A Cognitive Approach and the Translation Strategies Used
in the Subtitling of Metaphors in Three American Movies

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Abstract

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) illustrated that metaphors are not merely the ornaments belonging to literature or language itself; they govern our mind and regulate our daily behaviour. According to this view which was later known as the cognitive approach to metaphor, the conceptual system of man’s mind which controls the way we think and the way we behave is metaphoric in nature. According to the cognitive approach, Mandelblit (1995), Kovecses (2005), and Al-Hasnavi (2007) have each respectively considered two, four, and three schemes for metaphors in their models of translation. The present paper is an investigation to show that six schemes of metaphors should be considered in the subtitling of this figure of speech according to the cognitive approach of metaphors and based on the nature of the comparison of metaphors between the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL). In order to examine the practicality of this view, a number of English metaphors and their Persian subtitles in three American movies (Face Off, Con Air and Speed) will be discussed. There are two reasons behind choosing these films. First, all three movies belong to one genre (i.e., action). The nature of this genre of cinema seeks for the application of a large number of metaphors to further influence the viewers. Second, the variety of metaphors in these movies helps the researchers to provide clear examples for their considered schemes in the present study.

Introduction

Interlingual subtitling is among the most outstanding branches of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) which has been widely focused and analyzed in the past decade. This type of translation involves a shift from the oral to the written form as well as a transfer from one language to another. Despite the various strategies which are applied to perform interlingual
subtitling, the researchers have never reached a common attitude regarding the number and labels of such strategies. This lack of uniformity has resulted in considering the concept and taxonomies of strategies as vague. However, subtitling has always been accepted by different scholars as a series of losses, overlooking or forgetting strategies and omissions. Studies on interlingual subtitling are mostly founded on a film, a director or a specific issue such as translation, adaptation of cultural references, humour, taboo language, socio-dialects or the like. The present study is among the very few investigations which considers the matter of subtitling metaphors based on a cognitive approach with cultural concerns. Besides, it may be regarded as the first ever study which discusses the matter of subtitling metaphors in cinema movies on a cognitive basis and with cultural concerns from English to Persian.

Aims of the Study

The present study tries to answer the following questions on the basis of the cognitive approach to metaphors and with cultural considerations:

1. What are the strategies used by translators to deal with metaphoric expressions as culture-specific items in the subtitling of American movies to Persian?
2. What are the gaps in the subtitling of metaphoric expressions in the movies under study?
3. How can we stop the gaps and what strategies can be used to overcome such gaps?
4. What is the role of culture in the subtitling of metaphors and how can we consider cultural concerns when subtitling metaphors?
Methodology

This study aims at discussing the subtitling of metaphors from English to Persian based on the cognitive approach to metaphors and with cultural concerns. To serve this purpose, it starts with discussing the role of culture in the translation of metaphors. Later, the most outstanding cognitive models about translating metaphors will be considered and criticized. And finally a new cognitive model about different schemes of metaphors and the subsequent strategies for the translation of metaphors at each scheme will be presented. In the mean time, the metaphors applied in the American movies under this study (Face-off, Conair and Speed) will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to examine the feasibility of the presented new model. In the light of this analysis, proper answers will be provided for the research questions.

Constraints of Subtitling

Time and space are jointly known as the two main technical constraints in film subtitling, no matter what terminology may be used by different scholars to describe these constraints. Time constraint refers to the duration of time that a subtitle can be viewed on screen. Accordingly, a normal two full line subtitle which contains 14-16 words should remain for less than 5 ½ seconds on screen.

The space constraints, on the other hand, refer to the space on the screen where a subtitle appears. On this basis, every subtitle contains one or two lines, with a maximum of 32 to 40 characters in each (Gottlieb, 1998; Luyken et al, 1991; de Linde, 1995).
Influencing Parameters in the Translation of Culture-Bound Elements in Subtitles

Jan Pedersen (2005) presented a series of parameters based on which subtitlers should decide which strategy to use in the subtitling of culture-bound elements. These strategies can be applied for both Extralinguistic and Intralinguistic Culture-bound Elements such as metaphors. Among all of Pedersen’s parameters, centrality of reference, intersemiotic redundancy and co-text are focused in this study.

Centrality of Reference

Centrality of reference is one of the most important influencing parameters which works on multiple levels. The establishment of the centrality of an Extralinguistic Culture-bound Reference (ECR) in a text involves at least two levels; namely, the macro level and the micro level. An ECR is central on the macro level if it is typically the subject matter or very central theme of the film or TV programme at hand. In contrast, an ECR is peripheral on the micro level if it is just mentioned in passing a few times in the film.

Intersemiotic Redundancy

Subtitles are part of a poly-semiotic text and therefore different forms of the common notion of the target text (TT). In the view of Gottlieb (1997) there are four semiotic channels in poly-semiotic texts such as films or TV programmes which are as follows:

a) Non-verbal visual channels; namely, the picture
b) Non-verbal audio channels like music and sound effects
c) Verbal audio channel; that is, the dialogue
d) Verbal visual channels; namely, signs and captions
Semiotic information can be carried via all these channels; however, in case of overlap or Intersemiotic Redundancy, the subtitler is recommended to provide the TT audience with the guidance.

Co-text
This parameter is quite simple. It refers to overlapping information in the Co-text (the dialogue) such as disambiguation or explanation of an ECR earlier or later in the Co-text.

The Cognitive Approach to Metaphor

Unlike traditional approaches which regard metaphor as an ornament or a figure of speech belonging to language or rhetorics, metaphors are not merely considered as linguistic entities in the cognitive approach. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) defined metaphor as a device to understand the target domain experience on the basis of a familiar one (source domain). Accordingly, it is believed that metaphors as a persistent part of our ordinary life can be detected not only in our language but in our thought and action in a way that we can consider them as the foundation of our ordinary conceptual system (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

A Cognitive Perspective Towards the Role of Culture in Metaphor

Edward Burnett Tylor (quoted by Smith, 2001) defined culture as an intricate whole which comprises knowledge, belief, art, Morales, law, custom and other habits and abilities which can be obtained by man as a member of society. Consequently, culture is inter-related with a great number of fields which are still needed to be discovered, including the case of metaphor.

On the other hand, metaphor researchers are practically interested in the area of cross-cultural variation in a way that different studies have been conducted on the comparison of different metaphorical concepts and expressions between three different kinds of cross-cultural variations in the usage of metaphors as follows:
a) Differences regarding the particular source-target conventional mappings in the given cultures,
b) Differences regarding the value judgements about the source or target domains shared mappings,
c) Differences regarding the degree of pervasiveness of metaphor as such and as compared with other rhetorical figures.

The first type of variation is the most common between metaphors. This refers to the situation that metaphors belonging to different cultures map onto the same target domain despite having different source domains. In fact, this is the way that many complex conceptual metaphors show various cultural models. For instance, many metaphorical expressions which are derived from the metaphor, ‘Life is a journey’ involve different types of vehicles like cars, trains, ships, and the like (Boers, 2003). In different cultures, different means of transportation are used; therefore, they play different roles in people’s minds and lives. Consequently, the usage of ship and coach in a large number of the metaphorical expressions of the western languages is due to the use of these vehicles as the most important ones in western countries.

The second type of variation is regarding ‘connotation’ and ‘institution’ in a certain culture. Lack of knowledge of particular cultural backgrounds makes these aspects of great importance to foreign language learners. Understanding the implied meanings of special metaphors is at times a difficult task for foreign language learners to do. Therefore, further explanations about the implied meaning of metaphors can be of great help. The study of idioms and proverbs (as different types of metaphors) in a foreign language can be regarded as the best instance. The relation between metaphorical concepts and fundamental values in the culture makes different value systems to account for this variation (Su, 2000).
For the third type of variation, Boers (2003) argues that different languages show different preferences to use a certain figure of speech like metonymy. Charties-Black (2003) in his comparative study between Malay and English exhibits that Malay compared to English shows more preference to use metonymic expressions in speaking.

**Cognitive Models for the Translation of Metaphors**

**Mandelblit’s Cognitive Translation Hypothesis**

Based on the cognitive approach, Mandelblit (1995) presented his 'Cognitive Translation Hypothesis' and considered two schemes for the translation of metaphors as follows:

a) Similar mapping conditions between the SL and the TL

b) Different mapping conditions between the SL and the TL

According to Mandelblit (1995), the translation of a metaphor with a similar mapping condition in the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) is less time-consuming and simple. On the other hand, the translation of the SL metaphor with a different mapping condition can be reproduced in the TL while the translator can choose from among the following strategies to render the SL metaphor into the TL: rendering the metaphor to simile, a paraphrase, a footnote, an explanation and as the last resort- omission.

**Al-Hasnawi’s attitude in translating metaphors**

Al-Hasnawi (2007) added one scheme to Mandelblit's Cognitive Translation Hypothesis and considered three schemes for the translation of metaphors as follows:

a) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementation

b) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical implementation
c) Metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexical implementation

According to Al-Hasnawi (2007), the first set includes the universal metaphors which are shared by human experience. The second set comprises the metaphors which are only lexically different because of the ethical system in the SL and TL. Finally, the third group includes the culture-bound metaphors in the SL.

**Kovecses’s View in Translating Metaphors**

Kovecses (2005) considered four schemes in the translation of metaphors from the SL to the TL as follows:

a) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementation

b) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical implementation

c) Metaphors of different mapping conditions but similar lexical implementation

d) Metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexical implementation

**Criticism on the Previous Cognitive Models of Translating Metaphors**

The translation of a metaphor (in the cognitive approach) involves two aspects of this figure of speech; namely, mapping conditions and lexical implementation. This means that there should be logically six schemes to discuss when comparing a bi-aspect entity (metaphor) between two systems (the SL and the TL). These possible schemes which root in the nature of comparison can be referred to as follows:

a) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementation

b) Metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical implementation

c) Metaphors of different mapping conditions but similar lexical implementation
d) Metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexical implementation

e) The SL metaphor does not exist in the TL

f) The TL metaphor does not exist in the SL

In the next section, we discuss the practicality or otherwise of these schemes through extensive linguistic (rather than merely logical) examples.

**A New Model in the Subtitling of Metaphors**

As stated above, the translation of metaphors in the cognitive view is firmly dependent on two aspects of metaphors; namely, mapping conditions and lexical implementation. Consequently, there should be six logically possible schemes on a cognitive basis towards the translation of metaphors which can be discussed as follows:

**Scheme One** – metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementation

The metaphors of this scheme are ‘universal metaphors’ which are shared by the SL and the TL cultures. For example:

I'd like to **stand on my own two feet**.

Definition of metaphor: *to become independent*

In Persian, this sentence can be subtitled as:

میخواهم روی پاهاي خودم باشم.

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: I'd like to **stand on my own feet**)
Scheme Two – metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical implementation

At this scheme mapping conditions of the SL metaphor and the TL metaphor belong to the same conceptual domain (e.g. numbers, religion, sport and the like) but they are lexically different. For example:

She is a real 10.

Definition of metaphor: talented and knowledgeable

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: She is 20)

Scheme Three – metaphors of different mapping conditions but similar lexical implementation

The SL metaphor and the TL metaphor have similar word implementation but (rather) different mapping conditions. For example:

He calls his teacher by his first name.

Definition of metaphor: to have a friendly relation with

Persian speakers do have such a metaphor in their language:

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: He calls his teacher by his first name)

As it can be viewed, both metaphors include quite the same words but the concepts which lie behind these seemingly identical metaphors are different. 'He calls his teacher by his first
name' for the English native speakers means 'He has a friendly relation with his teacher; while the Persian speakers use to interpret the same metaphor as 'He is a rude person'.

**Scheme Four** – metaphors of different mapping conditions and different lexical implementation.

At this scheme, the mapping conditions of the SL metaphor and the TL metaphor do not belong to one conceptual domain; besides, they do not follow the same lexical patterns. For Example:

Somebody get the **asshole** outa here.

Definition of metaphor: **annoying person**

Persian subtitlers translate this metaphor as:

یه نفر این سیریش رو بتداره بیرون.

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: Somebody get the **stick** out of here)

The use of metaphors which are constructed basically by sexual terms is something common in the American English (particularly in the movie dialogues). For example, the term 'asshole' is a very common term in the American movies which indicates, 'a worthless and annoying person'; however, Persian speakers prefer to use the metaphors which are constructed based on non-sexual terms.
**Scheme Five** – the SL metaphor does not exist in the TL (the SL speakers use to conceptualize an identity in the metaphoric language while the TL speakers use the literal language)

For example:

He is a **late bloomer**.

Persian speakers do not have any metaphor in their language which can be considered as an equivalent for this metaphor; instead, they use the literal language to explain its meaning.

**Scheme Six** – the TL metaphor does not exist in the SL (the TL speakers conceptualize a certain identity in the metaphoric language while the SL speakers use the literal language).

On the surface, this scheme is no more than a theoretical possibility which has nothing to do with our case of translating metaphors from the SL to the TL. In other words, the lack of a metaphor in the SL can never be considered as problematic while we translate from the SL to the TL. But the fact is that the present scheme can be the source of great help to subtitlers who suffer the most from the unique constraints of this particular type of translation; namely, space and time. Metaphor is the shrunk form of a rather lengthy idea in the literal language. Therefore, a subtitler can use the TL metaphor for the translation of the SL literal statement (with regard to the cultural experience and semantic associations) not only to save on space and time but to help the viewers to better enjoy the movie with more TL-oriented subtitles.

Nida (1964) considered the translation of a non-metaphor by a metaphor as relevant to reach more effectiveness in communication. On the very same basis, Vermeer (1989, quoted by Munday, 2001) stressed on the possibility of translating a ST literal phrase to a TT metaphor should it be more suitable for the TT context.
The Required Strategies for the Translation of Metaphors at Each Scheme

What matters the most when it comes to choosing from among the strategies of translation is to determine the type of translation. In other words, the nature, constraints, and parameters of a certain type of translation determine the types of strategies that a translator can use. As it has been stated before, the present paper is focused on the interlingual open subtitling of metaphors from English to Persian. Therefore, on one hand, we need to consider the constraints of this particular type of translations as well as its influencing parameters when discussing different strategies. And on the other hand, the vital role of culture in metaphors should be underlined. As mentioned previously, metaphors (as culture-bound items) govern our conceptual system and regulate our language, thought and even our behaviour. Therefore, double care should be taken into account when dealing with the translation of metaphors as the loan or loan-translation of unnecessary metaphors from the SL to the TL which may result in the hegemony of the Source Language and Culture over the Target Language and Culture.

With these vital points in mind, let us discuss the required strategies at each scheme:

**Scheme One**- This type of metaphor can be best subtitled by reproducing the same image in the TL. For example:

Miho, you’re an **angel**.

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: Miho, you’re an **angel**)
**Scheme Two**- The best strategy to subtitle this type of metaphor is to replace the SL metaphor with the TL metaphor which follows the same mapping conditions as the SL metaphor but is lexically different. For example:

He *took it on the chin*.

Definition of metaphor: to leave something unnoticed

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: He *passed it under his moustache*)

**Scheme Three**- In order to subtitle these types of metaphors, conversion of the SL metaphor to sense is the best choice. In contrast, translation of the SL metaphor by the same metaphor plus tense is not recommended (due to cultural considerations and particular constraints in subtitling; namely, time and space). For example:

He *calls his teacher by his first name*.

Definition of metaphor: to have a friendly relation with someone

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: He *has a friendly relation with his teacher*)

**Scheme Four**- The preferable strategy for rendering this type of metaphor is to replace it with its semantically equivalent TL metaphor. For example:

You are really *pushing my buttons*.
Definition of metaphor: to irritate someone

(The word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: You are really **going on my nerves**)
The final word

In the end of this part and before discussing the collected data, it is of great importance to note that choosing from among the presented strategies is highly influenced by the parameters of subtitling (Pedersen, 2005) and the particular constraints (i.e. space and time) of this certain type of translation which were focused here as well as other issues which root in the nature of subtitling and metaphor.

Discussion of Findings

The task of collecting the applied metaphors in the movies was done with great care and was followed with the analysis of the data on the basis of the suggested approach towards categorizing and translation of metaphors in this study. Later, the results were put into the SPSS software to evaluate the frequency and percentage of different types of metaphors, the applied strategies in the original subtitles, and the applied strategies in the suggested subtitles. The reason behind this was to verify the practicality of the suggested taxonomy of metaphors as well as the subsequent strategies for the translation of metaphors in different schemes as provided here. Besides, the acquired statistics offer us with sufficient information to see the problematic cases, the wrong strategies applied by Iranian subtitlers to translate metaphors, and the frequency of such wrong choices.

Before starting the task of discussing our data in the considered movies for this study, one point is needed to be explained. The ruling government in Iran is a highly religious one which closely monitors the cultural products of the western countries (such as American movies) to safeguard the cultural and religious values of its nation. Therefore, subtitling of original American movies is usually conducted in illegal ways and in concealment.
Consequently, the subtitlers are unknown and there is no way to ask them for more explanation on their suggested subtitles.

**Statistics and Discussion of Findings Regarding the Six Presented Schemes of Metaphors in the Movies Investigated**

In Table 1, the extracted data indicates the feasibility of all six schemes which have been presented earlier. Besides, the frequency of different metaphors in different schemes is in a way that we can divide our schemes into two categories: major schemes and minor schemes. The former refers to those schemes which have a high frequency; while, the latter refers to the ones with a low frequency. To summarize, there are two groups of schemes for metaphors; namely, the major schemes including schemes 1, 4, and 5; and the minor schemes containing schemes 2, 3, and 6.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different Schemes (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) in Subtitling Metaphors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers in the first column of the table refer to different schemes as follow:
1 (Scheme 1: metaphors of similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementation)
2 (Scheme 2: metaphors of similar mapping conditions but different lexical implementation)
3 (Scheme 3: metaphors of different mapping conditions but similar lexical implementation)
4 (Scheme 4: metaphors of different mapping condition and different lexical implementation)
5 (Scheme 5: the SL metaphor does not exist in the TL)
6 (Scheme 6: the TL metaphor does not exist in the SL)

Statistics and Discussion of Findings About the Applied Strategies to Translate Metaphors in the Original Subtitles

As shown in Table 2 below, the translation of the SL metaphors to sense in the TL, translation of the SL metaphors to the equivalent TL metaphors, translation of non-metaphors to metaphors, omission, and reproducing the same image in the TL are respectively the most applied strategies by Persian subtitlers. Besides, mistranslation (which is due to the lack of sufficient information about American English) and illegally reproducing of the same SL image in the TL (which is due to carelessness of the Persian subtitlers about cultural concerns) are seemingly the sources of mistakes in the discussed movies. In the meantime, some cases of omission seemed to be totally uncalled for.

TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different Translation Strategies (A, B, C, D, E, F, and G) Applied in the Original Subtitles</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid A</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The letters in the first column of the table refer to different strategies as follows:
A (Translation of the SL metaphor to sense in the TL)
B (Legally reproducing the same SL image in the TL)
Statistics and Discussion of Findings of the Suggested Strategies in this Study

As can be seen in Table 3, all the gathered metaphors from the three movies could be translated via applying the presented strategies in this study. Therefore, it is safe to claim that the presented strategies are completely practical in the subtitling of metaphors. In other words, these strategies have proven to be good options for the subtitlers to enhance the quality of their translations and to avoid possible mistakes.

**TABLE 3**
Different Translation Strategies (A, B, C, D, and F) Proposed by This Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>94.5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The letters in the first column of the table refer to the following strategies:
A (Reproducing the same SL image in the TL)
B (Replacing the SL metaphor by the TL metaphor)
C (Conversion of the SL metaphor to sense)
D (Translation of non-metaphor to metaphor)
E (Omission)
What are the strategies used by translators to deal with metaphoric expressions as culture-specific items in the subtitling of American movies to Persian?

The findings of this study revealed that the applied strategies used by Iranian subtitlers to translate metaphors in the considered movies for this investigation are as follows:

1. Mistranslation (38.8%),
2. Translation of the SL metaphor to sense in the TL (20%),
3. Translation of the SL metaphor to the equivalent TL metaphor (20%),
4. Translation of non-metaphor to metaphor (7.9%),
5. Illegally reproducing the same SL image in the TL (5.5%),
6. Omission (5.5%), and legally reproducing the same SL image in the TL (2.4%) (see Appendix A for examples).

What are the gaps in the subtitling of metaphoric expressions in the movies under study?

The most prominent gaps in the translation of metaphoric expressions in the movies under study were detected as cases of mistranslation (38.8%), illegally reproducing the same SL image in the TL (5.5%), and (unnecessary) omission (5.5%).

How can we stop the gaps and what strategies can be used to overcome such gaps?

Based on the findings here, the six suggested schemes for metaphors and their relevant suggested strategies; namely, reproducing the same SL image in the TL, replacing the SL metaphor by the TL metaphor, conversion of the SL metaphor to sense, translation of non-metaphor to metaphor, and omission can be best applied by Iranian subtitlers to overcome the afore-mentioned gaps.
What is the role of culture in the subtitling of metaphors and how can we consider cultural concerns when subtitling metaphors?

And finally, it has been approved that culture has an undeniable role in the matter of metaphors and their translation from the SL to the TL in a way that neglecting cultural concerns in the subtitling of metaphors may cause an inconvenient influence of the Source Culture and Language over the Target Culture and Language. An example of this case in the present study is illegally reproducing the same SL image in the TL which can transfer the mental, cultural, and linguistic patterns of the SL into the TL.

Conclusion

The present study shows that the subtitlers of our considered three movies suffer from a number of shortcomings that can be summarized as poor knowledge of English, which is the source of a considerable number of their mistakes, lack of any scientific method in subtitling metaphors which can be clearly seen in the subtitles which does not let them to follow a straightforward guideline in their way of translating metaphors, and carelessness towards cultural considerations which results in entering the unnecessary SL cultural patterns by illegally reproducing the SL images in the TL.

To remove these problems, a new attitude towards the subtitling of metaphors has been presented which considers six schemes for the comparison of metaphors between the two languages. Later, the feasibility of these six schemes and their subsequent strategies have been examined through different examples. The results have also indicated that the presented attitude in this research can be regarded as a practical step to both remove the present obstacles in the subtitling of cinema movies from English to Persian and to lay the ground to implement cultural concerns in the subtitling of metaphors on a cognitive basis.
Appendix A

The following is a list of examples for the applied strategies used by Iranian subtitlers to translate metaphors in the considered movies for this investigation.

1. Mistranslation:

He’s a piece of work, a real piece of work.

Definition of metaphor: a very experienced and person

خیلی عوضیه. یه عوضی واقعی.

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: He is an asshole, a real asshole.

2. Translation of the SL metaphor to sense in the TL:

This kid’s a potential fountain of information about the family business.

Definition of the metaphor: source of information

این پسره خیلی اطلاعات راجع به نحوه کار قاچاقچی‌ها داره.

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: This kid has lots of information about the way the smugglers act.

3. Translation of the SL metaphor to the equivalent TL metaphor:

Yeah, well, I’d still like to crush his larynx with my boot.

Definition of metaphor: to shut one’s mouth

آره میدونم. ولی هنوز دلم میخوام با چکمه هام یه اردکی بهش بزنم.

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: I still like to kick his ass with my boot.
4. Illegally reproducing the same SL image in the TL:

She made a Pez-dispenser out of him.

Definition of the metaphor: *to cut one's head ear for ear*

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: She *made a Pez-dispenser out of him.*

(Iranian viewers have no idea about a Pez-dispenser)

5. Omission:

The do-rag gotta go, *homeboy*

Definition of the metaphor: *pal*

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: Your hat gotta go.

6. Legally reproducing the same SL image in the TL:

If I don’t get my shot in the next couple of hours … *somebody gonna be sending flowers to my mother.*

Definition of the metaphor: *I will die*

Word-for-word translation of the Persian subtitle: … *somebody gonna be sending flowers to my mother*
REFERENCES


