

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES OF DUBBING TRANSLATORS AND DIALOGUE ADAPTORS IN SLOVAKIA

Aktuálne výzvy profesie dabingového prekladateľa a úpravcu dialógových listín na Slovensku

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ABSTRAKT

Štúdia sa zameriava na špecifiká profesie dabingového prekladateľa a úpravcu dialógových listín v slovenskom kontexte a aktuálne výzvy, ktoré so sebou táto profesia prináša. V teoretickej časti autorka sumarizuje náplň práce a úlohy dabingového prekladateľa a úpravcu dialógových listín a ponúka stručný náhľad do profesie úpravcu dialógových listín na Slovensku v minulosti. Pozornosť kladie aj na jednotlivé typy úprav, referenčné materiály a dabingové štúdiá, pričom ponúka aktuálny zoznam fungujúcich dabingových štúdií na Slovensku. Cieľom štúdie je prostredníctvom pološtruktúrovaného rozhovoru so vzorkou aktívnych profesionálnych dabingových prekladateľov a úpravcov dialógových listín poukázať na aktuálne profesijné výzvy a pracovné podmienky dabingových prekladateľov a úpravcov dialógových listín v slovenskom prostredí.

Kľúčové slová: Dabingový preklad. Úprava dialógov. Dabingové štúdio. Profesijné výzvy.

ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the specifics of the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor in the Slovak context, as well as the current challenges associated with this profession. In the theoretical part of the study, the author summarises the responsibilities and tasks of a dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor, and offers a brief excursus into the history of the profession of dialogue adaptor in Slovakia. Attention is also devoted to the individual types of dialogue adaptation, reference materials, and dubbing studios, and the author provides a list of active dubbing studios in Slovakia. The aim of the study is to highlight the current professional challenges and working conditions of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors in the Slovak context through a semi-structured interview with a sample of active professional dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors.

Key words: Dubbing Translation. Dialogue Adaptation. Dubbing Studio. Professional Challenges.

Introduction

The profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor has a long-standing tradition in Slovakia, and although the demand for subtitles is growing with the rise of streaming platforms, the profession continues to play a highly important role in the process of creating Slovak language versions of audiovisual works. This profession is associated with several challenges related to various linguistic, technical, time-related, and production-related factors, and despite its importance, relatively minor attention has been devoted to its current specifics and challenges. The aim of this paper is to provide a theoretical perspective on the specifics and challenges of the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor in the Slovak context and, through a semi-structured interview with a sample of professionals in the field of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, to present their professional experience, responsibilities and working conditions, including their perceptions of current challenges and trends, which serve as a partial sociological insight into the current state and functioning of dubbing practice in Slovakia.

1 Dubbing Translator vs. Dialogue Adaptor

Firstly, it is essential to highlight the differences between the responsibilities and working procedures of a dubbing translator and a dialogue adaptor, which differ significantly. A dubbing translator receives an audiovisual work in the source language and transfers it into the target language in a natural and adequate manner, while using natural linguistic and stylistic devices (Paulínyová 2015b). When translating specific elements, such as wordplay or charactonyms, the translator may provide several alternatives and an explanation of the translation in parentheses (Walló 1987), which distinguishes dubbing translation from other types of translation, where such a procedure is not common practice and is instead considered a sign of the translator's incompetence. The translator usually works with a video file and a dialogue list, but in practice, they also use various reference materials (Zahorák

and Perez 2024) (reference materials are discussed in more detail in the section *Dubbing Translation and Dialogue Adaptation: Types and Reference Materials*). According to Makarian (2005), a dubbing translator uses phonetic transcription for foreign-language expressions, translates text on screen that is not included in the original dialogue list, and preserves the phrasing of the original utterance.

In the English-speaking context, the responsibility of a dubbing translator consists of the natural translation of dialogues. A dubbing translator provides a so-called rough translation that reflects all the characteristics of the source text and culture. They translate elements such as wordplay, idioms, cultural references, and jokes literally and provide explanatory notes for the dialogue adaptor and dubbing director (Chaume 2014). A dubbing translator may also provide a rough translation of songs for music directors or artists, who later create a new version of the song in the target language. The dubbing translator usually works with a video file and a dialogue list, although there may be situations where only the video file is available without a dialogue list. In such cases, excellent knowledge of the source language is essential, as the dubbing translator must listen to the text in the source language and translate it into the target language (ibid.).

A dialogue adaptor, also referred to as a dialogue editor, dialogue writer, or simply an adaptor, works with a translated dialogue list in the target language and adapts it to the characters' speech patterns, gestures, movements, and facial expressions so that the naturalness and authenticity of the lines and dialogue are preserved (Paulínyová 2015b). This means that while a dubbing translator must master both the source and target languages, a dialogue adaptor only needs the knowledge of the target language (Paulínyová 2015a). However, the author of this study does not agree with this view. Although it is true that a dialogue adaptor who does not know the source language and perceives only the dialogue list in the target language is not hypnotised by the original and

can ensure the accuracy, fluency, and naturalness of the speech in the target language, a lack of knowledge of the source language can cause various shifts in meaning or expression, omissions, etc. The responsibility of the dialogue adaptor, however, does not end there. In the translated dialogue list, they also indicate the characters' positions during their lines, i.e., whether they are on-screen (vo) or off-screen (mo) (symbols used in the Slovak dubbing practice), which significantly influences the selection of translation solutions in terms of qualitative consistency—that is, consistency in articulation and lip-synchronisation. Furthermore, the dialogue adaptor provides a list of individual characters according to gender, indicates short or long meaningful pauses, emotions, and tone, which must also be reflected in the final dubbing, as well as other vocal sounds such as laughter, crying, coughing, etc., or changes in the environment or unintelligible background speech (Perez and Hodáková 2021).

In the English-speaking context, a dialogue adaptor is defined as a professional who rewrites dialogues into the most natural form possible, while maintaining consistency in the length of the utterance, consistency in articulation, and lip-synchronisation. A dialogue adaptor does not always master the source language, and therefore, at the expense of achieving synchronisation and naturalness in the text, shifts in meaning may occur (Chaume 2014). The dialogue adaptor also uses symbols to mark pauses during speech, sounds produced by the voice, as well as the characters' positions during speech—(ON) or (O/S) indicates that the character is on screen, and the symbol (OFF) or (V/O) means that the character is off screen, etc. (ibid.). According to Whitman-Linsen (1992) and Chaume (2014), the ideal situation is when both the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are carried out by the same individual, and Chaume (2014) adds that an experienced dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor should be able to perform the dialogue adaptation simultaneously with the translation.

Current dubbing practice in *Slovakia* indicates that the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are usually performed by the same individual. However, in the past—specifically before the development of advanced technologies, and when DVDs and videotapes did not exist—these tasks were divided between two different professionals. Nowadays, both tasks are performed by one professional primarily for time-saving reasons, as this approach shortens the overall process of creating the Slovak language version of audiovisual works, and the dubbing translator receives payment for both the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation. In such cases, every dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor has a different working method—some complete the translation and then proceed to the dialogue adaptation, whereas others perform the dialogue adaptation simultaneously with the translation. It should be noted, however, that in such cases the text does not undergo any further revision (Paulínyová 2015a). It is also worth mentioning that, in such cases, the dialogue adaptor must comply with all the specifics and criteria associated with dubbing translation, including the phonetic transcription of titles and names, transcription of numbers, and marking text on screen (Zahorák 2024). However, in practice, situations occur in which the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are performed by two different individuals. This may be the case when the dubbing translator is not familiar with the criteria of dialogue adaptation or the dialogue adaptor lacks knowledge of the source language. In such cases, the dialogue adaptor works with three source materials: the original audiovisual work, the original dialogue list, and the translated dialogue list (Paulínyová 2015a). Furthermore, based on the own professional experience of the author of this study in the field of dubbing translation, the author can confirm that this procedure is occasionally used in situations where translation studies students or recent graduates enter the professional practice and perform dubbing translations, which are then further adapted by professional dubbing adaptors.

2 A Brief Excursus into the History of Dialogue Adaptation in Slovakia

Given that this study focuses on the current professional challenges of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors in Slovakia—a field that is highly dynamic and constantly evolving with the development of new technologies—it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the development of dialogue adaptation in the Slovak context.

Paulínyová (2015a) states that in the past in *Czechoslovakia*, dialogue adaptation was carried out by translators or dramaturgs, and the dialogue adaptation consisted solely of matching the length of individual lines. The profession of dialogue adaptor was created in the 1970s (*ibid.*). However, even in the 1970s and 1980s, there were individuals who both translated and adapted dialogues; nevertheless, as multiple foreign languages were involved, these tasks were usually performed by two individuals (Perez, Brezovská, and Jánošíková 2021). Darina Hlúchová, a Slovak dialogue adaptor, revealed in an interview with Miroslava Brezovská that she started working in the field of dubbing translation in 1976, and at that time, the work of a dialogue adaptor looked completely different, as it solely contained the adaptation of dialogues. Editors would pre-cut the film segments that needed to be translated and adapted, and the dialogue adaptor sat in front of the screen and watched the relevant segments. Once satisfied with the dialogue adaptation, the dialogue adaptor would give a signal to the technician, who would then play the next loop (*ibid.*). If the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation were performed by two individuals, the dialogue adaptor would adapt the translated text so that “the resulting dialogue met the required standards for quality, synchronisation, stylistics, number of pauses, etc.” (*ibid.*, p. 12). All changes were written down with a pen directly on paper. Thus, the first stage of the process involved translation, the second stage involved dialogue adaptation, and the third stage involved a dramaturgical review of the adapted dialogues (*ibid.*).

If the aforementioned work tasks and responsibilities are compared with current

dubbing practice, several fundamental differences can be observed. In today’s Slovak dubbing practice, as already mentioned, dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are usually performed by one individual, who works with a dubbing reference (video file), a dialogue list, or other reference materials, using a computer (mostly Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel documents), and works usually from the comfort of their home, occasionally in dubbing studios. The key roles involved in the process of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor, as well as the dubbing producer or, in some cases, the dubbing dramaturg, who is responsible for selecting and communicating with the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor (Kompasová 2023).

3 Dubbing Translation and Dialogue Adaptation: Types and Reference Materials

Dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation represent a complex process influenced by a number of factors, including the reference materials provided by the dubbing studio or the client. It is therefore important to describe in more detail the types of adaptations and reference materials used by dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors in the Slovak dubbing practice.

In this paper, the classification of dialogue adaptation according to Paulínyová (2017) is followed. At the linguistic levels, the following types of dialogue adaptation are distinguished:

1. A qualitative adaptation – focused on articulation and lip-synchronisation.
2. A quantitative adaptation – focused on matching the length of sentences.
3. A rhythmic adaptation – focused on the alignment of the rhythm of the lines.

Within the extralinguistic level, mimetic, gestural, and kinetic adaptation are distinguished, which focus on achieving verbal and non-verbal consistency.

As already mentioned, dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors work with various reference materials. These materials serve as a basis for dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, recording, and audio

post-production; however, this article focuses only on those directly related to the process of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation. The basic reference materials that a dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor work with include the dubbing reference (video file) and the dialogue list, which serves as textual reference material (Kompasová 2023). However, dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors may also use other reference materials, and their specific types, as well as the ways in which they are used and provided to the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor, may vary depending on the specific dubbing studio and the client. These reference materials include a creative letter containing information regarding the title, storyline, stylistic and lexical devices used by the characters, etc.; a localisation letter providing information on which segments shall or shall not be dubbed, on on-screen text or songs; a list of key names and phrases, which is edited by dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors themselves and serves to maintain consistency, and, lastly, a sensitive events list, which manages the translation of swear words and other sensitive expressions (*ibid.*).

The above-mentioned types of dialogue adaptation and the role of reference materials in practice, as well as the tasks and responsibilities of the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor mentioned in the previous sections of this paper, form the theoretical framework for the research section, in which their actual functioning in the process of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation shall be identified and interpreted, as well as the examination of the current working conditions of dialogue adaptors in Slovakia.

4 Dubbing Studios in Slovakia

It is also important to mention dubbing studios, which play an essential role in the Slovak context, as they oversee the production process of Slovak language versions of audiovisual works. This section briefly describes the role of dubbing studios and the individual stages of producing Slovak language versions of audiovisual works, and provides a list of active dubbing studios in Slovakia.

A dubbing studio is a recording studio that acts as an intermediary between the client, the distributor, and the audience, and is responsible for producing the Slovak language versions of audiovisual works. The client agrees with the dubbing studio on the delivery date, type of dubbing (lip-sync, voiceover), reference materials, method of delivery, etc. (Kompasová 2023), and during the various stages of producing the Slovak language versions of audiovisual works, a dubbing dramaturg, dubbing producer, dubbing translator, dialogue adaptor, voice actors, sound engineer, and dubbing director collaborate (Makarian 2005). Currently, this process can be divided into the pre-production stage, i.e., receiving the order, reference materials, assembling the production team and cast, translating and adapting the dialogue list, dramaturgical adjustments, etc., the production stage, which includes recording the Slovak language version of audiovisual works, and the post-production stage, i.e., the stage from sound post-production to the actual delivery of the project (Kompasová 2023).

Currently, there is no comprehensive and publicly available list of active dubbing studios in Slovakia. Thus, available information from the official websites of Slovak dubbing studios has been compiled, and based on that, an overview of the most well-known active dubbing studios has been created. The overview only includes dubbing studios that primarily focus on the production of lip-sync dubbing (SunriseStudio [s.a.]; Dimas [s.a.]; Magic Voice 2026; DAB Daniela 2012; Noise Artillery 2020; Ivory 2015):

- SunriseStudio – has been in operation since 2013, offers four recording studios and specialises in the production of Slovak language versions of audiovisual works for television, cinema, streaming platforms, distribution companies, and advertising agencies.
- Dimas – was established in 1990 and produces Slovak language versions of audiovisual works for television, cinemas, and streaming platforms.

- Magic Voice – was founded in 2007 and collaborates with television channels TV Markíza, TV JOJ, KANÁL 1, etc.
- DAB Daniela – was founded in 1999 and produces Slovak language versions of audiovisual works primarily for the television channel TV JOJ, Disney and cinemas.
- Noise Artillery – has been operating since 2014. In the past, it focused exclusively on the production of dubbing for cinemas; however, it also currently produces Slovak language versions of audiovisual works for streaming platforms.
- Ivory – was established in 1995. It produces Slovak language versions of audiovisual works for cinemas and television channels TV JOJ, STVR, TV Markíza and Hallmark.

5 Current Challenges in Dubbing Translation and Dialogue Adaptation from a Professional Perspective

In the previous sections of this article, a brief theoretical overview of dubbing translation, dialogue adaptation, and the role of dubbing studios in *Slovakia* was provided. As the focus is on the perspectives of professionals—active dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors—on these issues, a semi-structured interview was conducted with them. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that allows for uncovering and capturing the individual experiences of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, as well as the challenges they face, which may be not only subjective, but also objective in nature (e.g. technical conditions, delivery deadlines).

The research sample consisted of four active dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors from *Slovakia*, whose names have been anonymised. The semi-structured interview was conducted online via the *Microsoft Teams* platform, and with the respondents' consent, an audio recording was made, which was subsequently transcribed and analysed. It is acknowledged that this is a small sample of respondents from which general conclusions cannot be drawn; however, since the

respondents are active professionals, they provide interesting insights that may prove highly relevant and may open up further discussions on the current state and working conditions of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors in *Slovakia*.

Preparation for the semi-structured interview consisted of developing a set of open-ended questions. In the initial phase, basic information about the respondents was gathered, i.e., the field of their study, their professional experience in the field of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, whether translation and dialogue adaptation are their main profession, the language combinations in which they perform dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, and the dubbing studios they collaborate with. The second part of the semi-structured interview focused on the following topics and questions:

1. Do you perform both dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation? What genres do you work with most often?
2. In your opinion, what challenges are associated with the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor?
3. How would you describe your collaboration with individual dubbing studios? (This particular question focused on what reference material they typically have available, how much time they have to complete the dubbing translation or dialogue adaptation, whether they work exclusively from home or also from a dubbing studio, and whether they collaborate with other participants involved in the process of the production of Slovak language versions of audiovisual works.)

6 Analysis and Evaluation of the Semi-Structured Interview

Respondent 1 studied Translation and Interpreting (English Language and Culture and Spanish Language and Culture) at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica and successfully completed doctoral studies in Philology at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. They have been actively involved in audiovisual translation, specifically dubbing, for approximately three years,

translating primarily from the English language, occasionally from the Spanish language. In rare cases, they work with a dialogue list in the English language and with the original video file in a language other than the working language, which can be considered indirect translation. Dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation do not constitute their main source of income, and they collaborate most frequently with the dubbing studio Dimas, occasionally with SunriseStudio and Magic Voice, and in the past, they also worked with Noise Artillery. Respondent 2 studied Translation and Interpreting in the English and Spanish language combination at Comenius University in Bratislava. They have been working in dubbing translation for five years and primarily collaborate with the dubbing studio Noise Artillery; however, they also work with dubbing studios Dimas and SunriseStudio, and in the past collaborated with the now-defunct dubbing studio Saturn. They work exclusively with the English language, and dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation constitute their main source of income. Respondent 3 studied Translation and Interpreting (English Language and Culture and Russian Language and Culture) at *Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra*. They entered the field of dubbing during their studies in 2022. They translate from English, and dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation represent only a secondary source of income. They collaborate with the dubbing studio Dimas and have previously worked on voiceover for the dubbing studio Cabo. Respondent 4 studied Translation and Interpreting (English Language and Culture and Slovak Language and Culture) at *Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra*. They gained their first experiences with audiovisual translation in 2022 and have been working professionally in this field for approximately two years, exclusively in collaboration with the dubbing studio Dimas. They translate from the English language and consider dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation to be a marginal source of income.

Regarding dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, all respondents stated that

they perform both dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation; however, several of them perform only one of these tasks on various projects. Respondent 1 stated that they perform only dialogue adaptation in cases where the dubbing translation is performed by students, respondent 2, on the other hand, worked exclusively as a dubbing translator for approximately two years, while they currently still work only on dubbing translation or only on dialogue adaptation on some projects, or on both dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation on others; they explained that the dubbing studio Noise Artillery is specific in that dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation within a one project are usually handled by two different individuals. Respondent 4 confirmed that many novice translators begin by working only on dubbing translation and gradually move on to dialogue adaptation, which was also the case for them. Respondent 3 performs both dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation. All respondents currently work primarily on audiovisual works intended for a child audience, with respondent 2 actively translating mainly films and series from the Star Wars universe.

The respondents were also asked which challenges they consider specific to dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, which, naturally, is closely related to the genres on which individual dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors work, as well as to their professional experience. Respondent 1 emphasised the difficulty of lip-sync dubbing as a complex process and mentioned, for example, the tempo of speech, since every voice actor has a different diction, and the dialogue adaptor should consider this during dialogue adaptation, particularly with regard to quantitative synchronisation. They also mentioned intertextuality, meaning that the dubbing translator should also pay attention to various references or allusions to other works, as well as the translation of songs, including in the form of subtitles, which the dialogue adaptor often needs to provide. Finally, they mentioned marking the walla and the most accurate possible notion of sounds and noises in the dialogue list, which may be

particularly challenging, especially for novice dialogue adaptors. Respondent 2 particularly highlighted the importance of maintaining consistency across interconnected audiovisual works and explained that, as a dubbing translator, they must often—even without a creative letter available—recognise that a particular phrase appeared in another audiovisual work and that it is necessary to translate it consistently. They also mentioned the creative processes involved in translating audiovisual works for a child audience, such as translating charactonyms, which must sound natural in Slovak and at the same time must be approved by a supervisor. Respondent 3 considered the translation of wordplay to be a challenge in audiovisual works for a child audience and highlighted the creation of a glossary to facilitate their work. They also mentioned that children's series frequently feature characters from previous episodes, and that these characters must be labelled consistently in every dialogue list to ensure they are voiced by the same voice actors. They also identified songs as a challenge for dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, adding that their adaptation often requires intervention from a music director. Respondent 4 also addressed the issue of the child audience, and as a major challenge in dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, they identified the ability to effectively and appropriately engage with the experiential background of the child viewer, i.e., describing images with words they can process within their existing experiential framework and at the same time introducing new words to enrich the viewer's vocabulary in a way that does not feel disruptive but rather sparks their curiosity and interest. They also mentioned the translation of cultural elements and teamwork on projects with multiple episodes, where coordinated work in terms of consistency, creating glossaries, etc., is needed.

The concluding questions addressed the current working conditions of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, as well as their collaboration with dubbing studios. Respondent 1 confirmed that the standard ref-

erence materials are the video file and the dialogue list, and that, depending on the specific project and client, a localisation letter and creative letter are often also provided. Regarding workload, thanks to their experience, they currently need approximately one week for a 45-minute special containing 20 songs; and if the dubbing studio has enough time before the delivery deadline set by the client, respondent 1 may set the delivery deadline themselves in agreement with the dubbing studio. They work exclusively from home and communicate solely with the dubbing producer; however, on a few occasions, when visiting the dubbing studio during recording, respondent 1 spontaneously modified specific solutions and consulted with the dubbing director, thereby actively influencing the production process of the Slovak language version of the audiovisual work. Respondent 2 noted that Star Wars projects are characterised by encrypted videos and strict confidentiality requirements. In the past, they therefore worked directly in the dubbing studio; currently, they work primarily from home, but their computer must be equipped with various software tools. On such projects, respondent 2 often works with a creative letter and the Disney database, where they also translate synopses and enter terminology that is then reviewed. When translating dubbing for cinemas (for the dubbing studio Noise Artillery), the image in videos is often encrypted, and in such cases, respondent 2 works with additional material, a so-called spotting list, which contains information about the characters involved in the dialogue. Currently, their standard workload consists of two 20-minute episodes per week. They primarily collaborate with a supervisor working for Disney, with whom they consult, for example, on the translation of terminology. Respondent 3, in collaboration with the dubbing studio Dimas, always has access to a video file, a dialogue list, and a localisation letter; at the start of a new series, they also receive a creative letter. They work exclusively from home and stated that since dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are secondary activities for them, they usually have one week to deliver one 25-minute

episode. They communicate exclusively with the dubbing producer. Respondent 4 agrees with respondent 3 regarding the materials and deadline, and works exclusively from home, although on several occasions they have modified another dubbing translator's translation with the actors while present at the studio recording. They communicate exclusively with the dubbing producer.

Based on the semi-structured interview conducted, it may be concluded that the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor in Slovakia should be perceived as a complex activity influenced not only by linguistic and translation factors, but also by technical, time-related, and production-related factors. All respondents agreed that it is a highly demanding profession requiring a wide range of competencies and skills. Among the main challenges associated with the profession of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, they included achieving optimal quantitative synchronisation, identifying intertextuality in audiovisual works, marking of walla and sounds, translating songs in the form of subtitles (respondent 1), maintaining consistency across audiovisual works (respondent 2), consistent character labelling in the dialogue list (respondent 3), and teamwork (respondent 4), as well as various creative processes associated with this profession (translation of proper names (respondent 2), translation of wordplay and songs (respondent 3), or anticipating the life experience of the child viewer (respondent 4). These challenges are of both objective and subjective nature, as they are conditioned by various factors, such as the professional experience of the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor, time constraints related to the dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation, availability of the reference materials, the type of audiovisual work being translated and adapted, the intended audience, etc.

The semi-structured interview also reveals that all respondents are always provided with a video file and a dialogue list by the dubbing studio or the client during their work, and for many projects, a localisation letter and creative letter are also standard reference materials. The situation differs

within the research sample (respondent 2), for example, in projects for cinema dubbing, which feature encrypted videos, and where the dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor also have access to a so-called spotting list for identifying characters present in the dialogues. All respondents primarily work from home, although respondent 2, due to confidentiality and video encryption, occasionally performs the work directly in the dubbing studio. In terms of time constraints, the semi-structured interview shows that all respondents generally propose a delivery deadline based on their availability. The pace and scope of the dubbing translations and dialogue adaptations delivered depend on the respondents' workload. Respondents 3 and 4, who perform dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation as a secondary source of income, deliver a smaller volume of work per week on average than respondent 2, for whom it presents a primary source of income. Respondent 1, respondent 3, and respondent 4 primarily communicate with the dubbing producer, while respondent 2 communicates mainly with the client's supervisor.

A particularly interesting finding is that, although according to the professional literature, dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are currently performed in Slovakia mostly by one individual (Paulínyová 2015a), respondent 2 pointed to the opposite model of operation, as in practice, in one of the dubbing studios, dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation within a single audiovisual work are primarily performed by two different individuals. Respondent 1, respondent 2, and respondent 4 also confirmed that, in practice, dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are performed by two individuals when the dubbing translation is done by a student or recent graduate beginning their professional activity in the dubbing industry. In such cases, the dialogue adaptation is performed by a professional dialogue adaptor.

The findings correspond in many respects with existing knowledge about Slovak dubbing practice. The respondents confirmed that dubbing translation and dialogue adap-

tation are mostly performed by one individual, which is consistent with the findings of Paulínyová (2015a), who points out that, due to time constraints and production requirements, both professional roles are usually performed by a single individual. At the same time, however, the results also show that in current dubbing practice, there are cases in which dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are performed by two different individuals, with one dubbing studio regularly employing two separate individuals for the roles of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor. The findings also build on the research by Kompasová (2023), who, in characterising the competence profile of a Slovak dubbing translator, emphasises the importance of linguistic, cultural, translation, technical, and organisational competencies, which is also confirmed by the respondents' statements. The respondents further highlighted the use of reference materials, which corresponds with the findings of Zahorák and Perez (2024) and Kompasová (2023), who emphasise the importance of reference materials for achieving an adequate dubbing translation. However, this study also offers insights into aspects of professional practice that have been explored only marginally, such as working conditions, time demands, and the perceptions of professional challenges. In this context, it complements existing knowledge of Slovak dubbing practice with empirical accounts from active professionals.

Conclusion

This paper examined the current specifics and challenges associated with the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor in the Slovak context, which is characterised by various production-related, technical, time-related, linguistic and translation factors, as well as the current working conditions of this profession in Slovakia. A theoretical overview of Slovak dubbing practice was provided, with particular attention to types of dubbing adaptation, reference materials, and dubbing studios, including a list of the most well-known active dubbing studios in Slovakia.

The semi-structured interview revealed that the challenges associated with this profession cannot be viewed in universal terms, as they depend on several factors, including the individual's professional experience, the genre of the audiovisual work, and the client. At the same time, it confirmed that this profession has undergone a major transformation due to technological development and is now primarily performed from home. A particularly insightful finding, however, is that while theory suggests that dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are currently mostly performed by a single individual (Paulínyová 2015a), one dubbing studio demonstrated the opposite operational model, where dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation are usually performed by two different individuals. This finding highlights the variability among dubbing studios in Slovakia and the need for more in-depth research into individual dubbing studios and their operational practices.

Despite the small sample of respondents, the research showed that the profession of dubbing translator and dialogue adaptor is highly diverse, and the findings from the semi-structured interview may contribute to a better understanding of the profession of dubbing translation and dialogue adaptation in Slovakia and create space for further research into its specifics and future development. In addition, this study represents the initial phase of a broader research project focusing on the profession of dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors in Slovakia, and in subsequent phases of the research, the sample of respondents shall be expanded to include additional professional dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, and a quantitative research shall be conducted in order to verify the identified professional challenges, working conditions, and trends on a broader sample. Based on the current findings, it shall also be possible to formulate specific research hypotheses regarding work organisation, time demands, economic conditions, and the degree of integration between translation and dialogue adaptation activities within Slovak dubbing practice. Attention should also be paid to the potential impact of

the growing prevalence of individual work, remote work, and limited professional interaction on the psychological well-being and mental health of professional dubbing translators and dialogue adaptors, as this remains an aspect that has received only limited attention in contemporary translation studies research.

List of Abbreviations

(mo)	off-screen
(OFF)	off-screen
(ON)	on-screen
(O/S)	on-screen
(vo)	on-screen
(V/O)	off-screen

Affiliation

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