RELIGIOUS REFERENCES IN THE SUBTITLING OF *SUCCESSION* INTO SPANISH

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Abstract: The way taboos are translated can be controversial as it can depend on the characteristics of the communicative act related to the speakers' context, culture, age and idiolect. However, we could generalise that some taboos can cause a strong reaction to the audience in the context of audiovisual translation (AVT), and some of them are particularly delicate to address, as is the case of religious references. Subtitlers are responsible for transferring the source text (ST) into a target text (TT) in the form of subtitles. In the case of Spain, whether or not the resulting subtitles are more or less faithful to the original cannot be said to be the result of censorship nowadays. However, phrases such as "Jesus fucking Christ" can pose a challenge to the professional, who must consider the best option to render the full impact of its contextual load. The result, for example, can vary from abiding by the rules of what can be considered politically correct, not being fully faithful to the ST or, by contrast, transferring some offensive or taboo load to the TT in the form of a (non-)religious phrase. On streaming platforms in Spain, these expressions tend to be compensated by other offensive phrases which avoid the direct insult to "God" or "Jesus Christ" (Ávila-Cabrera 2020), thereby resorting to ideological manipulation (Díaz Cintas 2012). The present study analyses the series *Succession* (Jesse Armstrong 2018–2023), season 3, and its subtitled version into Spanish, broadcast by HBO España (Spain). Based on a Descriptive Translation Studies approach (Toury 2012) and following Ávila-Cabrera's (2023b) taxonomy of translation techniques, our initial hypothesis is that religious references are usually subtitled in a neutralised or offensive way, the latter excluding the direct reference to the religious figure. This paper aims to show the way that religious references in this TV series have been subtitled into Spanish for the Spanish audience from a linguistic approach, contributing to enriching the literature on AVT and religious phrases as taboo elements.

Keywords: religious references; taboo language; interlingual subtitling; translation techniques; faithfulness; ideological manipulation.

1. Introduction

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is a field of study within the discipline of Translation Studies (Chaume 2018) in which translators need to implement strategies and techniques, as well as being required to have a very good knowledge of the languages and cultures involved in the transfer from a source text (ST) into a target text (TT), and which has gained a prominent role given the production and distribution of digital content. Following Chiaro:

> [a]udiovisual translation is one of several overlapping umbrella terms that include 'media translation', 'multimedia translation', 'multimodal translation' and 'screen translation'. These different terms all set out to cover the interlingual transfer of verbal language when it is transmitted and accessed both visually and acoustically, usually, but not necessarily, through some kind of electronic device. (Chiaro 2009: 141)

One linguistic aspect that can be particularly challenging to this professional practice is the translation of taboo words because of the impact that these terms or phrases can have on the target audience and culture (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2021). Among the multiple topics that can be considered taboo, some can be less controversial than others depending on the languages and cultures involved. For example, sex, violent language, scatology or matters relating to death are topics normally dealt with faithfully in European countries. However, when it comes to religion, different approaches can be used because the audience's sensibilities can be offended when religious figures are insulted (blasphemy) or even when they are simply taken in vain (profane expressions). It is true that the degree of permissiveness related to these religious transfers is culturally dependent, but it can be affirmed that they often make translators resort to less faithful renderings or even to cases of self-censorship, and censorship imposed by the client.

In the context of subtitling, as the AVT mode under study in this paper, technical manipulation (Díaz Cintas 2012) is a must because, as a rule, the ST needs to be condensed. In addition, when subtitlers feel the need to soften or delete taboo content, Díaz Cintas describes it as ideological manipulation. Two cases of manipulation are therefore present when films or TV series in a source language (SL) are subtitled into a target language (TL): technical and ideological. The latter is our focus here and can take place in the case of direct insults to religious figures, not usually translated in the form of blasphemy in professional subtitles in Spain (Ávila-Cabrera 2020).

This paper aims to present the results of a case study which explores the interlingual subtitling of religious references found in the third season of the TV series *Succession* (Jesse Armstrong 2018–2023). Following a linguistic approach based on Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) (Toury 2012) and using the taxonomy of subtitling techniques presented by Ávila-Cabrera (2023b), our analysis centres on the subtitling of religious references from American English into Spanish for a Spanish audience from a linguistic point of view. The main goal is to shed light on how these expressions are rendered in the TT, paying attention to their taboo load. In order to do so, we will identify the cases that

were not transferred at all, those transferred faithfully as well as those transferred avoiding blasphemy, but using other offensive elements instead in an attempt to maintain some offensive/taboo load in the TT.

2. Theoretical framework

There are several topics that are considered taboo in Western countries and are normally treated faithfully in subtitling, such as sex. However, in the case of Latin America, audiovisual programmes in neutral Spanish tend to tone down or eliminate the load of taboo terms and swear words in the TT (Fuentes-Luque 2015). This also happens in Arabic countries where the use of euphemisms or deletion is normally the rule (Al-Adwan 2015). When it comes to religion in AVT, different approaches play their role in accordance with the target culture and audience. There are euphemistic phrases that are preferred by some speakers such as "Gosh" or "Lord" (Allan and Burridge 2006) to avoid the use of profane language such as "God" or "Jesus Christ".

This section presents a cultural approach to religion as well as the research conducted in AVT with religious references as the object of study. In addition, a taxonomy of translation techniques (Ávila-Cabrera 2023b) is discussed as the tool for the analysis of data in this case study.

2.1. A cultural approach to religion

Religion is a deeply ingrained aspect of human society, playing a significant role in shaping beliefs, values, practices, and social structures across diverse cultures (Geertz 1973). For this reason, its study cannot be confined to theological or philosophical analysis alone, and scholars from various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and cultural studies have increasingly recognised the importance of adopting a cultural approach in order to understand it better (Ortner 2006). This perspective emphasises the dynamic interplay between religion and culture, highlighting the mutual influence and co-creation of meaning between the two, and recognises that religious beliefs and practices are embedded within specific cultural contexts, so that they cannot be separated from the broader social, political, economic, and historical factors that shape a society (Taylor 2008). Therefore, this approach encourages scholars to explore how religion is constructed, negotiated, and transformed through cultural processes, such as rituals, symbols, myths, narratives and collective experiences. By examining religion through a cultural lens, researchers gain insights into the diverse ways in which worldviews are constructed, interpreted and lived by individuals and communities.

One key aspect of the cultural approach is the recognition of religious pluralism and diversity. It acknowledges that religious beliefs and practices vary significantly across different cultures and subcultures, challenging the notion of a universal or homogeneous understanding (Fuller 2001). Instead, this perspective encourages scholars to explore the unique expressions of religion within specific cultural contexts, including indigenous beliefs, Eastern

philosophies, Abrahamic faiths and new religious movements. Moreover, it highlights the agency and creativity of individuals and communities in shaping their own religious identities and practices and emphasises that they are not static or fixed but subject to reinterpretation, adaptation, and innovation (Geertz 1999; Paden 2013).

As an illustrative example, Lawson and McCauley (1990: 5), who published one of the foundational works on the understanding of religion as a cognitive science, explain that "we construe a religious system as a symbolic-cultural system of ritual acts accompanied by an extensive and largely shared conceptual scheme that includes culturally postulated superhuman agents". A similar stand is adopted by Whitehouse (2004: 2) when referring to religious rituals explaining that "religion consists of any set of shared beliefs and actions appealing to supernatural agency". Through this lens, researchers can analyse how individuals and communities negotiate and construct their religious identities in response to social, political, and cultural changes, in no way a unique and permanent identity. This approach also provides a framework for understanding religious syncretism, hybridity and the emergence of new religious forms in contemporary societies. This evolution is also clear in the translation, via captioning or revoicing, of audiovisual products in the case of Spain, where the treatment of the transfer of the load contained in these terms has undergone obvious changes in the last twenty years.

Although recently religion has been described as a dispensable cognitive spandrel (Dennet 2006) or even a dangerous delusion (Dawkins 2006), much research also supports the idea that it can be a cornerstone of evolution in complex societies (Atran and Henrich 2010), as it is not just based on rituals and beliefs, but also sacred values that are venerable for whole communities (Taves 2009; Herzfeld 2017). These sacred values represent deeply held convictions and principles and often shape the moral framework, social norms and ethical guidelines followed by individuals within the community and, consequently, influence the language that is considered acceptable.

2.2. Studies on religion and AVT

We have witnessed a growth of publications concerning taboo topics in AVT in the last few decades such as sex (Díaz Cintas 2001; Chiaro 2007; Ogea Pozo and Bujalance 2022; Ogea Pozo and Botella Tejera 2023), taboo, offensive or foul language (Azzaro 2005; Ávila-Cabrera 2015a; Barrera-Rioja 2023), manipulation and self-censorship (Gómez Castro and Pérez L. de Heredia 2015; Bucaria 2018; Sanz-Moreno 2017; Alsharhan 2020), taboo comedy (Bucaria and Barra 2016; Chiaro 2016), swearing and insults (Guillot and Pavesi 2019; Valdeón 2020; Ávila-Cabrera 2023a; Guillot 2023; Pavesi and Formentelli 2023), and taboo language in the L2 classroom (Valdeón 2015; Beseghi 2016; Bruti 2016; Ávila-Cabrera and Rodríguez-Arancón 2018). However, it must be said that this is an ample field that has not been explored as much as many other topics within the scope of AVT such as culture, identity, humour, and multilingual films.

Studies on how religious references are subtitled in Arabic countries are more frequent. Izwaini (2017, 2018) studies religious expressions (God and

religion) that are considered taboo in Arabic subtitling, among other taboo topics such as sex, alcohol and drugs. The author discusses the fact that these taboo expressions are the object of censorship and manipulation in the subtitles and tend to be toned down or translated in a less offensive or even a non-offensive manner. However recently, Fakharzadeh and Dadkhah (2020) conducted a study that analysed 478 expletives of a religious historical series subtitled from Persian to English by professional in-house subtitlers. The results indicate that the toning down of expletives takes place when the receiver is a revered religious figure and when the semantic field of Persian is not internationally well-known. On the other hand, when the receiver is a negative figure, expletives tend to be translated maintaining the force of the ST. The authors relate these results with the translation agents' religious ideology. It is interesting to observe that the results provided by Khoshsaligheh *et al.* (2018) reveal that Iranian fansubbers do not follow the toning down or deletion conventions that prevail in Iranian dubbing. Instead, their renderings aim to be uncensored and faithful to the ST.

Other studies that deal with the treatment of religious references as well as offensive language subtitled into Spanish are those by Ávila-Cabrera (2015b, 2016a, 2016b), which scrutinise some of Tarantino's films. In a case study by this author (2020) focusing exclusively on religious references in some Tarantino films subtitled into Spanish, the tendency to not subtitle blasphemy (understood as insulting "God" or "Jesus Christ", for example) in a faithful manner is highlighted. Instead, other offensive phrases which would not offend religious audiences, but that can transfer some taboo or offensive load, are used. Scandura's (2020) PhD thesis deals with neutral Spanish in the dubbing of infant and juvenile TV series. She states that in dubbing from English into neutral Spanish, religious expressions are normally changed for others. This decision is made by the client, the TV station, the production company or the dubbing studio, although the translator usually avoids the use of vulgar terms (Ferrari 2010), which can be done in the form of self-censorship (Chaume 2008a) or ideological manipulation (Díaz Cintas 2012).

Allan and Burridge (2006) acknowledge that the intensity of words can be modulated by making use of: a) orthophemisms or more neutral utterances, for example, "Jesus"; b) euphemisms or sweet talking such as "Lord"; and c) dysphemisms or offensive expressions such as "Christ!" The subtitling of expressions such as "Oh my God!" or "Jesus Christ" in English-speaking circles can have an impact on the audience. However, it must be said that a closer translation such as *Oh Dios mío* ["Oh my God"] into Spanish neutralises the effect of the ST phrase considering that mentioning "God" in these terms in Spanish is not offensive or taboo. Instead, it is culturally related with mentioning this religious figure as a gesture of despair or joy. There is an exception in Spanish, which is the exclamatory use in vain of "God!" as in *¡Dios!* ["God!"], normally acknowledged as offensive by religious people (Ávila-Cabrera 2023b). Thus, the subtitling of profane phrases (naming religious figures in vain) and blasphemy (insults to religious figures) into Spanish is a controversial matter that audiovisual translators must keep in mind in order to avoid offending the audience, even though the ST actually uses them in their oral form.

2.3. Translation techniques to deal with taboo language

The translation tools used by translators can be varied. Among them, we can find the first taxonomy of translation techniques proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1977). In addition, Molina and Albir Hurtado (2002) present a taxonomy of strategies and techniques for translation practice. Other approaches also address strategies for subtitling culturally specific terms (Pedersen 2007; Díaz Cintas and Remael 2021), for translating humour (Martínez Sierra 2004), or for dubbing and subtitling (Martí Ferriol 2007). We can therefore state that there is diversity in the number of translation strategies and/or techniques at the translators' disposal in accordance with different scholars' approaches.

As there are different definitions for the concepts of translation strategies and techniques, we will resort to Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) postulate. According to these authors, the translator makes use of a translation strategy to face a translation problem. The translation solution unfolds in the TT in a particular way – these authors refer to this operation as a translation technique.

In the research analysis conducted here and based on DTS, we have made use of the translation techniques elaborated by Ávila-Cabrera (2023b: 78), whose taxonomy deals with what is considered offensive, "those linguistic terms or expressions made up of swearwords, expletives, etc., which are normally considered derogatory and/or insulting". Taboo language, those "terms that are not considered appropriate or acceptable with regard to the context, culture, language and/or medium where they are uttered" (Ávila-Cabrera 2016b: 28), and religious references when used in vain are topics considered taboo by different cultures.

The aforementioned translation technique taxonomy is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Ávila-Cabrera's (2023b: 78) taxonomy of translation techniques.

TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

TRANSFER	a) Load toned up b) Load maintained c) Load toned down
NON-TRANSFER	d) Load neutralised e) Load omitted

As can be inferred from Table 1, there are two degrees that concern the transfer – or lack thereof – of the phrases' taboo load in the TT. Then, if the transfer has been made, there are three alternative results: a) the load has been toned up because it has gained intensity; b) the load has been maintained because the solution found is similar in intensity; c) the load has been toned down because it has lost part of its original intensity. As for those instances in which the transfer has not been made, there are two possible results: d) the load has been neutralised because the solution found eliminates its intensity completely; e) the load has been omitted and there is no trace of it.

This taxonomy of translation techniques will be used for the analysis of the corpus presented here. We cannot forget about a resource used by translators called compensation. Chaume (2008b) refers to it as a cognitive process that leads to the substitution of a communicative effect for another one, which appears at another stage of the TT. This is common in subtitling when it is not possible to include a taboo element or swearword, for example, in the subtitle because of the spatio-temporal restrictions, but which will be visible later in an attempt to compensate for that previous loss (Díaz Cintas and Remael, 2021). However, no compensation cases have been found in this sample, for which reason we have followed Ávila-Cabrera's (2023b) translation techniques exclusively.

3. Methodology

This case study was conducted in order to analyse the treatment of religious references (including both profane phrases and blasphemy) when subtitled into Spanish for the audience in Spain. The corpus was taken from the third season of the TV series *Succession* (Jesse Armstrong 2018–2023), whose audio is in American English and that is broadcast by HBO España (Spain). This TV series is about the Roy family, whose head is Logan Roy, CEO and owner of a global media firm Waystar RoyCo. He has suffered some decline in his health and his daughter and three sons are fighting for the control of the company. The reason why the third season was chosen is that the main characters' exchanges were particularly interesting for analysing the treatment of religious references given its terminological variety. This study is based on the DTS paradigm (Toury 2012), so it focuses on describing the way in which the translation was done, but not prescribing the way in which it should have been done. In order to obtain the data, the 9 episodes of the third season were watched, all the religious references found in the ST were noted down and then compared with the subtitles in Spanish. Thus, we followed a linguistic approach, but did not focus on the spatio-temporal technicalities of the subtitles.

3.1. Initial hypothesis and research questions

Our point of departure is the fact that blasphemy (understood as direct insults to religious figures) is very rarely presented in professional subtitles. Thus, our initial hypothesis is that religious references are not normally subtitled faithfully or, if some offensive load is transferred to the TT, it is done through the use of other non-religion-related offensive formulas.

To this end, we have established three research questions to address our initial hypothesis:

> RQ1. Were religious references transferred to the TT maintaining some offensive or taboo load?
> RQ2. Were religious references transferred in a neutralised way or omitted in the resulting subtitles?

RQ3. Were religious references transferred in another offensive way avoiding insults towards religious figures?

In order to address the above RQs, a descriptive analysis of the audiovisual text was completed while watching the 9 episodes, which were subtitled by audiovisual translator Marina Rodríguez García (Iyuno-SDI Group). While RQ1 and RQ2 can be addressed by making use of the translation techniques followed, RQ3 needs to be answered through the observation of the religious phrase in the ST and its transfer to the TT.

This research design therefore aims to shed light on this case study based on the treatment of religious references subtitled from American English into Spanish for the Spanish audience.

4. Data analysis and results

This section presents a number of samples to discuss the translation techniques (Ávila-Cabrera 2023b: 78) observed in the subtitling of this case study. In addition, the results found after the analysis are discussed here in order to address the RQs and our initial hypothesis.

4.1. Data analysis

After the analysis of the transfer from the audio in American English subtitled into Spanish for the Spanish audience, we found 46 instances in which religious references are used in 8 of the 9 episodes of the third season of *Succession* (see Appendix 1). A description of the examples that relate to the translation techniques observed is shown in the following tables that also include the season (SE), episode (EP), ST and TT (along with a back translation).

TRANSFER-TONED UP

We would like to point out that our analysis did not reveal any case of transfer of the load by being toned up in the subtitles.

SE03 EP05: TRANSFER-MAINTAINED (RELIGIOUS)

ST	TT	Back translation
-Just take this for a toast. Yeah. Oh, **God**.	-**Dios**.	[-**God**.]

As can be seen in the sample above, the use of "God" in the ST is used as a profane phrase, because mentioning *Dios* ["God"] can be considered taboo for the religious source audience. In this case, the transfer has been made through the use of a taboo religious term as it entails mentioning *Dios* in vain. Thus, the load has been maintained in the TT.

SE03 EP07: TRANSFER-MAINTAINED (NON-RELIGIOUS)

ST	TT	Back translation
-Sorry. -I said no. **Jesus**, dude. Dude?	-¿Cómo? --- -Que no. Tío, **joder**.	[-What?] --- [-I said no. Dude, **fuck**.]

In this case, we find that "Jesus" has been transferred to the TT through the offensive term *joder* ["fuck"]. As can be seen, the transfer has been made and the load has been maintained through a non-religious offensive word.

SE03 EP07: TRANSFER-TONED DOWN (NON-RELIGIOUS)

ST	TT	Back translation
-Oh, my **fucking God**. -This is dumb.	-**Joder**. -Vaya gilipollez. Yo entro.	[-**Fuck**. -What a fucking thing. I'm entering.]

In the sample shown above, we can observe that the ST contains blasphemy in the form of "fucking God". The ST phrase has been subtitled via an offensive term, *Joder* [Fuck]. However, we can highlight that the latter has not the same force as the original, therefore, the transfer has been made, but toned down with a non-religious – albeit offensive – term.

SE03 EP08: NON-TRANSFER-NEUTRALISED

ST	TT	Back translation
-Depth? **Oh my God!**	-¿Profundidad? Dios mío.	[-Depth? My God!]

The above sample presents the recurrent phrase "Oh my God!", which in the source culture has some offensive connotations because it mentions the name of God in vain. It has been subtitled as *Dios mío* ["My God"]. However, for the target audience, this is an expression used by speakers that refer to God without the aim of insulting this religious figure, but in a way that shows religious devotion. The transfer has therefore not been made because the load has been neutralised in the TT despite the fact of having used a religious phrase.

SE03 EP08: NON-TRANSFER-OMITTED

ST	TT	Back translation
-Roman. -**Jesus**. Fuck.	-¡Roman! --- -Joder.	[-¡Roman!] --- [-Joder.]

In the ST from the sample above it can be observed that the ST contains "Jesus", which has been omitted in the subtitle. The reason for this seems to be the need for text condensation in subtitling, which here implies choosing between "Jesus" and "Fuck". However, our analysis here is that the transfer of the religious name has not been made due to omission in the subtitle. Nonetheless, we can observe that there is an offensive term in the TT, *joder*

["fuck"], although it is beyond the goals of our analysis as it corresponds to the term "Fuck" from the ST. Further studies on the f-word are those provided by Fernández Dobao (2006), Pujol (2006), Soler Pardo (2013), McEnery and Love (2018), and Valdeón (2024), among others.

As introduced at the beginning of this section, none of the examples found in our analysis made use of translation techniques in which the transfer of the religious phrase was made by toning up the load. Instead, all the cases explored can be explained in terms of being transferred by maintaining and toning its load down, and not being transferred by neutralising or omitting its load.

4.2. Results and discussion

This section deals with a discussion of the results obtained after the quantitative and descriptive analysis of the corpus based on a linguistic and DTS approach. In order to shed light on the subtitling of religious figures of the third season of this TV series, the research questions raised in this paper are answered as follows.

- RQ1. Were religious references transferred to the TT maintaining some offensive or taboo load?

Firstly, our focus was on the number of religious instances present in the ST. We analysed a total of 48 instances, which are developed and shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Religious reference instances transferred and not transferred.

Religious instances	Transfer			Non-transfer	
	Toned up	Maintained	Toned down	Neutralised	Omitted
46 (100%)	0	16 (34.78%)	5 (10.86%)	15 (32.63%)	10 (21.73%)

Thus, 21 instances (45.64%) were transferred to the TT and 25 cases (54.36%) were not, therefore, we can state that more than half of them were not subtitled in the TT.

- RQ2. Were religious references transferred in a neutralised way or omitted in the subtitles?

Paying attention to the non-transfer cases, in 15 of them (32.63%) the loads were neutralised in the translation choices made in the TT. In addition, in 10 instances (21.73%) the ST references were omitted. This percentage (54.36%) has been the most common in the treatment of religious figures.

- RQ3. Were religious references transferred in another offensive way avoiding offence towards religious figures?

Out of the 21 instances (45.65%) that were transferred to the TT, 16 were cases in which the offensive or taboo load was maintained in the subtitle. In addition to this, 8 of these cases in which the load was maintained account for 17.39%. We cannot assert that the majority of cases were transferred without using some religious load, but none of the cases found in the subtitles included blasphemy or a direct insult to a religious figure. In addition, we did not find any case that included either blasphemy or a profane phrase in the TT when the ST did not originally have it.

After addressing the research questions and observing that the recurrent tendency has been to not transfer religious references very faithfully in the TT, we can support our initial hypothesis that indicates that blasphemy is very rarely presented in professional subtitles, this case study showing not a single example. This result is in line with Ávila-Cabrera's (2020) case study on the subtitling of religious figures into European Spanish in some of Tarantino's films. On the other hand, an opposite trend is that of studies on fansubbing and taboo language (Beseghi 2016; Khoshsaligheh *et al.* 2018), in which subtitles free of censorship can be found. All in all, the professional subtitles for this TV series broadcast in Spain seem to be less offensive for a religious audience when it comes to subtitling religious references considering that cases of ideological manipulation or self-censorship can be at play.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the subtitled version of the TV series *Succession* in relation to religious references has provided valuable insights into the treatment of taboo language in AVT. The findings of this study support the initial hypothesis that religious references are often not subtitled faithfully into Spanish, and instead, alternative translation techniques are employed to maintain or tone down the taboo load.

The results indicate that a significant number of religious references were not transferred to the TT, accounting for more than half of the instances analysed. This suggests that subtitlers often choose to omit or neutralise religious references in order to avoid potential offence or controversy. The decision to not transfer these references can be seen as a form of self-censorship or as a result of the subtitler's perception of the target audience's sensitivity towards religious topics. However, there may be cases in which the non-transfer of the load will respond to technical constraints. No compensation cases were found in the TT either.

In the cases in which religious references were transferred, the study revealed that the translation techniques employed tended to maintain or tone down the taboo load rather than toning it up, of which we found no examples. This suggests a cautious approach to handling religious content in the subtitles, aiming to strike a balance between faithfulness to the ST and respecting cultural sensitivities.

The analysis also highlighted the use of alternative offensive or taboo language to replace direct religious references, which indicates that subtitlers

often resort to other offensive terms or expressions in an attempt to maintain the offensive or taboo load while avoiding direct insults to religious figures. This practice aligns with the concept of ideological manipulation in AVT, where subtitlers employ strategies to convey the intended impact or effect of the SL while considering the cultural and linguistic norms of the target audience. These results are in line with previous research on the same topic but applied to other media content.

The findings of this study contribute to the existing literature on AVT and taboo language, particularly in relation to religious references. The results emphasise the importance of considering cultural and religious factors in the translation process, highlighting the complexity and challenges faced by subtitlers in rendering meaning in a way that is acceptable to the target audience. However, the fact of not having interviewed the subtitler of the season is a limitation of this study, whose findings could have been triangulated with the qualitative information granted by Marina Rodríguez García.

Further research can expand on this study by examining the treatment of religious references for different target audiences. Additionally, investigating the reception and audience reactions to the subtitled versions of religious references can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of translation choices on viewers. Another line of research could be to carry out the same type of analysis in the full four seasons of the series in order to obtain more conclusive results. Last but not least, comparing the dubbed with the subtitled version would allow us to elucidate whether there are similar tendencies to translate religious references in these two AVT modes.

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TV SERIES

Succession. (2018–2023) Jesse Armstrong, Gary Sanchez Productions: USA.

APPENDIX 1. Analysis of the third season of *Succession*[1]

ST	TT
SE03 EP02	
-Now on Safetime. **-Oh my God!**	-Ahora, en Safetime… **-Dios mío.**
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Jesus! -Stop trying to convince me of shit.	**-¡Dios!** -No me convenzas.
	Transfer: maintained
-Yes, you fucking do. -Is it the **goddamn** donuts?	-Sí, joder. ¿Han sido los dónuts? -¿Te han gustado los **putos** dónuts?
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-Fuck you, **plastic Jesus**. -You're a fucking twat.	-Que te den, **Jesucristo de pacotilla**. -Puta gilipollas.
	Transfer: maintained
SE03 EP03	
-Jesus. Everyone's doing fucking somersaults for him right now.	**-Joder**, qué piruetas/hacemos todos por él.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-Oh, my God. -Same.	**-Madre mía**. -Lo mismo digo.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Jesus Christ.	**-Vaya tela.**

[1] Note: the table above shows the source text (ST) in American English on the left column, where we can also find the season (SE) and episode (EP). The target text (TT) can be seen on the right column in the form of Spanish subtitles and the translation technique employed for each case is shown below.

	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Oh my God. Guess what, we're down a guest. Oedipussy has ghosted my ass.	**-Vaya por Dios**. Qué pena. Falta el invitado.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
SE03EP04	
-**Oh, God**. -I know.	**-Ay madre**. -Ya.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
SE03 EP05	
-Christ, Dad, you just said it's not far off what we originally offered.	-Acabas de decir que es similar a lo que les ofrecimos.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-God, I wish I know the thinking.	-Ojalá razonase como él.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Jesus, fucking take it easy. You wanna give him the fucking tabasco suppository?	-Relájate, **joder**. ¿Le ponemos un supositorio de tabasco?
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-They're good if we're good. It's done. **-Oh my God**.	-Vale. Les vale si nos vale. Listo. -**Genial**.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Oh, my God. -It's not creep. No, it's not, come on.	-No, vamos.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Kira Mason. **-Oh, my God**.	-Kira Mason. -**Madre mía**.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-**Oh my God**.	-**Dios mío**. -Cerrad el micro…
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Just take this for a toast. Yeah. **Oh, God**.	**-Dios**.
	Transfer: maintained
SE03 EP06	
-**Jesus**. -Greg.	**-Joder**. -Greg.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-Oh, Jesus.	---
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Speak of the devil. You take care. Good to see you.	**-Hablando del rey de Roma**… Cuídate. Ha sido un placer.

	Non-transfer: neutralised
SE03 EP07	
-Oh, my God. This feels disgustingly Kendall.	**-Dios mío**, qué asco. Esto es muy Kendall.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Oh, Jesus.	**-Jesús**.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-**Oh my God**. -What?	-**Dios mío**. -¿Qué?
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-**Oh my fucking God**. -This is dumb.	-**Joder**. -Vaya gilipollez. Yo entro.
	Transfer: toned down
-Oh my God. Did you see that? I just got moved.	-¿Lo has visto? Me ha movido. Vale.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-**Oh, God**. -What is it?	-**Una tontería**. -¿Qué pasa?
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Well, I said no, Greg. -Sorry. -I said no. **Jesus**, dude. Duh?	-¿Cómo? -Que no. Tío, **joder**.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-Ken, **Jesus**.	**-Dios**, Ken. Oye.
	Transfer: maintained
-Oh, my fucking God. You know what?	---
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Neither of you should be in here. **-Oh my God**, you're right.	-No deberíais estar aquí. -Es verdad.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Why don't you hit me maybe? Come on, **shitty Jesus**. You know you want to, just fucking hit me.	-Anda, **Jesús de pacotilla**. Quieres hacerlo. Pégame, joder.
	Transfer: toned down
SE03 EP08	
-Depth? **Oh my God!**	-¿Profundidad? **Dios mío**.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-We had a deal. **Jesus Christ**.	**-Joder**.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)

-Oh my God, you can't ask someone to say terrible things and then get…	-No puedes pedir que te digan cosas feas y luego ponerte…
	Non-transfer: omitted
-Jesus! Fuck. Yeah, that's his dick.	**-Dios**. Joder. Sí, es su… polla.
	Transfer: maintained
-Roman. **-Jesus**. Fuck.	-¡Roman! **-Joder**.
	Non-transfer: omitted
-What is it? **-Jesus**.	-¿Por qué mandas esto? **-Dios**.
	Transfer: maintained
-Jesus, Dad. I'm screwing around!	**-Joder**, papá. Si es de coña.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-God, this must so hard for you. -It's fine.	-Debe de ser muy difícil para ti. -Estoy bien.
	Non-transfer: omitted
SE03 EP09	
-Jesus. -Hey, buddy.	-Madre mía. -Hola, tío.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Jesus, no, **God**, Dad, can we not…	**-Dios**, no, papá. ¿Podemos no…?
	Transfer: maintained
-Jesus, what is she on?	-…**para alimentarlo**… -Qué coñazo.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Jesus. I feel ill.	**-Madre mía**. Voy a vomitar. -¿Sí?
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-I'll scale the north face of the fucking Eiger. **Jesus** fuck.	**-Me cago en la puta**.
	Transfer: maintained (no religious reference)
-Jesus Christ.	**-La leche**.
	Non-transfer: neutralised
-Get ready, okay? **-Jesus**. Okay.	-Prepárate, ¿vale? **-Dios**. Vale.
	Transfer: maintained