

# SOME OPINIONS ON SUBTITLING TRANSLATION III

The next method is called deletion.

Here is an example:

It's a scene that A and B are in a coffee shop when a girl come in . The girl had dated man A for a while but finally dumped him. Man A feels so nervous to greet the girl used to hurt him badly. Then the conversation starts.

B: Are you going to go over there?

□□□□□□□□

A: No, ok, but not yet..... I don't want to look too eager for her.

One Mississippi, two Mississippi, three Mississippi four Mississippi  
.....okay, I feel much better now.

□, □ .....□□□□□□□□..... □□□□□□□□□□

□..... □..... □.....□..... □□□□□□□□□□

There is something needs to be noticed in this dialogue, it is the way for A to count numbers to calm himself down. The counting method of Mississippi would be regarded a common way of counting numbers in America.

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According to the Oxford dictionary ,the word “Mississippi” means “a major North American river and the chief river of the United States; rises in northern Minnesota and flows southward into the Gulf of Mexico”

But “Mississippi” in the dialogue doesn’t share specific meaning like the dictionary reference. It has nothing to do with the Mississippi river. The Americans like Man A use it here only as a strategy for counting so as to prolong every count enough to last for seconds. If we know this,we could understand why Man A ’s counting way goes in such a different way and feel his nervousness when he do it to make himself look calmer and much “cooler”.

One more example is listed below.

It’s the scene that Man A gets into the tanning booth for deep skin color. He stands in front of equipment, and face directly to the sprayers, then sprayers start working. Remembering what is just told by the attendant in the health club , here he says:

A: One Mississippi.....two Mississippi.....Three Miss.....our Mississippi  
.....

1□□□□□.....2□□□□□.....3□□□□□.....4□□□□□.....

(The sprayer starts spraying on his face again)

A: Wait! Stop! I’m still not! I need to finish counting!!

The sprayer stops, then the attendant comes in and ask:

You didn’t even turn?

□□□□□□

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A: No, I don't even finish four Mississippis.

□□□□□□□□□□□□

Attendant: why you count Mississippi? What I said is count to five'!

~□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

As a similar way of counting numbers like the former example, it is used in a quite different situation. The attendant don't need the client A to prolong counting for suntan as too long time would make skin color too deep and unnatural. But unfortunately, client doesn't get that.

In order to make audiences from different cultures understand this expression, it is not an appropriate practice for the translator to "ignore" the word "Mississippi" as done in the former example, which mostly possibly leads to confusions and misunderstandings for the target audience. So we prefer to take the strategy of preservation, rather than deletion this time. From this example, People may realize that deletion is not always the best practice; we should make different choices or use different strategies due to the context of the conversation accordingly.

To be continued.....

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