

Bridging Cultural Divides: A Comparative Study of Subtitling English and Arabic Films in Saudi Context

Corpus-based study using Excel "AI Analyze Data" tool.

Noha Alowedi ¹[0000-0002-4624-7063]

¹ Saudi Electronic University, Riyadh, KSA

n.alowedi@seu.edu.sa

Abstract. This study explores the intricacies of translating contemporary English and Arabic audiovisual content, especially cultural-specific-items (CSI) on issues of race, gender, religion, customs, ecology, and colloquialism. The investigation focuses on comparing the different translation techniques related to cultural concepts in the genre of popular fiction. To fulfill that aim, four films (two originally in English and two originally in Saudi Arabic) featured on online streaming platform (Netflix-MENA) are chosen: *Rustin* (2023), *Angels and Demons* (2009), *Raven song* (2022), and *The Tambour of Retribution* (2020). Those four films are under the category of "trending in Saudi Arabia"; consequently, they comply with the Saudi context. The main objective is to identify the overall translation strategy used in film subtitling. Accordingly, to evaluate the strategy in line with the general vision of Saudi Arabia 2030. Results show that the translation strategy of foreignization is used when subtitling English films. Thus, preserving Western culture in the linguistic features of the subtitles. While the translation strategy of domestication is used when subtitling Saudi films. Eventually, losing the local Saudi culture in the linguistic features of the English subtitles. Consequently, the current research shed lights on the importance of maintaining the foreignization strategy when subtitling Saudi films to assure that local Saudi culture is received by the English-speaking audience all over the world.

Keywords: corpus based, Excel AI Analyze, criticism, Saudi films, subtitles, cultural-specific-items, translation strategies.

1 Introduction

In the contemporary era, translated content has permeated our lives to an unprecedented extent, enveloping individuals in a world rich with translations, particularly in the realm of audiovisual translation. This facet of translation facilitates the easy and accessible consumption of foreign media for those who may not possess proficiency in the original language (Smith & Johnson, 2023; Wilson & Parker, 2022).

The term "Audiovisual Translation" (AVT) became the standard referent to screen translation for all kinds of screen projected materials. Diaz Cintas And Remael (2007) were first to coin the term AVT. However, many researchers have paved the way for the existence of this final term. Jeremy Munday (2016) presents a historical overview

as the following. In 1971, Katharina Reiss refers to 'audio-medial' to fields such as advertising. Snell-Hornby (1988/1995) links films to literary translation in her integrated theory. Mayoral et al. (1988) coined the term 'constrained translation' in reference to technical time and space limitations. Researchers recognized to complications added to translators due to the co-existence of the sound channel and the vision channel, and hence they started speaking of 'audiovisual language transfer' Luyken et al. (1991).

Gambier (2003) provided significant identification of different types of audiovisual translation including the following: interlingual subtitling, bilingual subtitling, intralingual subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, surtitling, audio description.

Subtitling of contemporary English and Arabic audiovisual content, particularly in the Middle East setting (Saudi Arabia), presents a complex and multifaceted challenge. This challenge is amplified when dealing with terms related to race, gender, religion, customs, ecology, and colloquialism, which are often subject to varying social norms and can oscillate between accepted and offensive categorizations. The problem at the heart of this research lies in understanding how these terms are subtitled into Arabic and English, the cultural nuances that accompany them, and the potential disparities in connotations and meanings that arise during this transformative process.

Moreover, the language of films generally falls within the genre of popular fiction, which is highly dynamic and continuously updated. This fact imposes extra challenge and responsibility on the translator/subtitler. The task of translating audiovisual content across diverse languages and cultures is a complex one as it transcends the confines of mere linguistic conversion, calling on the translator to deeply appreciate the linguistic intricacies embedded within cultural subtleties, values, and norms (Dwyer, 2017). Barker (2016) affirms that in an age defined by the globalization of information and culture, the demand for cross-cultural understanding and effective intercultural communication has never been more pronounced than now.

Concepts such as equivalence, cultural adaptation, and semiotics become indispensable tools for dissecting the complexities inherent in linguistic and cultural translation in the sphere of audiovisual media. This study is delimited to analyze the disparities in connotations between English and Arabic for cultural-specific-items (CSI) in four films on issues of race, gender, customs, religion, ecology, and colloquialism. The comparison is carried generally between the subtitling of English films to Arabic and the subtitling of Saudi films into English.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Cultural-Specific-Items (CSIs)

According to Mona Baker (2018) culture specific concepts are source-language words that express concepts totally unknown in the target culture. Such concepts may relate to: 1) religion, 2) social customs, or 3) type of food. A clear dissimilarity of culture-specific items among other items can be observed in the following categorization: 1) CSIs are related to a specific culture and 2) other cultures do not possess the same concepts or items (Mikutytė, 2005).

Peter Newmark's (1988) taxonomy of CSIs is accessible and may be used as a practical tool in translation. He singles out five categories under the name cultural categories: 1) ecology; 2) material culture; 3) social culture; 4) organizations, customs, ideas; 5) gestures and habits (Newmark, 1988, p.95).

Aixela (1997) states that CSIs depend on the context and cannot exist off the context of the source text and the target text. According to Aixela, all culture-specific items can be assigned whether to proper nouns or common expressions, whereas the latter group includes words of 1) objects, 2) institutions, 3) habits and 4) opinions.

2.2 Subtitling Constraints and Procedures

Subtitling is the process of translating in written language a spoken dialog, received orally by actors in films, guests in TV shows, or any audiovisual material. Subtitles appear in successive segments of one or two lines at the bottom of screen, and they flash in and out at an average rate of two to six seconds (Al Tamimi and Mansy, 2023).

Subtitling Constraints. The limitations of space and time impose constraints on subtitlers. Spatial considerations encompass several elements, including the number of lines and characters per line, the positioning of subtitles on the screen, the choice of typeface, and the color of the text. According to Diaz Cintas (2018), it is recommended to limit the length of subtitles to a maximum of two lines, ensuring they occupy no more than one-twelfth of the screen. Additionally, it is suggested that the average number of characters per line should be about 35. To minimize the possibility of viewer distraction, neutral typefaces are typically chosen, and white subtitles are predominantly used.

Time constraints refer to the limited duration that a subtitle is intended to be visible on the screen (Diaz Cintas and Remael, 2021). Another technical challenge is the conversion of the oral message in the source language to written text in the target language where "many oral features, such as pauses, repetitions, false starts, etc. that are very common to spoken discourse, get "cleansed" to adapt to the code of written language" (Pedersen, 2005, 167).

Subtitling Procedures. Several scholars within the subtitling field have developed classifications for subtitling strategies. The most applied is Pederson's typology which he presented in a conference in Germany (2005). Pedersen subtitling typology which was designed to manage cultural references includes the following: official equivalent, retention, specification, direct translation, generalization, cultural substitution, and omission. Apparently, it is not different from the translation techniques and procedures handling cultural concepts.

2.3 Translating Techniques and Strategies

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) adopt a model in classification translation solutions under their proposal of “contrastive stylistic analysis of translation.” In this model, the scholars suggest two broad methods and seven techniques to deal with stylistic translation problems. The two main methods are direct/overt and oblique/covert translation. Overt translation embraces literal solutions that bring the reader to the source culture, while covert translation encompasses nonliteral solutions that takes the translated text closer to the reader.

Techniques for Overt Translation. Techniques classified under overt translation method include borrowing, calque, and literal translation. They are further explained below.

Borrowing: Transferring source language words’ sounds to target language to fill a lexical gap. EX, Hijab, Kaa’ba, wedoo, etc.

Calque: Transferring source language expressions and structure to conform to target language structure. Commonly used in the translation of collocations, names of organizations, compounds and phrases. EX, Arab Spring- الربيع العربي ; Spiderman- الرجل العنكبوت ; Skyscrapers- ناطحات سحاب , ect.

Literal: Adhering to the linguistic structure, style, and feel of the source language. It usually occurs between languages of the same family, but it can be applicable between languages of different families such as Arabic and English.

Techniques for Covert Translation. Techniques classified under covert translation include transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. They are explained below.

Transposition: Replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message. It is common when languages belong to different families and have different structure systems such as Arabic and English. Ex, The economy did not stop growing ينمو الاقتصاد نموا ثابتا

Modulation: Changing the semantics point of view of the source language. For example, a negative source language expression is changed to a positive target language expression. Another usage is with different cultural connotations. Ex, It warmed my heart يثلج الصدر

Equivalence: Substituting a word or expression in the source language with one already available in the target language. For example, proverbs and cliches that describe the same situations across cultures by different stylistic means. Ex, Birds of a feather flock together الطيور على أشكالها تقع

Adaptation: Explaining source language items that do not exist in target language. For example, translating culture specific items by describing. Ex, الطواف حول الكعبة Circling around the Holy Cube.

Translation Strategies. When it comes to measuring readers’ response and acceptance, translation strategies relevant to the ethical dimension have been discussed in Venuti’s (1995) definition of foreignization and domestication. The basic definition of

domestication strategy is that the foreign features of the source text are accommodated in the target text; accordingly, the target text appears natural in the target culture. Munday (2016) further explains that domestication involves translating in a transparent, fluent, invisible style to minimize the foreignness of target text. On the other hand, foreignization, according to Venuti (1995) is an ethno deviant pressure on the target language culture values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad. It is a non-fluent or estranging translation style designed to make visible the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the source text and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture (Munday, 2016).

2.4 Previous Related Studies

A fundamental concern in translation endeavors revolves around the faithful reflection of the essence of the source text. In her Phd dissertation, Mujaddadi (2017) investigated the ethical choices taken by translators when subtitling English films to Arabic, especially with taboo references. The decision of whether to preserve or adapt the nuances of the ST is a deliberate choice, often influenced by the translator's personal beliefs and the desired impact on the target audience, the study concludes that the most commonly employed strategy for translating taboos is euphemism (Mujaddadi, 2017).

Alsager and Almohizea (2023) explored the violation in Arabic subtitles of the film *Mulan 2020* according to Skopos Theory. Findings showed that the rules of Skopos Theory were sometimes dismissed at the word and phrase levels in the subtitle translation. At the discourse level, the Skopos rule was violated. The findings also revealed that the most used strategy was providing a literal translation.

Since subtitling is a niche of translation, comparing the number of subtitling research to the general translation studies research, the latter is bigger. Furthermore, comparing the number of research investigating English to Arabic subtitling to the number of research investigating Arabic to English subtitling, the former is bigger.

The literature review until today shows that there are 15 papers handling English-Arabic subtitling (Khuddru, 2000; Mazid, 2006; Alkadi, 2010; Thawabteh, 2011; Gamal, 2014; Alharthi, 2015; Al-Adwan, 2015; Khalaf, 2016; Yahiaoui, 2016; Mujaddadi, 2017; Abdelaal, 2019; Alsharhan, 2020; Alfaify and Ramos Pinto, 2022; Alsager and Almohizea, 2023; Albarakati, 2024) and only 5 papers investigating Egyptian dialect-English subtitling (Thawabteh, 2012; Al-Rosan, 2012; Al-Kharabsheh and Yssin, 2017; Moll, 2017; Mansy, 2021), and only one paper studying Saudi dialect-English subtitling (Ali, et. Al, 2024). This paper examined Saudi Arabic slang expressions subtitling into English. The study found that the translation strategies used are generalization, paraphrase, official equivalent, direct translation, and cultural substitution.

2.5 Significant of the Current Study

Considering the booming film industry in Saudi Arabia. This rapid yet steady increase in the industry is supported by both private and public sectors. High budgets are set for film productions. The Ministry of Culture is officially facilitating film making, one

example is the establishment of the Film Commission, among other 10 commission to support and enhance Saudi Culture inside and outside the Kingdom. All these efforts sync with the Kingdom vision of 2023.

In view of the preliminary review of the existing literature on the topic of Subtitling in the Arab world, Specifically regarding Saudi films, and the research gap identified, this research aims to focus on Saudi film making industry and provide insights to the subtitling teams contributing to bridging the Arabic-English cultural gap.

To reach the research aim, the following objectives were set: to identify CSIs and their classification; to investigate translation techniques applicable to the translation of CSIs; to decide whether the general translation strategy was foreignization or domestication.

To achieve these objectives, comparative corpus-based approach is followed. In 1998, the ‘corpus-based approach’ had been suggested as a new paradigm in translation studies. The approach was built on the tools and techniques of monolingual corpus linguistics initially developed in the 1980s by John Sinclair (1991). Stig Johansson (2003) was the first to apply corpus-based approach to translation research. The corpora (plural of corpus) can either be ready built such as the monolingual COBUILD Bank of English and the parallel corpora Linguee, or they can be collected and created by the researcher. Having the different types of corpora, the researcher can explore the data, analyze, and provide conclusions contributing to Translation Theory.

It is crucial to highlight the distinction between corpus-driven approach (which builds up from the data towards patterns and generalization, in sync with Descriptive Translation Studies) and corpus-based approach (which starts with a pre-existing hypothesis or theory and try to find evidence to support or suppress that claim). The latter approach is one followed in this study.

The point of departure in this study starts with Lawrence Venuti’s the translator invisibility theory. Venuti (2008) believes that the translator becomes invisible hindering estranged exotic terms of the foreign source text to appear in the target English text. This invisibility is produced:

- 1- by the way translators themselves tend to translate fluently into English, to produce an idiomatic and readable TT, thus creating an ‘illusion of transparency’;
- 2- by the way the translated texts are typically read in the target culture: that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the ‘original’. (Venuti 2008: 1).

Consequently, If the major strategy used in translating the cultural references in the Saudi films to English subtitles is domestication, then Venuti’s theory is proven confirmed.

3 Methods

The corpus approaches to translation can help analyze the connotative and denotative meaning of the word (Jiang & Rij-Heyligers, 2008). Parallel corpora, which include comparing the texts along with their translations, are beneficial and of great importance for translators and linguists (Zanettin, 2017). Baker (2018) is among the leading scholars to explore the use of a corpus-assisted approach in translation and assures that this

approach frees translators from the pressure possible bias. Corpus-based analysis increases the validity of the results, as this method uncovers how the word is used in its original/source and translated/target text and the contextual information related to it (Alowed, 2022).

The corpus-based approach is a method that uses an underlying corpus as an inventory of language data. From this repository, appropriate material is extracted to support intuitive knowledge, to verify expectations, to allow linguistic phenomena to be quantified, and to find evidence for existing theories or to retrieve illustrative samples. It is a method where the corpus is interrogated and data is used to confirm linguistic pre-set explanations and assumptions (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001). And that exactly is the method used in this study.

3.1 Data Sources

All the chosen films are available on Netflix in Saudi Arabia and rated top trending. Subtitles are made by Netflix professional subtitlers (not fans). The films cover the theme of civil rights as opposed to discrimination based on race, gender, religion, and disability. A summary of each film follows:

Rustin (2023). English is the original language of the movie. The film tells the story of Bayard Rustin, advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr., who devotes his life to the pursuit of racial equality, human rights and global democracy. However, as an openly gay Black man, he is all but erased from the civil rights movement he helped build.

Angels and Demons (2009). English is the original language of this film. The film is about a symbologist trying to stop a secret society from terminating the Vatican City. He seeks to decipher clues during his mission, and most of the signs lead him to the four science altars.

Raven song (2022). Arabic is the original language of this film. The story is about Nasser, an unexceptional washout, who is analyzed with a brain tumor when he meets a mysterious and peculiar young woman. Obsessed by her and sick of being a failure, he must quickly figure out what he wants to do in life before he goes through a risky surgery. He reaches out to the young woman with the most seductive way in his opinion which is a song.

The Tambour of Retribution (2020). Arabic is the original language of this film. The film is about a love story disguised in local social conflict. A swordsman's son falls in love with the daughter of a black wedding singer (Tagaga) in a social paradox based on selling joy weddings and buying death in courts.

3.2 Data collection

As previously mentioned, this paper is situated in the realm of the corpus-based approach, with the aim to find evidence from the chosen corpus to either confirm or contradict Venuti's theory of the translator invisibility. Therefore, the researcher built **parallel corpora** comprising of source text- target text pairs, when aligned sentence by sentence or phrase by phrase, can allow the investigation of the strategies employed in translation of CSIs. The steps are as follows:

- Selecting four movies: two with the language spoken is English and two with the language spoken is Arabic (Saudi Dialect).
- Extracting English and Arabic CSIs from the subtitles of the films.
- Compiling the corpus by aligning the source segments with target subtitles. This step is created in an Excel sheet.
- Dividing the excel sheet to seven columns as follows: film name, ST segment, TT segment, type of CSI, translation technique, translation method, and translation strategy. Only the first three columns are filled at this phase (i.e., data collection).
- This data was obtained by watching the films several times (three times for each film)
- Identifying instances of the related CSIs, the researcher relies on her proficiency in Arabic, specifically Saudi Dialect, being a Saudi herself (born and raised in Saudi).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this research is twofold. Qualitative analysis starts by collecting the data (CSIs and their translation) and classifying the data to CSI types, translation techniques, methods, and strategies, and documenting that in an Excel sheet. Quantitative analysis follows. Here the "AI Analyze" tool in Excel is used to calculate the statistics and present the relationships among the data.

Identifying Cultural-Specific-Items (CSIs). The segments of identified CSIs are analyzed inductively to find the suitable typology for them. Accordingly, the following classifications appear:

CSI types: race, religion, gender, customs (food, clothes, fiction, social norms), ecology (places, institutions), and colloquialism.

- Back to the Excel sheet, the fourth column is filled with the proper CSI type.

Designating Translation Procedures to CSIs. Again, each identified CSI segment, paired with its translated partner, are classified to the proper translation procedure. Allowing the following categorization:

CSI translation techniques borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation.

CSI translation method. direct/overt and indirect/covert.
 CSI translation Strategy. foreignization and domestication.

- Back to the Excel sheet, the fifth, sixth and seventh columns are filled with the proper technique, method, and strategy.

The overall sheet looks as the following:

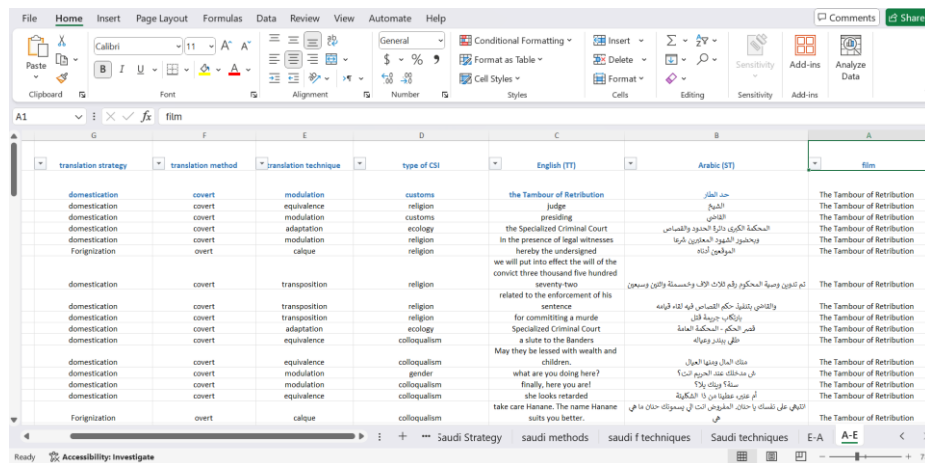


Fig. 1. Overall data distribution in the Excel Sheet.

AI Analyze Tool in Excel. Now that all the data on the Excel sheet are coded and categorized, it is time for the quantitative analysis using the AI Analyze tool.

There are two ways to utilize this tool. The first is general, as you directly go to tool icon and press, the result will come back with all the data on the sheet, with some analysis questions suggestions.

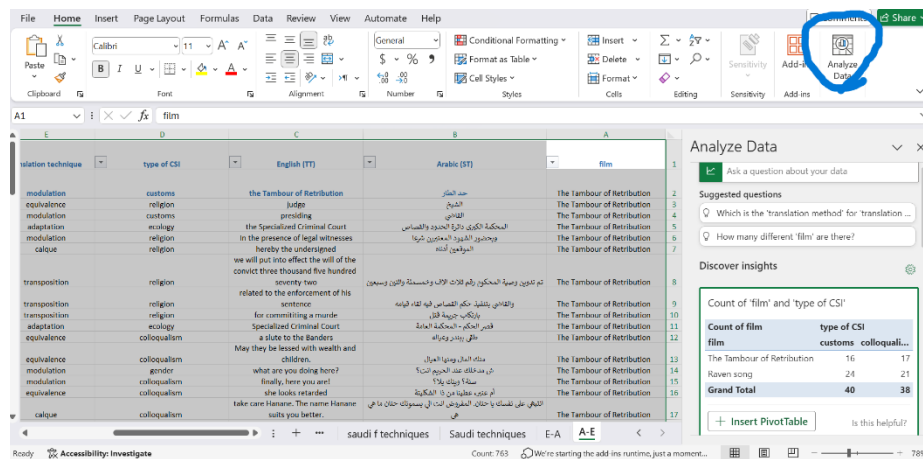


Fig. 2. General AI Analysis.

- Specify the question you need.
- Press on +insert Pivotal table. You will get the following result:

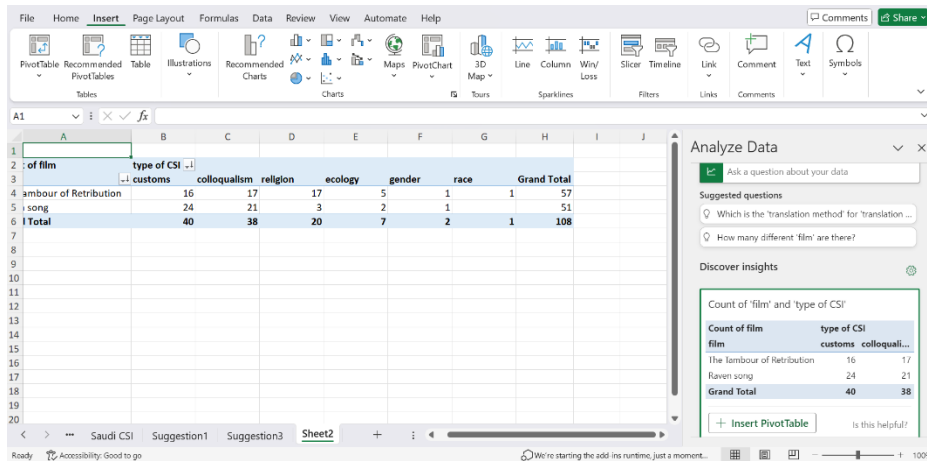


Fig. 3. AI Analyze tool general result.

- Press insert. You will see several graphs and tables to choose from.
- After selecting which shape you want, you will receive the following:

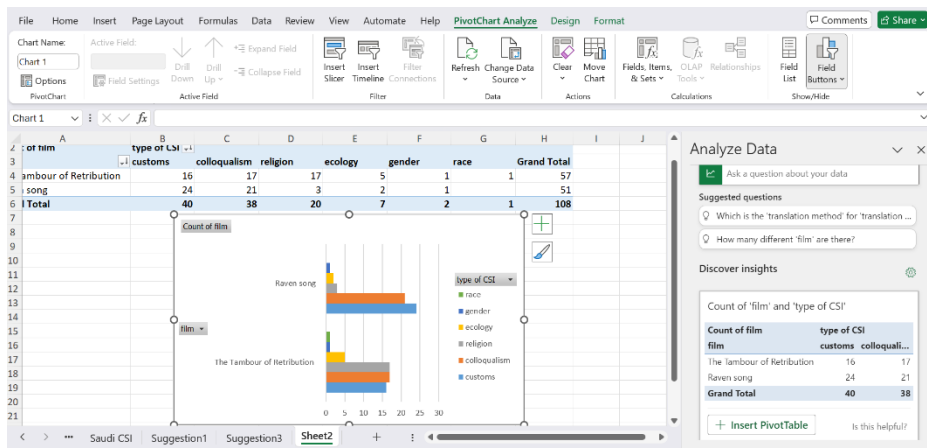


Fig. 4. Inserting Shape analysis design.

The second option to utilize the AI Analyze tool, is to specify the column you need statistics for, as the following:

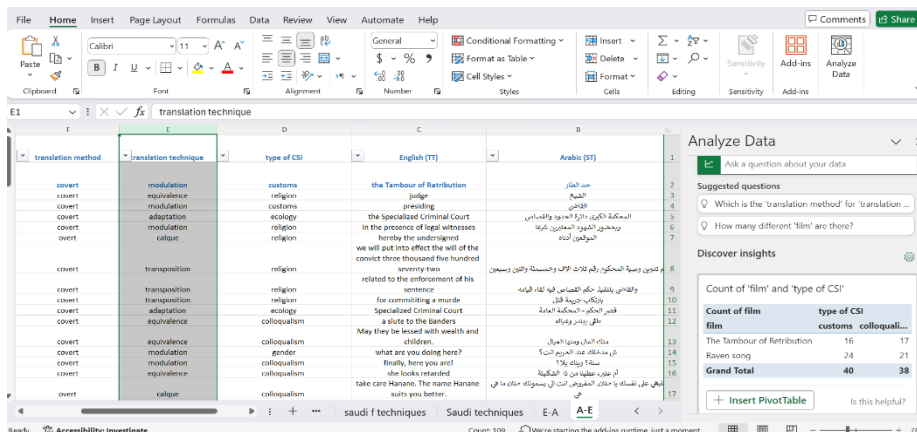


Fig. 5. Specific AI Analyze feature.

After selecting the column, press the tool icon, and you will get the statistics for each of the techniques, as the following:

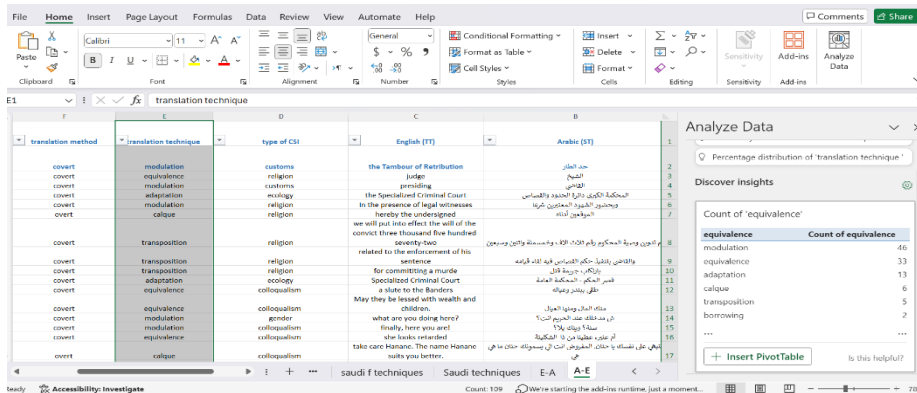


Fig. 6. Result of Specific AI Analyze feature.

Now you can press +insert Pivot Table and start all over with each of the columns.

4 Results

The audience of the two English films Angels and Demons and Rustin are Adults Arabic speaking viewers, so the translation of subtitles is from English to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

4.1 Subtitling of English Films into Arabic

Cultural-Specific-Items. Religion, customs, and race appear to be the majority of the cultural-specific-items in the two English films. They form 81% of all CSIs in both films.

Translation Techniques. Results of this study shows that calque and borrowing constitute the most often recurring translation techniques in the Arabic subtitles of the two English films. They form 71% of all techniques in both English films.

Translation Method. The overt translation method occurs 94 times compared to only 27 covert translation incidents. in both the English films. This method forms 78% of the methods in both English films. Overt translation method includes the direct translation techniques such as borrowing calque and literal.

Translation Strategy. As “Overt” is the most translation method used in translating the English script into Arabic subtitles, that leads to the judgement that the overall strategy of translation here is Foreignization with the percentage of 77%.

4.2 Subtitling of Saudi Films into English

Having the audience of the two Saudi films *The Tambour of Retribution* and *Raven* song to be Adults English speaking viewers, the translation of subtitles is from Arabic to English.

Cultural-Specific-Items. Customs and colloquialism appear the majority of the cultural-specific-items in the two Saudi films. They form 73% of all CSIs in both films.

Translation Techniques. Results of this study show that modulation and equivalence constitute the most often recurring translation techniques in the English subtitles of both Saudi films. They form 75% of all translation techniques used in both films.

Translation Method. The covert translation method occurs 99 times compared to only 9 overt translation incidents in both Saudi films. They form 91% of the methods used in both films. Covert translation method includes the indirect translation techniques such as modulation, equivalence, adaptation, etc.

Translation Strategy. As “covert” is the most translation method used in translating the Saudi script into English subtitles, that leads to the judgement that the overall strategy of translation here is domestication with the percentage of 96% in both Saudi films.

5 Discussion

As global connectivity continues to break down geographical boundaries, audiovisual media serves as a powerful medium for the exchange of ideas and entertainment. However, this exchange hinges on effective translation that not only conveys linguistic meaning but also preserves cultural relevance (Diaz Cintas & Anderman, 2008). Hence, as English-language media proliferates across diverse societies, there emerges an imperative to bridge the linguistic and cultural chasms that often exist. It is within this context that terms linked to gender, customs, ecology, race, religion, and colloquialism find themselves at the heart of narratives in various forms of media. How these terms are translated carries profound implications for effective cross-cultural communication.

Starting our discussion with the two English films: *Angels and Demons*, and *Rustin*, results show that foreignization translation strategy prevails in the translation of English CSIs with a percentage of 77%. As established in the results section above, the majority of CSIs in the English films are related to religion, customs, and race. Table 1 demonstrates samples of the most common techniques used in translating those items.

Table 1. Samples of translation techniques in both English films.

Translation technique	Source text	Target text
Calque	the ring of the fisherman	خاتم صبياد السمك
Calque	the empty throne	العرش الخالي
Calque	college of Cardinals	مجمع الكرادلة
Calque	Segregation	الفصل العنصري
Calque	Jesus is the light	يسوع هو النور
Borrowing	Catholics	الكاثوليكين
Borrowing	sede vacante	سايدي فيكانتي
Borrowing	Congress	الكونغرس
Borrowing	the preferiti	البريفيريتي
Borrowing	National Mall	ناشونال مول
Borrowing	Al Capone	أل كابون

Proceeding the discussion of the two Saudi films: *The Tambour of Retribution*, and *Raven Song*, results indicate that domestication translation strategy prevails in the translation of Saudi CSIs with a percentage of 96%. As established in the results section above, most of the CSI in the Saudi films are customs and colloquialism. Table 2 below includes samples of the most common techniques used in translating those items.

Table 2. Samples of translation techniques in both Saudi films.

Translation technique	Source text	Target text
Modulation	يا شمس الشمس	O queen of all suns
Modulation	ايش فيها قافلة؟	why the long face?

Modulation	دقيقة	hold on
Modulation	شفقتي عقاب الله	look what happened
Modulation	عمدة الحارة	Municipality
Modulation	مواويل بدرية	Badrieh's stories
Equivalence	ابوك الله يحلله وببيحه	your father died
Equivalence	منك المال ومنها العيال	be blessed with wealth and children
Equivalence	الله يرحمه	may he rest in peace
Equivalence	نطح الصياح بالصياح تسلم	Attacking is the best defense
Equivalence	السلام عليكم. عليكم السلام هلا	Hello. Hi
Equivalence	الله لا يقوله، والله ما تزوجها لو ايش	No way! Over my dead body.
Equivalence	حد الله بيننا وبين الحرام	It's out of the question.
Equivalence	تشرفنا	nice to meet you
Equivalence	حيال الله الشقردي	hello old friend

This study shows that the translation strategy of foreignization is used when subtitling English films. Thus, preserving Western culture in the linguistic features of the subtitles. While the translation strategy of domestication is used when subtitling Saudi films. Eventually, losing the local Saudi culture in the linguistic features of the English subtitles. Consequently, the current research results confirm Venuti's theory of the 'translator invisibility' when it comes to translation into English.

6 Conclusion

Several scholars have highlighted the complexities of translating cultural nuances. For instance, Baker (2006) emphasizes the role of cultural adaptation in effective translation, indicating the need to convey not just words but the cultural context that accompanies them. Similarly, Venuti (1995) underscores the concept of domestication and foreignization, suggesting that translators must choose between making the text more familiar to the target culture or preserving the foreignness of the source text. By maintaining this exotic feel of the source text 'in our case' the Saudi text, the cultural identity (characterized by its rich cultural heritage) would shine and travel extensively. And that is exactly in line with the Kingdom vision 2030.

The film industry in Saudi Arabia has emerged since 2017 and is tremendously blooming, calling for more competent translators (subtitlers) who can fill the cultural gap between Arabic and English and produce the best possible subtitles, representing cultural diversity and intellectual inquiry.

Acknowledgments. This research received grant no. (31/2023) from the Arab Observatory for Translation (an affiliate ALECSO), which is supported by the Literature, Publishing & Translation Commission in Saudi Arabia.

Disclosure of Interests. The author has no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

References

1. Aixela, J. F.: Culture-Specific Items in Translation. Translation, Power, Subversion, Alvarez, R. and Carmen-Africa Vidal, M (eds.). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, pp.52-78 (1997)
2. Ali, S., Al-Jabri, H., AL-Adwan, A., Eliza Abdul Rahman, W. R.: Subtitling Saudi Arabic slang into English: the case of “The Book of the Sun” on Netflix. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1-7 (2024)
3. Abdelaal, N. M.: Subtitling of culture-bound terms: strategies and quality assessment. *Heliyon*, 5 (4) (2019)
4. Al-Adwan, A. S.: Towards a model of euphemisation in Arabic subtitling. *Arab World English Journal*. 4, 6-21 (2015)
5. Albarakati, M.: Arabic Audio-Visual Translation Censorship: A Corpus Study of Subtitles of Three Films. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 7(1), 51-61(2024)
6. Alfaify, A., Ramos Pinto, S.: Cultural references in films: an audience reception study of subtitling into Arabic. *The Translator*, 28(1), 112-131(2022)
7. Alharthi, A.: Strategies of subtitling Satire: A case study of the American sitcom Seinfeld, with particular reference to English and Arabic. *Arab World English Journal*. 4, 22-41(2015)
8. AlKadi, T.: Issues in the subtitling and dubbing of English-language films into Arabic: Problems and solutions (a PhD thesis). Durham University (2010)
9. AlKharabsheh, A., Yassin, O.: Translation of colloquialism in the Arabic-into-English subtitled film, *The Dupes*. *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies* (2017)
10. Alowedi, N. A.: The Language of Dark and Bright: A Corpus Linguistic Analysis of the Concept of Death and Life in the Translated Autobiography “Dying to Be Me”. *Res Militaris*, vol.12, n°5, 1343-1357 (2022)
11. Alrosan, H. H.: The subtitles of H. Dabbour: A Translational dilemma. (unpublished MA Thesis). The American University of Sharjah, UAE (2012)
12. Alsager, S. N., Almohizea, M. I.: An Analysis of Subtitle Translation of *Mulan*: Skopos Theory-Inspired Perspective. *Arab World English Journals*, 7(3), 50- 68 (2023)
13. Alsharhan, A.: Netflix no-censorship policy in subtitling taboo language from English into Arabic. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 3 (2): 7-28 (2020)
14. Al-Tamimi, Y., Mansy, M.: Subtitling Research in the Arab World. *International Journal Linguistics, Literature, and Translation*. 6 (1): 01-09 (2023)
15. Baker, M.: *Translation and Conflict: a narrative account*. Routledge (2006)
16. Baker, M.: *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. Routledge (2018)
17. Barker, G. G.: Cross-cultural perspectives on intercultural communication competence. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 45(1), 13-30 (2016)

18. Diaz- Cintas, J.: Subtitling's a carnival: new practices in cyberspace. *J Spec Transl* 127–149 (2018)
19. Diaz Cintas, J., Remael, A.: *Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling*, Manchester and Kinderhook, NY: ST Jerome (2007)
20. Diaz Cintas, J., Anderman, G. (eds.): *Audiovisual translation: Language transfer on screen*. Springer (2008).
21. Diaz-Cintas J., Remael, A.: *Subtitling concepts and practices*. Routledge (2021)
22. Dwyer, T.: *Speaking in subtitles: Revaluing screen translation*. Edinburgh University Press (2017)
23. Gamal, M. Y.: *Audiovisual translation in the Arab World: Mapping the field*. In *Arab Media and Society*, 19, 1-12 (2014)
24. Gambier, Y. (ed.): *Screen Translation, Special issue of The Translator*. 9. 2. (2003)
25. Jiang, Z., Rij-Heyligers, J. V.: *Parallel corpus in translation studies: an intercultural approach*. In *International Symposium on Using Corpora in Contrastive and Translation Studies*. Hangzhou, China (2008)
26. Khalaf, B. K.: *An introduction to subtitling: Challenges and strategies*. *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies*, 3 (1), 122-129 (2016)
27. Khuddru, A.: *Subtitling in Arabic*. *Turjuman: Journal of Translation Studies*, 9 (1), 31-37 (2000)
28. Mansy, M.: *Subtitling Islamic TV Programs: A Functional Approach*. (Unpublished PhD dissertation). Helwan University, Egypt (2021)
29. Mazid, B. M.: *Arabic subtitles on English movies: Some linguistic, ideological and pedagogic issues*. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, 7, 81-100 (2006)
30. Mikutyte, J., *Types of realities and methods of translation*. (2005)
31. Moll, Y.: *Subtitling Islam: Translation, mediation, critique*. *Public Culture*, 29 (2), 333-361 (2017)
32. Mujaddadi, A.: *Recontextualising racial slurs from English to Arabic: A comparative analysis of subtitles in relation to translation strategies and socio-cultural norms*. (PhD thesis). The University of Liverpool (2017)
33. Munday, J.: *Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications*. Routledge (2016)
34. Newmark, P.: *Textbook of Translation*. Prentice-Hall International, pp. 94–103 (1988)
35. Pedersen, J.: *How is culture rendered in subtitles?* In H. Gerzmisch & Naurat (eds.). *Challenges of multidimensional translation*. Conference proceedings. Paper presented at EU High Level Scientific Conference Series, Saarbrücken, Germany, pp. 1-18 (2005)
36. Sinclair, J.: *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. Oxford University Press (1991)
37. Smith, A. R., Johnson, P. M.: *Audiovisual translation in the digital age*. *Journal of Global Communication*, 57(1), 89-107 (2023)
38. Thawabteh, M. A.: *Linguistic, cultural and technical problems in English-Arabic subtitling*. *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation*. 5 (1) 24-43 (2011)
39. Thawabteh, M. A.: *The translatability of euphemism and dysphemism in Arabic-English subtitling*. *Lexis* 6, 145-156 (2012)
40. Tognini-Bonelli, E.: *Corpus Linguistics at Work*. Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia (2001)
41. Venuti, L.: *The translator's invisibility: a history of translation*. Routledge (1995/2008)
42. Vinay, J. P., Darbelnet, J.: *Comparative stylistics of French and English: A methodology for translation* (Vol. 11) John Benjamins Publishing (1995)
43. Wilson, C. R., Parker, H. L.: *Bridging cultures: the role of audiovisual translation in global communication*. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 38(4), 431-448 (2022)
44. Yahiaoui, R.: *Ideological constraints in dubbing The Simpsons into Arabic*. *Altre Modemittà : Rivista di studi letterari e culturali*, (1), 182-200 (2016)

45. Zanettin, F.: Parallel corpora in translation studies: Issues in corpus design and analysis. In *Intercultural Faultlines*, pp. 105-118. Routledge (2017)