

In The Name of God



SHEIKHBAHAE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION IN
CARTOON TRANSLATION: A CASE OF
CULTURE-SPECIFIC TERMS IN PERSIAN
DUBBED CARTOONS**

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
ARTS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis was composed by me, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified.

To My Dear Parents

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Abstract

Culture is one of the essential elements in a language and when translating not only the message, but also the culture of the source language should be transferred. The current research study has focused on the translation of culture-specific terms in three English speaking cartoons dubbed into Persian. The aim of the study is to investigate the strategies employed by Persian translators when transferring the CSTs to Persian specifically in dubbed versions of the films and also to identify whether the CSTs were foreignized or domesticated in dubbing. A descriptive analysis based on foreignization and domestication translation strategies proposed by Pederson (2005) was carried out to achieve the objectives of the study. To do so, the data were collected from three English cartoons namely *Home on the Range*, *Barnyard* and *Shark Tale* which were dubbed into Persian. The three mentioned cartoons were watched while considering the original typescripts. Then the CSTs were identified based on a model suggested by Newmark (1988), and they were compared with their Persian dubbings to account for the possible applied strategies in translation. The findings of the study reveal that the employed strategies of foreignization and domestication in order to transfer the English culture-specific terms into Persian are: *Retention*, *Addition*, *Borrowing* and *Calque* as the foreignization strategies and *Omission*, *Situational Equivalent*, *Cultural Equivalent*, *Generalization*, *Paraphrase with Sense Transfer*, *Equivalent* and *Creation* as the domestication strategies. The results of the study also demonstrate that the strategy with highest frequency is the strategy of *Equivalent* and the second most frequent strategies are *Generalization* and *Omission* belonging to domesticating strategies. It should be mentioned that the most frequent foreignizing strategy is *Borrowing*. In addition, the results indicate that in dubbing, the CSTs tended to be more domesticated.

List of Abbreviations

CST: Culture-Specific Term

AVT: Audiovisual Translation

SL: Source Language

TL: Target Language

TC: Target Language

TT: Target Text

List of Symbols

Persian Alphabet	English symbol	Example
ا	Aa	Aatash
ب	B	Barf
پ	P	Pofak
ت	T	Toop
س	S	Sabad
ج	J	Jaaroo
چ	Ch	Cheshm
ح	H	Hole
خ	X	Xaab
د	D	Dar
ذ	Z	Zolaal
ر	R	Rekaab
ز	Z	Zanboor
ژ	Zh	Zharf
س	S	Sar
ش	Sh	Shamim
ص	S	Sadaf
ض	Z	Zarar
ط	T	Tabl
ظ	Z	Zolm
ع	'	Ta'ien
غ	Gh	Gheibat
ف	F	Fekr
ق	Q	qasr
ک	K	ketaab
گ	G	garm
ل	L	laale
م	M	mive
ن	N	naan
و	V	vaqt
ه	H	hole
ی	Y	yaari

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

The present chapter starts with an introduction on audiovisual translation and dubbing. Next, it will briefly state the problem and the purpose of the research. The research questions, significance of the study, and definitions of the key terms will then follow.

1.2. Introduction

Language cannot be separated from culture. Newmark (1988, p. 95) states that he does not regard language as a component or feature of culture. In translating texts, people do not only transfer message but also culture from a source language to a target language. The problems happen when the culture of the source language is not the same as the target language. The translator has to find a way to transfer the culture, so that the readers of the target language can understand the cultural message.

Many texts containing cultural elements have been translated from one language into another such as newspaper and magazine articles, books, manuals, and documents. Recently, translation is not just limited to those written forms.

Another form of translation which develops rapidly is film translation. As one form of translation, film translation enables people with different languages to understand the film. Films become important as many people feel that films can entertain them in every kind of situation. People have the right to decide on the film genres they like to see. They may prefer drama, comedy, action, etc.

Film is able to convey message to the audience through three aspects namely picture, dialogue, and music. These aspects are united and they form the film. Picture

is the visualization of the story on the screen, dialogue is the conversation happening in the film, and music is the sound effects of film which gives effect to the story.

Surely, film involves culture and the culture has to be transferred to the target language.

In translating film, a translator may prefer dubbing. Dubbing means the viewer can hear the language spoken in the film but not in the form of source language, rather in the form of target language. In the process of dubbing, the translator should make the language as comprehensive as possible in order not to destroy the message being transferred. Also, since dubbing involves lip movement, so the translator should be aware of what he chooses to substitute.

In Iran, dubbing started in 1946 with the advent of movies and cinemas in the country. Since then, foreign movies have always been dubbed for the cinema and TV. Using different voice actors and adding local clues and witticisms to the original contents, dubbing played a major role in attracting people to the cinemas and making them interested in other cultures. The dubbing art in Iran reached its climax during the 1960s and 1970s with the inflow of American, European and Hindi movies. The most famous musicals of the time, such as *My fair lady* and *The Sound of Music* were translated, adjusted and performed in Persian by the voice talents.

Animation as a form of audio visual program, also, has a special place in Iran, not only among the children but also among the adults; so it has a wide majority of viewers that can easily criticize it. This is the translator's task to attract the viewer's attention with skillfully translated and dubbed dialogues.

Translating film containing cultural terms becomes challenge as the translator has to find the appropriate strategies to translate it. The challenge is even bigger since the translation will be in the form of dubbing, which has to be matched with lip movements of the characters. Nida (1964, p. 130) states that “differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure”. The translator must be aware of cultural terms occurring in the film. They will become problems when the translator fails to find the right translation.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

In the age of communication and technology, people can get entertainment much more easily and frequently than in the past. One of the means of entertainment found in almost every house is television. This means of entertainment has different kinds of viewers including children and different kinds of visual programs, cartoons for example. Children like watching programs produced in another language such as English, nevertheless not all of them are able to understand the language uttered by the speakers. Thus for those viewers whose mother tongue is not the same as the language being spoken in the film, watching the program could be boring; therefore dubbing and subtitling have been introduced. In fact, these two forms of language transfer work as a mediator between the language of a film and the target language of the audience. The focus of this study is dubbing defined as “replacing the original voice soundtrack with another in another language” (O’Connell, 2000, p.169). The researcher, as an English translator involved in the issues of dubbing, has watched many foreign cartoons being dubbed into Persian and has noticed that it is worth investigating the cultural transfer from the source language into the target language. She is going to devote her attention to the translation of culture-specific terms in cartoons.

When dealing with audiovisual translation, one of the most important issues is culture. It's not possible to overgeneralize the universality of culture being common to all men. This is not the case; all men are divided into groups each of which has its own culture and its own way of perceiving and translating. As it was mentioned, the focus of this study is translation of culture-specific terms in cartoons. It is believed that translating cultural elements can be a demanding task due to the fact that such demands have specific meanings in the culture and language in which they arise but not necessarily in others. Culture-specific terms refer to those which have no equivalents or may have different positions in target reader's cultural system, causing difficulties in translation. Newmark (1988, p. 78) maintains that translation problems caused by culture-specific words happens due to the fact that they are inherently and uniquely bound to the culture concerned, and therefore, are related to the "context of a cultural tradition".

Taking these facts into account, the researcher aims to investigate first the concepts of domestication and foreignization in translation of culture-specific terms in English cartoons dubbed into Persian, and then she draws her attention to different strategies of domestication and foreignization employed by Persian translators to render English culture-specific terms into their Persian equivalent.

Which strategy is more appropriate as far as cartoon dubbing is concerned? Which strategy can make the translated text have a better effect among its target audience, foreignization or domestication? So far no single theory can give a definite answer to the question, nor can any theorist completely negate either of them.

1.3.1. Domestication vs. Foreignization

The debate on whether to use Domestication or Foreignization has attracted the attention of translation theorists for a long time. Venuti (1995) discussed those two terms in his book “*The Translator Invisibility*”. He carried out research on translation in the Anglo-American culture and figured out that most publishers advocate *Domestication* as it makes the translation reader-friendly. The tendency is to choose texts from other cultures that appeal to the Anglo-American values. For Venuti, this mode of translation is making the translator “invisible” on the one hand and implies “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values” (ibid. p, 20) on the other.

1.4. Aims of the Study

This research aimed to investigate the issues of domestication and foreignization in translation of culture-specific terms in English cartoons dubbed into Persian. The researcher concentrated on domestication and foreignization strategies applied in translation of English culture-specific terms to render their Persian equivalents based on the strategies suggested by Pedersen (2005).

1.5. Significance of the Study

Cartoon translation, be it dubbing or subtitling, is now one of the areas in translation activities that requires the translator be specialized enough in rendering the source language materials in order to transfer into the target language. Indeed, the growing need for communication has intensified the need for translation. The amount of English speaking cartoon translation keeps increasing. As stated by Gottlieb (2001,