

András Csémy

Translator



I had the opportunity to interview András Csémy, who works as an audiovisual translator. His main field of translation is subtitling and he mostly makes subtitles for series and serials. András is a DJ in his free time and also works for a foreign dating site as a translator. The reason I chose him is that András made subtitles for one of my favorite TV shows, *Getting On* (and I like his parties a lot).

András studied English at Eötvös Loránd University where he first met translation as a profession. One of his schoolmates worked at a translation agency and she could secure a position for András at the same company. About ten years ago, when his current workplace called for new translators, András applied for a job. With years of experience behind his back, he was accepted. After that, he made subtitles for different movies, documentaries and TV shows, including HBO hit series like *Girls*, *Vinyl* and my personal favorite, *Getting On*.

András told me that he loved his job, even though it is very underrated and underpaid in Hungary. The fees paid for this kind of translation have not changed in the past ten years and people know and (usually) remember the name of the translator in case of a Hungarian-dubbed movie, but the subtitle-maker remains in the background, his or her name is hidden somewhere in the end of the credits. András also told me that no matter if a series is widely known and loved, it will fade away just like the name of the translator. People in this profession usually work with very tight deadlines. This is the same in András' case, too. He usually gets only a few days to make the subtitles but sometimes a whole week is provided for him, but only very rarely. The situation of an audiovisual translator is now better than it was five years ago. As the internet spread, agencies had to modernize and keep the pace. He speaks about the old times with a slight feeling of nostalgia in his voice: when he had to go to the office to grab a bunch of VHS cassettes and he played them on his video-cassette player at home, hitting the pause button many times to make the correct subtitle, because it was impossible to connect the PC with the video player.

Nowadays, this is simpler. He works entirely from home, with digital copies.

András' working languages are English and Slovak, but he uses mostly English and had only a few opportunities to translate from Slovak. He told me that the company he works for makes subtitles for example for Arabic and Korean language movies, and they use the English transcript to translate them into Hungarian.

He also told me a quite surprising thing: the studio tells the translator which age group is targeted by the movie and the translator has to translate according to this. No matter if a movie is full of swearing and strong language and the Hungarian language offers a wide range of swearwords, he has to use moderate and appropriate language.

Although András said that he loved working from home and he would not be able to sit in an office from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day, sometimes it is hard: for example, to get in touch with people is a bit more complicated. He also mentioned that this could have a consequence: you do not experience different language variants and vocabulary (for example, as you would do in the office amongst colleagues). Every time you go out, you should carry a notebook with you to write down the worthy expressions and words – as Eszter Pataricza suggested in an interview.

Bóka Máté