

## Investigating the Iranian Translator's Strategies for Subtitling the Cultural-bound References in "Harry Potter" Movies

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### Abstract

Subtitling, like all other types of audiovisual translation, has always been influenced by cultural factors, and in turn, subtitles have influenced their target readers. The relation between culture and language in interlingual subtitling might cause some problems in translating Culture References (CRs). The aim of the present study was to classify the samples of CRs in the "Harry Potter" movie series based on Klingberg's (1986) model. It was also intended to investigate the strategies applied by Iranian translators in subtitling the (CRs) in "Harry Potter" movies from English into Persian based on Diaz Cintas's (2007) proposed strategies. To do so, instances of CRs were drawn from the two series of Harry Potter entitled *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) and *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* (2005). The data analysis was carried out by descriptive statistics to indicate the frequency and percentages. The findings revealed that "Personal Names" and "Magical Objects", were the most frequently used CRs in the two selected series of Harry Potter movies based on Klingberg's (1986) model. Additionally, the results showed that "Loan" and "Calque" were the most frequently used strategies in subtitling the CRs. The findings of the present study may be useful for English translation students, subtitlers, and fansubbers who do subtitle English movies in the Iranian context.

**Keywords:** Audiovisual Translation; Children Literature; Culture References; Subtitling; Translation Strategies

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, more information is transferred and presented in different types of audiovisual formats such as movies in DVD formats, and the interface between technologies, language, and culture is increasing rapidly as well (Khodaie & Sadeghpour, 2015). Audiovisual material is, by nature, a vehicle to transfer thoughts and ideas, and it is a means to reflect the producer's language, culture, and aims (O'Connell, 2009). Many consider audiovisual translation (AVT)

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as one of the most challenging forms of translation encountered these days, and its problems cannot be reduced to questions of grammar, lexis, or semantic structure (Afsari, Abootorabi, & Moeinzadeh, 2018). AVT started to gain ground within the field of translation studies in the 1990s. In recent years, as well, “translation studies have come into close contact with cultural studies, progressively abandoning the idea that translation is merely a linguistic operation and seeing it instead as a form of intercultural communication” (Gambier, 2003, p. 216). Without a doubt, “translating culturally-centered movies for a specific cultural and linguistic community imply interpreting otherness through the images and words used by the narrating culture” (p. 216). Therefore, the encounter with the other which is portrayed in movies is subordinate to the relation between the source and the target language and culture (Spanakaki, 2007).

Subtitling, as an audiovisual mode, has recently been considered as a key approach to facilitate communicate with the audience (Davies, 2003). Subtitling, in contrast to traditional varieties of translation, is a technique to shift from verbal language into written text and is enormously dependent on subtitling devices to appropriately transfer the message (Gottlieb, 2005). In this recognition, subtitles allude to writings that show up at the display either in the identical dialect of the audio-visual work (i.e., intralingual subtitling) or in every other goal language (i.e., interlingual subtitling) (Ying Zhang & Junyan Liu, 2009). Gottlieb (2001, p. 42) defined subtitling as “the rendering in a different language of verbal messages in mass media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text presented on the screen in sync with the original written message.” Subtitles are written translations of dialogue in film in a foreign language or the same language displayed at the bottom of the screen (Montagud et al., 2021).

Various strategies are applied by subtitlers to render the plot and content of film for audiences of the target language, thereby making connections among culture and generation inside the context of translation (Zhang & Liu, 2009). Subtitling, like all other types of audiovisual translation, has always been influenced by cultural factors, and in turn, subtitles have influenced their target readers. The relation between culture and language in interlingual subtitling might cause some problems in translating culture-bound references (Klingberg, 1986).

Furthermore, in the last ten to fifteen years, as O’Connell (2009, p. 223) claims, the number of publications addressing aspects of AVT for children has been increasing. However, very few studies have been made on the combination of these two subjects, i.e., AVT for children. When the receptor of translation is as vulnerable as children, the translator must be very careful to find a balance between the concept of translation, being a bridge between cultures, different viewpoints, a space to introduce new ideas within the norms, limitation of space, time, and semiotic systems of the target culture (Davies, 2003).

To deal with CRs successfully, Baker and Jones (1998, p. 245) asserted that “a translator has to be not only ‘bilingual’ but also ‘bi-cultural.’” As a result, when dealing with CRs, the translator may opt for a cultural transfer of the reference by using the equivalent target language reference which corresponds to the source language and cultural reference to be translated. In the same vein, CRs are especially challenging in subtitling because they require searching for meaningful equivalents that deliver the spirit of the source text and have as close an effect as possible on the target audience (Camilli, 2019). Cultural items devote significant importance in the area of translation of texts. Talking about the translation of CRs is also controversial,

since a single identical word or phrase may be translated in different ways by different translators. However, what is important is the best solution of a translator when facing CRs in a text for finding their appropriate meaning and a suitable equivalent for these items in the target text (TT) (Davies, 2003). Consequently, translators need to be familiar with different methods and strategies in dealing with Culture-bound items different nations and various languages comprise the world; these languages live in the context of different cultures manifesting different aspects of life (Vishnyakova et al., 2019).

Many categorizations have been proposed for CRs within the audiovisual translation area. Among those categorizations of CRs in the translation of children's literature, was the only one proposed by Klingberg (1986). Klingberg's (1986) model is being used in this study because the main subcategories of the model can classify the CRs in fantasy, adventure, and narrative movies. Klingberg (1986) argues that children's literature translation is a specific kind of translation, which must consider the cognitive and linguistic abilities of its recipient – the child. Klingberg (1986) introduced ten types of CRs and proposed strategies for dealing with each category. In short, translating culture-bound references constitutes a big challenge for translators, and therefore, appropriate strategies need to be adopted. In this regard, Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) proposed different strategies to translate CRs. These strategies include verbatim transfer, culturally neutral expectation, paraphrasing, target language adaptation. In a similar vein, Tomaszkiwicz (2001) proposed omission, transfer direct, adaption, substitution as translation strategies. Similarly, Pederson (2017) recommends official equivalent, retention, specification, explicitation, addition, direct translation, generalization, substitution, and omission as translation strategies. Another taxonomy of subtitling strategies that are the focus of the present study are those proposed by Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007). He proposed strategies that are more commonly used in subtitling CRs than other types of translation. Diaz Cintas and Remael's (2007) proposed strategies are 'loan, calque, explicitation, substitution, transposition, lexical recreation, compensation, and omission.'

Consequently, this study aimed to identify the subtitling strategies of CRs in fantasy movies to look at how CRs were rendered into Persian. Harry Potter movie series was chosen as the corpus of the present study because of its huge popularity around the world and the nature of its language and themes which pose a significant challenge for subtitlers, especially when working between two incongruent languages and cultures like Persian and English. Thus, this study was to examine the treatment given to culture-bound references in the encounter of these two distinct languages and cultures via subtitling. The present study was conducted to identify the CRs in the "Harry Potter" movie series according to Klingberg's (1986) model. Besides, this study aimed to investigate the strategies applied by Iranian translators in subtitling the culture-bound references (CRs) in "Harry Potter" movies from English into Persian based on Diaz Cintas and Remael's (2007) proposed strategies. Based on the aim of this study the following research questions can be posed:

RQ1: What cultural references are used most frequently in the Harry Potter movie series based on Klingberg's (1986) categories?

RQ2: What strategies are used by Iranian translators to translate cultural references in the subtitle of the "Harry Potter" movie series based on Diaz Cintas and Remael's (2007) model from English into Persian?

## **2. Review of Literature**

### *2.1. The Nature of Audiovisual Translation*

Audiovisual translation is increasingly becoming an area of academic research in the field of translation studies (TS). The unclear terminology used for AVT has caused problems when discussing audiovisual translation issues. Concerning the translation of audiovisual material, many scholars have proposed some terms such as "multimedia translation", "limited translation", and "film translation". However, each of these conditions is subject to certain limitations. Diaz Cintas (2003) asserted that "the term "film translation" was the first term to be used in the field of AVT" (p. 34). In the same way, the term "screen translation" denotes material which is distributed via the screen, i.e., television, film, and computer screen, and excludes other translations intended for theater and radio (Díaz-Cintas, 2003; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). To date, most of the research conducted at AVT has focused on the field of screen translation, which, being both audiovisual and multimedia, is understood as translating films and other products for film, television, video, and DVD.

### *2.2. Different Types of Audiovisual Translation*

The purpose of this section is to describe the types of audiovisual translations available today, dubbing and subtitles. It cannot be denied that dubbing and subtitles are still the main types, but in some areas, other types of AVT are emerging now. AVT is part of show business and therefore financial interests are a factor in the widespread use of AVT. In general, subtitling and dubbing are tied to economic conditions. Countries with economic potential for technological development, like France, can afford dubbing, poorer countries. Eastern European countries are content with subtitles or voice-overs. However, there are other reasons for choosing different types of AVT: a) local habits and traditions make it unlikely that an audience accustomed to a particular practice will accept a change; b) cultural reasons may recommend the original soundtrack in some societies; c) Political guidelines or censorship policies could be decisive; d) Historical reasons can also be decisive.

This does not mean that one man is better than another, but it partly explains the distribution of AVT modes in countries. New technologies are changing AVT standards in different countries. The United States, for example, has traditionally been reluctant to accept foreign audiovisual products; However, with subtitles, new audiovisual markets are opened, since the audience is used to emails and chat formats like this type of AVT (Diaz-Cintas, 2003). Also, despite the vast amount of research in the AVT area, there seems to be no consensus on the number of AVT modes. Less than a decade ago, scientists could only name five AVT modes (Chaves, 2000) or ten types of transfer in the AVT area, as in the taxonomies of Gambier (1996) and Diaz-Cintas (1999), while today some can list up to 13 modes (as cited in Anderman & Rogers, 2003).

*2.2.1. Intra-lingual AVT.* In this type of translation, the source language is the same as the target language. The intralingual AVT is intended to meet the needs of the hearing impaired and includes the playback of the dialogues in written subtitles. There are four main types of intralingual AVT: "Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, audio description for

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the blind, live subtitling, and subtitling for opera and theater" (Denton & Ciampi, 2012, p. 401). Since this type is not directly related to the study, the focus is on the next type that is most relevant to this study.

2.2.2. *Interlingual AVT*. The goal of interlinguistic translation is to make audiovisual productions accessible and understandable to an audience that does not understand the original language, thus improving export opportunities. Scholars like Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) have suggested various forms of interlinguistic AVT. Luyken et al. (1991) distinguish two forms: first, subtitling, which is divided into two subcategories, a) traditional subtitling and b) simultaneous subtitling; second, revocation, which is divided into three types, a) timing, b) voice-over/narration, and c) free commentary. Gambier (1994) uses a broader classification: a) subtitling, b) simultaneous subtitling, c) dubbing, d) interpretation (recorded and consecutive), e) voice-over, f) narration, g) commentary, h) multilingual transmission, i) subtitles and subtitles and j) simultaneous translation. More recently, Karamitroglou (2000) has used Gambier (1994) and Luyken et al. (1991, p. 40) and categorized the audiovisual voice transmission methods in subtitling, dubbing, narration (including voice-over), and free commentary. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) propose the following types of AVT, subtitling, and revocation, which include dubbing, voice-over, partial dubbing, narration, interpretation, and live performance (opera, conference, etc.). It should be noted that subtitling and dubbing are the most popular forms of AVT.

### 2.3. *Subtitling*

Subtitling includes the showing of written language, usually at the end of the page, an account of the actors' dialog and other linguistic material that is part of the visual picture (letters, graffiti, and captions) or the soundtrack. One of the strengths of subtitling is that audiences should not lose the original soundtrack of the movies (Diaz-Cintas, 2003). In comparison, subtitling is much cheaper because it requires less time and resources to manufacture it. In the modern age with the increasing production of different audiovisual items every year, subtitles seem to be more rational than dub. It is much more desirable in the case of literates and can even be used as an assist Working to read (Luyken et al, 1991). The shortage of time and space, on the one hand, and the tendency of translation to be longer than the original language, on the other hand, have led to several difficulties in subtitling, which have given no opportunity for translation, but to simplify the text to accommodate the room on the computer.

Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007, pp. 8-9) declare that subtitling may be defined as a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavors to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image and the information that is contained on the soundtrack. Gottlieb (1992) describes subtitling as “(1) a written, (2) additive (i.e., new verbal material is added in the form of subtitles), (3) immediate, (4) synchronous and (5) poly-medial (i.e., at least two channels are employed) form of translation” (p. 162)

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#### 2.4. Taxonomies of Subtitling Strategies

In translation science, many scholars have developed different classifications of the strategies available to translators. Gottlieb is also a well-known scientist in the AVT field. In 1994, Gottlieb argued that the difficulty of translating CRs is closely related to the degree of their specificity and the distance between the cultures of origin and destination. He summarized ten strategies for dealing with linguistic and cultural problems when reducing a text to subtitles: 1) expansion, 2) paraphrase, 3) transference, 4) imitation, 5) transcription, 6) dislocation, 7) compression, 8) annihilation, 9) cancellation and 10) resignation. Diaz-Cintas (2007) also proposed strategies used in subtitling CRs in movies. The translation strategies involve loan, calque, explicitation, substitution, transposition, lexical recreation, compensation, and omission.'

**Loan:** According to Diaz-Cintas and Ramael (2007), the loan is a strategy or direct transfer is used when "the word or phrase of the source text is integrated into the target language because it is not possible to translate. Thus, both languages use the same word. "In other words, this strategy is used to transfer an ST element to the TT without making more than minor textual changes, for example concerning spelling and pronunciation (Leppihalme, 2001).

**Calque:** According to Cintas and Ramael (2007, p. 202), Calque or literal translation refers here to the literal translation of ST words and phrases in TT. As a strategy, Calque can be viewed as a word-for-word translation that conveys the literal meaning of the ST elements and stays close to the ST wording.

**Explicitation:** The explanation is "a strategy with which the translator makes explicit in the TT that information that is only implicit in the ST" (Diaz-Cintas & Ramael, 2007).

**Substitution:** Substitution is a strategy used when space limitations "do not allow the insertion of a fairly long term, even if it exists in the target culture" (Diaz-Cintas & Ramael, 2007, p. 204). This procedure is also available to translators in cases where two cultures "show a partial overlap rather than a clear presence versus the absence of a certain cultural element" (Ivir, 1987). The main disadvantage of this method, however, is that it "identifies non-identical concepts, removes the strangeness of foreign culture, and treats foreign cultural concepts as its own" (Ivir, 1987, p. 42).

**Transposition:** The term transposition or cultural adaptation refers to the replacement of a cultural concept of one culture by a cultural concept of another that conveys the meanings and connotations of the cultural source of reference.

**Lexical creation:** This strategy involves coining or inventing new lexical elements in TL to represent the culture of SL (Diaz-Cintas & Ramael, 2007).

**Compensation:** The compensation strategy can be defined as "compensating for a loss of translation by translating or adding something to another" (Diaz-Cintas & Ramael, 2007).

**Omission:** As a translation strategy, omission or deletion means the complete exclusion of an ST element from the TT (Pedersen, 2005). Omissions are inevitable in subtitles, "either due to spatial limitations or because the target language does not have a corresponding term" (Diaz-Cintas & Ramael, 2007).

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### 2.5. Typologies of CRs in Translation

Cultural reference items comprise words, terms, phrases, and concepts that are created for a particular culture and are only understandable to that culture. This means that people outside this culture can understand it, but still cannot experience it in the way that the locals do. According to Aixela (2004), there is no cultural reference per se. It maintains that a culture reference “is the result of a conflict arising from a linguistically represented reference in a source text that, when translated into a target language, is due to non-existence or different value (either through the ideology, use, frequency, etc.) of the subject in question in the target language or culture”. There are also cultural symbols in the audiovisual sector that include cultural information, transmitted verbally or non-verbally, acoustically, or visually. The translation of CRs is of crucial importance for a correct interpretation and reception of the dialogue of the original film in a target culture. The screen translator must be able to transfer the elements of the original culture in the target text that may be implicit or explicit in the original text, always considering not only the image but also the target culture where these CRs should be interpreted. Screen translators should also pay particular attention to these references and note that CR may not exist in the target culture. In addition to the linguistic or cultural difficulties in the translation of these references, the limitation of the number of characters in the subtitles (from 32 to a maximum of 38 in each line) must be considered, since this represents an additional difficulty. In this regard, Kleinberg (1986, pp. 17-54) proposes ten types of CRs such as (a) literary references, (b) references to mythology and popular belief, (c) historical, religious, and political background, (d) buildings and home furnishings, food, (e) customs and practices; play and games, (f) flora and fauna, (g) personal names, titles, names of domestic animals, and names of objects, (h) geographical names, and (i) weights and measures.

## 3. Method

### 3.1. Corpus of the Study

The required corpus for the present study which was instances of CRs was drawn from the Harry Potter movie series. The movie series is comprised of eight movies. In the present study, only two movies i.e., *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (HPPS) (2001) and *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* (HPGF) (2005) were selected. These two movies were downloaded from the Subkade website (<https://subkade.ir/>). The Persian subtitle of both movies (HPPS and HPGF) was downloaded from [wizardingcenter.com/](http://wizardingcenter.com/) website. The translator of these movies was Hossein Gharibi who has subtitled the two series in 2015. The rationale behind the selection of this subtitling was the accuracy, fluency, the subtitling of all verbal elements in the movie, and the comprehensive translation of all the idiomatic expressions and cultural elements in the movies. A brief description of these two movies was presented in the following sections.

*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2002), also called *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is the first novel in the immensely popular Harry Potter movies series by British writer J.K. Rowling. The film became a critical and commercial success, grossing \$974 million at the box office worldwide during its initial run. It became the highest-grossing film of 2001 at the time. The film was nominated for several awards such as *Academy Awards* for Best Original Score, Best Art Direction, and Best Costume Design.

Although criticizing the final half-hour, Jeanne Aufmuth of Palo Alto Online stated that the film would "enchant even the most cynical of moviegoers. The USA Today reviewer Claudia Puig gave the film three out of four stars, especially praising the set design and Robbie Coltrane's portrayal of Hagrid (Linder, 2001).

*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005) was directed by Mike Newell. It was distributed by Warner Bros Pictures, based on J. K. Rowling's 2000 novel. The film was nominated for the *Academy Award* for Best Art Direction and won the *BAFTA Award* for Best Production Design. On Metacritic, the above-mentioned movie has a weighted average score of 81 out of 100, based on 38 critics, representing universal acclaim. The *New York Daily News* praised the film for both its humor and its dark tone.

### 3.2. Procedures

In the first phase of this study, two movies of "Harry Potter" series i.e., *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) and *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* (2005) were considered as the source of required data for this study. Afterward, the researcher watched the Persian subtitled version of the case study and made a list of the CRs applied in the original version of this film based on Klingbergs's (1986) classification of CRs. Then, comparing the original and subtitled versions of the corpus, the researcher determined the strategies adopted in the translation of each CRs category identified in this corpus based on the taxonomy of strategies proposed by Diaz-Cintas (2007). To ensure that the identified categories of culture-bound items and their translation strategies by the researcher were accurate and valid, two experts in the field of Translation Studies working in the realm of audiovisual translation were asked to check the identified categories of culture-bound items and their translation strategies. After ensuring the accuracy of the analysis, the frequency and percentage of the culture-bound items categories and translation strategies were determined and tabulated. Finally, based on the requirements of the predetermined research questions, the most frequently used categories of CRs and translation strategies were identified.

### 3.3. Data Analysis

To analyze the data in this study the SPSS 24 software was employed. To answer the first research question of the present study, descriptive statistics containing frequency and percentage were provided. To answer the second research question, the overall frequencies of translation strategies used in the translation of determined CRs were elicited to identify the most and the least frequently used techniques followed by descriptive statistical analysis.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results of the First Research Question

To answer the first research question, descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used. In this study, the categories of culture-bound terms were determined referring to the proposed classification of CRs by Kingerberg's (1986, p. 34) model. Klingberg (1986) lists ten types of cultural references. The categories of cultural references that occurred in the two movies of the Harry Potter series as well as the frequencies and percentage of each topology, were presented in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Frequencies of the CRs Categories Based on Klingberg's Model.*

(CRs)	F	Percentage	
Animals and mythological creatures (Flora and Fauna)	9	8.3%	
Names (Personal names, titles, names of domestic animals, and names of objects)	Personal names	52	47.7%
	Place names	12	11%
	Magical objects	16	14.8%
Food and drinks (Buildings and home furnishings, food)	12	11%	
Weights and measures	2	1.8%	
Customs (References to mythology and popular belief)	2	1.8%	
events and practices (Literary references)	4	3.6%	
Total	109	100	

As it is illustrated in Table 1, all the categories of CRs proposed by Klingberg (1986) were used in the two selected movies of Harry Potter. More specifically, there found to be 109 cultural reference items in the two selected movies of Harry Potter (i.e., *Harry Potter and Philosophers' Stone* and *Harry Potter and Globe of Fire*). The results revealed that "Personal Names" is the highly used cultural reference item with a frequency of 52 and a percentage of (47.7%). The second and third frequently occurred categories of CRs were "Magical Objects", "Food and Drinks" as well as "Place Names" with the frequency of 16 and 12, and percentages of (14,8%), and (11%), respectively. Moreover, it can be noted that among CRs categories proposed by Kingerberg (1986), "Customs", "Weights and Measures" as cultural items with the frequency of 2 and percentage of (1.8%) were the least used CRs in the above-mentioned movies. The explanation for the result is that the first movie *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) contains over hundred names. For instance, most characters are given a first name and surname and what makes the series unique, controversial, and interesting is that the names included are especially exclusive.

The names have different origins such as Latin, Scottish, and French. The target audiences were British children and to them some names are very conventional and familiar. However, British children can easily understand some invented, foreign, and strange. The *Harry Potter* movie series borrows some myths and legendary creatures from different cultures that can be traced back to ancient times. Some devices do not exist in the real world and they have been borrowed from other fictional tales, such as those of witches on their flying broomsticks and Persian tales of flying carpets. Moreover, there is a very high usage of alliterations of names of characters and products in the series. The explanation is that probably using alliteration makes it easy to remember many of the names. Additionally, food and drink are generally considered something central and interesting in children's stories, books, movies, and programs. Different types of real and imagined food are in the *Harry Potter* movie series which have an important role in the life of Harry and his friends. In the two-intended movies of Harry Potter, there were 12 cases of food and drinks.

The results of the study in this section might be consistent with the findings of Altahri (2013) in his thesis in which he investigated all the movies of Harry Potter to identify the cultural-bound references and the results showed that "Name" was the most prevalent and frequently occurring CRs in the series. The findings are also in line with another similar study

on the Harry Potter novel by Dukmak (2012) who explored the CRs in the Harry Potter novel based on Klingbergs' model and found that the "Personal Name" and "Magical objects" were the most frequently used CRs categories in all movies of Harry Potter.

#### 4.2. Results of the Second Research Question

To answer the second research question which aimed to find the Iranian translators' strategies for subtitling the CRs items in the "Harry Potter" movie series (2002; 2005) based on Diaz-Cintas's (2007) model, descriptive statistics were used. It is worth mentioning that in the present study *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* were called HPPS, and (HPGF, respectively. It can be seen from Table 2, among the taxonomy of translation strategies proposed by Diaz-Cintas (2007), only four strategy types including "Loan" or (direct transfer); "Calque" or (literal translation); "Transposition"; and "Explicitation" were identified as the subtitling strategies for CRs in these two-movie series.

Table 2.  
*The Frequencies of the CRs Categories and Translation Strategies.*

(CRs)	Translation Strategies								Frequency in Total (CRs)
	Loan (direct transfer)	Calque (literal translation)	Explicitation	Substitution	Transposition (cultural adaptation)	Lexical creation	Compensation	Omission (deletion)	
Animals and mythological creatures (Flora and Fauna)	2	3			4				9
Names									
Personal names	51		1						52
Place names	7	4			1				12
Magical objects	4	4	3		5				16
Food and drinks	2	10							12
Weights and measures		2							2
Customs	2								2
Events and practices	3		1						4
Total (Strategies)	71	23	5	0	10	0	0	0	109
Percentage %	65.2%	21.2%	4.6%	0	9%	0	0	0	100%

4.2.1. *Names of Characters.* The findings showed that in subtitling the "Personal names" the most frequently and dominantly used strategy was "Loan" translation with the frequency of 51 (Table 3). According to Diaz-Cintas and Ramael (2007), the loan is a strategy that is used when "the word or phrase of the source text is integrated into the target language and the target text because it is not possible to translate and both languages use the same word." In other words, this strategy is used to transfer an ST element to the TT without

making more than minor textual changes, for example concerning spelling and pronunciation (Leppihalme, 2001).

Table 3.

*Samples Translation Strategies Adopted for Subtitling Personal Names.*

Movie	Source Text	Subtitled Text	Strategy
HPPS	I should've known that you would be here, Professor McGonagall.	متوجه نشدم اینجایی استاد مک گونگال	Loan
HPPS	Good evening, Professor Dumbledore.	عصر بخیر استاد دامبلدور	Loan
HPPS	Are the rumors true, Albus?	شایعات صحت داره آلبوس؟	Loan
HPPG	This is Amos Diggory, everyone.	ایشون ایموس دیگوریه بچه ها	Loan

4.2.2. *Mythological Creatures.* The findings showed that the most frequently employed translation strategy in subtitling the mythological creatures was “Transposition” with an occurrence of 4 times (Table 4). “Transposition means that the CRs are subtitled into equivalent TT cultural concepts. The TT item may not be equivalent to the ST idiom but it sounds culturally acceptable in the target language” (Abdelaal, 2019, p. 5). Then, “Loan” and “Calque” strategies were used with an occurrence of 3 and 2 times, respectively.

Table 4.

*Samples Translation Strategies Adopted for Subtitling Names of Mythological Creatures.*

Movie	Source Text	Subtitled Text	Time	Translation Strategy
HPPS	The Swedish Short-Snout.	پوزه کوتاه مهربون	00:03:32	Transposition
HPPG	The Chinese Fireball.	توپ آتش جنگجو	00:03:32	Transposition
HPPS	Hello there, Firenze.	سلام فرینز	01:55:28	Loan

4.2.3. *Place Names.* The results revealed that the dominant translation strategy for the subtitling of the “Place name” was the “Loan” strategy with a frequency of 7 (Table 5). “Calque” strategy was the second frequently used strategy in subtitling this category with a frequency of 4. It revealed that the Persian translator did not change the British setting. Additionally, the subtitler applied “Transposition” strategy to render the “Place names” with the frequency of 1. The results revealed that the Persian translator did not change the British setting.

Table 5.

*Samples Translation Strategies Adopted for Subtitling Place Names.*

Movie	Source Text	Subtitled Text	Time	Translation Strategy
HPPG	Little tyke fell asleep as we were flying over Bristol.	این کوچولو وقتی داشتیم از رو بریستول رد می شدیم خوابش برد	00:02:46	Loan
HPPS	You're from Burma, aren't you?	تو اهل برمه ای.. مگه نه؟؟	00:07:05	Loan
HPPS	Rubeus Hagrid, Keeper of Keys and Grounds at Hogwarts.	روبیوس هاگرید نگهبان کلید ها و زمین های هاگوارتس	00:14:12	Loan

4.2.4. *Magical Objects*. The translator employed 4 translation strategies to subtitle the “Magical Objects” including: “Loan”, “Calque”, “Transposition”, and “Explication” (Table 6). The findings showed that the “Transposition” strategy was the most frequently used strategy with the frequency of 5 followed by “Loan” and “Calque”, each of them was employed 4 times. Besides, “Explication” with the frequency of 3 was the third most frequent strategy for subtitling the “Magical objects”.

Table 6.

*Samples Translation Strategies Adopted for Subtitling Magical Object.*

Movie	Source Text	Subtitled Text	Time	Translation Strategy
HPGF	One standard size 2 pewter cauldron...	یه دیگ سربی سایز 2 استاندارد	00:20:48	Transposition
HPPS	Look, Neville's got a Remembrall.	هی نگا. نوئل به گوی فراموشی داره	00:58:08	Explication
HPGF	Look at it! The new Nimbus 2000!	نگاش کن نیمبوس 2000 جدیده!!	00:23:50	Loan

4.2.5. *Food and Drinks*. The results revealed that 83.3 % of the strategies used to subtitle the categories of food and drinks in the selected corpus belong to the “Calque” strategy with the frequency of 10 followed by the “Loan strategy” with the frequency of 2 (Table 7).

Table 7.

*Samples Translation Strategies Adopted for Subtitling Food and Drink.*

Movie	Source Text	Subtitled Text	Time	Translation Strategy
HPGF	A packet of Drooble's and a Licorice Wand.	یه بسته دوپل به بسته شیرین بیان	00:03:32	Calque
HPPS	Two Pumpkin Pasties, please.	دوتا پاستیل کدو هلوایی لطفا	00:14:06	Calque
HPPS	...they drink only malt whiskey.	اونا فقط ویسکی مالت می خورن	00:18:47	Loan

4.2.6. *Weights and Measures*. The “Calque” strategy with the frequency of 2 was used with the names of magical currency units, which are also words borrowed from another language.

Example 1:

HPGF: Ten-to-1 for Fleur, thank you very much (00:52:11)

During the Triwizard tournament, some students were betting on who of the champions would beat the dragon. One of the students was betting *Ten-to-1 for Fleur*. The phrase is translated literally with preservation of the name *Fleur* as “ده به یک برای فلور”. However, because such kind of activity does not exist and is not familiar to Persian audiences, the target audience would not recognize the cultural activity and not enjoy the action as the source audience.

4.2.7. *Customs, Events, and Practices*. For subtitling the “Customs” in the selected movie series the “Calque” translation strategy with the frequency of 2 was used. Besides,

“Loan” and “Explication” strategies were used for subtitling “Events and practices” with the frequency of 3 and 1, respectively. Some examples of the translation of this category were presented in the following section in detail.

For Example - Happy Christmas, Harry. - Happy Christmas, Ron.

In the present study, the word “Christmas” is quite familiar in Iranian culture but not as prominently as in western culture. The subtitler opts for different strategies for this event. Due to this relative familiarity, the subtitlers have translated this word by preserving the source word by using the “Loan” strategy as "کریسمس".

In short, as revealed in the analysis, the first frequently used strategy was “Loan translation” with 65.2% occurrences. Besides, it seems that in dealing with subtitling cultural references in *Harry Potter* series the “Calque” translation strategy was the second most common strategy applied with 21.2% occurrences. In addition, this strategy is used in all CRs categories, particularly to names of animals and places, magical objects, and food items. Although the main value of the calque strategy is its faithfulness to the source text, it may be problematic in subtitling, where subtitlers rarely have room for explanation, unless the context or visuals come to the rescue. In this regard, when applied to CRs, “literal translation may result in translations which appear linguistically comprehensible but are semantically incomprehensible to the TT reader” (Ivir, 1998, p. 35). Yet, the connotative meanings from such names might not be familiar for Iranian children. Therefore, the audience may not have the same perception of the same associations as those made in the source text because the target audience has different cultural backgrounds and knowledge. Thus, the subtitle translator must be very precise. As mentioned before, in the present study “Calque” strategy was also called “Direct translation” or literal translation (Newmark, 1998). In this regard, Aminoroaya and Amirian (2016) declared that one of the most frequently used strategies for dubbing animated movies is “Direct translation” strategy. Tekin (2019) also tried to investigate which translation strategies were used most frequently in the subtitled Turkish translation of “Frozen” according to Bell’s (1991) equivalent theory. He declared that “the most common translation strategy in the subtitled version is Exact Translation or Calque strategy” (p. 342). In contrast to the findings of the present study Trisnatea (2020) stated that the “Direct translation” strategy has a low number of usages in subtitling.

“Transposition” and “Explication” strategies, wherein the subtitler made effort to find an equivalent or add some information to explain some cultural references, were the third and fourth most frequently used strategies with 9% and 4.6% in subtitling *Harry potter* into Persian, respectively. While the “Transposition” strategy was applied mainly to “Mythological creatures” and “Events”, the “Explication” strategy was used with “Magical objects”, “Food” and “Customs”. It is worth mentioning that, the “Transposition” strategy based on Diaz-Cintaz’s (2007) framework is exactly like the Adaptation translation strategy according to Schjoldager et al.’s (2008) model. The results of the present study were in line with the findings of Warachananan and Roongrattanakool’s (2015) study findings who stated that the “Adaptation” strategy with (1.79%) is the least applied strategy by subtitlers.

Moreover, some strategies such as “Compensation”, “Lexical creation”, “Substitution”, “Omission” were not used in Persian subtitled versions of CRs in the intended series of Harry Potter. Although these strategies are common in the subtitling practice in general, the frequency

of using each of these strategies in subtitling the cultural references in *Harry Potter* movies is not noteworthy.

## 5. Conclusion

Cultural elements in a broad sense, which are mainly related to the way of life, attitudes, ways of thinking, and, above all, customs, and habits of people, play an important role in translation studies and have become one of the central themes of translation studies. Despite their importance, culture-specific elements are among the troublesome and difficult topics in translation. Many scholars have proposed theories and models to represent CRs, including Newmark (1988). The challenges and types of problematic topics, especially cultural references, are more complicated, especially when it comes to subtitling for children from English to Persian. For example, CRs and implicit messages in movies are not only hidden in language but can also be found visually and verbally. Therefore, this study tried to identify the CRs in the Harry Potter movie series based on Klingberg's (1986) model. In addition, the present study tried to identify what strategies are applied most for subtitling CRs in the Harry Potter movie series from English into Persian based on Diaz Cintas's (2007) model.

Taking everything into account, Iranian translators must apply different strategies when subtitling CRs. The findings showed that among strategies proposed by Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007), "Loan", and "Calque" strategies were used most frequently in Persian subtitled versions of two selected Harry Potter movie series entitled *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) and *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* (2005).

Calque strategy also means "literal translation," ranked second, with nearly 25% of the CRs translated literally. This strategy applies to all categories, especially place-names, animals, plants and potions, and magic items. It can be concluded that Iranian subtitlers used literal or word-for-word translation procedures for the CRs in the ST in subtitling the CRS. Therefore, due to the point that word-by-word translation may result in the wrong rendering of the meaning of the cultural reference items, translators should translate the idea of source CRs with CRs that have a similar meaning to the Source Text and with the concept that can comprehend properly in the Target Text.

In addition, using the "Loan" strategy in subtitling CRs means that most cultures were morphologically "transliterated" to conform to TL spelling and phonetic conventions. The frequent use of the "Loan" strategy for subtitling the Latin words and other cultural references also affects the Persian subtitles. For example, most semantically loaded names, including their denotative and connotative meanings, are inevitably lost in Persian subtitles. Of course, this deprives the target audience of the same experience as the source audience. In this regard, it seems that translators in subtitling frequently keep the original CRs of the movies. The "Explicitation" strategy was applied for subtitling the events, food, and magical items. Opting for this strategy has been found to give the subtitler the ability to describe or explain the culture as well, making it easier for the target audience to share the same effects and experiences with the source audience. The "Transposition" strategy was also used, but less frequently than the other strategies. It mainly applied to limited categories like plants and potions. The analysis also showed that the last two strategies, "Substitution" and "Lexical creation", were not used. This explains, on the one hand, the lack of creativity of the subtitlers when it comes to

introducing new words in Persian and on the other, reflects the density of the cultural and mythological content of the series. It can be concluded that to provide an adequate translation of CRs, Iranian subtitlers should be an expert in the area of translation and at the same time, they are required to enhance their linguistic and cultural knowledge about the Source Language and Target Language CRs.

The results of the present study provide a pedagogical implication for translation trainees to identify subtitling strategies used in translations of CRs from English to Persian. Additionally, the example stated in this study will be beneficial for translation students to learn strategies that are used by Iranian translators for subtitling CRs in movies. Besides, the findings of this study would be useful to translation lecturers to recognize the frequent strategies used in the subtitles of CRs in the movies and then introduce them to their students in the classes. Also, the obtained results can be applied as a basis for Iranian subtitlers and fansubbers in the subtitling industry.

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