AVT SOLUTIONS FOR THE LINGUISTIC VARIETY OF ENGLISH IN THE NETFLIX TV SHOW DEAR WHITE PEOPLE

SOLUÇÕES EM TAV PARA A VARIANTE LINGUÍSTICA DO INGLÊS DENTRO DA SÉRIE DA NETFLIX *CARA GENTE BRANCA*

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims at analyzing the translation of occurrences of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in dubbing and subtitling for the Netflix™ TV show *Dear White People*. For that purpose, we took screenshots of both the original lines and subtitles in Portuguese, and transcribed dubbed lines of the same scenes in order to compare the different translation choices used in both AVT modes. William Labov (2010) and scholars from the Functionalist school of thought are the theoretical basis for this project and helped us discuss the selected examples.
Keywords: audiovisual translation; language variety; *Dear White People*.
RESUMO: Este trabalho busca analisar a tradução para legenda e dublagem da variante chamada de inglês vernáculo afro-americano (IVAA) dentro do seriado *Cara Gente Branca*. Para esse fim, utilizou-se de capturas de telas das falas originais e das legendas e a transcrição da dublagem com o intuito de comparar as diferentes escolhas tradutórias usadas em ambas as modalidades audiovisuais. William Labov (2010) e pesquisadores funcionalistas serviram de base teórica para este artigo, ajudando na discussão dos exemplos selecionados.
Palavras-chave: tradução audiovisual; variante linguística; *Cara Gente Branca*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technological advances make it possible for people from different cultures to interact with each other on a global scale. However, in the long term, this contact has showed a gap in terms of translation: there is not a precise method for working with

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distinctive features of a culture when there is no equivalent in another one. As a matter of fact, whenever dealing with cultural matters, the act of replacing a single word for another in the target culture is far more challenging than it seems, as the idea of right or wrong may vary depending on the use as well.

Having pointed this out, this study analyzed the translation of a culturally charged linguistic variety of English in *Dear White People,* which is an American comedy-drama series produced and distributed by Netflix™. The first season was released in 2017 and it is based on a 2014 movie under the same name[2].

To contextualize, it is noteworthy to explain that *Dear White People* follows different groups of African American students in Winchester, a predominantly white fictional elite university. Each episode focuses on a different character and ironically discusses his/her dramas related to racism, sexuality, activism and empowerment, and their interaction with other students in the campus. The main character is Samantha White (played by Logan Browning), who runs a podcast on the university radio also called *Dear White People*.

Netflix™ series *Dear White People* was chosen as the object of study because it depicts a very particular cultural scenario expressed mainly, but not solely, by the language variety called African American Vernacular English (AAVE), which is used by some of the characters in specific scenes. This paper is a result of a bigger research project that has as its main objective the study of the particularities of audiovisual translation, subtitling, dubbing and the untranslatability of cultural elements.

Due to time and space constraints, this paper presents only the highlights of the theoretical framework used, as well as the most significative examples in order to draw the main parts of the discussion and conclusion of our research.[3]

[2] Both movie and series were created and directed by Justin Simien.
[3] Both the research carried out in 2018 and this paper were developed under the supervision of my former undergraduate adviser professor Samira Spolidorio.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Roman Jakobson (1959) was the pioneer when declaring that meaning can be conveyed by three types of translation: *intralingual*, which describes the process of transferring meaning into the same linguistic code (same language) by using, for instance, words that are synonyms; *interlingual*, a process similar to the first one, but instead of using the same linguistic code, it deals with two linguistic codes, translating from one language to another; and *intersemiotic* (or transmutation), which, in turn, does not focus on the verbal aspect of one or two linguistic codes in particular, but across different semiotic codes (usually, between verbal and non-verbal codes), as, for example the adaptation of a book to a movie in which the words describing a scene are presented in an image, or the verbal description of a painting.

In interlingual translation, the translator must have the ability to transit between the linguistic features of the source and the target languages, as well as to show cultural knowledge of both source and target audiences. We can bring Cicero and Horace (Ancient Greek), who were the pioneers in discussing the controversial translation concepts of "word-for-word" and "sense-for-sense", the former referring to the literal translation and the later to the translation of the meaning, to the discussion. Over the centuries, these concepts received other names and approaches depending on different theorists but the dichotomic view persisted. This discussion remains alive until today, but it has been expanded by other scholars to include more modern concerns related to ideology, functionalism, manipulation. Therefore, now we understand that translation encapsulates much more than just a linguistic operation.

Whenever dealing with translation, one must bear in mind that language is never neutral. This means that the choice of a word in detriment of another is — consciously or unconsciously — bounded to the translator's views and beliefs. The same is applicable to Audiovisual Translation (AVT), which enables people who do not

understand a given language to access audiovisual content even if it was not produced in his/her mother tongue.

Regarding the theoretical basis referring to translation itself, this research is based on the functionalist approach, mainly represented by Christiane Nord's studies, complemented by Susan Bassnett's and Andre Lefevere's ideas on cultural translation. We believe such theoretical framework is better suited for the objectives intended and for the analysis of the *corpus*. As stated by Nord, "translating is regarded as a 'purposeful activity'" (NORD, 2016, p. 569). This perspective is also followed by other scholars from the Functionalist school of thought, as defined by Nord:

> The approaches which are nowadays subsumed under the general heading of "functionalism" are based on the Skopos theory (Skopostheorie), proposed by the German scholar Hans J. Vermeer. The Greek word skopos means "purpose" and, in the theory, usually refers to the communicative purpose of the translational action. [...] There are usually two or even more ways of expressing a thought or a message, and the translator's guiding principle for choosing one or the other is, as we have seen, the communicative purpose for which the translation is intended. (NORD, 2016, p. 05).

That is to say that each text is produced in certain cultural conditions and for audiences from the same culture. The translator, then, faces a distinct environment whenever translating to a different culture. This extra-linguistic knowledge will, in many scenarios, lead one to produce a target-oriented text as the meaning is not 'stuck' in the source words themselves. Instead, the meaning is created in the sociolinguistic context at the moment of reception.

In the book *Translation Studies*, Bassnett (2002) endorses the statement above, claiming that "translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages" (BASSNETT, 2002, p. 16). If, in the process of intralingual translation, it is possible to replace a word for another whose meaning is similar but never the same, interlingual translation takes this dilemma to a deeper

level, as the translator will not find one-to-one equivalence in other cultures, since the words are only units inside a bigger social and historical context.

In many cases, there is a feeling of loss when we are not able to convey all the references that the source culture offers; this, however, may be compensated using references derived from the target culture. Bassnett (2002) refers to this phenomenon as 'loss and gain'. The same process can be applied when translating to another linguistic variety. Such compensation consists of weakening a certain piece to strengthen another part of the text in order to maintain the general 'feeling' or 'effect' of the original text.

As translation is a process of rewriting the original text, one should observe that any step of this process is made to serve a purpose, an ideology. Bassnett and Lefevere (1998) argue that "rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power [...]. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices" (LEFEVERE, 1992, p. vii). In other words, it is the act of reproducing the sense from the intersection across cultures. However, the comprehension that people from the target culture may have about a translated text will never have the same effect as the one caused by the source culture audience's understanding of the original text. Culturally speaking, sense is formed by a set of variables that will differ depending on the culture at stake.

In the digital era, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) is expanding its resources to meet the needs of the market, which is way faster than it used to be 50 years ago. This is pushed even further when we talk about AVT, because each mode has its own standards, demands and constraints. In summary, the dubbing process is composed of several phases performed by multiple professionals, from translators (that translate the script) to actors (that record and lip-sync the AV material), who work together in order to create a satisfactory final product. Frederic Chaume (2004) described three types of synchronization that are taken into consideration to greater or lesser extent depending on what is being dubbed. They are:

Lip synchrony: it consists in a script translation that prioritizes the matching of actors' lips movements, especially in close-ups scenes;

Kinesic synchrony: it is when the translation is adapted according to the body movements displayed on screen;

Isochrony: it refers to the type of synchrony based on the instant that the actor/actress opens his/her mouth to start speaking until the moment he/she closes the mouth.

In the captioning mode, the tools required for subtitling can simply be a personal computer equipped with the software to create/manipulate the subtitles and the original file to be used. Subtitles are usually displayed in two lines maximum, with each line showing about 35 to 42 characters each. It is established that the viewer needs the total amount of 6 seconds to comfortably read and understand two full lines and pay attention to what is being showed on the screen as a whole.

Subtitling poses a challenge to keep the marks of orality of the source language in the translated text, whereas dubbing and its constraints may enable the viewer to notice that a movie, for instance, is composed by some dialect or linguistic variety apart from the standard version of any language. Although placed one next to the other, we have no intention of comparing these two modes in order to define which one is better. Moreover, it is vital to distinguish their peculiarities in order to critically evaluate the techniques and strategies adopted in each one in the translation of *Dear White People*.

When very important cultural elements — that are crucial for the general understanding and appreciation of the content — are presented, the challenge is even bigger. So, in order to better understand the cultural aspect found in a *corpus*, it is necessary to also present some elements regarding the linguistic variety analyzed in the Netflix™ show. Thus, the linguistic aspect is studied mainly by William Labov, who

is the main theorist behind the history of AAVE and who worked extensively in the field of sociolinguistics.

The exact origin of African American Vernacular English, also called Black English and Ebonics, is unknown. During decades, scholars have been discovering different facts and creating new theories about it. One of these theorists, Walt Wolfram, states that:

> the primary hypotheses on the origin and development of AAVE may be divided into three major positions: the ANGLICIST, the CREOLIST, and the NEO-ANGLICIST hypotheses. In the mid-twentieth century the ANGLICIST HYPOTHESIS — that the speech of African Americans derived directly from British-based dialects — was commonly accepted by prominent American dialectologists, along with the conclusion that twentieth-century African American speech was identical to that of benchmark rural Southern vernacular white speech. (WOLFRAM, 2003, p. 04).

However, the creolist hypothesis remained stronger in the 1960s and 1970s, as "the roots of AAVE were embedded in an expansive creole found in the African diaspora (Bailey 1965, Stewart 1967, 1968, Dillard 1972)" (WOLFRAM, 2003, p. 04). It is still debatable which hypothesis has the most plausible arguments, with important scholars pulling for both sides. However, when considering the social-historical conditions, some similarities with West African varieties are perceivable; also, written documents — such as literature texts and ex-slaves recordings — led one to believe that the creolist hypothesis is nowadays the one with more pieces of evidence to be the origin of AAVE.

In his paper "Unendangered Dialects, Endangered People: The case of African American Vernacular English" (2010), William Labov argues that the reason African American variety diverges from the others is because there are more than linguistic features associated with it. The social context and, primarily, residential segregation reinforce this argument because people used to live, work, and do whatever was necessary inside the black community with no need to interact to speakers of other

dialects. The author claims that AAVE is by far the most studied variety of Standard English (SE) as it has been studied by many scholars since the mid-1960s.

According to Chambers (1983 *apud* KOCH; GROSS; KOLTS, 2001), Black English (the name they use to refer to AAVE) is a self-sufficient language in terms of syntax, phonology, and semantics that is used by most of the American black community in colloquial communication situations, especially when talking to other African-Americans. Many of these situations are represented in the show, with characters switching back and forth between SE and AAVE, depending on the social context and on other participants' presence in the conversation.

In order to better understand this linguistic variety — which is not as equally common and studied here in Brazil as it is in other contexts — the main AAVE features will be properly introduced and explained as the examples are analyzed in the next section.

3. ANALYSIS

The examples that follow show some characters in situations where they are speaking in AAVE. Every time the characters code-switch between SE and AAVE, feelings such as pride and the certainty that — based on their discourse — they will be understood by people who are from the same ethnic group (or they will exclude the ones who are not) arise. The language reconnects them with people who share the same background of years of oppression and it is an important element to the racial issues addressed in the TV show.

Our analysis consists in contrasting original lines in which occurrences of AAVE are present with the strategies and solutions from both the official Netflix™ subtitles and dubbing, while trying to highlight the importance of the AAVE use in particular scenes.

Example 1 – Season 1 "Chapter I"

In this first example, we have Sam and Joelle, who are best friends. They both share similar personality traits, such as: intelligence, charisma, style, outspokenness — *Dear White People,* Sam's radio program, is an example of that —, but there are some aspects that distinguish them. Sam is a light-skinned black person, and although they are activists in a common cause, Sam is directly affected and privileged by her skin tone. As a result, Joelle is seen sometimes as simply her friend's shadow. It is important to point out that, even if Sam is the main character, each chapter centers on one specific character, so that the spectator is able to better understand all of them.

In this scene, Joelle is telling Sam about a video she is watching, where a white girl is giving some tips on how to control the calories you eat to lose weight. At first, Joelle refers to the girl as a "white bitch in Texas" — the translation in Portuguese is "*uma branquela do Texas*" in the dubbed version and "*essa branquela do Texas*" in the subtitles —, but then Sam asks about her real name and she says it is Marian Updike.

The strategy of translating "white bitch" to "*branquela*" was an adaptation. In English, the use of the word "bitch" may fit several purposes, not all with a negative tone, since in some situations, it can also be an empowerment word. However, in Portuguese, most of the translations for this word are insulting to women and are not as polyvalent as 'bitch' is; therefore, translators must make a definitive choice based on the overall context to find a suitable translation.

When Bassnett (2002) declares that translation is more than the replacement of a word by another one that is "equivalent", she is referring to cases such as this one. If the translator decided to translate 'bitch' for the closest word in the target language (TL), which would probably be *vadia* or *cadela*, the effect would be different from the

original intended, adding a much stronger negative aspect of profanity and promiscuity to it.

Thus, the spectators who watch the show with the original audio and subtitles may notice the difference and, if they have a previous knowledge of the word 'bitch', feel robbed of its meaning by the omission. Nevertheless, for the ones who watch the dubbed version, this translation option may as well go unnoticed or they may even find it an adequate translation.

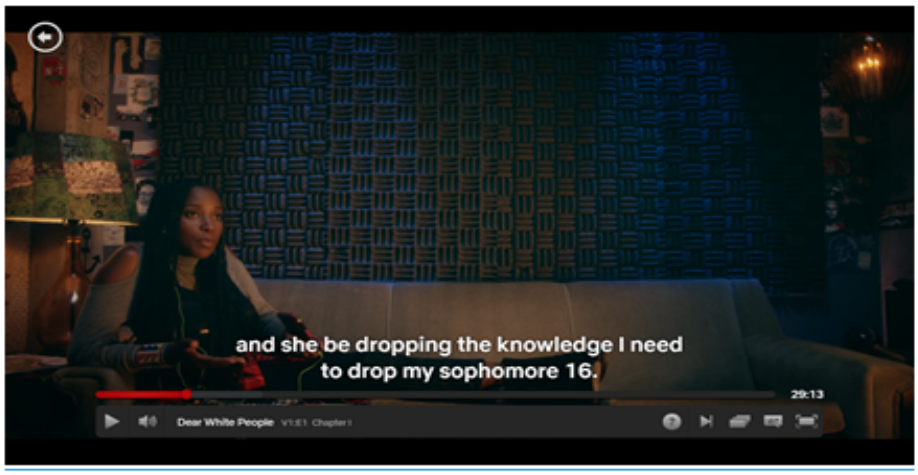

FIGURE 1 — Scene from Season 1 "Chapter I"

Here, more contextualization is needed as 'sophomore' is the second year of high school or university. More precisely, in this scene, Joelle is referring to the pounds one gains in the first two years of university due to the calories they ingest as a result of the adjustments to the new life, stress, and other factors. The sentence "she be dropping" is described in AAVE as being *Aspectual* or *Habitual*. Although Joelle is watching and listening to pieces of advice from a white girl, which she refers to pejoratively, she feels the need to establish a difference between that girl in the video and herself. Besides, there are issues regarding self-esteem underlying the scene. Joelle feels less attractive than her best friend, who in turn, compliments her appearance.

FIGURE 2 — Another scene from Season 1 "Chapter I"

Dubbing: "*Ela tá falando o que eu preciso pra terminar o meu segundo ano aqui*"

The subtitles in Portuguese follow the technical constraints: the number of characters and the on-screen time. As for the dubbing, the character is making a gesture with her hands to emphasize what she is saying. The isochrony and the kinesic synchrony are appropriate. Nevertheless, it is possible to notice that the dubbed version is totally different from the original line in the ST and, from the subtitles in Portuguese. The translation followed the dubbing parameters and the result, although vague and not too far from the original, does not cause any strangeness or discomfort to the spectator.

Because the captioning mode used depicts a written mode of AVT and it is common sense that written language is bound to be more formal than spoken language, the standard variety of the language is used. Hence, there is no difference in the language that may alert the spectator about the change in the way the character is speaking or cue the audience on all the other subtle layers of meanings previously described.

The same happens with the translation for dubbing. Even though it is the spoken language — and if there was any possibility of a change in the language to adapt it to a non-standard variety, it would be possible to be included in the dubbing by the voice actors — there is no translation or even an adaptation for AAVE. As a matter of fact, the absence of any trace of any linguistic variety which indicates that in that specific line there was a change in the language is worth being discussed a little further.

In his book *A tradução literária* (2016), Paulo Henriques Britto explains in a chapter named "A tradução de ficção" some of the strategies he adopted while translating a novel with AAVE dialectal marks. He also justifies:

> There is no dialect spoken only by African-Brazilian people from South to North: black people from Rio Grande do Sul speak the local language, the same happens in Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and also in Pernambuco, where the population of black and white share a common dialect. Thus, every time I confront a Black English mark in a text to be translated, I know there will be an inevitable loss[4]. (BRITTO, 2016, p. 116, our translation).

This loss mentioned by Britto (2016) will be felt either in the semantic field, or in other cultural aspects depicted in the scene. Due to cultural, social and even linguistic barriers, one will never be able to carry all these aspects in a satisfactory way. In some cases, such as for several literary works that deal with language varieties in general or even AAVE in specific (like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Moby Dick* or *The Color Purple*, to name a few) compensation strategies have been used both in the literary translations and also in their audiovisual adaptations using a language variety of social status, common to the least educated members of the Brazilian society.

[4] In the original: "Não há um dialeto afro-brasileiro, falado por negros de sul a norte do país: os negros gaúchos falam o dialeto gaúcho, os mineiros falam o dialeto mineiro; os negros do Rio falam o dialeto carioca, os de Pernambuco falam o mesmo dialeto pernambucano usado pelos brancos de lá. Assim, sempre que me deparo com uma marca de Black English num texto que estou traduzindo, sei que haverá uma perda inevitável." (BRITTO, 2016, p. 116).

Nevertheless, once the fictional university set as the main scenario for *Dear White People* is supposed to be an elite university and AAVE use within this space is, consequently, not related to the formal education level of its speakers, this common compensation strategy would not be a satisfactory outcome for the examples presented here.

This being said, we understand that there is an accentuated cultural loss in the depiction of African American characters and their sense of identity through both the dubbed and subtitled versions. However, we believe that by pointing it out here and discussing the options and translation choices made will help raise awareness to this issue and, possibly, help other translators and translation scholars to devote more time to this cultural aspect of translation.

Example 2 – Season 2 "Chapter IV"

Coco is depicted in the show as a strong and determined person with ambitious dreams for her future. She likes to be in a leadership position where she can be heard and/or followed. Coco and Sam used to be best friends when they started university, but they discovered they had divergent views about who they were and mainly how they wanted to be seen by society. Unlike Sam, Coco does not have a passion for social justice and racial equality. She tries, by any means, to adapt herself in a world whose privileges were not made for black people like her. Her wigs with long, straight and expensive hair can be seen as an illustration of that.

For this example, we selected a scene in which Coco is listening to Abigail, a white girl who is having problems with her roommate Keisha (who is black) because she keeps listening to Beyoncé's album *Lemonade* while Abigail is trying to study. This situation happened after the Davis House (white students' dormitories) had mysteriously burst into flames, forcing its residents to move to A-P house (black

students' dormitories) and, therefore, to live together in the same physical space — apart from the university classrooms — as the people who already lived there.

Because the mysterious start of the fire had not been solved yet and the tensions between white and black students were increasing, the scene is particularly charged with racial aspects. White students such as Abigail have never been deprived or denied of any of their rights and privileges. Therefore, having to 'adapt' in the previously existing routine of black A-P dorm was a struggle for most white students temporarily housed there.

Another conclusion we can also draw from this situation is the background of oppression going on as Abigail describes her problem. She had no idea, but asking her roommate to turn down the music or to even turn it off was a way of limiting her. AAVE in this context is the inner voice, which comes from a moment when one person expresses authority over another, who is oppressed.

In the scene, James, a CORE (Coalition of Racial Equality) member, enters the room and interrupts the girls. Coco asks him to give her a moment because she is doing what nobody else does: talking to Abigail.

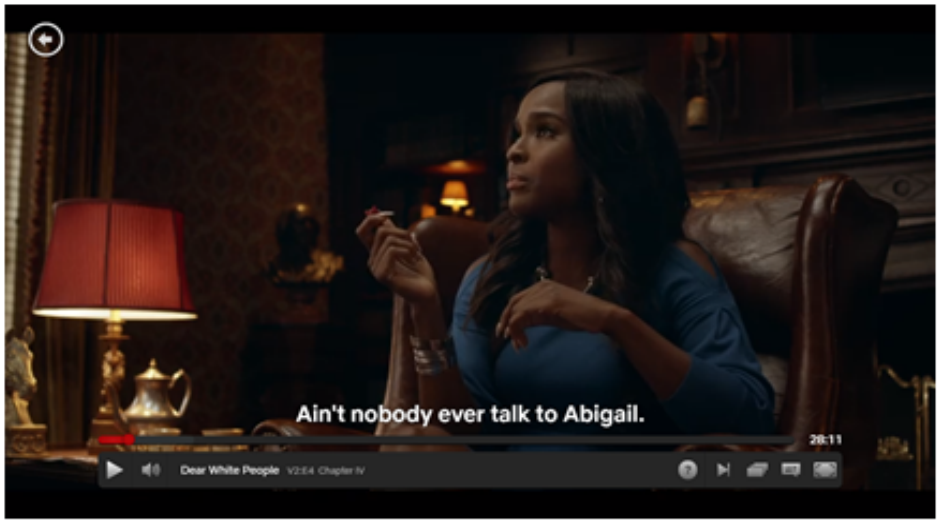

FIGURE 3 — A scene from Season 2 "Chapter IV"

Coco is one of the characters whose discourse is almost never composed by any AAVE reference. The reason is because she makes an effort to adapt to a preexisting standard, as indicated before. In this scene, Coco's line is full of sarcasm. She is giving pieces of advice to the white girl, and she wants people who are listening to her to know that she is capable enough of being in this position because she is black. That is the reason she uses this structure, which is called "double negative" (not + no) and the preverbal negative form of the "ain't" is in the beginning of an affirmative sentence.

It is important to mention that, as well as 'y'all', 'ain't' is used not only by AAVE speakers but also by SE speakers. However, its usage is seen by people in general as very informal, being considered as a term for illiterate people. Meanwhile, within AAVE, these constructions are not related to literacy level.

FIGURE 4 — Another scene from Season 2 "Chapter IV"

Dubbing: "*Ninguém nunca fala com a Abigail*"

Both AVT modes used here follow the standard established. The only difference we can pin to contrast is the use of the name "Abigail" in the dubbed version, while subtitles opted to translate it for the pronoun *"ela"* ("she"). This is because the use and repetition of proper names is a feature of spoken language. The use of the words

"*ninguém"* ("nobody") and *"nunca"* ("never") in both subtitles and dubbed version is a successful attempt to the "double negative" in the original line. Nevertheless, this usage is predicated by Portuguese prescriptive grammar, which allows speakers to use it in formal and informal settings.

This scene, in which the use of AAVE by a character that does not usually speak this language variety, is particularly significant because it sets Coco as a 'black leader' for the A-P dorm students. She makes sure to use AAVE when addressing to James, who is also black (even though she was not using it to speak directly to Abigail a second earlier), to reassure that despite listening to Abigail's complaints, she is on 'their side'.

Example 3 – Season 2 "Chapter V"

Joelle is explaining to Rashid why she avoids taking the boys she met to the A-P house. (see more details about Rashid's character description below). According to her, every time Sam meets someone she is interested in, the person becomes more interested in her friend because of Sam's lighter, and, therefore, considered prettier, skin tone

In this chapter specifically, Joelle meets Trevor, a man who seemed — at the beginning — ideal for her. He is intelligent, black (this is a precondition for her to be interested in a man), has sense of humor, and other features that attract Joelle. However, in the end, she discovers he is a Hotep: the most extreme type of black activist. Trevor is misogynistic, homophobic, arrogant, and he truly believes in illogical conspiracy theories. Thus, he is problematic in many aspects. At the point of this dialogue, however, she is still interested in him and is conflicted about introducing him to her friends or not.

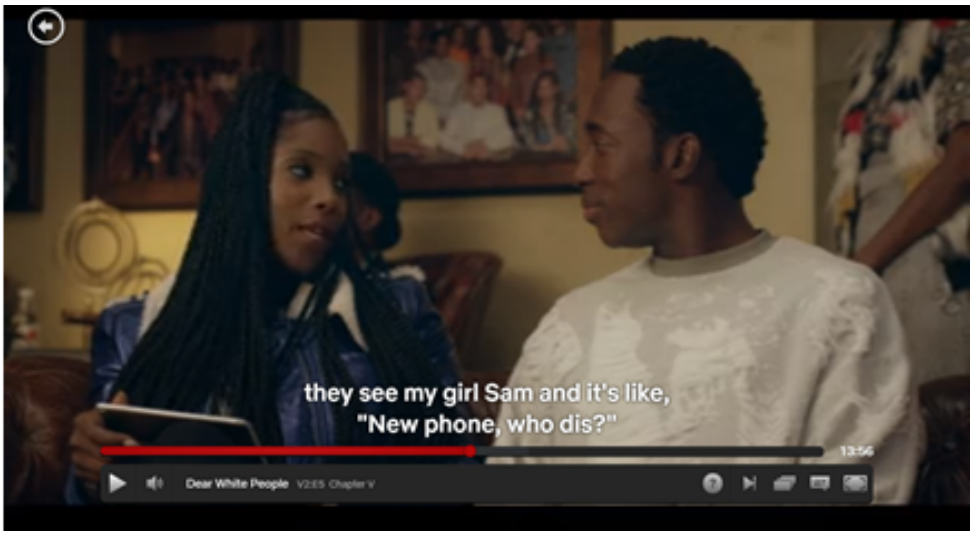

FIGURE 5 — A scene from Season 2 “Chapter V”

In the sentence ‘who dis’ there are two AAVE features embedded: the copula absence and the modification of the fricative /ð/ sound (SE) in ‘dis’. The latter is pronounced with a /d/ sound when it appears at the beginning of a word and with a /f/ sound in words such as “with” or “mouth”.

Joelle’s direct speech with AAVE elements is one more evidence that she only dates black men who would speak that way. Interestingly, Rashid plays in this show a student who is an immigrant from Kenya. His character is not so well explored but, in this scene, he seems to be interested in Joelle. Also, he is portrayed as someone who is constantly learning about black lives in America, because the understanding of blackness is different from where he came from. He does not speak in AAVE, and it is explained that this variety is associated with a culture that he is not deeply integrated with. Besides, even if he were, the fact that he is black and African, but not African American, is an indication that Rashid cannot cross this language barrier.

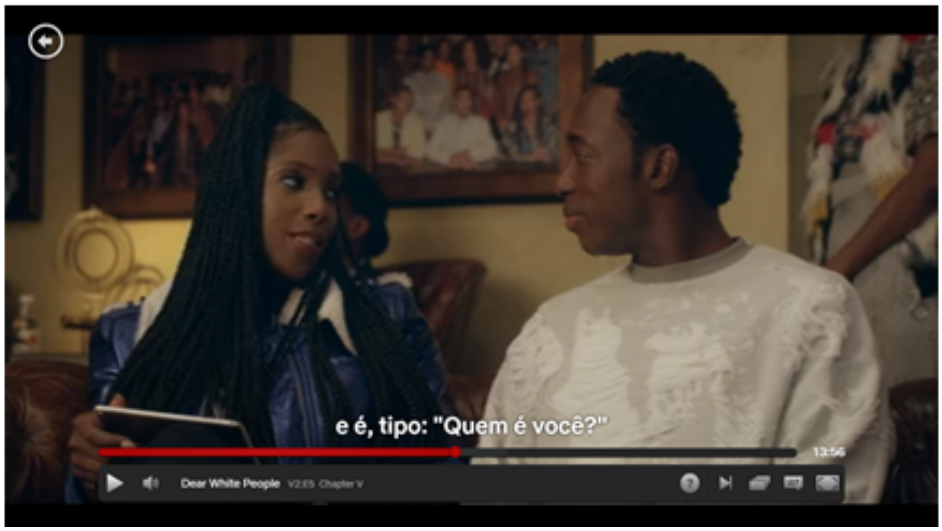

FIGURE 6 — Another scene from Season 2 "Chapter V"

Dubbing: "*E ficam... nossa, e ela quem é*?"

Regarding the Portuguese translation, both the number of characters and time on-screen (subtitles) and the synchrony (dubbing) are according to the rules. Just as the previous examples, the subtitles are more literal to the original than the dubbing. The slang; "new phone, who dis", that was popularized on the internet, is being used to demonstrate that a man would be no longer interested in Joelle if he saw Sam, therefore 'ghosting'[5] her.

In order to add one more information related to the dubbing part, Rashid's strong accent in the original — as well as the non-standard features we analyzed — is completely erased in the translation. Spectators who occasionally watch the show with subtitles in Portuguese can compare both ST and TT. However, the massive number of spectators who only watch the show with dubbing in Portuguese lose something that was not compensated by any other means. In this sense, except for the scenes in which Rashid explicitly mentions his Kenyan roots, viewers would not even know that there is a linguistic (and cultural) distance between him and the other black characters.

[5] To interrupt communication with someone without warning or explanation.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We are living in a time in which the act of translating cannot be considered as a simple linguistic move anymore. Until a final text reaches its intended audience, there were several decisions made by multiple people behind the scenes. Since the early days of the discussions of whether to translate word-for-word or sense-for-sense, the idea of how to cope with the plurality of the language has been expanding. Thus, scholars have been theorizing about various aspects involving translation and its multitude of elements.

AVT, as both a technological mean and a branch of translation studies, acts as a whole new world, with different possibilities to make content available for the masses. Moreover, the fact that the final reader/spectator has access to the source material means that s/he can possibly make a comparison with the translator's work.

This paper is a result of a study on how important a specific dialect (AAVE) is, how this non-standard English relates to African American people and how difficult it is for translators to deal with this situation, especially when translating AV content. Although we mainly pointed out the 'losses' in the AVT solutions selected without actually proposing alternative solutions, we consider this approach an open door for future studies that can take this into account in order to come up with compensation strategies that could help highlight the racial issue being explored in the show.

The analysis we presented here was based on current issues found in the medium of popular entertainment and a decisive step away (and forward) from the already overdone analysis of the 'faithfulness level' usually considered regarding ATV content. Our first intention was to contrast these modes because they are made for different purposes and target-audiences and have different demands and constraints. However, as shown in the analysis, none of them presented an attempt to translate the variety of English spoken in *Dear White People*. The fact that AAVE appears only in a

few occasions in the narrative may be an argument for the total erasure in the translation. However, the vernacular dialect is used in specific moments in order to add more layers to the scenes and are indeed important aspects of these scenes.

One hypothesis is that the absence of a dialect in Brazilian Portuguese for Afro-Descendants, the high levels of education displayed by the students at Winchester, and the use of AAVE only in specific scenes, plus all the regular constrains of AVT, led to a translation without dialectal marks. The meaning in those original lines did not cross the language barriers because it is part of the culture and culture is, for the most part, untranslatable. Although compensation strategies have been used to depict dialectal marks in other literary and AV translations, this was not the case here.

We believe that a given variety may be translated if the translator and/or other factors involved in the translation process find it significant for that target audience. That is to say that every case should be evaluated separately, whether the target audience is a small group of people or an entire population of a certain age, knowing who they are is fundamental for a target-oriented translation or a translation based on the purpose of the final text as defended by the Functionalist school.

Based on the theoretical framework presented here, mainly regarding the functionalist approach, we are not, by any means, calling out translators' 'mistakes' in leaving the dialectal marks out of the dubbed and subtitled versions. We understand many factors such as Style Guide and parameter compliance (the 'briefing' as Christiane Nord would put it) or even the general message (the *skopos*, in Vermeer's conception) could have a strong interference in the translation choices made. However, when dealing with translation from Lefevere's and Bassnett's (1998) point of view, it is imperative that these identity issues highlighted by the linguistic variety used in the TV show are, at least, considered and discussed as we hope to have done in this paper.

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