

Semantic Loss in Translating Movie Subtitles from English into Kurdish (Witch Hunter as a Sample)

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Abstract

The present study investigates the underlying factors and nature of semantic loss occurring in translations of selected movie subtitles from English into Kurdish. Semantic loss includes under-translation, over-translation and mistranslation. The data are all taken from movie transcripts and subtitles in English and Kurdish, more specifically Sorani Kurdish.

Previous research showed that the losses resulted mainly from the lack of equivalence between the source text (English) and the target language (Sorani Kurdish). These losses are usually attributed to lack of equivalence and more particularly formal equivalence.

The present study proposes that losses result from incompatibility on the semantic and cultural levels between the source and target languages; lack of proper translation qualification of the translators. Certain losses are due to subtitling limitations that need to be taken into consideration.

The results of the present study show that semantic losses are losses of vocabulary, phrases, whole sentences that definitely cause lack of proper understanding of the source message, or its literary or aesthetic values.

keywords: semantic loss, translation, subtitle

1.Introduction

Due to the differences between English and Kurdish as two separate and independent languages, loss of meaning in translation is very common, varied and sometimes inevitable.

Losses may occur at all language levels: morphological, syntactic, and semantic due to mistranslation, superficial interpretation of the semantic and pragmatic equivalents, and literal translation, in other words losses are the result of under-translation, over-translation and mis-translation.

The losses would be more and more varied when it comes to translating movie subtitles as it has its own limitations and constraints that impose further requirements on translators such as word limitation. Therefore, semantic reduction (semantic loss) cannot be avoided in subtitling.

2.Background:

The precise meaning of words can slip and slide rather than remain fixed therefore, to grasp the exact meaning of an item or an expression one needs to take the context of situation into consideration.

Dollerup (1974:198) points out that translators "need a complete knowledge of the subtler shades of meaning in foreign words or phrases and should remember the pitfalls of failing to recognize them". When it comes to a context like movie subtitles the case becomes more complicated and difficult as it demands many other requirements such as word number/segment number limit. In order to better understand , the difficulties and the underlying factors of semantic loss in translating subtitles, one has to know what does subtitle mean.

Subtitling is defined by Gottlieb(2005:16) as 'a prepared communication using written language acting as an additive and synchronous channel ,as part of a transient and polysemiotic text.

The concept of subtitling is defined Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:161) as "the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue."

However, Karamitroglou , based on Gottlieb (1994a:107), points out that "subtitles are different from 'displays' or 'captions'" (2000:5). .

Gottlieb (1992:162) defines subtitling as a 1) written, 2) additive , 3) immediate, 4) synchronous, and 5) polymedial form of translation.

Furthermore , Jakobson (1966) distinguishes between different forms of subtitling: from a linguistic viewpoint, there is *intralingual* (within one language) and *interlingual* (between two languages) translation; whereas technically speaking, subtitles can be either *open* (not optional, e.g. shown with the film) or *closed* (optional, e.g. shown via teletext) (Gottlieb, 1992:163; see also Baker, 1998).

Gottlieb, states that: "Subtitling can be both 'intralingual' (or 'vertical'), when the target language is the same as the source language, and 'interlingual' (or 'diagonal'), when the target language is different from the source language" (Gottlieb, 1994a; Gottlieb, 1998:247, quoted in Karamitroglou, 2000:5).

Movie subtitling is therefore interlingual and open, which means that SL linguistic material (speech, other linguistic material) is transformed into TL subtitles, and that subtitles are broadcast simultaneously with the program. According to Shochat and Stam (1985:41), "the interlingual film experience is perceptually bifurcated: we hear another's language while we read our own."

Subtitling pre-requisites:

Subtitling possesses certain pre-requisites. Some of them are linguistic or textual , others can be termed as technical.

Subtitling is not an easy work and is performed under considerable constraints. For this reason, effective subtitling requires recognition of these constraints and understanding of the limitations, as viewers simultaneously have to read one or two lines of text at the bottom of the screen in the allotted time, which is generally shorter than for the original dialogue.

However, what is rarely appreciated is that audio visual translation is a form of translation that is of vital, and growing, importance, and that it imposes a variety of both technical and contextual constraints on the part of the translator. As subtitles do miss details most of the times and frequently have an overall neutral shade, which detracts from their quality, it would be useful to discuss what subtitling involves in actual practice.

Gottlieb (1992:164) discusses in different terminology, what he calls the *formal (quantitative)* and *textual (qualitative)* constraints of subtitling. *Textual* constraints are those imposed on the subtitles by the visual context of the film, whereas *formal* constraints are the *space factor* (a maximum of two lines are allowed, with approximately 35 characters per line) and the *time factor*. The time factor in particular, plays a pivotal role in the decisions translators have to make. Although traditionally five to six seconds have been considered to be sufficient for reading a two-liner (Hanson 1974; quoted in Gottlieb, 1992:164), Gottlieb (1992:164-165) brings up interesting evidence from more recent studies (d'Ydewalle et al. 1985), according to which some viewers have been able to read subtitles considerably faster.

As Delabastita (1989:200), also discusses the problem of film subtitling, he suggests that one of the chief aspects to be considered is the amount of reduction it presupposes. This is due to the fact that the number of visual verbal signs on the screen is restricted, on one hand, by the space available and, on the other hand, by the time available. The constraints of space and time result in the problem of selection, as the translator has to analyze the source text material carefully to decide what should be transferred to the target text and what can or must be left out.

Kovai (1994:250) has applied relevance theory to subtitling, arguing that "decisions about deletions are context-dependent." So, in some contexts deletion is a must.

Moreover, subtitling as a mode of linguistic transfer has a number of synchronization constraints. Following Mailhac (2000:129-131), these constraints are the following: a) the medium changes from oral to written, that is "video and television subtitling normally require larger fonts and therefore allow fewer characters (ibid:129), b) the linguistic transfer is constrained by the length and structure of utterances, c) link to visuals, d) frame changes "since they can divert the attention of the viewer away from the subtitles" (ibid.), and e) the viewers' reading speed, which varies according to their degree of literacy and according to whether it is a cinema audience or a television/video one, which carries implications in terms of the age range (ibid:129-130).

There are also some other inevitable losses such as: quantitative and qualitative changes to achieve legibility and readability. Such changes to achieve legibility, in terms of appearance, are the following: the position of line breaks, the number and length of lines, the use of punctuation marks, the color and size of the font, typeface, and timing.

On the other hand, when it comes to achieving readability, there are a number of quantitative and qualitative changes that need to be taken into account. Quantitative changes include: a) simplifying vocabulary, b) simplifying syntax, c) merging short dialogues, and d) deletions. Qualitative changes include the tendency to neutralize the marked language/speech to more clear and standard language, which affects the characterization.

Consequently, the nature of the losses can only be identified and fully appreciated by taking into account the aforementioned parameters. As Mailhac (2000:130) states, "The simultaneous availability of the source and target dialogues may encourage

viewers with a knowledge of the source language to start 'picking holes in the translated text,' even though they are more often than not ignorant of the constraints which characterize this form of linguistic transfer and the strategies required to overcome them."

As a result, when it comes on translating subtitles, the subtitler needs to use the limited space and time in an optimal way, in order to virtually retain the meaning effect in the subtitle translation. But the constraints themselves clearly cannot predict whether the meaning effect tends to be preserved or lost in subtitles.

3. Kinds of Losses

Losses can be of various kinds but two of them can be easily categorized. The first kind could be termed as the must-lose losses which occur because of the different systems of the two languages which has nothing to do with the skill and competence of the translator who cannot find equivalence thus compensatory strategies are utilized. Second is an (translators' pitfall) loss which is attributed to translator's failure to find the appropriate equivalence. Both kinds of loss can be seen on all levels.

4. Levels of Loss

Loss could be seen on all levels of language, namely morphological, syntactic and semantic levels. The morphological and syntactic level losses lie outside the domain of this study. Keeping in mind the fact that morphological and syntactic losses directly affect the meaning and overall message of the utterances. Hence, very little would be presented for morphological and syntactic levels. The main focus will be on semantic level loss.

4.1. Morphological Level:

Semantic loss occurs at the morphological level. Generally, this should not matter in movies. However, people do occasionally use "grammatical" (morphological) features such as gender or number agreement (or intentional lack of agreement) to convey expressive meaning. In English, for example, to refer to a boat as "it" versus "she" conveys different attitudes about intimacy and control; those same distinctions may not exist in Kurdish.

In 401 (a lot of people died in *the fires*) is being translated as (a lot of people died in *the fire*) where the plural form of the source language is changed into the singular form. Though this is not acceptable in all contexts but sometimes the requirements of the target language impose this change.

In 733 (boy) is translated as **boys** where the singular form of the English version is changed into the plural form. Here, the context of situation plays a great role in determining whether it is possible to exchange plural and singular.

4.2. Syntactic Level:

When translating movie subtitles from one language to another, the preservation of syntax probably does not matter much. The main challenge is to make the dialogue sound as natural in Kurdish as it does in English — which surely means favoring Kurdish syntax over English syntax.

Karamitroglou also advises to shorten and simplify complex syntactic structure, provided that a fine balance is achieved between semantic, pragmatic and stylistic aspects:

In 48 (this women *will burn*) is being mis-translated as (This women **must be burnt**) which contains a tense shift here that was not necessary because the English version is clearly stated as future construction while the Kurdish one is obligatory statement.

In 191 (... and *sank* her in the *moat*) is being mis-translated as (...and *sink* her in the *gulf*) which is an example of tense shift from past to present in the first place and then the word *moat* is interpreted as *gulf* in the Kurdish version and these two are totally different.

4.3. Semantic Level:

This kind of loss is very common and often inevitable in translation as it is a corollary of the lack of equivalence in English and Kurdish, especially in the domain of culture specificity: many religious and cultural words have no equivalents in the two languages such as terms of kinship and swear words. Explicitly, the most serious loss in translation is when the meaning, be it denotative or connotative, is lost or distorted, which undermines the purpose or skopos and even the justification of translation as an act of bilingual communication.

In sample (93) the word *cottage* has been translated into *house* because cottage is related to western cultures while it is not found in Kurdish culture. Thus, this change is due to culture-specific items.

In sample (117) the word *Sabbaths* is being translated as *vocation* which is not correct. This mis-translation is due to the use of a religious term Sabbaths which is not found in the target language culture and background.

5.Theoretical Framework:

Translation is the process of communicating a meaning in a ST through a means of an equivalent TT. Theories of translation have always tended to revolve around the two poles of "literal" (or word-for-word) and "free" (or sense-for-sense) translation.

This research is basically based on Baker's typology of equivalence. This theory or typology was selected because it is the most relevant theory. It discusses exhaustively the non-equivalence problem at different levels. Baker (1992) believes that the concept of "equivalence" is relative because it is affected by many linguistic and cultural factors.

Baker (1992) discussed equivalence at the different levels; however, this research refers to the equivalence and non-equivalence at the word level. According to Baker (1992), it is important to distinguish between lexical items and units of meaning to achieve good translation.

6.Methodology

This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach; specifically the content analysis type of the qualitative research. This approach requires written language that the researcher examines, to identify the losses in meaning and the causes behind them. Besides this, this research does not depend on quantities or numbers.

6.1 Data Collection Procedures:

For the data of the research the English and Kurdish subtitle scripts of the English Movie (Witch Hunters) a 2013 production has been selected due to the availability of both scripts to the researcher. It was difficult to find due to copyright issue. The movie consists of 799 subtitle captions in English(Source Text/ST) and 799 in Kurdish (Target Text/TT). Each Subtitle caption is compared to its counterpart in the Kurdish version (translated by Rashwan Mahood Mustafa in 2014 for a local TV channel). The comparison was to find out under-translations (omitting certain vocabulary and/or phrases), over-translations (adding vocabulary) and mistranslations (use of incorrect equivalent , lack of understanding the original ST, and Culture Blocks).

6.2.Data Analysis:

The data of the study was all the 799 subtitle captions in English and Kurdish of the *Witch Hunters* Movie. The Subtitles were all compared for identifying the under-translations where the translator has omitted a word, a phrase or a whole subtitle caption, i.e. there is no trace in the target text; over-translations where the translator has added more words to the original source text; mistranslations where the translators has mistranslated the source text .

Some linguistic items of the original that do not contribute to the comprehension and appreciation of the target movie as a whole can be omitted in the subtitles such as padding expressions (e.g. , *well* , *you know* , *as I say...etc*) , or responsive expressions recognized and comprehended by the majority of the viewers (e.g. , *yes* , *no* , *please* , *sorry* , *thank you*) especially when they are uttered clearly (this reduces the time required to read the subtitles and lets the viewers focus more on the visual part).The total sample of under-translations were 32 subtitle captions ranging from single words to phrases.

6.2.1 Under-translations:

Under-translations are samples where a word or a phrase is being omitted from the English version. The words are of various categories such as nouns , adverbs and adjective. The samples for under-translation are shown on table 1 below:

Table 1 Samples of Under-translations

Sub.n o.	English version	Kurdish version	Omission
8	Hello	كهسى لىيه؟	Hello
22	Set her ass on fire	ئهوه بيسوتينه	Set her ass
71	Well	شهيتان بهسهر سهري خوتانهوه جا چهز بكهى يان نا	Well
72	Now	گهر تا ئىستا منداله كانتان له ژيان مابيت	Now
77	I guess you are <i>free to go</i>	وابزانم تو دهتوانى برويت	Free
81	What the hell	ئهوه چى دهكهيت؟	Hell

162	Even you God knows better than to come here	تکایه؟	Whole phrase
179	Really	ئە ی چی ئاساییه؟	Really
183	Quite	من به راستی هاندەری کاره کانی تۆم	Quite
190	That is from when you found the fox witch	به لئ ، ئەمه یان ئی جادووگەر) فۆکسی ئەنتۆپ)ه	From
231	Fucking	من رقم له وانیه	Fucking
320	Why don't you <i>just</i> burn her	بۆچی نایسوتینیت؟	Just
417	All	ئایا ئەمه راسته؟	All
433	Hey	به هەر شیوه یه ک بیست ته نها سوتاندمان	Hey
454	Hi	تۆ باشیت؟	Hi
465	Somewhere	که له م دره خته جیته هیشته له وی	Somewhere
466	Probably	ئاسانتر ده بیست ئەگەر بچیته ناویه وه	Probably
469	Yeah	تۆ باش مه له نازانیت	Yeah
473	Did you say	که وا بوو ئاویکی چاره به خشه؟	Did you say
483	Here	وه ره	Here
512	Hey	چاوه ری بکه	Hey
569	Little	با چیرۆکیکتان بۆ بگێرمه وه	Little
637	Deep	شوینیک هه یه له ناو دارستانه که	Deep
650	Kid	پرسیار مه که	Kid
659	Well	له کاتی نمایشی شار	Well
675	Well/kid	نه ی تۆ ده چیت	Well, kid
720	Yeah	دۆزه خ	Yeah
733	<i>Little boy</i>	یان ئەوه تا کوره کان ده مرن	Little
759	You did	کاریکی باشته کرد	You did
761	Fucking	ده بیست گالته م له گهل بکه ی	Fucking

Most of the under-translations are found with simple words such as (*hello*(8) , *hi*(455) , *hey*(433, 512) , *yeah*(469,720) , *well* (71,675,659); swear words such as (*what the hell* 81) , (*fucking* 761).

In sample 22 (*set her ass on fire*) there is under-translation because it has been translated as (*burn her*). Here , the semantic content of the two are equivalent but the

connotative meaning is not transferred to the target audience due to the omission of *her ass* which show disgust and anger from the speakers perspective.

In samples (231, 761) the *Fucking* has not been translated at all due to cultural differences and might be censor of the broadcasting policy of the TVs. It could also be due to clarity of the word which renders it not necessary to be translated. Other similar cases where it is not necessary to be translated , are words such as *hi* , *hello* , *yeah* , *well*..etc.

In samples (569 , 733) the word *little* has been deleted in the Kurdish version. This might be attributed to the insignificance of the semantic content of the word in the overall message intended. But , this is not accepted in all contexts and situations as it leads to inaccuracy in communicating the appropriate message.

In other samples such as (179) *really* , (183) *quite* , (465) *somewhere* , (466) *probably* the adverbs are totally deleted from the Kurdish version. This might be due to the misconception of insignificant role of adverbs from the translators point of view. But this is a fatal mistake and is no way acceptable as it shows the inaccuracy of translation and leads to creating a negative impression.

In samples (71) *well* , (72) *now* , (77) *free* , (320) *just* , (417) *all* and (637) *deep* adjectives are omitted in the Kurdish version. The underlying factor of these omissions are not clear because they are very common adjectives that have specific meaning and they are not put in the original text for nothing. Each adjective adds up something to the noun used with it therefore it is necessary to be transferred to the target text.

6.2.2 Over-translations:

As for the over-translations the instance are very limited, these might be due cultural differences that might need further elaboration and explanation to make the message more comprehensible for the target audience.

Table 2 Samples of over-translations

Sub.no.	English version	Kurdish version	Addition
93	There's been reports of a strange cottage in the forest	هه‌وال هه‌یه سه‌باره‌ت به خانوویه‌کی سه‌یر له باکووری دارستانه‌که	North of the forest
158	Witch!	له‌گه‌ل جادوو‌گه‌ر	With the witch
185	Where does she live?	له‌ کوئ ده‌ژیت؟ سه‌رۆکی پۆلیس ، ئه‌و ژیانانی له مه‌ترسیدایه‌؟	Her live is in danger
265	But , I am old-fashioned that way	به‌لام به‌مشینوویه من تو‌زیک دواکه‌وتووم	A bit old-fashioned
454	Are you okay?	تو باشیت؟	Are you in good health

In sample 93 (there's been reports of a strange cottage *in the forest*) is over translated by adding the word *north* to the subtitle (in the **north** of the forest).This might be due to the preceding and following utterances and the context of situation.

For instance in sample 158 (*witch*) is over-translated into (*with the witch*) due to contextual requirement and for ease of comprehension by the target audience. Since there is space and this simple addition of preposition will support proper understanding of the message, this over-translation is acceptable.

In sample 185 (*where does she live*) there is over-translation because it has been subtitled as (*Where does she live, her life is in danger*). The context of the utterance in the movie implies that the speaker is addressing this direct question not to know the place of her living but to tell that she is in danger.

In sample 265 (*But I am old-fashioned that way*) is over-translated into (*I am somehow old-fashioned that way*). Here, the word *somehow* is added into the Kurdish version of the subtitle.

There are words and phrase that may have various interpretations but it is the role of the translator to know which interpretation is meant and translate accordingly. For instance 454 (*Are you okay?*) which is subtitled as (*Are you good?*). This phrase could be interpreted in various ways but here it is not asking about the health of the addressee rather it is about are you safe that is why it is over-translated as (*Do you feel good?*).

6.2.3 Mis-translations:

As for the instances of mistranslations which are mostly due to translators inaccuracy in selecting appropriate equivalences for many vocabularies and phrases and may be partly due to not having enough experience in both cultures.

Table 3 samples of mistranslations

Sub.no.	English version	Kurdish version	Kurdish to English
13	This Oven's not hot enough	ئەم فرنیە زۆرگەرم نیە	Very hot
16	It is hot enough for you now?	ئایا تەواو گەرمە بۆ تۆ؟	Quite
34	The eyes of the demon	سەیری چاوەکانی شەپەرگیزی بکەن	Cruelty
41	As your mayor....	وەک پارێزگەرگەت...	Governor
42	Then many of you have lost precious loved ones	کە زۆر بە تان کەسانی نزیکتان لە دەستداوە	Close
43	...with plague	بەهۆی جادوووەوە...	Magic
47	They ride at night	لە شەو دا گوزەر دەکەن	Pass by
48	This women will burn	ئەم ئافرەتە دەبێت بسوتێت	Must
51	All over these fucking hillbillies	بۆ گشت ئەو گەوجانە	Stupid
72	Now, if your children are still alive	گەر تا ئێستا مندالەکانتان لە ژیان مابن	Till now

74	You're gonna have me to <i>deal</i> with	ئەو دەبیت خۆم چاره سەری بکەم	Solve
82	You can't <i>just</i> come here	ناتوانیت بە تەنھا بێتە ئێره	Alone
83	Any man with <i>half</i> a <i>brain</i> could see that she was not a witch	تەنانهت که سێکی کهم عەفلیش دەزانیت ئەو ئافره تە جادووگەر نیه	Liitle brain
85	Hansel and Gretel have been <i>brought</i> here	هانسل و گریتل لێره گهوره بوونه	Brought up
93	There's been reports of a strange <i>cottage</i> in the forest	هه وال هه یه سه بارهت به خانووه یه کی سهیر له باکووری دارستانه که	House
101	Would you <i>shut</i> up?	بێ دهنگ نابێ؟	Silent
102	That witch we found was a <i>dead end</i> , mayor	پاریزگار ، ئەو جادووگه ره ی دۆزیمانه وه بێ سوود بوو	Useless
105	That is called the <i>Blood Moon</i> , Mayor	ئەمە پێی دەوتریت خوینی مانگ	Moon blood
117	More Sightins , animal slaughter , <i>Sabbaths</i>	سهیرکردنی زیاتر ، کوشتنی ئاژهلی زیاتر ، پشوو	Vacation
124	The rest when the children are <i>brought back alive</i>	ئەو که ی تریش کاتییک منداله کان ده گهریندریته وه ژیان	Back to life
126	He knows these woods <i>inside and out</i>	ئەو شاره زای ناوه وه و دهره وه ی دارستانه که یه	In and out
140	Rob this town <i>blind</i>	به هه ره مه کی ئەو شارۆچکه یه ببه ره	Randomly
152	<i>To the dark</i> of the forest?	بو تاریکترین شوینی دارستان؟	To the darkest
178	We hunt witches <i>for a living</i>	ئیمه راوی جادووگه ران ده که ین له پیناو ژیان	For the sake of life
184	That's <i>great</i>	ئەمە سه مه ره یه	Strange
191	...and sank her in the <i>moat</i>	بیخه نیو که نداوه که	Gulf
212	No , that is <i>horseshit</i> ,son	نه خیر کورم ئەمە درۆیه کی	An utter lie

		شاخداره	
244	We're <i>almost</i> there	زۆر نزيكبووينه ته وه	Close
265	But , I am <i>old-fashioned</i> that way	به لام به مشيويه من تۆزئيك دواكه وتووم	Regressive
306	Good night , <i>Sheriff</i>	شه و باش سه رۆكى پؤليس	Police chief
319	Only one <i>object</i> remains	ته نها يه ك ئامانچ ده مينئيه وه	Target
326	The <i>files</i> , we need to count them	پئويسته ژماره ي ئه وانه ببينين كه ده فرن	Fly
347	You <i>go</i>	ته وا وه	Complete
352	Time is up , tell me where <i>she</i> lives	كات ته واو بوو ، پيم بلى له كوييه؟	Where she is
368	Not <i>really</i>	به راستى نه خيتر	Truthfully
375	Say your name before my arrow rips out your <i>throat</i>	ناوى خوت بلى بهر له وه ي تيره كه م گه رده نت بپرئيت	Throat
383	<i>Shit</i>	به نه فرهت بيت	Damn
399	The witches took a <i>young</i> girl	جادوو گه ره كان كچيكي گه نجيان برد	Adult
401	A lot of people died in the <i>fires</i>	خهلكيكي زۆر به هؤي ئاگره كه مرد	The fire
422	Do you want some <i>porridge</i> ?	هه نديك له تيكوشه ي ئه و گؤشتا وه ت ده وئيت؟	Soup
433	We <i>just</i> burned her anyway	به هه ر شيويه كه بيت ته نها سوتاندمان	Only
459	I've got to <i>get</i> my sister	ده بيت بچم خوشكم بدؤزمه وه	Find
484	<i>She's</i> a wild, eh?	درنده يه كه بوو	Was
490	<i>Shut</i> up	بى دهنگ به	Silent
509	Why did you save me?	بوچى منت پاراست؟	Protect
554	We made a promise , you <i>know</i> that	په يمانماندا ، له بيرته	Remember
555	Why do you think the witches <i>spells</i> don't work us?	به بوچوونى تو بوچى وشه ي جادوو گه ره كان كار له ئيمه ناكات؟	Words
590	But she was <i>too proud</i> to run	به شانازييه وه رايكرد	Ran

617	Drink it . It will help <i>the pain</i>	بیخۆوه بۆ برینهکه باشه	Wound
660	<i>Win</i> three times	سێ جار ئه‌نجام داوه	Do/perform
697	Listen to me <i>carefully</i>	جوان گویم لیبگره	Nice
711	<i>Stay still</i>	له‌سه‌رخۆ	Slow down
720	Hell, yeah	دۆزهخ	Hell
732	Stop <i>right there</i>	لێره بوهسته	Here
733	Or <i>the little boy</i> dies	یان ئه‌وه‌تا کوره‌کان ده‌مرن	Boys
749	<i>Hit</i> me with your love spell	ئازاری پێ بگه‌یه‌نه به جادووه‌کانی خۆشه‌ویستیت	Hurt him
752	<i>Pathetic</i>	نه‌خۆش	Sick
758	I <i>tried</i> to stop her	ویستم بیه‌وستینم	Wanted
786	Unless you want to <i>pull</i> the cart	مه‌گه‌ر بتویت عاره‌بانه‌که پال بدهیت	Push

In sample 13 (This oven's not hot *enough*) is mis-translated as (This oven's not **very** hot). This is not an appropriate translation because the word *enough* means not as expected but the translator could not successfully render it to Kurdish.

While in sample 16 (It is hot **enough** for you now) is mis-translated as (as it is **completely** hot for you?). Here , the context determines what is the meaning of a word such as *enough*. The translator has been successful in finding the right equivalent in Kurdish for this context.

In sample 18 (it was just *the two of us*) is mis-translated in the selection of the correct word which is used naturally by Kurdish speakers.

In sample 34 (the eyes of the *demon*) is mis-translated as (the eyes of the **cruelty**) which is not the right word for the *demon*. This could be related to the incompetency of the translator who has limited knowledge in the two cultures especially dealing with religious aspects.

In sample 41 (as your *mayor*...) is mis-translated as (our your **governor** ...) because the two words are different in the two culture of English and Kurdish. The mayor of a city is the principal person in municipality council of a town in the English culture whereas in the Kurdish culture there is governor and municipality council.

In 42 (Many of you have lost *precious loved* ones) is being mis-translated as (many of you have lost **near** people) which has led to losing the connotational meaning of the utterance as the *precious loved ones* is meant to intensify the emotional impact of the addressee and shows the attitude of the speaker, whereas the Kurdish version has not taken these aspects into consideration.

In 43 (... with *plague*) is being mis-translated as (... with **magic**) which might be partially true in this specific context but for the Kurdish audience there is a better word to be equivalent to *plague* which is ' *peta*' .

In 47 (they *ride* at night) is being mis-translated as (They **pass by** at night) which is not correct because ride is either done to bike or any vehicle while pass by could be on foot as well and there is no indication of the type.

In 48 (this women *will burn*) is being mis-translated as (This women **must be burnt**) which contains a tense shift here that was not necessary because the English version is clearly stated as future construction while the Kurdish one is obligatory statement.

In 74 (You're gonna have me *to deal with*) is being mis-translated as (I have **to solve** it myself) which reflects the difference between the two languages because each language has its own structure and lexicalization.

In 82 (You can't *just* come here) is being mis-translated as (You can't come here **alone**) which is mis-understood by the translator because in the English version the word *just* does not mean alone or only but it means ' with no thinking or consideration'.

In 83 (any man with *half brain*) is being mis-translated as (any man with **little brain**), here the expression half brain is changed into little brain which are not equivalent to each other. Someone with half brain means someone who does not possess an active and properly functioning brain while with a little brain either it means small or it is not found in Kurdish culture and it is not natural to the Kurdish audience.

In 85 (.... have been *brought* here) is being mis-translated as (... have been **brought up** here) which leads to a total change of the intended message and difference between the English and the Kurdish versions. The word brought alone has a meaning and brought up is a totally different meaning.

In 93 (strange *cottage*) is being mis-translated as (strange **house**) which shows the cultural difference between English and Kurdish. The existence of cottage in the English culture is very common whereas it is not usually found in the Kurdish culture.

In 102 (*a dead end*) is being mis-translated as (**useless**) which is a good attempt from the translators side to overcome the metaphorical meaning of the English version but transferred successfully.

In 105 (*the Blood Moon*) is being mis-translated as (**blood moon**) which is an example of the mis-translation due to cultural background and lack of knowledge on culturally bound terms in the two languages. Since the English version both words Blood Moon start with capital letter so it cannot be treated as ordinary words but the Kurdish version has transferred both words with the literal sense of the two words. Instead, the Kurdish version could have been rendered as the Red Moon at that time it would have been more comprehensible by the target audience.

In 117 (*Sabbaths*) is being mis-translated as (**vacation**) which is another example for culturally bound terms. The word *Sabbaths* in English culture has a religious connotation and it usually refers to the weekends and time of worship and rest by the Jews and Christians, while the Kurdish equivalent is totally different and does not give the sense of the English word. This could be also seen as the problem of lack of lexicalization.

In 124 (brought back *alive*) is being mis-translated as (brought back **to life**) which are totally different as the English version is clear that they want the boy to be

brought back while he is still alive whereas the Kurdish version implies that the boy is dead but they want to bring him back to life. This creates confusion and deviation from the original message and intended meaning.

In 140 (rob this town *blind*) is being mis-translated as (steal this town **randomly**) which are not equivalent but accepted to some extent. the word *rob* has been replaced by *steal* which is a more general term, the word *blind* is being replaced by *randomly*.

In 152 (*to the dark* of the forest) is being mis-translated as (**to the darkest place** of the forest) which is clearly an indication for not understanding the collocational and metaphorical meaning of the expressions because the expression *to the dark* here means the deepest place not *the darkest*.

In 178 (we hunt witches *for a living*) is being mis-translated as (we hunt witches **for the sake of life**) which is yet another of misconception and miss-comprehension because the expression *for a living* means you do that as a source of your living not for the sake of life.

In 184 (that's *great*) is being mis-translated as (that's **strange**) which is in no way acceptable because the word *great* does not mean *strange* unless it is said sarcastically and in this context there is no sarcasm.

In 191 (... and *sank* her in the *moat*) is being mis-translated as (...and *sink* her in the *gulf*) which is an example of tense shift from past to present in the first place and then the word *moat* is interpreted as *gulf* in the Kurdish version and these two are totally different.

In 212 (no , that is *horseshit* , son) is being mis-translated as (no , that is **an utter lie**, son) which is an instance for the difficulty of translating swear words. Here, the word *horseshit* has been rendered as *an utter lie* but it has not been successfully selected because the two are not equivalent.

In 319 (only one *object* remains) is being mis-translated as (only one *target* remains) which is confusing to the audience because the word *object* in the English version in this context refers to child but in the Kurdish version the word *target* has been used.

In 326 (*the files* , we need to count them) is being mis-translated as (we must see the number of **those who fly**) which is fatal mistake because it shows the carelessness from the translators side. The word *files* in the English version has been rendered as *fly*.

In 401 (a lot of people died in *the fires*) is being mis-translated as (a lot of people died in **the fire**) which is an example for shift from plural to singular as the word *the fires* in the English version has been changed in *the fire*. Definitely, the two are not equivalent.

In 433 (we *just* burned her anyway) is being mis-translated as (we **only** burned her anyway) which might be due to making haste in translation process because the word *just* here in this context does not mean *only* instead it mean now or refers to a very near past time. Here , the correct meaning of the word is lost in translation.

In 509 (why did you *save* me?) is being mis-translated as (why did you **protect** me?) which are not equivalent because the word *save* is to rescue someone who is

already in danger whereas the word protect is no to let someone to face danger. So , the choice of the word has been successful.

In 554 (... you *know* that) is being mis-translated as (... you **remember** that) which is not faithful to the source text as the word know means something different than the word remember. Not only the denotative meaning but the connotative meaning is also different.

In 555 (the witches *spells* don't work on us) is being mis-translated as (the witches **words** do not work on us).This is an instance for not understanding the exact meaning of the word *spells* which does not mean the *words* alone but the magic process as one package. This might be attributed to the lack of lexicalization in Kurdish language.

In 590 (she was *too proud to run*) is being mis-translated as (she **ran with pride**) which is due to misunderstanding the English version because the expression *too proud to run* in English does not mean that the action of running is done on the contrary it means *not run due to pride*. This could be attributed to lack of sufficient knowledge about the grammatical and semantic aspects of the source language.

In 617 (it will help *the pain*) is being mis-translated as (it is good for **the wound**). Here the word the pain has been rendered as the wound which are not equivalent because the pain could be the result of anything including wounds but not only wounds. The context of situation here plays a great role in the selection of the correct equivalent but it is also important to take the target audience into consideration.

In 660 (*win* three times) is being mis-translated as (**do/perform** three times) which is not acceptable because the word win in English does not only means to do or perform an action but to come first among a group, while the Kurdish version refers to doing or performing not winning. This might cause confusion to the target audience.

In 711 (*stay still*) is being mis-translated as (**slow down**) which is totally different. The English expression *stay still* means to stop and be motionless and is type of threat while the Kurdish version *slow down* is not a threat and not absolute in asking to be motionless. Hence , the whole source message has been transferred in a distorted way.

In 732 (stop *right there*) is being mis-translated as (stop **here**) which a sample of translating a word with its antonym. However, this causes confusion and most cases lack of proper communication. The English version *right there* is a very clear and strong command to stop exactly where the addressee is whereas the Kurdish version stop *here* , is a command to stop where the addresser is.

In 733 (or *the little boy* dies) is being mis-translated as (or **the boys** die) which has two mistakes one if the omission of the word little in the translation and changing the singular boy into plural. Both changes are not justified at all and lead to mis-communication and confusion.

In 749 (*hit* me...) is being mis-translated as (**hurt** him...) which is clearly seen that the word *hit* is replaced by **hurt** and is not a correct translation because the word hit implies physical contact with a concrete object whereas the word hurt could be physical or psychological or both of them.

In 752 (*pathetic*) is being mis-translated as (*sick*) which is not quite adequate because pathetic means disgusting and sometimes pity arousing while the word chosen as equivalent is a very common and general word that does not convey the same semantic content.

In 758 (I *tried* to stop her) is being mis-translated as (I *wanted* to stop her) which is a shift of meaning from *tried* to *wanted* with no specific and logical reason .It might only be attributed to the translators inaccuracy in equivalent selection.

In 786 (unless you want to *pull* the cart) is being mis-translated as (unless you want to *push* the cart) which is a change from one word with its antonym due to the fact that the structure of the Kurdish might be more natural in this way and might also be partially related to the markedness parameter variation in the two languages under scrutiny.

7. Results and Discussion

Having presented all these sample of under-translation , over-translation and mis-translations for the translating the English subtitle into Kurdish, now it is time to discuss the data analysis and results.

It is observed that the frequencies of the over-translation is much lower than the under-translations and mis-translations respectively.

The semantic loss that has been noted could be grouped into partial or complete loss on the one hand and shift in meaning on the other. In some sample the meaning is only partially lost , in others there is a complete loss of meaning. While , in several samples there is a shift in meaning.

As for the samples of under-translation, it is noticed that most of the words and expressions that are left out are gap-fillers and swear words; words that are easily understood and derived from the context by the audience or the viewer of the movie. But some of the under-translations are not acceptable because they lead to miscommunication and lack of proper understanding of the message of the movie.

Some of these under-translations are inevitable due to the difference between the two languages , the source and the target .Another factor might be due to difficulty in translating cultural bound terms , lack of lexicalization and semantically complex words ,metaphorical meanings that could not be easily grasped by the translator. Other under-translations could be attributed to the requirements of subtitling in case of long sentences and utterances.

The translation of the swear words is not always necessary because some of the swear word are easily recognized by the audience and sometimes the sound is cut off by the subtitlers and channels broadcasting the movie due to cultural censors and religious factors.

Concerning over-translation samples , even though the number of the samples is very limited but there are some .The factors that lead to over-translation might be due to avoiding misunderstanding , further clarification to support the audience/viewer have better understanding of the message or sometimes reading in between the lines of an utterance as the result of watching the movie several times. The translator lives with the movie so he/she knows more than the first-time viewer of the movie hence he adds up bit from here and there to show his understanding.

The instances of over-translation show that translators do not take the risk of adding up complete statement or utterance to the source language instead they try to add up prepositions , one more word or phrase for further clarification when the space of the subtitle caption allows him to do so. Over-translation is not possible everywhere and with every utterance but in very restricted places and with limited number of utterances.

Regarding the samples of mis-translation, they are of various nature and for multiple of factors. As for the nature of the mis-translations , they range from single words to phrases and even whole utterance ; there might be tense shift , singular to plural or vice versa , definite to indefinite , mis-selection of the equivalences , word choice from antonyms , synonyms ; structure shift ,word order...etc.

Concerning the factors of the mistranslation , they could be attributed to the use of culturally bound terms and vocabulary in the English version , lack of lexicalization, the use of semantically complex words and phrases , collocational and metaphorical uses of utterances , lack of sufficient knowledge of the translator in both cultures, subtitling requirements imposed on the selection of words or shortening long utterances and the structural differences between the source language and the target language.

Some of the mis-translations are related to the sense of meaning intended in that specific context where the translator was not successful in finding the intended choice and decides to use the more general meaning of the word. Some of the words and phrases have collocational meaning ,others have metaphorical or figurative meaning but most of these meanings have not been taken into consideration. One of the most problematic areas of translation is this aspect of metaphoricity.

Other mis-translations can be attributed to the use of culturally bound terms in the English version which are not found in the target language Kurdish. This will definitely leaves trace on the translation as the translator is forced to find a solution. He will either succeed or fail in his attempt. The solutions might be using the nearest equivalent , explain it or provide a literal translation , i.e. word-to-word translation. The latest is the most common one used in this movie which is also the most confusing to the audience as they have no idea of what the *Sabbaths* or the *Blood Moon* is, for instance.

Some other mis-translations are due to lack of lexicalization. Languages differ in how they lexicalize concepts. English and Kurdish have different lexicon so it is normal to have a word referring to an object and/or a concept which is not found in Kurdish. In these cases , the translator faces difficulty in finding equivalents. For instance , the word *moat* is found in the English language referring to 'a deep , wide ditch that is usually filled with water and that goes around the walls of a place , such as a castle,to protect it from being attacked'(Merriam-Webster Dictionary).Kurdish , however , lacks lexicalization for this concept. Therefore, the translator resorts to the nearest word and he used the *gulf* which is not equivalent.

Translating semantically complex words is yet another underlying factor for the mis-translation samples. Some of the words have complex structure from a semantic

point of view. This is might be attributed to the cultural and structural differences between the two languages.

8. Findings: Causes of Semantic Loss:

The most important finds of the study could be summed up in the following points:

Semantic loss in translating movie subtitles is inevitable. This loss could be partial or complete ; it could be loss of meaning of a single word , a phrase or a whole utterance.

The most frequent words that are liable for under-translation are nouns , adjectives and adverbs ; swear words and hedges. Sometimes , there is tense shift , change from singular and plural.

The collocations and metaphorical expressions and culture-specific items are the most problematic for translators hence most of the mistranslation samples involve one of these items.

The causes of semantic loss are the use of culturally bound terms in the source text(English) , lack of lexicalization in the target language(Kurdish) ; the use of semantically complex words in the source text and the lack of profound knowledge about the two cultures from the translators part.

9. Conclusions:

It has been concluded that :

- 1.Semantic loss during translating English subtitles into Kurdish is inevitable but of various types and for different reasons.
- 2.Most of the under-translations , i.e. omission of a word , a phrase or an utterance occur with swearwords , hedges , certain adverbs , adjective and items that are easily understood by the viewers.
3. For over-translations , i.e. adding certain words and phrases to the source text ,it is rare but it occurs in certain contexts when something is not understood if translated word-to-word.
- 4.Mis-translations are frequent but they can be attributed to culture-specific items , lack of lexicalization , metaphoricity of words , phrases and expressions.

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ملخص البحث

تبحث الدراسة عوامل و طبيعة الخسارة الدلالية عند ترجمة الفلام من الانكليزية الي الكوردية. تتضمن خسارة الدلالية كل من الحذف ، الاضافة و خطأ في الترجمة. تتضمن نماذج الدراسة نص الفليم " صياد السحرة" بالاللغة الانكليزية و ترجمتها الي الكوردية بالاخص اللهجة السورانية. اكد الدراسات السابقة بان الخسارة الدلالية تاتي بصورة رئيسية من عدم وجود المفردات و الكلمات المقابلة بين لغة المصدر و لغة الهدف. تقترح هذه الدراسة بان الخسارة الدلالية هي نتيجة عدم تقابل و تطابق على مستوي الثقافي و الدلالي بين اللغتين و عدم وجود مواصفات المترجم الناجح . ترجع بعض تلك الخسارة الى القيود و متطلبات ترجمة الافلام بسبب عوامل تقنية. تاكد نتائج هذه الدراسة بان خسارة الدلالية تتضمن خسارة الكلمة و مجموعة كلمات او جملة كاملة بشكل يؤثر على فهم رسالة النص الرئيسي و قيمة الادبية و الجمالية النص.

پوخته‌ی توێژینه‌وه:

ئهم توێژینه‌وهیه له هۆکار و سروشتی ونبوونی واتا دهکات له کاتی وەرگیرانی فلیمی ئینگلیزی بۆ سەر زمانی کوردی. ونبوونی واتا سێ لایهن ده‌گرتته‌وه (قرتاندن ، خستنه‌سه‌ر یان به‌هه‌له‌ وەرگیران). داتای توێژینه‌وه‌که له تیکستی فلیمی ئینگلیزی به‌ ناو‌نیشانی (راوکه‌ری جاووگه‌ر) و تیکستی وەرگیرانه‌که بۆ سەر زمانی کوردی پینکدیت. توێژینه‌وه‌کانی پیشوو ئه‌وه‌یان سه‌لماندوه‌ که به‌شیوه‌یه‌کی گشتی ونبوونی واتا له ئه‌نجامی نه‌بوونی وشه‌ی به‌رامبه‌ره له نێوان زمانی سه‌رچاوه و زمانی ئامانج. به‌لام ئه‌و توێژینه‌وه پینشیا‌زی ئه‌وه دهکات که ونبوونی واتا ده‌گه‌ریتته‌وه بۆ جیاوازی نێوان زمانه‌کان له رووی رۆشن‌بیری و کلتوری و واتایی و هه‌ندیکیش بۆ تاییه‌تمه‌ندییه‌کانی زمانی فیلم و پیداو‌یسته‌یه‌کانی نووسینی سه‌بتایتل. ئه‌نجامه‌کانی ئه‌و توێژینه‌وه ئه‌وه‌یان سه‌لماند که ونبوونی واتا هه‌ندیک جار تاک وشه و یان گری ئیان ته‌نانه‌ت رسته‌ی ته‌واویش ده‌گرتته‌وه به‌ شیوه‌یه‌ک که کاریگه‌ی ده‌بیته‌ له‌سه‌ر تیگه‌یشتن و به‌های ئه‌ده‌بی و ئیستاتیکی فیلمه‌که.