

Synchrony and Translation Quality in Persian Unauthorized Dubbing in Iran

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The increasing interest of the Iranian audiences in watching foreign films and television series against the limiting regulations of official dubbing and distribution of such foreign audiovisual content in Iran has resulted in the rise of unauthorized dubbing and subtitling of such programs in Persian. This article explores the quality of unauthorized dubbing of a criterion selection of ten American feature films freely accessible on Persian-language video-piracy websites. The results revealed that content synchrony and isochrony were the most problematic types of synchrony in these Persian dubs, while character, kinesic, and phonetic synchronies were preserved at acceptable levels. In terms of English to Persian translation, the inaccuracies and problems were classified under the three categories of language, culture and dubbing team, where each category was divided into several subcategories.

Keywords: *dubbing, translation quality, synchrony, unauthorized, Persian, Iran*

1. Introduction

Dubbing films into Persian in Iran has been going on for more than half a century. Since the emergence of the first dubbed films in Iran, dubbing has been the official translation modality of audiovisual fiction in Iran for a number of practical reasons. In the past, dubbing was carried out mostly by state-run and authorized private sector. Recently, however, due to the availability of technology and the Internet, it is carried out by both authorized and a growing number of unauthorized companies. Authorized companies include national television channels and official home entertainment companies, while unauthorized companies are mostly on-line agencies and websites that release their products with no legal permission from the national authorities (Nord, Khoshsaligheh, & Ameri, 2015).

Obviously, products of both sectors have their own audience who opt for watching each type for their reasons. For instance, since dubbing of audiovisual materials in the authorized sector is closely monitored in terms of their conformation with the dominant cultural regulations and ideologies of the country, they involve a significant amount of cultural gatekeeping and censorship; therefore, unauthorized dubbing appeals to those who seek the original work in its entirety. Due to the same cultural reasons, many feature films and series are never dubbed by the authorized companies because they would necessitate too extensive censorship to be appropriated for the Iranian society which leaves little left to show, or the censorship extends beyond some segments of the work, and the entire theme is the problem.

Recently, dubbing, mostly authorized, has been researched from a number of aspects such as reception, censorship and culture (e.g., Khoshsaligheh, Eriss, & Ameri, 2019; Khoshsaligheh, Ameri, & Mehdizadkhani, 2018; Ameri, Khoshsaligheh, & Khazae Farid, 2018; Mehdizadkhani & Khoshsaligheh, 2019), but no published study has attempted to explore the quality of unauthorized dubbing in Persian. Considering the significance of synchronization as the most prominent factor in assessing the quality of dubbing practice

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(Chaume, 2004, 2012), this paper aims to examine the quality of unauthorized Persian dubbing of feature films in terms of both synchrony and translation.

The study is limited to investigate dubbing of American feature films as they constitute the largest percentage of audiovisual fiction watched by the Iranian audiences of unofficially distributed foreign multimedia content, besides the films and series produced by other nations such as South Korea and Turkey. This study specifically addresses the following questions:

- 1) How is the unauthorized Persian dubbing of American feature films evaluated in terms of the different types of synchrony?
- 2) How is the unauthorized Persian dubbing of American feature films evaluated in terms of translation into Persian?

2. Review of the Literature

Dubbing, as a clear case of “constrained translation” (Bosseaux, 2015, p. 57; Zabalbeascoa, 1997, p. 330), is the substitution of the SL oral content with its equivalent in TL. The main aim of dubbing is to create an “illusion” of watching a local audiovisual product for the target audience, by adapting different types of synchrony (Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p. 1). Synchrony is the process of adapting all the used media through which the message is transmitted (Mayoral, Kelly, & Gallardo, 1988). Clearly, in each film, different types of media such as dialogues, motion pictures, signs, music and sound tracks work simultaneously to create meaning. In dubbing, these important media need to be synchronized perfectly to create an acceptable version in target language with quite the same impression on the target audience as the original. Chaume (2012, p. 72) emphasizes that “in the hierarchy of priorities, synchronies take precedence over a faithful rendering of the ST content”. The main types of synchrony that are used to create acceptable dubbing are introduced in the following two categories.

In a three-phase categorization, Fodor (1976) introduces the following types:

- Phonetic synchrony concerning lip movement
- Character synchrony regarding the voice of the dubbing actors
- Content synchrony which points to the coherence between the translation and the situation on screen (as cited in Matamala, 2010, p. 103).

Chaume (2012) also proposes the following categorization:

- Phonetic or lip-synchrony which is on screen actor's mouth's articulation
- Kinesic/Kinetic synchrony or body movement synchrony
- Isochrony or synchrony between utterances and pauses and the duration of the original actor's utterances.

Phonetic or lip-synchrony is probably the most significant factor for quality of dubbing, specially it is mostly noticeable in close-ups and scenes that open vowel, bilabial and labiodental consonant of character's mouth are visible (Chaume, 2012); consequently, the translational unit is assumed to be syllables and letters (Díaz-Cintas & Orero, 2010). Its main function is to create the illusion for the viewers that the voices they hear are the original one (Kilborn, 1993), bad phonetic or lip-synchrony could make the reception impossible (Koolstra, Peeters, & Spinhof, 2002). Most criticisms that are raised against the dubbed film are associated with the dischryony of lip movements of the on screen actors with audible dialogues, since it is more likely that viewers notice it (Chaume, 2012). Actually, phonetic

synchrony depends on accuracy of translation, quality of other types of synchronization as well as performance of dubbing actors (Bartolome & Cabrera, 2005).

Producing an accurate translation is mainly the responsibility of translators. This accuracy is so important that even they are not usually allowed to manipulate or censor the text. However, this accuracy is occasionally violated because some translators, especially novice ones, might translate the script without resorting to the original film (Schwarz, 2011). In addition, their responsibility is mostly limited to this stage and they rarely get involved in later stages of dubbing, like synchronization process, to help the dubbing team in creating more authentic version of script during the work (Bartolome & Cabrera, 2005).

Kinesic or kinetic synchrony is another important factor in dubbing. This synchrony makes the dubbing actors to choose their words adjusted to the articulatory movement (Chaume, 2012). Different verbal systems may have a wide range of gesture, i.e. the speaker of these languages may use the gestural and bodily movement to transfer a meaning without reciting a single word; therefore, in dubbing from these languages into a verbal system with a limited bodily movement, there is always a gap between the on-screen image and what is heard.

In dubbing, another significant issue is character synchrony or “voice personality”. It means the voices of the dubbing actors and actresses should match as closely as possible with those of the original in terms of timbre and tonal qualities (Kilborn, 2014). Character synchrony can be essential when there is a close connection between image, sound and text which might pose a translation challenge for translators as well (Bartina & Espasa, 2005). However, Herbest (1997) notes that it is not a key factor in reception of dubbing since target audiences usually accept the new voices, except when a particular voice that is always used for a character is replaced by a new one. In general, since the number of the dubbing actors are mostly limited and viewers probably hear the same voices in different films (Goris, 1993), it might keep them constantly aware of watching a dubbed film (Chiaro, 2009).

Content synchrony is recognized as another obligatory factor in reception of dubbing. It is to preserve the agreement between the visual channel (the scene) and the translation (or what is heard). It is deemed obligatory since viewers of a dubbed product are deprived of the original sound track (Nord, Khoshsaligheh, & Ameri, 2015). In general, translators or dubbing team of AVT usually encounter multiple constraints that can be classified as follow (Chiaro, 2009):

- a) Highly culture-specific references (names of places, famous people, institutions, etc.). When facing terms which are specific to a culture, the translator's strategy is to transfer them to the TL through the strategy of “transference” (Newmark, 1988, pp. 81-82). “Transference”, including “transliteration”, is the substitution of each alphabet of the SL word with its equivalent in the TL (Catford, 2000).
- b) Language-specific features (terms of address, taboos). According to Khoshsaligheh and Ameri (2014, p. 37) there are four common procedures for rendering taboo into Persian:
 - i) Translation of the source culture taboo to a target culture taboo (Taboo to Taboo).
 - ii) Omission of the source culture taboo (Deletion).
 - iii) Substitution of the target culture taboo with a target culture non-taboo (Taboo to Non-taboo)
 - iv) Rendition of the source culture taboo to a target culture euphemistic equivalent (Euphemism).

It is worth mentioning when cultural and ideological considerations makes translators to carry out censorship on the translation, dubbing would probably be much weaker than the original (Bucaria, 2007; Chiaro, 2007), and usually the translator's strategy is under-translation (Antonini & Chiaro, 2009).

- c) Areas and issues that overlap between language and culture (such as songs, jokes, etc.). In the case of songs, if the words of a song is in connection with the story plot, they need to be translated and sung in TL (Chiaro, 2009).

Multiculturalism can also be included as another significant constraints factor in AVT. Audio visual texts may occasionally contain some sort of intralingual language variation (i.e., dialects, sociolects, etc.) as well as interlingual variation (i.e., heteroglossia or multilingual see Zabalbeascoa & Corrius, 2014). Here, multilingualism means on-screen characters speak in more than one language and certain combination of different languages is shown. In multilingual products, L1 refers to SL and L2 refers to the TL, and L3 is any language which is not mainly the used language of the on screen characters (Zabalbeascoa & Corrius, 2014). L3 can be transmitted in a number of ways: a) adaptation: when the L3TT is rendered into a language which is different from L2 or L3ST; b) neutralization: when the L3ST is rendered into the same language as L2; c) transfer unchanged: when L3TT remains the same language as L3ST (Corrius & Zabalbeascoa, 2011). In case of bilingual audiovisual materials, L1 and L3 should not be translated into one, because a considerable portion of information about the characters and setting would be eliminated (Heiss, 2004). Actually, research has shown that multilingual film in dubbing countries, both subtitling and dubbing are used (Chiaro, 2009; Heiss, 2004). Subtitling is used for dialogues that their foreignness needs to be reflected and dubbing is used for other dialogues which needs to be domesticated (Heiss, 2004).

3. Method

Based on a descriptive research design, the study explored the quality of unauthorized dubbing of American films into Persian in terms of the different types of synchronies as well as translation accuracy. The study examined the Persian versions of ten American drama feature films dubbed in the Iranian unauthorized dubbing sector. The purposively selected sample of the study included the following films: *The Book Thief* (Percival, 2013), *The Great Gatsby* (Luhmann, 2013), *12 Years A Slave* (McQueen, 2013), *Night Crawler* (Gilroy, 2014), *Whiplash* (Chazelle, 2014), *Room* (Abrahamson, 2015), *The Revenant* (Inarritu, 2015), *Arrival* (Villeneuve, 2015), *Hacksaw Ridge* (Gibson, 2016), *The Jungle Book* (Favreau, 2016).

The Persian dubbed version of each film was carefully examined and compared against its original version with regards to the various types of synchronies, advocated in the seminal literature (e.g., Chaume, 2004, 2012; Fodor, 1976), as well as the quality and accuracy of the translation into Persian. To address the research questions, the results of the analyses are categorized and presented in the following section.

This introductory study hopes that can pave the way for further corroborating studies, and obviously, considering the fairly small and non-probability sample of the films, the results of the study cannot afford to be generalized and extended beyond this corpus. Therefore, it is recommended that further research would use larger and multiple samples to include televisions series and films of other genres and source languages to develop the knowledge on this topic.

4. Results

The results of the present study are segmented into two main categories: synchrony-related issues and translation-related issues. Each category is divided into some more subcategories that are presented below.

4.1 Synchrony-related Issues

4.1.1 Content Synchrony

In the dubbed version of the films a total of 21 instances of content synchrony were found. They included items in the target texts which were in contradiction with their original ones in meaning. These items mainly involved offensive and immoral instances which were detected to be censored in the dubbed version either through complete omission or substitution with neutral words, like the ones mentioned in Table 1. Interestingly, it was noticed that the censorship was not exerted on the words which could be seen visually on the screen, so in such cases, the harmony between the visual and auditory codes were violated. Content synchrony also included items which were seemingly emanated from the translator's misunderstanding of the ST. This could be due to the translator's insufficient knowledge of SL or his/her inaccessibility to the original version of the film.

Original Dialogue	Time	Persian Back-translation	Film
1. Looking my tiepin?	00:43:18	Looking at my cravat?	The Great Gatsby
2. A bird, that can't be a good thing.	01:04:06	I'm not an antelope, I'm afraid.	The Jungle Book
3. Bring me the girl	01:42:56	Bring me the money.	The Revenant

Table 1 Examples of content synchrony

4.1.2 Isochrony

The findings revealed that isochrony was hardly preserved in the examined cases. In many cases, the on-screen actor's lips were still moving while nothing was heard in the TL, and in many other the dialogues were still audible while no lip movement of the on-screen actor was observed. Some of the instances are reported in Table 2. As the comparisons of the times clearly indicate, the duration of translations do not match with their original versions.

Original Dialogue	Time in ST	Time in TT	Film
1. He learn you to read?	01:03:02 01:03:03	01:03:02 01:03:06	12 Years A Slave
2. You are right, we should not be dating.	00:52:18 00:52:20	00:52:18 00:52:19	Whiplash
3. You made him up in your head, he's not real.	00:15:39 00:15:41	00:15:30 00:15:43	Room

Table 2 Examples of isochrony

4.1.3 Kinesic/Kinetic Synchrony

Data collected from the films revealed that kinesic synchrony is by and large preserved, except in some rare cases, like the ones that were mentioned in the Table 3 and 4. In the film entitled *The Book Thief* (2013), in one scene, a strict teacher is holding a chalk in her hand, and by saying three separate words, wants Leslie to write her name on the board, but in the TT, these words are translated into a complete sentence, which has reduced the imperative tone of her words, leading to inconsistency of the visual and auditory cues. The other

example that is mentioned in Table 3 is related to the scene in the film *Whiplash* (2014), where Andrew's father is using his hand to give direction, but in the dubbed version his utterance is not translated, resulting in the same dischrony.

Original Version	Persian Back Translation	Time
Chalk, board, name.	Come to the board and write.	00:12:09
And I loaded the pantry up with Gushers.	Andrew, I loaded the pantry up with Gusher.	01:14:50

Table 3 Examples of kinesic synchrony

4.1.4 Character Synchrony

The findings also demonstrated that character synchrony was mostly preserved in the examined cases. It is clear that the dubbing team has made their best effort to maintain the harmony between the on-screen actor's voice and the voice talent. The two examples in Table 4 prove this issue.

Film	Character	Actor	Persian Voice Actor
<i>Whiplash</i> (Chazelle, 2014)	Terence Fletcher	J.K Simmons	Bahram Zand
<i>The Revenant</i> (Alejandro, G. Inarritu, 2015)	Glass	Leonardo Dicaprio	Afshin ZiNoori

Table 4 Examples of character synchrony

In *Whiplash*, Terence Fletcher who is a strict abusive teacher towards his students, has a light, steady voice and uses a lot of swearwords and insults in his language; however, in the target version, due to the necessity of toning down the offensive language, the TT voice actor uses more gentle voice to keep the harmony between words and his tone of voice. All in all, the harmony between the ST actor and TT voice talent is preserved. In the case of the next film, *Glass* is the leading role but he has a few dialogues throughout the story. At the beginning of the story he rarely speaks, but later after he is wounded by a grizzly bear, starts speaking with a weak and plaintive voice. In the TT, this change in his voice is perfectly preserved and transmitted.

4.1.5 Phonetic Synchrony

The findings reveal that the phonetic synchrony is almost well-preserved. As shown in Table 5, the girls are reciting the word “party” which is quite in agreement with the lip movement of the first letter of the word (بگذرونیم) [begzaronim] in the Persian.

Original Version	Persian Back translation	Time
Ain't we having a party?	Aren't we gonna have fun?	00:17:50

Table 5 Example of phonetic synchrony

4.2 Translation Accuracy Issues

Table 7 reports translation accuracy issues which are categorized into three main issues, including language, culture, and dubbing team. Each category consists of further subcategories which are reported with their frequency to show their recurrence in the corpus.

Category	Sub-category	Specific Errors	Frequency
Language related issues	Grammatical Errors	Incorrect translation of verb tense	68
		Incorrect translation of verb/phrasal verb	51
		Misunderstanding of the ST	58
		Incorrect translation of preposition	9
		Incorrect translation of personal pronoun	38
		Incorrect cuing	23
		Incorrect translation of noun	56
		Incorrect translation of Adjective	17
		Incorrect translation of the sentence	237
	Translation strategies	Incorrect translation of culture-specific nouns	4
		Neutral translation of brand names	8
Literal translation of street names		3	
Multilingualism in subtitle		13	
Multilingualism in dubbing		133	
	Untouched song	1	
Culture related issues	Translation strategies	Omission in dialogue	113
		Toning down the taboo	184
		Addition of new dialogue	65
		Omission of dialogue	236
Dubbing team related issues	Voice quality	Change in character	9
		Untouched voice	200
		Dubbed dialogues along with untouched voice	18
		Dialogues in voice over	2
	Pronunciation	Incorrect pronunciation	8

Table 6 Taxonomy of translation errors

4.2.1 Incorrect Translation of Verb Tense

Findings revealed that 68 verb tenses were translated incorrectly in the corpus of the study, which are probably due to the translator lack of knowledge in usage of the verb tenses and their meaning. Table 7 provides two instances.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. All the bright, precious things fade so fast.	00:12:14	All the bright, precious things faded so fast.	The Great Gatsby
2. We've been done by this morning.	00:05:18	It will be done by tomorrow morning.	The Revenant

Table 7 Examples of incorrect translation of verb tense

4.2.2 Incorrect Translation of Verb/ Phrasal Verb

Among the findings, as shown in Table 8, there were some incorrect translations of verbs (whether in their meaning or negation) as well as phrasal verbs which consequently has led to incorrect translation of the given sentence.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. You both have till 02:00 hours to figure something out.	00:33:46	You have two hours to think about it.	Arrival
2. I originate from Canada.	01:55:58	I've been in Canada for a few	12 Years a

		years.	Slave
3. I just couldn't get her to come down.	01:23:40	She could not come down.	Room

Table 8 Examples of incorrect translation of verb/phrasal verb

4.2.3 Misunderstanding of the ST

Some dubbed dialogues were found in contrast with the story plot, like the ones mentioned in Table 9. In the first example, Solomon's new master asks if he has ever picked cotton, and the new master reacts to his "no" reply by saying "it comes to you quiet naturally", but it is translated wrongly. In the second example, the pronoun "it" refers to "music notes" not to the "ability and power". These incorrect translations have led to the incoherence between what is being heard and what is being seen.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. It comes to you quite naturally.	01:24:10	It's obvious you are not used to it.	12 Years a Slave
2. Yeah, I guess maybe you don't have it.	01:30:48	It seems you don't dare it.	Whiplash

Table 9 Examples of misunderstanding of the ST

4.2.4 Incorrect Translation of Prepositions

As Table 10 shows, some translated dialogues contain incorrect translated prepositions which have resulted in incorrect meaning.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. They had to bury him by the tracks.	00:05:19	They had to bury him in the tracks.	The Book Thief
2. When there's a storm and you stand in front of a tree, if you look at its branches, you swear it will fall.	00:41:09	When there's a storm and you stand beside a tree, if you look at its branches, you're sure it will fall.	The Revenant

Table 10 Examples of incorrect translation of prepositions

4.2.5 Incorrect Translation of the Personal Pronouns

As shown in Table 11, among the data collected from the sample, there were some instances of incorrect translation of personal pronouns which have led to the incorrect transfer of meaning in the dubbed versions.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Need to kill her?	00:17:53	Wanna kill me?	The Revenant
2. Before you were born.	00:36:30	Before the boy was born.	The Book Thief

Table 11 Examples of incorrect translation of personal pronouns

4.2.6 Incorrect Cuing

In the corpus, as shown in Table 12, there exist some dubbed dialogues that revealed the translators had difficulty in determining the beginning and the end of the sentences. In the first example, the slaveholder asks a client to watch how perfect and healthy Randal is, and then makes Randal to jump and prove that, but the translator mixed both sentences to one and this has resulted in incorrect translation. In the second example, the word “past” means “years ago” not the verb “pass”. This incorrect inferring of meaning has led into incorrect translation as well.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Observe this. Randal, jump, jump, jump, run, run, run.	00:30:30	Look at this Randal, jump, jump, jump.	12 Years a Slave
2. But I have had a difficult time these past several years.	02:05:17	But I have had a difficult time. How these years passed.	12 Years a Slave

Table 12 Examples of incorrect cuing

4.2.7 Incorrect Translation of Noun

As shown in Table 13, among the data collected there were some cases in which nouns were translated incorrectly, so some of them are not in accordance with the scene.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Why aren't we at the rape at Griffith Park like everybody else?	00:59:14	Why aren't we at the murder at Griffith Park like everybody else?	Night Crawler
2. It's them Doss kids, crazy as their old man.	00:04:14	It's them Doss kids, crazy as their old father.	Hacksaw Ridge

Table 13 Examples of incorrect translation of noun

4.2.8 Incorrect Translation of Adjective

In some cases, as shown in Table 14, adjectives are translated incorrectly and in some other cases they are completely omitted.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Jesse Owens, the fastest man alive.	00:23:40	Jesse Owen, the first man in history.	The Book Thief
2. I think that you're really pretty...	00:13:13	I think you are very good.	Whiplash

Table 14 Examples of incorrect translation of adjective

4.2.9 Incorrect Translation of the Sentence

Some cases of incorrect translation at the sentence level were also found in the corpus. These sentences were translated completely incorrect, leading to inconsistency between the plot and the scene. As the following table shows, in the first example, the man means the place they are heading is so terrible that when they arrive they wish they had fought and escaped before, but the Persian version is different in meaning. In the second example, the teacher is giving

the address of the music hall in which the band are going to play the music, but it is translated completely wrong.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. All's I know, if we get where we're travelling, we'll wish we'd died trying.	00:22:37	The only thing I know is that for achieving freedom we must try.	12 Years a Slave
2. Stage right, in order, now.	00:37:16	Play properly, now.	Whiplash

Table 15 Examples of incorrect translation of sentence

4.2.10 Incorrect Translation of Culture-Specific Terms

Some culture-specific nouns were translated incorrectly such as the word, “Sabbath” which means the seventh day of the week and the day of rest and worship among Jews and some Christians. This word was translated differently in the examined cases; for example, in the film *Hacksaw Ridge*, it was translated to 'Saturday', while in the film *12 Years a Slave*, it was substituted by a neutral word of 'holiday' in one place and the word 'Sunday' in another place. Nevertheless, the prevalent equivalent for “Sabbath” in Persian is (سبته) [Sabbath].

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. The Sabbath day, it is free to roam.	01:07:17	Today is Sunday and it's holiday.	12 Years, A Slave
2. So, Saturday is my Sabbath, and I'm not allowed to work then.	00:38:11	So, Saturday is the day of worship and I'm not allowed to work.	Hacksaw Ridge

Table 16 Examples of incorrect translation of culture-specific terms

4.2.11 Neutral Translation of Brand Names

Among the data collected from the sample, some proper nouns such as the names of drinks, foods, places, etc. were detected to be translated neutrally, despite sometimes these nouns had important role in providing some information about the character's personality.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Highballs Mr. Gatsby?	00:41:06	As always, Mr Gatsby?	The Great Gatsby
2. It's a custom Wurlitzer.	01:01:35	It's a handmade piano.	The Great Gatsby

Table 17 Examples of Neutral Translation of Brand Names

4.2.12 Literal Translation of Street Names

Findings also revealed the procedure of literal translation was used for the translation of street names which are deemed as highly culture-specific references, like the ones that are mentioned in Table 18. In the first two examples “Heaven” is translated to "behesht" and “Broadway” is translated to "well known" (Catford, 2000).

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. This is Heaven Street.	00:06:13	This is behesht street.	The Book

			Thief
2. Outside the car, the world was thrown inside a snow-shaker, und on a place called Heaven street ...	01:52:53	[...], und on a place called behesht street ...	The Book Thief
3. Film stars, Broadway directors ...	00:25:11	Film stars, well known directors ...	Great Gatsby

Table 18 Examples of literal translation of street names

4.2.13 Multilingualism in Subtitles

The Book Thief (2013) is a multilingual film: English as L1, Persian as L2, and German as L3, because almost all the dialogues contain some German words or phrases. The translator's strategy to handle the L3 was to dub the semantic units at the word level, and for those semantic units which were longer than one word inserted a subtitle in L1. For example, when military commander addresses people in German, as shown in Table 19, his dialogues are left untouched, untranslated; however, the English versions were shown as subtitles.

The English Translation of German Dialogues in Subtitle	Time
1. And that is why we have gathered here tonight to free ourselves from any intellectual dirt.	00:27:42
2. We will exterminate the illness that infected Germany for the last twenty years.	00:28:02

Table 19 Examples of multilingualism in subtitles

4.2.14 Multilingualism in Dubbing

The Revenant is multilingual film as well in which L1 is English, L2 is Persian and L3s are French and American Indian. Unlike the film *The Book Thief*, the semantic units which were longer than a word were dubbed, as shown in Table 20, and the multilingualism of the film is hidden for the target audience. For example, the following dialogues are from a conversation between three people: a French, an American Indian, and an interpreter who interprets from French to American Indian and vice versa, but in the dubbed version the dialogues of interpreter are omitted or left untouched and the conversations just switches between the French and American Indians, although the lip movements of the interpreter in some parts are visible.

The English Translation of Multilingual Dialogues	Time
1. All we can trade are guns and ammunition.	00:32:40
2. Tell him if he asks about horses again, there is no deal.	00:32:42
3. I need a woman with big tits who can cook.	00:32:14

Table 20 Examples of multilingualism in dubbing

4.2.15 Untouched Song

The film *The Jungle Book* contains a song in which the king of Bander-log, asks Mowgli for “the red flower”. Obviously the song is in connection with the story plot and requires a translation, but as shown in Table 21, the translator or the dubbing team left the song untouched and the addressees only hear the original song.

Original Version	Time
Now, don't try to kid me, man-cub, I'll make a deal with you, What I desire is man's red fire, to make my dream come true ...	01:08:58 -01:10:12

Table 21 Examples of untouched song

4.3 Culture Related Issues

4.3.1 Omission in Dialogues

According to Table 22, 113 instances of omitted words and lines of dialogues were found in the corpus of the study, which resulted in the inconsistency between the verbal, visual and the narrative flow of the plots. A couple of such instances are shown in the following Table.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Strip her. Strike her bare and lash her to the post.	01:48:19	Stripe her, tie her to that tree trunk.	12 Years a Slave
2. Young men don't just drift coolly out of nowhere and buy a palace in Long Island	00:47:25	Young men cannot simple buy such a palace in long Island.	Night Crawler

Table 22 Examples for omission in dialogues

4.3.2 Toning Down of Taboos

Each film contained some sort of taboo, as shown in Table 23, and the translator's strategy toward all taboos even for the multilingual ones in *The Book Thief* were toning down through substitution with less taboo words or completely irrelevant ones.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. Hitler is a monkey's ass, stick you Hitler.	01:42:46	I hate Hitler.	The Book Thief
2. Is that Ma's boyfriend?	00:54:21	Is that ma's husband?	Room

Table 23 Examples of toning down of taboos

4.3.3 Addition of New Dialogue

In the Persian dubbed versions, 65 instances of addition to the dialogues were detected. These additions extend from a single word to a sentence, like the first example in Table 25. The reason for these additions in some cases were due to toning down of taboo, like the one shown in the second example of Table 24.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
	01:20:44	So, you do not help me to save myself.	12 Years a Slave
2. You wanna make a baby.	01:49:52	You wanna get married and make a baby?	Arrival

Table 24 Examples of addition of new dialogue

4.3.4 Omission of Dialogues

In the examined cases, as shown in Table 25, some dialogues were completely omitted in the Persian dubbed version. In the following extracts, the camera is completely on the actor (a close-up scene) and the lip movements are noticeable but nothing is heard.

Original Version	Time	Film
1. He pantomimes, There's barely a welt on her. That's what your niggers make of you...a fool for the taking.	01:49:57	12 Years a Slave
2. You were playing with this little boy's momma?	00:17:50	The Revenant

Table 25 Examples of omission of dialogues

4.3 Dubbing Team Related Issues

4.3.1 Change in Character

Findings also revealed that there were some cases with the change in characters, like the one shown in Table 26. In the original film, a dialogue is uttered by a character but in the dubbed version it is dubbed and uttered for another character.

Original Version	ST Character	TT Character	Time	Film
1. I hate the word "hulking"	Tom Buchanan	Daisy	00:09:04	The Great Gatsby
3. Major Jay Gatsby for valor extraordinary.	Jay Gatsby	Nick Carraway	00:37:36	The Great Gatsby

Table 26 Examples of change in character

4.3.2 Untouched Voice

As shown in Table 27, some dialogues were detected to be left untouched in the dubbed version of the films. In fact, the original voice of the character could be heard while no translated and dubbed dialogues were provided for them.

Original Version	Time	Film
1. I accuse you of nothing. I cannot accuse. I have done dishonorable things to survive and for all of them, I have ended up here. No better than if I stood up for myself.	00:41:22	12 Years a Slave
2. I begged him to stay. I told him you'd want to see him!	01:03:27	Hacksaw Ridge
3. What is it? You can't remain the Sabbath without her under your eye? You are a no-account bastard, filthy, godless heathen. My bed is too holy for you to share.	01:12:07	12 Years a Slave

Table 27 Examples of untouched voice

4.3.3 Dubbed Dialogues along with Untouched Voice

As shown in Table 28, there were dialogues which were accompanied by their original versions, in other words, the dialogues were dubbed and a few second later the original ones were heard.

Original Version	Time	Film
1. That is far more than my wages amount to.	00:10:36	12 Years a Slave

2. There was another drive-by shooting today downtown.	00:09:27	Night Crawler
3. Say goodbye to Momma. Come on.	00:26:39	Hacksaw Ridge

Table 28 Examples of dubbed dialogues along with untouched voice

4.3.4 Dialogues in Voice Over

It was also noticed that in some dialogues, the beginning of the source sentence was heard and a few second later the translated dialogues were audible. This is probably due to the technical issues or insufficient knowledge of the distinction between dubbing and voice over.

Original Version	Time	Film
1. And this is your grandson.	02:06:29	12 Years a Slave
2. Were it not for the riotous amusements that beckoned from beyond the walls of that colossal castle owned by a gentleman I had not yet met.	00:04:50	The Great Gatsby
3. The morals were looser and the ban of alcohol had backfired making the liquor cheaper.	00:03:49	The Great Gatsby

Table 29 Examples for dialogues in voice over

4.3.5 Incorrect Pronunciation

Incorrect pronunciation by voice actors were also found in the corpus which resulted in the incorrect meaning in dialogues. This problem might be due to the use of incorrect punctuation in the translated script. For example, as the below table shows, in the first example, the Persian equivalent of the verb 'ban', (توقیف)[Tofigh], is mispronounced as (توفیق) [Tofigh] which have very close pronunciations in Persian. Similarly, in the second example, the Persian equivalent for 'flower' (گل) [Gol] is read out 'clay' (گل) [Gel] as they have the same spelling, and they are different in just one vowel sound.

Original Version	Time	Persian Back Translation	Film
1. The morals were looser and the ban of alcohol had backfired making the liquor cheaper.	00:03:49	The morals were looser and the <i>success</i> of alcohol had made the alcohol cheaper.	The Great Gatsby
2. And the dust becomes flower ...when the morning is clear...	00:12:54	And the dust becomes clay, when the morning is clear.	The Revenant

Table 30 Examples of incorrect pronunciation

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine the quality of unauthorized dubbing of feature films into Persian by evaluating the extent of preservation of the different types of synchronies (Chaume, 2004, 2012; Fodor, 1976) as well as the accuracy of English translation into Persian.

Because of the intricate coexistence of multimodal channels, translation of audiovisual text in any way including dubbing, is often challenging and needs to be done carefully to help facilitate the transfer of the message without any losses or added hardship on

the part of the target audience. This intercultural task certainly requires professional mediators who are trained for the job and are supported by the specialist guidelines and standards and relevant professional communities. Considering the circumstances of unauthorized dubbing, inaccuracies in the translation, and lost synchronies are not unexpected as observed in the results.

Clearly, in audiovisual products, both acoustic and visual channels work together to make a whole meaning, but the findings of this study revealed that this harmony was sometimes violated, especially in dialogues that contained taboo words. It was detected that these words were toned down through substitution with less offensive equivalents or completely neutral ones. These two strategies were previously noted and several cases were discussed by Khoshsaligheh and Ameri (2014) and Khoshsaligheh Ameri and Mehdizadkhani (2018) as two of the main strategies to handle taboo terms in dubbing in Persian. Findings also revealed that censorship was merely exerted on culturally inappropriate content at the audio-verbal level but there is almost no visual intervention for any purpose. This is completely opposite to authorized dubbing practice as investigated by Pakar and Khoshsaligheh (forthcoming). This finding supports the claim by Nord et al. (2015) that in quasi-professional dubbing, censorship is dominantly applied at the verbal level and not the visual level. The verbal intervention and manipulation observed in the corpus might stem from two other reasons than the usual cultural gatekeeping by the translators in the official practice: a) these translations were carried out by translators who did not check their translations against the original films to match every segment of their translation. In this regard, Schwarz (2011) has previously noted that sometimes amateur translators translate the script without resorting to the film; b) it might be the result of restricted role of the translator in the dubbing process, who is not involved in other stages of dubbing which is in line with Bartolome and Cabrera (2005)'s claim that translators rarely, if ever, appear in other stages of dubbing.

The findings also revealed that isochrony was barely preserved, but since most of these dischronies were just for a few seconds and the target audiences are aware that they are watching a dubbed film, this is usually dismissed as an unimportant problem by the viewers. In this regard, Chaume (2012) notes that the audiences usually notice the dischrony of lip movements of the on-screen actors in close-ups which is sometimes inevitable in professional dubbing. Character synchrony was closely preserved, while Herbest (1997) states that there is no need to preserve this synchronicity since the audience usually accepts new voices. In the case of kinesic synchrony, it was evident that synchrony for the scenes where bodily movements were used to convey meaning was largely preserved, except for a few cases. In those few cases, this problem could hardly hinder comprehension of the film because in most of those cases the characters were filmed in mid-shots or long-shots, so the target audience could not notice lip movements. This dischrony might result from either the impossibility of translating the dialogue in words which would be phonetically matching or the restricted role of the translator (Bartolome & Cabrera, 2005), or just translation of the transcript without checking against the original film (Schwarz, 2011).

Phonetic synchrony was observed to be almost well-preserved in the sample. It is said that good phonetic synchrony creates the illusion for the viewers that the voices they hear are original (Kilborn, 1993). Based on the analysis of data, it was concluded that the unit of the translation was dialogue, and still this synchrony was well-preserved. It is, however, in contrast with the instruction that the unit of translation for dubbing should be syllables and letters (Diaz Cintas & Orero, 2010). Phonetic or lip-synchrony is mostly noticeable in close-ups, and cases with open vowels, bilabial and labiodental consonants (Chaume, 2012).

The findings of the present study also revealed that the translators were probably amateurs as the translated transcripts were flawed with so many translation and language errors. In case of the translation of the songs, the analysis showed that that they were untranslated, despite the professional emphasis on the necessity of the translation of the songs as they play an important role on the development of the plot, characterization and theme of the film Chiaro (2009).

A number of translation errors were found in the literal/neutral translation of culture-specific referenced items such as street names and the like; their importance, however, is usually emphasized (Newmark, 1988). Translation errors were also observed in incorrect spotting as well as misunderstanding of the ST. The errors included a variety such as incorrect rendition of verb tenses, verbs/phrasal verbs, prepositions, personal pronouns, nouns, adjectives, and sentences. Mistakes at such level strongly confirmed the assumption that the translations were carried out by amateur translators.

In the case of multilingualism, when dubbing countries face such feature in films, the common solution is the use of both subtitling and dubbing for transferring and distinguishing the languages (Chiaro, 2009; Heiss, 2004). For dialogues which need to sound foreign, subtitle is used and for dialogues in L1 are dubbed (Heiss, 2004). The findings of this study indicated a degree of inconsistency in the sample: in film *The book thief* (2013), multilingual dialogues (German) were transferred in English subtitle, whereas in the film *The Revenant* (2015) for example, multilingual dialogues (native Indian in America) were transmitted in Persian (TL), and in other cases, the dialogues were completely omitted, so the foreignness of those dialogues was completely hidden to the Iranian viewers. The findings of the study also revealed that some errors were because of the poor handling of the dubbing companies and unqualified voice talents. So, some original voices left untouched in the dubbed versions, or some dubbed dialogues along with the original voices could be softly heard simultaneously.

The results of this descriptive study, although limited, can provide a set of pedagogical and conceptual implications in the under-investigated area of dubbing in the context of Iran. Given that currently, multimedia translation courses are offered in undergraduate programs such as BA English Translation and BA English Literature in many Iranian universities, translation educators can present authentic material and design realistic tasks and based on the pitfalls and foibles of dubbing in various context, some of which were revealed in this research. The results can indicate to where instruction ought to be focused so that prospective translators for dubbing can make better decisions in the process of translation, dialogue writing and synchronization. Moreover, dubbing practitioners can take into account all synchrony and accuracy issues to enhance their skills in their future translation commissions. Considering the limitations of this study in terms of sampling, future research can investigate the dubbing quality in localization of audiovisual fiction of other genres and source languages in Iran. It would valuable that later research would address the reception of unauthorized dubbing on the part of the Iranian audiences through qualitative research (e.g., using focus group interviews) and quantitative research (survey studies). Additionally, the impact of the revealed dischronies and translation inaccuracies can be investigated in terms of the probable cognitive load they may impose on the viewers and whether they disrupt the immersion the viewers experience mixed-methods research (e.g., experimental studies using EEG and eye-tracking).

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