

Translation of Taboos in Dubbed American Crime Movies into Persian

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This study aimed at investigating the strategies which Iranian AV translators use for rendition of taboo language in American crime movies dubbed into Persian. The required bilingual corpus was purposively selected based on a pre-determined set of criteria. During data collection, drawing on a Persian-specific set of types of taboo language, the 642 instances in the selected sample of four American crime movies were detected and recorded. Having analyzed the strategies in rendering the original taboos into Persian, a model of four basic strategies was empirically achieved—namely, a) translating the source culture taboo to a target culture taboo, b) deletion of the source culture taboo, c) substituting the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo, and d) rendering the source culture taboo to a target culture euphemism. The descriptive statistics showed that the general approach taken by the AV translators was toning down the force of taboo language, following the target culture norms especially by deleting the source culture taboo as the most frequent strategy or replacing it by a non-taboo or euphemism, even though nearly one-thirds of the taboos were kept in the dubbed target product. The findings are useful data within descriptive translation studies; nevertheless, they cannot be generalized since the study is limited by a relatively small corpus and a non-probability sampling technique.

KeyWords: Taboo language, dubbing, American crime movies, Persian, censorship

1. Introduction

Language as a means of communication is entangled with culture, which is “socially acquired knowledge” (Yule, 2010, p.267), as a main component of every language. To House (2009), culture is a series of values and conventions which are shared among a certain speech community and is in the service of directing people’s thoughts and manners, while Newmark (1988, p.94) construes culture as “the way of life and its manifestation that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression.”

Taboo as a means or topic of expression has always been part of every language and culture. According to Longman Advanced North American Dictionary (2007) “a taboo subject, word, activity, etc. is one that people avoid because they think it is extremely offensive or embarrassing.” Taboo has a strong cultural component representing particular customs and the way people view their society (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2013).

Since the advent of audiovisual (AV) materials, people have gained increasingly more access to various types of screens like theaters, TV, DVDs, computers, and tablets, among others which are based on the display of the image, and it is safe to assume that movies, with vast entertaining, artistic, critical, and political dimensions, have been the most popular of all such AV material. Obviously, movies as art or industry are international and trans-cultural, and therefore, not limited to a single audience. As Ivarsson (1992) points out people can hear the sound of the conversations in movies and get the essential information, but the problem is that when movies are shown in other countries with a different language thus, original conversations are not understood to all audience, and translation comes as an aid. When the first “talking pictures” were created in the 1920s, there was a great concern for a solution to avail movies to circulate despite language varieties and differences internationally (Chiaro, 2009, p. 141).

To this end, audiovisual translation (AVT) was born. However, AV translators have always faced a series of complex problems during the process of translation. These difficulties according to Chiaro (2009, p.155) are:

1. Highly culture-specific references (e.g., place names, famous people)
2. Language specific features (e.g., taboo)
3. Areas of overlap between language and culture.

Translating the above features are more challenging in movies because the audience has direct access to a considerable portion of the original material, that is, the visuals. Among these taboo language is grave difficulty. Rendition of taboo language in AVT is a difficult and complex task and with the advent of screen material, taboo languages are observed more frequently, while it is generally thought that their force is strengthened when they appear in written materials like subtitles or books (Tveit, 2009). However, the situation is now different as the printed swear expressions possess the weaker version than the auditory ones in movies since “they are pronounced with stress and intensity” (p. 89). At often times AV translators attempt to “tone down the expressive force of the four-letter words [English taboo language written with four letters], in addition to leave many of them out” (Tveit, 2009, p. 89). Pavesi and Malinverno (2000), cited by Antonini and Chiaro (2009, p. 103), explain that Italian AV translators are used to “under-translate” such expressions and reduce the number of taboo expressions in the translated versions than in the original. It goes without saying that, AV translators have to employ particular strategies to cope with the challenges of taboo rendition. This study is an attempt to describe the normatively employed strategies of translation of taboo expressions by Iranian AV translators in dubbed crime movies into Persian.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Taboo Language

The English term taboo was originally derived from Tongan *tabu* in the late 18th century (Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary, 2010). Capitan James Cook was the first person in introducing the term into European languages after he encountered it for the first time in Polynesia (Holden, 2001). Taboo in Tongan means “forbidden” (Fromkin et al., 2013, p.321). As for the contemporary understanding of the concept in English, Yule (2010) relates taboos to slang used by the youth, and he adds that these are expressions of which people shun to make use due to religion, politeness, and behavior, and he explains that swear words make up most taboos. Fromkin et al. (2013) believe that taboos show particular customs and the way in which a society is viewed. They also mention that expressions associated with sex, sex organs, and

body functions, constitute the majority of taboos in most cultures. According to Allan and Burridge (2006, p.1) taboos are rooted in social limitations on people's behaviors which can result in discomfort or harm. They classify taboos into the following categories:

- a) Bodies and their effluvia (sweat, snot, faeces, menstrual fluid, etc.);
- b) The organs and acts of sex, micturition and defecation;
- c) Diseases, death and killing (including hunting and fishing);
- d) Naming, addressing, touching and viewing persons and sacred beings, objects and places;
- e) Food gathering, preparation and consumption.

The classification appears clear and practical for the western world; however, Sharifi and Darchinian (2009) in a local study found that the Persian translator has to deal with a wider and fairly different range of categories as taboo language:

- a) Private relations between men and women whether legitimate or illegitimate and words related to them such as, kissing, hugging, sleeping with, cheating on, etc.;
- b) Boys' and girls' relations before marriage like boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.;
- c) Calling or naming outer sexual organs and related words;
- d) Words and expressions related to alcoholic drinks and drugs;
- e) Swearing, curse and impolite expressions;
- f) Stating features of immoral behaviors and habits like thieving, etc.;
- g) Issues related to religion and belief which are against those of the translator's society;
- h) Stating some political issues which are rather threatening to the translator's society and cause some political situations to remain highly unstable.

Given that taboos are not universally recognized, the present study uses Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) taboo typology of contemporary Iranian culture. Namely, what is considered taboo in one culture might not be considered taboo in another, even though cultures share much in common in this regard. In the case of Alcoholic drinks the situation is an instance of discrepancy, as the Persian culture considers the alcoholic drinks related terms

as taboos, while in the Anglophone world for instance, they are not. Although Allan and Burridge's typology can be applied to the Persian culture, it lacks some Persian taboo categories such as those related to politics or immoral behaviors. For example, the Iranian would not consider diseases or death as taboos. Likewise, the words like boyfriend and girlfriend which are considered as taboos in the Iranian culture do not fit Allan and Burridge's (2006) typology. Furthermore, Sharifi and Darchinian's model is much more specific than Allan and Burridge's. This study, thus, in order to make detailed use of taboo classifications, employs Sharifi and Darchinian's (2009) typology.

2.2. Dubbing as Audiovisual Translation

Even though multimedia translation, screen translation, or AVT is a widely expanding field within translation studies (Gambier, 2012; Orero, 2009), the most prevalent forms of AVT are subtitling and dubbing. However, Gambier (2009, pp. 42-46) introduces a wider range of current AVT categories:

- a) Interlingual subtitling (open caption), which is carried out between two different languages for the cinema and video DVDs, including bilingual subtitling.
- b) Bilingual subtitling, in the case of the country Belgium where subtitles are shown in two different languages at the same time.
- c) Consecutive interpreting
- d) Simultaneous interpreting
- e) Intralingual subtitling (close caption), which is done in the original languages and for the hard of hearing.
- f) Dubbing, in that the original sound track is replaced by a target one and covers lip-synchronizations.
- g) Voice-over or half-dubbing, which is associated with documentaries and interviews, and the original sound is heard beneath the translation sound.
- h) Free-commentary
- i) Sight Translation
- j) Real-time Subtitling
- k) Surtitling, which is used in musical performances and projected above the stage.

l) Audio description, which is used for the visually impaired, and the blind, in which a narration is added to the movie in order to transfer the visual information via verbal information.

Chaume (2013, p. 107) takes his definition of dubbing further as follows:

Dubbing consists of translating and lip-syncing the script of an audiovisual text, which is then performed by actors directed by a dubbing director and, where available, with advice from a linguistic consultant or dubbing assistant. In some European and Asian countries (i.e. France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain and Turkey, or China and Japan, among others) it is the most widespread form of audiovisual translation for productions from foreign distributors and television companies. This complex process is linguistic and cultural, but also technical and artistic, where teamwork is vital in order to achieve a high quality end product.

Iran is among the countries that a considerable number of foreign movies are dubbed, and the market's preference is dubbing and voice-over. And subtitling is mostly carried out as an amateur activity on the net by fansubbers. In addition, all TV channels provide dubbed versions of fictional screen products including all kinds of movie genres and animated movies, and voice-over versions for documentaries, and interviews, whereas subtitling is seen in few cases on low profile interviews on news programs. It is only natural that the Iranian viewers have grown accustomed to dubbing. Moreover, in the country which is known to defy Westernization, culturally, expressing a strong preference for dubbing is reasonable since there is a relation between dubbing and nationalism. As Danan (1991) states, "A strong nationalistic system tends to be closed and reject outside influences. Translation in a nationalistic environment must therefore be target oriented in order to make the foreign material conform as much as possible to the local standards" (p. 612). Since viewers have direct access to original dialogues in subtitling, this might prompt audiences to use the foreign language in their routine activities or make them interested in the foreign cultures (Danan, 1991). Or when AV material in English and English language as the current language of power is concerned, according to Gottlieb (2004) subtitling helps "cementing the dominance of English" (p. 87). On the other hand dubbing hides the original sound track of the movie, creates a situation for the audience as they are watching a movie in

their own language thus, they have no access to the original language of the movie (O'Connell, 2007). Therefore, dubbing is "an assertion of the supremacy of the national language and its unchallenged political, economic and cultural power within the nation's boundaries" (Danan, p. 612).

In the case of dubbing, according to Chiaro (2009), typically, four stages are involved. First, the text of the movie (transcript) is rendered. Second, some changes inevitably occur in order to make the translation sound natural and to solve the problem of lip synchronizations of the actors. Third, the translated transcript is going to replace the original sound by that of the dubbing actors in the studio. And finally, once recording is completed, the recorded sound tracks are fitted into the original movie.

Nevertheless, it is generally thought that the process of dubbing is the same everywhere, but the process might differ from one country to another or even from a certain dubbing studio to another in certain details. The task of dubbing is very convoluted, and as such many factors are involved in the process comprising many stages. The first step starts by the client like a TV station sending the transcript of the movie to the dubbing studio. The client might commission the dubbing studio to dub the original songs or assign special rules to the dubbing actors. Then, an independent translator is asked to translate the received material by means of the original movie and the transcript. Next, a proof-reader confirms the translation. At the synchronization phase, the synchronizer matches the translation with the original, and omits and adds information if necessary to preserve synchronization. At last, in the dubbing sessions the synchronized and translated scripts are given to the dubbing actors to play their roles at a minimum of time and cost. Screen materials in this field always encounter great changes and adaptations, and that is what makes this field quite sensitive. And most of modifications might happen at the process of synchronization and proof-reading phases (Martínez, 2004). Chaume (2006) also points out that "Synchronization (or lip-sync) is one of the key factors at stake in dubbing" (p. 7). In her seminal paper, Matamala (2010) provides evidence that a great deal of changes take place at the synchronization phase like, reduction, amplification, changed word order, modification, repetition, among others.

2.3. Norms in Translation

The characteristics of norms would lead us to a better understanding of translation or more specifically, the translating strategies (Toury, 2004) and the audience's expectations (Chesterman, 1997). Munday (2012) believes that norms are peculiar to cultures, societies, and time, being socio-cultural limitations which are acquired by persons during the educational and socializing processes. The concept of norms is best defined by Toury (1995, p. 55) as follows:

The translation of general values or ideas shared by a community—as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate— into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioral dimension.

Pym (2010) points out that while dealing with descriptive translation theories, norms “usually operate at a wider, more social level” (p.73). He then adds that norms are not supposed to be followed by all translators as they are not general rules in order to be respected. But according to Delabastita (2008) norms can be parts of the main factors which have “guided or influenced the translators in their choices” (p.234). In their socio-cultural dimensions, in the process of translation, norms put some limitations on translators' behaviors because the acceptability of target text (TT) is of great concern to them. Due to socio-cultural norms like religion, morality, among others, translators manipulate the source text (ST) by means of some strategies such as omission to create an acceptable translation for the TT audience (Pei, 2010). Generally speaking as Schäffner (2010) remarks translation is norm-governed, and the relation between the ST and TT is dictated by norms, and the best method in studying such translational behaviors according to Baker (2009) is researching a corpus of actual translations, then discerning regular translation strategies or habitual patterns of translation in that corpus.

Toury (1995, 2004) classifies norms into: a) initial norms, b) preliminary norms, and c) operational norms. According to Munday (2012), in line with Toury's initial and preliminary norms, Chesterman (1997) proposes his model of translation norms as: a) product or expectancy norms and b) professional norms.

Table 1. Toury's and Chesterman's classification of norms (Munday, 2012, p. 183)

Toury		Chesterman	
Initial norms	Translator's subjection to ST-oriented norms (adequacy) or TT-oriented norms (acceptability)	Product or expectancy norms	What the readers expect of the TT; they relate to translation tradition and prevailing genre and discourse conceptions and give criteria for evaluation
Preliminary norms	Translation policy for selection of texts and directness of translation (sometimes via intermediate language)	Professional norms	Accountability norm is ethical; the translator accepts responsibility. Communication norm is social; translator is expert
Operational norms	Relate to the choices in the text itself; metrical norms (is the text complete?) and textual-linguistic norms (the lexical and syntactic choices)		Relation norm is linguistic; judged according to the text type, brief, ST author intentions and needs of TT readers

One of the socio-cultural norms pertains to ideology (Pei, 2010) which its role in dubbing studies in particular descriptive ones is highly significant (Chaume, 2012), and is well stated by Hatim and Munday (2004) as “the basic orientation chosen by the translator operating within a social and cultural context (the choice, for example, between Venuti's domesticating and foreignizing translation” (p. 103).

In the process of translation, the ideological interventions are highly made not only by the translators but also by those who “wield power” that make translators produce texts which are not rendition in nature; in other words, the readers or audience are not aware that they are reading a translation (Fawcett & Monday, 2009, pp. 137-138). Indeed, it is called a domestication translation or a covert one in Venuti's (1998) and House's (1997) typology of translation strategies, respectively.

Karamitroglou (2000) explores the links of the concept of norms and AVT. He lists a series of elements which are involved in the process of AVT among

which “human agents” have the highest priority (p.71). The dub manager, translation commissioners, and the translators play a key role in this process. For example, the commissioners which are national channels of Iran contact the dubbing studio for a dubbed version of a movie with a special purpose they might outline. For instance, the dubbed movie should not show high cases of inappropriate visual and auditory materials (Taboo words); thus, the dub manager and translator must fulfill the determined purpose by the commissioners. Otherwise, their dubbed products would not receive the permission to be distributed in the market or broadcast on TV channels.

3. Method

3.1. Corpus

The study is based on a comparative model, and it uses a bilingual unidirectional parallel corpus (Saldanha & O’Brien, 2013, p.68; Laviosa, 2010, p.84) which comprises of the original scripts of a purposively determined sample of popular American crime movies and the dubbed versions into Persian. To determine the subjects to form the corpus needed for the study, a criterion sampling technique (Saldanha & O’Brien, 2013, p.34; Dörnyei, 2007, p.126) was used, and as such, a set of predetermined criteria was set to select the movies which would best serve the purpose of the research. This technique of sampling has successful applications in corpus-based studies (Saldanha & O’Brien, 2013). The following criteria were used for selection: a) including a high frequency of taboo language, b) dubbed by a single AV

Table 2. The English Corpus of the Study

No.	Original Title	Release Year	Run Time	Director
1	Cop Out	2010	110 minutes	Kevin Smith
2	15 Minutes	2001	120 minutes	John Herzfeld
3	Pulp Fiction	1994	154 minutes	Quentin Tarantino
4	Insomnia	2002	118 minutes	Christopher Nolan

Table 3. The Persian Corpus of the Study

No.	Title Back Translation	Dubbing Year	Run Time	AV Translator
1	Outlaw	2010	99 minutes	Changiz Jalilvand
2	15 Minutes	2007	105 minutes	Mahdi Arjomand
3	Pulp Fiction	2004	95 minutes	Amir Houshang Zand
4	Insomnia	2003	111 minutes	Aria Zarin Kafsh

translator, c) dubbed by an Iranian AV translator with Persian as their native language, d) dubbed by an official and professional AVT company, and e) each movie ought to be translated by a different AV translator. The details of the four original movies and the dubbed version, selected for the study is presented in Table 2 and 3.

3.2. Procedure

In addition to the original movies, the dubbed movies were also acquired from a well-established, professional Iranian media distribution and AVT company, 21 Century Visual and Media Company, with Iranian Persian native, in-house translators.

The following steps were taken to collect and analyze the required data. To begin with, after watching the original movies carefully, the taboos were extracted and recorded. Each English taboo word or expression was compared with its dubbed equivalent in Persian. After reviewing all the recorded pairs of taboos, the strategies used for rendition of the taboo language was identified and categorized into four basic types. Subsequently, descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and sum, was provided for each strategy. In order to consistently detect the words or expressions which are locally understood as taboos according to the Iranian culture in the American movies, the categorization of taboo language in Iran introduced by Sharifi and Darchinian (2009) was employed.

4. Findings

A total of 642 instances of taboo language were found in the English corpus of the study (see Appendix). Table 4 shows the frequency of taboo language in each of the four movies.

Table 4. Frequency of Taboos in the Original Movies

No.	Name	Frequency
1	Cop Out	166
2	15 Minutes	118
3	Pulp Fiction	282
4	Insomnia	76
Total		642

At the outset, it goes without saying that the taboos marked and investigated in the study are those which are locally understood as taboos according to the contemporary Iranian culture found in the selected American movies. In other words some of the marked language strings as taboo might not be considered taboo language in the Anglophone world like alcoholic drinks, boyfriends and girlfriends and their relationships, which could be explained due to the existing religious differences.

A review of the corpus of the study showed that a variety of taboo language had occurred in the original movies. Based on Sharifi and Darchinian (2009) categories, the taboo words and expressions in the following categories had occurred more frequently: a) Private relations between men and women whether legitimate or illegitimate and words related to them such as, kissing, hugging, sleeping with, cheating on, etc.; b) Boys' and girls' relations before marriage like boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.; c) Calling or naming outer sexual organs and related words; d) Words and expressions related to alcoholic drinks and drugs; and especially and much more frequently than other e) Swearing, cursing and impolite expressions.

The analysis of the strategies used for the rendition of the taboo language resulted in the following categorization.

- a) Translating the source culture taboo to a target culture taboo (Taboo to Taboo)
- b) Deletion of the source culture taboo (Deletion)
- c) Substituting the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo (Taboo to Non-taboo)
- d) Rendering the source culture taboo to a target culture euphemistic equivalent (Euphemism)

Based in the achieved model of categorization of the rendition strategies, Table 5 shows the frequency of taboo rendition into Persian in the first American crime movie used in the study, *Cop Out*. As can be seen, translating the source culture taboo to a target culture taboo (38%) and closely next, deletion of the source culture taboo (36.7%) were the two most frequently used strategies in this case. Substituting the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo was the least frequently used strategy.

Table 5. Frequency of each Taboo Rendition Strategy in *Cop Out*

	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
	Taboo to Taboo	63	38
	Deletion	61	36.7
	Taboo to Non-taboo	17	10.2
	Euphemism	25	15.1
Total		166	100

For further clarity, a few examples are mentioned with the source and target equivalents used as well as the English back translations of the Persian dubbed translation. In the beginning of the movie (TCR: 00.01.34-00.01.37), the string of words "The expression you're gonna see on my face is Fuck you." was dubbed into Persian (back-translation of the Persian segment) "Wana see the expression on my face? The expression on my face says curse and damn your father's soul and your father's father's soul." This segment involves a curse which has been rendered into Persian as a curse, not as strong, yet still a curse, and thus, as a taboo-to-taboo strategy.

In another instance, the sentence, “He’s taking a shit in the house”, in the original (TCR: 00.33.08-00.33.14) is translated to “He has gone to the bathroom in the house (back-translation of the Persian words)” in the dubbed Persian version. It is an example for Taboo rendered in the form of a Euphemism as the segment includes an impolite word which has been rendered as a positive word into Persian.

In the second movie, *15 Minutes*, as can be seen in Table 6, translating the source culture taboo to a target culture taboo (41.6%) was the most frequently used strategy, while substituting the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo (11.8%) was the least frequently used strategy.

Table 6. Frequency of each Taboo Rendition Strategy in *15 Minutes*

	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
	Taboo to Taboo	49	41.6
	Deletion	38	32.2
	Taboo to Non-taboo	14	11.8
	Euphemism	17	14.4
Total		118	100

An example for taboo rendition in *15 Minutes* relates to sexual relations (a) where the strategy of Deletion was used. In the original version (TCR: 00.30.30-00.30.32), the segment, “I don’t want sex”, while in the dubbed version, the entire sentence was skipped. This segment involves sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman, and due to its high sensitivity in the religiously cautious, Iranian culture in which premarital sexual relations are forbidden, it was omitted (censored) in the dubbed version.

In another instance of Taboo language in *15 Minutes* (TCR: 00.36.59-00.37.01), taboo word related to sex (a), “She’s a prostitute” was rendered as (back-translation from Persian to English) as “The girl was from the Czech” in the dubbed version. Since this segment includes the taboo word “prostitute”, it was rendered to a non-taboo expression; in other words, it was substituted with a non-taboo segment. By using the word Czech instead of the word prostitute, which according to the setting of the movie is factually correct, a silence due to

otherwise deletion of the taboo language is avoided.

In the third movie, *Pulp Fiction*, as can be seen in Table 7, deletion of the source culture taboo (35.4%) was the most frequently used strategy, and substituting the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo (5.1%) was the least frequently used strategy.

Table 7. Frequency of each Taboo Rendition Strategy in *Pulp Fiction*

	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
	Taboo to Taboo	100	35.4
	Deletion	115	40.7
	Taboo to Non-taboo	14	5.1
	Euphemism	53	18.8
Total		282	100

An example of taboo language in *Pulp Fiction* (TCR: 00.07.58-00.08.02) refers to alcoholic drinks (d), which unlike many parts of the world, is a taboo in most Muslim countries including in Iran. The used strategy was a taboo to taboo rendition. The segment originally, “You can walk into a movie theater in Amsterdam and buy a beer”, was rendered as “For example, they serve beer in Amsterdam’s movie theaters” (back-translation from Persian to English). This segment includes a taboo word related to alcoholic drinks; “beer” is considered a taboo word in Persian, while it is not a taboo in most of their cultures. But the translator seems to have decided to keep the taboo probably due to its fairly weakening taboo force in the Iranian culture.

Another instance of taboo language occurs towards the end of the movie (TCR: 02.08.02-02.08.05) relates to impolite words (e) and Euphemism has been utilized as the rendition strategy. The original segment was, “This is some fucked-up repugnant shit” and it was rendered in the dubbed version as “I’m about to barf” (back-translation from Persian). The original segment includes two impolite words which have been rendered through one single positive word in Persian, “barf” (back-translation from Persian).

In the fourth movie used in the corpus, *Insomnia*, as can be seen in Table 8, deletion of the source culture taboo (38.1%) was by far the most frequently

used strategy, and rendering the source culture taboo to a target culture euphemistic equivalent (19.7%) was the least frequently used strategy.

Table 8. Frequency of each Taboo Rendition Strategy in *Insomnia*

	Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
	Taboo to Taboo	14	18.4
	Deletion	29	38.1
	Taboo to Non-taboo	18	24
	Euphemism	15	19.7
Total		76	100

As an example from *Insomnia*, in early parts of the movie (TCR: 00.19.03-00.19.07), a segment including a taboo for the Iranian culture related to boy's and girl's relations (b) is translated using a taboo to non-taboo strategy. In the original version, the segment, "I know you beat your girlfriend" is translated as "I know you beat your fiancée" (back-translation from Persian). This segment involves taboo language related to the relation of an unmarried boy and girl, a relation which has been replaced with a non-taboo word in Persian, "fiancée" (back-translation from Persian). As discussed above in terms of the word "beer", the word "girlfriend" or "boyfriend" for that matter, are not taboo words in the Anglophone world and many other parts of the world, but the Persian translators have recognized them as taboo in consideration of the contemporary Iranian socio-cultural context.

The final example is a segment from towards the end of *Insomnia* (TCR: 01.30.33-01.30.36). This taboo segment is a type of Curse (e) and is rendered as a taboo in the dubbed version. In the original version "He was an asshole." was translated as "Randy Shabder was a dirt bag" (back-translation from Persian). This segment includes a curse which has been rendered as another taboo into Persian.

And the results demonstrate that Taboo to Taboo strategy has a higher frequency in the movies *Cop Out* and *15 Minutes*, while in the two other movies, *Pulp Fiction* and *Insomnia*, the results were different and the highest percentage goes to Deletion strategy. Table 9 shows the most frequent strategy

Table 9. Percentage of the Most Frequent Strategy Used in each Movie

Strategy	Movie	Percentage
Taboo to Taboo	Cop Out	38
Taboo to Taboo	15 Minutes	41.6
Deletion	Pulp Fiction	40.7
Deletion	Insomnia	38.1

in each movie.

In summary, the strategies of Deletion and Taboo to Taboo are the most common among the translators of the movies under investigation, and the two other strategies, Euphemism and Taboo to Non-taboo are less frequently employed. Nonetheless, in a more general picture, the four basic strategies can be classified into a binary classification of a) keeping the taboo force or b) suppressing the taboo force in the dubbed version. In that case, three of the four strategies fall into the latter divide including Deletion, Taboo to Non-taboo, and Euphemism.

In the light of this binary classification of the strategies, the overall results, as can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, demonstrate that the AV translators would tend to tone down the force and effect of the original taboo language—segments recognized as tabooed by the criteria of the Iranian audience—since only nearly one third of the taboo language was kept in the dubbed versions in the sample altogether and approximately two-thirds of the taboos were deleted or suppressed into a euphemism or even some type of non-taboo.

Figure 1. Percentages of Taboo Rendition Strategies in the Entire Corpus

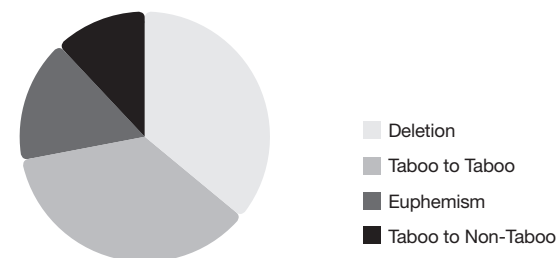
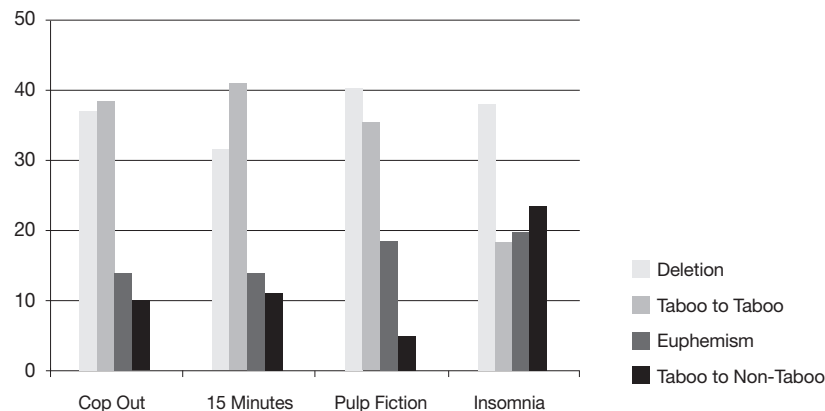


Figure 2. Distributions of Taboo Rendition Strategies in each Movie



5. Discussion and Conclusion

Basic types of norms namely, initial norms, preliminary norms, and operational norms are discussed (Toury, 1995). The scope of this study relates to initial norms. The findings of this study indicate that the AV translators try to create an acceptable, target-oriented translation. They do so in order to meet the expectations of the target society in terms of American dubbed movies, or the American AVT expectancy norms (Chesterman, 1997). In other writing, “the foreign utterances are forced to conform to the domestic norms and frame of reference” (Danan, 1991, p. 612). Likewise, Agost (2004) asserts that in AVT, TTs have higher priorities over the STs.

The Anglophone world is in principle a secular culture, whereas the Iranian culture is religion-oriented and relatively restrained. Since the Persian culture does not accept interferences easily from the outside, and as cultures take up defensive stances (Hermans, 2013), AV translators seem to attempt to tone down the original taboos—segments which would be recognized as taboo by the cultural standards of the receiving Iranian audience in case translated without any modifications—because they can be challenging intrusions to the integrity of the public Iranian audience. It is in that case which the translation is more acceptable to the target culture and could be useable by a wider range of audiences. In other words, the ideology of the professional Iranian AV

translators directs their overall translation decisions and strategies to produce a rendition of the movie script which would best fit the target culture.

The results of this study indicated that professional AV translators in dubbing American crime movie into Persian, following the initial norms of AVT in Iran, would take up a target-oriented approach to their work so as to meet the AVT expectancy norms of the Iranian society. That is, the translators are generally inclined to moderate and soften the impolite force and the vulgar effect of the original taboo language in the dubbed movies into Persian either by censoring the items or by suppressing them into a euphemism or a non-taboo lexical item.

However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to make any strong claims, and can be taken only as far as empirically-supported insights provided by an exploratory study because the current research, as a corpus-based translation study, lacks the large enough corpus which ought to include over a million lexical units. The study is also limited as the formation of the fairly small corpus is not randomly selected which addition to the small size of the sample restrains the researchers to generalize their findings.

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Appendix

Table 10. Sample Taboo Language and the Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed Equivalence from *Cop Out*

Strategy	Taboo Segment	Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed
Taboo to Taboo	Fuck you	Curse your father's father's father's soul
	Who the fuck are you?	Who the hell are you?
	Hell , fake ass kuju	Get lost you
	Fuck this job	The hell with this job
	Just sit the fuck back and shut up	Just sit at the back and zip it
Deletion	Mother Fucking Homage	–
	Fucking Amsterdam	Amsterdam
	These assholes are crazy	They both are crazy
	You are a pussy	–
	Believe this shit ?	Can you believe it?
Euphemism	Fuck!	Damn this luck!
	Nitwit here almost got his ass shot off	We were about to arrest him
	He's taking a shit in the house	He has gone to the bathroom in the house
	I'll fuck you up	Watch it, or else
	Mr. Dickhead	Useless fruitcake
Taboo to Non-taboo	Son of bitch	Killer
	Baboon chimpanzee is the only non human primate that has oral Sex ?	Chimpanzee is the only animal which can do so many things like humans
	They crave the cock , any cock , every cock	They need help
	She got one nitty missing a nipple	She has lost a lot of hair
	It's in Paul's wife pussy	In your friend's pocket

Table 11. Sample Taboo Language and the Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed Equivalence from *15 Minutes*

Strategy	Taboo Segment	Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed
Taboo to Taboo	Come on you fucking guys	Come you schmucks
	You are a son of bitch	Schmuck
	You are just a little, small Russian piece of shit	You are a Russian useless, piece of garbage
	You sick fucks	You sick bastards
	That is what American want: violence and sex	That is what the American want: violence and sex
Deletion	Give me your fucking money	Give me your money
	I don't want Sex	–
	Get the fuck back	Get back to work
	Fuck off!	–
Euphemism	As a plumber, fixing fucking toilets.	You want me to plumb
	Are you fucking kidding me?	Are you joking?
	You remind me of a puppy I used to have. Used to piss all over the carpet	My little dog always messes up the carpet
	She's got the potential to fucking hang on you	She was ready for your propose
	Get the hell of outta here	Beat it.
Taboo to Non-taboo	Make me bust your ass	I'll kick your butt
	Fuck her first	I wana see her
	You slept with her	You left your ex-wife
	Getting dates or what?	Getting the information was so hard?
	Smoking after sex	Firing after getting high
	She's to be a prostitute	The girl was from the Czech

Table 12. Sample Taboo Language and the Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed Equivalence from *Pulp Fiction*

Strategy	Taboo Segment	Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed
Taboo to Taboo	You can walk into a movie theater in Amsterdam and buy a beer	For example, they serve beer in Amsterdam's movie theaters
	He's motherfucker	Son of a bitch
	Some fuckless piece of shit fucked with it	A dirty, piece of shit screwed with its lock
	This shit is hard to get off	This shit does not come off easily
	Any of you fucking pricks move, I'll execute every motherfucker	I will shoot his brains out, if any of you bastards move
	Deletion	Sound like a sensible fucking man
I'm fucking going		So, I am off
I been sayin' that shit for years		For years, I've repeated this
In agonizing pain rapist		Be in pain
One more kiss		–
Euphemism	Marcellus fucked him up good	Marcellus took care of him
	What'd he do, fuck her?	There has been a woman?
	French Fox's specialty was sex	French Fox was a seducer
	I'm going to get Medieval on your ass	I am having Medieval fun with you
	This is some fucked-up repugnant shit	I'm puking
Taboo to Non-taboo	Eating a bitch out and giving a bitch a foot message aint the same thing	He feared that if he does give her a message, she is going to rat him out to Marcellus
	Cause my girlfriend is vegetarian	Cause my wife is vegetarian
	And one in my clit	And one on my ankle
	It's a sex thing and helps fellatio	It's relaxing like physiotherapy
	Go home and jerk off	You go home and take a shower

Table 13. Sample Taboo Language and the Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed Equivalence from *Insomnia*

Strategy	Taboo Segment	Back-translation of the Persian Dubbed
Taboo to Taboo	Son of bitch	Worthless scum bag
	Except your fucking novel	Except that damned book
	What the fuck is this?	Where the hell is this?
	What the hell is wrong with you?	What the hell is wrong with you?
	He was an asshole	Randy Shabder was an awful dirt bag
Deletion	It was her big fucking secret	This was her big secret too
	It's so fucking bright here	It's too bright in here
	Do you want a beer or something?	Don't you want something?
	Shit!	–
	Drinking related-problems	–
Euphemism	If she talks, you're fucked	If she talks, you are screwed
	I'm sick of this bullshit	You make me sick
	My rep's in the shit	They ruined my reputation
	Sick bastard	psycho
	You never had the balls to be one of us	You didn't have the guts to be a cop
Taboo to Non-taboo	Did you have sex with her ?	You were just her friend?
	What has two thumbs and loves blowjobs ?	Who is that has two thumbs and is hungry as hell
	I kissed her	I just wanted to relax her
	She argued with her boyfriend	She argued with her fiancé
	I know you beat your girlfriend	I know you hit your fiancée