Rendering Taboos in Subtitling and Dubbing: A Case Study of the Persian Translation of the American Drama Television Series

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Abstract

Translating taboo words is one of the challenging tasks that translators face during subtitling and dubbing movies. The translation of taboo words should be handled carefully since they may violate the norms of the target society. In this regard, the translators use different strategies to find an equivalent in the target language. This study tried to identify the strategies used by Iranian translators in dubbing and subtitling the F*k words as taboos in American English-drama crime television series based on Davoodi's (2009) model. Thus, this was a corpus-based study that has a quantitative method with a descriptive comparative approach. The corpus of this study was limited to F*k words found in the TV series called *Big Little Lies* season one. This TV series was selected as the corpus of this research because this series movie was incredibly more suggestive and popular in recent decades and targeted a wide range of audiences and adults. Thus, 80 F*k words were identified for further analysis based on Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) model. Descriptive statistics were used to determine frequencies and percentages of the applied strategies in the Persian subtitled and dubbed of the F*k words. The findings showed that *Substitution*, and *Euphemism* were the first and second used strategies by Iranian translators for dubbing and subtitling the F*k words, respectively. Additionally, the results of the Chi-square test revealed that there was not a significant difference between Iranian translators' strategies for subtitling and dubbing F*k words. The results of the present study can be beneficial for Iranian subtitlers, dubbers, and translation students in the subtitling and dubbing of F*k words as taboos in crime drama movies from English into Persian.

Keywords: Dubbing; F*k Words; Subtitling; Taboo Words; Translation Strategies

1. Introduction

With the advent of the latest digital technology, and the increasing demand for communication across the world, audiovisual products such as films have become the prominent vehicle through which to convey messages and transmit culture from one country to another with different languages and cultures (Yuan, 2016). Audiovisual translation (AVT) in

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the globalizing world has a significant effect on human communities. Diaz Cintas (2009) regards AVT as a robust intercultural communication activity. AVT is the process that makes television programs or movies more understandable for non-native watchers who cannot understand the source language (SL). Among various forms of AVT, subtitling and dubbing could be acceptable and popular ones around the world. Regarding film, TV, and video translation Baker and Hochel (2001) divide the world into four blocks: (a) Source language communities in which the imported films preferred to be subtitled rather than dubbed; (b) Dubbing countries in which the imported films and programs preferred to be dubbed; (c) Voice over countries which intend to project voice over for a feature film, and (d) Countries which are exceedingly literate and value subtitling to dubbing. A glance at this classification reveals that Iran is a dubbing country that preferred dubbing, subtitles, and voice-over on national television.

Translation of movies in the form of subtitling and dubbing has a significant role in every community and could influence the culture of the target community in the long run (Karamitroglou, 2000). The audiovisual translation modes such as subtitling and dubbing present a considerable challenge to any translator because of the difficulties encountered while dealing with taboo words as cultural items (Sedighi & Najian Tabrizi, 2012). Taboos are some words and sentences in the source culture that can be used without any problem but they may be considered forbidden in the target culture, and the people of the target society might avoid using them (Sedighi & Najian Tabrizi, 2012). Since each country has different languages, people find taboo words in the movie they watch in different languages of their mother languages. Taboo words have been used frequently in films, especially in today's Hollywood films. Taboo words refer to those linguistic terms or expressions made up of swearwords, expletives, etc., which are normally considered derogatory and/or insulting (Yuan, 2016). This type of language, considered to be low register (Murray et al., 1884), entails "a particular choice of diction or vocabulary regarded as appropriate for a certain topic or social situation" (Hughes, 2006, p. 386). Taboo words exist in the majority of cultures although the acceptability of this type of linguistic register differs according to the type of society, culture, beliefs, and the like (Ávila-Cabrera, 2016). Related to this consideration, taboo words do not convey a denotational meaning which may be considered essential for the development of the plot in a film and may lead the translators to get rid of taboo words in case of necessity (Wu, 2021). However, if the translator transfers such taboo words and sentences to the target culture, she/he will violate the norms of the society (Sedighi & Najian Tabrizi, 2012). Therefore, comprehending foreign taboo words or expressions can be a demanding task, and they might contain some cultural manifestations and certainly mirror cultural features. In this regard, translation strategies are the solutions adopted by translators to fill this cultural and linguistic gap between the cultures in question (Dukate, 2007). In the same vein, the audiovisual translator should be equipped with different strategies to tackle such problems in the process of translation (Sedighi & Najian Tabrizi, 2012). In this regard, Sharifi and Darchinian (2009) for recognition of taboo words in Iran have categorized these words into (a) sexuality, (b) drugs and drinks, (c) profanity, (d) immorality, and (f) political.

Moreover, the correct translation of these words and expressions is difficult. The presence of taboo words in movies is a translation problem that has lately received scholars'

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increasing attention. In this respect, the translation of taboo is an issue that gives rise to many difficulties during the subtitling and dubbing process (Van Steenland, 2015), since different cultures react differently to taboos, and, on top of that, these words can be perceived as more offensive when written down than when spoken (Van Steenland, 2015). Thus, in audiovisual translation, translators always face the challenge to choose the best strategy to reproduce the cultural and linguistic peculiarities in the translation or ask if to reproduce them at all (Gholami & Rahbar, 2018). Thus, Davoodi (2009) has suggested four translation strategies for the above-mentioned taboo words including (a) censorship, (b) substitution, (c) taboo for taboo, and (d) euphemism.

While the growing interest in AVT research can be seen in many European countries, little has been done in the Iranian context, where to the best of the researchers' knowledge, very few studies have been done to investigate the different translation strategies of taboo words in subtitling and dubbing English TV series into Persian. In this regard, the English TV series Big Little Lies season was selected as the corpus of the study, and the taboo words, specifically the F*k words, in the mentioned series were identified based on Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) model. The researchers also aimed to look at the strategies used in subtitling and dubbing the TV series Big Little Lies into Persian in the Iranian culture based on Davoodi's (2009) model. In the last step of the present study, the different types of translation strategies applied for dubbing and subtitling the taboos in seven episodes of selected TV series were compared statistically to identify any significant differences in the applied translation strategies for translating taboo words based on the Davoodi's (2009) model. Based on the aim of this study the following research questions were posed:

Q1. What were the most frequently used strategies by translators in subtitling the taboos, particularly F*k words, from English to Persian in the selected television series according to Davoodi's (2009) model?

Q2. What were the most frequently used strategies by translators in dubbing the taboos, particularly F*k words, from English to Persian in the selected television series according to Davoodi's (2009) model)?

Q3. Is there any significant difference between the strategies employed by translators for subtitling and dubbing the taboos, particularly F*k words, into Persian in the selected television series according to Davoodi's (2009) model?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Dubbing

Cary (1969) defines dubbing as a unique type of translation that is blessed with the gift of total fidelity. Dubbing simply refers to the replacement of the original audio track with a new audio track in another language (Nanayakkara, 2019). It is the sole type of translation that respects the written text, the life of words, and the whole soul of language. Pavesi et al. (2015) contends that among the different translation modalities, dubbing is the mode that preserves the goals and nature of the original dialogue, superseding the soundtrack of the audiovisual product in the source's language with the soundtrack in the target language aiming to reproduce a semiotic whole acceptable to the receiving audiences. Moreover, due to the widespread

distribution of audiovisual products, dubbing emerges as the screen language viewers most consistently access in those communities where it is still dominant in cinemas and on television.

2.2 Subtitling

According to Abdelaal (2019), subtitling is one of the important areas of translation studies. In this regard, subtitles refer to texts that appear on the screen either in the same language of the audio-visual work (i.e., intralingual subtitling) or in another target language (i.e., interlingual subtitling). Subtitling should not, however, be confused with other audiovisual translation types such as dubbing (Abdelaal, 2019). Baker and Hochel (2001) note that dubbing is an oral translation activity that makes use of the acoustic channel in screen translation. However, subtitling is a visual translation activity that involves the superimposition of a written text onto the screen. Subtitling is a process that entails technically transferring an SL movie or audiovisual media to a TL movie or audiovisual media, synchronized with the original verbal message (Gottlieb, 2004). According to O'Connell (2007), subtitling is "supplementing the original voice soundtrack by adding written text on-screen" (p.169). Gottlieb (2001) argues that subtitling is characterized as a diasemiotic or intermodal method of translation involving the shift from the spoken to the written form of language.

2.3 Concept and Characteristics of Taboos

Language and culture are tightly linked together, and translation has played an important role in human communication because it involves transferring cultural elements from one language to another (Lovihandrie et al., 2018). According to Fromkin et al. (2013), the taboo has a strong cultural component representing particular customs and the way people view their society. It is argued that taboo is inseparable from the culture and customs of a particular society. Taboos are conveyed from one generation to another and they never die. This procedure happens "at deep unconscious levels of our behavior, through the contagion of somatic response" (Robinson, 1996, p.24). Taboo is a unique phenomenon since its usage is considered inappropriate in daily communication. The term taboo refers to words that are unacceptable in society. These words are usually used to show disgust, social norm violation, sexual connotation, and anger. Ghounane (2014) said that taboo means using certain banned behavior, topic, or term are banned. According to Allan and Burridge (2006, p. 2), the taboo is considered prohibited when it is used for insulting other people, describing sex, and our bodies and their functions. Similarly, Natalie (2005) stated that taboo words and expressions refer to body parts, sex acts, bodily functions, and products, racist terms, verbal taboos or insults directed at people and family religion, death, and unlucky matters. Sharifi and Darchinian (2009) reported that Iranian translators were inclined to face a wide range of taboo terms as briefed below:

- Legal or illegal relationships between men and women and words related to them like kissing, hugging, sleeping with, cheating on, etc.
- Relations between boys and girls before marriage such as a boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.
- Uttering sexual organs and related words and expressions
- Words and expressions related to forbidden drinks and drugs like alcoholics
- Impolite expressions, i.e., curses, swears
- Calling features of immoral actions and behaviors like thieving, etc.
- Cultural and religious issues are opposite to those of the translator's society.
- Stating some issues which may threaten the translator's society politically and disrupt the political situations.

Based on this category a F*k word is a type of curse and impolite expression (i.e., type five) which has pejorative, offensive, and slur meanings. According to Sharifi and Darchinian

(2009), F*k words are terms that refer to impolite expressions, i.e., curses, and swears. In the present study, based on Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) category a F*k word is a type of curse and impolite expression, which has pejorative, offensive, and slur meanings.

2.4 Strategies for Translating Taboo Words

Davoodi (2009) stated that there are four possibilities for the translation of taboo terms including a) the taboo term in L1 is not taboo in L2, so the translator will translate it directly. b) The taboo term in L1 is taboo in L2 too. c) The term which is not taboo in L1 is considered taboo in L2. He proposes the following four strategies in taboo translation:

(a) Censorship: censoring the taboo is the first and the simplest choice in the translation of such terms. In this case, the translator ignores the term easily and censors it as an extra term. But it is not a proper and acceptable way, because on some occasions, the taboo term is a key term in the source text and the omission of it will distort the meaning of the text.

(b) Substitution: the other way to translate a taboo term is by substituting the term with another term in L2. But it often certainly distorts the meaning.

(c) Taboo for taboo: On the other hand, although the translator knows the expressions are not acceptable to target people and society, s/he prefers to translate them into taboo.

(d) Euphemism: As to this strategy, some taboos of the SL will be translated into euphemistic terms in the TL. In other words, they are translated into their equivalent inoffensive taboos whose TL culture considers them as non-taboo euphemistic terms.

In the same vein, Lovihandrie, et al., (2018) used a mixed model for the classification of taboo words that were derived from Brownlie's (2007), Robinson's (1996), and Davoodi's (2009) framework, and this derived model consisted of six strategies to translate taboo expressions such as;

(a) Omission: In this strategy, the translator deleted a certain part or parts of a source text while transferring it into the target language. Chesterman (1997) stated that in the translation of taboo expressions, omissions stand as a strategy where the translators may choose to eliminate the taboo nature of the source text by deleting taboo elements while transferring them into the target text. It could be because the translator tries to give the same expectation to the readers in the target language or perhaps the words have too vulgar in the context of the target language.

(b) Substitution: The other way to translate a taboo term is by substituting the term with another term in L2, i.e., by replacing a word, phrase, or larger lexical units in the source text. Baker (1992, p. 31) defined substitution as "replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader."

(c) Taboo for taboo: In this strategy, the translator changes the taboo expression in the source language, which is translated into taboo expression in the target language and has both the same expressive meaning and propositional meaning. Taboo for taboo or what is called literal translation by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) can only be applied to languages that are extremely close in cultural terms. It is acceptable only if the translated text retains the same syntax, the same meaning, and the same style as the original text.

(d) Borrowing: Borrowing is the idea of taking the word where the source language maintains the word and making fewer changes and just changing spoken rules in the target language. Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) stated that borrowing is a translation procedure that involves using the same word or expression in the original text in the target text. This strategy is divided into two categories, pure and naturalized borrowing.

(e) Translation by more general words: The translator renders the taboo expressions using the expression in the target text that can cover the meaning found in the source text.

Baker (1992, p. 26) stated that translation by a more general word (superordinate) is one of the commonest strategies dealing with many types of nonequivalence, particularly in the area of propositional meaning.

(f) Euphemism: Euphemism is the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression to replace one that offends or suggests something unpleasant (Al-Shahwi, 2013). It also aims to protect the readers or audience from possible offense by toning down the strong language, offensive expressions, and vulgar descriptions. Hamidiyah (2013) stated that euphemism is a softened utterance to be more polite and acceptable in its use. Linfoot-Ham (2005) stated that the function of euphemism is to protect the readers or audience from the possible offense. It is also used to avoid impolite or insulting words (Sinambela, 2010; as cited in Lovihandrie et al., 2018).

3. Method

3.1 Corpus of the Study

In the present study, an American English-language Drama Crime television series called *Big Little Lies* season one was chosen as the corpus of the study. This TV series was based on the 2014 *Big Little Lies* novel by Liane Moriarty. It was created and written by David E. Kelley and it premiered on HBO on February 19, 2017, in the United States and concluded on April 2, 2017, encompassing seven episodes. *Big Little Lies* wins many awards such as TCA Award for outstanding achievement in movies or miniseries and the Critics' Choice Television Award for best-limited series. In this study, seven episodes of this TV series were analyzed entitled *Somebody's Dead* (episode 1), *Serious Mothering* (episode 2), *Living the Dream* (episode 3), *Push Comes to Shove* (episode 4), *Once Bitten* (episode 5), *Burning Love* (episode 6), and *You Get What You Need* (episode 7). In this regard, the Persian subtitles of the seven episodes were downloaded from the *Digimovies* website (2018) as an acceptable subtitled version for further analysis. In addition, the Persian dubbed version of the above-mentioned Tv series was downloaded from *Filmmio* (2019).

3.2 Procedures

To achieve the purpose of this study, seven episodes of the *Big Little Lies* TV series were selected for analysis. First, the selected episodes were watched carefully. Second, in this television series, 80 F*k words were identified and extracted from the source language (i.e., English) based on Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) model for further analysis. In the third step, the Persian subtitled and dubbed versions of the movies were analyzed carefully to compare the Persian equivalent of English taboos in the subtitled and dubbed versions of movies. Afterward, the translation strategies used by translators for subtitling and dubbing the identified taboos were determined based on Davoodi's (2009) model. According to Davoodi (2009), translation strategies for subtitling or dubbing the taboos are in four forms: (a) Censorship; (b) Substitution; (c) Taboo for taboo; and (d) Euphemism. Besides, for the analysis of the corpora, Davoodi's (2009) model was employed to identify what types of strategies were more frequently used in translating taboos in Persian subtitled and dubbed versions of this TV series. In the last step of the present study, the different types of translation strategies applied for dubbing and subtitling the taboos in seven episodes of selected TV series were compared

statistically to identify any significant differences between them for translating taboo words based on Davoodi's (2009) model.

3.3 Data Analysis Method

Then, to answer the first and second research questions, the data were put in SPSS, version 26, and the descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the frequency and percentage of the strategies used by Iranian translators in dubbing and subtitling the taboos. In the last step to the third research question, the obtained frequencies were statistically compared by running a Chi-square statistical procedure to check any probable differences between different translation strategies adopted in subtitling and dubbing the taboo words into Persian.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results of the First Research Question

To answer the first research question which aimed to find the Iranian translators' strategies for subtitling the taboos, particularly F*k words, from English to Persian in the selected television series according to four strategies of Davoodi's (2009) model, descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency and percentage) were applied. In this regard, Table 1 illustrated the translation strategies that were adopted for subtitling the F*k words in the selected American television series *Big Little Lies* (2017). The following table showed that in subtitling the taboos, particularly F*k words, the Iranian translator used the *Substitution* strategy with a frequency of 33 and a percentage of 41.3%. This strategy was the first frequently used strategy by translators for subtitling the F*k words. Additionally, the *Censorship* strategy took second place in occurrence numbers with a frequency of 26 and a percentage of 32.5%. The *Euphemism* strategy also with a frequency of 12 and a percentage of 15% was the third most frequent strategy. Furthermore, *Taboo for Taboo* with a frequency of 12 and a percentage of 15% was the least used strategy in the subtitling of the F*k words.

Table 1

*Strategies Used by Iranian Translators for Subtitling F*K Words in the Big Little Lies TV Series*

Subtitling Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Substitution	33	41.3
Euphemism	12	15.0
Censorship	26	32.5
Taboo	9	11.3
Total	80	100.0

Noteworthy, as Table 1 shown in the Persian subtitled version of the *Big Little Lies* TV series, four strategies of Davoodi's (2009) model were used. In general, *Substitution* and *Censorship* strategies were used more than other strategies for subtitling F*k words.

4.1.1 Substitution. According to Davoodi (2009), one way to translate a taboo word is to substitute the term with another term in the target language (i.e., Persian). This strategy is used when the translators preferred to use equivalences that have lower a bad meaning instead

of F*k words. Whether spoken or written these F*k words are very bad and forbidden in the Persian language and culture. In this regard, in the subtitled version of the television series *Big Little Lies* (2017), the *Substitution* strategy with a frequency of 33 and a percentage of 41.3% was the first frequently used strategy by the Iranian subtitlers (Table 2). The translators substituted the taboo words with other terms which were not considered taboo in the Persian language.

Table 2

Examples of Substitution Strategy in the Subtitled Version of the Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Sub version
Episode1	I mean, she whines if I ask her to set the table, but peel one **fucking** potato with Bonnie...	الان اگه ازش بخوام میز رو بچینه کلی غر میزنه، ولی پوست کردن یه سیب زمینی کوفتی با بانی...
Episode3	That **fucking** Madeline!	اون مدلین عوضی
Episode3	Why does **fucking** shit keep happening to me?	چرا این اتفاقات گند تمومی نداره؟

4.1.2 Censorship. According to Davoodi (2009), censoring the taboo is the simplest choice in the translation of taboo words. This strategy is used when the translator ignores the term easily and censors it as an extra term. In the subtitled version of the selected television series, *Censorship* with a frequency of 26 and a percentage of 32.5% was the second most frequently used strategy by the Iranian translators (Table 3).

Table 3

Examples of Censorship Strategy in the Subtitled Version of the Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Sub version
Episode2	Do not **fuck** with my daughter's birthday.	میگم کاری به کار جشن تولد دختر من نداشته باش.
Episode2	Are you **fucking** kidding me?	مسخره کردی؟
Episode2	But these gems, they're **fucking** kamikazes**.**	اینا دیگه نوبرشن. مثل جنگجویان انتحاری هستن.

4.1.3 Euphemism. According to Davoodi (2009), in this strategy, some taboos of the SL are translated into euphemistic terms in the TL. In other words, they are translated into their equivalent inoffensive taboos. The findings indicated that the *Euphemism* strategy with a frequency of 12 and a percentage of 15% was the third used strategy by the subtitlers (Table 4).

Table 4

Examples of Euphemism Strategy in the Subtitled Version of the Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Sub version
Episode2	And I'm **fucking** sick of it.	و من از این وضعیت خسته شدم.
Episode2	- Excuse me? - Why don't you get **fucked**!	ببخشید؟ چرا نمیری گم بشی؟
Episode1	Everyone knew Nathan was a little bit of a **dick**, but a likable one	همه میدونستن که نیتان یکم عوضی بود، ولی عوضی دوست داشتنی

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4.1.4 Taboo for Taboo. According to Davoodi (2009), this strategy is used when, the translators know the expressions are not acceptable to target people and society, but they prefer to translate them into taboo. The findings revealed that the *Taboo for Taboo* strategy with a frequency of 12 and a percentage of 15% was the least-used strategy by the Iranian translators for subtitling taboo words in the *Big Little Lies* series (Table 5).

Table 5
Examples of Taboo for Taboo Strategy in the Subtitled Version of the Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Sub version
Episode3	I want to **fuck** her right here and right now.	میخوام همینجا و همین حالا تر**تیب**شو بدم.
Episode4	But, you know, that's one of the things that really defines being a husband is your willingness to go along with your wife's **fucked-up** ideas.	اما این یکی از چیزاییه که شوهر بودن رو معنی میکنه اینکه با ایده های تخ**می زنت همراه بشی.
Episode4	That said, the puppets **fuck**.	میگن عروسکای بگ*ا*یی.

4.2 Result for the Second Question

The second research question aims to find the Iranian translators' strategies for dubbing the taboos, particularly F*k words, from English to Persian in the selected television series entitled *Big Little Lies* (2017). Table 6 indicated that the *Substitution* strategy with a frequency of 41 and a percentage of 51% was the first frequently used strategy. In addition, the *Censorship* strategy with a frequency of 26 and a percentage of 32.5% was the second used strategy for dubbing the F*k words. The *Euphemism* strategy also with a frequency of 12 and a percentage of 15% took the third place of occurrence number in the dubbing of F*k words. Furthermore, the *Taboo for Taboo* strategy was not used by dubbers.

Table 6
*Strategies Used by Iranian Translators for Dubbing F*K Words in the Big Little Lies TV Series*

Dubbing Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Substitution	41	51.2
Euphemism	13	16.3
Censorship	26	32.5
Total	80	100.0

Noteworthy, in the dubbing version, three strategies were used out of four strategies proposed by Davoodi (2009). In general, *Substitution* and *Censorship* strategies were used more than other strategies for dubbing the F*k words, from English into Persian in the selected crime drama television series.

4.2.1 Substitution. Davoodi (2009) believed that one way to translate a taboo term is substitution. In the selected television series, the *Substitution* strategy with a frequency of 41 and a percentage of 51.2% was the first frequently used strategy by dubbers (Table 7). From

the following table, it can be seen that the translator used a substitution strategy for translating F*k words from English into Persian.

Table 7

Examples of substitution strategy in the Persian dubbed version of the Big Little Lies TV series

Episode	Source Text	Dub version
Episode 1	I mean, she whines if I ask her to set the table, but peel one **fucking** potato with Bonnie...	حالا اگه من بهش بگم میز و بچین کلی غر میزنه اما سیب زمینی پوست کندن کوفتی با بانی براش
Episode 3	That **fucking** Madeline!	اون مدلین عوضی
Episode 3	Why does **fucking** shit keep happening to me?	چرا این همه گند زده میشه تو کار من؟

4.2.2 Censorship. The first possible strategy that a translator can choose when facing a taboo term in translation is censorship (Davoodi, 2009). In the dubbed version of the selected television series, *Censorship* with a frequency of 26 and a percentage of 32.5% was the second most frequently used strategy by the translators (Table 8). From the table above, it can be seen that the translator used a *Censorship* strategy for translating F*k words from English into Persian. it means the translator preferred to censor F*k words because they may harm TL and T-culture.

Table 8

Examples of Censorship Strategy in Persian Dubbed Version of Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Dub version
Episode2	Do not **fuck** with my daughter's birthday.	کاری به کار جشن تولد دختر من نداشته باش.
Episode2	Are you **fucking** kidding me?	مسخره کردی؟
Episode2	But these gems, they're **fucking** kamikazes.	اما اینا دیگه نوبرن. اونا کامیکازین.

4.2.3 Euphemism. According to Davoodi (2009), *Euphemism* is the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression to replace one that offends or suggests something unpleasant. It also aims to protect the readers or audience from the possible offense by toning down the strong language, offensive expressions, vulgar descriptions, etc. The findings indicated that the *Euphemism* strategy with a frequency of 13 and a percentage of 16.1 % was the third used strategy by the Iranian dubber for translating F*k words (Table 9). From the first, second, and third rows of the following table, it can be seen that the *Euphemism* strategy was used in dubbing.

Table 9

Examples of Euphemism Strategy in Persian Dubbed Version of Big Little Lies TV Series

Episode	Source Text	Dub version
Episode2	And I'm **fucking** sick of it.	و من از این وضعیت خسته شدم.
Episode2	Fuck. I'm sorry.	غلط کردم متاسفم ببخشید.
Episode1	Everyone knew Nathan was a little bit of a **dick**, but a likable one	همه میدونستن که نیتان یک کله خره، اما از نوع دوست داشتنی

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4.3 Result for the Third Question

To answer the third research question which aimed to examine whether there is any significant difference between the strategies employed by translators for subtitling and dubbing F*k words in the selected television series, a Chi-square test was used. This Chi-square value determines the statistical significance of the difference the researchers have just tested. Noteworthy, a p-value less than 0.05 (typically ≤ 0.05) was statistically significant. Thus, if $p < 0.05$, the researchers can say that there was a statistically significant difference between the strategies used by translators in subtitling and dubbing. The results of the present study indicated that the chi-square statistic value was reported as 32.844 and the significance value associated with it is Sig = 0.000; the p-value was lower than .05 (Table 10). Thus, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the strategies employed by translators for dubbing and subtitling F*k words in the selected television series.

Table 10
Results of the Chi-square Test

		Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Chi-Square Test	Pearson Chi-Square	32.844	.000

However, Table 11 presents in detail the four strategies used in dubbing and subtitling F*k words. The *Taboo for Taboo* strategy with a frequency of 9 and a percentage of 11.1% was the fourth used strategy in the Persian subtitled version of F*k words while this strategy was not used in the dubbed version of the selected television series (Table 11).

Table 11
Results of Cross-Tabulation of the Third Question

Translation Strategies		Frequency	Percent
Dubbing Strategies	Substitution	41	51.2
	Euphemism	13	16.3
	Censorship	26	32.5
	Total	80	100.0
Subtitling Strategies	Substitution	33	41.3
	Euphemism	12	15.0
	Censorship	26	32.5
	Taboo for Taboo	9	11.3
	Total	80	100.0

In the present study, the Iranian subtitlers used *Censorship* in 32.5% of cases as the simplest choice in the translation of taboos. It revealed that the translator ignores the F*k words in the SL and censors them as an extra term. However, the taboo term is a key term in the source text and the omission of it will change the meaning of the text. Besides, the subtitlers used the *Substitution* strategy in 41.3% of cases to translate the F*k words by substituting the term with another term that is not considered taboo in the Persian language. Nevertheless, it often distorts the meaning and confuses the reader. In most cases, such translation will be absurd to the readers.

The *Taboo for Taboo* strategy was also used by the translator in 11.3% of cases. It showed that the subtitlers preferred to translate the taboo words into taboos in the Persian language. Applying this method is an easy way, but it might often be embarrassing to the Iranian audience. Besides, the *Euphemism* strategy was used in 15% of cases. The translators used an agreeable or inoffensive expression to replace one that offends or suggests something unpleasant in TL. Euphemism is the best choice for the translator not to express offensive or unpleasant terms.

In this regard, Robati and Zand (2018) also in their study found that the applied strategies in order of appearance for translation of taboo terms in the novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie based on Davoodi's (2007) strategies were substitution (35.33%), taboo for taboo (26%), censorship (23.33%) and euphemism (15.33%). The 61% application of *Substitution* and *Taboo for Taboo* strategies show the tendency of the translator to maintain the force of effect of taboo terms than eliminating their force through censorship and euphemism by 38.66% application.

The finding of the present study also was in line with the results of GJurchevska Atanasovska (2016) who found that *Substitution* and *Taboo for Taboo* strategies were the first and second used strategies for translating taboo words in the short stories collection *The Most Beautiful Woman in Town* by Charles Bukowski and *What We Talk about When We Talk about Love* by Raymond Caver and their Macedonian translations. Afifi (2022) also concluded that subtitlers tend to use substitution strategies more. This means that the translator often translates taboo words in the source language into another word in the target language which has a different meaning yet still has the same effect on the audience. Meanwhile, euphemism is the least used strategy among subtitlers.

Baker (1992, p. 31) defined substitution as "replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader." Spoken or written F*k words are very bad and forbidden in the Persian language and culture. In the present study, Iranian dubbers in 51.2% of cases substituted a taboo term with another term in the Persian language. They used Persian equivalences that have lower a bad meaning instead of F*k words. Additionally, *Censoring* the taboo was used by translators in 32.5% of cases as the simplest choice in the translation of taboo terms. It showed that the Iranian translator 32.5% of cases ignores the F*K words easily and censors it as an extra term.

Moreover, the dubbers used the *Euphemism* strategy in 16.3% of cases to translate taboos of the SL into euphemistic terms in the Persian language. Linfoot-Ham (2005) stated that the function of euphemism is to protect the readers or audience from the possible offense. It is also used to avoid impolite or insulting words (Sinambela, 2010). The softened data mostly the words referring to sexual activity or private parts of the body. Some of them resorted, to renaming and repackaging the word to make it sound attractive (Rakhmaniyah, 2013).

Compared with some studies that have been carried out, some of them aimed to investigate the translation of taboos and to find out the equivalence which has been employed by the translator in the process of translating taboo words. Those studies found that the most common strategy used for translating taboos by translators were *Omission* or *Censorship*, Euphemism, and Substitution. For example, Alvi et al. (2013) investigated the translation of

taboos from English into Persian in dramas from a skopos-based view, and Behzad and Salmani (2013) examined the translation strategies used by three translators in translating taboo words and expressions to find out the equivalence in the process of translating taboo words in the sentences of Saramago's Blindness. Those studies conclude that the most common strategy used for translating taboos were *Censorship*, *Euphemism*, and *Substitution*. The difference with the present study is that those studies analyzed from English to Indonesian translation, while this study is from English to Persian translation. Those study also different in the object of the study. Those studies analyzed adult novels, meanwhile, this study analyzed the American television series *Big Little Lies* (2017). In addition, the results of Alavi et al., (2013) showed that the most used strategy was *Censorship* with a frequency of 229, and the *Taboo for Taboo* strategy was the least used strategy with a frequency of 80.

According to the results of the comparison between dubbing and subtitling strategies, it can be concluded that among four types of translation strategies based on Davoodi's (2009) model, three types of strategies were used by both Iranian translators for subtitling and dubbing F*k words from English into Persian. However, the results revealed that the *Taboo for Taboo* strategy was used by Iranian subtitlers with a frequency of 9 and a percentage of 11.3% whilst this strategy was not employed by Iranian dubbers. It showed that the subtitlers knew the expressions are not acceptable to the Iranian audiences and society, but they prefer to translate them into taboo. They used this strategy to maintain the taboo expression contained in the SL. In other words, F*k words were translated into their equivalent inoffensive taboos in Persian. Thus, the audiences in Iran not only understand the meaning of what is seen but also get an expressive impression of the word. The finding of the present study was in line with the results of Bigdeloo's (2022) study. The results indicated that the *Taboo for Taboo* strategy with a frequency of 75 was the most used strategy based on Lovihandire et al., (2018) model for translating taboos in four Persian translations of Salinger's book named *The Catcher in the Rye*.

5. Conclusion

In summary, when dealing with taboo words, a translator decides, based on the cultural and moral situation of the time, whether to rewrite the text, soften it, or translate it as it is and the words which are susceptible to being transformed to be morally acceptable or decent, are taboos. Based on the study findings the Iranian translators used three strategies of Davoodi's (2009) model when subtitling and dubbing F*k words, and the most dominant strategy was the *Substitution* strategy in both subtitling and dubbing versions in *Big Little Lies* (2017) season one. The *Taboo for Taboo* strategy was the least frequently used strategy in subtitling F*k words, but this strategy was not used in dubbing F*k words. It showed that the subtitlers knew the F*k words were not acceptable to the Iranian audiences, but they translated them into their equivalent inoffensive taboos in TL. Hence, the reader in Iran not only understands the meaning of what is read but also gets an expressive impression of the word.

The findings revealed that *Substitution* was the most used strategy in subtitling and dubbing F*k words because Iranian translators preferred to use equivalences that have lower a bad meaning instead of F*k words. The spoken or written F*k words are unacceptable and forbidden in the Persian language and culture, and the audience will react to these F*k words

negatively. Hence, the translators substituted the taboo words with other terms which were not considered taboo in the Persian language. Nevertheless, this strategy often distorts the meaning and confuses the target audience in Iran.

In addition, after the *Substitution* strategy, the most frequent strategy was the *Censorship* strategy in Persian subtitled and dubbed versions of F*k words in *Big Little Lies* (2017) movies. It means that the Iranian translators preferred to delete or censor these F*k words because they were not translatable or deletion of them did not harm the message of SL in subtitling and dubbing. Thus, censorship might be based on the belief that if the Persian audience watches those scenes and listen to those words, they will imitate them. However, in some cases using this strategy does not reflect the writer's intention or the characters' personalities, because eliminating or softening the taboo words in the film alters their original meaning significantly. The translators also used the *Euphemism* strategy to translate taboos of the SL into euphemistic terms to soften the taboo terms to be more polite and acceptable in their use. They used this strategy to protect the Iranian audience from the possible offense.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the publication of this article.

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