

Intervention in new amateur subtitling cultures: a multimodal account

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Recent developments in the audiovisual marketplace have led to an increasing compartmentalization of subtitling audiences and the emergence of amateur subtitling cultures that aim to cater for the idiosyncratic demands of their target audience niche. Fansubbing, i.e. the subtitling of Japanese animated films by fans, is one of the most influential and successful of such amateur cultures. This article examines the genealogy of this peculiar phenomenon, describes some of its most distinctive subtitling practices and explores the effects of its interventionist agenda. Drawing on the apparatus of multimodal theory and the insights provided by a small purpose-built corpus, this paper argues that fansubbing exploits traditional meaning-making codes in a creative manner and, more importantly, criss-crosses the traditional boundaries between linguistic and visual semiotics in innovative ways.

1. Introduction. Subtitling in an increasingly fragmented audiovisual marketplace

An enduring question in audiovisual translation studies is how to adapt mainstream subtitling strategies to the needs and preferences of individual audience ‘niches’¹. Long gone are the days when a single set of subtitling conventions sufficed to inform the interlingual and intercultural mediation practices of a relatively homogeneous group of professionals who worked almost exclusively for the film and television industries. Over the last two decades, developments in the audiovisual marketplace have led to a twofold expansion of subtitling. On the one hand, this form of translation has become increasingly enmeshed in the localization of more pragmatic or ‘utilitarian’ screen-based texts, ranging from promotional corporate programmes to videogames. On the other hand, subtitled films or television broadcasts have come to serve ulterior purposes, such as enhancing social cohesion or fostering the integration of specific groups within the community. In most cases, the gradual consolidation of subtitling as a tool for social integration has been the result of a concerted and clearly targeted action, as in the deployment of specialized mediation practices in programmes addressed at the deaf and the hearing impaired. In some other cases, the social relevance of subtitling can be accounted for on the basis of its sheer pervasiveness – as illustrated by the reliance of different social groups on freely available subtitled programmes as a means to develop their proficiency in another

language. Whatever the circumstances leading to the expansion of its area of influence, subtitling is now used to translate an unprecedentedly heterogeneous range of text-types. Concomitantly, it now targets different groups of viewers with diverse expectations as to what subtitled texts can or should deliver. And whilst there is a growing awareness of the compartmentalization of subtitling audiences, “little research has been done to profile these target groups and subgroups” (Gambier 2003: 178) in terms of identifying the conventions and practices that would best suit their backgrounds and requirements.

This article focuses on a specific audience niche: fans of Japanese animated cinema worldwide. Section 2 begins by examining the genealogy of this peculiar viewer segment; of particular interest here is the fans’ active involvement in the design of customized subtitling strategies for the translation of this culture-specific genre following the failure of mainstream subtitling conventions to translate ‘japaneseness’ successfully. On the back of technological developments, fan networks have grown to create the most influential subtitling-based form of linguistic and cultural mediation by amateurs: fansubbing. This section closes with a short overview of the most distinctive formal manifestations of this subtitling paradigm. Section 3 engages in a theoretical exploration of the generative principles that lie at the basis of actual fansubbing conventions in order to harness the complexity of amateur mediation strategies and capture their potential resonance for other amateur subtitling cultures. Drawing on the apparatus of multimodal theory and the insights provided by a small purpose-built corpus, I discuss (i) the ways in which amateur subtitlers actively manipulate the finite range of meaning-making modes that are available to them; and (ii) how their interventionist approach to subtitling contributes to the gestalt semiotics of the translated audiovisual text.

2. Anime ‘fandom’ as an emergent audience niche

Fansubbing is a relatively new subtitling-based mediation phenomenon articulated by fans of Japanese animated films or anime worldwide. Born as a children-geared filmic manifestation in the late 1970s, anime has grown and taken over ‘live action’ films as the dominant form of cinematic entertainment in contemporary Japan. According to film studies specialists (Minh-ha 2005), this development can only be understood in the context of (i) the Japanese society’s desire for Westernization and (ii) the identification between Asian physiognomy and Japan’s uncomfortable past. More pointedly, Sato (2002) contends that “the ethnic self-denial that has suffused Japanese society ever since the Meiji era [...] in favour of a Western ideal has undermined live-action film by affecting the performance of Japanese screen actors”. In a context in which Japanese audiences find the dramatic emotions of Western-looking anime characters more credible than those expressed by

native actors in live-action films, “most of the serious and ambitious film efforts [in Japan] have used the vehicle of anime” (*ibid.*).

Whilst anime subordinates cinematic naturalism to the search for modernization, the aesthetics of this genre remain firmly anchored in Japanese idiosyncrasy. Pérez-González (2006) has recently argued for the cultural specificity of anime both as a *narrating* and a *narrated* culture. On the one hand, style markers such as “comic freeze-frames or elaborate *tableau*-like visual inserts” (*ibid.*) have served as a springboard for the development of anime-specific narrative techniques and filmic syntactic conventions (Napier 2001), and hence led to the emergence of a unique narrating culture. On the other hand, anime dialogues rely heavily on a plethora of genre-specific cultural references whose interpretation requires the viewer’s familiarity not only with the Japanese language but also with the narrated culture that embeds them. Overall, “the overlap between the narrated and the narrating cultures that characterises Japanese animated films brings into a particularly sharp focus the role that the language-culture revolving door plays in the reception and enjoyment of these audiovisual products” (Pérez-González, 2006: 262-263).

2.1. The globalization of anime: implications for audiovisual translation

The synthesis between “the global and the particular” (Minh-ha 2005: 40) which lies at the basis of anime films goes some way towards explaining their universal appeal. In a recent study on the emergence of the anime fan phenomenon or ‘fandom’ in the USA, Cubisson (2005) distinguishes three stages in the globalization of anime worldwide.

In the early 1970s, the USA audiovisual market witnessed the proliferation of children-oriented anime broadcast by the main television networks. In the short term, the choice of dubbing to translate Japanese anime led to changes in “the stories and characters [of the original films] to suit the perception of the tastes of American children and their parents”, the americanization of Japanese names, and the removal of “elements of Japanese Culture” (2005: 52). However, halfway through that same decade, anime fans were already “aware of the extent to which these texts had been altered for American audiences” (*op. cit.*: 48) and set out to create the infrastructure required for the small-scale distribution of original versions of anime films outside Japan.

The advent of a second generation of more sophisticated, adult-oriented anime in the early 80s coincided with the popularization of the home video technology, with anime soon growing into a popular market niche with home video retailers (Masters 2004: 44). This confluence of factors provided the final impetus for the spread of anime fandom. Fans demanded their right to experience first hand the cultural ‘otherness’ that anime is imbued in and lobbied for the abandonment of dubbing as the default translation modality for this genre. The engagement of fans in the articulation of their expectations – regarded by some specialists as a form of

resistance to Western popular culture (Newitz 1994) – soon posed important dilemmas for video distribution companies:

For a company to release an anime on video-tape the company had to decide where the greater profit lay – among those devoted fans who prized Japanese audio tracks or among those who preferred shows to be dubbed into their own languages. This commercial decision led to heated arguments among fans because purchasing decisions of some fans affected availability of the alternative format for other fans. (Cubisson 2005: 46)

The emergence of the DVD technology in the late 1990s marks the beginning of the third stage in the globalization of anime. With their capacity to accommodate multiple audio and subtitle tracks, DVDs enabled licensed distribution companies to market professionally subtitled collections of anime films or series that had been previously broadcast in dubbed form. But whilst fan communities worked hard at raising the distributors and retailers' awareness of their expectations and preferences –so that these could inform the packaging of anime for commercial DVD release – professional subtitles proved insufficient to quench the fans' thirst for the fullest and most authentic experience of 'japaneseness'. Mainstream subtitling is a modality whose limitations have been widely discussed in the literature. Trapped within the bounds of practices and conventions derived from the "hegemony of synchronous sound and the strict alignment of speaker and voice" in mainstream audiovisual products (Naficy 2001: 24), professional subtitlers have traditionally had little room for manoeuvre when dealing with the presence of 'otherness' in the source text. As attested by a growing body of scholarship, commercial subtitling practices are widely held to foster cultural and linguistic standardization (Díaz Cintas 2005). For anime fans, the domestication of Japanese culture and the ensuing dilution of the genre's idiosyncrasy that commercial subtitling brought about was unacceptable (Carroll 2005) and would soon lead to the emergence of a new and influential mode of linguistic, cultural and semiotic mediation known as fansubbing.

2.2. The role of technology in the empowerment of amateur subtitlers

Fansubs are subtitled versions of anime that fans (amateur subtitlers) produce primarily to express their disagreement with commercial subtitling practices and to impose linguistic and cultural mediation strategies of their own. Fansubbers, who work on a voluntary basis and without remuneration, aim thus to deliver tailored subtitled texts to a carefully profiled and neatly targeted audience that they themselves are part of. Additionally, fansubbed versions seek to "make minor films (that go unnoticed by the major distribution companies) more widely available to non-Japanese speakers; to have minor films noticed, and hopefully redistributed, by the major companies;

and to make available a subtitled version where only a dubbed version exists” (Kayahara 2005).

There are a number of reasons why the fansubbing phenomenon has managed to improve accessibility to a hitherto non-mainstream (and non-Western) form of entertainment without concerning itself with profitability targets. Although fansubbed copies of anime were already available in VHS and commercial laserdisc formats back in the 1980s (Cubisson 2005: 48), the expansion of fansubbing networks has gone hand in hand with the increasingly widespread availability of information and communication technologies. In the era of digitization, such technologies provide networks of fansubbers with the tools and avenues required for (i) the appropriation of anime texts by literally ‘ripping’ audio and video captures of films and programmes they do not hold the copyright to²; (ii) the manipulation of footage in pursuit of their mediation agenda; and (iii) the widespread dissemination of fansubbed products through dedicated channels that allow for hundreds of thousands of downloads by fans worldwide within the next few hours after a programme has been made available online (Henry 2006)³.

In the light of the above, it seems reasonable to argue that fansubbing epitomizes a peculiar form of comprehensive intervention in the traditional dynamics of the audiovisual marketplace based on a combination of singular circumstances. Firstly, fansubber networks act effectively as self-appointed translation commissioners that choose what is to be subtitled; secondly, their mediating task is informed by their status as *connoisseurs* of the needs and preferences of their target audience, whom they ultimately represent (Díaz Cintas and Muñoz-Sánchez 2006); finally, most consumers of fansubs are highly computer literate, capable of processing screen-based information with relative ease, and hence more predisposed to accept new developments in subtitling practice –such as the ones outlined by Díaz-Cintas (2005). On account of this confluence of factors, amateur subtitling grants fansubbers an unlimited degree of latitude that manifests itself in the subversion of a number of consolidated practices from mainstream subtitling.⁴

The conventions used in amateur subtitling of anime were first accounted for by Nornes (1999: 32), and later described in more detail by Ferrer-Simó (2005) and Díaz Cintas & Muñoz-Sánchez (2006). More recently, Pérez-González (2006) has provided a more extensive corpus-based overview of fansubbing practices which I can be summarized as follows:

- First, fansubbers experiment with a wide range of fonts and typefaces to ensure that “the visual styling of subtitles is compatible with the aesthetics” of the frame/s that requires translation, “thus seeking to maximise the viewer’s enjoyment of the original semiotic resources while minimising the mediator’s intrusion” (*ibid.*).
- Second, fansubbers rely on the principle of speaker-colour association – a well established convention in subtitling for the hard of hearing; changes in subtitle colour are also used to signify shifts in “ma-

terial aspects of language, from voice to dialect to written text within the frame” (Nornes 1999: 32).

- Third, cultural references and untranslatable words are kept in Japanese in the subtitle, while a definition, gloss or interpretation-facilitating comment is provided by way of ‘headnote’ at the top of the screen.
- Fourth, fansubbers use a profusion of titling elements – of different lengths and in seemingly random alignment patterns – that are positioned outside the traditionally default subtitle display area (*i.e.* the bottom of frame).

Gambier (2003) has recently contended that, in the new media landscape of internationalisation and digitisation, we are witnessing a transfer of power from media owners to the distributors and professionals who manipulate the multiple meaning-making codes at play in audiovisual texts. Fansubbing groups rank high among the most visible beneficiaries of this power transfer. The remainder of this paper will draw on my premise that the technology-driven ‘empowerment’ of fansubbers as linguistic and cultural mediators is worth investigating insofar as it may be symptomatic of an emerging scenario in which more people will feel inclined to subtitle. On the basis of the evidence provided by fansubbed anime, amateur subtitlers are likely to engage in experimental practices that exploit semiotic resources in full and, in doing so, contribute to developing new –and not necessarily harmonious– subtitling cultures.

3. A multimodal characterization of fansubbing conventions

In the previous section, I have articulated some of the most conspicuous differences between the amateur subtitling of anime and mainstream or commercial subtitling practices. In this section, I intend to explore the genealogy of such differences in more depth. Rather than restricting the scope of my discussion to specific formal manifestations of mediation by non-professionals, I propose to engage in a more theoretical exploration of the generative principles that lie at the basis of actual fansubbing conventions. In order to harness the complexity of amateur mediation strategies and capture their potential resonance for other amateur subtitling cultures, I will be drawing on the theoretical apparatus of multimodal theory. Ultimately, my goal is to establish the feasibility of accounting for the formal exuberance of fansubs in terms of shifts in the deployment of the semiotic meaning-making resources available to amateur subtitlers.

To this end, I will illustrate my argument with references to and examples from a corpus of six episodes of two well-known anime series (episodes 1, 2 and 3 of *Burst Angel* 2005 and episodes 176, 177 and 178 of *Naruto* 2006) that were fansubbed by Lunar and Dattebayo, respectively. The composition of this sample corpus was informed by three major criteria: the

date of release of the six fansubbed episodes within a period of 14 months; the popularity these series enjoy among fans, as attested by the number of downloads from the servers used for their dissemination; the fact that both series belong to the same genre of anime⁵. My analysis of these texts to date has been purely qualitative and I therefore make no claim of comprehensiveness or representativity in quantitative terms.

3.1. Rationale for a multimodal characterization of fansubs

Over the last two decades, scholars working in a wide range of language-related domains have become more aware of the diversity of resources that can be used to create texts in addition to the spoken and written word. Different semiotic modalities – such as gestures, visuals or music, to give but a few examples – are often codeployed within a multimodal text to create meaning. As Ventola *et al.* (2004: 1) suggest, “the various possibilities of combining communication modes in the ‘new’ media [...] have forced scholars to think about the particular characteristics of these modes and the way they semiotically function and combine in the modern discourse worlds”.

Among the different strands of multimodal research that have emerged in recent times (Baldry and Thibault 2006), my analysis of the multimodal idiosyncrasy of fansubs presented in subsection 3.2 is informed by Stöckl’s (2004) approach to the study of *modes* or *modalities*. Whilst Stöckl’s framework was not developed with filmic texts in mind, I contend that his conceptualization of each meaning-making mode as the product of a choice-driven utilization of semiotic resources available at different structural levels is productive for my purposes. In the following paragraphs, I survey the network of ‘meta-terms’ and examine the assumptions that have served as a basis for the development of Stöckl’s model. Both the terminology and the assumptions are brought to bear on the description of filmic texts as the overview unfolds.

Modes are “sign systems from which communicators can pick their signs to realize their communicative intentions” (*ibid.*: 11). As far as films – our object of study in this paper – are concerned, the language mode is typically realized in spoken form through dialogue; the fact that modes such as language or image are “deeply entrenched in people’s popular perceptions of codes and communication” (*ibid.*: 14) earns them, in Stöckl’s framework, the status of *core modes*. An additional distinctive feature of core modes is the fact that they can be realized through different *sensory channels*. In subtitled films, for instance, language is conveyed along both the auditory and visual channels, in the form of speech and written subtitles, respectively.

Within each sensory channel, each core mode has its own *medial variants*; consider, for example, the case of the medial realizations of the language mode within the visual channel. In anime films, image is construed *statically* in the occasional freeze-frames which are so typical for this

filmic genre, or *dynamically* in the animated scenes. As far as the language mode is concerned, fansubbed anime relies on *static* writing in its ‘traditional’ subtitles, while resorting to *dynamic* writing in the karaoke-driven titles that are commonly found in the opening and closing credits sequences, as illustrated at the top of the frame displayed in screen capture 1 below.



Screen capture 1: Dynamic realization of the language mode in the visual channel
(*Naruto* 2006, episode 178).

The choice of a specific medial variant on the part of the communicator involves the concomitant activation of relevant *sub-modes* which, in Stöckl’s terms, “provide the building blocks of a mode’s grammar” (2004: 14). Continuing with the same example, the communicator’s decision to opt for a static realization of the language mode in the visual channel – *i.e.* the use of a traditional subtitle – entails the need for further choices among the possibilities that sub-modes such as *fonts* and *colours* make available to them. Overall, it is the combination of the communicator’s choices out of the options available under each sub-mode system – hence the description of Stöckl’s model as one based on system networks of choices – that ultimately determines the realization of a mode in a multimodal text.

3.2. A multimodal description of fansubbing practices

As is also the case with mainstream subtitles, fansubbing is a type of audiovisual mediation that primarily involves the utilization of meaning-making signs from the core mode of language. These are medially realized in the visual channel via snippets of (mostly static) text which are superimposed on the animated image somewhere at the bottom of a frame or succession of frames. However, unlike mainstream subtitlers, fansubbers exploit the range of options available as part of the sub-modes attached to written language, mainly font and colour variation.

Whilst mainstream subtitlers are advised to rely on typefaces with no serifs and ‘pale white’ fonts to enhance legibility (Karamitrouglou 1998),

amateurs in charge of typesetting within each fansubbing group use all sorts of combinations of fonts and colours⁶. In doing so, they seek to observe a correlation between their colour-*cum*-typeface choices and any shifts in key aspects of the diegetic communication event – i.e. the conversation between the fictional characters. As anticipated above, changes in colour denote a change of speaker. Furthermore, the analysis of fansubbed footage suggests that the selection of fonts and colours is determined by the variables of field (‘what is being talked about’), tenor (‘the relationship between the interactants’) and mode (‘circumstances affecting the material delivery of speech’) in any given scene. Such variables include, to give but a few examples, the overall visual composition of the frame, the volume of talk, the use of a given dialect or the fact that the speech heard by the viewer is being dreamt by one of the characters. Working as they are for a highly committed audience, fansubbers subordinate optimum visibility to aesthetics and a visual realization of the ‘materiality’ of talk.

In professional subtitling, title synchronization is paramount. Each of the fragments into which subtitlers divide the speech of the original film for the purposes of translation is to be delivered concurrently with its written rendition in the target language via the subtitle. As a result, spatio-temporal restrictions on the wording of the subtitles arise: “[s]ince people generally speak much faster than they read, subtitling inevitably involves [...] technical constraints of shortage of screen space and lack of time” (O’Connell 1998: 67). In this context, mainstream subtitlers have been led to approach their mediation task as a shift between two different sensory variants of a single meaning-making mode: acoustically realized language (dialogue) turns into visually realized language (text). Shifts across sensory channels notwithstanding, commercial subtitling aims to achieve a one-to-one correspondence between these two different medial varieties of the same linguistic stimulus: subtitles only convey an edited version of the character’s speech. Amateur subtitling, as instantiated by fansubbing, problematizes the confinement of the subtitler’s mediation competences to the production of a condensed transcription of spoken dialogue. As part of their mediation, fansubbers often resort to the deployment of written – and hence visual – realizations of the language mode whose content is not always directly associated with the spoken dialogue which is being delivered at that particular point. From a functional point of view, the common denominator to the use of these discretionary segments of written language can be formulated as follows:

- In terms of content, they provide (i) definitions of ‘untranslatable’ Japanese words uttered in the dialogue – and hence printed in the subtitle – or explanations of the cultural relevance of an object or action which happens to be visible in the frame at a given point; (ii) micro-texts inserted by the translator with a view to contextualize or guide the viewer’s interpretation of the narrated event; (iii) notes

drawing the viewer's attention to a material aspect of the character's speech (e.g. their dialect).

- As far as their position is concerned, they are commonly displayed at the top of the screen by way of a 'headnote' – as opposed to the traditional footnotes found in literary texts.
- Insofar as they are intended to frame or elaborate on other signs which are visually realized in the frame either through images or language (speech+subtitle), headnotes and signs are bound to be visually co-present to a certain extent. As the two frames in screen capture 2 below illustrate, headnotes need not be synchronised with the subtitle to which they are anchored. In this example, the subtitle's headnote ('Shihou Hoppou Shuriken no Jutsu: All Direction Shuriken Technique') remains on display across shifts in visual perspective, thus transgressing the widely accepted mainstream convention not to override visual syntax cuts and transitions (Karamitrouglou 1998).



Screen capture 2: Temporal asynchrony between headnotes and subtitles
(*Naruto* 2006, episode 178).

While traditional subtitles are situated in the diegetic space of the filmic narrative (*i.e.* they convey the fictional dialogue among the characters), fansubbers' headnotes introduce a non-diegetic dimension into the interlingual and intercultural mediation process. Headnote-mediated fiction declares its artifice and allows fansubbers to maximize their own visibility as translators. Their assumption of this interventionist role (i) represents the ultimate statement against the effacement of the translator that prevailed in the early subtitling of anime outside Japan and (ii) epitomizes the spirit of the 'abusive subtitling' paradigm advocated by Nornes (1999). In overstepping the boundaries of the diegetic dimension, fansubbing abandons the traditional allegiance of professional subtitling to the voice-title synchronization principle. More importantly from our point of view as audiovisual translation scholars, it opens up a new space for the interaction between the translator and the viewer of the audiovisual text in question.

The incorporation of a linguistic, non-diegetic dimension into the mediation process is not, however, the most extreme rearrangement of se-

miotic resources that fansubbers may resort to. Fansubbed anime shows evidence of an incipient trend towards the ‘dilution’ of visual (written) signs from the language mode within broader visual signs from the image mode. In fansubbed anime there is a profusion of titling elements providing ‘translations’ of written elements contained in the source text; in most cases, these titles are so sophisticated from a visual point of view that they blend in with their visual surroundings. Fansubbers’ access to dedicated technologies allows them to creatively exploit a wide range of sub-modes when it comes to composing these titles. In addition to the relatively conventional sub-modes of font and colour, they are also able to make innovative choices among the resources that other sub-modes – such as perspective, depth, angle, composition, to name but a few examples – make available to them. These choices enhance the pictorial dimension of the written signs and contribute to blur the erstwhile clear-cut distinction between linguistic and visual semiotic resources. Screen capture 3 below illustrates the differences between the visual status of the traditional subtitle featuring at the bottom of the frame and the pictorial titles that are positioned diagonally on both sides of the poster.



Screen capture 3: Pictorial subtitles (*Burst Angel* 2005, episode 1).

4. Conclusion

In the emerging audiovisual marketplace, subtitling audiovisual texts and disseminating the output of this mediation process is becoming increasingly easy and affordable as the technological means required for these purposes become more readily accessible. These developments are already allowing for a widespread participation of amateurs in the process of linguistic and intercultural mediation – from fan groups members to political activists and ‘alter-globalists’ (Brander and Jung 2006). As a result, the rationale for the use of audiovisual translation in the near future is likely to become more heterogeneous, less predictable. The growing diversity of backgrounds and motivations of the new actors can only contribute to widen the portfolio of products that has been subtitled to date. More importantly, the new subti-

ting cultures are bound to open up the potential for divergence between the priorities of the new mediators and the profit-driven agenda of the media establishment. This paper has examined, to the extent allowed by length constraints, how one of the most consolidated among the emerging subtitling cultures is contributing to the evolution of subtitling practices. Fansubbers prioritize the satisfaction of their audience's needs and expectations as consumers of Japanese anime. To that end, they are constantly developing highly interventionist mediation strategies which rely heavily on the use of new technologies both in the production and consumption of the subtitles. Fansubbing represents thus an interesting example of how to avoid the alienation of a demanding community through a careful profiling of their audience and a neat targeting of their needs.

In this paper I have advocated the use of a multimodal theoretical framework to become acquainted with the generative principles that lie at the basis of current fansubbing conventions. I have argued that the plethora of formal differences between mainstream subtitling and fansubbing can be accounted for in terms of (i) the unique ways in which amateurs actively manipulate the finite range of meaning-making modes that are available to them; and (ii) a number of ground-breaking contributions on the part of amateur subtitlers to the gestalt semiotics of the translated audiovisual text. This admittedly tentative application of multimodal theory to the analysis of a small corpus of fansubbed texts does not claim to be comprehensive. However, I hope to have illustrated its potential contribution to the search for systematic insights into the increasingly complex formal manifestations of the subtitling phenomenon.

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Filmography

- Burst Angel* (2005).
 Episode 1: 'Hell Comes silently'.
 English fansubbed version Lunar (<http://www.lunaranime.org>).
 Original: *Burst Angel*, Episode 1 (2004).
 'Hell Comes silently'.
 Dir. Koichi Ohata for GONZO Studios.
 First aired on April 6, 2004 by TV Asahi Network (Japan).
- Naruto* (2006).
 Episode 178: 'Encounter: The boy holding the name 'Star''.
 English fansubbed version by Dattebayo (<http://www.narutofan.com>).
 Original: *Naruto*, Episode 178, Season 6 (2005-2006).
 'Encounter: The boy holding the name 'Star''.
 Dir. Yuuto Date for Studio Pierrot.
 Aired on March 29, 2006 by Network Airmax (Japan).

¹ The terms 'mainstream subtitling', 'commercial subtitling' and 'professional subtitling' will be used interchangeably throughout this paper to refer to widely accepted subtitling practices used by professionals working for the audiovisual industry. As explained later in the paper, they are the opposite of any form of 'amateur subtitling', including 'fansubbing'.

² For a fuller account of copyright-related constraints of fansubbing, see Díaz Cintas & Muñoz-Sánchez (2006).

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- ³ Díaz Cintas & Muñoz-Sánchez (2006) and Pérez-González (in press) provide extensive accounts of the fansubbing process, including its most technical aspects.
- ⁴ Admittedly, this subversion results partly from the fact that fansubbers, including fans who are in charge of the translation stage of the mediation process, are not formally trained to perform the role they have been entrusted with. As acknowledged by Díaz Cintas & Muñoz-Sánchez (2006), “the quality of the translations circulating on Internet is [therefore] very often below par, although on occasions some fansubs do not have anything to envy to the quality of the licensed translations, commercially distributed on DVD or broadcast on television”.
- ⁵ “Shōnen anime is typically characterized by high-action [...]. The camaraderie between boys or men on sports teams, fighting squads, etc. is often emphasized”. *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sh%C5%8Dnen>. (accessed on 15 April 2007).
- ⁶ For more information on the distribution of functions and roles within fansubbing groups, see, Díaz Cintas & Muñoz-Sánchez (2006) and Pérez-González (2006).