Kuipers, Giselinde, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands / Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

The Task of the Translation Industry: Audiovisual Translation and the Limits of the Flow Metaphor of Cultural Globalization

Audiovisual translation is a crucial but often unnoticed component of globalization processes. Using interview and ethnographic data, this article analyzes the translation industry in four European countries: France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland.

This paper, firstly, analyzes the translation industries of these countries within the larger cultural and media field. Second, it analyzes the consequences of audiovisual translation. Translations of the same show, movies, or game vary considerably across countries. Partly, this is the result of translation technologies (dubbing, subtitling, voiceover), but it is also caused by wider cultural and institutional factors, such as government involvement, structure of the media industry, etc. The cases of Italy and France, two dubbing countries, show that the same translation system can lead to different effects in different institutional and cultural contexts (for instance: Italy has considerable censorship of translations). Finally, I will argue that an analysis of translation leads us to reconsider the "flow" metaphor of globalization.