

An Investigation into the Dubbing of Verbal Cultural Signs in Animations from English to Persian Based on Klaudy's Classification of Explicitation and Analysing Them Based on Hatim and Mason in the Semiotic Dimension of Context

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the extent that Persian dubbing used from four famous animations "Ice Age 3, Cars1&2, Shrek1" could transfer the potential concept of verbal cultural signs based on Klaudy's (2008) classification of explicitation (Obligatory explicitations, Optional explicitations, Pragmatic explicitations, Translation-inherent explicitation) for the first part of study and also the suggestions of Hatim and Mason (1990) for translation of the cultural signs were used. for the main part of analysis of the dubbing. They suggest four stages for translation of a semiotic entity comprising; identification of a source-system semiotic entity, informational core, explication in detail and finally the transformation of data. Therefore the existing verbal cultural signs were extracted and analyzed on a mixed-method on the basis of Klaudy's, Hatim and Mason's suggestions. The results showed that in translation of verbal cultural signs of four animations, translation-inherent strategy happened with the highest rank among the other Klaudy's strategies and this strategy with the most frequency could transfer the potential meaning and has a direct relation with four suggested stages of Hatim and Mason, also some of the potential concepts were translated by using mix strategy. further analysis showed that in some cases the translator could not convey the potential meaning of verbal cultural signs from the original dialogues of the film to Persian dubbing and sometimes s/he had over translation in dubbing to make the animations more attractive. The results showed that absorbing the market of cinema is the most important factor that translator of animations considered also the absence of a real equivalent in target language, different norms and conventions between two languages as well as insufficient knowledge from the potential meaning of the cultural signs of the source are the main reasons of some problems in the dubbing while the dubbing of animations are very acceptable in the market.

Key words: Audiovisual translation (AVT), Cultural sign, Potential concept, pragmatic, dubbing

1. Introduction

One of the most important ways of communication is language and to be successful, understanding the message is the key factor. Translation that is a kind of interlingual communication is defined by Newmark as “an attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another” (1988a: 7), and he adds that, “rendering, as closely as the associative and syntactical capacities of another language allows, the exact contextual meaning of the original” (1988a: 11). As the formalist theorist Gideon Toury has tried to define translation as a communicative act while acknowledging the domestic values that come into play, the target norms that constrain communication, he wrote “Translation is communication in translated messages within a certain cultural linguistic system, with all relevant consequences for the decomposition of the source message, the establishment of the invariant, its transfer across the cultural-linguistic border and the recomposition of the target message” (Toury 1980:17 as cited in Venuti 2000, pp.469-470). So translation as a form of communication is concerned with transferring the message as closely as possible. Therefore understanding the message is bound to understanding the culture as well as other nuances of the language.

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is a branch of translation studies concerned with the transfer of multimodal and multimedial texts into another language and/or culture and animation is one of the film genres, based on Wikipedia the other genres are based on story content (the war film), others are borrowed from literature (comedy, melodrama) or from other media (the musical), Some are performer-based (the Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers films) or budget-based (blockbusters), while others are based on artistic status (the art film), racial identity (Race films), location (the Western), or sexual orientation (Queer Cinema). The two most widespread modalities adopted for translating products for the screen are dubbing and subtitling. Dubbing is “a process which uses the acoustic channel for translational purposes, while subtitling is visual and involves a written translation that is superimposed on to the screen” (Chiaro, 2009, p.141). Due to the survey is concerned with the dubbing and cross cultural sign, the researcher focuses on dubbing in animations and the translation of intercultural communication and conveying the verbal signs.

With respect to the meaning of verbal or non-verbal communication, in this investigation the researcher will explore the translation of English dubbing strategies employed when a verbal culture-specific item is used in the dialogue of animations based on Klaudy's (2008) classification of explicitation and analyzing them in four suggested stages for translation of a semiotic entity by Hatim and Mason (1990). So the most important aim in this study is to analysis the applying Hatim and Mason's stages in dubbing of animations and the modality of transferring cross-cultural concepts.

2. Translation problems and Audiovisual Translation

Computer, video, radio and television and other kinds of audiovisual materials are considered as important as books as far as the education and entertainment of people. The previous studies have indicated that individuals are amused by audiovisual more than reading illustrated works

such as picture or comics books so the translator of AVT or dubbers should be conscious of being vital AVT translations for conveying the culture, concepts and semiotic entities, as Ramière (2006) says language and culture are deeply intertwined, and translators obviously do not translate individual words deprived of context. Since cultures are contacted with one another, translation for the cinema in particular and the audiovisual world in general, raise considerable cross-cultural issues (ibid.).

Jan-Emil Tveit (cited in Jorge Diaz Cintas and Gunilla Anderman, 2009 p.85) believes early in the twentieth century the new film medium transcended all national and cultural borders, but with the arrival of the talkies, the film industry faced a translation problem since only a small percentage of the world's population understood English. As a result, there was a growing need to find appropriate screen translation approaches. He says one important consideration is the loss of authenticity. An essential part of a character's personality is their voice, which is closely linked to facial expressions, gestures and body language. Authenticity is undeniably sacrificed when a character is deprived of their voice and instead the audience hears the voice of somebody else.

The concept of equivalence of effect in AVT is very important. It means that translation in AVT modes (subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, etc.) should be designed in a way to ensure the same impact on the target-language audiences as on the source-language audiences.

As it is generally believed, the more different the structure of SL and TL, the more difficult the translation of SL into TL will be. Difficulties may also arise in translation when the SL genre has no equivalent in the TL. In this way, it shows difficult structural characteristics since the TL genres are constructed with different norms and conventions. Because of the differences between the two languages (English and Persian) such as structural and cultural differences, these difficulties may occur in the translation between these two languages. Not having enough knowledge of each of these languages or both will make much more difficulties for the translators in the process of translating in the different areas such as dubbing.

As O'Connell remarks (2003, p. 223) technically speaking, typical problems of lip-sync and kinetic synchrony commonly associated with dubbing human actors are greatly reduced by the simplified physical representation of animation characters. From a commercial point of view, the fact that high quality animation can be revoiced for rebroadcast to a new audience of children at a fraction of the total original production costs also makes dubbing an attractive option, but Sometimes it is being seen that the dubbing is different with English language structure however the words are being rendered correctly literal also it is applied overtranslation in most of the cases. So with respect the works of Hatim and Mason, for translation of a semiotic entity the researcher tries to identify the problematic area in translating dubbing of animations after categorizing them based on four strategies of explicitation by Klaudy (2008).

3. Theoretical Framework

The most important note to consider in the study of cross-cultural concepts and analyzing translation is to find a reasonable frame to show the quality of translation. The researcher runs into a serious problem in the study of the cultural aspects of translation and based on Aixelá (1996, pp.56-57) applying a suitable tool for analysis, a notion of 'culture-specific item' (CSI) that will enable researcher to define the strictly cultural component is essential. The theoretical framework of the study is eclectic. First, the researcher surveys the strategies which are used by dubber based on Klaudy's (2008) classification of explicitation. This classification introduces four strategies which are as follow briefly and will be explained in chapter 2 in detail:

- 1) Obligatory explicitations (S1) are caused by grammatical differences between source and target languages. They occur when the translator is forced by these differences to spell things out explicitly that are only implicit in the source text.
- 2) Optional explicitations (S2) are the result of "differences in text-building strategies [...] and stylistic preferences between languages. Such explicitations are optional in the sense that grammatically correct sentences can be constructed without their application in the target language, although the text as a whole will be clumsy..." (Klaudy, 2008, p.106).
- 3) Pragmatic explicitations (S3) are due to differences in cultural and/or world knowledge that members of source and target language communities share. They typically occur when a translator needs to add linguistic material to explain a concept specific to the source culture.
- 4) Translation-inherent explicitation (S4) "can be attributed to the nature of the translation process itself" (Klaudy, 2008, p. 107).

Because of eclectic theoretical framework, for the second part of study the researcher, with respect to the works of Hatim and Mason in the semiotic dimension of context, adopts the analysis of Persian dubbing of the animations base on their suggestion. Hatim and Mason (1990, pp. 105-106) suggested four stages for translation of a semiotic entity:

The first is *Identification* of a source-system semiotic entity. The second one is *informational core* (a suitable TL denotation equivalent). The Stage three is related to *explication* in detail. And final stage is the *transformation* of data. Then, they mentioned that the process of translating of semiotic must be adjusted to incorporate the implications of the scope of semiotics for the practical task of the translator. Semiotics deals with syntactic, semantic and /or pragmatic properties of the sign. As a result, the semiotic description of a given sign must include one or more than one of the types of relation, i.e. syntactic, semantic and pragmatic (ibid.). After identification of the cultural sign and relay information content, the translator has to give an indication of connotative value to the sign so that the real potential concept of the sign is to be transferred. Due to the constraints of dubbing and lip synchronization and being sensitive of translation, this is a strict function for translator. Therefore the researcher wants to survey to what extent the translator (dubber) has been successful to transfer the potential concept of the verbal cultural signs and convey the real Persian language structure in the dubbing. The summary of the four stages are showed in the following table:

Table 1. Hatim and Mason four stages for translation of a semiotic entity

Types of stages	Character of stages
1) Identification	identify a source-system semiotic entity
2) informational core	Find out the potential concept and a suitable TL denotation equivalent
3) explication	Explain the real and potential concept in detail
4) transformation	Convey the semiotic entity by the best equivalent

4. Significance of the study

According to Ian Mason (1989) early views of the process of communication involved the notions of encoding and decoding a message, which was seen to consist bits of information so the translator was treated as a decoder and re-encoder of messages. Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place to another. There are various categories of communication and more than one may occur at any time. The different categories of communication are:

- Spoken or Verbal Communication: face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media.
- Non-Verbal Communication: body language, gestures, how we dress or act - even our scent.
- Written Communication: letters, e-mails, books, magazines, the Internet or via other media.
- Visualizations: graphs, charts, maps, logos and other visualizations can communicate messages.

Since AVT products refers to verbal communication and animations which are important part of it and have the special significance in children and adult's communication, it is essential to consider their translating as a vital task. The message might get lost in translation of the sign. Sometimes, an idea or concept does not exist in another language. Therefore the role of translation is "fundamental in the very constitution of the sign, both verbal and nonverbal, in the very determination of its meaning" (Petrilli, 1992, p. 234). During 2000 to 2014, many film makers have released different kinds of animations with diverse topics which have composed different sorts of verbal and non-verbal signs. Applying some kinds of reasonable strategies to convey the best equivalent in dubbing of animations is so important for creating communication and growing their mind map of the world. So the researcher tries to identify the best strategies used in the animations' dubbing based on Klaudy's (2008) classification of explication and analyze their cross-cultural concepts according to Hatim and Mason's (1990) suggestions.

5. Methodology

5.1. Data collection procedures

The following procedures were used to answer the research questions. First, animations with Persian dubbing and English subtitles were watched, simultaneously the verbal cultural signs in dialogs and their subtitles were extracted. Second, the source text was analyzed based on the categories of cultural proposed by Newmark (1988). Next, the extracted English dubbings were confirmed by the supervisor(s), and then the researcher categorized them based on Klaudy's (2008) classification of explicitation strategies. For each strategy, the researcher used two columns to show the original words or expressions with their translated ones in chapter 4. Finally the researcher analyzed the used dubbings to find out to what extent the potential concept of verbal cultural signs has been transferred by the dubbing.

5.1.1. Source text analysis

To analyze the source text, the criteria of selecting the signs were applied based on Newmark (1988, p. 103) categories of culture which are summarized in the following:

(1) *Ecology*

Animals, plants, local winds, mountains, plains, ice, etc.

(2) *Material culture* (artefacts)

Food, clothes, housing, transport and communications

(3) *Social culture* - work and leisure

(4) *Organisations, customs, ideas* -Political, social, legal, religious, artistic

(5) *Gestures and habits*

After recognizing the signs, were prepared a table includes original dialogue and dubbing to distinguish the real potential concept. For this purpose the researcher prepared some definitions of these items according to Newmark (1988, pp. 95-102) and then cultural signs collected in each category and the extracted cultural signs were classified based on them. Some of the cultural signs have brought in the following for instance:

1) Ecology: Geographical features can be normally distinguished from other cultural terms in that they are usually value-free, politically and commercially. Nevertheless, their diffusion depends on the importance of their country of origin as well as their degree of specificity.

There weren't any signs based on ecology category in animations.

2) Material culture

(a) Food: (b) Clothes: (c) Houses and towns: (d) Transport:

❖ Have you ever met a person, you say, let's get some parfait

3) Social culture - work and leisure:

- ❖ You can't do a three-point turn without bumping into some celebrity
- 4) Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts
 - ❖ May be there is a good reason on keys shouldn't talk
- (5) Gestures and habits
 - ❖ Uh, Shrek!

5.2. Methods of data analysis

To analyze the data, the researcher used the classification of interlingual translation strategies proposed by Klaudy's (2008) classification of explicitation as the theoretical framework. Klaudy's translation strategies are as follows:

- 1) Obligatory explicitations (S1) are caused by grammatical differences between source and target languages. They occur when the translator is forced by these differences to spell things out explicitly that are only implicit in the source text.
- 2) Optional explicitations (S2) are the result of "differences in text-building strategies [...] and stylistic preferences between languages. Such explicitations are optional in the sense that grammatically correct sentences can be constructed without their application in the target language, although the text as a whole will be clumsy..." (Klaudy, 2008, p.106).
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In order to analyze the dubbing translations, the unit of translation as the basis for analysis should be clarified. The basic unit of a film is a frame; consequently, the unit of analysis in this study was considered to be a frame. A frame is defined as a word or a stretch of words in the form of dialog. After determining the strategies used for dubbing, the researcher analyzed the potential concept of verbal cultural signs in the original dialogs and compared them with the potential concept of their dubbing. For this purpose, the researcher used the suggestion of Hatim and Mason (1990) for semiotic translation. They suggested a number of important procedures for semiotic translation as unit of translation (*ibid.*, pp. 105-106):

- Stage 1, Identification:
The translator identifies a source-system semiotic entity. This will be a constituent element of a certain cultural (sub) system.
- Stage 2, Information:
The translator identifies an informational core.
- Stage 3, Explication:

If the informational equivalent is not self-sufficient, the translator will seek to explicate by means of synonym, expansion, paraphrase, etc.

➤ Stage 4, Transformation:

Having retrieved the information core and carried out the necessary modification, the translator then considers what is missing in terms of intentionality and status as a sign.

After analysing the potential concepts of signs between two languages (English and Persian), As Hatim and Mason (1990, p. 117) stated “the description of a sign would be impoverished if it restricted attention to either the syntactic, semantic or pragmatics of the sign”. They believed that overlap is inevitable for analysis of the sign. Then, the frequency and the percentage of the different strategies used in dubbing are measured and shown in tables as well as bar charts. Finally, the tables are analyzed to find out the extent of transferring of potential concept of the signs and their results are discussed.

6. The result of analyzing

After analyzing the data, the below table was presented to specify the frequency and percentage of the four dubbing strategies based on Klaudy's. After identification of each strategy used, the data showed that the translator used all of the four strategies introduced by Klaudy. Moreover, each strategy used in the mixed strategies accounted as an independent strategy in frequency and percentage. A table and a bar chart were prepared to show the frequencies and percentages of strategies used for dubbing of animations (see Table 4.7 and Figure 1).

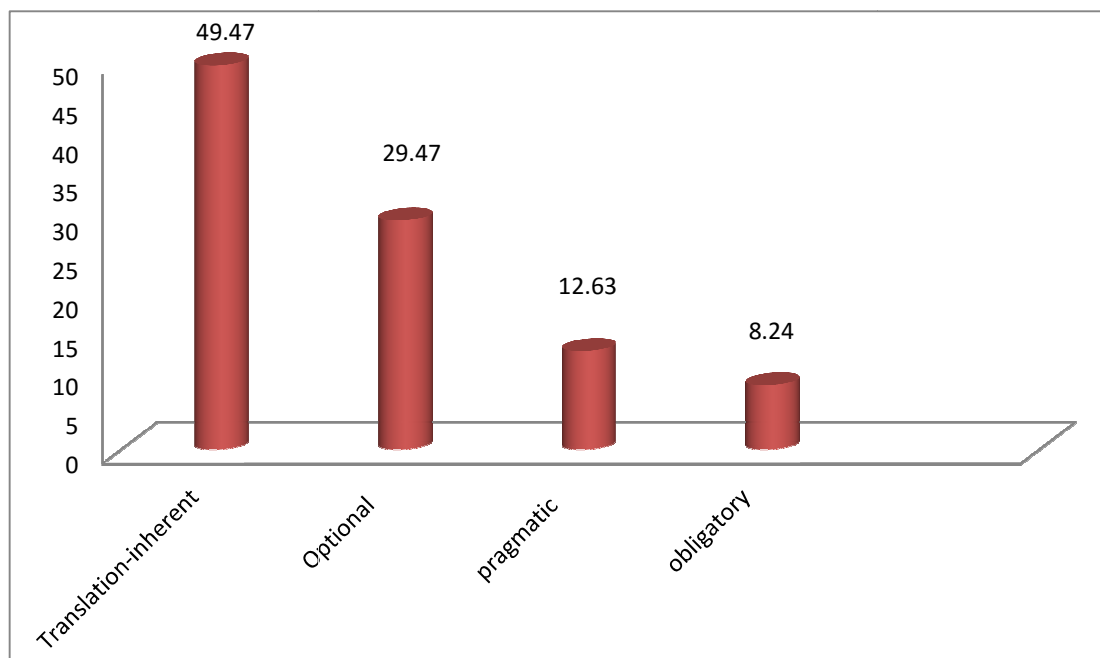
Type of strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Obligatory Explications	8	8.42
Optional Explications	28	29.47
Pragmatic Explications	12	12.63
Translation-inherent Explications	47	49.47
Total	95	100

Table 4.7: Frequency and percentage of strategies used for dubbing of cultural signs in animations

Analysis of the data gathered in the present study revealed that the dubber(s) of the films under the study has (have) used three strategies (pragmatic, obligatory and optional) to

transfer the verbal cultural signs in the original films. In the next section (4.4), each of the samples and their dubbing would be

Figure 1. Dubbing strategies' percentages



7. Some samples

شهر فرنگ is a cultural concept that refers to one kind of amusements in Qajar era that included a rectangle box, and was carried on four wheels. It had three holes that the viewers can watch fantastic pictures from different places of the world. It got very popular between people and whenever they wanted to talk about a fabulous and worth seeing thing, they said the example of Shahr Farang and it got a cultural concept and has an irony about a surprising thing. In Ice age3 animation, Mammut talks about the amusement park that he has built for his child and it is very worth seeing so the translator used a beautiful irony in Iranian cultural concept to transfer the expression. According to the four stages of Hatim and Mason translator could transfer the source expression by a sign in target culture.

let's get some parfait was translated to قطاب بخوری اصلا انگشتات هم باهائش میخوری. Short for French (parfait glace) parfait is an iced dessert made with egg yolks, sugar, cream or top milk, and flavoring (usually fruit), sometimes with the addition of a liqueur and for American parfait a layered dessert often consisting of fruit, ice cream, pastries, whipped topping, etc. and served in a glass, often a parfait glass and قطاب is a special pastry made with egg yolks, sugar, flavor, water and oil. It is a traditional Iranian pastry so translator used a reasonable equivalence to convey the cultural word that is an understandable concept in target dialogue. But about the rest of the sentence, it was tried to use an irony by applying translation-inherent strategy (اصلا انگشتات هم (باهائش میخوری) in target dialogue which means it is very delicious.

In the case of *but I know that half is safe!* it can be seen optional strategy and according to animation it means *I know that it is not right but I did it* and it was substituted with an irony in Persian *آره بابا اونم از خریتم بود* which means it is because of my ingenuousness hence it could not be acceptable translation, however it was used to say more humor but as it was said in Hatim and Masson (1997, p.66) one area of meaning was appeared consistently to be sacrificed in dubbing was that of interpersonal pragmatics.

8. Conclusion

In this study, the researcher investigated that how the dubbing strategies used for the translation of verbal cultural signs could deal with the problems of intercultural transfer in four animations. The findings indicated that two strategies, translation-inherent and obligatory, proposed by Klaudy were mainly used to English-Persian dubbing of verbal cultural signs of the animations with some degree of variation in the distribution of strategies, obligatory strategy used less in translation. Having mentioned that sometimes more than one strategy was used to translate a dialogue and translation-inherent was the most frequently used strategy (49.47%) in the film also the results indicated that there is a direct relation between translation-inherent explicitation and four suggested stages of Hatim and Mason which researcher tried to show it in the following figure:

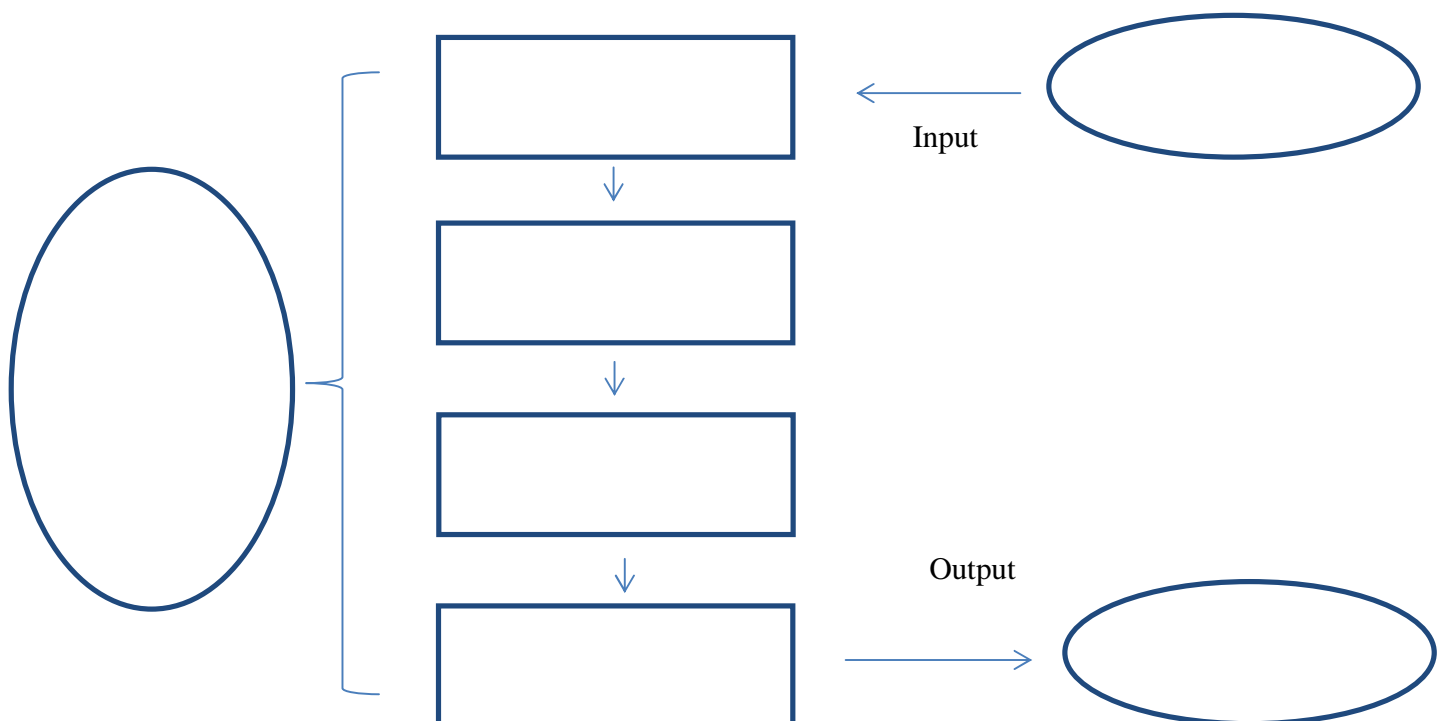


Figure 2: The relation between translation-inherent explicitation and Hatim and Mason's stages

The more analysis showed that in some cases the translator could not convey the potential meaning of verbal cultural signs from the original dialogues of the film to Persian dubbing and sometimes s/he had over translation in dubbing to make the animations more attractive. Also the translator used irony and idiom in his/her translation a lot. The researcher concludes that absorbing the market of cinema, the absence of a real equivalent in TL, different norms and conventions between two languages as well as insufficient knowledge from the potential meaning of the cultural signs of the source are the main reasons of some problems in the dubbing while the dubbing of animations are very acceptable in the market and viewer enjoy watching them.

As translation scholars say, translating only the linguistic component without taking into account the value of the other semiotic dimensions of film would certainly be a recipe for disaster. Culture plays a main role here. Regarding this subject, Diaz Cintas (2009, P. 9) stated:

Culture, cultural identity and pragmatic functioning in their more or less explicitly localized forms ooze from all the film or programme's semiotic systems and pragmatic. The translation of humor, dialect, compliments, swearing or taboo language must be considered within this context and they are only a few examples of the areas discussed in the present volume posing formidable challenges. Not only for their very localized meaning, both in time and space, but also for being always embedded in the source audiovisual text with a pragmatic and semiotic significance that goes well beyond the purely linguistic dimension.

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