

Skopos and musical audiovisual products in the XXI century: a theoretical review

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Abstract

In recent years, more and more scholars have started to explore the importance of connections among text, music and image. Authors like Peter Low and Johan Franzon started the journey towards a yet uncharted field, laying the foundations of song translation using functionalist approaches. Based on their ground-breaking work, other researchers have dared to step into a field in need of scholarly contributions. Therefore, the main goal of the present article is to collect and analyse the latest and most important studies in the translation of musical audiovisual products during the XXI century.

Key words: skopos, musical audiovisual products, dubbing, subtitling, musical texts, functionalist approach, audiovisual translation, song translation, music, strategies

1. Introduction

The translation of musical texts has received little attention from scholars until recently. According to Mateo (2012: 115), this could be due to ‘the methodological challenges that its study entails’ and the issues that appear when concepts such as “translation”, “adaptation” or “rewrite” are redrawn. In addition, ‘[the study of the translation of musical texts] questions essential concepts such as “authorship” or “source-text” and it clearly calls for a multidisciplinary approach’ (2012: 115). However, in the last decades authors such as Gorlée (2005), Franzon (2005, 2008 and 2015), Low (2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008, 2013 and 2017), Desblache (2013, 2019a and 2019b), García, R. (2013 and 2017), Mateo (2008 and 2012), Bosseaux (2008 and 2011) or Kaindl (2005), have produced research that has gone some way to redressing the lack of publications.

Before proceeding to examine the different publications related to the translation of musical audiovisual products *per se*, it is important to define first what the term ‘musical text’ has really referred to for scholars in the last decades. The translation of musical texts or ‘vocal translation’, as Gorlée (2005: 7) calls it, is conceived as the union between poetic and musical texts. Similarly, Golomb presents the term *Music-Linked Translation* ‘[that] refers here to an instance of verbal text “set to” [...] or synchronised with [...] an instance of music, whether this setting [...] is made *a priori* by original design [...] or *a posteriori*’ (2005: 122). On the other hand, Kaindl points out the importance of understanding the connection between text and music as an interdisciplinary study, in which the semiotic and social relationships play a crucial role especially in the translation of popular songs. In fact, Kaindl states that popular songs are communication channels by which cultures and information are transferred to different people everywhere (2005: 235-236).

Most prior studies mostly defined the translation of musical texts as a union between musical notes and message and were based on the fact that lyrics need to be aligned with the melody, not only in the original text but also in their translation into a foreign language. However, popular songs are not the only songs to take into account. Audiovisual productions, such as the ones analysed in the present study, claim to be worthy of these connections too.

The appearance of new audiovisual translation modes in the last decades (subtitling, dubbing, audiodescription, etc.) has brought up other elements to discuss, such as the relationship among text, music and image. For that reason, specialists such as Low (2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008, 2013 and 2017) and Franzon (2005, 2008 and 2015) apply functionalist approaches to this translation field (Nord 1997, 2009 and 2016; Reiss and Vermeer 1996; Vermeer 2012): song translation should be revolved around the translation *skopos* and the audience of the target text. Therefore, image is a factor to have in mind in the translation of musical texts. This is evident in the case, for instance, of musical films or series, where music and lyrics are always connected to what is happening on screen.

Having defined how translation of musical texts has been conceived by scholars in the last decades, I will now move on to discuss at length the main works in the field of song translation, starting by the two main authors who have been looking into the relationship among music, text and image in audiovisual products applying functionalist approaches (Peter Low and Johan Franzon) and concluding with the latest studies about song translation in the XXI century.

2. Song translation according to Low

2. 1. Logocentric versus músico-centric songs¹

Low believes that a song is a whole based on three main elements: words, music and performance. Every culture has traditional songs which show their own values and beliefs. Therefore, songs imply people of all ages, backgrounds and places, as well as take part in most cultural and linguistic identities of human beings. Song lyrics usually depict emotions, tell personal life lessons or create fictional stories with the main goal of entertainment. Unfortunately, verbal elements are not able to cross borders as easily and successfully as musical or even performance components are. That is why song translators must understand a musical text as a complete product and try to make it work into a new communicative context (Low 2017: 1-7).

Song translation differs greatly from general translation and it is ‘an unusually complex one, involving a hybrid genre which belongs in the performing arts. Song-texts [...] pose problems resembling sometimes those of poetry and sometimes those of drama’ (Low 2003a: 87). However, song translation to be sung is not something new: operas, musical plays, hymns and thousands of songs have been translated through the years with acceptable results, ‘at least sometimes’ (2003a: 87). For that reason, the author finds song translation, especially those related to comedy, drama or even narrative, highly interesting since they must be immediately understood by their recipients. As Low alleges (2017: 40):

When a song will be performed in a language unfamiliar to most of the audience, some kind of translation must occur, because otherwise the verbal elements of the song will be lost. They may not be totally lost, since a good performance can communicate something of the song’s mood, but they will be largely lost: those who say: ‘I don’t understand Spanish, but I understand that song’ are mistaken.

Low assumes that every song must be translated, although it is accompanied by instruments and/or visual elements: ‘songs need voices singing words’ (Low 2017: 4). Even though music can be seen in general as the most important part in a song, the truth is that

translators must focus on the lyrics of every song in which they are working on and draw their own conclusions. It would be too simplistic to affirm that all vocal music would be logocentric and the rest, musico-centric: ‘Instead we can apply the term “logocentric” to actual songs where the words matter more, and “musico-centric” to the others’ (2017: 10). What is more, Low acknowledges that even ‘a single song may shift between logocentric and musico-centric sections’ (2017: 13).

For all those reasons, the author concludes that translators should ask themselves the right questions in order to understand if the songs they are translating are mainly logocentric or musico-centric. With the main goal of analysing the factors which make a song logocentric or musico-centric, Low presents a variety of questions which would guide a translator to differ logocentric songs, whose translation is key for their context, from musico-centric songs (see Table 1 and Table 2).

<i>Key factors of the translated song</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
1. The song tells a story	
2. The song tells verbal jokes	
3. The song uses rich vocabulary	
4. The song has been written by a famous poet	
5. There are a lot of different verses	
6. The words are sung with sincerity, as if the singer believed them	
7. Lyrics are audible over the percussion and other instruments	
8. Lyrics are clear enough to transcribe	
9. The song was originally sung in the language of the audience	
10. Song’s target audience would be interested in the combined musico-verbal effect	
Conclusion	Mostly ‘Yes’: Logocentric Mostly ‘No’: Musico-centric

Table 1 Key factors to differ logocentric from musico-centric songs (Low 2017: 14-16)

<i>Types of logocentric songs</i>	<i>Why are they considered logocentric songs?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Narrative songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lyrics tell the story ○ Characters are depicted by songs and without the lyrics, the plot of the story would not make any sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comic songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Music and/or image could set the mood for a joke, but they could

	not properly tell it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dramatic songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They describe or present events that are happening ○ <i>First-person character songs</i>: dramatic monologues which describe feelings or situations of the characters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Protest songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Music cannot state a message by its own
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dialogue songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One singer sings the words for one or even two characters. ○ There is a message to translate, no matter its music
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Satirical songs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The message cannot be understood unless the lyrics are translated using a proper strategy in order to render the satire of the song, even at the expense of its musical integrity

Table 2 Types of logocentric songs (Low 2017: 10-14)

The author states that it can be found an equivalent for every song in a target language, either translating it, adapting the lyrics into the target language culture or even replacing the original text for a different one that works better with the original music. Therefore, in order to fulfil with the translation *skopos*, translator should take into account several key components before facing a song translation as Low (2005: 186) points out:

According to Vermeer, translation methods and strategies should be determined by *skopos* [...]. In his view, the *skopos* may even ‘help to determine whether the source text needs to be “translated”, “paraphrased”, or completely “re-edited” [...]. In the case of song, this means consideration and re-consideration of the prospective listeners to the translated song, of their situation in a different cultural polysystem and of their ability to comprehend and appreciate the song in the limited time (perhaps less than three minutes) during which they are hearing it. The result may be a choice to paraphrase rather than simply translate.

Consequently, Low establishes a general classification (see Table 3) of the main components that must be taken into account when translating song-lyrics, since they ‘are expressive texts channelling feelings such as joy and despair on subjects like love or death’ (Low 2017: 25). As the author states, the language used in songs is merely subjective, containing sometimes even subtleties and nuances similar to those used in poetical texts.

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Components</i>
Main problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective language (autobiographical details and drama)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning, content and intent (sense of the text) • Non-standard language (dialects, sociolects, slangs, colloquialisms) • Cultural issues (allusions, local culture) • Peculiarities of the source language (word order, synonyms, syntactic structures)
Other problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambiguity • Archaisms • Euphemisms and indirect language • Fixed expressions • Foreign phrases • Incomplete sentences • Irony, humour and vulgar language • Metaphors and similes • Neologisms • Repetitions and rhymes

Table 3 General classification of the main components that must be taken into account when translating song lyrics (Low 2017: 25-37)

2. 2. Song translation to be read in audiovisual products

Low states that the functionalist view by Vermeer (Reiss and Vermeer 1996) and the *skopos* theory can be applied to song translation in general in the same way it has been applied to specific types of songs conceived mainly to persuade customers in advertisement campaigns (Low 2017: 40). Since musical texts are apparently expressive texts, the concept of functionality can seem little convention in this sense. However, Low suggests a model which reflects the two main parts involved in the process of translating a song, that is, its translator and its recipients: ‘The standard will not be intertextual coherence but adequacy or appropriateness with regard to the *skopos*’ (Nord 1997: 33).

Under a functionalist approach, Low indicates the various translation strategies according to purpose, that is, according to the *skopos* of a translation and in which song translations to be read and song translation to be sung must be treated accordingly. Table 4 shows a classification of the *skopos* in song translation to be read according to the author.

<i>Skopos</i>	<i>Kind of translation</i>
• Translation study	• Word-for-word
• Printed programme	• Communicative
• CD insert	• Semantic
• Surtitle and subtitles	• Communicative and/or gist
• Spoken intro	• Gist

Table 4 Kinds of translations according to *skopos* in song translation to be read (Low 2003b: 101-106 and 2017: 41-61)

Regarding song translation to be read on screen, either opera recitals (surtitles) or on television and DVD (subtitles), Low claims that subtitles and surtitles, even having different *skopoi*, share their essence: a communicative translation is needed, fully and immediately understandable by its recipients in the target culture. For that reason, a more semantic translation with the same linguistic level of the original author would not be needed in here, either aspects such as rhyme or rhythm (Low 2008: 1 and 2017: 48, 56-57).

2. 3. Song translation to be sung in audiovisual products²

Low states that a song translation is comparable to a pentathlon: ‘this image links the five criteria to the five events in which athletes must compete to maximise their points, events as different as a shot-put and a 100-metre sprint’ (Low 2017: 79) and presents the ‘Pentathlon Principle’, conceived as a practical *skopos*-based approach for song translation to be sung (Low 2005: 191):

The Pentathlon Principle states that the evaluation of such translations should be done not in terms of one or two criteria but as an aggregate of all five. More fundamentally, it contends that this notion of balancing five different criteria can assist translators both in their overall strategic thinking and also in their microlevel decisions — in the practical task of choosing which of several possible words or phrases is the best option overall. Now to speak of a pentathlon is merely a metaphor. But it is a more illuminating choice of metaphor than other metaphors, even that of ‘juggling’ (though this better captures the sense of simultaneity).

In addition to this five criteria, Low adds a sixth one, what he called ‘dramatic effectiveness’, transforming this pentathlon into a hexathlon (Low 2005, 211), as Table 5 shows.

1. <i>Singability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative singability in physical and phonetic texts: is it easy to sing?
2. <i>Sense</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semantic accuracy: are the meaning, content and intent well transferred?
3. <i>Naturalness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceiving style and register: how natural is the style of the target text?
4. <i>Rhythm</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of respect for the pre-existing musical rhythm of the source text: how well does it fit to the music?
5. <i>Rhyme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of importance: how well does the target text rhyming match the rhyming found in the source text? Does the target text need to

	rhyme at all?
6. <i>Dramatic effectiveness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performability: does it transfer the same effect of the source text?

Table 5 Hexathlon Principle for song translation of musical audiovisual products (Low (2003a, 2005, 2008 and 2017))

3. Song translation according to Franzon

3. 1. Fidelity and format

Franzon understands a song as ‘a piece of music and lyrics –in which one has been adapted to the other, or both to one another– designed for a singing performance’ (2008: 376). He agrees with Low (2017: 40) on the fact that song translation is linked to the *skopos* of the translated text, that is, a functional translation should take into account its purpose in the first place, which is the main goal to achieve (Franzon 2005: 263): ‘[A] song lyric translation [...] [is] a text that is similar to its source text in aspects relevant to its target culture presentation as a staged narrative to music’.

Franzon also shares Low’s opinion on the fact that song translation cannot be defined as a general translation has been traditionally defined, since a general translation basically consists of replacing the textual material of the source language into the equivalent material of the target language (Franzon 2005: 264). However, Franzon conceives song translation closer to a *creative transposition*, using Jakobson’s term (Apter and Herman 2016: 58; Franzon 2005: 264), or even as an adaptation³: ‘In song translation, adaptation may well be the only possible choice’ (Franzon 2005: 265).

In his proposal, Franzon considers the understanding of the concepts of *fidelity*⁴ and *format* as a great help in the translation process due to the difficulties which often arise when translating a text. The author understands *fidelity* as everything that distinguishes a translated song from other translations, and *format* as everything that can transform a literal translation (useless in its function) into a singable and performable translation (Franzon 2005: 266-268).

Franzon states that both fidelity and format are intrinsic elements that shape the *skopos* of the translated text. For that reason, according to Franzon (2005: 267), song translation format is similar to what Nord suggested in her distinction between documentary and instrumental translation⁵. The main purpose of the translated text is being a communication tool in the target culture, in which the original text serves as a model example to follow, rather than an entire document containing all the original information: ‘In a musical, the staged narrative is presented in the form of a series of distinct songs. The mere fact that a theatrical situation is presented in the song form implies a special dramatic significance’ (Franzon 2005: 270).

Apart from fidelity and format, Franzon also differentiates between the two ways in which songs are presented in a musical product: non-diegetic and diegetic songs.⁶ Regarding the latter, Franzon (2005: 271) adds that it can contain inner monologues of the characters, either if they think they are talking or they know they are singing.⁷

3. 2. Choices in song translation

Taking into account the concepts of *skopos*, *finality* and *format* previously mentioned, an ideal song translation is understood as a version of a song which reproduces the exact same values, the essence of the original text, that is, music, lyrics and performability in a target language. Nevertheless, '[i]n practice, this is an impossible ideal' (Franzon 2008: 376). In order to avoid a right or wrong classification, the author modifies somehow the definition of song translation, implying that a 'a song might be recognized as a translation if it is a second version of a source song that allows some essential values of the source's music and/or its lyrics and/or its sung performance to be reproduced in a target language' (2008: 376). For that reason, Franzon (2008: 376-389) presents a classification of song translation that would help translator to choose which option or options would be the right ones when dealing with their translation briefs:

- Leaving the song untranslated: Franzon quotes Holz-Manttari (Franzon 2008: 377) when considering this option as a translational action *per se* since translators are the ones who decide what a translation really needs.⁸ According to Franzon, most of the time translators are required to strictly follow a translation brief, where sometimes it is indicated that dialogues should be translated but not songs. This might be due to the fact that lyrics are not considered important for the plot (for example, background music in films, which are not often translated) or because original lyrics may enhance authenticity or because simply translators do not have enough time to translate song lyrics (2008: 378). According to Aleksandrowicz (2019, p. 175), this option is the preferred one when translating audiovisual products.
- Translating the lyrics but not taking the music into account: song lyrics are translated only paying attention to their meaning, that is, 'semantically close prose renderings [...]. [I]n short, translations as a supplement to the original' (Franzon 2008: 378). It is often used in subtitled products in cinema and television (Franzon 2008: 378-379 and 2015: 335-336).
- Writing new lyrics to the original music with no overt relation to the original lyrics: 'This would be the case when the music is the most important part of the package' and 'as a result of importation and marketing of musico-verbal material between languages and cultures' (Franzon 2008: 380). As far as Franzon is concerned, this option would be the most spread when exporting popular and international hits. However, Franzon suggests a model contrary to the one proposed by Low, who states that a translation is the one which transfer all the meaning of the source text. Low would consider it, therefore, as a replacement text rather than a proper translation (Low 2013 and 2017: 116).
- Translating the lyrics and adapting the music accordingly: depending on the translation brief, there are some products in which their lyrics are more important than their music and, consequently, the latter must be changed (for example, religious musical texts) (Franzon 2008: 381-386).
- Adapting the translation to the original music: this option is chosen when translator cannot change the original music of a song and should create a functional equivalent to the original song. A translation to be sung must match with the music and with what is happening on stage. This translation choice is frequent in dubbed films, where visual or musical elements cannot be altered (Franzon 2008: 386-388).

4. Recent studies on song translation strategies in the XXI century

This section briefly addresses the latest studies based on Low and Franzon's research, since in the recent years numerous studies have been trying to keep defining the different translation strategies around musical products (musical plays, musical films and series, modern songs, etc.), so far lacking in the scientific literature.

Although the first studies on translation and music revolved around opera (Franzon 2008: 374), more and more scholars are starting to conceive the relationship between music and text in a multidisciplinary way. Publications such as *The Translator* (Susam-Sarajeva 2008), *Song and Significance* (Gorlée 2005), *Music, Text and Translation* (Minors 2014) and *Music and Translation: new mediations in the digital age* (Desblache 2019a), among others, are the most important studies in the field.

In addition, due to the lack of previous research on song translation, there has been a higher interest in this field especially by researchers who are finishing their bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree studies and who are highly contributing to improve the scientific literature in the field of translation of musical audiovisual products (Costa 2015; García, A. 2013; García, R. 2013, García, S. 2016; Morales 2016; Rodríguez 2008; Tido 2014; Vargas 2015).

In order to show the latest discoveries in the field, a selection of the three best studies is going to be analysed below:

- Di Giovanni (2008: 300-306): Undoubtedly, her research is a clear example of a deep understanding in the field of song translation and the relationship among music, text and image. After having examined the translation of fifteen American film musicals into Italian,⁹ she could survey and analyse a large sample of translation strategies, concluding that song translation strategies could be narrowed down to four translation choices: *partial translation* (where dialogues are dubbed, but songs are left untranslated), *mixed translation* (where dialogues are dubbed, but songs are subtitled into the target language), *full translation I* (where dialogues and lyrics are dubbed, translating song lyrics into the target language) and *full translation II* (where both dialogues and songs are subtitled, translating song lyrics into the target language). The author finally concludes that economic reasons were probably the most important factor behind the choice of translation strategies.
- Comes (Costa 2015: 21): starting on the premise that choosing a strategy is only possible when the translation brief and client's intentions are clear, Comes also classifies song translation strategies into four categories: original lyrics are untranslated; original lyrics are subtitled into the target language; original lyrics are untranslated, but redubbed using the original lyrics in order to avoid a change in the voice of characters in the target version; and original lyrics are dubbed into the target language.
- García, R. (2017: 208-210): García simplifies the choices in song translation suggested by Franzon (2008) and states that lyrics should be dubbed, subtitled or left untranslated in the original version. The author shares Comes's opinion regarding the latter strategy stating that either it is used the original track of the song or it is redubbed keeping the original lyrics. In this way, the author believes that "[o]nly the voices will be dubbed in order to keep auditive continuity and uniformity. That way the receptor will not be surprised when listening to a voice he or she is not used to" (García, R. 2017: 208). The author states that the reasons not to translate the lyrics into the target language are based mainly on musico-centric factors, being the music

the most important element to take into account and, therefore, the lyrics are not seen as a part of the plot. However, García (2017: 208-209) acknowledges that other elements (such as economic factors or target language recipients) could be the cause of preferring one or another translation choice in audiovisual musical products, although the real reasons are still unknown.

With the only purpose of summarising and illustrating the main strategies which have been previously enunciated in the present article, Table 6 and Table 7 have been created.

<i>Translation strategies</i>		<i>Spoken dialogues</i>		<i>Songs</i>		
		Dubbed	Subtitled	Dubbed	Subtitled	Untranslated
Partial translation		x				x
Full translation	Mixed	x			x	
	Subtitled		x		x	
	Dubbed	x		x		

Table 5 Classification of strategies in translation of musical audiovisual products

<i>Songs</i>	<i>Translation strategies</i>
Original version	Left untranslated
Subtitled	Subtitling
Dubbed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intralinguistic dubbing: Character voice dubbed, but keeping the original lyrics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interlinguistic dubbing: Character voice dubbed, translating the lyrics into the target language

Table 6 Classification of strategies in song translation in audiovisual products

5. Conclusion

Although song translation studies seem to have been neglected specially during the XX century, in recent years more and more scholars have started to explore the importance of connections among text, music and image.

Authors like Peter Low and Johan Franzon started the journey towards a yet uncharted field, laying the foundations of song translation. Based on their ground-breaking work, other researchers have dared to step into a field in need of scholarly contributions. Therefore, the main goal of all the literature reviewed taken place in the present article is to collect and analyse the latest and more important contributions in song translation, mainly focusing on translation strategies used in musical audiovisual products, in order to keep reflecting about the work that has been done in the field and bringing into contention all the work that still must be done in the future.

It cannot be denied that translators are just the initial links of a so-called translation chain (Cruz, 2017) in which their work is indeed the first step, but not the last one. Rendering finished products needs a big coordination effort, where the translator is therefore only part involved in the final outcome. Translation briefs, final clients, economical factor, tight deadlines or even potential viewers can be the ones to blame when one wrong translation strategy is chosen over another that could be considered better. For that reason, a wider scope needs to be taken in order to really analyse translation strategies in musical audiovisual products. Future studies should aim to replicate results in larger databases using more varied samples, which could help to draw more concrete conclusions to their analysis. And last but not least, future research should be conducted taking into account more realistic settings and should go straight to the source: a deep research into how translators and companies really work is highly required in order to fully understand chosen translation strategies in musical audiovisual products.

Notes:

1 As far as Low is concerned (2017: 4-5): ‘Besides, although the term “song” is not used for extended vocal performances like musicals or operas, [...] [it] is applicable to those musical-verbal hybrids’.

2 Low knows that the different translation criteria can differ among the different sources and languages: ‘[M]any of [...] [these] ideas are relevant to other European languages; and [...] that every language and language pair will possess specific problems’ (Low 2003a: 88).

3 Authors such as Low (2013) or Apter and Herman (2016) deeply discuss about the differences between translation and adaptation.

4 Franzon bases his theory on Low’s theory, *the Fidelity Paradigm*, and his concept of *loyalty*, which in turn are based on the functionalist theory of Nord (Low 2013: 241; Nord 1997: 125).

5 Nord acknowledges two different types of translation processes and, therefore, two different kinds of translations: the documentary translation process (‘producing in the target language a kind of document of (certain aspects of) a communicative interaction in which a source-culture sender communicates with a source-culture audience via the source text under source-culture conditions’) and the instrumental translation process (‘producing in the target language an instrument for a new communicative interaction between the source-culture sender and a target-culture audience, using (certain aspects of) the source text as a model’) (Nord 1997: 47).

6 According to Desblache (2019 b: 288), songs ‘can have a diegetic (if a singer/singers perform in the film) or a non-diegetic role, which is independent from the impact of the song on the meaning of the film’.

7 Franzon refers here to the songs which Low denominates *first-person character songs* (Low 2017: 12).

8 In fact, translators are not often the agents in charge of taking the decision of what should be or not translated (Franzon 2015: 345; García, R. 2013: 89; Nord 1997: 21; Vermeer 2012: 192).

9 The fifteen American film musicals studied in Di Giovanni’s research are: ‘An American in Paris (1951), Singin’ in the Rain (1952), A Star is Born (1954), Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954), Guys and Dolls (1956), Some Like it Hot (1959), West Side Story (1961), My Fair Lady (1964), The Sound of Music (1965), Hello Dolly (1969), Cabaret (1972), Jesus Christ Superstar (1973), Nashville (1975), New York, New York (1977) and Grease (1978)’ (Di Giovanni 2008: 300).

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