



From *Sendung mit der Maus* to *Mouse TV* Experiences from a linguistic film dubbing project



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The film: *Viererkniffel/The mystery of Zoe's dice*

- What is the secret of Zoe's dice? Whenever Zoe throws her dice under water, she only gets fours. Christoph from the *Sendung mit der Maus* tries to solve the mystery.
- This seven-minute educational film provides an entertaining introduction to the scientific method. The protagonists formulate and test several hypotheses. They use their results to build a model, then make a prediction and achieve the expected outcome.
- Source: WDR, *Sendung mit der Maus*, (<https://www.wdrmaus.de/filme/sachgeschichten/viererkniffel.php5>)



Linguistic and methodological teaching objectives

- introduce and discuss the **scientific method**
- raise awareness of **register-specific language use**
- raise awareness of the characteristics of **spoken language**
- discuss **translational equivalence** (e.g. regarding content, associations and style)
- introduce the principles and problems of **film dubbing**

Underlying pedagogical concept(s)

- **product-oriented teaching**: produce a dubbed film
- **research-oriented teaching**: students carry out small-scale research projects and present them in class, followed by a reflection on their research's contribution to the dubbing process
- **competence-oriented teaching**: foster the acquisition of new digital technical skills (using the software Final Cut Pro)
- **active learning**: students play an active role in the planning and problem-solving process (e.g. speaker casting; slowing down speed)
- **individualized learning**: task allocation based on heterogeneous participants' skills and interests (e.g. regarding the level of German and prior experience with translation or film dubbing)

Students' independent research projects and presentations

- **common problems in dubbing**
- **compare language use in**
 - educational TV programmes for children (*Sesame Street/Dora the explorer*) vs. educational TV programmes for adults (*MythBusters/BBC documentaries*)
 - educational TV programmes for children (e.g. *Sendung mit der Maus*) vs. educational books for children (e.g. the *Was-ist-Was* series)
 - different English/German educational TV programmes for children (*Sendung mit der Maus/Mouse TV* vs. *Sesamstraße/Sesame Street*)
- collect **catchphrases** from *Sendung mit der Maus* and *Mouse TV*
- collect German and English **expressions** that can be used to provide **explanations**

Seminar outline/Steps in the dubbing process

- kick-off meeting:
 - watch film together
 - discuss the **scientific method**
 - find and **distribute research project topics**
- **collect tasks** that are necessary for the dubbing process
- inputs on the **basics of dubbing and register research**
- **presentations** by students on their research projects
- **transcription of German audio** following transcription guidelines
 - short connected passages with time codes and scene descriptions
 - indicate pauses <...> and the way of speaking (e.g. <smiling/surprised>)
 - ca. 1 minute per student; copy-paste into a single table
- **translation** into English by the same students
- discuss students' rough translation in class and **improve** it together regarding **idiomaticity**, grammar and appropriateness for the register
- make translation **shorter** where necessary
- have translation **checked** by English native speakers
- **cast a speaker**
 - candidates record a **one-minute audio** of the translated English text on their mobiles and upload the file to Moodle
 - listen to audios in class and **vote** for favourite speaker
- carry out **Dubbing Day** (see below)
- wrap-up meeting with **celebration**; watch **dubbed film** and documentation

Technical equipment

- International tape with music and sounds but without German voiceover (obtained from the WDR's *Mitschnittservice*)
- Video editing software: Final Cut Pro
- High-quality microphone



End-of-term assignment: Project report

- students **answer** the following **questions** in 4500-7000 characters:
 - What were the **aims** of the class?
 - What did we do (e.g. which **methods** did we use)?
 - What did you do specifically (e.g. to **contribute** to the aim)?
 - What **results** did we achieve?
 - What did you **learn**?

Watch the dubbed English version of *Viererkniffel* at https://www.wdrmaus.de/extras/maus_international/englisch.php5



Dubbing Day (in LMU's eLab)

2 Adding captions and audios of the beginning final cut pro

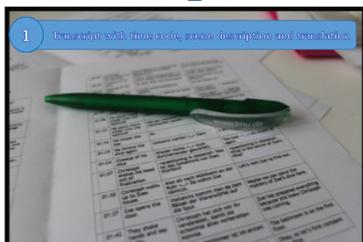


ca. 8-10 hours

3 Share aligned captions for the speaker

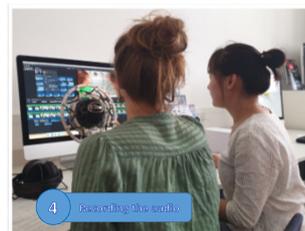


1 Working with time codes, scene descriptions and translations



Tasks on Dubbing Day

- **align** German version and **international tape** in **Final Cut** software
- use soundwaves to **mark the beginnings and ends** of German speech segments
- copy English translations of speech segments into appropriate slots to create **time-aligned captions** (minus 10 frames)
- read out captions and **record English audios**
- listen to audios, give **feedback** to speaker and **re-record** if necessary
- add **credits** at the end of the film
- **post-editing** (check for flaws and remedy them)
- **document** the dubbing process (photographs, short videos and texts)



4 Recording the audio

7 The final dub



6 Working the credits and post-editing



5 Group the dubs and re-creation of the final dub