

Translation Procedures in the Arabic Subtitles of “Hotel Transylvania: Transformania”: A Study of Culturally-Bound Content

Alshaymaa Yahya Alharbi
Applied College, Taibah University, Madinah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Translation is considered the fifth dimension of language, a composite of the other four main language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The translation of culturally laden texts found in movies is an asset that connects cultures and communities by breaking down language barriers. This study attempts to identify and analyze the translation procedures applied to culturally-bound sentences in the Arabic subtitles of the animated movie: *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania*. The research used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the Arabic subtitles, and thereafter, classified the translation based on Newmark’s taxonomy of translation procedures. Six translation procedures were identified in this movie: literal translation, paraphrase, compensation, cultural equivalent, shifts/transpositions, and descriptive equivalent. The study's findings indicate that one effective way to convey intended meaning, especially for concepts related to cultures that are foreign to the target audience in the case of movies is through frequent use of literal translation of dialogue. This can only be achieved by employing intensive and precise translation procedures. This research underscores the importance of adopting a flexible and procedurally focused approach to translation to preserve the entertainment and narrative value of the film and accommodate cultural diversity. The study’s findings are likely to be useful to all stakeholders in the field of translation.

Index Terms—subtitling, translation procedures, animation movies, Arabic, culturally-bound language

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a crucial component of communication and given the rate of contemporary globalization, its importance in communication is obvious. Whether manual or digital, translation has become a great tool in ensuring cross-cultural communication though translation is defined in many ways as experts differ in their perceptions and ideas about translation. According to Crystal (1987), "translation is the neutral term used for any task in which the meaning of a statement in one language (the source language) is translated into the meaning of another (the target language), regardless of whether the medium is spoken, written, or signage" (p. 334). Thus, the process of moving a concept or piece of information from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) is known as translation. On the other hand, according to Newmark (1988), it is the process of translating a text into another language in the manner that the author intended. Language-wise, translation is a major facilitator in transcending linguistic boundaries and ensuring communication.

From premodern to the present times, the field of translation has also transformed with the developments in science and technology. Numerous tools, including online and offline dictionary software, have been invented and improved over the years to aid the translation process. In reality, translation technology requires calibration to obtain quality content in the target language (Apani & Afiah, 2020). However, because the translation process and translation outcome are often confused, the translation methodology is frequently misinterpreted as a method and strategy. Additionally, it is challenging to understand when phrases overlap (Fitria, 2015; Alqahtani & Al-Ahdal, 2025a, 2025b). One persistent challenge for translators lies in handling culturally sensitive texts. This difficulty stems from the fact that the phrases, concepts, and expressions to be translated are deeply rooted in the culture of the source text. Literal translation can lead to obscurity, possibly making the words appear cryptic and meaningless to the recipients of the message (Baker, 2018). Abdelaal (2020) argues that language and culture are intertwined and interdependent, making it difficult to deal with one without the other. Therefore, the translator must incorporate the culture of the source language into the translation process. The matter becomes even more complex when the translator is required to deal with audiovisual content as its viewers need to understand the language of a film with its inherent complexities and limitations related to the time and place of the events therein (Diaz Cintas & Remmael, 2014; Mohammad & Al-Ahdal, 2024).

Thus, broadly speaking what makes the translator's job difficult is the presence of culturally-bound elements. Culturally-bound elements are words, expressions, concepts, or phrases that an audience outside the SL culture cannot understand; hence, contextualizing them is essential. According to Abdelaal (2020), "Language and culture are part and parcel of each other; they cannot be separated because they are interwoven" (p. 122). Language shapes the cultural identity of a community, or it can be said that language is culture and, thus, translating a language implies translating a culture (Abdelaal, 2020).

In the context of the current study, "culturally-bound translation" refers to expressions that carry a unique social or cultural context distinct from Arabic culture, as well as cultural references such as colloquial language, humor, and metaphors. In contrast, "non-culturally-bound translation" refers to universal content or content that can be translated largely directly, such as basic verbs, nouns, and simple sentences. Since this study is placed in the context of a film, it is important to be reminded that the style of translation will be governed by the film's narrative. This means that character development, emotional expression, and the effectiveness of comedic timing all will depend on the translation, which ultimately determines the reach of the content to Arabic-speaking audiences.

Jabak (2019) states that culture-specific elements such as references as well as linguistic features, such as idioms, proverbs, metaphors and swear words pose great difficulties to translators. Moreover, translation of movie subtitles differs from general translation because it contains on audio and visual content. Each of the two major types of movie translation viz., dubbing and subtitling interferes with the original text to a different extent. Dubbing is known to be the method that modifies the source text to a large extent and thus, makes it familiar to the target audience through domestication. Making the audience feel as though they were listening to actors speaking their (target) language is said to be its goal.

Fadly (2013) defines subtitling as "a translation of the spoken source language dialogue into the target language in the form of synchronized captions, usually at the bottom of the screen, and this is the form that alters the source text to the least possible extent" (p. 19).

During translation of film content, the title of the movie should be translated such that it conveys the essential idea to catch the audience's attention immediately. Because of this, movie names must be accurately translated as aptly pointed out by Bai (2018) who stated that a lovely title can have an impact on the final touch, audience appeal, and providing viewers with enough nourishment for their souls and movie titles frequently not only reflect the main idea of movies but also attract the audience to watch them.

The 2022 American computer-animated adventure comedy *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania* (also known as *Hotel Transylvania 4*) was produced by Columbia Pictures and Sony Pictures Animation, and distributed by Amazon Studios. In light of the aforementioned, this study will analyze the translation processes used on the culturally specific content in its subtitles. To guide the investigation, the study addresses two questions as follows: (1) What types of translation procedures are used in translating culturally-bound subtitles of the movie, *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania*? and (2) How are these translation procedures applied by the translator in rendering the subtitles?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Every language has its own vocabulary. Translation is the tool that bridges the gap between any two languages by finding the most suitable words and expressions in the target language. This can be possible only through reciprocal translation. However, the field of translation faces challenges, and research seeks to address these by recognizing cultural equivalence across languages. From this perspective, Nida (1964) attempted to distinguish between two types of equivalence: formal and dynamic. He emphasized the importance of providing the target audience with opportunities and then assessing their responsiveness. Based on this, Newmark (1988) offered a systematic, scientific framework for organizing translation procedures from his perspective, providing translators with a set of tools to address various textual challenges, particularly those involving cultural terminology.

In audiovisual translation (AVT), subtitling is characterized by its unique multimodal nature, where visual, auditory, and textual channels interact (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2020). This requires not only accurate translation but also, synchronization with the on-screen action and conciseness so viewers can read and watch comfortably. Subtitling has attracted the attention of researchers in recent years due to the growing interaction among cultures. Recent studies have focused on the translation of humor, idioms, and cultural references (e.g., Al-Shehari, 2019; Alwazna, 2021). For example, in Fitria's (2020) study on the subtitled translation of "*Crazy Rich Asians*", it was concluded that the most commonly used strategies for subtitling are paraphrasing and literal translation. However, Arabic subtitling is rarely mentioned for western animated films. Among the few who did, Jabak (2019) analyzed the challenges of Arabic-English translation in general but did not address the inherent limitations of subtitling between this language pair. Animated films, such as the *Hotel Transylvania* series, present special challenges due to their dynamic dialogue, extensive use of physical humor and puns, and culturally specific jokes. Therefore, this study contributes to this field by applying Newmark's (1988) model to a contemporary, animated film. The findings of the study are also likely to shed light on the applicability of those methods in the context of contemporary Arabic audiovisual translation.

Ahmed and Islam (2023) examined the translation strategies used to convey cultural nuances from Egyptian Arabic into English in the film "*Quills*." Based on Pedersen's (2011) model, they identified seven different approaches, among which the most significant were substitution, omission, and generalization. They assessed the translation quality using Pedersen's FAR model and concluded that, despite some stylistic inaccuracies, the translation was overall very accurate. Their findings reveal the difficulties of conveying cultural nuances between two languages or cultures and highlight the influence of text type and cultural distance. Furthermore, they note the lack of research on the translation of Arabic dialects into English.

Nograhini (2025) argues that translating animated films is challenging due to their emotional depth, humor, idiomatic expressions, and numerous cultural references. While translators must maintain linguistic accuracy and cultural sensitivity, they are also subject to temporal and spatial constraints, necessitating cultural adaptation. Previous studies have

emphasized the importance of translating psychological concepts, humor, and distinctive cultural expressions using methods such as literal, communicative, and idiomatic translation, and, where appropriate, adaptation. Cultural understanding is essential in audio-visual translation as each culture has its own way of expressing emotions and humor.

In Iliavičius (2017), Lithuanian translators typically preferred a text-centric approach to cultural elements, accounting for approximately 59% of cases. Most translators preferred to preserve the source text without changes. This was observed in approximately 47% of cases. A reader-centered strategy occurred in only 26% of cases, while formal translations accounted for approximately 15%. Clearly, the accuracy of the source text is paramount. Translators typically retained personal names and tended to use literal or formal translations of place names and dates rather than adapting them for a Lithuanian audience.

Based on a study of three French films, Lamière (2006) questioned the applicability of Venuti's localization model to audiovisual translation. The findings suggested that translators lack a clear, consistent strategy for dealing with cultural cues, resorting instead to quick, flexible solutions. Regarding contextual approaches, some researchers argued that translation classifications inadequately reflect the complexity of real-world translation and dubbing.

Mustafayeva's (2022) study of Azerbaijani films focused on identifying culture-specific elements (CSEs) using Newmark's classification and verifying their translations. The most common strategy was searching for synonyms in the target language (34%), followed by cultural substitution (20%) and the use of borrowings with clarification (12%). This diversity suggests that translators do not rely on a single approach but choose the method most appropriate for each situation. In most cases, translators preferred either direct translation or careful adaptation of cultural elements to the new audience.

Al-Samarrai et al. (2023) analyzed literary works and used Newmark's taxonomy to identify methods of translating cultural elements. They found that literal translation was the most common (17.6%), followed by implicit translation (16.3%) and paraphrase (12.6%). This study showed that translators generally preferred a direct approach and adapted the meaning to the target audience. This highlighted the applicability of Newmark's model to cultural translation.

To sum up, studies have shown that translating cultural elements is a complex process. Typically, translators employ a variety of strategies, sometimes strictly adhering to the source text, at others they adapted the language to the target audience's culture. Some researchers emphasize accuracy and fidelity to the source text, while others emphasize equivalence and interchangeability to make ideas more accessible to the audience. This necessitates a flexible, context-specific approach, especially for animated films like *Hotel Transylvania*. To conclude, translators must find a balance between humor, emotion, and the cultural specifics of the target audience; with so many mandates, it is certainly a challenging task.

III. METHODOLOGY

The goal of the research is to identify the translation procedures used when translating culturally-bound content and examine how they were applied to translate the English dialogue into Arabic subtitle text in the movie *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania*. The reason for choosing this film is its diversity of situations which creates more opportunities to extract diverse examples for analysis. In addition, the choice of culturally-bound content narrows the focus of this research. Theoretically, the findings of this study will help translation studies students enhance their understanding of the translation of culturally-bound elements and translation procedures.

The qualitative approach in this study aimed to identify the translation techniques used by the translator(s) in *Hotel Transylvania: Transformania*. Using the descriptive analysis technique, the researcher used verbal explanations to describe and analyze the data. The information came from the subtitles that were displayed on the screen. Newmark's nineteen translation techniques served as the basis for the author's analysis. It is important to note that this method was chosen because it is considered the best for the contextual analysis of translated movie subtitles (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The study's focus was on the official Arabic subtitles. The researcher followed these steps; (1) The researcher watched the movie as the source of the data; (2) chose certain segments of the movie to analyze; (3) recorded the original texts and the translation of these segments; (4) categorized the data based on each translation procedure matching the data to the procedure to which it corresponded; (5) explained and described how each procedure was applied. At this stage, the data was sorted and categorized to according to the translation procedures followed.

The researcher used clear criteria to determine when a translation is culturally contextualized. For example, if the translation contained idiomatic expressions such as, "kill her" or "we're totally in agreement," or references to films, events, or social concepts, such as, "Fantastic Friday," or used slang and colloquialisms like "Man!", or wordplay, culturally influenced humor, or metaphors with a clear cultural meaning (such as "cobwebs in my head"), then the translation is considered culturally contextualized. Conversely, translations lacking these elements—such as the use of universal body language, simple descriptions, or direct dialogue without any cultural significance—are considered culturally insensitive. The analysis revealed instances where the original text was rich in cultural expressions while the translated text lacked them, or vice versa. This suggests that sometimes a "cultural shift" occurs, altering the cultural character of the dialogue itself.

The data for this research was obtained through a YouTube channel named H & T Club. This channel provides several Western animated movies subtitled or dubbed into Arabic. The movie was divided into segments and uploaded as a series of 2-3-minute videos. The 87-minute film was divided into 35 segments to facilitate analysis. Examples were then drawn

from each dramatic stage based on the nature of the story of the film (orientation, complication, evaluation, and resolution). Additionally, the dialogues were transcribed, creating a parallel corpus of the original English (SL) content and its corresponding Arabic (TL) subtitles. A total of 25 clear instances of culturally-bound subtitles were identified for analysis. Table 1 highlights the main information about this movie.

TABLE 1
DETAILS ABOUT HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA: TRANSFORMANIA

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Directed by | Derek Drymon Jennifer Kluska |
| Produced by | Alice Dewey Goldstone |
| Distributed by | Amazon Studios |
| Release date | January 14, 2022 |
| Running time | 87 minutes |
| Language | English |

For analysing the data, Newmark's (1988) classification scheme for translation methods was employed. Each translation in context was considered, then compared with the source text to identify the translator's techniques (e.g., literal translation, paraphrasing, compensation). The procedure took a simple approach: first, contextualizing the translation; second, categorizing the techniques used; and finally, assessing how effectively these techniques conveyed meaning in the audiovisual context.

IV. RESULTS

As mentioned in the research methodology, this study is based on Newmark's nineteen translation procedures. Analysis indicated that the following procedures were applied in subtitling this movie.

Literal translation

The following examples were translated using a literal translation procedure, which focuses solely on form and structure as described by Newmark. The phrases and sentences were translated without adding any extra words to clarify their meaning, as their meaning was clear, per se, and did not need further explanation. Extracts in Table 2 show that the translation is rendered clear and precise and can be understood by the TL audience, as it is culturally relevant to TL.

TABLE 2
EXAMPLES OF LITERAL TRANSLATION

| SL | TL |
|--|--|
| How quickly the time flies! | كم يمر الوقت بسرعة! |
| Right, right, right! | صحيح، صحيح، صحيح! |
| When I think of you sometimes | عندما أفكر فيك من وقت لآخر |
| Just the two of us | فقط نحن الاثنين |
| But now it is time to start the actual planned party | ولكن حان وقت الانتقال إلى الجزء المقرر من هذا الاحتفال |
| Relax Dad! | استرخ يا أبي |
| I see the crystal raindrops fall | أرى قطرات المطر البلورية تنهمر |
| and the beauty of it all | وأجمل ما في كل هذا |
| is when the moon comes shining through | هو حين يظهر القمر بين السحب |
| to make those cobwebs in my mind | فيرسم بيوت العنكبوت في ذهني |

However, in the last example listed above, viz., "I see the crystal raindrops ... cobwebs in my mind", we have a short song enacted by the main character. The translator used the literal translation method when dealing with this song and it moved well through the first couple of lines until the song comes to the last line which says, "to make those cobwebs in my mind." In this line, the translator substituted the word "cobwebs" with the Arabic equivalent, "بيوت العنكبوت", which turned out to be a grave mistake, as the literal translation procedure does not fit in this context. The phrase "cobwebs in the mind" refers to a state of having mixed and tangled thoughts, a feeling of confusion, vagueness or lack of clarity about something, it is an idiomatic expression. When the TL audience reads the literal translation of 'cobwebs,' they are likely to be confused leading to possible failure to detect the intended meaning. Therefore, we can consider that, in this example, the literal translation failed to convey the message.

A. Paraphrase

In this procedure, the meaning of the Culturally-Bound Term (CBT) is explained in more detail. Table 3 shows examples that demonstrate how this procedure has been applied.

TABLE 3
PARAPHRASING FOR THE CULTURALLY-BOUND TERMS

| SL | TL |
|---|---|
| It's like Freaky Friday but on a Tuesday though | كالفيلم عن تبادل أم وابنتها جسميهما وإنما نحن رجلان |
| I guess I killed it! | يبدو أن أدائي كان مذهلاً |
| Whatever you say | كما تشاؤون |
| What are you up to? | ما الذي تخطط له؟ |
| Hit it! | اعزفوا! |
| He has everything under control | هو يشرف على حسن سير كل شيء |

In the first example, "It's like Freaky Friday but on a Tuesday though", there is a reference to a movie in which the plot involves a mother and a daughter going through an imaginary experience of switching bodies. The translator used the paraphrase procedure and explained the plot of this movie in several words to keep the audience aware of the reference and analogy made by the speaker. This translation is perfect and it explains in a few words the plot and therefore, it can transmit the reference to the TL audience instantly.

As for the second example, the dialogue, "I guess I killed it!" is another CBT. It literally means when someone excels at a task at hand. Therefore, the translator used the paraphrase procedure and explained that the speaker thinks that he performed amazingly well. The translator's choice in this example is a good one since it can relay the meaning smoothly to the TL audience.

The third example, "Whatever you say," is translated as "كما تشائين" to paraphrase the original sentence as more culturally relevant to the TL audience. A back translation of this phrase "كما تشائين" would be "as you wish". It is, thus, a good choice of procedure.

The next example considered here is, "What are you up to?" and here the phrasal verb (be) up to (something) has a meaning of its own as to signify planning for something probably considered mischievous and therefore, the translator used the question "ما الذي تخطط له؟". However, this simple question does not relay the message of the speaker that there is a scheme being plotted.

Moving forward, the next example is "Hit it!" which is another culturally-bound term. It can occur in a variety of contexts with slightly different meanings and here the translator uses the visual to help with translating this term. When the speaker says, "Hit it!" he is addressing a musical band and he wants them to start performing. So, the translated sentence "اعزفوا!". The back translation of this would be "play the music!" Hence, it can be considered a good translation.

The last example in this category is, "He has everything under control." In this example, the translator could have used the literal translation method, but the paraphrasing procedure turned out better and was able to convey the message more subtly. The translator used the sentence "هو يشرف على حسن سير كل شيء" which means "he supervises the smooth running of everything" in the back translation, certainly a good translation.

B. Compensation

Compensation occurs when there is a loss of meaning in one part of a sentence, hence the need to compensate it in another. Table 4 shows the examples demonstrating the use of this procedure.

TABLE 4
EXAMPLES OF COMPENSATION IN TRANSLATION

| SL | TL |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| But it is time to let go | ولكن حان الوقت لكي أتخلى عن إدارته |
| Now you're ready for the great outdoors | أنت الآن جاهز لنزهة ممتعة في الطبيعة |
| I resent that | أعترض على التشبيه |
| Entering is deadly | كل من يدخل الكهف يموت |

In the first example, "But it is time to let go" the speaker is talking about retiring and letting go of the hotel administration. However, the phrase 'hotel administration' is not mentioned. In the translated version, the translator saw the need to add the "إدارته" which refers to administering the hotel. This demonstrated the use of compensation procedure clearly. The addition of this word clarified the meaning and helped the TL audience better understand the context. Therefore, this translation can be considered well done.

The second example is, "Now you're ready for the great outdoors". In this example the words "نزهة ممتعة" were not found in the SL text. But the translator added them to compensate for the loss of meaning so as to make the audience understand that the character is going on a trip and not merely going outdoors. Again, here is another excellent example of translation where the addition served to clarify the context for the audience.

The same procedure is applied in the third example where the translator added the word "التشبيه" to indicate that the character is against the use of this analogy at that point in the conversation. It is a good translation, as it keeps the audience on track with the characters' conversation without losing their way.

Coming to the last example, we have the sentence, "Entering is deadly". In the source language, it is not mentioned the place into which the speaker is advising against entering. Hence, the translator built upon previous context and added the word "الكهف" to compensate the loss of meaning and to clarify the text. The translator also built on the imagery in the film as a photo of the cave appears as the speaker is delivering this sentence. Therefore, the addition of the word "الكهف" is a very good choice on the part of the translator as it gives the sentence powerful meaning once it is associated with the image.

C. Cultural Equivalent

Newmark explained this procedure as replacing a cultural word in the SL with a TL one. However, "they are not accurate" (Newmark, 1988). See Table 5.

TABLE 5
EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL EQUIVALENT

| SL | TL |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Wow, Drake! | يا سلام يا "دراك"! |
| Oh man! | يا سلام! |
| Boy that was fun | يا سلام كان ذلك ممتعاً فعلاً |

In these examples, the three exclamations “Wow!”, “Oh man!”, and “Boy!” are translated into the word “يا سلام!”. This is done using the cultural equivalent procedure to make these terms closer to the TL culture of the audience. It can be done, however, by the literal translation procedure, since the exclamation “Wow!” has entered the TL jargon and can be translated literally and understood very well by the target audience.

D. Shifts or Transpositions

When it comes to this procedure, we can define it as the change in the grammar from SL to TL. Newmark further explained this change as (i) change from singular to plural, (ii) the change required when a specific SL structure does not exist in the TL, (iii) change of an SL verb to a TL word, change of an SL noun group to a TL noun and so forth (Newmark, 1988). Table 6 analyzes these translations.

TABLE 6
EXAMPLES OF TRANSPOSITIONS

| SL | TL |
|--|--|
| This is hard to watch | لا أريد أن أنظر |
| You mean by ruining my carefully planned party | وهل يكون ذلك بإفساد برنامجي للحفلة؟ |
| Johnny works hard to make this extra special | جهداً كبيراً ليجعل الحفلة مميزة بذل جوني |

The first example is, “This is hard to watch”. This is an affirmative sentence; however, when we look at the translated sentence “لا أريد أن أنظر” we find it to be a negative sentence. Here it is clear that the translator resorted to changing the structure of the sentence to bring it closer to the structure used in TL. This shift from the affirmative to the negative sentence structure adds depth to the TL sentence and emphasizes the speaker's anxiety about not wanting to witness the events. It is considered a good structural shift that effectively delivered the translator's purpose.

Another affirmative phrase is “by ruining my carefully planned party.” Here, too, a shift in the structure was introduced, and it was translated as a rhetorical question: “وهل يكون ذلك بإفساد برنامجي للحفلة؟”. This rhetorical question effectively conveys the speaker's annoyance at having his party ruined, especially since the intonation in such questions is rather high. Therefore, it can be said that the translator's choice served the context.

In the sentence, “Johnny works hard to make this extra special”, the speaker uses the simple present tense while the translator preferred going for a past tense and translated the sentence as “بذل جوني جهداً كبيراً ليجعل الحفلة مميزة”. The use of the verb “بذل” transmits the message of a huge effort being put into organizing the event which helps understand the speaker's emotion in relaying this idea.

E. Descriptive Equivalent

In Descriptive Equivalent procedure, the meaning of the CBT is explained in several words (Newmark, 1988). However, the explanation here is less detailed than in the paraphrase procedure. Table 7 cites the two examples of CBT.

TABLE 7
EXAMPLES OF DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT

| SL | TL |
|--|--|
| Johnny is giving me the greatest headache of my entire existence right now | جوني هو حالياً أكبر مصدر إزعاج في كل وجودي |
| I know you and Johnny don't always see eye-to-eye | أعرف أنك لا تتفق دائماً مع جوني |

The first CBT is “the greatest headache”. The translator used the words “أكبر مصدر إزعاج” to describe that the headache is causing discomfort to the character. The second term is “see eye-to-eye”. Here, the translator used one word, “لا تتفق”, which describes the two characters' inability to get along. These two translations served the purpose very well, as they conveyed the message in simple terms while also maintaining relevance to the TL audience and perceptions.

V. DISCUSSION

The results show that the translators of the movie, *Hotel Transylvania*, went beyond literal translation. They employed a variety of techniques to accommodate the cultural differences between Arabic and English. Adaptive techniques such as paraphrasing, substitution, and the use of cultural substitutes could also be clearly identified. This shows that the translator(s) not only transferred words from one language to another but also, acted as mediators to bridge the two cultures effectively. This is consistent with the idea that audiovisual translation is not merely a transfer of words but an independent form of communication that must consider the audience's cultural context (Diaz Cintas & Rimmel, 2014). For example, when paraphrasing “Freaky Friday,” the translator(s) clearly aimed for viewers to understand the metaphor itself, even if it differed from the original (Nida, 1964). The translator chose to summarize rather than translate verbatim or quote directly, to ensure immediate understanding for the audience in a fast-paced comedic scene. Furthermore, the

aim was to ensure that even those unfamiliar with the film could grasp the role of the metaphor in the story, highlighting the surreal nature of body-swapping.

The same applies to the procedures of substitution and transformation. They demonstrated an understanding of the film's overall context by using images and dialogue within the scene to clarify meaning. As the use of the word "cave" demonstrates, this alternative use of language responds to the limitations and possibilities of the visual medium. The translator(s) cleverly utilized on-screen information to enhance the clarity of the dialogue. This decision maintained the coherence and fluidity of the narrative.

However, in some passages, the translator(s) relied too heavily on literal translation, such as in the expression, "spider web on the head." This can potentially create a problem. While a literal translation may be appropriate in some cases, translators should be more sensitive to idiomatic expressions and find alternatives that clearly convey the meaning in audiovisual content. In this case, a more descriptive synonym would have been more appropriate. This supports Baker's (2018) assertion that translators must know when to deviate from literal translation to avoid unintentional ambiguity or humor. However, this example also highlights the issue of "cultural shifts." For instance, if the phrase "spider web" is used as a metaphor for confusion, literal translation of "spider web" would eliminate the intended psychological nuance. This could disrupt the emotional portrayal of the characters. Tone and word order are also important. By transforming the phrase "It is painful to watch" into the Arabic imperative "I don't want to watch," the translator(s) incorporated a common personal expression in Arabic. This strengthens the character's emotional expression and increases the viewer's engagement with the story.

Overall, the skillful use of these devices in the movie helped convey the spirit, particularly its comedic and narrative aspects. The ultimate goal of the translational changes was to preserve the story's appeal. Key elements included: empathy for the characters (through the selection of culturally appropriate expressions), ease of understanding (paraphrasing and repetition), and the ability to convey humor (the use of expressions that fit the rhythm of Arabic comedy). This made the cultural content more accessible and understandable to Arab audiences, and also contributed to their enjoyment of the film.

VI. CONCLUSION

The processes of translating in general and translating culturally-bound phrases, as well as subtitling movies, require a lot of skill on the part of translators. Moreover, it requires a deep knowledge of the SL culture as many factors need to be taken into consideration; mainly, timing, structure, and wordiness. The aim of this study was to examine the cultural relevance of the translation methods used in the Arabic translation of the film, *Hotel Transylvania*. A detailed analysis of the translation procedure taxonomy confirmed the use of six methods from Newmark's (1988) framework. These procedures are literal translation, paraphrase, compensation, cultural equivalent, shifts or transpositions, and descriptive equivalent. In other words, while this analysis focused on identifying culturally established expressions, it was found that the movie translator(s) chose the most appropriate approach for each case, prioritizing the depth of cultural elements, the context of the video, and the preservation of continuity. Particularly significant is the observation of the "cultural shift" pattern; that is, how expressions change as a result of translation. This has a significant impact on how the work is perceived by the audience. The main purpose of the use of such procedures is to describe better and communicate the messages in minimal words and best received structures in the TL. Hence, the research concludes that these procedures best help the translator convey audiovisual messages to the target audience most suitably. To sum up, the most appropriate approach ultimately depends on how well the translator balances adherence to the original culture with accessibility and emotional impact on the viewer. Further research is needed to examine how audiences perceive these storytelling-focused translations.

A. Limitations

The study noted certain limitations. First, the focus was on a single film, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied on the translator's interpretation of the translation procedures, raising concerns about the subjective approach to the problem.

B. Recommendations for Future Studies

Future replications can adopt comparative analysis of the translation of different animated films from the same series. Comparing dubbing and translation of the same film into Arabic would provide valuable insights into how different audiovisual translation methods account for cultural nuances sensitivity. Finally, empirical studies measuring audience comprehension and evaluating different audiovisual translation methods would add a new dimension to the findings.

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Shaymaa Yahya Saleem Alharbi is an Assistant Professor at Taibah University. She holds a Ph.D. in Translation from the University of Leicester, United Kingdom (2019). She has over ten years of academic and teaching experience in English language and translation. She has participated in numerous training programs and academic conferences both locally and internationally, delivered workshops on translation fundamentals, and obtained a Train the Trainer (TOT) certification as well as executive diplomas in management, leadership, and total quality management. <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8983-2112>