Miotto for their support. And most especially I would like to thank Marion Périn who introduced me to Shakespeare when I was twelve years old.*

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## Introduction.

In the 1990's a great number of onscreen adaptations of William Shakespeare's plays were released. Going from the extremely faithful Zeffirelli's *Hamlet*<sup>1</sup> to the free adaptation of *Macbeth* by Disney studios' *The Lion King*<sup>2</sup>. With more than 20 film adaptations produced Ayanna Thompson labels the 1990's as "Shakespeare's decade."<sup>3</sup> The four hundred years that separate Shakespeare from a modern-day audience have caused the Bard's writings to be mistakenly thought to belong to high culture. Adapting Shakespeare's plays into movies, and the great success they have encountered, had the effect of re-connecting the Bard with the people. The English verb "to adapt" comes from the Latin "*adaptare*" which means "to make fit". As Julie Sanders said : "the adaptation of Shakespeare invariably makes him 'fit' for new cultural contexts."<sup>4</sup> Films such as Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing*<sup>5</sup> (*Much Ado*); Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo+Juliet*<sup>6</sup> (*R+J*) and Pacino's *Looking for Richard*<sup>7</sup> (*Looking*), show three different ways to make William Shakespeare's plays fit a 1990's audience, and bring the Bard closer to a contemporary audience. Branagh's *Much Ado* endeavours to present the audience with a realistic and entertaining<sup>8</sup> adaptation of Shakespeare's play so as to make the audience feel connected with the Bard's message. Luhrmann's adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*'s tragic love story takes place in contemporary world, yet both time and place remain unspecified, which functions as an evidence of Bard's relevance in a modern world and the universal nature of his speech. Pacino's film shows the process of understanding, staging and playing Shakespeare's *Richard III* in the 1990's. The film is divided between documentary scenes when people address their thoughts about the Bard to the camera, or when the actors rehearse their part. But also Pacino's staged and filmed adaption of the play, showing the actors in costumes and settings recalling the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The film blurs the frontiers between extra and intra diegetic worlds, in that respect it can be associated to the mockumentary genre<sup>9</sup>. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* aim at adapting the Bard (making him fit) to the 1990's, which implies a form of modernisation. By modernising the Bard, these three films aim at filling the temporal and cultural gap that separates us from Shakespeare's writings and hence to re-popularise him, that is to say to make him accessible to everyone, regardless of one's gender, age and social or educational background, as the playwright was in his own time.

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<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet* 1990 dir. Franco Zeffirelli

<sup>2</sup> *The Lion King* 1994 dir. Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson 2007: 1052

<sup>4</sup> Sanders 2006: 46

<sup>5</sup> 1993 dir. Kenneth Branagh

<sup>6</sup> 1996 dir. Baz Luhrmann

<sup>7</sup> 1996 dir. Al Pacino

<sup>8</sup> Branagh 1993: p.x

<sup>9</sup> A mockumentary is a film that presents fictional events in the form of a documentary. Usually actors improvise their own lines to capture a form of realism: this has the effect of blurring the line between reality and fiction.

As Lynda Boose said: “the significant way in which Shakespeare’s popularisation has been transformed [...] is by globalization and the emergence of transnational cinema.”<sup>10</sup> The exportation of Shakespeare film adaptations in France has revolutionised the way to translate Shakespeare. Dirk Delabastita explains that in *Othello* the handkerchief the protagonist gives to Desdemona, as a token of love, was to be replaced by some French translators by a crucifix as the presence of a handkerchief on stage in the performance of a serious play was not allowed by the classicist theatrical rules. Such a change is made possible in theatrical performance, but not in film translational, as the original product is finished and unchangeable. In *Othello* (1995 dir.Oliver Parker) Laurence Fishburne clearly presents Irene Jacob with a handkerchief. The adaptor<sup>11</sup> when translating the dialogues must use the French word “mouchoir” otherwise the actor’s translated lines would be in contradiction with film’s images. “The particular constraints that govern the translation of film, namely the co-existence of the sound and the vision channel, restrict the procedure open to the translator.”<sup>12</sup> Audio-visual translation (AVT) must take into account both the verbal and the visual channel of a film. To ensure the audience is able to understand the film’s plot, the translation of dialogues must be synchronised with the film’s image.

Two main methods of audiovisual translation exists in order to overcome the language barrier that separates a domestic audience from understanding a foreign film: subtitling and dubbing. Whilst subtitling presents a written transcript of the original spoken dialogues on screen, dubbing replaces the original voice track by one in the target language. The role of AVT is to render accessible a foreign film to a domestic audience by creating a cultural equivalent to the original whilst be in adequacy with the original film’s message and purpose<sup>13</sup>. As *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* share the purpose of producing popular onscreen adaptations of Shakespeare’s play, in the sense that they are accessible to all, it would appear that dubbing is the translational mode that best respects this intention. For subtitles are written information added on screen and synchronised with the film’s images, they create disparities amongst the viewers who might not all be at ease with the practice of quick reading that is a prerogative when watching a subtitled movie<sup>14</sup>. Dubbing enables all members of the audience to understand the film’s narrative. As a film is by nature a work of art that endeavours give the illusion of reality, this illusion must not be spoiled when the film is dubbed. The translational process must not draw attention to itself, for it would distract the audience’s attention from the film plot otherwise and break the cinematic illusion. As the practice of dubbing consists in replacing the original voice track by one in the target language, the new recorded and translated voice track must be synchronised with the film’s images and the lip movement of the original actors to give the impression that they speak in French. To do so the

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<sup>10</sup> Boose 2003 : 5

<sup>11</sup> The person in charge of translating the original film’s dialogues

<sup>12</sup> Munday 2012: 269

<sup>13</sup> Soh Tatcha 2009 : 503

<sup>14</sup> Sadoul 1965

translated dialogues must correspond to the mouth articulatory movements of the actors on screen. Any discrepancy between the film's images and the dubbed voice track reminds the audience of the artificiality of the product and breaks the illusion the original film had created.

Not only do the dubbed dialogues have to be synchronised with the film images, the dialogues of the target text must also be in adequacy with the source text's message and sound natural to the target audience. In other words, the screenplay has to be adapted to the target language and culture. According to Vinay and Darbelnet adaptation in the field of translation is the replacement of a linguistic feature specific to the source culture and language, by one that is in coherence with the target.<sup>15</sup> "L'adaptation n'est pas la reproduction, plus ou moins fidèle, d'un texte d'origine: elle prend place et sens dans un contexte socioculturel donné de production et dans un contexte filmique, esthétique de fonctionnement."<sup>16</sup> When it comes to *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* and the exportation in France the process of adaptation is twofold. A first adaptation was made by the directors and screenwriters to make Shakespeare's play "fit" the 1990's. A second one was made by the adaptor who was in charge of translating the original screenplay and make it "fit" to both the dubbing process and the French audience of the 1990's.

Dubbing is a translational practice thought to belong to low culture. It is generally attributed to entertainment movies considered not to hold any artistic values.<sup>17</sup> Robert Stam, in 1992, said that dubbing was a form of "cultural violence": "to graft one language, with its own system of linking sound and gesture, onto the visible behaviour associated with another, then, is to foster a kind of cultural violence and dislocation."<sup>18</sup> The very flaws Stam denounces about dubbing is what in fact brings it closer to Shakespeare film adaptations and to Shakespeare himself. *Romeo and Juliet* and *Much Ado About Nothing*'s plots are set in Italy (Verona and Messina) and all the characters are Italians. Yet the play was written in English. Having English actors play Italian characters is not upsetting to the audience who willingly overlooks this incoherence to appreciate the performance<sup>19</sup>. The purpose of *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* is to state that there is no such thing as an authentic Shakespeare, but that his plays are universal and timeless. Pacino declares that he wants to "communicate a Shakespeare that is about how we feel and what we feel today."<sup>20</sup> In order to do so they have dislocated his plays in both space and time. Dubbing as a practice (and the adaption process it implies) is the continuity of what Pacino, Branagh and Luhrmann did with Shakespeare's writings.

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<sup>15</sup> Darbelnet, Vinay 1995 : 39,40

<sup>16</sup> Gambier 2004 : 172

<sup>17</sup> Ascheid 1997 : 35

<sup>18</sup> Stam 1992 : 50

<sup>19</sup> Coleridge 1817

<sup>20</sup> Looking 0 :06 :23

This dissertation exposes the theory that dubbing popular and modernised adaptations of William Shakespeare's plays, such as *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* extends their popularising effect to France, and integrates Shakespeare's writings into the French Popular culture of the 1990's.

To defend this theory this dissertation will first analyse the strategies Kenneth Branagh, Baz Luhrmann and Al Pacino used to re-popularise the Bard and make his plays relevant to a 1990's audience. Secondly, it will report the techniques and specificities of French dubbing that aim at making the audience believe that they are watching a domestic production and preserve the cinematic illusion. Thirdly it will focus on the means the adaptor uses to create a cultural equivalent to Shakespeare's words that is in adequacy with the original film's purpose which is to modernise and popularise the Bard.

## I. Re-popularising Shakespeare: Adapting the Bard to the 1990's.

Shakespeare's plays are commonly and erroneously considered to belong to high culture, when in fact Shakespeare is popular in essence and in deed. Although many complex definitions are given of the adjective "popular", and of the phrase "popular culture," a rough definition, following John Storey's work, seems to fit the Bard's plays: what is popular, and by extension belonging to popular culture, is any artistic or intellectual activity that is well liked by many, and that originates from the people to be transmitted to the people, regardless of their age, gender or social and educational background.<sup>21</sup>

Shakespeare himself is a man of the people, son of a craftsman, he is from what is known today as the lower middle class. His plays mingle commoners and noblemen (such as in *Much Ado About Nothing*) and favour the encounter of high and low brow culture. However, Shakespeare managed to transcend the binary concepts of high and low culture, by joining the two in his plays, thus gathering and entertaining high society as well as commoners.<sup>22</sup> "Shakespeare drama is not about high-brow versus low-brow, but about how to create a more efficient discursive immediacy so as to convey deeper ideas to the greatest numbers."<sup>23</sup>

Probably because the English language has known great variations over the last 400 years, Shakespeare is no longer considered as popular, although his works are part of popular culture. Most people know the Bard's name and may even name a few of his plays, or quote *Hamlet's* famous line "To be or not to be." But few know more about Shakespeare. In order to discover what is thought of William Shakespeare and his plays, Al Pacino interviewed New York's streetwalkers. The recurring answer was that his plays were said to be boring and incomprehensible.<sup>24</sup>

Through filmic and modernised adaptations, Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann aim at reconnecting the Bard and the people, by making him accessible and relevant to modern-day audience. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* blend the worlds of theatre and cinema by juxtaposing cinema classics and Shakespeare's spectral presence. Thanks to modernised filmic adaptations, Shakespeare plays have been made popular again in the 1990's.

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<sup>21</sup> Storey 2006

<sup>22</sup> Rivère de Carles 2015

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Looking 00 :03 :45

## A) Modernising Shakespeare.

*Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* state the Bard's popularity and relevance in a contemporary world. According to Roland Barthes, the reader has to free himself from the author as an individual, in order to get in touch with his message.<sup>25</sup> Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann killed Shakespeare's canonical status, and bring him back to his original one: a popular author.

In order to do so, *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* have deconstructed his work and re-contextualised it. Branagh's *Much Ado* is not located in the city of Messina in Sicily, but in the Tuscan country side. Relocating the action from an urban setting to an arcadian-like one creates an impression of freedom from social conventions, and brings the characters back to a state of nature. The architecture of the villa and the costumes of the actors link the action with an unspecified past that could be sometime between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>26</sup>, thus emphasising Shakespeare's timelessness. Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet* is set in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. As in *West Side Story*, the feud between the Capulets and Montagues takes the form of a war between two gangs or rather two criminal families. "Fair Verona" has become "Verona beach," a colourful and bustling metropole, where brand new skyscrapers and ruins of a recent past coexist. The city is not specifically located but is very evocative of Latin America or South California. Transposing the play in a contemporary world stresses the timeless relevance of Shakespeare's speech of love freedom and rebellion.

Instead of locating *Richard III* in another time and space than the one described within the play, Pacino contextualises the plot and focuses on the issue of acting, staging and understanding Shakespeare now. Kimball and Pacino do not hesitate to recall and explain the historical context in which the action is set, as well as the link the characters have with one another. The film counts many scenes where the actors read their lines, do not understand them and have to rephrase them with their own contemporary words to get to the truth of Shakespeare's script. Kevin Conway demonstrates shows the great discrepancies that exist between contemporary language and Shakespeare's poetry: "In a contemporary play, somebody would say: 'Hey you! Go over there, get that thing and bring it back to me.' That would be the line. But when Shakespeare says it: 'Be mercury, set feathers to thy heels and fly like thought from them to me again.'" Pacino even proudly shows his copy of *Richard III*'s Cliff Notes to the camera. *Looking for Richard* explicitly breaks down the wall that separates high and low

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<sup>25</sup> Barthes 1967.

<sup>26</sup> Crowl 1997 :69,73 ; Brannagh 1993 : p.xiv

culture. Pacino and Kimball collect all sorts of opinion, may them come from scholars, comedians or New York's streetwalkers. As he amusingly declares "Do you know of William Shakespeare? We're peddling him on the streets."



Pacino aims at reconnecting Shakespeare with his lost status as popular author. When rehearsing the seduction of lady Anne in Act 1 Scene 2, Kimball and Pacino have an argument. Pacino is struggling with his interpretation of the character, because he does not understand Richard's desire to marry Anne. He suggests consulting a scholar on the matter. Kimball gets quite mad and declares that actors "are the proud inheritors of the understanding of Shakespeare" and that Pacino knows more about Richard III than "any fucking scholar from Harvard or Columbia."<sup>27</sup> In the following scene Pacino still went for the opinion of the British scholar, Emrys Jones, then professor at the University of Oxford. He declares that he does not know either what motivates Richard to marry Lady Anne. Proving that even though they have spent years studying Shakespeare, there still are certain elements that confuse scholars in Shakespeare's writing.

Showing the cast struggling with Shakespearean text re-assures the audience that understanding Shakespeare can be hard for everyone. But this process of explaining the play and illustrating such explanations with scenes in costumes also states of the timelessness of his speech. Re-phrasing Shakespeare words with contemporary language and bringing him to the streets is a form of re-contextualisation and modernisation of his speech.

In an effort to destroy the social hierarchy created by the erroneous conception that Shakespeare belongs to high culture, Branagh decided to diminish the importance of social hierarchy that existed in the original play. In his adaptation, aristocrats, servants and commoners are set on equal footing.<sup>28</sup> *Much Ado's* opening scene shows the characters, noblemen and servants alike, having a pick nick together (not together: some serve the others). They laugh and listen joyously to Shakespeare's words that Beatrice, perched barefoot in a tree, is reading to

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<sup>27</sup> Looking 00 :40 :09

<sup>28</sup> Crowl 1997

them. The scene is infused with idle joy, where all men and women, regardless of their social status, are entertained by the Bard's writing. This scene works as a prologue giving the spectators the assurance that they are about to see an entertaining Shakespeare. Furthermore, the costumes chosen by Branagh do not only erase all form of temporality, they assert the equality between the characters and, by extension, between the viewers. In the film, all women wear white cotton dresses with beige corsets.



Men wear blue trousers and beige jackets with blue collars. Only the Prince's brother, Don Jon, and his accomplices wear black trousers that match the black collars of their jackets.



Their costumes function as the visual assertion that they are the villains of the story, which corresponds to Branagh's intention to produce a Shakespeare adaptation that is easily understandable: "My continued desire in *Much Ado* was for an absolute clarity that would enable a modern audience to Shakespeare on film, in the same way would respond to any other film."<sup>29</sup> In order to do so, Branagh did not hesitate to reorganise the structure of the play, to make it more compatible with filmic media, and ensure utmost comprehension. Borachio and Don Jon's scheme to destroy Claudio and Hero's union is originally set in Act 2 scene 3. But Branagh decide to move it after Beatrice's gulling scene taking place in Act 3<sup>30</sup>. This has the effect of showing the two villains plotting on the eve of the wedding, just before setting their

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<sup>29</sup> Brannagh 1993 : p.x

<sup>30</sup> Brannagh 1993 : p.xiv

plans in action. Moreover, the director gave a modern interpretation to the word “talk’d” (CLAUDIO “What man was he talk’d with you yesternight” Act 4 Scene 1). A 1990’s audience would not have understood Claudio’s brutal rejection of Hero had she only talked to a man. In Branagh’s film, the action of talking is replaced by sexual intercourse. Using continuity editing, the director made sure that the audience would understand the characters’ mistake, and sympathises with Claudio’s rage that is only the manifestation

of his broken heart<sup>31</sup>. Whilst the action of “talking” is off stage in the play, Branagh deliberately shows the couple having sex as to tell the story with, as he puts it, “absolute clarity.”<sup>32</sup> The following shot shows Hero asleep in her bed, thus confirming it was not her at the window having sex with Borachio.



Luhmann, as well, modernised the Bard’s word, and gave a 20<sup>th</sup> century interpretation. *R+J* opens on a television screen. The prologue is said by a news journalist, making the story a piece of news. This does not only have the effect of integrating Romeo and Juliet’s story in a contemporary world, it shows that the play’s preoccupations with the repression of love and restricted individual freedoms are contemporary issues. Furthermore, Luhmann modernised Shakespeare’s Queen Mab’s speech about erotic intoxication by juxtaposing Queen Mab, love, and the use of drugs. During Mercutio’s monologue in act 1 scene 3, the fairy of dreams is described as such: “She comes in shape no bigger than an agate stone on the forefinger of an alderman.” When saying this, Mercutio presents Romeo with a small pill of ecstasy on his index creating a parallel between the fairy of dreams and drugs. As the ecstasy is



ornamented with a red heart crossed by arrow, the director extends Shakespeare’s discourse by saying that love is a drug. The scene is only 1min3s long but counts no less than 31 shots, most of them lasting

<sup>31</sup> Crowl 2003 : 77

<sup>32</sup> Brannagh 1993 : p.x

less than 3s. During longer shots, that may be up to 10s long, the actor<sup>33</sup> is constantly mobile, galloping like Queen Mab, and he is followed by a hand camera. The quick editing and constant movement of the frame makes the scene quite dizzying, symbolising the marvellous and yet unsettling experience of taking drugs and/or falling in love.

For the action taking place in the 17<sup>th</sup> century is transposed in the 1990's, some elements could create quite upsetting anachronisms. In the original play, the characters fight each other using swords, while in the 1996 adaptation, they use pistols. Luhrmann integrated the word "sword" in the film narrative by turning it into a weapon brand. So that the actors, when saying the word "sword", are not being anachronistic, nor are they at odd with the images, for they are referring to the brand of their gun: SWORD.



Rather than taking its viewers back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* bring Shakespeare to the modern world by adapting his plays to a 1990's film audience. These three films' cast comprises actors that are not generally associated with Shakespeare and the world of theatre. Although Al Pacino had performed in stage productions of Shakespeare<sup>34</sup>, he is better-known for his roles as Michael Corleone in *The Godfather* trilogy (1972, 1974, 1990 dir. Francis Ford Coppola) and Tony Montana in *Scarface* (1983 dir. Brian De Palma). Winona Ryder was cast as Lady Anne for the very reason she is a film actress and not a stage actress. Neither Leonardo DiCaprio nor Claire Danes had any experience with Shakespeare before acting in Luhrmann's adaptation. And *Much Ado* counts both stage actors and Hollywood stars like Denzel Washington ("America's most popular black actor"<sup>35</sup>) and Keanu Reeves ("America's most popular teen-heart throb"<sup>36</sup>). Branagh wanted to mingle "experienced Shakespeare actors who were unpractised of screen, and team them with highly experienced actors who were much less familiar with Shakespeare, [and] produce a Shakespeare film that would belong to the world."<sup>37</sup> Associating the Bard with American film actors asserts of his universality and accessibility. Furthermore, the presence of Hollywood stars is an excellent mean to attract an audience who wouldn't normally read or see a play by William Shakespeare. These three films have managed to create a link

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<sup>33</sup> Harrold Perrineau

<sup>34</sup> He played *Richard III* in 1977, and *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* in 1988.

<sup>35</sup> Burt 1997 :14

<sup>36</sup> ibid

<sup>37</sup> Branagh 1993 : p.x

between Shakespeare and the cinematic popular culture of the 1990's.

## B) Present, Past and Future.

In order to adapt Shakespeare to filmic media and connect him the world of cinema, *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* make aesthetics references to the film classics that are integral part of 90's popular culture. At the beginning of the film, Lurhmann's treatment of the fighting scene between Capulet and Montague boys is highly influenced by Sergio Leone's films. It even imitates some of his most emblematic shots. In a *Fistful of Dollars* (1964 dir. Sergio Leone), Gian Maria Volonte's character's arrival for his duel with Clint Eastwood's character is announced by an insert on his cowboy boots. Similarly, what is first seen of Tybalt are his cowboy boots.

<i>A Fistful of Dollars</i>	<i>Romeo+Juliet</i>
	

The character's face is shown for the first time in an extreme close up, while he is smoking a cigarillo, another clear reference to Clint Eastwood's character in *The Man With No Name* trilogy (*A Fistful of Dollars* 1964, *For a Few Dollars More* 1965, *The Good, The Bad, The Ugly* 1966 dir. Sergio Leone).

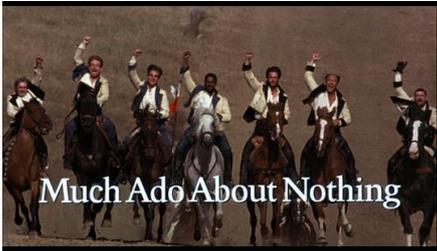
<i>The Good, The Bad, The Ugly.</i>	<i>Romeo+Juliet</i>
	

In *Richard III*, the character of Gloster inspires fear, hatred, fascination and admiration. Sinyard argues that Pacino's interpretation of Gloster in *Looking* is highly similar to his previous roles as mafia

gangsters<sup>38</sup> (Michael Corleone and Tony Montana). Because *Richard III* stages a violent quest for power that opposes and tears up two families, it can be compared to a mafia feud: “Remember we talked the others day about a gathering of dons, in a way.”<sup>39</sup> This interpretation of *Richard III*'s plot as a mafia film can be sensed in the aesthetics of the film. Al Pacino asked his director of photography (Robert Leacock) to reproduce the “faces in the shadows” style of Gordon Willis, who was Francis Ford Coppola’s cinematographer on *The Godfather* (which is probably the most iconic mafia film). The chiaroscuro of effect on both Michael Corleone and Richard’s face, aims at symbolising the ambiguity of their character: the brightness of their mind, and the darkness of their intentions.

<i>The Godfather</i>	<i>Looking For Richard</i>
	

Although he is originally a stage actor, Kenneth Branagh felt greatly inspired by Hollywood’s classics to adapt Shakespeare on screen. In his screenplay, the director did not hesitate to illustrate certain scenes by making clear references to specific films he drew his inspiration from. For example, when the soldiers arrive in Messina on their horses, Branagh described them in this way: “They look like a combination of Omar Sharif riding in *Lawrence of Arabia*<sup>40</sup> and *The Magnificent Seven*<sup>41</sup>”<sup>42</sup>. The comparison between the shots is easily made: both are long shots, showing seven horsemen riding in a rather desolated landscape.

<i>The Magnificent Seven.</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
	

<sup>38</sup> Sinyard 2000 :68  
<sup>39</sup> Looking 01 :09 :47  
<sup>40</sup> Lawrence of Arabia, 1962 dir. David Lean.  
<sup>41</sup> The Magnificent Seven, 1960 dir. John Sturges.  
<sup>42</sup> Branagh 1993 : p.viii

After Benedict has been gulled by Claudio, The Prince and Leonato, he finally realises that he is in fact in love with Beatrice. Out of joy he plunges in the fountain, and splashes water around. This scene is a clear echo to the famous film *Singing in the Rain* (1953 dir. [Gene Kelly](#), [Stanley Donen](#)). After seeing his girlfriend to her apartment, Don Lockwood (Gene Kelly) decides to walk home in spite of the heavy rain pouring. The actor expresses his joy to be in love by singing and tap-dancing in the heavy rain, splashing water from the gutter. Referring to the classics of cinema is a way to integrate and adapt Shakespeare to the new media, while at the same time showing that his stories are timeless.

<i>Singing in the Rain</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
	

Although all three films are modernised versions of Shakespeare’s work, they are infused with a sense of the past, as if haunted by the Bard: “The undead is that sublime thing, a liminal entity from the past but haunting the here and now, the past that refuses to vanish. Shakespeare himself and his characters are the undead in a sense.”<sup>43</sup> Spectrality is particularly evident in *Looking* as being both present in the diegesis (*Richard III*) and extra (documentary parts) in which the quest for Richard is more of a search for William. At the beginning of the film, The Bard shows himself to Al Pacino standing alone on stage, about to play his words.



His presence within the theatre reminds the actor of the pressure that comes with adapting the Bard and most particularly for the screen, which is not his original milieu. His sudden apparition also

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<sup>43</sup> Zizek 1993

states of his continuous presence and relevance in a modern world. Pacino and Kimball try to reconnect past and present, to be possessed by the Shakespeare's ghost through "method-acting type of stuff."<sup>44</sup> They go to the Cloisters<sup>45</sup> in Upper Manhattan, travel to Stratford, then to London to rehearse *Richard III* ghost scene in the Globe, so that "maybe in the rehearsal [they] could get a sense of those spirits."<sup>46</sup> The dream/ghost sequence intercuts rapidly shots of Pacino as Richard in costumes within the filmed play, with shots of Pacino rehearsing the part in his everyday clothes, and other shots of the documentary part. This intermingling blurs the line between diegetic and extra-diegetic world, implying that both Richard and Pacino are hunted; Richard by his victims, Pacino by the spectre of the Bard. As his ghost motivates him to adapt the play into a film<sup>47</sup>, it also raises the issue of faithfulness and truthfulness when transposing Shakespeare's play on screen. Peter Brook asserts and demonstrates the compatibility of Shakespeare verses and the big screen: "When you play Shakespeare, and you have a mike on and can really speak the verse [quietly] you are not going against the nature of the verse [...] you're allowing the verse to be a man speaking his inner world"<sup>48</sup> and thus be truthful to the words and their meaning. Pacino seems to have taken Brook's words at face value, for most of the *Richard III* sequences are shot in close-up or extreme close-ups.

*Much Ado* is as well infused with the Bard's ghostly presence, his *praesentia in absentia*<sup>49</sup> materialised by his words. As the film opens, half-verse by half-verse the white words of Shakespeare's song *Sigh No More* break the black screen and then dissolve to the rhythm of Emma Thompson's voice, offscreen, speaking them. The darkness fades away giving place to an audience of picnickers looking up to Beatrice reading to them. The intertextual apparition and vanishing of the words as the actor utters them work as a metaphor for adapting and reviving Shakespeare: the actor's voice brings the words to life, and as they disappear slowly others takes their place, as a form of continuity and morphing from literature to theatre, from theatre to cinema.



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<sup>44</sup> Looking 1 :30 :11

<sup>45</sup> The Cloisters are a museum of European abbeys shipped to New-York in 1934.

<sup>46</sup> Looking 1 :30 :09

<sup>47</sup> Derida "the desire to write is the desire to launch things that come back at you as much as possible and in as many forms as possible"

<sup>48</sup> Looking 0 :37 :00

<sup>49</sup> Zizek 1993

For the audience of picnickers in the diegetic “theatre” may see the performer, the extradiegetic audience only discovers her later, as if stating of the importance of the words, as well as the film’s hybrid form of cinema and theatre. The very fact that Beatrice, a fictive character, is reading a text written by the very same man who created her, shows the spectral presence of Shakespeare within the film, as belonging to both fictional and real world. Benedict’s and Beatrice’s monologues are additionally asserting this hybridity between theatre and cinema, as they are shot in long takes giving their speech a form of theatricality.

Although one of the most (post)modern Shakespeare film, *R+J* is also imbued with a strong atmosphere of pastness and theatricality that work as references to the playwright’s ghostly presence. The very opening of the film, showing an old-fashioned TV set (even for the 1990’s) places the audience in what they may recognise as contemporary world but that yet makes aesthetic references to the past like the flamboyant baroque-like settings shows: The Capulet Mansion, or the Church, or more symbolically the ruined Theatre in the amusement park, where Romeo and his friends meet.



This shell of a theatre, opened up to the free space of ocean, emphasises the theatricality of the mise-en-scène, making the characters’ life a performance. Donaldson argues that using a “large ruined proscenium arch” as a shelter for Romeo to write (his own lines that Shakespeare wrote for him) and Mercutio to perform and sing in drag, is a form of resistance to the media-polluted world of the parents and quarrellers, as well as being a cameo reference to Shakespeare’s Globe.

The ruined theatre is a romantic, undead presence of the past that refuses to disappear, like the bard himself.<sup>50</sup> It is interesting to notice that all three film try to revive the past, and bring it to a modern



<sup>50</sup> Donaldson 1999 : 198,199,200

audience, while at the same time reaching out for the future by attracting the youth.

In *Looking*, Kenneth Branagh tells of his first experience with Shakespeare. It was at school, where during the classes the students would read the text aloud, and then analyse it with the teacher. He declares this method to be absurd and dull because no connection is made with the real world. Certainly he remembered this feeling of being disconnected from text when he wrote his screenplay, and decided to produce a “realistic” Shakespeare adaptation.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Kevin Kline shares with Pacino the memory of the first time he saw a Shakespeare play in the theatre, when he was at university. The actor remembers that he got bored just ten minutes after the play had begun, and kissed his girlfriend to fill time. This anecdote is echoed later in the film. When Pacino performs the opening monologue of *Richard III* before high school students who appear to be much more excited about meeting Al Pacino than by the message he is trying to convey. The camera picks up two teenagers kissing in the twilight of the back row, creating a link between Kevin Kline’s youth in the 1960’s, and the youngsters of the 1990’s. Stating that Shakespeare must be adapted in such a way to show teenagers his plays are relevant and his themes eternal.

Indisputably, *R+J* was directed and marketed to attract the youth of the 1990’s. The two young and androgynous lead actors correspond to the beauty cannons of the time<sup>52</sup>, and their popularity amongst teenagers asserted the film to be teen-targeted. In 1995, Leonardo DiCaprio was already a teen idol, after starring in the ABC sit-com *Growing Pains*, and his Oscar nomination for best supporting actor in *What’s Eating Gilbert Grape* (1994 dir.Lasse Hallström) co-starring Johnny Depp. Claire Danes was the lead actress of the MTV show *My So Called Life*, which was sponsored by *R+J*. Indeed MTV and *R+J* teamed up during the promotion of the film. The channel aired “a half an hour special on the film, the week before [the film’s] United States Release, [and] ads blaring forth clip from the soundtrack CD<sup>53</sup>” which comprises numerous artists in vogue in the 1990’s, such as Radiohead, The Cardigans, Garbage, or Prince. In the film, the soundtrack illustrates perfectly the action on screen and might even work as a modern interpretation of Shakespeare’s text, as suggested by the film’s last song, “Exit Music(For A Film)”. The lyrics, although not written for the film, recall Romeo and Juliet’s passionate love and tragic death. The song speaks of two young lovers, whose union is disapproved by their parents and decide to escape their authority by killing themselves, and so be together eternally.

*“The dying of your tears  
Today we escape, we escape.*

*Pack... and get dressed  
Before your father hears us  
Before all hell breaks lose  
[...]*

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<sup>51</sup> Branagh 1993 : p.x

<sup>52</sup> Burt 1997: 18

<sup>53</sup> Burt 1997 : 18,19

*You can laugh  
A spineless laugh  
We hope your rules and wisdom choke you  
Now we are in everlasting peace."*

According to Anderegg, Luhrmann uses *Romeo and Juliet* to flatter the rebellious tendencies of teenagers. Transmitting to the youth a "screw the parents" message, that is not childish nor insolent, because it is coming from the great William Shakespeare, that has shown very lucrative<sup>54</sup>.

### C) Shakespeare Success in Hollywood.

*Much Ado* saw a great success: with an 8 million dollar budget, the film made 22.5 million at the box-office; and it was awarded the Plame d'Or, at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival. *R+J* knew an even bigger success, with its 14 million dollar budget, the film grossed no less than 46 million. Such gains show that *Much Ado* and *R+J* have managed to re-popularise the Bard in the sense that he is better-known to and better-liked by many. According to Trevor Nunn "It has become possible for many people to think in terms of filming Shakespeare almost entirely because of the achievement of Kenneth Branagh... the breakthrough success of his *Henry V*, followed by the even bigger success of *Much Ado* has made the film world, and Hollywood in particular, become interested again, when for years, everything concerning the Bard was darkness.<sup>55</sup>" Indeed by the end of the 1960's only but a few Shakespeare film adaptations had been (co)produced by Hollywood major studios<sup>56</sup> (The Majors). The Bard was even seen as a marketing liability<sup>57</sup>, for it was considered that the public desired for entertaining product that would bear the mark of "intellectualism". But Kenneth Branagh's unconventional adaptation of *Henry V*, proved the Bard was not only popular (the film won three Oscar in 1990), it was also lucrative (about 10 million \$ gross). The 1990's mark the reconciliation of Hollywood and Shakespeare for no less than twenty onscreen adaptations were produced, or co-produced by The Majors.<sup>58</sup>

The 1990's have spread Shakespeare's words to a part of the population who would not generally go see his plays. Hollywood film adaptations of Shakespeare have achieved to make him lose his high-brow connotation, by presenting him in a new and modern form, and with a cast that would be appealing to viewers that Burt calls a "mediating package"<sup>59</sup>. When an actor is cast in a film, he brings with him his persona. His previous roles and films infuse the new production with a certain connotation, making

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<sup>54</sup> Anderegg 2003:59,63.

<sup>55</sup> Nunn 1996 : p.ii

<sup>56</sup> Universal Pictures; Walt Disney Pictures; [Warner Bros. Pictures](#); 20th Century Fox; Columbia Pictures; Paramount Pictures.

<sup>57</sup> Burt 1997 : 08

<sup>58</sup> See list in Appendices

<sup>59</sup> Burt 1997:08

it belong to a certain genre in the public's mind. For example, casting teen idols such as Claire Danes and Leonardo DiCaprio aim at attracting a young audience. Casting Denzel Washington, who had just played Malcolm X (*Malcolm X* 1992 dir.Spike Lee), as the Prince, asserts of the modernity of the adaptation. Having action movie stars such as Keanu Reeves (*Point Break* 1991 dir.Kathryn Bigelow) and Michael Keaton, the 1990's Batman<sup>60</sup>, in a Shakespeare film adaptation, states that Shakespeare is not highbrow, nor does he belong to high culture, he is accessible and belongs to universal popular culture.

A good example of Shakespeare re-popularisation through Hollywood film adaptations, is to be found in the film *Clueless* (1995 dir. Amy Heckerling). The protagonist of the film, Cher, is a rich



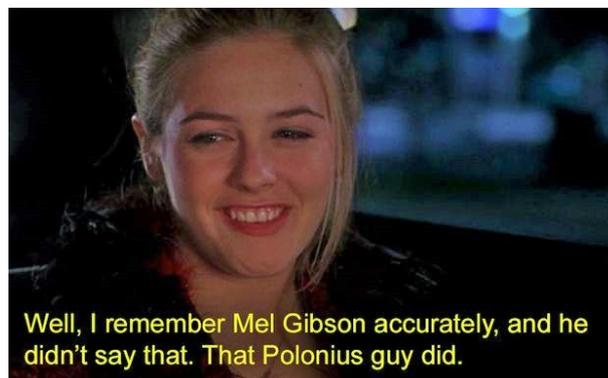
Beverly Hills high school girl, whose interest are only set on her appearance, her clothes and her reputation. As she finds herself penniless and alone after being robbed in the street in the middle of the night, she calls for her step brother, Josh, to come and bring her home. Josh comes with his girlfriend Heather. In the car a clear a distinction between the “shallow” Cher sitting quietly in the back sit, while the two “intellectuals” college students argue in the front. To illustrates her discourse Heather quotes Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but mistakes one character for the other. Cher corrects the young woman, who feels quite offended and retorts in condescending tone that she knows her Shakespeare. Cher answers that she knows her Mel Gibson even better. As she is a Gibson fan, she has seen Franco Zefferilli's *Hamlet* many times (in which Gibson is the lead actor) causing her to know Shakespeare's play by heart.

“HEATHER: it's just like Hamlet said: ‘to thine own self be true’.

CHER: Hamlet didn't say that.

HEATHER: I think I remember *Hamlet* accurately.

CHER: Well I remember Mel Gibson accurately and he did not say that. That Polonius guy did.”



Well, I remember Mel Gibson accurately, and he didn't say that. That Polonius guy did.

<sup>60</sup> *Batman* 1989 ; *Batman Returns* 1992 dir.Tim Burton

In this extract the roles are reversed: the know-it-all college student, becomes the ignorant, whilst the unread high school girl becomes the erudite. Even though Cher expresses herself in a familiar manner (“That Polonius guy”) she is able to quote Shakespeare perfectly, because the “mediating package” in which *Hamlet* was presented (that is to say the actor Mel Gibson) was appealing to her.

Although Shakespeare is a popular author, the English language and expectations of the audience have evolved for the past 400 years, whilst Shakespeare’s texts have remained the same, making it hard for a modern-day audience to get in touch with the message his plays try to convey. Appreciating and, more importantly, understanding Shakespeare must not be the privilege of educated part to the population, for Shakespeare’s plays were written to entertain all men and women, regardless of their social or educational background. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* aim at reconnecting the Bard and the popular mass. In order to do so they modernise the Bard. They cut out scenes that are not suitable to filmic media, they re-organise the play’s structure to ensure utmost comprehension, or they paraphrase and give modern interpretations Shakespeare’s words. This effort to re-contextualise the Bard in the 1990’s states that his plays are relevant. Those three film evoke the great classics of cinema to show the audience that the themes in Shakespeare’s theatrical plays are no other than the ones that can be found in the most popular films. The feud between the Capulets and the Montagues is akin to a gang war. *Richard III* opposes two families fighting for power, the same way two mafia families would. *Much Ado about Nothing* shows that loves trumps over proud and doubt; a message that can be found in many romantic comedies. Shakespeare must not be feared but be attractive: to do so, Branagh, Pacino and Lurhmann, have integrated the Bard to the popular cinema of the 1990’s. The short extract taken from *Clueless* shows that the Bard is accessible and entertaining to all, but have to be adapt to cinema and the rules it responds to.

## II. Dubbing Shakespeare for the masses: playing and re-playing Much Ado, Romeo and Looking.

In the late 1920's the first talkies (sound films) appeared, threatening film exportation. Language barrier was not an issue in the silent era as intertitles could easily be replaced by others written in the target language. But from the 1930's onward, films' verbal message became an integral part of the narrative. One could no longer rely solely on the images to seize the plot and its nuances. Film, like books, had to be translated. At first, Hollywood studios shot multiple-language version films. A screenplay was written in English, and then translated in many different languages (French, Spanish, Italian, German...). The actors would play the same film in all its different translated versions. As they generally did not understand the language they had to speak, they would have to learn their lines phonetically and repeat them with their heavy accent. But this was too costly a practice and eventually disappeared. The alternative to multi-language version films was subtitling. This translation method consists in the transcript of the onscreen dialogue. Another method was dubbing; which is the recording of comedians' voices reading a translated screenplay. The recording would then replace the voice track of the original, while the nonverbal sounds remain unchanged. Whilst the population of countries such as Norway, Finland, Sweden Britain, showed a preference for subtitled films; France, Italy, Germany and Spain preferred dubbing.<sup>61</sup> This division between "subtitling countries" and "dubbing countries" still exists.

Audio-visual translation aims at producing an equivalence to the original product that is both in coherence the target language and culture. A film is a work of illusion that gives this impression of reality, by hiding away all its artifice. Film translation has to be somewhat invisible to ensure that the illusion created by the original is not ruptured. Thus it has to answer to a certain amount of rules in order to make the audience believe that they are watching a local production. Henceforth, this section first contrasts dubbing and subtitling as means to translate Shakespeare in France. Having established the particular interest of dubbing to promote Shakespeare on film, this chapter then discusses the techniques and specificities of French dubbing. Thirdly, explaining the rules of synchrony dubbing must apply as to make the spectators forget they are watching a foreign film reinforces the argument of dubbed film making Shakespeare a local reference for the audience.

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<sup>61</sup> Tveit 2009 : 85

## A) Dubbing or Subtitling Shakespeare.

The exportation of onscreen adaptations of Shakespeare raises the question of how to translate them. Should they be either dubbed or subtitled? According to Reiss and Vermeer's skopos theory,<sup>62</sup> when having to translate any sort of text, a translator must reflect on the purpose of the source text and the purpose of its translation. When it comes to audio-visual translation, the translator must determine what message the film director wished to convey, who it is addressed to, and how such a message is delivered. The choice of the mean of translation must be in coherence with the original film's skopos. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *Romeo* aim at stating that Shakespeare is accessible to all, regardless of their social and educational background. Even though his plays were written 400 years ago, his plays and poems are still relevant to and entertaining for a contemporary audience. Enjoying them is not the preserve of a few enlightened people, but a right to be enjoyed by each and everyone worldwide. Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann's films' purpose (or skopos) is to gather everyone around the Bard. The goal of any translation is to enable a Target Audience to understand the message conveyed by the Source Text without betraying it. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *Romeo*'s popularising and unifying effect, must not be lost in the translational process. It would appear then that subtitling is unfit to transmit faithfully the popular Shakespeare those films had constructed to a French audience.

As Gottlieb defined it, subtitling is "the rendering in a different language of verbal messages in filmic media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text presented on screen in sync with the original verbal message."<sup>63</sup> Subtitles are written information; they imply that the spectator has to read a text to understand the film plot, instead of simply watching its images and listening to the dialogues. Given the fact that not everyone is at ease with quick reading, the understanding and appreciation of a film become the privilege of an educated part of the population,<sup>64</sup> leaving out children, uneducated or illiterate people.<sup>65</sup> Subtitling as a practice can prove to be elitist. Indeed, subtitles are conventionally attributed to the art house cinema genre that gives prominence to the foreignness of a product. If a film is considered as "artistically valuable" it is to be subtitled rather than dubbed<sup>66</sup>. Subtitling, which leaves the original voices unchanged, is thought to preserve the film's authenticity, and thereby ensures its status as a work of art and not a mere entertainment product. Because the action of reading is considered an effort by many, subtitles (subs) are seen as incompatible with the amusement and escapism a film ought to provide the audience with. Subs, however, are regarded as a prerogative of a said "intellectual

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<sup>62</sup> Reiss, Vermeer: 1985

<sup>63</sup> Gottlieb, 2001 :86

<sup>64</sup> Jean Lescure, 1965 " la version originale est un privilege de classe"

<sup>65</sup> According to the Institut Nationale de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques(INSEE), about 9% of the French population was illiterate in 2004. As the numbers decrease, it is probable that the illiteracy rate was much higher in the 1990's. However, since no studies were run in France before 2004 it is impossible to prove this fact. Jonas, 2012:01.

<sup>66</sup> Ascheid, 1997 :34

cinema.”<sup>67</sup> Subtitling a film classifies it as belonging to high culture. But Branagh, Luhrmann and Pacino wanted to transcend the binary concept of high and low culture, and be faithful to Shakespeare’s intention to produce a popular and entertaining, yet sophisticated discourse, accessible to all. The very nature of subtitles creates disparities amongst the audience, where only the educated ones can fully appreciate the quality of the product. In addition, France usually reserves this practice to a certain genre, considered as more intellectual than entertaining. Subtitling, then, confers on Shakespeare’s works a form of elitism that his modern film adaptations had managed to destroy.

More than just creating disparities amongst the viewers, subs also betray the directors’ intention to present the audience with Shakespeare words. Quite obviously, a certain amount of the original text cannot be translated in subtitles. Either because it is “untranslatable” or because a specific reference would not make sense in the target language and culture. Because subtitles must be in perfect synchronisation with the images of the motion pictures, space and time constraints are added to the translational process. Subs should contain between 33 and 40<sup>68</sup> characters per lines. They may not be longer than two lines and have to be synchronised with the original dialogue track in order to enable the audience to make a link between what is heard and seen and what they read. To make the translated text quickly readable and easily understood, the subtitler has to simplify the original dialogue by eliminating the elements considered as unnecessary to understand the film’s narrative: “The subtitler does not have room for wordy formulations or complex structures: in order to ensure readability, brevity is the essence [of subtitling].”<sup>69</sup> It is estimated that about 40% of the source text is lost in this process.<sup>70</sup> The essence of subtitling seems then to be at odd with the essence of Shakespeare’s text : poetry and rhetoric. In *Much Ado*, Emma Thompson, playing Beatrice, speaks quite quickly so as to illustrate the rapidity of her wits.<sup>71</sup> The subtitler is left with no choice but having to go straight to the point.

Original Version	Dubbed Version	Subbed Version
Foul word is but foul wind, foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome. Therefore I will depart unkissed.	Des mots puants ne sont que souffle puant, et souffle puant vient d’haleine puante, et haleine puante est chose immonde. Et donc je ne veux pas de votre baiser.	Les mots puants viennent d’un souffle puant et donc je ne veux pas t’embrasser.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Mason 1989 :14

<sup>69</sup> Tveit 2009 :86

<sup>70</sup> Sadoul 1965

<sup>71</sup> *Much Ado* 01:30:00

Due to the great constraints of time and space, subs are only a summary of the actors' dialogues<sup>72</sup> which appears to be in contradiction with the film's purpose to present the viewers with Shakespeare's poetic words. Furthermore, too brief a translation may cause the audience a certain sense of frustration. For example, when Benedict complains about Beatrice to the Prince and Hero, the subtitler translated "huddling jest upon jest with impossible conveyance upon me," by "elle m'a lancé tant de railleries."<sup>73</sup> Although the translation is idiomatic and transposes Benedict's words well, it is significantly shorter than Branagh's utterance.



The English subs (that are identical to the spoken line) are 57 character-long, the French subs reduce the count to 33. The estimated time to read 30 characters is 2 seconds, however the actor speaks for about 5 seconds. During the extra 2/3 seconds when the actor's speech is not subbed, the spectator is able to sense that certain elements of the original text are excluded in the translation. Which causes a certain sense of discomfort to the audience, who is momentarily distracted from the intrigue<sup>74</sup> and wonders what the actor says that he cannot understand.

Similarly, in *Looking*, part of Kevin Kline's interview is not translated in subs. Kevin Kline confesses that during the first Shakespeare play he saw at university, he was so bored that he would rather kiss his girlfriend than watch the show.<sup>75</sup> Although the French subs count only 40 characters, the



<sup>72</sup> Ascheid 1997:33

<sup>73</sup> Much Ado 00 :28 :38

<sup>74</sup> Ascheid 1997 : 34

<sup>75</sup> Looking 00 :04 :40

short length of the utterance (only 3 seconds) forced the subtitler to leave out this anecdote, probably deemed irrelevant. Wrongly though, for this statement is echoed later on in the film, when the two teenagers kiss during Pacino's performance,<sup>76</sup> connecting the two different generations together, and showing that Shakespeare has to be adapted and re-contextualised in order to be appreciated by a young audience. However Kline's anecdote is present in the French dubbed version: "on a plus du tout suivi. On s'est peloté, embrassé, et à l'entracte on est parti." This fact implies that when watching the subtitled version, the viewer is unable to make a link between the two scenes and miss out an important message that the film tries to advocate, while it is still present in the dubbed version.

If the lack of elements translated in the subs may be unsettling to the viewer, the abundance of subtitles may be all the more disturbing. In *Romeo*, the soundtrack belongs to both the extra and intra diegetic spheres. It illustrates the narrative as well as being part of it. The subbed version of the DVD presents the viewer with the translation of the songs, enabling them to appreciate fully the importance and relevance of the soundtrack. Mercutio's first appearance on screen, at the movie house<sup>77</sup> is accompanied by the song "Young Hearts Run Free" performed by Kym Mazelle.<sup>78</sup> In this scene the song is part of the extradiegetic soundtrack, but also part of the dialogue track, for Mercutio sings the lyrics. Implying that the song is playing within the narrative as well. In order to make a difference between the verbal elements that belong to the extradiegetic soundtrack, and those that are part of the narrative, the subtitles are in two different typographies: what is extra is in italics, what is intra is straight.



But, when Mercutio shows his friends his invitation to the Capulets' ball, another kind of typography appears on screen. For the invitation is shown to the audience in an insert, the subtitler chose to translate the graphic elements present on it in capital letters. Having three different kind of typewriting in the same scene, make it quite difficult for the spectator to understand what the subtitles correspond to.

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<sup>76</sup> Looking 00 :11 :35

<sup>77</sup> Romeo 00 :19 :09

<sup>78</sup> Kym Mazelle. "Young Hearts Run Free." Capitol Records, 1997.



While translating the song is relevant, for it illustrates and give emphasis to the adolescents' urges for love and freedom; the translation of the invitation is superfluous. The subs read "INVITATION A UN BAL COSTUME", when the elements of true importance on the card were "Mercutio and friends", as it is thanks to Mercutio that the Montague may go to the ball, that are not transcribed. Paradoxically, the inserts on the characters' guns showing the engraved word "sword" are not subtitled. While this translation would have been appreciable to understand how thoroughly Luhrmann worked at modernising Shakespeare; subtitling the invitation to the Capulet ball only brings yet another visual signifier on screen.

It must be recalled that subtitles are visual signifiers added to (if not over) other visual signifiers. As such they divide the spectators' attention, which may thus face the choice of reading or watching the film.<sup>79</sup> This is particularly true with film adaptations of Shakespeare. As the dialogues are complex poetic structures, demanding more attention to be understood than common everyday language. Therefore, reading the subs of a Shakespeare film request additional effort. Even Georges Sadoul, scholar and audio-visual translator, declared that, when it comes to translating the Bard, subtitles are not the best of choice: "Je comprend assez bien l'anglais pour suivre un dialogue de film contemporain. Mais la langue de Shakespeare est bien compliquée à comprendre pour un Français un peu Anglophone, même pour un citoyen Britannique de culture moyenne. Écoutant [*Hamlet*] de Lawrence Olivier et perdant le sens de certaines grandes tirades, je devais donc lire attentivement les sous-titres [...] J'en arrivais si bien à méditer les écrits que j'en perdais de vue les images."<sup>80</sup> A film contains both visual and verbal information that are of equal importance for the understanding of the plot<sup>81</sup>. Asvisual signifiers, subtitles do not only divide the viewer's visual attention, it also alters the original product. The way a story is shown is as important as the way it is told. Editing and frame construction are integral parts of the narrative. In this shot from *Looking for Richard*, The duke of Buckingham (Kevin Spacey) is kneeling down before King Richard (Al Pacino). His face is at the bottom of the frame as to show his

<sup>79</sup> Goris 1993 : 171

<sup>80</sup> Sadoul 1695

<sup>81</sup> « The film establishes a multi-channel and multi-coded type of communication » Delabastita 1989 :196

submission and foreseeable fall down. But the actor's face is completely hidden by the French subtitles. The visual language of the film is replaced by a written one, as if of more importance.



Similarly, this extreme close-up of Al Pacino shows the character's ambiguity. Half of his face is hidden in the shadows, the other is lit. This shot illustrates his villainy and the brightness of his mind while symbolising the audience's hatred and fascination for the character.



In this shot, not only are the subtitles inscribed on the very face of the speaker, they also spoil the significant chiaroscuro effect. Because the whiteness of the subs contrast too greatly with the dark background, they attract the eye and divert the attention from the actor's face.

Conversely, the visual impact of a film images may distract the audience from reading the translation, making it hard for them to follow the plot. According to McGruk and Macdonald: "visual perception greatly interferes with the understanding of speech."<sup>82</sup> When watching and listening to a film, the viewer has a better understanding of the speech if both images and sound coincide. In cinema, appears to be harder to comprehend a verbal message if the speaker has his back turned to the camera. When watching a subtitled audio-visual product, the viewer has to focus on the moving images, and at the same time, read the subtitles, in order to decipher the language he is hearing but unable to understand. But, if the visual channel, that is to say the film images, provides too many visual information, the viewer's attention might be more set on the images than on the translation. During Mercutio's Queen

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<sup>82</sup> McDonald, McGurk : 1976, Gallardo 2014 :5

Mab monologue<sup>83</sup>, the action and visual channel of the film is so captivating it may disable the viewer from reading the subs. This scene of just 1min3s counts no less than 31 shots. Most of them are shot-reverse-shot of no more than 3 seconds. The human eye being naturally attracted by movement, the extremely fast paced editing makes of this scene it hard for the audience to read the abundant text, that is, of course, static. The constant change of frame and moving camera attracting his attention.<sup>84</sup> This dizzying editing illustrates perfectly Mercutio's words, (unfortunately when viewing the subtitled version) the visual channel takes over, and Luhrmann's interpretation of Queen Mab may not be fully appreciated by the viewers. It may even create a certain sense of discomfort. In order for rapture to happen, images, speech and its translation, must be synchronised: dischronies break the cinematic illusion, for they remind the audience of the artificiality of the film. In *Romeo*, during the fight scene at the Phoenix Gas Station scene, the Montague boys provoke the Capulets. Knowing that Benvolio is about to lend them a hand, the boys decide to go further in their provocation. The French subtitles for the spoken line are two shots ahead. The subs appear on screen at 5:03 whilst the line is only spoken at 5:07 and is left untranslated. Such technical mistakes disturb and confuse the audience, who can't make a link between text and dialogue.



More than just dividing the viewer's attention between text and images, subtitles are the visual reminder that the audience is watching a foreign and illusionary product, which may cause a break in the cinematic illusion the original had created. According to Ascheid: "Subtitling ruptures the ease with which character identification normally proceeds. [It] results in the perception of 'difference' rather than the confirmation of 'sameness' and identification, which potentially leads to a considerable loss of pleasure during the [cinematic] experience."<sup>85</sup> The soundtrack translation in *Romeo* enables a French viewer to understand the lyrics as an English speaker would. However, this concern to be the most faithful possible to the original film may lead to a break in rapture. *Romeo and Juliet's* first encounter takes place in a powder room accompanied by Desree's song "Kissing You". The beginning of the scene

<sup>83</sup> *Romeo* 00:20:25

<sup>84</sup> Taylor 2003 :192-3.

<sup>85</sup> Ascheid 1997:34

is intercut briefly with shots of the ballroom where the artist's performance managed to quiet down the overwhelming agitation that took place in the ballroom the moment before.



As in Mercutio's drag scene at the ruined movie house, the song is both part and out of the narrative. It illustrates the lovers' first meeting, and reinforces the peaceful and romantic atmosphere of the scene. However its translation in the subs is most unsettling. The spectator instead of focusing on the protagonists, focuses on a speaker, in this case a singer, who is not on screen. The song that ought to create a romantic atmosphere, and hence be only illustrative, draws too much attention to itself when translated. Moreover, certain lyrics that are perfectly acceptable in English are at odd with French culture. For example the lyrics "touch me deep" are translated by "touche-moi". Hearing words and reading them do not have the same impact on the viewer.<sup>86</sup> And whilst the English lyrics are upsetting, their French translation present too much a sexual connotation that is at odd with the rest of the scene. The subtitler even decided to subtitle the vocals of singers, which present no interest for the viewer as they are not words but only notes, making the subs grotesque and highly disturbing. Furthermore, French speakers are used to listening to songs in English without feeling frustrated not to understand the lyrics. Translating an extradiegetic song translated reminds French audience that they are unable to understand certain aspects of a film. It states of the product's foreignness instead of making the receiver connected with the message.



As Desprats said "a text by Shakespeare is first and foremost a text written for mouths, bosoms and breaths." But, subtitles, by nature, are written information. They impose the action of reading Shakespeare on the viewer, instead of that of hearing Shakespeare which was Branagh's, Pacino's and

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<sup>86</sup> Mason 1989 : 18

Luhrmann's intention. Moreover, they create a double speech within the film. The original and the new version coexistence lets the spectator know of the translational process, which asserts the film's artificiality rather than preserving the illusion created by the original. The population of countries such as Sweden, Norway and Finland, are used to subtitles. They are able to read the subs and hear the dialogues simultaneously, without any sort of discomfort<sup>87</sup>. However, France has a long history with dubbing that was the main mode of translation in the 1990's<sup>88</sup>. For culturally subtitles were associated with art house cinema, subtitling would automatically classify Shakespeare films as high culture. Which goes against the purpose of *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *Romeo*, to produce entertaining Shakespeare adaptation and bring down the concepts of high and low culture. Since translating is transformation of a foreign product into an equivalent that is accessible and acceptable to the target culture; the mode of translation chosen must be both in coherence with the source text skopos, and the culture of the target country.

## B) The techniques and specificities of French dubbing

One of the main argument in favour dubbing is that it leaves the original images unchanged, and does not alter the nature of the medium. The visual channel of a dubbed film is identical to the original, and the verbal message is replaced by another verbal message. As Alfred Hitchcock confessed to Francois Truffaut "Un film circule dans le monde. Il perd 15% de sa force s'il est sous-titré. 10% seulement s'il est bien doublé, l'image restant intacte."<sup>89</sup> Frames construction, editing and staging are of truly importance to construction of the narrative. The translation of a book must respect the structure of the source text (chapters, punctuation). "The language of film, [has] its own grammatical rules and its own particular logic"<sup>90</sup> When translating a film, attention must be paid to the editing choices the director have made, for it is the bone structure of a film. Frédéric Chaume defends the idea that in order to produce a good, idiomatic and faithful translation of a movie, the dubbing team must pay as much attention to the visual channel as they do to the verbal<sup>91</sup>.

It would appear that of the four European dubbing countries France is the one that endeavours to respect cinematic language as much as possible. Indeed, the recording of the dubbed version vary

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<sup>87</sup> Ascheid 1997 :35

<sup>88</sup> Pommier, 1988

<sup>89</sup> Sadoul 1967

<sup>90</sup> Chaume 2007 : 177

<sup>91</sup> Chaume 2004 : 22

from one country to the other. In that respect, dubbing is an area of translation where “localisation beats globalisation.”<sup>92</sup> Dubbing is a culturally specific practice.

When a foreign studio wishes to have a film dubbed into another language, they send a copy of the finished film and screenplay to a dubbing studio in the target country. The screenplay is translated and adapted in order to make it sound as idiomatic and natural as possible. At the same time the translator and adaptor endeavour to make the translated dialogues match with original actors' articulatory movements *of the mouth*. Various dubbing symbols are added to the screenplay. This process is quite important as synchronisation is essential to give the illusion that the actors on screen are speaking the target language (this process of synchronisation will be further discussed in II.C). These dubbing symbols indicate to the actors and the dubbing director the visual elements that have to be respected during the recording of the dubbed track, such as the comedians' reactions (laughters, cries, surprise) and the labial consonant present in the original text. Labials and bilabials require a full close of the mouth, which is visible by the spectator. The dubbed track must match with the performance seen on screen. In Germany, Spain and Italy, the translated and annotated screenplay is placed on a lectern, inside a dubbing cabin where the actors read the text aloud. In France, instead of reading the screenplay from a lectern, dialogues are typed at the bottom of the screen in a white track: the *rythmo band* (la bande rythmo.) The original film is projected on a big screen, the dialogues and dubbing symbols scroll beneath the images from right to left. When the dialogue lines cross a vertical line, called “la barre de precision” at the left of the track the actors start speaking<sup>93</sup>. The many dubbing symbols present on the *rythmo band*, underneath the dialogues, are added by the detectors (“people who are responsible for synchronising the dialogues”<sup>94</sup>) When given the original film and screenplay, the *détecteur* writes the dubbing symbols on the master track (la bande mère). It is a white scroll, with the original dialogues written on it, above and/or beneath the words the detector would indicate the mouth articulatory movements, the actors' reactions, if they are on or off screen, but also visual elements such as a change of shot. During “the detection, the technician also segments the original script into what is called “boucles” (takes), and numbers them. The master track is then given to the translator and adaptor. Once translated, the dialogues will be performed and recorded according to the segmentation the detector has done of the original. Takes are usually less than a minute long but there are no established limits for the duration of a take or the number of lines it contains. Instead detectors follow the audiovisual criteria that structure the narration. This means that action breaks, fade-ins and outs, a change of scenery, the introduction or exit of a character, are motives to finish a take and begin a new one. Like the master track (la bande mère), the segmentation of the film into takes according to editing and the narrative is also specific to French dubbing. In Spain, the translated text is divided into portions of ten (or eight) lines.

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<sup>92</sup> Chaume *Localisation* 2007 :203

<sup>93</sup> Chaume *Localisation* 2007 : 205

<sup>94</sup> *ibid*

In theory, a change of scene should ask for a new take. But as the actors are paid according to the number of takes they effect, and not the number of lines they read, the dubbing managers prefer to record fewer but longer takes, therefore neglecting the narrative construction of the original<sup>95</sup>. Germany does not split the screenplay according to a particular number lines, but according to time. Takes are usually between 3 or 10 second-long. Even if “the German tradition [as the French] respects the audio-visual narrative criteria in as far as possible<sup>96</sup>” such short takes may be at odd with certain scenes. For example: Benedict and Beatrice monologues are sequence shots, lasting respectively 2min54s and 55s. The director’s choice to film those scenes in one single take, is a clear reference to theatrical performance that must be respected in the dubbing process. Presumably, each monologue should constitute a “boucle” in the French screenplay, and Patrick Poivey (Kenneth Brannagh) and Frédérique Tirmont (Emma Thompson) would have recorded their monologue in one single take, conserving the theatricality of the original scenes. Unfortunately, due to the lack of evidence and documents relating to the dubbing of *Much Ado*, I can only posit a practical hypothesis here. The three stages of French dubbing aim at creating a strong link between the dubbed the version and the original visual product. The meticulous segmentation of the translated screenplay ensure that the audio-visual structure of the film is respected; a change of scene in the original commands for a new take in the recording. Detection aims at creating a perfect match between the lip-movements observed on screen and the translation. Finally the use of the rythmo band enables the actors to perform in coherence with the visual channel; watching the original actors’ performance helps the dubbing comedian to understand the emotion and intention they wished to transmit the audience, and re-produce it.

In that respect French dubbing is highly similar to ADR (additional dialogue replacement) or post-synchronisation. This technique consists in having the original actor re-record his/her own lines after the film and (usually) editing, to guarantee the best sound quality, diction and timing. In a recording studio, the (original) actor is shown the scene with the sound taken on set, and then re-performs the lines. The record constitute the final soundtrack version that will be shown to public. It is undeniable that *Much Ado*, *Romeo* and *Looking* had to resort to this technique. In *Romeo* and *Much Ado* many scenes were shot outdoors (even close to the ocean in the case of *Romeo*) which most commonly result in unusable sound, and requires the use of ADR. In *Looking for Richard*, when Richard seduces Lady Anne, the sound quality was very poor. Winona Ryder’s voice was so inaudible the actress had to be post-synchronised by Kate Burton.<sup>97</sup> Both in the original and the dubbed version, the actors on screen are ventriloquist’s puppets. Cinema has the audience assume that the voice heard comes from the mouth on screen. When in fact the two may not have been recorded at the same time, nor even belong to the same person. The specificities of French dubbing aim at preserving this illusion, and the pleasure it

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<sup>95</sup> Chaume *Localisation* 2007 :208

<sup>96</sup> Chaume *Localisation* 2007 :209

<sup>97</sup> Sinyard 2000 :65

procures. Dubbing even brings it to an upper level by tricking the viewers into believing that the actors on screen express themselves in French, whilst the audience is well aware that they are not.

### C) Synchrony to create illusion.

According to Caillé “Cinema is a factory of illusions. Dubbing attempts to give the illusion of an illusion”<sup>98</sup>. In order for the dubbed version to maintain, and even extend, the cinematic illusion, it has to observe a certain amount of rules, which are meant to produce the best possible match between the French dialogue track and the film images. In other words, voices and images have to be synchronised. Dischronies, that is to say discrepancies between the visual and the oral channel, cause great discomfort to the spectator, and break the rapture. Chaume states of the existence that three different types of synchrony that must be respected as to present the audience with “a believable final product that seems real, [and] tricks [the] spectators into thinking that they are watching a domestic product.”<sup>99</sup> The first one, is isochrony: the duration of the translated utterance must be of the exact same time as the original one. Hearing voice when seeing a closed mouth, and vice versa, is too great a fault to be tolerated by the audience. The second is lip-synchrony (phonetic synchrony). When the actors mouth is visible, their lip movements must match with the dubbed track. The phonemes of the original text must coincide as much as possible with the ones of the target language.<sup>100</sup> Most importantly the labial, bilabials, and linguolabials (/p/; / b/; /m/; /f/; /v/; /d/; /t/; /n/) for they require partial or complete close of the mouth. As well as open vowel /a œ a ɒ/ because the mouth is visibly open when pronounced. And semivowel /i:/, /u:/, /j/, /w/, /r/ for the actor has pucker up their lips to say them (semivowels are called “cul de poule” in the French dubbing jargon.)<sup>101</sup> The phonemes of the target language do not have to be identical to those in the source text, but must belong to the same group. The third type of synchrony is called kinetic synchrony. It signifies that the performance of the dubbing comedian must be coherent with the facial expression and the gestures of the actor on screen. For example: if an actor is crying, sobs must be heard in the voice<sup>102</sup>.

Probably the most important is isochrony. Indeed, hearing a voice when the actor on screen mouth's is shut, or watching a character's lips move without uttering a sound, is either annoying or a

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<sup>98</sup> Whitman 1992 :54,55 ; Caillé 1960 : 103-109

<sup>99</sup> Chaume 2007 :75

<sup>100</sup> Fodor 1976

<sup>101</sup> Jeanne 2014 : 2

<sup>102</sup> Chaume 2007 : 76

laughing matter. In both rupture, it attracts the viewer's attention on the artificiality of the product. In *Much Ado*, during Benedict and Beatrice's stichomythia,<sup>103</sup> isochrony is well respected.

	<b>Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.	Oh! Vous seriez pour un perroquet le meilleur des maîtres!
<b>Phonemic transcription</b>	ju: ɑ: ə rɛr pærət tɪfə	vu sɔʁje pu œ̃ pɛ.ʁɔ.kɛ lə mɛ.jœʁ də mɛtʁ
<b>Utterance duration</b>	00:00:02:28	00:00:02:29

These two utterances do not bear many phonemic similarities. The author did manage to create a match between the open-mid vowel /ɛ/ in /rɛr/, and the close-mid vowel /e/ in /sɔʁje/; and to have the labial /t/ of /tɪfə/ coincide with the other labial /m/ in /mɛtʁ/. But, what is most striking here is the significant length difference of the two lines that is easily observed when comparing the two phonemic transcriptions (the English one counts 19 symbols, the French counts 33). Nevertheless the two utterances duration is the same. In order to emphasise the impact of Benedict's quip, Kenneth Branagh articulates exaggeratedly and speaks in a bit more slower pace than he did the second before. Thus enabling Patrick Poivey to say a relatively longer line. This example taken from *Much Ado*, states of the importance of isochrony. Especially during a verbal sparring scene, where lines succeed to one another quite rapidly. If the dubbed track were at odd with the original, the spectator would notice, drawing away his attention from the scene.

Isochrony is most important, but may sometimes be cheated with. In this example from *Looking For Richard*, priority was given to lip-synchrony. Al Pacino is filmed in a close-up, and addresses directly to the camera for 6 seconds. His lips are clearly visible, as his face contrasts with his dark clothes, and rather poorly lighted background, and attracts the viewer's visual attention. Much care must be given to the good synchronisation of the original lip-movements and the French track.

	<b>Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	The readiest way to make the wench amend Is to become her husband and her father.	Le meilleur moyen pour que la belle me pardonne C'est de prendre la place de son mari et de son beau-père.

<sup>103</sup> *Much Ado* 00:11:00

<b>Phonemic Transcription</b>	ðə rɛdiəst weɪ tu meɪk ðə wɛntʃ ə'mɛndz ɪz tu bɪ'kʌm hə hʌzbənd ænd fɑðə	lə mɛ.jœʁ mwa.jɛ̃ puʁ kə la bɛl mə pɑʁ.dɔ̃n s_ɛ də pʁɑ̃dʁ la plas də sɔ̃ ma.ʁi e də sɔ̃ bo pʁɛ
<b>Duration</b>	00:00:05:78	00:06:36

Taking the advantage of a change of shot after “father”, Sylvain Joubert (the dubbing actor) is able to finish his line when Pacino’s has ended. The phonemes of the translation of the first verse correspond extraordinarily to the English ones. The adaptor managed to create almost every match necessary to give the impression that Pacino is in fact speaking French.

	<b>Original English Version</b>	<b>French Version</b>	<b>Phonemic English Transcription</b>	<b>Phonemic French Transcription</b>	<b>Consonant (and semivowel) match</b>	<b>Vowel match</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	The	Le	ðə	lə		/ə/
	Readiest	Meilleur	rɛdiəst	mɛ.jœʁ	/r/ and /m/	/ɛ/; /ə/ and /œ/
	Way	Moyen	weɪ	mwa.jɛ̃	/w/	
	To	Pour	tu	puʁ	/t/ and /p/	/u/
	Make	Que	meɪk	kə	/k/	
	The	La	ðə	la		/ə/ and /a/
	Wench	Belle	wɛntʃ	bɛl	/w/ and /b/	/ɛ/
	Amends	Me pardonne	ə'mɛndz	mə pɑʁ.dɔ̃n	/m/ ; /d/	

Not only did the adaptor manage to replace the original labial consonant with other labial, he also managed to have the vowels match together. For indeed vowels, and open-vowels particularly, are features of the original language that may be easily recognised by a foreign spectator. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, the action is set in Messina. This information is told at the beginning of the film when Signor Leonato (Richard Briers) receives a letter from the Prince, informing him of his imminent arrival.

In the original, Briers does not pronounce the word according to its English pronunciation /mə'si:nə/; but to the Italian one: /mes'si:na/. The open vowel /a/ is placed at the end word which itself is placed at the end of the utterance: “I learn by this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina”. As the city’s name as an equivalent in French, the adaptor uses the name “Messine” in its translation. In the French pronunciation /mɛ.sin/ the open vowel /a/ disappears. As the open vowel is the last phoneme of the utterance, it would be quite easy for the audience to notice the actors has his mouth open, when the close front vowel /i/ requires a rather closed mouth. The adaptor had to find a ploy so that the French dialogue line would end up on an open vowel as well.

	<b>Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina!	J'apprend par cette lettre que Don Pedro d'Aragon vient à Messine. Il arrivera ce soir !
<b>Phonemic transcription</b>	aɪ lɜ:n ɪn ðɪs 'letə ðæt dɒn pɛdro ɒl ærəgən kʌmz ðɪs naɪt tu mes'si:na	ʒ_a.pʁɑ̃ paʁ sɛt lɛtʁ kə dɔ̃ pɛdro da.ʁa.gɔ̃ vʝɛta mɛ.sin il a.ʁi.və.ʁa sə swaʁ
<b>Utterance duration</b>	00:00:07:61	00:00:07:73 <sup>104</sup>

During the utterance, a quick change of shot occurs. Passing from Leonato reading the letter, to the picnickers, before switching back to Leonato. When saying the phrase “comes this night”, the actor is off screen. The adaptor took advantage of this change of shot to solve the problem caused by the different pronunciation of the city’s name. The word “Messine” is said when Briers is off screen. The word “Messina” is replaced by the word “soir” that ends in the same open vowel /a/ that the original.

However, having the phonemes of the original and translated version match is not always possible if the adaptor wishes to translate faithfully the source text. An example is particularly eloquent in Romeo+Juliet. When Juliet threatens Father Lawrence to kill herself, the actress in tears is shown in an extreme close-up. Her mouth is clearly visible to the audience. Unfortunately, translating the text faithfully meant having to overlook phonetic synchronisation.

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	<b>Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	Be not so long to speak! I long to die	Parle sans tarder il me tarde à moi de mourir.
<b>Phonemic transcription</b>	bi nat soʊ lɔŋ tu spik aɪ lɔŋ tu daɪ	paʁl sɑ̃ taʁ.de il mɑ taʁd a mwa də mu.ʁiʁ
<b>Duration</b>	00 :00 :02 :87	00 :00 :02 :90

The last word of the English utterance, “die” /daɪ/, and its translation “mourir” /mu.ʁiʁ/ bear not enough phonetic resemblance to be an acceptable match, and the dischory is visible. However, it does not break the cinematic illusion, for both isochrony and kinectic synchrony are respected. Caroline Victoria’s performance is sincere and in clear coherence with the visible distress of Juliet and Claire Danes facial expression. The dubbing actress is yelling, and sobs can be heard in her voice. Similarly, when a desperate Romeo provokes Tybalt, after Mercutio’s death, the French and English text are not well synchronised.

	<b>Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>Dialogue</b>	Eihter thou or I or both must go with him.	Il faut que toi ou moi ou nous deux nous allions le rejoindre.
<b>Phonemic transcription</b>	i:ðəʁ ðəʊ ɔr aɪ ɔr boʊθ mʌst ɡoʊ wið hɪm	il fo kə twa u mwa u nu də nu a.ljɔ̃ lə ʁə.ʒwɛ̃dʁ
<b>Duration</b>	00 :00 :03 :99	00 :00 :03 :96

The original text and its translation show no convincing phonetic resemblance, but Damien Witecka’s acting is able to compensate of this great lack of synchrony. The audience can see a yelling and crying DiCaprio on screen, and is able to hear the same despair and anger in Witecka’s voice. The dubbing actor’s voice is so loud, the sound is actually saturated; which only intensifies the rage madness the original scene communicates. As Chaume puts it: “If the gesture, the intonation and the dialogues

are credible and natural, the audience will be more tolerant of any unsynchronised lip-movement that may appear in the dubbing.”<sup>105</sup>

Indeed, an audience “well-conditioned to accept dubbed motion picture<sup>106</sup>” is not necessarily annoyed nor are they distracted by dischronies (as long as they are kept to a minimum) due to their habituation to this mode of translation. Gonzalo Iturregui Gallardo, conducted an experiment to understand the existing link between habituation and tolerance to lack of synchrony a Spanish audience has when watching a dubbed film. Gallardo’s experiment counted 15 subjects, who were shown 9 scenes taken from Anglophone and Francophone films that had been dubbed in Spanish. Each scene last 25 to 35 seconds, and the particularity to be only filmed in close-up, implying that the speaker mouth is perfectly visible. After watching the scenes, the subjects had to mark them on a scale of 1 to 4 according to certain criteria: lip-synchronisation quality; negative impressions; and the “degree of naturalness”. In addition, the subjects had to guess what the original language was, and to justify their answer.

	<b>Anglophone Films</b>	<b>Francophone films</b>
<b>Quality of lip-movement</b>	2,99/4	2,63/4
<b>Negative impression/ Discomfort</b>	1,8/4	2,26/4
<b>Naturalness</b>	2,81/4	2,3/4
<b>Original Language</b>	56,6%	16,98%

56% of the subjects were able to recognise English as the original language based on the actors lip movements. Although French and Spanish languages bear more than similarities than Spanish and English do, and the subjects recognise the English language lip-movements, they consider that the Spanish dubbing of British/American films is better synchronised and more natural than the dubbing of French ones<sup>107</sup>. “This fact reveals that the subjects are more accustomed to, or have normalised to a high degree, the original English lip-movement in a dubbed version<sup>108</sup>.” This is probably due to Hollywood hegemony and the dominance of the English over the audio-visual world. This “high degree” of habituation Gallardo speaks of has created a in the audience tolerance to small form of dischronies, that the viewer is only aware of when focusing on the speaker’s lips<sup>109</sup>.

<sup>105</sup> Chaume *Quality* 2007 :82

<sup>106</sup> Ascheid 1997 :33

<sup>107</sup> Gallardo 2014 : 15,16,17.

<sup>108</sup> Gallardo 2014 :20.

<sup>109</sup> Gallardo 2014 :23.

The audience's tolerance when viewing a dubbed film is what Chaume calls a tacit agreement: "There is a tacit agreement between the sender and the receiver: the audience knows perfectly well that it is watching a [foreign] film, and as such there will always be a certain amount of dischronies or lack of synchrony."<sup>110</sup> Chaume's description of this agreement that exists between performers and spectators, is highly similar to Coleridge's concept of Suspension of Disbelief.<sup>111</sup> This concept means that for the sake of entertainment and enjoyment, the audience is (unconsciously) willing to let go of their critical faculties and believe the unbelievable. Spectators when watching a film are aware that it is a work of art that aims at giving the impression of reality. A French audience when watching a dubbed motion picture, knows perfectly well that the voices they hear are not the originals. But, as for a ventriloquist act, they are able to overlook this absurdity and enjoy the show.

The goal of AVT is to create a domestic equivalent to a foreign product, that respects the original film's message and *raison d'être*. *Much Ado*, *Looking*, and *Romeo* have the same desire to modernise Shakespeare and re-estate him as a popular author. For dubbing is culturally attributed to entertainment motion pictures, and does not require any particular effort on the part of the viewer; it preserves the *skopos* of those three popular Shakespeare films. AVT must also be in coherence with the film's atmosphere and not alter it. Dubbing as a practice does not change the impression of reality that the original endeavoured to create. It rather widens it. When respecting the rules of synchrony, dubbing is able to give the impression that the actors express themselves in French. This illusion of an illusion, partially fills the gap created by cultural discrepancies and enables the audience to feel closer the message the film conveys.

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<sup>110</sup> Chaume *Quality* 2007 :79.

<sup>111</sup> Coleridge 1817

### III. The Cultural importance of dubbing Shakespeare.

Dubbing aims at making the audience believe they are watching a home production, when they know for a fact it is foreign. To do so the dubbed text and the actors' performance must match the images onscreen by respecting the rules of synchrony. But to maintain this illusion, the translation of the original dialogues must be acceptable in the target language. "Most researchers and professional dubbers alike lend the greatest priority to a believable and convincing dialogue."<sup>112</sup> If the translated dialogues sound natural to both the dubbing director and the actors, the recording goes smoothly and the actors are able to give their best performance. In brief, the translation must be idiomatic. The Oxford English Dictionary gives two definitions of this adjective. The first one is: "using, containing or denoting expressions that are natural to a native speaker." The second: "appropriate to the style of art or music associated with a particular period or individual group." Producing an idiomatic audio-visual translation of film adaptations of Shakespeare that are meant to be seen by a 1990's audience implies that the French text must sound genuine and coherent to a contemporary audience.

Nevertheless, the adaptor's task is to respect the *skopos* of the original films that is to present the audience with Shakespeare's words. The scriptwriter must find a way to produce a translation that is both in adequacy with texts that are four hundred years old without producing an archaicistic text, but at the risk of producing a hybrid and disparate language.<sup>113</sup> The dubbed dialogues must be easily understood by the viewers<sup>114</sup>, which implies that the adaptor must use simply structured sentences. Yet he faces the great duty of translating William Shakespeare's poetic words. The author must find a way to be truthful to both the Bard's writings and the film's *skopos*, while at the same produce an idiomatic and modern translation of Shakespeare. Dubbing *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* aim at making them accessible to a French audience by creating a cultural equivalent to these foreign films. The goal of AVT is to conciliate the foreign film with the domestic culture without betraying the original.

In order to give the impression that the original actors express themselves in French, the adaptor must re-produce the features of English oral speech and conforming them to French spoken language. So as to give a cultural equivalent to Shakespeare's text, the dialogue author must adapt its translation to French language and culture, in other words he has to domesticate it. The translational norms the adaptor must observe aim at making Shakespeare film adaptations, and Shakespeare himself, accessible to a French audience. And by extension, it integrates him into French culture.

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<sup>112</sup> Whitman 1992 : 54-55

<sup>113</sup> Maquerlot 2000 : 285

<sup>114</sup> Gorris 1993 :185

## A) The Norms of translation in French Dubbing.

According to Gorris, three major translational norms have to be applied when adapting a screenplay for dubbing: standardization, naturalisation, and explicitation. These norms aim at producing an easily understandable oral text that sounds natural to French speakers in order to make them forget they are watching a foreign production, otherwise the spectators focus more on the translational process than on the film. As Chaume said “by not respecting these guidelines that shape oral register in the target culture, the threshold of permissiveness and previously mentioned tacit agreement is ignored.”<sup>115</sup>

The standardization policy in the dubbing process is “the type of intervention that renders the translated discourse considerably more homogeneous.”<sup>116</sup> (ref?) It aims at creating a text that is idiomatic and yet faithful to the original. It applies to the features of spoken language, the lexical level used, and the geographical markers that may be present in the original text and voice track. As *Looking* is a mockumentary, it comprises many scenes where the actors perform a role, but also express themselves before the camera on the spur of the moment. The actors’ speeches then bear the marks of spontaneous spoken language, such as false starts, hesitations and repetitions. In order to be true to the original, the dubbed voice track must reproduce those features, and create an artificial spontaneity that corresponds to the target language’s features of oral speech. In this extract, Pacino endeavours to explain *Richard III*’s plot, but as it is rather complex a story, he gets confused and does not manage to express his thoughts clearly.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
<b>00:08:24</b>	And, hum, somehow manipulate, hum, them into thinking that, hum, they’re, hum. You know... That the kids are... See, I’m confused just saying it to you.	Et qu’il ne manœuvre de façon à leur faire croire finalement que... Que... Qu’ils sont, euh... Euh... Tu vois, qu’les gamins sont un peu, euh... Oh j’m’embrouille rien qu’à t’raconter.

These two sentences bear the marks of spontaneous oral language. The interjection “hum” frequently used by the actor and expresses his hesitation in his choice of words and the formulation and his speech is perfectly well transcribed in French. The English interjection “hum” is replaced by the French one

<sup>115</sup> Chaume *Quality* 2007 :79

<sup>116</sup> Gorris 1993: 175

“euh”, or else by the repetition of the subordinating conjunction “que” (“finalement que... Que... Qu’ils sont, euh”). The French sentences, as the English ones, do not have a clear beginning nor end. Al Pacino only utters partially constructed clauses, that do not lead to a structured nor coherent speech; and neither do Sylvain Joubert’s lines. The contractions of the verbal phrases “I am” and “They are” into “I’m” and “They’re”, are also present in the translation. Joubert does not say “je m’embrouille” and “te raconter” but say “j’m’embrouille” and “t’raconter”. The elision of the last vowel in the first and second personal pronoun is a common feature of French spoken language. This elision has been normalized in French contemporary language, and when spectator hear such contraction, they do not even detect this grammatical incoherence and do not find it upsetting. Because the dubbing actor’s voice has to be synchronized with the onscreen actor’s lips, he cannot improvise. Any sound uttered is written on the rythmo band. The features of spontaneous oral speech that are present in the French dubbed are integral part of the translated screenplay. The adaptor creates a fake spontaneity that is typical of French spoken language.

This extract also states that, in order to be true to the original film, colloquialisms must be translated in such a way that they sound natural to the target audience. For example, Pacino’s line “that the kids” is translated by “qu’les gamins”. Swear words have to be translated as well in a manner that is both coherent with the film’s context and the target language. At the beginning of the film, Pacino stands alone on stage in an empty theatre when William Shakespeare appears to him, watching the actor with a blasé look on his face. The Bard’s presence upsets the actor who nervously swears: “Fuck.”<sup>117</sup> While this swear word is most frequently used in English, its meaning varies according to the context in which it said. To translate it, the adaptor has to primarily understand the reason it used. In this scene Pacino swears because he realises that playing and adapting the English canon is quite tremendous a task, both impressive and slightly frightening. In the French dubbed track, the swear word “Fuck” is translated by “l’enfoiré,” which has the efficiency of referring directly to Shakespeare and gives emphasis to the message the original tries to convey. Later in the film, Frederic Kimball uses the same swear word.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:39:54	You know more about <i>Richard III</i> than any fucking scholars at Columbia or Harvard.	Tu en sais plus sur <i>Richard III</i> que tous les foutus professeurs de Columbia ou de Harvard.

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<sup>117</sup> *Looking* 00:01:57

In this scene Kimball is quite mad at Pacino for wanting to consult scholars on a matter he believes they cannot be of any help. Using a swear word illustrates his rage. The English phrase “fucking scholars” is translated in French by “foutus professeurs”. This translation is idiomatic and in coherence with the context. However, it has the regrettable effect of diminishing Kimball’s anger, for the French “foutu” is qualified as belonging to a familiar language register, whilst the English “fuck” is clearly slang and vulgar. These two extracts show that the adaptor has to analyse the whole context of a scene when translating a line, in order to transmit as well as possible what is meant in the original.

Whilst the adaptor has to pay attention to swear words and colloquialism, he also has to faithfully translate idioms that belong to higher language registers. The use of the pronouns “thee”, “thine” and “thou” (that mark closeness between two character, or inferior social status) are frequent in Shakespeare’s writing and differ from the pronoun “you”. These out of used pronouns are most usually translated by the French “te”, “t”, “ton” et “tu”. *Much Ado*’s adaptor paid great attention to the frequent changes in use of the pronouns “thou” or “you”.

<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
01:08:09	By my sword Beatrice <u>Thou</u> lovst me!	Par mon épée Beatrice je jure que <u>tu</u> m’ <u>aimes</u> .
01:08:41	I will swear by it that <u>you</u> love me.	Je veux jurer par elle que <u>vous</u> m’ <u>aimez</u> .
01:09:10	Is Claudio <u>thine</u> enemy?	Est-ce que Claudio est <u>ton</u> ennemi?
01:10:17	Think <u>you</u> in your <u>soul</u> the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?	<u>Croyez-vous</u> du fond du coeur que le Comte Claudio ait calomnié Hero?

In this sequence the use of the pronouns “thou” and “you” interchange from one line to the other, and the adaptor has translated each pronoun according to its French equivalent. However, the translation of “thee” “thy” and “thou” changes according to the context in which they are used, and the link between the characters that use them, in *Looking* and *R+J*.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, the young girl always uses the pronoun “thou” when speaking to the Nurse, who systematically replies by “you”, for their age and social status differ. The French dubbed track presents two different kind of translation for these pronoun in two different scenes.

<i>Romeo+Juliet</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:52:10	JULIET: Come, I pray <u>thee</u> , speak!  NURSE: Can <u>you</u> not stay awhile?	JULIETTE: Aller, je t'en prie, <u>raconte</u> -moi!  NOURRICE: <u>Tu</u> ne <u>peux</u> donc pas attendre?

In this scene, the Nurse is about to announce Juliet that she will be married to Romeo, but playfully let the nervous young girl wonder. In the translation, both servant and mistress call each other “tu” so as to show that the two are very close. But when the Nurse advises Juliet to marry Paris against her heart’s desire, when she was in fact looking for comforting, a shift occurs in the translation.

<i>Romeo+Juliet</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
01:23:21	NURSE: I think it best <u>you</u> marry with this Paris.	NOURRICE: Je crois quant a moi qu’il vaut mieux que <u>vous</u> <u>épousiez</u> ce Paris.

This new use of the French pronoun “vous” states that the Nurse, who had been Juliet’s accomplice in her secret marriage, is no longer on her side as she is advising to deny her first husband and take a new one imposed by her parents. The use of “vous” marks the distance created by the Nurse’s action, in opposition to the complicity the two shared previously that was asserted by the mutual use of “tu”.

Similarly, in *Looking*, the translation of pronouns reflects the relationship between two characters. In the original, both Anne and Richard call each other “thou”, but the French version creates a hierarchy between them.

<i>Looking for richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:44:25	ANNE: Though I wish <u>thy</u> death, I will not be <u>thy</u> executioner.	ANNE: Même si je souhaite <u>ta</u> mort, je ne veux pas t’ <u>exécuter</u> .

00:44:42	RICHARD: That hand which for <u>thy</u> love did kill <u>thy</u> love.	RICHARD: Cette main qui par amour pour <u>vous</u> a tué <u>votre</u> amour.
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For Richard has killed her husband and father, the pronoun “tu”, Anne uses when speaking to him, show she does not feel obligated to grant him with any mark of respect. On the contrary, Richard’s use the pronoun “vous” is a mean to demonstrate his (feigned) admiration, respect and love, and to make her believe she has some kind of dominance over him. Translating “thou” by “tu” or “vous” according to the context in which it used is a way for the adaptor to produce a translation that will be coherent with the action onscreen and easily understood; creating a homogeneity between filmic language and the translated verbal language.

In order to ensure utmost comprehension on the part of the viewers, the dubbing does not only homogenise the original text, but also the voice track by erasing all geographical markers of oral speech (that is to say the actors’ accents) that may be present in the original. It was a clear intention in *Much Ado* to cast American and British accent, to state that Shakespeare is not English, but universal. However, the rendering of the original actors’ accent is simply unfeasible in French. If the accents heard in the original voice track have no link whatsoever with the characters’ past and identity, all actors, British or American, are dubbed in standard French that bears no mark of any geographical dialect. An exception was made in *R+J* for the character of the Nurse. In the original, Miriam Margolyes speaks in a Hispanic accent so as to make a reference to the employment of Latino-American immigrants in United-States. In the dubbed version, the reference was left unchanged. Marie Vincent (the dubbing comedian of Miriam Margolyes) acts her French lines is an heavy Spanish accent. In *Looking*, when interviewing people on streets, a woman is surprised to hear that Al Pacino, an American, would play an English character: “You want to do it in Ameri... With your American accent?”. The difference in accents between the actors in the film is quite important, for one of the message the film advocates is that an American actor is as entitled to play and understand Shakespeare as a British one. Most of the scholars and actors that are asked their opinion about Shakespeare are British (Kenneth Branagh, Peter Brook, Vanessa Redgrave, Emrys Jones...). Whilst most of the actors cast in Pacino and Kimaball’s production are American (Alec Baldwin, Kevin Spacey, Winona Ryder, Kevin Conway, Aidan Quinn). Thus creating a clear separation between those who think Shakespeare, the British, and those who act Shakespeare, the Americans. Unfortunately, the rendering of this opposition is impossible in the dubbed version at the risk of producing an incomprehensible cacophony. In order to reproduce this different in accents, the British should be dubbed in standard French, and the Americans in Canadian French, which is the transatlantic equivalent of the continental language. Such a translational practice would be most unsettling and upsetting to a French audience, who is not used to hearing American actors dubbed by

Canadian ones. For socio-cultural reasons this aspect of *Looking* had to be left out in the dubbing process.

The second translational norm described in Gorris’s work is naturalization which is “the socio-cultural adaptation of the translation.”<sup>118</sup> It concerns the adaptation of words that are specific to the source language and culture (culture-bound word), such as units of measurement, grades and assessment in school systems, as well as proper and place names. They must not be simply translated but adapted, by replacing them by French words referring to similar concepts. In *Looking*, Pacino brings his argument with Kimball to a close by amusingly knighting him and awarding him a PhD.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:46:22	PACINO: I hereby knight you Frederic...	PACINO: Frederic, je te fais chevalier...
	KIMBALL: PhD!	KIMBALL: Professeur!
	PACINO: PhD of the realm!	PACINO: Chevalier- Professeur!

The English term PhD is the abbreviation of the academic degree “Doctor of Philosophy”. Keeping the abbreviation in French would fail to produce an idiomatic translation, and would prevent the audience from understanding the situation. Furthermore, translating “Doctor of Philosophy” by “Docteur en Philosophie” would give an erroneous meaning to the term “PhD” that does not refer to a scholar in philosophy, but to an academic degree. The French cultural equivalent to “PhD” is the “doctorat” or “docteur” (for the English signifies both the degree and the person who obtained it). In this scene the adaptor chose not to use the word “docteur” but rather “professeur”. The French “docteur” is commonly used to address a doctor in Medicine, it might be confusing to the audience. Although the French “professeur” is vague, for it may refer to a primary or secondary schoolteacher, the spectators are able to understand that Kimball speaks of university professors for he mentioned Harvard and Columbia just a moment before.

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<sup>118</sup> Gorris 1993 : 177

Another cultural specific term that needed to be adapted to French culture and language was the measurement unit “mile” that Benedict uses in his monologue.

<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:36:00	I have known when he would have walked <u>ten mile</u> afoot to see a good armor.	Je l’ai connu qui aurait fait <u>dix lieues</u> à pied pour aller voir une solide armure.

Quite obviously, the adaptor could not have kept the term “mile” that would have been confusing to a French speaking audience who is unfamiliar to this measurement unit. But instead of replacing it by its modern-day equivalent, which is the meter system, the adaptor used the obsolete “lieue” that was the French measurement unit until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This adaptation has the effect of emerging the audience in an unspecified past, without making the adaptation archaic. Indeed, the term “lieue” is familiar to contemporary French speakers, as it is commonly used in tales that are part of popular French culture. The Seven Leagues Boots in Charles Perrault’s story *Le Petit Poucet* are called “Les Bottes de Sept Lieues”. Moreover, the adaptor did not convert “ten mile”, as it shows no interest in such a context. Only the number “ten” matters in this line which for it is repeated in the next one: “now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet” (“et voilà qu’il resterait dix nuits éveillé à esquisser la forme de quelque nouveau pourpoint”). By replacing culture-bound words with their French equivalents, the adaptor enables the audience to understand the actors’ speech.

Another way to ensure utmost comprehension on the part of the viewers, is the third translational norm Gorris describes: explicitation. This norm aims at making the original text more explicit than the original: “many equivocal or vague expressions [become] clearer or more precise in the dubbed version.”<sup>119</sup> For example in *Looking*, when Branagh speaks of the way Shakespeare was taught in his school, the actor expresses himself in such a way that the adaptor had to add an adverbial phrase to make the sentence understandable to French viewers.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:04:58	And of course it made no sense to us, because there was no connection made	Et bien sûr on ne comprenait rien parce qu’il n’y avait pas de lien fait avec la réalité.

<sup>119</sup> Gorris 1993 :183

The home audience is perfectly capable of understanding that Branagh is implying that no connection was made between what the students read and the real world they live in. But a French audience would feel confused and frustrated if the French translation ended on “pas de lien fait”. The sentence has to be completed with the adverbial phrase “avec la réalité” in order to make sense in the target language.

Later on in *Looking*, when Kevin Kline speaks of the first Shakespeare play he saw, he uses the phrase “Shakespearean acting” to describe the actors’ performance.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:04:41	They were doing this kind of Shakespearean acting.	Ils jouaient avec cet accent Shakespeareien exagéré.

As “Shakespeare acting” is specific to Anglo-Saxon culture language, a French audience is unable to understand what Kevin Kline means. Translating this phrase by “accent Shakespeareien” refers to the actors’ way of speaking, as the original does, and by adding the adjective “exagéré” the spectators are able to get a mental representation of what Shakespearean acting is.

The most relevant and audacious case of explicitation is to be found in *Looking* as well, when Kimball explains one of Shakespeare’s pun to Pacino.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>English Original Version</b>	<b>French Dubbed Version</b>
00:10:50	Now is the winter of our discontent Made glorious summer by this sun of York.	Maintenant, voici l’hiver de notre amertume Transmué en un été superbe par ce soleil d’York.
00:11:07	It’s a pun. The “Sun of York” is the sun in the sky over the English countryside of York. York is also your family name, and you are one of the three “sons of York”.	C’est un jeu de mot. “The Sun of York” c’est le soleil dans le ciel au-dessus de la campagne du comté de York. York, c’est aussi ton nom de famille, et tu es l’un des trois fils, les trois “sons of York”.

Whilst in English the words “sun” and “son” are homonyms, their French translation “soleil” and “fils” bear no phonetic resemblance whatsoever, causing Shakespeare’s pun to disappear from the translated

line. Nevertheless, *Looking*'s adaptor kept the original English line in the translation of Kimball's explanation. Because French viewers are well aware that Shakespeare is a British author, and as such, his plays were written in English, the presence of the original English words in the French translation is not unsettling, but rather appreciated, for they are translated and explained to the spectators, enabling them to understand Shakespeare's writing. Instead hiding the translational process, the adaptor shows it to the audience, in order to make them realise the genius of Shakespeare's poetry, and thus, is in perfect coherence with *Looking*'s purpose.

## B) Domesticating *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J*.

Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann aimed at producing Shakespeare film adaptations that would be accessible and entertaining to a 1990's audience, while at the same serve the Bard's words instead of simply using them. These adaptations state of the Bard's relevance in a contemporary world, and the eternal beauty of his poetry. In order to do so all three directors had to analyse Shakespeare's work, and interpret it to get to the truth of his words and be able to re-communicate them to others. The translational process of AVT is highly similar: "translators were the first to initiate an intellectual dialogue with Shakespeare's plays with the aim to understand them and prove worthy transmitters of the original."<sup>120</sup> So as to translate Shakespeare's words to a French audience, the adaptor must first understand the Bard's message and by what means such a message is communicated to the audience. Additionally, AVT must be faithful to the original film's *skopos*. Translating *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* demands to respect Shakespeare's original words and the films' purpose, and be simple enough to be easily understood. For the *skopos* of those three films is to modernise Shakespeare's play and make them accessible to 1990's spectators, the adaptor must write a translation that corresponds to a modern-day audience.

It can be noticed that in *R+J*, the adaptor Thomas Murat<sup>121</sup> did not hesitate to simplify the structure of certain lines, and adapting them to the film's tone.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
Time	English Original Version	French Dubbed Version
00:17:40	LADY CAPULET: Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris's love?	LADY CAPULET: Parle en bref. Est-ce que son amour t'agréera ?

<sup>120</sup> Drouet, Rivère de Carles 2016 :727

<sup>121</sup>

	JULIET: I'll look to like him, if looking liking move. But no more will I endart mine eye than your consent gives strength to make it fly.	JULIETTE: Je tacherai de l'agr��er s'il suffit de regarder pour en ��tre touch��e. Mais mettre plus de forces dans mes regards que ne m'y incitent vos encouragements �� le faire.
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In this extract the adaptor clearly simplified Juliet's line: "I'll look to like him, if looking liking move." The repetition of the verbs "look" and "like" and their transformation into present participles make the sentence quite difficult to understand. On the other hand, its French translation shows no significant comprehension difficulty. Each verb and their present participles have been translated by different verbs. This aims at simplifying the speech. "I'll look to like him" is translated by "je tacherai de l'agr  er" which respects what Juliet says in the original: she will look for something to like in Paris. "If looking liking move" is translated by "s'il suffit de regarder pour en   tre touch  e", both the original and the French make reference to the feeling of being stirred, or not, when looking at a person. Juliet's second line is easier to understand, but has nevertheless been slightly modified by Murat. What the character means when saying "no more will I endart mine eye than your consent gives strength to make it fly" is that she would not allow herself to fall in love with a man that does not have her parents' approval. Quite obviously, this line is of great dramatic irony, as the audience already knows Juliet will die because she fell in love with the only son of her parents' enemies. In Luhrmann's film, Claire Danes says this line in an ironical tone, making Juliet's line resemble playful insolence rather than dramatic irony. What was in the original an (ironical) assertion of a daughter's obedience to parental authority, becomes in French a clear mark of rebellion and independence: "Mais sans metre plus de force dans mes regards que ne m'y incitent vos encouragements    le faire." The dubbed version implies that Paris's portrait, drawn by Juliet's mother, does not make her wish to like him, and so she will not pay much attention to him. This extract demonstrates that the adaptor must draw away from the original to write a translation that is idiomatic, and to be in adequacy with the director's intention to modernise Shakespeare, and to give his own interpretation of the text.

Nevertheless, when translating a Shakespeare film adaptation, the adaptor must endeavour to create a French equivalent to Shakespeare's poetry. Most of the Bard's play are written in iambic pentameters. An iamb is a group of syllables (feet) constituted of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. As the word "pentameter" signifies that the verse counts five feet, an iambic pentameter comprises five iambs. Although Shakespeare has been translated into French for more than two hundred years, translators are still debating on which metrical foot is best suitable to constitute a French equivalent to the iambic pentameter. Some, like Jean Malapate, declare it is the alexandrine<sup>122</sup>:

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<sup>122</sup> Alexandrines are lines of poetic meter that counts 12 syllables, they were frequently used in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century French theatre.

“Quel vers? L’alexandrin, bien-sûr, pour traduire le pentamètre iambique anglais [...] parce qu’il en est l’homologue dans notre littérature [française].”<sup>123</sup> It appears that Thomas Murat shares Malapate opinion for he has translated many of Shakespeare’s rhyming iambic pentameters by rhyming alexandrines in *R+J*.

<i>Romeo+Juliet</i>				
Time	English Dubbed Version	Metrical	French Dubbed Version	Metrical
00:13:18	<p>ROMEO: Farewell my coz/            BENVOLIO: Soft! I will go along            And if you leave me so you do me/            wrong.</p>	Rhyming Iambic pentameters	<p>BENVOLIO: Attends moi!            Avec/ toi je veux faire quelques            pas            Et je serai blessé si tu n’y/            consens pas.</p>	Rhyming alexandrines
00:13:48	<p>Let two more summers wither in/            their pride            Ere we may think her ripe to be/            bride.</p>	Rhyming Iambic pentameters	<p>Que deux étés de plus voient/            leur gloire épuisée            Avant de décréter qu’elle peut/            être épousée.</p>	Rhyming alexandrines

However, because the dubbed voice track must be synchronised with the film’s images, the adaptor is not always able to respect a regular metrical pattern. In this case, he must focus on reproducing the poetical message of Shakespeare’s text, rather than the form in which it is expressed.

<i>Looking for Richard</i>		
Time	English Original Version	French Dubbed Version
00 :00 :15	<p>Our revels now are ended. These our actors,            As I foretold you, were all spirits and            Are melted into air, into thin air:            And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,            The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,            The solemn temples, the great globe itself,            Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve            And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,            Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff            As dreams are made on, and our little life            Is rounded with a sleep.</p>	<p>Notre intermède est maintenant fini. Ses acteurs, je vous en ai prévenu, étaient des tous des esprits. Et ils se sont fondus dans l’air, comme par magie. De même que la structure aérienne de cette vision ; les tours couronnées de nuages, les palais somptueux, les temples solennels, et le Globe terrestre lui-même, oui, avec tous ceux qui en ont hérité, vont s’évanouir. Sans même, à l’instar de ce spectacle immatériel disparu, sans même laisser derrière eux le plus léger nuage.</p> <p>Nous sommes faits de l’étoffe où se brodent les rêves ;            Et notre vie, un simple somme la parachève.</p>

<sup>123</sup> Maquerlot 2000 : 278

*Looking for Richard* opens on Prospero's monologue in the Scene 1, Act 4 of *The Tempest*. The text is written in iambic pentameters, but the verses do not rhyme (they are blank verses). The French translation is not written in verse, but is shaped as prose poetry that does not fail to capture the original's text essence.

This monologue creates a parallel between the illusion Prospero had created with his magic, and the world of theatre that aims at creating an illusionary world. In the French translation, the adaptor has domesticated the English text, making it conform to French language and culture. The line "fondus dans l'air comme par magie" is not the faithful translation of "melted into air, into thin air". It is rather an idiomatic expression that has the advantage of reproducing the link between magic and theatrical performance that is made in the original. The phrase "baseless fabric" is replaced by "structure aérienne" which is not the literal translation of the original either, but re-creates and extends the metaphor that connects the world of theatre, illusion and the heavens: "les tours couronnées de nuages" ("the cloud-capp'd towers"). Both in English and French clouds allude to day dreaming: theatre is the experience of illusion, such as dreams are, whilst none in fact are asleep. The adaptor wrote the last sentences of the monologue in alexandrines. In order to have them rhyme, he translated the past participle "rounded" ("entouré") by "parachève":

"Nous sommes de l'étoffe où se brodent les rêves,

Et notre vie un simple somme la parachève."

So as to re-create Shakespeare's rhyming verses the dialogue author may sometimes have to draw away from the original text, and adapt it to French language. Branagh's *Much Ado* opens on Shakespeare's song *Sigh No More*. The original text is a ballad written in rhyming tetrameters and trimeters. The adaptor did not hesitate to interpret and domesticate the text, without betraying its *skopos*, to have the French translation rhyme as well. The author did not respect the original structure of the text, but rather followed the rhythm of Emma Thompson's voice. The translation transmits faithfully Shakespeare's message to women: to let the worries men caused behind them, and enjoy a merry life without them. Nevertheless, the author slightly drew away from the original to make the translation more idiomatic, and especially to create rhymes. For examples the French literal translation for the English "deceivers" are the words "menteurs" or "imposteurs". By replacing it by the adjective "volage" the adaptor creates a rhyme with the French "rivage" (which is the exact translation of "shore") without altering the original's message that discusses of the inconstancy of men's mood. The phrase "tournez-leur le dos" is very idiomatic rhymes with the word "mot" respecting the original sounds, and giving emphasis to Beatrice's independent character who declares she will never be married.

<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>		
Time	English Original Version	French Dubbed Version
00:00:28	Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more, <i>a)</i> Men were deceivers ever, <i>b)</i> One foot in sea and one on shore, <i>a)</i> To one thing constant never. <i>b)</i> Then sigh not so, but let them go, <i>c)</i> And be you blithe and bonny, <i>d)</i> Converting all your sounds of woe <i>c)</i> Into Hey, nonny nonny. <i>d)</i>	Plus ne soupirez mes belles, <i>a)</i> Plus ne soupirez <i>b)</i> Les hommes toujours furent volages <i>c)</i> Un pied à la mer <i>a)</i> L'autre sur le rivage <i>c)</i> A une chose fidèle jamais <i>b)</i> Plus de soupirez <i>d)</i> Tournez leur le dos <i>e)</i> Faites sourires <i>d)</i> Et entrechats <i>f)</i> Echangez tous ces tristes mots <i>e)</i> En tra déri déra <i>f)</i>

As the name of the profession indicates it, the adaptor's role is not to merely translate the original film's dialogue, but to produce an adaptation of the original that is in coherence with the target language and culture. So as to ensure the domestic audience responds on the film as the home audience did without sensing any cultural discrepancies. According to Yves Gambier, the translational process of adapting a screenplay, that is to say to make it fit into a new and specific cultural context<sup>124</sup> is essential in AVT as it enables to bring the audience closer to the original's film message by taking into account their expectations and sociocultural background.<sup>125</sup>

### C) Dubbing Shakespeare: the assertion of a French Shakespeare.

Dubbing *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* is in the continuity of Shakespeare's integration into French culture that has started more than two hundred years ago. The first French translation of the Bard was made in 1733 by the French canonical author and philosopher Voltaire. The term translation seems quite inappropriate to speak of Voltaire's version of *Hamlet*, though. The French text (written in alexandrines) is infused with Voltaire's own thoughts of life and death, and hides away Shakespeare's words. When comparing the two texts it is even quite difficult to see correspondance between the English and the French verses, except for the shared reflexion on the meaning of life and death.

<sup>124</sup> Darbelnet, Vinay 1992

<sup>125</sup> Gambier 2004 :180

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i></b> (Act 3, Scene 1)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Voltaire's <i>Hamlet</i></b> (<i>Lettres Philosophiques</i>, Lettre XVIII)</p>
<p>To be, or not to be? That is the question— Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And, by opposing, end them?</p>	<p>Demeure ; il faut choisir, et passer à l'instant De la vie à la mort, ou de l'être au néant. Dieux cruels ! s'il en est, éclairez mon courage. Faut-il vieillir courbé sous la main qui m'outrage, Supporter ou finir mon malheur et mon sort ?</p>

The famous lines “to die, to sleep; to sleep: perchance to dream” is not even present in the French version.

The true integration of Shakespeare's writings into French culture was made through the Romantic literary movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, the French Romantics saw in Shakespeare “an emblem of their revolutionary spirit and creative liberation.”<sup>126</sup> In 1823, Stendhal wrote a pamphlet *Racine et Shakespeare* in which he clearly declares his preference for the English playwright and the romanticism of his works, over the French Classical Theatre that represents in Racine's plays. The pamphlet takes the shape of dialogue between a Romantic, who defends Shakespeare, and a Member of the French Academy who protects Racine. The two debate greatly on the classical unities (unity of time, space and action) that rule French Classical Theatre. Whilst the Member of the Academy aims at preserving those rules, the Romantic declares them to be deciduous, and states that the only purpose of drama is to move the audience: “Toute la dispute entre Racine et Shakespeare se réduit à savoir si, en observant les deux unités de temps de lieux, on peut faire des pieces qui intéressent vivement des spectateurs du dix-neuvième siècle [...] qui les fassent frémir et pleurer [...] qui leur donne des plaisirs dramatiques.”<sup>127</sup> No less than forty years later, in 1864, the French author, poet, playwright and politician Victor Hugo published a biography of the Bard. His *William Shakespeare* is a praise to the English dramatist's genius. His son, François-Victor Hugo, translated the integrity of the Bard's play which were published in 1865. It can be noticed that, contrary to Voltaire, François-Victor Hugo endeavoured to respect the Bard's word and to translate them faithfully. The metaphors and the lexicon used in the original are also found in its translation.

<sup>126</sup> Drouet, Rivère de Carles 2016 : 728

<sup>127</sup> Stendhal 1823

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i></b> (Act 3, Scene 1)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>François-Victor Hugo's <i>Hamlet</i></b> (Act 3, Scene 1)</p>
<p>To be, or not to be? That is the question— Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And, by opposing, end them? To die, to sleep— No more—and by a sleep to say we end The heartache and the thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to—'tis a consummation Devoutly to be wished! To die, to sleep. To sleep, perchance to dream</p>	<p>Etre, ou ne pas être, c'est là la question. - Y a-t-il plus de noblesse d'âme à subir - la fronde et les flèches de la fortune outrageante, - ou bien à s'armer contre une mer de douleurs - et à l'arrêter par une révolte ? Mourir... dormir, - rien de plus ; ... et dire que par ce sommeil nous mettons fin - aux maux du cœur et aux mille tortures naturelles - qui sont le legs de la chair : c'est là une terminaison - qu'on doit souhaiter avec ferveur. Mourir... dormir, - dormir ! peut-être rêver !</p>

In a preface to his son's translations Victor Hugo said "Le commentaire couche Shakespeare sur la table d'autopsie, la traduction le remet debout ; et après l'avoir vu disséqué, nous le retrouvons en vie."<sup>128</sup> The goal of translating Shakespeare is to make him accessible in the target population. In order to so the translator must adapt the translation to make it suitable to the target language and integrate it to the target culture. In this process the translator must engage in an intellectual dialogue with the original author, to understand the meaning and purpose of his words. Translating Shakespeare implies having to interpret him. The translator must momentarily make the Bard's words his own to determine how best to re-produce them. This principle of appropriation and reproduction is what Simeoni calls the "translatorial habitus."<sup>129</sup> Based on Pierre Bourdieu's sociological works<sup>130</sup>, Simeoni states that the sociological, socio-cultural and educational background, as well as life experience, influences the translator's work, who unwillingly let his own voice speak when translating the words of others. The simple fact of translating Shakespeare and reflecting on both his works and the means to communicate them, is a form of appropriation of the Bard's plays. Furthermore, the fact that the canons of French literature such as Victor Hugo or Stendhal have made the deliberate choice to write about Shakespeare automatically makes him part of French literature.

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<sup>128</sup> Hugo 1865

<sup>129</sup> Simeoni 1998

<sup>130</sup> Bourdieu 1977

“Between Voltaire’s harsh rejection and the Romantics’ blind adoration for the black sun, Shakespeare generated a dialogue in French art that made a very English playwright into a natural part of the French dramatic canon.”<sup>131</sup> This canonisation was rendered possible through translation. Once Shakespeare’s texts were translated, they could be staged and played in France before an audience who would not be able to understand his plays otherwise. In 1899, the highly popular French author Alexandre Dumas, best known for his swashbuckling novels such as *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, translated Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. His translation was performed on stage, with Sara Bernhardt as the lead.<sup>132</sup> This 1899 representation marks that a connection was made between Shakespeare and popular French culture through the translation and the performance of his plays in French theatres: “[The Festival d’] Avignon marks the complete integration of Shakespeare into the French dramatic canon as 38 of the 64 festivals have featured his plays.”<sup>133</sup> .

When seeing a Shakespeare play translated in French, the translational process is not shown to the spectators, otherwise it would break the illusion the play has constructed would be corrupted. When watching a Shakespeare play adapted to a French audience, the translation has to be invisible to make the audience forget they are watching the performance of a text that was originally written in another language. In that respect, theatre and dubbing are highly similar, for dubbing must create the illusion the voices heard are spoken by the onscreen actors. Both theatrical performance and dubbing hide away the translational process to ensure maximum rapture on the part of the audience.

Dubbing Shakespeare film adaptations is both the continuity and the result of Shakespeare’s integration into French culture that was initiated through the theatrical representations of his translated plays. This translational practice is culturally specific. Although Europe counts no less than four dubbing countries, each have their own particularities and techniques in the writing and recording of the dubbed voice track. France population shows a clear inclination for dubbing, which has become now part of French culture. More than just domesticating texts, French dubbing domesticates actors. Most of the time, Anglo-Saxon film stars have one, or maybe two, appointed dubbing comedians that dub them systematically in (almost) every filmic production they act. In the French dubbed version of *Looking for Richard* the actors are dubbed by their official French voice. Al Pacino’s French voice in the film is Sylvain Joubert’s, who had already dubbed Pacino in *The Godfather*, *Serpico* (1973 dir. Sidney Lumet) and *Scarface*. Kevin Kline’s dubbing actor is Dominique Colignon Maurin, since the 1988 film *A fish Called Wanda* (dir. Charles Crichton). Winona Ryder has been dubbed by Claire Guyot in no less than seventeen films (*Edward Scissorhands*; *Dracula*; *Girls, Interrupted*<sup>134</sup>). Kenneth Branagh in *Looking* is dubbed by Patrick Poivey, who also dubs him in *Much Ado*, however the British actor/director does not

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<sup>131</sup> Drouet, Rivère de Carles 2016 : 727

<sup>132</sup> Drouet, Rivère de Carles 2016 : 728

<sup>133</sup> Drouet, Rivère de Carles 2016 : 735

<sup>134</sup> *Edward Scissorhands* 1990 dir. Tim Burton; *Dracula* 1992 dir. Francis Ford Coppola; *Girls, Interrupted* 1999 dir. James Mangold.

have one but rather several comedians who dub him, according to the Distribution studios' choice. Damien Witecka dubbed Leonardo DiCaprio for the first time in *R+J*. The match between the French voice and the American actor's face was such a success, Witecka's voice has been DiCaprio's since 1997. When the Warner Bros studios decided to dub Christopher Nolan's film *Inception* (2010) they did not cast Witecka to play DiCaprio's role. The French actor's adolescent voice was no longer matching with the very masculine characters DiCaprio was acting from then on.. This change of voice provoked an outcry on the internet, petitions were signed and letters were sent to The Warner Bros Studios to give his voice back to Leonardo DiCaprio<sup>135</sup>. "[the actors] appearance outside of their dubbed screen persona provokes [their] easy recognition."<sup>136</sup> Dubbing creates a film's cultural equivalent, but also gives French identities to foreign actors; For dubbing is a translational method well appreciated by French filmgoers and is culturally associated with entertainment films, it ensures to attract a part of the population who would not generally see or read a play by William Shakespeare. Through the translational process of adaptation, dubbing produces an equivalent to Shakespeare's poetry that is specific to French culture and designed according to a French's audience expectation and social cultural background. Dubbing *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* is not only a means to attract large audiences, it also integrates Shakespeare into 1990's French culture.

Dubbing aims at giving to *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* an equivalent that is acceptable in French culture. To do so the translation must be faithful to the original. It has to re-create the orality of the original, respect the lexical level used and the poetry of Shakespeare's verses. It also has to be idiomatic to give the impression that the audience is watching a home product. Adapting the translation to the target language and its convention ensures a better reception of the foreign product to the target audience, who does not feel separated by a cultural gap, and is able to get in touch with the film's message. "Given our desire to believe that the heard voice actually emanates from the actors/characters on the screen, we repress all awareness of the possibility of an incorrect translation: in fact, we forget that there has been any translation at all."<sup>137</sup> The simple fact of translating Shakespeare implies its appropriation and its integration into French culture. Dubbing as translational practice that is culturally specific; the dubbing process in France has its own particularities and rules. Furthermore, dubbing is a popular and popularising mode of translation. Dubbing Shakespeare film adaptations such as *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* is a modern mean to keep integrating the Bard's work into French culture.

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<sup>135</sup> Allodoublage 12/11/2012

<sup>136</sup> Ascheid 1997 :36

<sup>137</sup> Shohat, Stam 1985: 49

## Conclusion

Kenneth Branagh, Al Pacino and Baz Luhrmann's enterprise was to (re)create a connection between William Shakespeare and the people. Although his plays are part of popular (global) culture, the Bard is mistakenly thought to belong to be high-brow. Shakespeare's plays were not written to be enjoyed by only a certain, most educated, part of the population, but to entertain all men and women regardless of their social and educational background. Undeniably the great variations the English language has undergone for the last four hundred years is the cause of a separation between the Bard's plays and a modern-day audience. *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* present the 1990's spectators with modernised Shakespeare film adaptations that aim at stating of the Bard's eternal relevance. The themes of his plays are not specific to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They are in fact timeless: "Underneath his writings on political strife and historical transformation are perennial fairytale-like plots about sibling rivalry, marital choice and generational conflict."<sup>138</sup> In order to reconnect the Bard with his status of popular author, Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann have adapted his plays into films that would integrate him into 1990's popular culture.

To do so Branagh did not hesitate to re-structure the play to make it conform to filmic media. His true wish was to produce an adaptation that would be easily understood, and appear realistic to a contemporary audience. Luhrmann relocated *Romeo and Juliet*'s tragic love story into an unspecified yet contemporary world, to state that Shakespeare's message on generational conflicts, love and freedom is still relevant in the 1990's. Pacino's approach to modernise and popularise Shakespeare is slightly different. In his film the frontier between Shakespeare's time and the contemporary world is constantly blurred. The film intermingles sequences when the actors in costumes play Shakespeare, but then are shown in the contemporary world reliving and analysing his words. This constant shift from reality to fiction, from past to present aims at asserting that Shakespeare and his plays are part of our contemporary society. Onscreen adaptations of the Bard's plays encountered great success in the 1990's, and have managed to re-popularise Shakespeare in the sense that he is better-known and better-liked.

As the sphere of cinema (and Hollywood productions in particular) is international *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* have crossed the borders of English-speaking countries to be distributed into French movie theatres. Since the first foreign talkies arrived in France in the late 1920's, the language barrier that prevents a domestic audience from understanding a foreign production has been overcome through the mean of two main translational methods: subtitling and dubbing. The aim of audio-visual translation is to give a cultural equivalent to the source product that is both acceptable in the target language, and faithful to the original film's message and purpose. Given the fact that *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* aim

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<sup>138</sup> Dobson 2015

at re-popularising Shakespeare's plays by making them accessible and attractive to all, their translation must be in adequacy with this intention. Because of their very nature (the written transcript of the dialogues spoken) subtitles imply that the spectator has to read Shakespeare instead listening to his words as the home audience does. Subtitling creates disparities amongst viewers. Only those who are at ease with quick reading are able to understand the narrative and appreciate the film. Leaving out children, uneducated or illiterate people. This segregation goes against the three directors' intention to produce Shakespeare film adaptations that are accessible to all, hence popular. Furthermore, because subtitling is a visual information added to the film images, it alters the nature of the original and corrupts the visual language of the product. Their presence on screen signals the artificiality of the movie; they state of the existence of the fourth wall that separates the audience from the illusionary world that the original had constructed. Dubbing, by replacing the original voice track by one in the target language, enables the audience to listen to Shakespeare's words as it was intended by the original movie. This translational method has the advantage of letting the original film images unchanged, and to preserve the illusion generated by the original film. Indeed, when the rules of synchrony (isochrony, lip-synchronisation and kinetic synchrony) are respected, dubbing even extends this illusion by tricking the audience into believing that actors they know to be foreigners express themselves in French.

For dubbing aims at creating a cultural equivalent to the foreign product, the dialogues must not only be translated but adapted to the norms that rule the target language, and its culture. This task is particularly important in the case of *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J*. These three film aim at presenting the audience with Shakespeare's words. The dialogues are not common language but poetry. The adaptor must re-create Shakespearean poetry without producing an archaic adaptation. Not only would the use of archaisms disturb the audience, it would also be at odd with the *skopos* of those three films that is to re-popularise Shakespeare through the modernisation of his plays. Producing an idiomatic translation of *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J*'s dialogues implies adapting the text to French language but also to the French audience of the 1990's. Dubbing is in the continuity what of Branagh, Pacino and Luhrmann did with Shakespeare's plays. They de-constructed, re-constructed, dislocated and relocated them into other settings, countries and cultures. "Dubbing transforms the original into a blueprint, which shifts its status from that of a finished and culturally specific text to that of a transcultural denationalized raw material, which is to be re-inscribed in a new cultural context."<sup>139</sup>

For the dialogue author has to produce a contemporary and simplified translation of texts that have remained the same for four hundred years, it could be argued that the French dubbed version of *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* brings a French speaking audience closer to Shakespeare's message than the home audience is. On the matter of translating Shakespeare Jean-Pierre Richard said : "Parce que Shakespeare écrivait dans la langue de son époque, en traduction il restera toujours *moderne*. On peut

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<sup>139</sup> Ascheid 1997 :33

aller jusqu'à se demander si, à cet égard, la traduction n'est pas le seul lieu possible de fidélité totale à Shakespeare, puisque, dans sa propre langue, il a le malheur de vieillir."<sup>140</sup> As *Looking for Richard* demonstrates it, many English speakers feel at odd with Shakespeare's texts because they simply do not understand his words or the structure of his verses. This has the effect of creating a language barrier within the Anglophone sphere. When translating Shakespeare into French, the adaptor respects the skopos of Shakespeare's plays: to create a poetic and sophisticated message that can be understood by all, and move them.

Dubbing is a translational method that does not create discrepancies amongst the viewers, but renders a foreign film accessible to all of them. It is also a way to integrate William Shakespeare into French popular culture. Dubbing *Much Ado*, *Looking* and *R+J* extends their intention to assert Shakespeare is an entertaining and popular author. This mode of translation is generally attributed to entertainment motion pictures (in opposition to subtitles that are favoured for arthouse cinema) dubbing Shakespeare film adaptations state that those films do not belong to high culture but to popular culture.

In 1993, Olivier Gorris concluded his essay on French dubbing in this manner: "the role played by dubbing [...] in the development of international discourse should not be investigated by Translation Studies alone; it merits becoming a task for the many disciplines involved in research on culture(s)."<sup>141</sup> Twenty-three years later, researches on the cultural impact of dubbing in France are tragically scarce,<sup>142</sup> although dubbing has been part French culture for almost a century. Understanding how dubbing onscreen Shakespeare adaptations have contributed to the integration of William Shakespeare's plays into popular French should (and must) be investigated further through the prism of Sociological studies.

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<sup>140</sup> Maquerlot 2000 : 286

<sup>141</sup> Gorris 1993 :188

<sup>142</sup> Works such as Nathalie Ramière's *Comment le sous-titrage et le doublage modifie la perception d'un film*, 2004 ; or Frederique Bisset's *Cinéma d'auteur et doublage: le paradoxe Woody Allen* are worth mentioning, for they endeavour to demonstrate the impact of dubbing on the integration of foreign film products into French culture, although they lack of socio-cultural informations.

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## Appendix

### List of films that are both adaptations and rewritings of William Shakespeare's plays:

*Henry V*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Perf. Kenneth Branagh, Derek Jacobi, and Ian Holm. Renaissance Films, 1989

*Hamlet*. Dir. Franco Zeffirelli. Perf. Mel Gibson and Glenn Close. Warner Brothers, 1990

*My Own Private Idaho*. Dir. Gus VanSant. Perf. River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves. Fine Line Features, 1991

*Much Ado About Nothing*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Perf. Kenneth Branagh and Emma Thompson. Samuel Goldwyn, 1993

*In the Bleak Midwinter*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Renaissance Films, 1995

*Othello*. Dir. Oliver Parker. Perf. Laurence Fishburne, Irene Jacobs, and Kenneth Branagh. Castle Rock Entertainment, 1995

*Richard III*. Dir. Richard Loncraine. Perf. Ian McKellen, Annette Bening, and Maggie Smith. United Artists, 1995

*Hamlet*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Perf. Kenneth Branagh, Derek Jacobi, and Julie Christie. Castle Rock Entertainment, 1996

*Looking for Richard*. Dir. Al Pacino. Perf. Al Pacino, Alec Baldwin, and Winona Ryder. Fox Searchlight, 1996

*Romeo+Juliet*. Dir. Baz Luhrmann. Perf. Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. Twentieth Century Fox, 1996

*Twelfth Night*. Dir. Trevor Nunn. Perf. Helena Bonham Carter, Nigel Hawthorne, and Ben Kingsley. Fine Line, 1996

*Shakespeare in Love*. Dir. John Madden. Perf. Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Geoffrey Rush. Miramax, 1998

*Midsummer Night's Dream*. Dir. Michael Hoffman. Perf. Rupert Everett, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Kevin Kline. Fox Searchlight, 1999

*Ten Things I Hate About You*. Dir. Gil Junger. Perf. Julia Stiles and Heath Ledger. Touchstone Pictures, 1999

*Titus*. Dir. Julie Taymor. Perf. Anthony Hopkins and Jessica Lange. Fox Searchlight, 1999

*Hamlet*. Dir. Michael Almereyda. Perf. Ethan Hawke, Kyle MacLachlan, and Diane Venora. Miramax Films, 2000

*Love's Labour's Lost*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh, Nathan Lane, and Alicia Silverstone. Miramax Films, 2000

*Romeo Must Die*. Dir. Andrzej Bartkowiak. Perf. Jet Li and Aaliyah. Warner Brothers, 2000

*"O"*. Dir. Tim Blake Nelson. Perf. Mekhi Phifer and Julia Styles. Touchstone Pictures, 2001