Audiovisual Translation of Persian Humour on Social Media

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Abstract
Using a blend of methods including existing subtitling models in Audiovisual Translation (AVT), Functionalism in Translation Studies, the General Theory of Verbal Humour, Cultural Linguistics (CuL) and careful analysis of numerous examples of Persian humour on social media, i.e. Instagram, the present research aims to demonstrate that there is a compelling argument to be made for updating traditional approaches to translation, subtitling in particular (cf. Zabalbeascoa, 2019). The findings of this study show that in today's globalised world, in which social media and new technologies are influencing the translation process, the core model of translation, subtitling in particular, in all its actuality, seems to be incomplete, as *cultural conceptualisations* underlying lexical items are lost in translation. *Cultural conceptualisations* that are, however, central to meaning construction and humour perception in the target culture. *Cultural conceptualisations* that are, thus, crucial for translators' daily task. The study suggests that in order to meet the concerns of the translation profession today, in this globalised world with its new ways of communication, and for successful intercultural communication, *cultural conceptualisations* underlying lexical items be incorporated into Audiovisual Translation (AVT), subtitling models (cf. Zabalbeascoa, 2019).

1. INTRODUCTION

Persian humour is entrenched in one of the main Persian literary traditions which dates back at least to the 14th century, to the satiric work of Obeyd Zakani, one of the most prominent humorists in Persian language and culture, 1300 – 1371 CE (Encyclopaedia Iranica, 2011). Following the main Persian literary tradition, Persian humour usually strives to "save the face" of the joke teller and preserve their honour at the expense of teasing others (Pazargadi, 2012), which can be categorised as "other-deprecating type of humour" (see Béal & Mullan, 2017). This type of humour is a rich source of cultural linguistics references for analysis in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) of humour (cf. Stankic, 2017). Cultural Linguistics (CuL) is a cutting-edge multidisciplinary research area that explores the relationship between language and *cultural conceptualisations*[1] (Sharifian, 2017a; 2017b; see also section 3). Expanding on the Cultural Linguistics framework (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b), the General Theory of Verbal Humour (Attardo, 2002, 2008; Attardo & Raskin, 1991) and Functionalism in Translation Studies (Nord, 2013, 2018), the present research offers a comparative analysis of the AVT of

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[1] See section 3.2. for the thorough discussion of *cultural conceptualisations* which are the specific property of newly-developed field of enquiry, Cultural Linguistics (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b).

Persian humour in a large corpus of stand-up comedies on social media. The study's emphasis is on subtitling strategies adopted in confronting translation challenges posed by culturally-constructed conceptual aspects of humorous instances. Several scholars such as Attardo (2017b, p. 96), the editor of the Encyclopedia of Humour Studies, emphasises that the interplay of culturally-constructed conceptual dimensions underlying the translation of humour is very complex and largely unexplored (Attardo, 2017b; Stankic, 2017).

In the following section, therefore, the current frameworks of AVT, subtitling models that deal with the translation of humour as a culturally-constructed element will be discussed. These AVT frameworks are highly relevant to this study, and they are especially important for the analysis of data in this research (see sections 4.3 and 5).

2. A BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Dore (2019), the editor of *Multilingual Humour in Translation*, explored Audiovisual Translation (AVT) of humour in two comedies: *Modern Family* and *The Big Sick* in a book called *Humour in Audiovisual Translation: Theories and Applications* (Dore, 2019; see also Dore, 2020). The book offers a comprehensive account of the AVT of humour, bringing together insights from Translation Studies and Humour Studies (Dore, 2019). The study's objective was to provide a better insight into the nature of humour translation in the audiovisual setting (cf. Dore, 2020). The research design was predominantly a descriptive contrastive analysis of the original comedies and their translations to demonstrate the applicability of humour theories in overcoming the translation challenges that humour imposes on translators. The methodology of the study was based on the General Theory of Verbal Humour (Attardo, 1994, 1997, 2017c; Attardo & Raskin, 1991; GTVH) in combination with existing models of subtitling strategies such as Pedersen (2007, 2011) and Gottlieb's (2008) models.

The study's results have revealed that in the translation of humour, "the application of the General Theory of Verbal Humour to the data under review has aptly demonstrated that this theory is indeed a full-fledged tool" (Dore, 2019, p. 283). However, the present research contends that downplaying humour translation to just linguistic formalisms, such as the one proposed in the General Theory of Verbal Humour is inadequate (cf. Kianbakht, 2020a) as this linguistic-oriented approach needs to be reinforced, at underlying conceptual layers of the analysis (see section 5), by a cutting-edge, recently developed framework, such as Cultural Linguistics' *cultural conceptualisations* analytical framework[2] (see section 3.2), to account for the translation of this complex culture-reliant phenomenon adequately. The study argues that these *cultural conceptualisations* underlying humour in translation, are far removed from the scope of the General Theory of Verbal Humour and humour translation models based on it. Therefore, due to limited applicability of this dominant linguistic-oriented framework, the research suggests that in-depth analysis of humour and its translation can be best achieved by adopting a new framework: Cultural Linguistics, and its conceptual, analytical units, such as *cultural conceptualisations* (i.e., *cultural metaphors, cultural schemas* and *cultural categories*), with the GTVH as its "independent" components. This necessitates paying closer attention to the conceptual aspects of translation, especially conceptual dimensions that are culturally constructed (Kianbakht, 2020b). Overall, this study maintains that the globalisation of world makes it no longer possible to downplay how crucial *cultural conceptualisations* and their analysis have become for translation studies and audiovisual translation of humour (cf.

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[2] The study of culture and language is of course not new, which can be traced back at least to the eighteenth century to the works of prominent scholars such as Wilhelm Von Humboldt (1767–1835), Franz Boas (1858 – 1942), Edward Sapir (1884–1939), and Benjamin Whorf (1897–1941). However, the exploration of language and *cultural conceptualisations* in this particular focus, within the recently developed framework of Cultural Linguistics is pretty new, cutting-edge field of enquiry (Kianbakht, 2020b).

Brekhus & Ignatow, 2019; Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020; Strandell, 2019; Zabalbeascoa, 2019). Several other scholars support this viewpoint, and it is in line with the current shift towards conceptual analysis in translation, language and cultural studies (cf. Brekhus & Ignatow, 2019; Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020; Strandell, 2019).

Pedersen's seminal work and model of subtitling strategies for translating Extra-linguistic Cultural References (ECRs) in AVT (2011) is the most prevailing subtitling model. He explored subtitling strategies, and his aim was to find out subtitling norms (Pedersen, 2011). The study investigated the technical norms of subtitling, such as the conventional time and space limitations of subtitling. The study's main focus was Extra-linguistic Cultural References (ECRs), cultural references to places, people, institutions, customs, food etc. that translators may not know, even if they know the language under investigation (Pedersen, 2011). The research design was predominantly a comparative analysis of subtitles of contemporary films and audiovisual programs. The study drawing on Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling model, proposed seven main strategies for rendering ECRs in subtitles namely: Retention, Specification, Direct Translation, Generalization, Substitution, Omission and the use of an Official Equivalent (Pedersen, 2011) which will be used as a framework to analyse subtitling strategies in the present research (see section 5). The findings of Pedersen's work are relevant to the present research. However, he did not delve into this particular focus of recently-developed framework of Cultural Linguistics' *cultural conceptualisations* underlying audiovisual translation of humour, which is addressed in this research. This research offers a systematic analytical framework for an in-depth analysis of audiovisual translation of humour – despite its notorious elusiveness, as an analytical object, in multimedia translation research (see the data analysis section).

Overall, despite the considerable literature on Cultural Turn in Translation Studies and studies foregrounding the undeniable and inevitable role/impact of culture in/on translation, which can be traced back at least to 1990s, the *cultural conceptualisations* in this particular focus of a recently-developed field of enquiry, Cultural Linguistics, manifested in the AVT of humour have remained largely unexplored (cf. Dore, 2020). Therefore, the present study explores the complexities of the audiovisual translation of humour and focuses on its underlying *cultural conceptualisations*. The research also applies a new systematic, multidisciplinary, analytical model to the audiovisual translation, and thus contributes to the on-going research in the field.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This study is a part of a bigger research conducted at RMT University. As a result of which, a new model, namely, a cultural conceptual model of analysis is developed. The new model is extensively applied to several different fields, such as the literary translation of humour, see Heydon and Kianbakht (2020). The new model is particularly applied to the audiovisual translation of humour on social media in this study which provides new insights in multimedia translation. The study's theoretical framework is expanded on the Cultural Linguistics framework, in the form of conceptual, analytical units such as cultural schemas, cultural metaphors and cultural categories, which are collectively called *cultural conceptualisations*, in combination with the General Theory of Verbal Humour and Functionalism in Translation Studies. In the following sections, therefore, at first, the General Theory of Verbal Humour will be explained. Then, the Cultural Linguistics framework will be described. Finally, Functionalism in Translation Studies and functional equivalence in translation will be set out.

3.1. General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH)

Raskin and Attardo (1991; Attardo, 2002, 2017a) developed a list of parameters, called Knowledge Resources, to model individual humour instances (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). They integrated Raskin's concept of Script Opposition (SO), developed in Semantic Script Theory of Humour (Raskin, 1985), into the General Theory of Verbal Humor as one of its six levels of independent Knowledge Resources (KRs) (Lew, 1996). These Knowledge Resources are Script Opposition, Logical Mechanism, Situation, Target, Narrative Strategy and Language (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). The framework postulates that verbal humour can be identified in light of these six parameters and that the Script Opposition is the most determining parameter, and the Language Knowledge Resource is the least determining parameter in this model:

1. *Script opposition* (SO) implies an opposition between two scripts considered contradictory and overlapping in a certain way in an instance of humour, which causes incongruity (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). It should be noted that the Script Opposition is the most important of all Knowledge Resources that accounts for the fact that all Knowledge Resources can be collapsed into this one (Attardo, 1994, p. 226), which means that the Script Opposition is the most determining parameter in identifying humour (see below).

2. *Logical mechanism* (LM) is a parameter that resolves the incongruity, which is evoked by the humour and its Script Opposition. In other words, it enables the audience to move beyond the Script Opposition existing in the humour and to decide which script is intended. Logical Mechanisms can range from juxtapositions to false analogies, figure-ground reversals, inferring consequences, or ignoring the obvious, etc. (Attardo, 2002, 2017a).

3. *Situation* (SI) explains that what the humorous instance is about "changing a light bulb, crossing the road, playing golf, etc." (Attardo, 2002, p. 179). The Situation includes objects, activities, and instruments of a humorous instance. Attardo (2002, p. 179) further explains a stenography Situation in a joke through the following example: "Can you write shorthand? Yes, but it takes me longer."

4. *Target* (TA) is the humour's aim; it can conjure up in the audience's mind, the names of groups or individuals, and ideologies or ethnic minorities with humorous stereotypes. Consider the following joke that targets Poles, as stereotypical targets for jokes in America taken from Krikmann (2006, p. 37): "How many Poles does it take to empty the ashtray of a car? Ten, to turn the car upside down."

5. *Narrative Strategy* (NS) is a "rephrasing of what is known in literary theory under the name genre" (Attardo, 1994, p. 224). It is responsible for the syntactic-semantic organisation of a joke. In other words, a joke has to be narrated in some form such as a simple narrative, a dialogue (question and answer), a riddle, or as an aside in conversation (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020).

6. *Language* (LA) is the parameter that accounts for the linguistic instantiation of humour (Attardo, 1994; p. 223). In a nutshell, the focal concept of Script Opposition, the fundamental property of the GTVH framework, is the necessary mechanism on which humour is based (Attardo & Raskin, 1991; pp. 297–303; see also Stankic, 2017, p. 32). These six parameters are used to identify instances of humour that is to be analysed (see section 4.2 for details and how the GTVH is applied in this research).

3.2. Cultural Linguistics and Audiovisual Translation (AVT) of Humour

Cultural Linguistics is an emerging field of enquiry (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b) that examines the relationship between language and *cultural conceptualisations* (see also Sharifian, 2003, 2011, 2012, 2015). "*Cultural conceptualisations* are the tools Cultural Linguistics uses to study aspects of cultural cognition and its instantiation in language" (Peeters, 2016, p. 1). Sharifian explains that Cultural Linguistics (a) postulates that features of human languages communicate and embody conceptualisations, and (b) focuses on the analysis of conceptualisations that are culturally constructed (2011, 2012, 2017a, 2017b). This is highly relevant to this research on subtitling humour since humour is subject to significant influence from the cultural context in which it is used (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Sharifian (2011) further maintains that the advent of this multidisciplinary area of research "has shifted focus from the relationship of individual cognition and language as highlighted in the cognitive approaches to language, to the relationship between language, cultural conceptualisation and cognition" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 3).

Cultural Linguistics proposes that "language is a cultural form" (Yu, 2007, p. 65) and "conceptualisations underlying language and language use are largely formed by cultural systems" (Yu, 2007, p. 65). As the central concept in the audiovisual translation, *cultural conceptualisations* are used in this study to indicate "patterns of distributed knowledge across the cultural group" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 3). *Cultural conceptualisations* also cover Strauss and Quinn's (1997) schematization and schemas (see section 3.2.3), and Lakoff's (1987) categories and metaphors (see sections 3.2.1 & 3.2.2), which are of particular importance for the analysis of the audiovisual translation of humour as a culturally-constructed element. Overall, by transcending the current cognitive and linguistic theories and intending to analyse the relationship between language and *cultural conceptualisations* for describing culturally embedded phenomena such as humour, Cultural Linguistics (2017a, 2017b) provides coherent multidisciplinary analytical tools in the form of conceptual, analytical units such as cultural categories, cultural metaphors and cultural schemas, which are collectively called *cultural conceptualisations*, that have been applied to the audiovisual translation in this study.

Cultural conceptualisations capture all aspects of human life such as the conceptualisations of life and death, to conceptualisations of emotion, body, and humour encoded and communicated through language features (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b). These language features are of special importance for subtitlers. These language features such as humorous words which may not have equivalence in the target language, semantic and pragmatic meanings of humour, morpho-syntactic features of humour, and other language features such as the use of specific dialects as a typical mechanism of creating humour, may pose significant challenges for subtitlers (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020; see section 5).

Humour is generally known to be deeply embedded in a particular culture, and therefore, for understanding and translating humour, different types of cultural presuppositions are required (Stankic, 2017). Notwithstanding the fact that humour is typically created by ambiguity or playing with different levels of language structure (Attardo, 2017c; Chiaro, 1992, 2017, 2018). For this reason, to understand and translate a particular instance of humour, the subtitlers need to take into consideration and unpack both the language and the cultural context of the source text to which that particular instance of humour refers so that both the language and the culture can be reconstructed and repacked into the new linguistic reality of the target text (cf. Munoz Basols, 2012; Stankic, 2017; Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020).

What is of particular importance here is that (a) this cultural context is shared by the members of a linguistic community collectively and that (b) within a specific linguistic community, there are conventional and acceptable ways of saying things (Kecskes, 2015, p.

114). Therefore, understanding humour and translating it depends intensely on its cultural specificity, in the sense of what is humorous and acceptable inside a specific culture (Antonopoulou, 2004, p. 224). This is connected to the fact that as Sharifian (2011, p. 5) maintains language is deeply rooted in a group-level cognition that emerges from the interactions between members of a cultural group. Since language and culture are inseparable, intertwined and closely related, it is evident that language is one of the tools for storing and conveying *cultural conceptualisations* that emerge from the group-level cognition across time and space (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Considering humour, it should be emphasised that "*cultural conceptualisations* mark not only humorous discourse itself in terms of different levels and units of language (e.g. speech acts, idioms, metaphors, grammar, etc.), but also language use and community practices (e.g. when it is (in)appropriate to joke and which form of humour to use in the given situation)" (Stankic, 2017, p. 100).

Taking into account humour in audiovisual texts and its subtitling, it should be noted that as Chiaro (2010) argues this type of humour is created to amuse different target groups that may not necessarily fit into a same linguistic and/or cultural community; as for example in the case of internationally broadcasted comedy shows, as is the case in the this study's dataset. Therefore, the producers of this kind of audiovisual products for absorbing a broader audience not only should have in mind the perception of humour by the individual audience, but also the audience as a collective group (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Cultural Linguistics plays a crucial role and accounts for this collective conceptualisation (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b). Human conceptualisation as Sharifian (2017a, pp. 2-4) argues moves over and beyond the level of the individual mind, and therefore is collective at the level of a cultural group, and these collective *cultural conceptualisations* form cultural cognition. This collective characteristic of *cultural conceptualisations* is highly relevant to the audiovisual translation of humour as a culturally-constructed phenomenon, which is overlooked in current linguistic and cognitive approaches, which tend to focus merely on the individual level of conceptualisations (see also Attardo & Raskin, 2017; Chovanec & Tsakona, 2018; Stankic, 2017). That is to say, in order to account for different types of humour – for example, ethnic humour or register humour – and their audiovisual translation, it is crucial to take into account not only the individual level of conceptualisations but also the level that is common to a cultural group (Stankic, 2017, p. 100; see also Sharifian, 2017a).

As set out earlier, because this research compares two languages and cultures through the lens of audiovisual translation, subtitling in particular, it seems essential to specify what is the *tertium comparationis* in this comparative analysis (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Leuven-Zwart (1989, 1990) explains that in the comparative analysis, the fundamental textual units entering into comparison are called *transemes*. These are units of a relational nature which do not exist a priori since they are only valid for the compared texts, the original stand-up comedies as the source texts, and their subtitled counterparts as the target texts (Santoyo, 1986; Santoyo & Rabadan, 1991; see also Rojo Lopez, 2002, 2015). As Rojo Lopez (2002, p. 312) maintains "the fact that these translation units are established a 'posteriori' does not mean that we cannot previously formulate a general hypothesis that serves as *'tertium comparationis'* in the analysis" (see also Hermans, 2019). Hence bearing in mind that this study deals with the audiovisual translation of humour as a culturally-constructed phenomenon, the hypothesis that serves as *tertium comparationis* between the original stand-up comedies as the source texts, and their subtitled counterparts as the target texts, is the notion of *cultural conceptualisations* (see section 4.3.3). *Cultural conceptualisations* are analytical structures which not only exist at the individual level of cognition but also at the level of cultural group cognition that are negotiated across time and space (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b). These analytical tools of Cultural Linguistics (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b) will be explained below before proceeding to the method of data analysis.

3.2.1. Cultural Categories

Cultural categories are a class of *cultural conceptualisations*, grounded in cultural cognition. They are culturally-constructed conceptual categories reflected in the lexicon of human languages (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b). Cultural categories are rooted in people's cultural experiences gained from their situatedness in a particular culture (Xu & Sharifian, 2017). They mirror the structure of attributes perceived in the world which inevitably shape people's thoughts (Polzenhagen & Xia, 2014), such as emotion categories, event categories, colour categories, age categories, food categories, or kinship categories (Sharifian, 2017a; 2017b; see section 5 for the examples of these conceptual, analytical structures).

3.2.2. Cultural Metaphors

Cultural metaphors are "cognitive structures that allow us to understand one conceptual domain in terms of another" (Sharifian, 2013a, p. 1591; cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Cultural metaphors shape the way people think and act in intra-and-intercultural communication, and are categorised as fundamental to human thought and action (Sharifian, 2015, 2017a, 2017b). For example, in the Persian language and culture, the cultural metaphor 'sefid-bakht' [literal translation: 'white-fate'] refers to marriage (Sharifian & Bagheri, 2019). The underlying cultural conceptualisation is 'HAPPY MARRIED LIFE AS HAVING A WHITE FATE' (Sharifian & Bagheri, 2019) so that mentioning that in Persian *cultural conceptualisations* happy married life is conceptualised as having a white fate, which has got its roots in old Persian worldview of Zoroastrianism (Sharifian & Bagheri, 2019).

3.2.3. Cultural Schemas

The schema's notion has a very high explanatory power to effectively explain its subject matter (Sharifian, 2001, 2017a, 2017b; Strauss & Quinn, 1997). In particular, schemas are "building blocks of cognition that help organise, interpret, and communicate information" (Sharifian, 2016, p. 507). Cultural schemas are a subclass of schemas shaped by culture and function as a foundation for communicating and interpreting cultural meanings (Sharifian, 2015, 2017a, 2017b; Strauss & Quinn, 1997). They include event schemas, role schemas, image schemas, proposition schemas, or emotion schemas entrenched in cultural knowledge and experience (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020), which are explained as the following:

1. *Event schemas* are "abstracted from our experience of certain events" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 8), such as the event schema of a stand-up comedy show.

2. *Role schemas* are "knowledge about social roles which denote sets of behaviours that are expected of people in particular social positions" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 9), such as role schema of a university professor.

3. *Image schemas* are "intermediate abstractions between mental images and abstract propositions that are readily imagined, perhaps as iconic images, and related to physical or social experiences" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 10). For instance, in a humorous utterance such as 'he has gone off the rails,' we are drawing on the image schema of the 'path' to capture the conceptualisation of the domain of 'thinking.' The 'path' image schema in this phrase shows the application of this image schema to the domain of 'thinking' (cf. Sharifian, 2011).

4. *Proposition schemas* are "abstractions that act as models of thought and behaviour and specify concepts and the relations that hold among them" such as Persian *cultural conceptualisation* of '*khoshbakhti*/happiness' as pre-destined fate (Sharifian, 2011, p. 10; see also Sharifian & Bagheri, 2019).

5. *Emotion schemas* pave our way to "define, explain and understand emotions primarily by reference to the events and situations in which they occur" (Sharifian, 2011, p. 11), such as Persian cultural emotion schema of '*khejālat*' (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). This Persian cultural emotion schema is multilayered and overlaps with three different cultural emotion schemas in English: embarrassment, shyness and shame (Sharifian, 2017a; Sharifian & Bagheri, 2019; see also the following sections for the application of these analytical tools to the method of data analysis).

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In this section, first of all, the corpus of the study will be described. Then, the data collection procedure will be set out, specifying first the framework used to select the data. Subsequently, the method of data analysis will be elaborated.

4.1. Corpus

The study's corpus was collected from Nazanin Nour's stand-up comedies during Persia's Got Talent show (2020) broadcasted on a publically available social media, official Instagram page retrieved from www.instagram.com/iamnazaninnour/. Nazanin Nour is a famous Iranian-American stand-up comedian, and one of the judges of Persia's Got Talent, the Persian spin-off of the British talent show Got Talent, aired in the Persian language in 2020. The show is produced outside of Iran in Stockholm, Sweden, for Persian audiences. It is aired on MBC Persia, part of the Middle East Broadcasting Center. The English subtitles of the stand-up comedies are publically available by professional subtitlers on the official Instagram page addressed for the English speaking audiences.

4.2. Data Collection Procedure

The analysed humorous instances have been identified and isolated in the data using the framework of General Theory of Verbal Humour's Knowledge Recourses (Attardo, 2002, 2017a). For illustration purposes, the application of the GTVH to the following instance of humour, 'The Doctor's Wife Joke,' is presented here (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). This instance of humour is taken from Attardo (2008) and Raskin (1985, pp. 117- 127) in order to show how the GTVH works in selecting the humour instances:

"A: 'Is the doctor at home?' the patient asked in his bronchial whisper.
B: 'No,' the doctor's young and pretty wife whispered in reply. 'Come right in'"
(Raskin, 1985, pp. 117- 127; see also Attardo, 2008).

A semantic interpretation of this example can be loosely read as: a patient who has been previously treated for some diseases asked about the presence of a doctor at the doctor's place of residence, to be treated for an illness that is apparent from the patient's whispering voice (Attardo, 2008; Raskin, 1985, pp. 117- 127). The doctor's wife, a young and pretty woman, whispers that the doctor is not at home, and invites him to enter the house (cf. Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Here, the target readership is faced with a dilemma: if the aim of the man's question is the desire to be cured for his illness; why is the doctor's wife asking him to come into the house? As the doctor is not at home, and the Script for 'DOCTOR' necessitates doctor's physical presence for examination and curing the disease! The Situation of this example leads the audience to start looking for another Opposing Script to make sense of the story (Raskin, 1985, p. 125), i.e., an alternative evaluation of the story. The reader will thus sit back and re-interpret the story. The doctor's wife's gender and explanation will be taken into consideration, as well as the doctor's absence (her husband). This interpretation will conjure up the 'LOVER' Script in the audience's mind, which allows the activation of the Logical Mechanism that an

improper relationship is going on, without the knowledge of the legitimate partner (Attardo, 2008; Raskin, 1985, pp. 117- 127). In view of the 'LOVER' Script, the doctor's wife's behaviour becomes meaningful, i.e. the doctor's wife misuses her husband's absence for having an affair with another man. Hence, the example is compatible with two Opposing Scripts (DOCTOR vs. LOVER), which are opposing each other based on 'SEX/NO SEX' (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Therefore, this example satisfies the requirements of the GTVH (SO: doctor vs. lover; LM: an adulterous relation be acted upon without knowledge of the lawful spouse; SI: meeting the doctor's wife; TA: improper relationships; NS: conversation; LA: English text). Thus, it can be identified as humorous (Attardo, 2008; Raskin, 1985, pp. 117- 127).

4.3. Method of Data Analysis

This section elaborates on the key concepts that constitute the method of data analysis in this study. In doing so, at first, the translation unit used for the analysis in this research will be explained. Then, the context in translation will be described. Finally, the study proceeds to set out the notion of functional equivalence in audiovisual translation.

4.3.1. Unit of Translation

The basic translation unit for the analysis in this research is a single conversational turn, as the smallest unit in the dialogue of stand-up comedies (Sinkeviciute & Dynel, 2017). Following Dynel (2011), a conversational turn is defined as an analytical unit that can differ in size, and that includes the flow of speech of an interlocutor, followed by a pause and the next interlocutor's turn in stand-up comedies (cf. Stankic, 2017). In this study's corpus, the conversational turn is equal to an utterance (cf. Stankic, 2017).

4.3.2. Context in Translation

As Martin (1995) claims, context is the mental contribution of the person who interprets an utterance, and the cognitive context is conceptual structures that are culturally-constructed in the speaker's mind (Sharifian, 2017a). It includes information from the physical environment and information that can be retrieved and inferred from our mental stores (see also Rojo Lopez, 2002, p. 315). Language plays an important role here since it serves as a primary mechanism for storing and communicating conceptualisations that are culturally constructed, acting both as a memory bank and a fluid vehicle to transmit *cultural conceptualisations* underlying culturally-constructed elements such as humour (Sharifian, 2017a, 2017b). Humour as Nash (1985, p.12) maintains "characterises the interaction of persons in situations of cultures, and our response to it must be understood in that broad context" (see also Rojo Lopez, 2002). Therefore, considering that the humorous instances in this study's corpus are context-bound and typically not translatable without their contextual information, they will be interpreted within their relevant cultural-conceptual context (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020).

4.3.3. Functional Equivalence

Before moving to set out the data analysis method, it is essential to discuss functional equivalence in audiovisual translation, which is highly relevant to analysing data in this study (see section 5). Shuttleworth and Cowie in the Dictionary of Translation Studies (1997, p. 64) argue that functional equivalence is the kind of equivalence reflected in a target text which aims to adapt the function of the source text in order to suit the specific context for which it has been produced (see also Nord, 2018).

In general, when subtitlers find an instance of a culturally-constructed element such as humour in the source text, they assign a function to that instance within an overall skopos of the translation task (Reiss & Vermeer, 2014) and use this function to find solutions they consider adequate (Rojo Lopez, 2002, 2015). Such solutions may or may not be acceptable to

the target audience of the translated text (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). Hence, here we are not dealing with a total equivalence, but with a correspondence that may or may not be acceptable to the target text's audience. From this perspective, the critical issue is not to ask whether the semantic import of the target language instances is or is not a total equivalent of that of the source language instances, but whether their textual function as activators of *cultural conceptualisations* is or is not equivalent to that of the source text instances (Rojo Lopez, 2002, 2015). In this way, based on Nord's Functionalism in translation (2010, p. 186), the target text instances are considered functional equivalents of that of the source text if these instances comply with the textual function involved. And if there is a high degree of correspondence between the semantic-pragmatic and stylistic information of the conceptual structures, i.e. cultural categories, cultural metaphors and cultural schemas they activate (see also Nord, 2018, pp. 219-230). Based on this assumption (Rojo Lopez, 2002, p. 316) the translation of culturally-constructed elements such as humour should be compared to the 'conceptual profile' of the source text's elements; that is, to the *cultural conceptualisations* they activate, then the critical step here is to analyse the function carried out by source text's elements within the source culture (cf. Rojo Lopez, 2002). This way, the source text element's 'conceptual profile' forms a norm which serves as a framework to decide the adequacy of the target text's element based on the *cultural conceptualisations* it activates within the target culture (see also Rojo Lopez, 2002; 2015; Wilson et al., 2019). For applying the method of data analysis, a multidimensional table has been designed (see the next page). The analysis of data has been conducted in multiple critical phases. Each analysed instance of humour identified in the stand-up comedies has been presented in a separate table such as the following:

Table 1: Humour Translation Analysis

Title				GTVH Knowledge Resources					
				SO	LM	SI	TA	NS	LA
Source Version									
Target Version									
Analysis									
CuL Conceptual Structures	Cultural Category		Cultural Metaphor			Cultural Schema			
Subtitler's Approach	Subtitling Strategy			Functional Equivalent					

In the table above, the Source Version indicates the humour instances identified in the stand-up comedies as the source text, and the Target Version portrays their subtitled counterparts as the target text. The GTVH Knowledge Resources denote each parameter of the General Theory of Verbal Humour framework in each example, and the CuL Conceptual Structures signify the Cultural Linguistics analytical structures instantiated in each case. The Analysis section entails the context-specific information about the events, objects and persons of the dialogues of the stand-ups including the participants (their statuses and roles); action (the participants' action); and other relevant features of the context (the surrounding objects and events). The Analysis section also offers a comparative analysis of the instances of humour detected in the source text implementing the proposed method of analysis, and their subtitled counterparts in the target text applying the analytical framework of Cultural Linguistics which focuses on cultural categories, cultural metaphors and cultural schemas activated in the mind of the audience (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). The researcher discussed which cultural categories, cultural metaphors, or cultural schemas these instances invoke in the audience's mind, whether they are the same or not. And what their similarities and differences denote in terms of the cultural values that are upheld in each particular language and culture (Heydon & Kianbakht, 2020). This led to patterns and *cultural conceptualisations* underlying subtitling of

humour and allowed the researcher to describe how subtitlers dealt with the challenges these *cultural conceptualisations* imposed in audiovisual translation and what subtitling strategies adopted in confronting these challenges.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data was conducted at two levels, quantitative and qualitative. Nonetheless, this paper is predominantly focused on the findings obtained from the qualitative analysis. Seventy instances of Persian humour were detected and analysed in this research. Due to this article's space limitations, only three examples, one for each analytical tools of *cultural conceptualisations*, e.g. cultural schemas, cultural metaphors, and cultural categories have been presented. Those interested in this project may contact the author for the full version of the study.

Table 2: Example 1. Cultural Metaphor-Based Humour: Cultural Metaphor of 'CHESHM [EYE] AS THE SEAT OF EMOTIONS.'

Title	Nazanin Nour's stand-up comedy: *Learn New Funny Persian Phrases.*	GTVH Knowledge Resources					
		SO	LM	SI	TA	NS	LA
Source Version	*Qadam-et behrooy-e cheshm-am.* Step-yours upon-of eye-mine.	You are very welcome/ Your steps on my eyes.	Inferring consequences.	A conversation between a host and a guest.	Persian politeness.	Stand-up comedy.	Idiom.
Target Version	Your steps on my eyes.	You are very welcome/ Your steps on my eyes.	Inferring consequences.	A conversation between a host and a guest.	Persian politeness.	Stand-up comedy.	Simple narrative.
Analysis	In this example taken from Nazanin Nour's stand-up comedy *Learn New Funny Persian Phrases,* the humorous reference to Persian Cultural Schema of 'POLITENESS RITUAL' is the Target of humour (see below). In the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian exploits the Persian Cultural Schema of 'POLITENESS RITUAL' to create humour and provoke witty thought. It is humour based on the Script Opposition between the script for YOU ARE VERY WELCOME vs. YOUR STEPS OVER MY EYES to mock Persian melodramatic politeness ritual, alluding to how Persians welcome their guests and visitors to their homes in Persian culture (Rahimieh, 2015). In Persian language and culture, the body-part '*cheshm'* [eye] is applied very frequently in conceptualisations of emotions (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4). It is a conceptual base for profiling a large number of *Cultural Conceptualisations* for Persian audiences (Sharifian, 2008, 2012). It is very closely linked to '*del'* [heart-stomach], which is usually conceptualised as the seat of emotions such as love in Persian language and culture (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4). Indeed, in Persian literature, many literary texts refer to '*cheshm-e del'* [eye of the heart], as the spiritual insight as opposed to the physical insight (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4). This Cultural Conceptualisation has its roots in 'Sufism,' a Persian mystic spiritual tradition, that has influenced Persian language and literature to a very great extent (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4). Another feeling that is associated with the eye in the Persian language and culture is a willingness in inviting people over your house (Sharifian, 2008, 2012). It is a polite form of expression of willingness in the following invitation. '*Qadam-et behrooy-e cheshm-am,*' which literally means 'may your step on my eye!' (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4), which is a welcome given to visitors to the speaker's home, that indicates Persian melodramatic politeness ritual Cultural Schema (Sharifian, 2012, p. 4). In the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian conceptualises '*cheshm'* as a container of emotions (Sharifian, 2008, 2012), and the above-mentioned Persian expression conjures up the Cultural Role Schema of 'A Persian Host' in the minds of source language-and-culture-audience. It invokes the Cultural Metaphor of '*CHESHM/*EYE AS THE SEAT OF EMOTIONS' (Sharifian, 2012) and activates the Cultural Conceptualisation 'YOU ARE VERY WELCOME' for Persian language-and-culture-audience. In the target text, at the subtitler-audience level, the subtitler adopts the direct translation subtitling strategy (Pedersen, 2011), "your steps on my eyes," which is not capable of recreating the same Cultural Conceptualisation, 'YOU ARE VERY WELCOME' in the target text, in order to activate the same impact of the original source text, for the target audiences correct-cultural-conceptual inferences, which consequently impairs the intended function of the original.
CuL Conceptual Structures	Cultural Category	Cultural Metaphor		Cultural Schema			
	Cultural Category of 'PERSIAN PEOPLE.'	Cultural Metaphor of '*CHESHM/*EYE AS THE SEAT OF EMOTIONS.'		Cultural Schema of 'PERSIAN POLITENESS.'			
Subtitler's Approach	Subtitling Strategy	Functional Equivalent					
	Direct Translation.	The subtitle does not function adequately in the target language and culture. The GTVH Knowledge Resources analysis and the existing subtitling strategies do not capture this problem. However, the CuL analysis of *cultural conceptualisations* does capture this and is capable of unpacking and analysing the underlying cultural-conceptual dimensions associated with the lexical items in audiovisual translation despite the conventional time and space limitations of subtitling.					

Table 3: Example 2. Cultural Category-Based Humour: Cultural Category of 'PERSIAN LOVERS.'

Title	Nazanin Nour's stand-up comedy: Learn New Funny Persian Phrases.	GTVH Knowledge Resources					
		SO	LM	SI	TA	NS	LA
Source Version	*Jigar-e-to bokhor-am.* Liver-of-you eat-I.	I love you so much/ I want to eat your liver.	Inferring consequences.	A conversation between lovers.	Ultimate Persian term of endearment *jigar* [liver].	Stand-up comedy.	Idiom.
Target Version	I want to eat your liver.	I love you so much/ I want to eat your liver.	Inferring consequences.	A conversation between lovers.	Ultimate Persian term of endearment *jigar* [liver].	Stand-up comedy.	Simple narrative.
Analysis	In this example taken from Nazanin Nour's stand-up comedy *Learn New Funny Persian Phrases,* the humorous reference to ultimate Persian term of endearment, *jigar* [liver], and Persian Cultural Metaphor of intense love 'I WANT TO EAT YOUR LIVER' are the Targets of humour. In the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian exploits the Persian Cultural Metaphor 'I WANT TO EAT YOUR LIVER' to create humour and provoke witty thought. It is humour based on the Script Opposition between the script for I LOVE YOU SO MUCH vs. I WANT TO EAT YOUR LIVER to mock ultimate Persian term of endearment, *jigar* [liver], alluding to how Persians may address their lovers in Persian culture (Rahimieh, 2015). In this example, in the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian exploits the Cultural Category of 'PERSIAN LOVERS' and the ultimate Persian term of endearment, *jigar* [liver] to activate the Cultural Conceptualisation 'YOU LOVE SOMEONE SO MUCH THAT YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR THEM' (Rahimieh, 2015; Sharifian, 2008) in the minds of Persian language-and-culture-audience. And the reference to this Persian Cultural Schema is explicit. In the target text, at the subtitler-audience level, the subtitler adopts the direct translation subtitling strategy (Pedersen, 2011), "I want to eat your liver," which activates Hannibal Lecter or a cannibalistic serial killer Image Schema in the minds of Anglo-American-audiences. Therefore, the subtitle is not capable of recreating the same Cultural Conceptualisation, 'I LOVE YOU SO MUCH THAT I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU' in the target text, in order to activate the same impact of the original source text, for the target audiences correct-cultural-conceptual inferences, which consequently distorts the intended function of the original.						
CuL Conceptual Structures	Cultural Category		Cultural Metaphor		Cultural Schema		
	Cultural Category of 'PERSIAN LOVERS.'		Cultural Metaphor of Intense Love 'I WANT TO EAT YOUR LIVER.'		Cultural Schema of 'PERSIAN ULTIMATE TERM OF ENDEARMENT *JIGAR* [LIVER].'		
Subtitler's Approach	Subtitling Strategy	Functional Equivalent					
	Direct Translation.	As explained above, the target text impairs the intended function of the original.					

Table 4: Example 3. Cultural Schema-Based Humour: Cultural Schema 'ADDING MASHALLAH IN COMPLIMENTS TO AVOID BEING JINXED.'

Title	Persia's Got Talent Show.	GTVH Knowledge Resources					
		SO	LM	SI	TA	NS	LA

Source Version	Nazanin: *Sibil-et vāghei hast-esh?*
	   Mustache-your real-is?
	Walter: *Bale vāghei-e!*
	   Yes, real-is!
	Nazanin*: Bāyd beh-esh mā-shā-allāh beg-im!*
	   Should to-it whatever-wills-God say-we!
		Real mustache/ Fake mustache.	Ignoring the obvious.	Surprisingly funny mustache.	Persian Cultural Schema of adding *mashallah* in compliments and Surprisingly funny mustache.	Stand-up comedy.	Idiom.

Target Version	Nazanin: Is your mustache real? Walter: Yes! Nazanin: We should say *mashallah* to that!	Real mustache/ Fake mustache.	Ignoring the obvious.	Surprisingly funny mustache.	Persian Cultural Schema of adding *mashallah* in compliments and Surprisingly funny mustache.	Stand-up comedy.	Simple narrative.
Analysis	In this example collected from Nazanin Nour's talk on *Persia's Got Talent* (2020), the humorous reference to Persian Cultural Proposition Schema of 'ADDING *MASHALLAH* IN COMPLIMENTS TO AVOID BEING JINXED' (see below), and one of the performer's surprisingly cute and funny mustache in the show, are the Targets of humour. In the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian exploits the Persian Proposition Schema '*MASHALLAH*' to create humour and provoke witty thought. It is humour based on the Script Opposition between the script for REAL MUSTACHE vs. FAKE MUSTACHE which is then reinforced in the humour's punch line by meta-pragmatic comment WE SHOULD SAY *MASHALLAH* TO THAT (Rahimieh, 2015). '*Mashallah*' is a common expression in Persian language and culture. It is etymologically an Arabic expression which literally means 'whatever God wills' that has found its way into the colloquial language of the Perso-Islamic culture of Iran (Rahimieh, 2015). It activates the Cultural Proposition Schema 'ADDING *MASHALLAH* IN COMPLIMENTS TO AVOID BEING JINXED/TO PRAY GOD MAY PROTECT ONE FROM THE EVIL EYE' in the minds of Persian-language-and-culture-audience. According to this Cultural Proposition Schema, an ill-intentioned soul may cast the evil eye on you upon seeing your blessings (Rahimieh, 2015). In this example, in the source text, at the comedian-audience level, the comedian exploits Persian Proposition Schema '*MASHALLAH*' to activate the Cultural Conceptualisation of 'EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION, JOY, SURPRISE, PRAISE OR THANKFULNESS FOR AN EVENT/PERSON/THING' in the minds of Persian-language-and-culture-audience. Its closest functional equivalent for the target language-and-culture-audience conceptualisation would be: 'wow, that is awesome!'. However, in the target text, at the subtitler-audience level, the subtitler adopts the retention subtitling strategy (Pedersen, 2011), "we should say *mashallah* to that!," which is not capable of recreating the same impact of the original source text, for the Anglo-American audiences correct-cultural-conceptual inferences, which consequently impairs the intended function of the original.						
CuL Conceptual Structures	Cultural Category		Cultural Metaphor		Cultural Schema		
	Cultural Category of 'PERSIAN PEOPLE.'		NO.		Cultural Proposition Schema 'ADDING *MASHALLAH* IN COMPLIMENTS TO AVOID BEING JINXED.'		
Subtitler's Approach	Subtitling Strategy		Functional Equivalent				
	Retention.		As explained above, the target text impairs the intended function of the original.				

6. CONCLUSION

Bringing together insights from Functionalism in Translation Studies, the General Theory of Verbal Humour, and Cultural Linguistics in the audiovisual setting within the field of Translation Studies, and careful analysis of numerous examples of Persian humour on social media, i.e. Instagram, this study attempted to demonstrate that there is a compelling argument to be made for updating traditional approaches to translation, subtitling in particular (cf. Zabalbeascoa, 2019). Because as the findings of this study's comparative analysis of the Audiovisual Translation (AVT) of humour indicated, the *cultural conceptualisations* underlying lexical items are lost in the translation of humorous elements of stand-up comedies on social media. The observations made in this study also revealed that the existing frameworks of Audiovisual Translation (AVT), subtitling models in particular, which deal with the translation of culturally-constructed phenomena such as humour, which have their roots in the core model of translation, seem to be incomplete (cf. Zabalbeascoa, 2019). Because the *cultural conceptualisations* that are, however, central to meaning construction, and humour perception in the target culture, are lost in translation. *Cultural conceptualisations* that are, thus, crucial for translators' daily task and for successful intercultural communication. This necessitates incorporating a "conceptual level of analysis" as a crucial step in the process of translation, for effective intercultural communication, in this globalised world with its new ways of communication.

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