VERTIMAS / TRANSLATION

Translation and Crime: The Case of Subtitling English Thrillers into Arabic

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Abstract. In subtitling, communication is seen as more than a matter of linguistic representation on screen. To relay the perceived meaning to the Target Language (TL) audience, other polysemiotic channels should then be taken into full consideration. This paper analyses a corpus of three scenes taken from a thriller entitled *Crash* (2004), broadcast on MBC4 satellite channel in 2010. The paper reveals that whilst the Source Language (SL) dialogue is highly confrontational and inflammatory, the Arabic subtitles ameliorate the dialogue, thus giving rise to a head-on clash with other polysemiotic elements of the moving picture. The paper also shows that the semiotic modalities should be explicitly encoded in the subtitles on screen. When these modalities are universal, translation avoidance strategy is an outlet. This strategy is employed to meet the expectations of the target audience which belongs to Arab culture of little affinity with that of English. The paper finally reveals that although foreignising strategy is advocated in subtitling, domesticating strategy is still a valid choice for the subtitler.

Keywords: subtitling, thriller, domesticating, foreignising, polysemiotic channels.

Introduction

Translation's ultimate goal has decidedly been intercultural communication since time immemorial. Translation has given several cultures a new lease on life as is the case with Arab culture, Western Europe's culture, among many others. The Arab translators hitherto served as mediators between their culture and Greek, Byzantine and Persian cultures. Sofer (2002, pp. 25–26) states that:

> *Islamic scholars served as a bridge between antiquity and the modern world. Our scientific world has its roots in ancient Greece and Rome, but many of its branches have grown on the trunk of Islamic culture.*

Likewise, Western Europe civilisation flourished due to translators (Kelly cited in Hermans, 1999, p. 37). Translation endures and continues to survive because of its nature as a 'chameleon-like'[1] discipline, as it were, that could be merged unobtrusively into a myriad of other disciplines (e.g. computer science, sociology, politics, criminology, film studies and so on). This paves the way for the emergence of new translation modes, e.g. translation technology, sociology of translation, translation and conflict, translation and crime, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) etc.

The present study is designed to shed some light on subtitling a thriller from English into Arabic with a view to examining: (1) the difficulties the subtitler encounters when translating the thriller; (2) cinematographic tools as important semiotic modalities; (3) the subtitling strategies employed by the subtitler; and (4) the semiotics of subtitling in cross-cultural transfer between English and Arabic.

Subtitling

Distilled from translation and into different sub-modes (e.g. dubbing, voiceover, subtitling etc.), AVT will be a watershed in the history of Translation Studies (Orero, 2009, p. 130). For the sake of the present study, we shall address only subtitling which, in the words of Gottlieb (2004, pp. 219–220), is defined as

> *diasemiotic translation in polysemiotic media (including films, TV, video and DVD), in the form of one or more lines of written text presented on the screen in sync with the original dialogue.*

More precisely, the subtitles are placed at the bottom of the screen, with an average maximum length of 35 characters and a minimum of two and a maximum of seven seconds' duration (see Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 65; Baker & Malmkjaer, 1998, pp. 244–245). Not only should the subtitlers have translation skills, but they should also have subtitling-specific skills because of the differences existing between translation and subtitling. Kruger (2008, p. 82) points out:

> *The difference between the skills required for subtitling and those required for translation, editing or interpreting, lies in the very technical aspects of subtitling. Subtitling requires all the skills that other modes require in terms of text analysis, subject expertise, language, awareness of context, quality control and so forth, but it also requires that the subtitler to be able to apply these skills within very rigid constraints of time and space, while adhering to specific conventions of quantity and form. Mastering and applying these skills take a long time.*

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[1] Borrowed from Christiane Nord in her presentation "Jack of all trades, master of none? The translator's professional and cultural identity and how it is developed in translator training" at The Sixth International Conference on "The Role of Translation in the Dialogue of Civilisations", An-Najah National University, Occupied Palestinian Territories on October 3, 2013.

In other words, the subtitler is a translator plus. It is then safe to assume that subtitling is likely to be riddled with intricacies and inaccuracies at both linguistic and semiotic dimensions. Much emphasis is placed on the latter as several AVT theorists believe (see Gottlieb, 1998, 2004; Ivarsson & Carrol, 1998; Karamitroglou, 1998, 2000; De Linde & Kay, 1999; Díaz Cintas, 2004, 2008; Orero, 2004, 2009; and Geogakopoulou, 2009 among many others). Gottlieb (2004, p. 227) states:

> In a film, up to four semiotic channels are in operation simultaneously: non-verbal picture, written pictorial elements, dialogue, and music & effects.

These channels, according to Baker & Malmkjaer (1998, p. 245), comprise of verbal auditory channel (e.g., dialogue, background voices, and sometimes lyrics); non-verbal auditory channel (e.g., music, natural sound and sound effects); verbal visual channel (e.g., superimposed titles and written signs on the screen); and non-verbal visual channel (e.g., picture composition and flow).

It should be noted that dialogue occupies a third in the making of the filmic meaning. It ensues, therefore, that a reduction on dialogue has to be made to meet the technical constraints of subtitling and the reading capacities of TL audience (De Linde and Kay, 1999, pp. 1–2). By the same token, Orero (2004, p. 86) aptly remarks:

> A screen adaptation of a 100,000 word novel may keep only 20,000 words for dialogue, leaving semantic load of the remaining 80,000 words [sic] the non-verbal semiotic channels – or to deletion.

Other technical constraints need to be given due attention in subtitling, namely (1) typeface, e.g. Helvetica and Arial because they are of proportional distribution (Karamitroglou, 1998, Spatial parameter); (2) first subtitle line is short (Schwarz, 2002, Presentation on screen); (3) number of characters per line is limited (Karamitroglou, 1998, Number of characters per line; see also Baker & Malmkjaer, 1998, pp. 244–245); and (4) segmentation should be done to maintain a semantic load, rather than "smaller units of a sentence or clause" (Georgakopolou, 2009, p. 24).

Subtitling Strategies

Subtitling falls within the ambit of translation, with such remarkable resemblance. It would then be advantageous to first define translation strategies. Scott-Tennent et al. (2000, p. 108) define translation strategies as

> the steps, selected from a consciously known range of potential procedures, taken to solve a translation problem which has been consciously detected and resulting in a consciously applied solution.

Taking his cue from Schleiermacher (1813/1992, pp. 41–42), Venuti (1995, p. 20) proposes two strategies 'domestication' and 'foreignisation'. The former involves

> an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to [TL] cultural values, bringing the author back home; [the latter]seeks to restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation, it is highly desirable today, a strategic cultural intervention in the current state of world affairs, pitched against the hegemonic English-language nations and the

> unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others.

Subtitling-wise, the strategies are viewed in terms of semiotic modalities providing meaning on screen e.g. through the soundtrack, background, colours etc. Gottlieb (1998) suggests ten subtitling strategies:

1. Expansion: expanded expression, adequate rendering, e.g. culture-specific references;
2. Paraphrase: altered expression, adequate content, e.g. non-visualised language-specific items;
3. Transfer: full expression, adequate rendering, e.g. slow, unmarked speech;
4. Imitation: identical expression, equivalent rendering, e.g. proper nouns; international greetings;
5. Transcription: non-standard expression, adequate rendering, e.g. dialects; intended speech defects;
6. Dislocation: differing expression, adjusted content, e.g. musical/visualized language-specific items);
7. Condensation: condensed expression, concise rendering, e.g. mid-tempo speech with some redundancy;
8. Decimation: abridged expression, reduced content, e.g. fast speech; low redundancy speech;
9. Deletion: omitted expression, no verbal content, e.g. fast speech with high redundancy);
10. Resignation: deviant expression, distorted content, e.g. incomprehensible or 'untranslatable' speech.

Unlike in printed translation, these strategies are all the more typical of subtitling (ibid.; see also Abd-El-Kareem, 2010) as they cater for both linguistic and semiotic dimensions. Ventola et al. (2004, p. 159) comments on the reducing strategies, namely the seventh, eighth and ninth:

> When a text is 'condensed', the semantic content remains intact while the lexico-grammatical structures for expressing that content are reduced. [O]n the other hand, if a text is 'decimated', then a part of the semantic content is sacrificed.[…]. 'Deletion' implies a total loss of information.

Obviously, foreignising strategy is adopted in subtitling as Danan (1991 as cited in O'Connell, 2007, p. 120) argues, "that subtitling, by virtue of its preservation of the [SL] soundtrack, is a quintessentially foreignising type of translation." It is yet oft-truism that no entire 'domestication' or 'foreignisation' in the course of subtitling. In thrillers, 'domestication' or 'foreignisation' is undertaken on linguistic presentations on screen whereas other polysemiotic elements are still determinant in the amount of such 'domestication' or 'foreignisation'.

Crime, Cinematographic Tools and Subtitling

Crime in translation is an embryonic discipline which may gain momentum and weight in Translation Studies. A search in Bibliography of Interpreting and Translation BITR[2] for the word 'subtitling' in the title returns 503 results. A similar search for both 'subtitling' and 'crime' in the title returns only one result. Daily stories about crimes in monolingual, bilingual and multilingual countries never end in the gutter press. The need for a translator then

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[2] Available at: http://aplicacionesua.cpd.ua.es/tra_int/usu/buscar.asp?idioma=en [accessed March 2014].

becomes urgent. In an incident[3] in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Magistrates' Court in Bethlehem sought out a Romanian-Arabic interpreter in a criminal case for more than a month, but all efforts were to no avail; the 'cack-handed' way it handled the incident in the end was to hire a pharmacist who simply did his undergraduate studies in a Romanian university. Examples like this are numerous. Indeed, we do not live in a crime-free world. Our world is full of various crimes, e.g. tax evasion, extortion, high treason, incest, indecent assault, housebreaking, rape, forgery, hate crime, infanticide, joyriding, money laundering, ram-raid, robbery, among many others. Typically, these crimes have become the main themes for moving pictures, the most popular of which are embroidered on by many scriptwriters all over the world—cops-and-robbers films are a case in point.

Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary (2003) defines 'crime' as "an illegal action or activity for which a person can be punished by law." One type is crime films whose focus is

> primarily on crime and its consequences [which] constitute a category that encompasses a number of genres—detective movies, gangster films, cop and prison movies, courtroom dramas (Rafter, 2006, p. 6).

Although films noir are ubiquitous all over the world, they have received a plethora of criticism for their potential to encourage violence and crime in society. Several cultures (e.g. Arab-Islamic culture) are not enamoured of crime films. One may describe Arabs and/or Muslims as 'dyed-in-the-wool' conservatives because their culture is swayed by the Islamic teachings, obviously reflected in the Qur'anic verse:

> Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast among the Believers, will have a grievous Penalty in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows, and ye know not[4] (Ali 24:19).

Crime films are deemed to be breeding ground for gargantuan 'scandal'. In addition, they are behind the run-down of society's values.

Nonetheless, crime films have become common currency all over the world. The Arab world is no exception. Nail-biting and spine-tingling thrillers can be watched around the clock on many state-run televisions and/or satellite channels almost in all countries. They exist with didactic purposes. Rafter (2006, p. 82) speaks out against the fact that films cause people to commit crime:

> Human behavio[u]r is influenced by multiple factors, in combinations so complex that no one has yet devised a way to isolate them from one another.

Cinematographic tools are very important for picture composition, without which much of the meaning intended by scriptwriters is likely to be blurred. Bordwell and Thompson (1990, p. 133) observe,

> [a] brightly illuminated patch may draw our attention and reveal a key gesture, while a shadow may conceal a detail and build up our suspense about what may be present there.

Moreover, Maszerowska (2013, p. 166) explains that "the varying levels of lighting (night/day, dark/light) serve to provide a spatio-temporal framework for the relevant shot". Brown (1996 as cited in Maszerowska, ibid.) further states that:

> While, typically, figures obscured by shadows or dark interiors are associated with mystery, fear or even evil, characters displayed in daylight and brightly illuminated settings evoke feelings of safety and comfort.

According to Bordwell and Thompson (1990, p. 133), the combination of

> [l]ighter and darker areas within the frame help create the overall composition of each shot and hence guide our eyes to certain objects and actions (see also Maszerowska, 2013, p. 166).

These cinematographic tools are of paramount importance in subtitling. Crime films comprise of the aforementioned four channels which need to be also incorporated with cinematographically relevant light and contrast patterns. It is crucial that synchronisation between these channels occurs in the course of subtitling. It is perhaps true that in crime films, non-verbal text elements may be universal, a point that is different from a claim made by Nord (2005, p. 121; emphasis added) that: "Non-verbal text elements *are*, like verbal elements, culture-specific." Someone stabbed to death, burnt to death, shot dead, executed, trampled, martyred, mown down, slaughtered, struck down by an illness, knocked down by a vehicle, etc are universal crime notions—Killing is killing everywhere. The translator should decide on appropriate linguistic presentations to be displayed on screen, ones that contribute to maximum flow of the film and bring about a veritable entertainment. It may be safe to assume that in thrillers 'actions speak louder than words', a point that should be catered by subtitlers.

Methodology

The present study is basically limited to the problems attributable to subtitling into Arabic an English thriller. The problems were identified and explained in light of the semiotics of subtitling.

Data of the Study

The data of the present paper consists of a corpus of three scenes drawn from blockbuster *Crash* (2004), a pacey thriller which features deviant and criminal behaviour, e.g. kidnapping, mayhem, murder and racism, etc, all of which have become a cause célèbre in Los Anglos. The three scenes include several examples (totalling 25), sufficient to enable conclusion-drawing. The film was broadcast on MBC4 satellite channel in 2010. The film's avowed attention to treat nauseating racism malaise is one of the most important themes. The characters are faced with a host of problems while trying to reconcile changes in an unfamiliar social milieu.

Significance of the Study

Though films noir are beamed into homes across the Arab World with around the clock subtitling into Arabic, they are yet neglected areas in Arab Translation Studies, to the best of our knowledge. The present study aims at exploring

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[3] Personal communication with an employee in the court.
[4] Available at: http://quran.com/24 [accessed November 2013].

one of the most challenging problems the translator is faced with when translating thrillers, namely catering for the criminal nature inherent in polysemiotic channels and producing subtitles which reflect more or less that nature. Hopefully, it should be possible to retrace a research path in view of disproportion between little research on AVT and the impact it has on society (Díaz Cintas, 2004), and that will bring to light some implications drawn from the translation of film-noirish thrillers. It will also be possible to assess the subtitling strategies in light of subtitling constraints.

Discussion and Analysis

To put the theoretical frame to practice, let us indulge in a few illustrative examples based on three scenes. In Example 1, the salesman's sales pitch to make two Iranian-born buyers buy a handgun was smooth—more or less promotional in which it is formally and functionally translated into *saṭaḥṣulu 'alā ṣundūqi dhakhīratin majjānīi* ('You get one free box of ammunition').

This translation observes the technical constraints of subtitling in terms of number of characters and duration on screen, and is concomitant with the visual elements in the shot: the cinematographic tool of choice of camera angle, field depth and a close-up of, say, the gun already laid by the salesman on the table goes in harmony with the actions in the moving picture (see De Linde and Kay, 1999, p. 32). In the scene, the camera pans the store so that a wide area is filmed to give an impression of the events.

In terms of interplay between image and dialogue, a spur-of-the-moment squabbling erupted. The salesman's face contorted in rage because of the exchange in Persian (third language) between the Iranian man and lady. With such a nasty suspicious mind, the salesman was dubious about conversation between the two persons. In this particular context of situation, the third language seems to be ideologically-motivated. In this spirit, Thawabteh (2013, p. 60) succinctly puts it:

> *Third language becomes a constructive principle of the text. It is a sign that occurs across the semiotic boundaries of the original [text] to achieve an ideological purpose.*

True, it seems possible to assume that the exchange in Persian between the man and the lady should, or even must, not be taken as a hindrance to the flow of the SL utterance. Rather, it should be viewed as a sign that contributes to the overall communicative thrust of the SL utterance. Immigrants, émigrés and minorities nostalgically love to have an exchange in their mother tongue which sets the salesman's teeth on edge.

In Example 1, the subtitles are displayed on screen in two languages i.e. bilingual subtitles. Arabic subtitle goes first and purposefully stays on screen across the picture as shown in Example 1c and Example 1d which "disturbs the visual experience too much" (Schwarz, 2002, Presentation on screen) and far easily distract the attention of the target audience. A case of synchronisation problem is recorded between image and subtitles on one hand and subtitles and sound on the other. The distraction goes on as the Arabic subtitles in Example 1e and Example 1f are retained on

screen far beyond the allowable time as to subtitling norms.

Example 1 also poses a cultural problem. The gun store is culture-specific. In the USA, the presence of gun stores in most states is perfectly legal whereas in most Arab countries, it is not. Therefore, showing a scene for a gun store is alien to Arab culture.

Example 1

SL	Subtitle
You get one free box of ammunition. What kind do you want?	(a) *saṭaḥṣulu 'alā ṣundūqi dhakhīratin majjānī. ayyi naw'in turīd?* [BT[5] You will get one free box of ammo. What kind do you want?]
Dialogue in Persian	(b) – *mādha qāl?* – *dhakhīrah?* [BT – What did he say? – Ammo?] What did he say, ammunition?
Dialogue in Persian	(c) – "*ayyu raṣāṣin turīd*"? – *an-naw'il-mulā'im* [BT What kind of bullets do you want to buy? I want to buy the most suitable one.] He said, "What kind of bullets?"
Dialogue in Persian	(d) – "*ayyi raṣāṣin turīd*"? – *an-naw'il-mulā'im* [BT What kind of bullets do you want to buy? I want to buy the most suitable one.] The kind that fit.
Dialogue in Persian	(e) – *al-'anwā'u kathīratun* – *lā 'afahamu bil-musadasāt* [BT There're several kinds. I don't know anything about pistols?] There's more than one kind.
Dialogue in Persian	(f) – *al-'anwā'u kathīratun* – *lā 'afahamu bil-musadasāt* [BT There're several kinds. I don't know anything about pistols?] I don't know anything about guns.
Dialogue in Persian	(g) – *hādha sababun wajīhun ākhar li'adam shirā'iha* – *lā tabd'aī thaniytan* [BT This is another good reason not to buy one. Don't start with me again.] Another good reason not to buy one.
Dialogue in Persian	(h) – *hādha sababun wajīhun ākhar li'adam shirā'iha* – *lā tabd'aī thaniytan* [BT This is another good reason not to buy one. Don't start with me again.] Don't start with me again.

To more appreciate the problem, take the remainder of the exchange in Example 2.

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[5] BT stands for Back Translation.

Example 2

SL	Subtitle
Yo, (Osama)! Plan a Jihad on your time. What do you want?	(a) *mahlan yā Usāmah, fal-tukhaṭiṭ lihādha| fī waqtikal-khāṣ, mātha turīd?* [BT Osamah, plan for this in your own time. What do you want?]
-Are you making insult at me? -Am I making insult at you -Is that the closest you can come to English? -Yes, I speak English. -I am American citizen. -Oh, God here we go.	(b) – *hal taqūlu 'ihānatun fī ḥaqqī?* – *'aqūlu 'ihanatun fī ḥaqqik|* *'ahadhihi 'ijādatuka lil lughati il-'injlīzyyah?|* *'ajal atakalamu il-injlīzyyah|* – *'anā muwāṭinun 'amrīkyy* – *bad'ana* [BT Are you insulting me? Insulting you? Is that all what you know of English? I speak English. I am an American citizen. Here we go again.]
I have right like you. I have right to buy gun.	(c) *liya ḥuqūqun mithlak, yaḥuq lī| shirā' musdas* [BT I have rights to buy a pistol, just like you.]
Not from my store, you don't! Andy, get him outta here now	(d) *laysa min matjarī| (Andy) 'akhrijhu min huna fawran* [BT But not in my store. Andy get him out of here now?]
Now get out.	(e) *'ukhruj fil ḥāl* [BT Now get out?]
We got a lot of kinds We got long colts, short colts, bull heads,	(f) *ladayya 'anwā' kathīrah, ladayna raṣāṣ| (colt) ṭawīl wa (colt) qasīr* [BT I got many kinds. I got long colts, short colts, bull heads.]
flat nose, hollow points, wide cutters,	(g) *wa raṣāṣ mustadīr wa raṣāṣ musṭṭaḥ ir-ra's| wa ākhar gabil lit-tamadud wa raṣāṣ qasīr il-mada* [BT lead round nose, lead flat nose, lead hollow point, lead wadcutter.]
and a dozen more that'll fit any size hole.	(h) *wa 'idat 'anwā' 'ukhra tulā'im| masurat musadas min 'ayi ḥajim* [BT and a dozen more of tap-like pistol that'll fit any size hole.]
Just depends upon how much bang you can handle.	(i) *al-'amru ya'tamid 'ala ḥajm id-dmār al-ladhī turīdīnah* [BT It just depends upon how much bang you want to make.]

In this sequence, the situation rapidly reached boiling point when the salesman forged his own interpretation of the dialogue in Persian and went berserk when he knew intuitively that the two persons are Muslims, thus slurs against Muslims is clear, i.e. 'Yo, (Osama)! Plan a Jihad on your time' which translates *mahlan yā Usāmah, fal-*

tukhaṭiṭ lihādha\| fī waqtikal-khāṣ ('Yo Osama! Plan for this on your time'). The SL utterance is pejorative by means of a network of signs for which the man felt aggrieved—being called 'Osama', an intertextual potential linked to Osama Bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, 'plan Jihad…', etc. With such irascible temper, the salesman uses fiery language in the SL, not explicitly encoded in the subtitles. The subtitles are likely to do injustice to the visual image in the sequence. The use of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) ameliorates the situation greatly in Example 2b—actually in all subtitles. The English informal attention getting sound 'Yo' in Example 1a is translated into formal MSA *mahlan* ('calm down'). It is perhaps true that MST stands as a tool for euphemism which, in words of Allan and Burridge (1991, p. 14), is an alternative,

> to dispreferred expressions, [..] used to avoid possible loss of face. The dispreferred expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful, or for some other reason have too many negative connotations to felicitously execute speaker's communicative intention on a given occasion.

No sooner had the tiff started than fierce quarrel broke out. Although the lady desperately sought to tone down the exchange between her friend and the salesman, the two seemed to have been involved in a strong argument triggered by out-and-out racism. In Example 2c, the Iranian-born American squealed in a high-pitched voice showing for defiance and angry at an American by birth treating an American (see De Beaugrande, 2008), simply because of race or language incompetence as shown in the eccentric structure of 'Are you making insult at me?'. In Example 2d-i, what can be seen through pictures tells more and more than what is displayed on screen, fair enough insofar as the target audience is concerned.

Example 3 shows a man who carjacked a car. A gun clutched in the feral man's hand with eyes front, trudging down a white van and pointing the gun at the driver whose daughter was huddled in the house. Looking down from the window, the girl screamed with tension when she saw that man pointing his gun towards her father and that her father was not 'wearing it' (i.e. the 'impenetrable cloak'); therefore, she hurried out the house to her father's side. The emotional scene depicts Elizabeth and her mother in a moment of intimacy. Emotional turmoil had drained both of them. The scene of Elizabeth hurrying out of the house to reach her father is shown in slow motion, keeping the viewers in suspense until she could exuberantly hug her father just moments before the armed man pointing his gun at her father's chest and pulling the trigger. Swiftly and decisively, she cuddled her father and she was shot in the back, but she managed to dodge the man's one-off bullet because she wore a bullet-proof vest. The other scene shows the overprotective mother haring off in fear of the street and all that aggro. She experienced the gamut of emotions (e.g. grim-faced, devastated and shocked when the shooting happened in just a minuscule amount of time, but fair enough for viewers to sympathise with the family in grief. At this juncture of the sequence, the man writhed in agony and looked uncannily at the daughter's murder. The father cried out as he took his daughter into his arms, thinking that she was shot in the back. Her mother was weeping in grief with a pallid on her face. Later, the

daughter said almost apologetically that she wanted to protect him *lā 'alayka yā 'abi* ('It's okay, Daddy') and *sa 'aḥmīk* ('I'll protect you'). Only then could the father utter a little snorting laughter. As can be noted the semiotic import in the composition of the picture is likely to play a crucial role in underpinning the underlying meanings intended by the original text. It goes without saying that her gestures, gesticulates and voice husky with grief are all helpful in the making of the meaning.

Example 3

SL	Subtitle
What's up? Give me my money!	(a) – *marḥaban* – *'a'ṭinī nuqūdī* [BT What's up? Give me my money!]
What? What money?	(b) *madha? 'ayu nuqūd?* [BT What money?]
Daddy! To pay for my store.	(c) *'abi* – *'idfa' thamana matjarī* [BT Dad! You must pay for my store.]
Give me my money!	(d) *'a'ṭinī nuqūdī* [BT Give me my money!]
Honey, stay inside. Elizabeth! Give me my money!	(e) – *ibqī bid-dākhil ya ḥabībatī (Elizabeth).* – *'a'ṭinī nuqūdī* [BT Elizabeth, stay inside! Give me my money!]
I want my fucking money! Give me that truck! That's not my truck!	(f) *'urīdu nuqūdī al-la'īnah 'a'ṭinī-sh-shāḥinah* – *hadhihi laysat shaḥinatī ya 'akhi* [BT I want my money! Give me that truck! That's not my truck!]
It's okay, Daddy. What... What?	(g) *lā 'alayka yā 'abī* [BT I am okay dad.]
What... What? I'll protect you.	(h) – *mādha?* – *sa 'aḥmīk* [BT what I just want to protect you]

Bearing all the extra-linguistic features in Example 3 in mind, the subtitles in 3g and 3h are semantically sufficient, but, having indulged in the semiotic modalities in the filmic context, we feel that the subtitles pragmatically fall short of the original text. It is important for the subtitler to take into account "the content of the non-verbal channels" (Orero, 2004, p. 86) as well as to

> *find out which of the non-verbal elements of the [source text] can be preserved in translation and which have to be adapted to the norms and conventions of the target culture (Nord, 2005, p. 121).*

In terms of cinematographic tools, it is obvious that they have functions to do in the film: the close-up to the handgun and the mother screaming draw our attention to a criminal act—the girl's shooting incidence. Because the crime scene is displayed in the daylight, it is possible for us as viewers to first mentally and clearly view the scene, then correlate it to the previous scenes and other actions. Admittedly, cinematographic tools are conducive to

semiotic modalities which, in turn, help us to make sense of moving pictures.

Strategy-wise, it is obvious that three major reducing strategies have been utilised by the subtitler. First, condensation is a adopted as illustrated Table 1 below:

Table 1. Condensation strategy of SL dialogue

Example	No of characters in the SL dialogue	No of characters in the TL subtitle
1a	36	27
1c	NA*	28 32**
2a	55	39
2c	47	31
3a	27	17
3c	28	21

*NA (not available): the dialogue is in Persian
** English subtitle

It is crystal-clear that employing condensation strategy has resulted in a discrepancy between the number of characters in the SL dialogue and those in the TL subtitles. Second, decimation is clear in Example 2a "Yo, (Osama)! Plan a Jihad on your time" which translates *mahlan yā Usāmah, fal-tukhaṭiṭ lihādha| fī waqtikal-khāṣ*. The SL item 'Jihad' is reduced to deictic *lihādha* (lit. 'that'). Finally, deletion strategy can be shown in Example 2b in which the interjection 'Oh' in "Oh, God here we go" is left untranslated in the TL version, i.e. *bad'ana* (lit. 'we start') and in Example 3h whereby redundant "What... What?" is subtitled into *mādha* ('What'). Reducing subtitling strategies are highly recommended as they take spatial dimension into full consideration, allowing for more communicative channels to take part in the exchange. Nevertheless, other strategies have also been employed:

- imitation in which 'English' in Example 2b is rendered into *lil lughati il-'injlīzyyah* ('English Language');
- transfer whereby "my fucking money!" is translated into *nuqūdī al-la'īnah* (lit. 'my damned money') and
- expansion in which "and a dozen more that'll fit any size hole" is subtitled into *masurat musadas min 'ayi ḥajim* (lit. 'tap-like pistol that'll fit any size hole').

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing analysis has shown that the task of the translator is fraught with multifarious difficulties in translating thrillers. Unlike printed translation, subtitling is unmistakably associated with polysemiotic channels of moving pictures and, as we have seen, those channels can be universal rather than culture-specific which *per se* makes the target audience appreciate watching the film and as a corollary of this, linguistic choice should be meticulously made by the translator. The focus of the present paper wrangled over the question of producing 'ingenuous' subtitles not recalcitrant to other important semiotic modalities which usually compose an audiovisual product. The cinematographic context of the film under discussion plays a crucial role in underpinning the aesthetic values of the film. Another point worthy of

mentioning is the use of MSA all through the subtitles which seems to have ameliorated the situation in a way that is at variance with the polysemiotic channels—the subtitles have been perfunctorily displayed on screen.

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Film

Crash, 2004. Directed by Paul Haggis. US, Lions Gate Home Entertainment. Arabic Translation by MBC 4.

Mohammad Ahmad Thawabteh

Vertimas ir nusikaltimai: angliškų trilerių subtitrų vertimas į arabų kalbą

Santrauka

Verčiant subtitrus, komunikacija suprantama kaip šis tas daugiau negu lingvistinės informacijos pateikimas ekrane. Siekiant perteikti informaciją auditorijai tos kalbos, į kurią verčiama, reikia atsižvelgti ir į kitus polisemiotikos suvokimo kanalus. Straipsnyje analizuojamas filmo *Crash* (2004) trijų scenų tekstų rinkinys. Filmas buvo rodomas 2010 m. satelitiniu MBC4 kanalu. Straipsnyje atskleidžiama, kad nors kalbos, iš kurios verčiama, dialogai yra gana konfrontacinio pobūdžio, aistringi, jaudinantys ir netgi kurstantys, arabų kalbos subtitrai sušvelnina minėtus dialogus, tokiu būdu sukeldami tam tikrą konfliktą su kitais filmo polisemiotikos elementais. Taip pat parodoma, kad ekrano subtitruose turi atsispindėti semiotiniai kalbos modalumai. Kai šie modalumai yra įvairiapusiai, išeitis yra vertimo vengimo strategija. Ši strategija yra naudojama siekiant patenkinti tikslinės auditorijos, t. y. arabiškos, gana skirtingos nuo angliškos, lūkesčius. Straipsnio pabaigoje pabrėžiama, kad nors yra propaguojamos svetimos kalbos, t. y. vertimo kalbos, strategijos, vis dėlto, originalo kalbos strategijos ir toliau lieka vertėjo prioritetas.

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