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The Portrayal of Women in English Films Localized into Persian

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Abstract

Audiovisual translation, the same as other forms of intercultural communication, tends to intervene with the original in order to comply with the norms of the receiving culture. Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the Iranian cinema has resorted to a conservative approach wherein the portrayal of the role of women, among other cultural issues, has been controlled to adapt to the Islamic thoughts, which constitute the pivotal Iranian ideological framework. The underground cinema, on the other hand, resists this official practice and adopts a more norm-breaking approach. This study examines the portrayal of women in a selection of dubbed and subtitled films into Persian. The findings reveal that the gender-related content in dubbed films was altered due to the socio-cultural considerations and ideologically charged motivations as well as the norms and clichés prevalent in the Iranian society. Similar measures, however, were not taken in the subtitles of the foreign films, which were produced by the amateurs.

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1. Introduction

That translation—as a social activity—is operated in a social system is an undisputed fact. Solely because, as Wolf (2007) puts it, the agents—translators here—that perform the task closely observe the rules, regulations, and musts of that system; hereby, the selection and production of translations, together with the translation strategies, are largely determined by these principles. Besides, the media has a great impact on forming public opinions and attitudes and may and can change individuals' beliefs towards different issues. As Díaz-Cintas (2019) puts it, “mass media is an extraordinarily powerful tool, not only in the original but also in their translation” (p. 186) and this may constitute a new line of research into media translation. The field of audiovisual translation (AVT) has moved on from mainly describing the characteristics and technical constraints of conventional modalities, such as dubbing and subtitling, to the recently thriving larger-scale and multi-dimensional investigations involving society, culture and power-related concepts (Chaume, 2018). For many years, the area of gender analysis was mainly dealt with in the field of social sciences, and the attention has now shifted towards the imbalanced representation of men and women in literature or media (De Marco, 2016). With the development of audiovisual products, researchers have pursued new areas of research where the dialogue between gender and AVT has become the arena where one can understand how this translation type can represent women. These studies bear significance as the representation of gender in the media reflects how women and men are viewed in a certain society. The manipulative power of translation and media has a crucial impact upon gender arrangements and the way in which gender issues are perceived within a social system (De Marco, 2006; von Flotow & Scott, 2016). As for the translation of gender, sensitive texts carry subversive influences into target cultures and may be considered threatening (Díaz-Cintas, 2012). On this ground, this paper is focused on the cinematic portrayal of gender in localized audiovisual fiction in Iran. More specifically, it explores how translation solutions represent women in films dubbed by Iranian professionals who supposedly adhere to the regulations and norms the government has introduced. The study also investigates a sample of fansubbed films to

understand how amateur subtitlers reflect women in their translation since they barley act in accordance with the professional and cultural norms and regulations. To this end, four English language feature films are scrutinized, *Zootopia* (Howard & Moore, 2016), *Tourist* (von Donnersmarck, 2010), *Suffragette* (Gavron, 2015), and *Just Like a Woman* (Bouchareb, 2013). Their content, dialogues, and characters can provide rich clues about how gender is transferred visually, acoustically and verbally.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Gender

Gender is irrelevant to the biological notion of sexes. It is rather accounted as a social construct, which involves a binary opposition and involves what means to be a man and a woman in a certain society—the set of behaviors, rules and characteristics that a society imposes on individuals as well as factors such as race, religion, ethnic and historical background, culture, class and sexual orientation which define gender roles and identities (Benjamin, 1988; De Marco, 2006; von Flotow, 2007). From this view, individuals are identified and treated differently as the representation of gender in a cultural context reflects how society sees women and men as opposite categories. Given the fact that men have been the norms and standards and that women have been considered deviant and dependent, and consequently, have been viewed as minorities in their society with a very subordinate position, voices of women have constantly been subjugated (De Marco, 2009; Mulvey, 1975). Gender studies, which has its roots in feminist criticism in the 1970s, is an interdisciplinary field study that calls for a change in the relationship existing between the sexes (De Marco, 2012). Gender studies and translation studies are two academic fields which have often been brought into a relationship because of their derivative, secondary and political nature (von Flotow & Scott, 2016). In the words of Susam-Sarajeva (2005), both disciplines have much in common and have addressed multiple neighboring areas, including “language, society, religion, literature, anthropology, and communication.” (p. 162).

2.2. Media Translation and Gender

Most studies on this interdisciplinary area of research in Iran deal with the role of translator's gender in translation of different genres (e.g., Manafi Anari & Ghodrati, 2010; Shafiee-Sabet & Rabeie, 2012; Eriss & Hashemi, 2017); that is to say, how translations by female translators may differ from those of male ones while gender portrayal in translated materials in Iran has barely been investigated.

In AVT, mentions Díaz-Cintas (2012), the manipulation of the original assumptions and values could easily happen, which could yield a differing representation of the original. Chaume (2018) defines AVT as a process whereby the original program is adapted to rules and norms of the culture that called for the translation. Therefore, this potentiality of AVT in adding “further layers of meanings” as well as building “new webs of associations only alluded to, if not altogether missing, in the original texts” (Ranzato & Zanotti, 2018, p. 2) needs more attention, especially, if it is considered from a gender perspective. While the number of studies addressing the link between gender and AVT has been on rise, and it is not difficult to find monographs, edited books and encyclopedia entries (e.g., De Marco, 2012; von Flotow & Josephy-Hernández, 2019; De Marco & Toto, 2019), research has failed to examine this interconnection in languages of limited diffusion, including Persian. This fact notwithstanding, small albeit growing literature on the linguistic and cultural analysis of gender-related matters in screen products could be found in AVT, which have been based on three approaches, as von Flotow and Josephy-Hernández (2019) put it. The first approach deals with how feminist content has been reflected in AVT. In the second approach, subtitling and dubbing are compared to pinpoint the differences they manifest in terms of gender portrayal. Genderqueer—“non-binary sexual orientations” such as gay speaking—is the focus of the third approach to gender in AVT (von Flotow & Josephy-Hernández, 2019). The present work is positioned within the second approach where dubbing and (non-professional) subtitling of products are studied. De Marco (2016) is of the view that changes in three elements in cinematic programs could result in gender discrimination, and consequently, viewers' perception of given characters is

distorted. The linguistic dimension along with the visual and acoustic dimensions could contribute to this discrimination. As far as empirical studies are concerned, research has it that a neutralizing approach to the translation of gender-related terms is more common in dubbing. On the contrary, subtitling tends to retain these values through a literal approach (De Marco, 2009; Feral, 2011).

The present literature on media localization in Iran reveals that only several studies have so far addressed such socio-cultural issues (Ameri & Ghazizadeh, 2014; Kenevisi, Omar, & Jalalian, 2016; Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Ameri, 2014, 2016; Khoshsaligheh, Ameri, & Mehdizadkhani, 2018), and they have touched on the impacts of ideology and censorship concerning the translations of audiovisual materials. In contrast, studies on amateur dubbing or subtitling have documented that unauthorized translators have displayed resistance against ideological considerations practiced and advocated in the Iranian professional AVT system (Ameri & Ghazizadeh, 2015; Nord, et al., 2015; Khoshsaligheh et al., 2018) which have made professional dubbing less appealing to audience (Ameri and Khoshsaligheh, 2018).

In the Iranian cinema—wherein AVT is positioned as well—the way women are portrayed is of importance. The Iranian cinema scholar Hamid Naficy points out that “a major goal of this system was to disrupt the direct discursive link between representation of women and promotion of corruption, amorality, and pornography which the pre-revolution cinema was said to have established” (Naficy, 2000, p. 560).

Along the same lines, the editor of the Iranian magazine *Film*, Hooshang Golmakani (cited in ASL19, 2015) adds:

Directors must avoid too many close-ups of young and pretty actresses. Full observance of the Islamic code of dress is a prerequisite, and actresses—with the exception of children—are expected to be fully clothed. Female dress should be simple in design, preferably in dark colors, and should not reveal body curves. Colorful and fashionable dresses may only be worn by actresses performing

negative roles.... Filmmakers are advised to have actresses completely cover their hair, and a movie with just one or two unruly tresses runs the risk of being criticized in the mass media ... should the logic of the story demand it, exposed hair must be a hairpiece. And, women's make-up should only be applied by other women. (p. 232)

What can be learned from the above-mentioned quotes is that women are cautiously represented and portrayed in the Iranian cinema as well as in the screening of foreign programs. To quote Naficy's (2012) words, the Iranian authorities' regulation for representing women on the screen primarily follows "principles of subservience, segregation, and veiling" (p. 101). On the contrary, the underground cinema in Iran—where amateur subtitling operates—, Jahed (2015, p. 223) emphasizes, appears to be a response to governmentally controlled censorship. As evidenced in recent empirical studies, Iranian non-official or non-professional subtitlers undertake the elimination of state censorship by subtitling films and TV shows which have no chance of being broadcast on Iranian TV channels or by subtitling taboo content which is subject to censorship by the authorities (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2018). This evidence is reminiscent of Iranian underground subtitlers' resistive translation behaviors.

Media induces predetermined gender norms, which are accepted by the culture, politics, or

religions of the recipient society. Social stereotypes are perceived in verbal language, individuals' behaviors, their way of thinking and the roles that they are expected to fulfill; these behaviors and roles are filtered and made socially invisible by mass media, while they tend to be closely linked with the dominant ideologies. Given the new trends in AVT, all these matters such as selecting an audiovisual product, rendering gender discourse and gender stereotype and the like are well-worth investigating. Therefore, this study tries to understand how women are portrayed in Persian dubbing by professionals and subtitling by amateurs. In other words, the present research explores how professional and amateur translators tackle the translation of women-related content and if they follow the dominant ideology practiced in Iran, or they try to defy it.

3. Methodology

This study employs a bilingual multimodal unidirectional parallel corpus. The bilingual corpus comprises four English language films in addition to their dubbed and fansubbed versions in Persian. The dubbed versions have been dubbed by professionals working in the authorized AVT system, while the fansubbed versions have been translated by amateurs and were shared online. The descriptive information of the corpus is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
The Descriptive Information Corpus of the Study

Original Films				Translated Films
Title	Director (s)	Year	Run Time	AVT Mode
<i>Zootopia</i>	Byron Howard and Rich Moore	2016	108 min	Dubbing
<i>Tourist</i>	Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck	2010	103 min	Dubbing
<i>Suffragette</i>	Sarah Gavron	2015	106 min	Amateur subtitling
<i>Just Like a Woman</i>	Rachid Bouchareb	2013	106 min	Amateur subtitling

The study is built on the comparison of the audiovisual text of the original with those of their translations to trace how the portrayal of women in the Anglophone culture is rendered in the Iranian culture through dubbing and amateur subtitling. Films are multimodal in essence; meaning that, they make use of "multiple semiotic resources such as language, sound, and image" (Hirvonen & Tiittula, 2010, p. 1) to communicate their message. In other

words, films present verbal and non-verbal signs through audio and visual channels (Zabalbeascoa, 2008). Audiovisual texts as a type of multimodal texts consist of interrelated modes which all contribute to the meaning-making process, in which the verbal language is accompanied with other kinds of visual and acoustic information that influence the final meaning of the multimodal text. To investigate the translation of such texts, a careful

consideration of all modes and their intricate combination in meaning-making is required. Accordingly, the selected films were explored at the two dimensions of acoustic and visual.

4. Findings

The aim of this study was to unveil how hints or instances of the portrayal of women are treated and rendered visually and acoustically in dubbed and fansubbed films in Iran. In so doing, the elements pertaining to femininity and feminism such as non-verbal content, dialogues, and characters which could provide clues about how female gender is portrayed on screen are identified and examined. In the following, some examples are used to discuss whether the dubbed and fansubbed translations maintain and get across the original form of portrayal of women to the target audience. A selection of examples of the Persian translations, together with their back translations (for the verbal instances) as well as the scenes (for the non-verbal instances) are provided.

4.1. Acoustic-Verbal

Dialogues, monologues, songs, and voice-off are the acoustic-verbal signs used in a film or TV series to make it meaningful to the audience. At this level, only the dialogues between male and female characters are considered. It is remarkable that in all investigated dubbed films broadcast on the television channels, the songs sung by women were excluded or they were simply replaced by a music soundtrack. The reason is that in Islam, which is the principal ideology in Iran, women are not allowed to sing before unknown men. In

addition, female characters in movies shown in Iran, Zeydabadi-Nejad (2010) notes, should “appear modest in appearance and behavior” (p. 46). In other words, whatever that leads to degenerating “the sanctity of the family and modesty” is subject to censorship (ASL19, 2015, p. 231), and here singing before men or those male viewers could hear the sound of a female singer are considered inappropriate behaviors.

4.1.1. Dubbed Films

4.1.1.1. Zootopia

The feature animated film, *Zootopia* (Howard & Moore, 2016), tells the story of a feminist bunny rabbit, Judy Hopps, who dreams of becoming the first rabbit cop in Zootopia, but most people, including her own parents, dissuade her from following her dream, because of her size, species, as well as her gender. In the film, it is emphasized that a female “prey” in the police system must work twice as hard to prove she is just as good as other cops as she is the very first bunny police officer—an idea reminiscent of many situations to which working women can relate. Judy Hopps is underestimated at first and is told repeatedly to “get back on the carrot farm where she belongs!” a phrase that is not too dissimilar to “get back in the kitchen!”. People belittled her and only focused on her physical appearance; nevertheless, she persisted. The two Persian dubbed versions of *Zootopia* maintain the same outlook towards women in Iran, reflecting a familiar albeit disapproving conception of femininity (Table 2).

Table 2
An Example from Zootopia (2016)

Original Dialogue	Persian Dubbed (I) & (II)	Back Translation
- So, are all rabbits bad drivers, or is it just you? You know you love me. - Do I know that? Yes. Yes, I do.	- ببینم همه خرگوش ها اینقدر بد رانندگی می کنن یا فقط تو اینجوری هستی؟ می دونی چی می خوام بگم؟ - بله بله می دونم.	- So are all rabbits such bad drivers or is it just you? You know what I want to say. - Yes, yes, I know
	- ببینم رانندگی همه خانم خرگوش ها این ریخته تعطیله یا تو این ریختی؟ خودتم می دونی که عاشقمی. - همچین یه خورده شک دارم، شوخی کردم.	- So are all female rabbits worse drivers? Or is it just you? You know that you love me. - I doubt a little, I was kidding.

Table 2 vividly exemplifies gender portrayal in the same film; Judy is driving her cop car, while her partner asks, “Are all rabbits bad drivers?”

Interestingly, contrary to the original text, which is “all rabbits,” the word “female” has also been added to the second dubbing and

reinforces an implicit meaning in the Iranian culture that females are said to be bad drivers. However, in the first dubbing, there is no mention of gender, and the dubbing group opted for a non-discriminatory language which is also faithful to the original. In the second part, the fox character asks if she loves him which is changed into “You know what I want to say? Yes, I know” in the first dubbing, meaning that this dubbed version was trying to conceal the

female rabbit’s affection toward another male animal in the public even though the second dubbing is less orthodox because the second dubbing was aimed for online streaming and the first one was dubbed for the television channel. Therefore, those dubbed for television channels, as opposed to those dubbed for online streaming, apply more layers of censorship to the translation.

Table 3
An Example from Zootopia (2016)

Original Dialogue	Persian Dubbed	Back Translation
Okay. Oh, you bunnies. You’re so emotional.	خیلی خوب خره اینقدر آب غوره نگیر جقدر تو احساساتی هستی	Come on, fool, don’t turn on the waterworks , you are so emotional
	آخی نازی جقدر احساساتی هستی خرگوشی	Oh, sweetie , how emotional you are?

In another instance, after finding out what is turning animals into savage creatures, Judy rushes to Nick to help her and makes a sweet apology of being a bad friend to him. Table 3 is an example of universal gender stereotype by using phrases reflecting a disparaging conception of femininity that women are very emotional creatures. By adding “don’t turn on the waterworks” and “sweetie”, which are indications of women as crybabies, the dubbed versions attempted to underscore the notion of powerless as a distinctive feature of women even though there is no mention of such concept in the original which refers to a gendered ideology about women’s vulnerability.

4.1.1.2. Tourist

Tourist (von Donnersmarck, 2010) is a drama about an American tourist named Frank who is visiting Italy to fix a broken heart and comes into contact with a woman called Elis. After being detained by the Italian police, Frank tries to escape Shaw’s guards, but a corrupt police inspector turns him over to Shaw’s people. Elise managed to save Frank just in time.

Generally, due to the religious and conservative situation of Iran, there are defined gender norms about what women should wear in public, how they should have relationships with unknown men and how emotions should be expressed in public. In the following, a few examples on rendering these kinds of gender portrayals are selected and presented.

Table 4
An Example from Tourist (2010)

Original Dialogue	Persian Dubbed	Back Translation
Because I’m in love with him Because I’ve kissed you	چون شوهرمه اشتباه گرفتنت	Because he is my husband They have made a mistake

Table 4 shows an example of how the relationship between men and women are represented in Persian dubbing. According to Islamic thoughts and traditions—constructing Iran’s dominant ideology—, men and women are strongly discouraged to have a close relationship outside the pair-bond. So, all references to such an illegitimate relationship

are changed to a marriage-like relationship or are simply omitted. As we can see in this example, the woman character expresses her feeling to a man who is in love with, but the Persian version replaced it by “he is my husband”. In the second part, the reference to kissing is omitted in translation and it is translated as “they have made a mistake”. This

manifestation highlights that kissing and hugging between unmarried men and women is not allowed in public and in the media, whether

this relationship is between a couple, or a mother and her son, or a father and his daughter.

Table 5
An Example from Tourist (2010)

Original Dialogue	Persian Dubbed	Back Translation
<p>- Once, he bragged to Alexander that he had every man killed his wife had slept with before she met him. When he found out how many there'd been, he killed her too.</p> <p>- What made Pearce think that he could take on a guy like that?</p> <p>- It's just who he is.</p> <p>- Could you ever feel like that about someone like me? I don't regret it, you know. Kissing you.</p>	<p>- اون همش دنبال کارهای خلافه. همیشه همین طور بوده اون و همدستاش آدمای وحشی هستند اصلا رحم ندارن</p> <p>- چی باعث شد پیرس فکر کنه حریف یکی مثل شاو میشه</p> <p>- خوب اینطوریه دیگه</p> <p>- فکر می کنم تو باید خیلی به اون علاقه داشته باشی کمتر زنی اینقدر جرات داره</p>	<p>- He is always looking for illegal jobs; He has always been the same. He and his partners are wild people. They don't have mercy at all.</p> <p>- What made Pearce think that he could take on a guy like Shaw?</p> <p>- It's just who he is.</p> <p>- I think you should be very interested in him, few women dare.</p>

In Table 5, another case of gender portrayal is exemplified. As can be heard in the original conversation, there is a conversation about the sexual past of one of the characters. In the dubbed version, this section is totally changed into some irrelevant sentences. In the next part, the man asked her if she has any feeling about him and then expressed his love to her; but in the dubbed version it is translated to "I think you should be very interested in him, few women dare", and insisted that women should love their husband and finally he stated a dominant gender stereotype in Iran and represented women as being weak and helpless who do not dare to endanger themselves because of their husband. In the end, he referred to their kissing which was omitted in the dubbing.

Table 6
An Example from Suffragette (2015)

Original Dialogue	Persian Fansubbed	Back Translation
<p>What gave you the right to stand in the middle of a riot and watch women beaten and do nothing?</p>	<p>کی به شما حق داده تا مثل سیب زمینی وایسین و کتک خوردن زنارو ببینید و کاری نکنید؟</p>	<p>Who gave you the right to stand like a potato and watch women beaten and do nothing?</p>

In this scene, evident in Table 6, the women who attended the London protest are badly beaten by the cops. Although there is no adjective in the source text, the translator added an idiomatic expression that reflects gendered ideology "like a potato" in the fansubbed version which refers to a man who is not protective enough of his female relatives like a

4.1.2. Fansubbed Films

This section deals with the analysis of women portrayal in subtitles made by amateur and unauthorized subtitlers.

4.1.2.1. Suffragette

As a drama, *Suffragette* (Gavron, 2015) portrays the story of the foot soldiers at the early feminist movement. The film was set in London of 1912, and it narrates the story of Maud Watts who is embroiled in the suffragette movement. The following examples have been selected to show non-professional subtitlers tackle the translation of women-related segments.

sister, or his wife and fiancée. By adding "like a potato" in the translation, the meaning of the sentence is intensified, and this can be the impact of the dominant gender norms on the translator which is derived from the exciting norms in community in which the translator lives.

Table 7*An Example from Suffragette (2015)*

Original Dialogue	Persian Fansubbed	Back Translation
The mental equilibrium of the female sex is less than that of the males.	اینکه هم ترازای جنسی زن کمتر از مرده	That female sexual equilibrium is less than that of males

After being arrested, the cop talked to Mrs. Maud and tried to convince her to stop protesting. As indicated in Table 7, “mental equilibrium” in the source text is translated to “sexual equilibrium”; this translation makes a misunderstanding, maybe the translator meant physical equilibrium. They maintained this gender bias that women are weaker than men because they are smaller.

4.1.2.2. *Just Like a Woman*

Just like a Woman (Bouchareb, 2013) is a drama with a feminist view. The story is about two women Marilyn and Mona set off on a trip to Santa Fe., in down-at-heel bars along the route. Mona has kept a secret; she is on the loose because she poisoned her cruel mother-in-law. In this film, women overcome their struggles, making them stronger when they succeed. It is also to be noted that women are by no means portrayed as angels.

Table 8*An Example from Just Like a Woman (2013)*

Original Dialogue	Persian Fansubbed	Back Translation
You hurt me. You don't respect me. I can't do this anymore, it's over. We never did anything together. Ten years, not even a child. Ten years wasted.	تو بهم صدمه زدی. بهم احترام نداشتی. من دیگه نیستم. دیگه تمومه. جالب اینه که من و تو هیچ وقت به هم دست نزدیم. ده سال گذشت و حتی یه بچه هم نداریم. ده سال به هدر رفت.	You hurt me. You don't respect me. I am not anymore, it's over. We never did anything together. Ten years passed, not even a child. Ten years wasted.

Table 9*An Example from Just Like a Woman (2013)*

Original Dialogue	Persian Fansubbed	Back Translation
- Me, I can't become a mother. I tried for five years..... - So how do you know it's you? Maybe it's your husband who can't... - Men in my country they always can. Yeah, my mother-in-law used to say that. - Maybe you should try with somebody else. You look like you could be a mother.	- من نمیتونم مادر شم، پنج سال سعی کردم ولی نشدم..... - پس از کجا میدونی مشکل از توهه؟ شاید از شوهرت باشه - مردای کشور من هیچ وقت همچی مشکلی ندارن، مادر شوهرم همیشه این حرف رو میزد - شاید بهتر باشه که با یکی دیگه امتحان کنی، به نظر میاد تو میتونی مادر بشی	- I can't become a mother. I tried for five years but I failed..... - So how do you know it's your problem? Maybe it's your husband - My country's men never have this problem. My mother-in-law always said that. - Maybe it's better to try with somebody else. You look like you could be a mother.

Table 8 shows the telephone conversation of Marilyn after leaving her husband, and Table 9 is the conversation between Marilyn and Mona. According to a common gender misunderstanding, men may not have infertility problems, and this problem belongs to women. There are not any changes or omission in the translation. The translators tried to render the source text

faithfully and without any changes. Since most of the fansubbed films in Iran are released illegally, therefore, all the dialogues were preserved, and no words were omitted. A few changes occurred derived from the translator's ideology which is drawn from the social context in which they live, affecting their translation choices (Eriss & Hashemi, 2017).

4.2. Acoustic-nonverbal

The acoustic-nonverbal signs include musical score, sound effects, and noises. Music, Chaume (2012, p. 103) believes, “can convey substantial meaning and may be significant to the plot.” However, as subtitles made by unauthorized, amateur subtitlers are shared in an SRT file format (soft subtitle) and as films or TV shows are separately downloaded (Ameri and Khoshsaligeh, 2019), the analysis of the acoustics channel is meaningless since they are left untouched by the subtitlers.

On the contrary, the acoustic channel is subject to changes and amendments in dubbing as the original track is replaced with a new one (Chaume, 2012). In the analysis of the dubbed versions, songs are omitted or replaced by instrumental background music, like in *Zootopia*, because the singer is female; expect

for one dubbing version which retained the songs and they were dubbed into Persian which seems to indicate that dubbing policies of online streaming are less conservative than those of TV channels.

4.3. Visual-verbal

Visual-verbal clues could include letters, newspaper content, or messages on computer screens or mobile phones related to gender.

4.4. Visuals

The analysis suggests that some scenes in the dubbed versions were omitted, changed, or even blurred because of cultural, social, religious and political issues. However, this is not the case with amateur subtitling, as alluded to earlier, subtitles files are shared as an SRT file, so it has no effect on the original program.



Figure 1
A Deleted Scene in the Dubbed Version of Zootopia



Figure 2
A Deleted Scene in the Dubbed Version of Zootopia

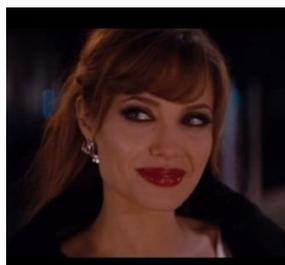


Figure 3
An Original Scene from Tourist

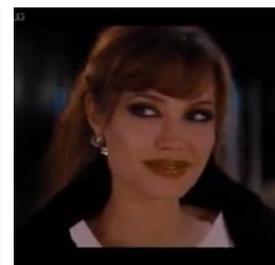


Figure 4
The Manipulated Scene in the Dubbed Version of Tourist



Figure 5
An Original Scene from Tourist



Figure 6
The Manipulated Scene in the Dubbed Version of Tourist

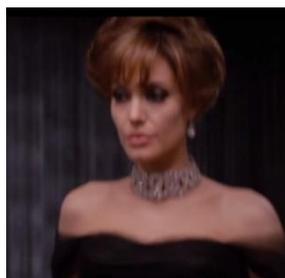


Figure 7
An Original Scene from Tourist



Figure 8
The Manipulated Scene In the Dubbed Version of Tourist

In *Zootopia* (Howard & Moore, 2016), all the scenes which were deemed inappropriate, according to the dominant ideology of Iran, such as practicing yoga, singing and the like (Figures 1 and 2) were omitted. The same can be seen in *Tourist* (Von Donnersmarck, 2010) wherein all the scenes associated with an

emotional relationship between the woman and the tourist were eliminated insofar as modifications in the plot stand out. In addition, in the dubbed versions, women's bodies were censored in a way that some parts were blurred as if they were part of the woman's dress (Figures 6 and 8) or the facial makeup of the

actresses was made lighter (Figure 4). In general, the dominant visual strategies in portraying women in the dubbed versions include a) removing dancing and social gatherings, b) removing any type of relationship between men and women, especially relationships outside the marriage bond, c) blurring women's dress, d) removing scenes with naked bodies, and e) toning down elements that accentuate women's beauty such as makeup.

5. Concluding Remarks

The paper focused on how women are portrayed in dubbed films by professionals and subtitled by amateurs in Iran. The way the dubbing and non-professional subtitling represented the gender in the original programs appears to be distinctive. The findings suggest that changes, including omissions, reframing, and modifications in terms of women portrayal in the localized films in Iran result from socio-cultural and religious motivations ingrained in the structure of a conservative society. In fact, the dubbing producer rewrites women-related content, which means that the translation yields a new discourse which is in accordance with the norms and regulations demanded by the dubbing industry and advocated by the state (Khoshsaligheh & Ameri, 2016). The gender shifts in the dubbed films took place at various dimensions of the audiovisual text. Observed shifts can be categorized into: a) removing songs of a female singer, b) replacing all casual relationships outside the marriage bond between a man and a woman, c) excluding all instances of kissing and hugging between men and women, regardless of the relationship, d) blurring women's unsuitable dresses or removing the scenes in which women appear naked, and e) removing all form of sensual or romantic gestures such as dancing. This matches the findings of Feral (2011), who revealed that the dubbed products weaken or completely eliminate the feminist content of the US productions. Portraying a differing version of women in the translated products is very noticeable due to religious, political, cultural and social considerations. Translation techniques, on occasions, can "give clues to the gender norms, restrictions and expectations of the translating culture" (Meng, 2019, p. 13). Unauthorized and amateur subtitlers, by contrast, tend to stick to the original content,

present a more faithful representation of women, and openly resist the dominant ideology concerning women representation in cinematic programs (Ameri & Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh, et al., 2018).

The present study provided some insights into shifts whereby gender might be portrayed in AVT in Iran. We have argued that social, political, religious and cultural elements, along with the linguistic and technical elements may have affected the translation made for dubbing or non-professional subtitling. The findings in terms of the visual and sound analysis revealed that women were generally portrayed according to the Iranian socio-cultural norms as well as the prescriptive regulations for distribution of cinematic programs.

Our research was aimed at making a contribution to the understanding of gender construction within and through the analysis and translation of dubbed and fansubbed films. At the same time, we believe that a gendered look at audiovisual texts in the light of current reception studies can open avenues for future research into the interdisciplinary research between gender and audiovisual studies. Besides, further research is recommended to benefit a diachronic design, before and after the Islamic revolution in Iran. Additionally, supplementary research is suggested to explore gender norms in audiovisual products for children.

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