

Stylistic Shifts in the English Dubbing of *The Last Fiction*: Human and ChatGPT-Generated Translations

Afarin Yazdchi 

MA in Translation Studies, Department of English
Language and Literature, Faculty of Foreign Languages,
University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

Mahmoud Afrouz* 

Associate Professor, Department of English Language
and Literature, Faculty of Foreign Languages, University
of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

Abstract

Audiovisual translation, like literary translation, requires not only transferring meaning but also preserving style. This study examines stylistic shifts in the English dubbing of the Persian animated film *The Last Fiction* by comparing the official human-dubbed version with two ChatGPT-generated translations using simple and detailed prompts. It identifies stylistic changes, evaluates Baker's (1996) model, determines the most and least frequent translation strategies, and examines how prompt design affects AI-generated translations. The findings reveal that in the human-dubbed version, leveling out and normalization were the predominant strategies, indicating a strong tendency toward target-oriented language. In contrast, both ChatGPT outputs relied heavily on normalization. The results also show that the detailed prompt increases explicitation and simplification. Furthermore, the study shows that Baker's (1996) model alone cannot account for all stylistic changes that occurred in translation. Thus, four additional strategies were offered—retention, exoticization, prosification, and deletion. The findings contribute to audiovisual translation research by extending Baker's (1996) framework and indicating how prompt design can affect the stylistic quality of AI-assisted dubbing.

Keywords: Audiovisual translation, dubbing, stylistic shifts, prompt design

*Corresponding author: afrouz300@gmail.com

Cite this article: Yazdchi, A., & Afrouz, M. (2026). Stylistic shifts in the English dubbing of *The Last Fiction*: Human and ChatGPT-generated translations. *Translation and Interpreting Research*, 3(10), 17-30.
<https://doi.org/10.22054/tir.2026.94488.1071>



© 2026 – Allameh Tabataba'i University Press

Print ISSN: 3092-6599

Online ISSN: 3060-7019

Publisher: Allameh Tabataba'i University Press

Published: 30.06.2026

Accepted: 25.05.2026

Received: 12.04.2026

1. Introduction

Audiovisual translation is described as the transference of multimodal and multimedia products. It includes both visual and acoustic modes of message transference (Chiaro, 2009). The prevalence of audiovisual products has increased the need to translate them into different languages. Thus, attention to audiovisual translation has increased, and its visibility and importance have grown (Díaz-Cintas, 2019). There are three modes of audiovisual translation, namely, dubbing, voice-over, and subtitling (Pedersen, 2011). Dubbing is considered the 'most comprehensive' form of translation because of its complexity (Pérez-González, 2009; Palumbo, 2009). According to Chaume (2013), dubbing is more than the mere translation of dialogues; it is a complex process consisting of linguistic, cultural, technical, and artistic aspects. This involves lip synchronization and collaboration among translators, dubbing actors, directors, and sound engineers. Dubbing is defined as the substitution of the original speech with a voice track, and it attempts to follow the phrasing, lip movements, and timing of the original dialogue as much as possible (Luyken et al., 1991).

In many cultures, dubbing is preferred to other modes of AVT because it tends to create a viewing experience for the target audience that is similar to that of the original audience (Pérez-González 2009; Palumbo 2009). Dubbing is affected by cultural and ideological factors since the preference for dubbing over subtitling often represents a country's linguistic policies, cultural identity, and historical traditions (Danan, 1991). In films and animated movies, dubbing attempts not only to convey the linguistic meaning of the original dialogue but also to maintain the naturalness of the translated dialogue for the target audience (Baños & Díaz-Cintas, 2017). Dubbing in Iran commenced in the 1940s and has continued to develop as an industry ever since (Ameri, 2018). Iran is recognized as a dubbing-oriented country. This mode of AVT has long been a dominant mode of audiovisual translation (Zoraqi et al., 2023). Different aspects of dubbing have gained importance, namely song translation and song dubbing (Golchinnezhad & Afrouz, 2021). Over the decades, high-quality dubbed films have gained popularity (Zoraqi et al., 2023). Iran's market prefers dubbing and voice-over, especially for animations.

Animations have gained popularity over the years (Verrier, 2013). In Iran, animated movies are popular, and they have fans among both kids and adults. This has led many scholars to investigate animation translations, especially dubbed versions, extensively. Translation should convey the style of the source text while preserving the meaning of the original (Nida, 2012). However, stylistic aspects have often received less attention than semantic equivalence in translation studies (Boase-Beier, 2006). This relative lack of attention to style suggests a need for further research on the transfer of stylistic features in dubbed animations, where transferring the style of the source text, in addition to the content, ensures audience understanding. Furthermore, in today's age of technology and artificial intelligence, it is important to determine the extent to which these new technologies can convey the style of a source text.

Style helps transfer the same meaning from the source language to the target language while playing a significant role in producing the same effect on the target audience. The present study aims to determine the stylistic changes that have occurred during the dubbing of an animation from Persian into English. This study aims to examine the extent to which Baker's (1996) model covers the strategies used in the dubbed version of an animated movie. Therefore, we can find out whether Baker's strategies are sufficient to account for all the changes that occurred in the dubbed version of the animation or whether we can enhance Baker's (1996) model by introducing new strategies. This study also seeks to identify the most and least frequent strategies employed in the Persian-to-English dubbing of the selected animation. Finally, it aims to identify the extent to which the outputs of ChatGPT with a simple prompt differ from those of ChatGPT with a detailed prompt in translating audiovisual content.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What stylistic changes have occurred during the dubbing of the animation from Persian to English?
2. To what extent does Baker's (1996) model cover the strategies used in the dubbed version?
3. What strategies have the highest and lowest frequencies in dubbing from Persian into English?
4. To what extent do the outputs of ChatGPT with a simple prompt differ from ChatGPT with a detailed prompt?

2. Literature Review

Huang and Chu (2014) examined style in translated Chinese novels. They investigated novels by Howard Goldblatt using the model proposed by Baker (2000). This model is a multiple-complex model of comparison for the study of a translator's style. This study suggests that different translators use distinctive patterns in their use of linguistic features; thus, style is determined not only by the author of the original but also by the translator's linguistic preferences. Although this model offers valuable insights into stylistic patterns, it relies more on quantitative data and underrepresents the qualitative data needed to understand the translator's voice.

Claesen (2014) employs three models, namely Wallaert's (2010), Berman's (1995), Park's (1998), and Baker's (2000). The study concluded that one translator changes coordinate sentences more than the other. The study provides a detailed linguistic analysis, but it lacks an analysis of the broader cultural and contextual factors that could influence the translation choices.

De los Reyes Lozano (2017) examined how animated films are dubbed from English into Spanish. The study focuses particularly on how various semiotic codes—linguistic, iconographic (visual), and musical—are translated. This study analyses a representative corpus of American 3D animated films dubbed into Spanish and distributed in Spain between 2002 and 2012. It examines specific features of children's audiovisual texts, such as colloquial language, childlike speech, figurative language, visual and verbal puns, multilingualism, cultural references, educational content, romantic elements, and songs, and analyzes whether these are maintained, reinforced, or reduced in the target texts. The study finds that translators often adapt these elements to match the comprehension level of child audiences, sometimes simplifying child speech or modifying jokes and cultural references to ensure clarity and cultural relevance. Thus, the style of the ST is affected when dubbing from one language to another for children. While this study offers a comprehensive model for analyzing dubbed animated films, it pays limited attention to audience reception and how the children actually perceive these stylistic changes in translation.

Rezvani Sichani and Afrouz (2019) investigated the impact of local cultural norms and the translator's hiring institutions' policy on Persian audiovisual translators' decisions in the case of taboo translation. They analyzed three translations of the film *I, Daniel Blake*. The results indicated that taboo translation in Persian AVT represents an ideological spectrum. Therefore, these decisions demonstrate a famous dichotomy in translation, namely domestication and foreignization. The study's conclusions are drawn from a limited corpus of only three translations of a single film, which may not fully represent the complexities of taboo translation across a wider range of Persian audiovisual content.

AlSuhaim (2020) examined the non-obligatory shifts employed in three English animations translated and dubbed into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). They applied Toury's normative model and shifts. They analyzed three preliminary, initial, and operational norms (non-obligatory shifts). These shifts were employed at the level of three textual segments: lexical-semantic, stylistic, and prosodic. It analyzed three animated movies, namely *Tangled* (2010), *Frozen* (2013), and *Big Hero 6* (2014). The study concluded that there is a direct relationship between operational norms applied during dubbing

on the one hand and the socio-cultural, ideological, and linguistic norms imposed by the target culture on the other hand. It also indicated that cultural norms govern preliminary choices of the three selected Disney animated films dubbed into MSA. It was also revealed that Arabs preferred acceptable rather than adequate translations, which in turn determined the initial norms. Therefore, this study discusses stylistic and non-obligatory shifts but considers style only as a linguistic feature, and it doesn't sufficiently address its broader rhetorical or cultural functions in shaping character identity and tone in the dubbed versions.

Rezvani Sichani, Amiryousefi, and Amirian (2021) explored the impact of ideology on audiovisual translation. They examined the Persian dubbing of three Hollywood animations. They examined the translations of culture-specific items and taboos based on Venuti's (2008) model. It was demonstrated that the translators attempted to produce highly domesticated versions of the originals. It was also shown that the status of cultures can play a crucial role in translators' decisions. The study's conclusions about the impact of ideology and domestication in Persian dubbing are based on a limited corpus of only three Hollywood animations, which may not fully represent the broader range of audiovisual content and translation practices.

3. Methodology

This study is a descriptive and comparative corpus-based research. The animation *The Last Fiction* by Ashkan Rahgozar (2018) and its English-dubbed version were selected. This animation was chosen for its literary style, which can challenge translators during the translation process. The analysis aimed to identify deviations from the source-language style in the dubbed version as well as AI-generated translations of the animation.

For this aim, Baker's (1996) model was chosen, which is about universal features including *simplification*, *normalization* or *conservatism*, *explicitation*, and *leveling out*. This model was selected because it treats style as a single category, rather than dividing it into subcategories. Most other style-related models do not treat style as a whole phenomenon; instead, they focus on one part of it, such as metonymy, adjectives, or ellipsis. In addition, Baker's (1996) model is comprehensive.

The dubbed version was analyzed based on the features of the model: The animation and its dubbed version were watched from the beginning to the end, and each Persian sentence was compared with its English translation, in order to identify the strategies used for their rendition. Then, the sentences were tabulated with their strategies written next to them.

The same procedure was followed for AI-generated translations. First, the sentences extracted from the animated movie were provided to ChatGPT, and ChatGPT was given a simple prompt to translate them. The English translations of the sentences were compared to the original version, and the strategy for each sentence was identified and written in a table next to it. Again, the same sentences were provided to ChatGPT, but this time with a detailed prompt to translate the Persian sentences into English. Then, the strategies for each sentence were determined and written next to the sentences in a table. Next, the data were analyzed, and the answers to the research questions were provided. Furthermore, four other translation strategies, namely, *exoticization*, *retention*, *prosification*, and *deletion*, were employed to account for the sentences that were not covered by Baker's (1996) model. After identifying the frequency of the aforementioned strategies, namely, simplification, explicitation, normalization, and leveling out, and the other four strategies, the data were analyzed using Excel software to identify the percentage of each strategy.

4. Results

Table 1 shows translation strategies used by human translators and AI in the animated movie *The Last Fiction*.

Table 1. Translation Strategies by Human Translator and AI

Translations Strategies	Human Dubbed	ChatGPT Simple Prompt	ChatGPT Detailed Prompt
Simplification	33	11	20
Explicitation	38	15	28
Normalization	52	56	58
Leveling out	54	31	25
Exoticization	0	2	3
Deletion	2	0	0
Retention	0	28	9
Prosification	3	3	3

As can be seen in Table 1, in the human-dubbed translation, leveling out is the most frequently used strategy with 54 instances, followed by normalization (52). Explicitation and simplification are employed 38 and 33 times, respectively. Prosification occurs 3 times, while deletion is used only 2 times. Neither retention nor exoticization is employed.

In the ChatGPT translation generated with the simple prompt, normalization is the dominant strategy with 56 occurrences, followed by leveling out (31). Retention is used 28 times. Explicitation appears 15 times, simplification 11 times, while exoticization and prosification occur 2 and 3 times, respectively. Deletion is not used.

In the ChatGPT translation generated with the detailed prompt, normalization remains the most frequent strategy with 58 occurrences, followed by explicitation (28) and leveling out (25). Simplification is employed 20 times. Retention is employed 9 times. Exoticization appears 3 times, prosification remains at 3, and deletion is not employed.

All in all, the findings show that normalization and leveling out are the dominant strategies across all three translations. To better understand the strategy frequencies in Table 1, Figures 1 to 3 are provided.

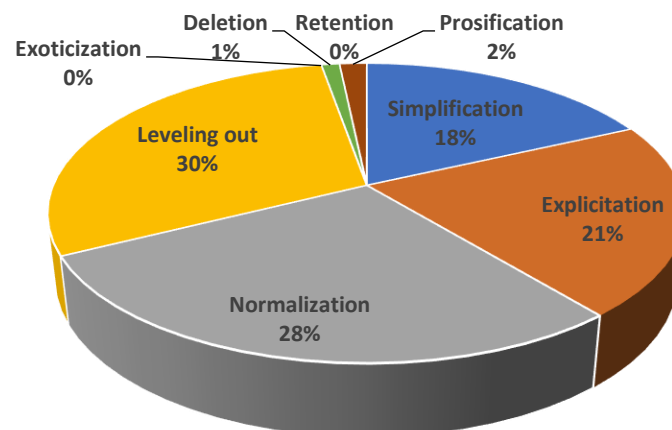


Figure 1. Percentage of the Strategies in the Human-Dubbed Version of *The Last Fiction*

Leveling out is the most frequently employed strategy in the human-dubbed version of *The Last Fiction*, accounting for 30% of all translation strategies. This is closely followed by normalization (28%). Explication has the third place with 21%. Simplification represents 18% of the strategies. Prosification and deletion were used relatively infrequently (2% and 1%, respectively). However, retention and exoticization, were not used at all (0%). All in all, the findings suggest that the human dubbing primarily relied on target-oriented strategies to produce natural and fluent translations.

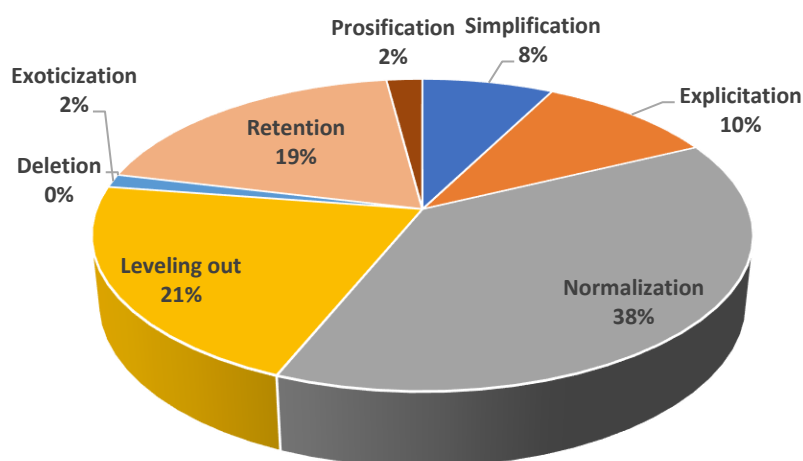


Figure 2. Percentage of the Strategies Used in ChatGPT's Translation Generated with Simple Prompt

As shown in Figure 2, normalization is the most applied strategy (38%) by ChatGPT when provided with the simple prompt in the translation of *The Last Fiction*. It is followed by leveling out, with 21% of all instances, and retention with 19%. The other strategies have been used less frequently in the translation. Explication represents 10% of the strategies, while simplification accounts for 8%. Prosification and exoticization are used less frequently, each only 2% of the total. Deletion is not employed at all (0%). Therefore, the findings indicate a tendency toward the target language in ChatGPT's translation generated with a simple prompt.

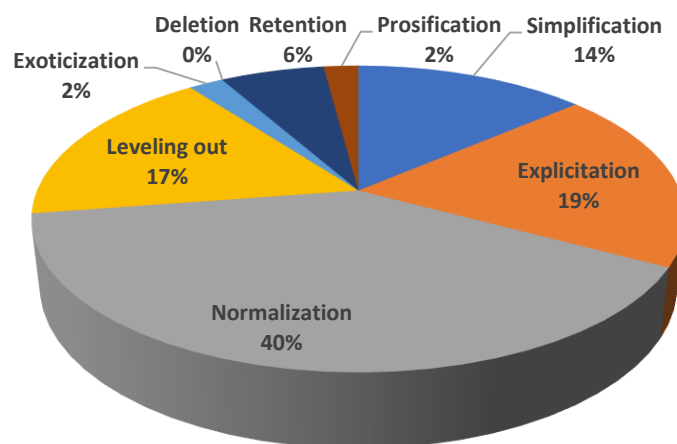


Figure 3. Percentage of the Strategies Used in ChatGPT's Translation Generated with Detailed Prompt

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of translation strategies employed by ChatGPT when provided with the detailed prompt for translating *The Last Fiction*. As shown in the figure, normalization is the most frequently used strategy, and it includes 40% of all instances, followed by explicitation at 19%. Leveling out represents 17% of the strategies employed, simplification accounts for 14%. Retention is one of the least used strategies (6%). Exoticization and prosification are used only rarely (2%). Deletion is not employed at all (0%). Therefore, the findings suggest that the detailed prompt translation tends to rely primarily on normalization while it also increases the use of explicitation to make everything clearer for the audience.

The remainder of this section investigates all the strategies from Baker's (1996) model used in translation of *The Last Fiction*. After analyzing these strategies, four other strategies introduced by the researchers have been analyzed. Examples for each strategy are mentioned.

4.1. Simplification Strategy

Simplification is defined as simplifying the language to make it easier for the target audience. Here is an example:

از قصر دزدی کرده سزایش است.

Human translation: He has stolen from the palace.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: He stole from the palace. This is his punishment.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: He stole from the palace. This is his punishment.

In this example, the human translator has translated a more detailed sentence into a shorter one in English to simplify it for the reader, by not mentioning the part that might be more difficult for the audience to understand. Nevertheless, the versions provided by ChatGPT demonstrate a leveling out strategy since the register is changed in the target language and the formality of the source language is reduced in the translation.

4.2. Explicitation Strategy

Explicitation is defined as the process in which some background information or some words are added to the translation. This serves as a way to make the implicit information explicit for the target audience. Sometimes this strategy is applied to solve the problem of lip synchronization in dubbed movies.

شبی به آنها پیشنهاد دادم که به جای چهار تن نفس دو تن را بگیرند و به جای مغز دو تن دیگر مغز برهه‌هایی را به خورد آن خون‌خوار بدهند.

Human translation: One night, I shared my scheme with them. I told them to only take the lives of two people instead of four, and instead of the brains of two others to mix in the brains of two sheep for that cannibals Zahhak to eat.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: One night, I suggested that instead of taking the lives of four men, they take only two, and feed the tyrant the brains of lambs in place of the other two.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: One night, I proposed that instead of taking four lives each day, they take only two... and feed the beast the brains of lambs in place of the other two.

The human-translated sentence is more explicit than the original because it includes background information, such as the subject of the sentence. Thus, it employs explicitation. In contrast, both ChatGPT translations show leveling out because they make the text simpler and less intense. They replace strong words like "blood-eater" with more general words like "tyrant" or "beast". Also, they

translate the more formal expression «نفس دو تن را بگیرند» into a more informal expression, “take the lives of two men”. This changes the tone of the original language and flattens it into a simpler, more informal text. As a result, the AI translations sound more neutral and less rich compared to the original meaning and style.

4.3. Normalization Strategy

In this strategy, the translator employs grammatical structures, vocabulary, proverbs, and other linguistic features that are more conventional in the target language. In normalization, the target language is valued more than the source language.

دزدی کرده توانش را می‌پردازد.

Human translation: He has stolen and so he must pay the price for it.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: He stole, and now he pays the price.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: He stole. Now he pays the price.

In all these examples, there is a preference for replacing the Persian sentence with an English cliché rather than translating the words literally.

4.4. Leveling Out Strategy

In this strategy, there are fewer variations in translations compared to the original texts. It is also concerned with different tones in translation, such as translating the formal to the informal or vice versa.

زخمی تلخ در وجودم کاشتید.

Human translation: You know you have wounded me bitterly.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: You planted a bitter wound within me.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: You planted a bitter wound within me.

In this example, the original translation shows leveling out, as the highly poetic Persian expression «زخمی تلخ در وجودم کاشتی» is rendered in a more neutral and conversational form: “You know you have wounded me bitterly”. This reduces the intensity and imagery of the source text and makes it less metaphorical and more direct. However, both ChatGPT translations demonstrate retention. Both of them preserve the original metaphorical structure of the source expression. As a result, the AI-generated versions maintain the stylistic and metaphorical richness of the original utterance, while the original translation has a tendency to simplify and level out its poetic and literary tone.

4.5. New Strategies

There are some strategies that the researchers introduced and applied to account for the cases that were not covered by Baker’s translation universals. They are presented below.

4.5.1. Retention Strategy

Retention occurs when there is no deviation from the style of the original text. Therefore, other strategies are employed. Here is an example:

اما مرداس به ناگاه مرد و فرزندش، ضحاک، به جای پدر حاکم جمکرد شد.

Human translation: But alas, Mardas died suddenly, and his son, Zahhak, took his father's place to rule the city of Jamkard.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: But Mardas suddenly died, and his son Zahhak became ruler of Jamkard in his father's place.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: But Mardas died suddenly, and his son, Zahhak, rose to rule Jamkard in his father's place.

The simple-prompt version, "But Mardas suddenly died, and his son Zahhak became ruler of Jamkard in his father's place", is an example of retention, since it closely follows the source structure. The detailed-prompt version, "But Mardas died suddenly, and his son, Zahhak, rose to rule Jamkard in his father's place", shows explicitation, as "rose to rule" makes the meaning more developed and clear. The official translation, "But alas, Mardas died suddenly, and his son, Zahhak, took his father's place to rule the city of Jamkard", also shows explicitation because it adds expressive and clarifying elements like "to rule the city of Jamkard".

4.5.2. Exoticization Strategy

Exoticization is known as defamiliarization in translation. It is when the translation is weird and unfamiliar to the target readers.

دست پختشان به دندان‌های آن خونخوار خوش آمد.

Human translation: The taste of their cooking was liked by that cannibal Zahhak.

ChatGPT with simple prompt: Their cooking pleased the teeth of that bloodthirsty beast.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: Their cooking pleased the fangs of that bloodthirsty beast.

Both ChatGPT translations show exoticization, since they retain unusual and strange images in English. Phrases like "pleased the teeth of that bloodthirsty beast" and "pleased the fangs of that bloodthirsty beast" sound unnatural in English and make the text feel more foreign and different from normal usage. In contrast, the original translation shows leveling out and explicitation because it makes the meaning more direct, changes the tone of the original, and also adds "Zahhak", which is not present in the Persian sentence, to make the reference clearer for the reader.

5.4.3. Deletion Strategy

When a sentence is deleted or eliminated completely in translation, the strategy is called deletion. For instance:

باید به سزای اعمالش برسانیم.

Human translation: -

ChatGPT with simple prompt: He must pay for what he has done.

ChatGPT with detailed prompt: He must answer for what he's done.

In this example, the original translation shows deletion because the Persian sentence is omitted completely. The simple-prompt translation shows normalization, as it uses the common English expression "He must pay for what he has done", which sounds natural and idiomatic in the target language. The detailed-prompt translation demonstrates leveling out because "He must answer for what he's done" expresses the same idea in a softer and more neutral way, and it reduces the force of the original expression «به سزای اعمالش برسانیم».

4.5.3. Prosification Strategy

Afrouz (2021) defined prosification as “where the translator renders a piece of rhythmic poem or a rhythmic text containing word plays and speech figures into a simple prose”. There is an example below:

فریدون فرخ فرشته نبود
 ز مشک و ز انبر سرشته نبود
 به داد و دهش یافت این نیکویی
 تو داد و دهش کن فریدون تویی

Human translation: Afaridoon the magnificent was not an angel nor was he influenced by musk and amber, forgiveness and selflessness became his glory, give and forgive too, like Afaridoon.

ChatGPT with simple prompt:

Fereydun the blessed was no angel,
 Nor was he made of musk and amber.
 By justice and generosity, he attained that goodness—
 Practice justice and generosity, and you too are Fereydun.”

ChatGPT with detailed prompt:

Fereydun was no angel born,
 Nor shaped from musk and amber fair.
 Through justice and through generosity
 He earned the goodness that he bore.
 So practice justice, practice grace—
 And you yourself shall be Fereydun.

In this example, all three translations demonstrate prosification, as the original Persian poem is translated into a more prose-like form. Although the detailed-prompt version keeps some poetic features, none of the translations preserves the rhyme, rhythm, and literary style of the source text completely. Instead, they attempt mainly to convey the meaning clearly. As a result, the poetic beauty and musicality of the original verses are reduced, and the translations are more like prose than poetry.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings indicate that a significant number of stylistic changes have occurred during the dubbing process. In the human-dubbed version, the translator shows a greater tendency toward natural, fluent translations, since the dubbed version relied more heavily on leveling out and normalization. Although ChatGPT has employed normalization, retention and exoticization are also employed in the translations provided by ChatGPT. These findings indicate that human translations have a tendency toward fluency and prioritize audience understanding, while ChatGPT-generated translations tend to preserve the source-language style by applying retention.

The findings also suggest that Baker’s (1996) model did not cover all the translation strategies used in the dubbed version. Also, it didn’t account for all the strategies employed in the ChatGPT translations. Several translation strategies could not be classified within these four categories. Therefore, four additional strategies, namely, exoticization, retention, prosification, and deletion, were employed to account for all the strategies observed in the corpus. This suggests that Baker’s (1996) model provides a useful model for the analysis of stylistic variation; however, it is not sufficient on its own.

It was also concluded that leveling out (54) was the most frequent strategy in the human-dubbed version, followed closely by normalization (52). In the translations provided by ChatGPT with a simple

prompt, the most frequently used strategy was normalization (56). In the detailed-prompt version, the most frequent strategy was also normalization (58). However, retention (0) and exoticization (0) were the least frequent strategies in the human-dubbed version. Furthermore, deletion was the least frequent strategy in both AI-generated translations.

The comparison indicates that prompt design influences ChatGPT's translation strategies. The simple prompt resulted in greater use of retention, indicating a stronger tendency to preserve source-language elements. However, the detailed-prompt translation tends to employ simplification, explicitation, and normalization more frequently. This implies that these translations are more target-oriented. Although both prompts produce natural translations, the detailed-prompt translations are more similar to human-dubbed versions in terms of stylistic adaptation and clarity.

The translation of multimedia and multimodal products is known as audiovisual translation. There are three modes of audiovisual translation, namely, dubbing, voice-over, and subtitling (Pedersen, 2011). Dubbing is a complex process, and it is described as the most comprehensive form of translation (Pérez-González, 2009; Palumbo, 2009). Dubbing tends to create a similar environment for the target audience, and this makes it a preferable mode for translating audiovisual products (Pérez-González, 2009; Palumbo, 2009). Dubbing is influenced by many factors, such as linguistic and ideological factors (Danan, 1991). In dubbing, dialogue should be natural and linguistically accurate (Baños & Díaz-Cintas, 2017). Thus, the style of the source text should be conveyed in the target language (Nida, 2012). This is also the case in the dubbing of animated movies. That is to say, the style of the source text should be conveyed in the dubbed version of an animated movie. Moreover, technology and AI can affect how the style of the source text transfers to audiovisual material.

This study investigated the manipulation of style in the English translations of *The Last Fiction* by comparing the official human-dubbed version with two ChatGPT-generated translations produced through simple and detailed prompts. The findings indicated that both human and AI translations relied heavily on target-oriented strategies. The human-dubbed version primarily applied leveling out and normalization. This revealed that human translators tend to produce natural, fluent, and target-oriented translations. However, while normalization was also the dominant strategy in both ChatGPT outputs, the simple-prompt version made greater use of retention. In contrast, the detailed-prompt version showed a greater tendency toward explicitation and simplification compared to the simple-prompt translation. These findings demonstrate that prompt design can significantly influence ChatGPT's stylistic translation choices.

The findings are generally consistent with those of Huang and Chu (2014), who argued that translators employ distinctive stylistic features rather than merely reproducing the author's style, and this affects the translation output stylistically. Similarly, the present study shows that the human translator and ChatGPT each have unique stylistic preferences, although different prompts lead to translation styles within the same AI system.

The results also support Claesen's (2014) conclusion that translators vary in the degree to which they manipulate stylistic features. However, unlike Claesen's comparison of two human translators, the present study compares human translation and AI-generated translations. It also provides information about diverse prompt designs and their employment in the same language model.

The predominance of target-oriented strategies in the human-dubbed version is consistent with De los Reyes Lozano (2017), who found that dubbed animated films are frequently adapted to enhance comprehensibility for audiences. By the same token, the extensive use of leveling out and normalization in the present study indicates that the human-dubbed version prioritizes fluency and accessibility. Nevertheless, ChatGPT employed retention, particularly in the simple-prompt version. This reveals ChatGPT's stronger orientation toward the source text than traditional dubbing.

Furthermore, the findings support Rezvani Sichani and Afrouz (2019) and Rezvani Sichani et al. (2021), who argued that Persian audiovisual translation tends toward domestication because of ideological and cultural considerations. The human-dubbed version in the present study follows this tendency through strategies such as normalization and leveling out. However, the AI-generated translations, especially those produced with the simple prompt, have less tendency to employ domestication. Therefore, they preserve more source-language stylistic features through retention.

The results are also in agreement with AlSuhaim (2020), who concluded that stylistic changes in dubbing are influenced by target-language norms. At the same time, the present study demonstrates that stylistic shifts are affected not only by linguistic and cultural norms but also by prompt design in the translations provided by AI systems.

Despite the similarities between this study and previous ones, it is worth noting that earlier studies focused on literary translation, or, when they addressed audiovisual translation, focused more on different kinds of movies rather than animated movies. Furthermore, this study focuses on translation from Persian into English, which is innovative. Finally, this study extends Baker's (1996) model by offering new strategies that can be employed in translation to preserve the style of the source text, and it is a step forward in the employment of translation universals in audiovisual translation.

The findings may benefit translation researchers, audiovisual translators, and AI developers. As mentioned earlier, the findings reveal that ChatGPT can produce stylistically acceptable translations, but its output is strongly affected by prompt design. This indicates that carefully designed prompts can improve the stylistic quality of AI-generated translations and make them more suitable for audiovisual translation. The study provides a better understanding of stylistic manipulation in AI-assisted dubbing and helps AI developers build more effective translation models. Furthermore, the study shows that Baker's (1996) model does not fully cover all stylistic strategies found in either human or AI-generated dubbing translations. This indicates the need to employ new translation strategies that account for all produced translations.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis was limited to a single Persian animated film, *The Last Fiction*. This limits the generalizability of the findings to other genres or audiovisual materials. Second, the study focused only on stylistic translation strategies and translation universals and did not examine other important aspects of dubbing, such as lip synchronization and audience reception. Finally, the AI-generated translations were produced only by ChatGPT and two prompting conditions (simple and detailed).

Future studies could investigate larger corpora, including different audiovisual genres. Furthermore, studies should compare outputs from multiple large language models and examine the impact of more diverse prompting techniques on stylistic translation. They can investigate other aspects of dubbing, such as lip synchronization and audience reception.

References

- Afrouz, M. (2021). Translating proverbs in *The Gulistan of Sa'di*: Developing a new taxonomy based on Baker's (2011) model. *Hikma*, 21(1), 53–83. <https://doi.org/10.21071/hikma.v21i1.13250>
- AlSuhaim, D. S. (2020). *A descriptive analysis of non-obligatory shifts in three Disney animated films dubbed into Modern Standard Arabic* (Doctoral dissertation, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University). Arab World English Journal Theses. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/th.281>
- Ameri, S. (2018). [Review of the book *A comprehensive history of dubbing into Persian in Iran: 1941–1971 (Vol. 1) & 1971–2013 (Vol. 2)*, by A. Zhirafar]. *Sendebare*, 29, 355–359.

- Baker, M. (1996). Corpus-based translation studies: The challenges that lie ahead. In H. Somers (Ed.), *Terminology, LSP and translation: Studies in language engineering in honour of Juan C. Sager* (pp. 175–186). John Benjamins.
- Baños, R., & Díaz-Cintas, J. (2017). Language and translation in film: Dubbing and subtitling. In K. Malmkjaer (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of translation studies and linguistics* (pp. 313–326). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315692845>
- Boase-Beier, J. (2006). *Stylistic approaches to translation*. St. Jerome Publishing.
- Chaume, F. (2013). The turn of audiovisual translation: New audiences and new technologies. *Translation Spaces*, 2(1), 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ts.2.06cha>
- Chiaro, D. (2009). Issues in audiovisual translation. In J. Munday (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to translation studies* (Rev. ed., pp. 141–165). Routledge.
- Claesen, T. (2014). *Style and coordination in literary translation: A case study of coordination style in Joseph Roth's Hotel Savoy and its two Dutch translations* [Master's thesis, Ghent University]. Ghent University Repository.
- Danan, M. (1991). Dubbing as an expression of nationalism. *Meta*, 36(4), 606–614. <https://doi.org/10.7202/002446a>
- De los Reyes Lozano, J. (2017). Bringing all the senses into play: The dubbing of animated films for children. *Palimpsestes*, 30, 99–115. <https://doi.org/10.4000/palimpsestes.2447>
- Díaz-Cintas, J. (2019). Audiovisual translation. In E. Angelone, M. Ehrensberger-Dow, & G. Massey (Eds.), *The Bloomsbury companion to language industry studies* (pp. 165–198). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Golchinnezhad, M., & Afrouz, M. (2021). Towards a less subjective model of singability analysis. *Kervan*, 25(1), 197–222. <https://doi.org/10.13135/1825-263X/5206>
- Huang, L., & Chu, C. (2014). Translator's style or translational style? A corpus-based study of style in translated Chinese novels. *Asia Pacific Translation and Intercultural Studies*, 1(2), 122–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23306343.2014.883742>
- Luyken, G.-M., Herbst, T., Langham-Brown, J., Reid, H., & Spinhof, H. (1991). *Overcoming language barriers in television: Dubbing and subtitling for the European audience*. European Institute for the Media.
- Nida, E. A. (2012). Principles of correspondence. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 141–155). Routledge.
- Palumbo, G. (2009). *Key terms in translation studies*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Pedersen, J. (2011). *Subtitling norms for television*. John Benjamins.
- Pérez-González, L. (2009). Audiovisual translation. In M. Baker & G. Saldanha (Eds.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies* (2nd ed., pp. 13–20). Routledge.
- Rahgozar, A. (Director). (2018). *The last fiction* [Film]. Hoorakhsh Studios.
- Rezvani Sichani, B., & Afrouz, M. (2019). A curious case of taboo rendition in Persian AVT: A spectrum of ideas. *Translation Studies Quarterly*, 16(63), 23–38. <https://journal.translationstudies.ir/ts/article/view/633>

- Rezvani Sichani, B., Amiryousefi, M., & Amirian, Z. (2021). Audiovisual translation as a cultural counter-hegemonic device: A case study of English–Persian dubbed animations. *Sendebare*, 32, 111–129. <https://doi.org/10.30827/sendebare.32.15480>
- Verrier, R. (2013, August 20). Are Hollywood studios cranking out too many animated films? *Los Angeles Times*. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/aug/20/business/la-fi-ct-animation-20130820>
- Zoraqi, A. A., Askary, M., Eriss, A., Sarvghadi, F., Soleimanirad, E., & Ghaderi, F. (2023). Audiovisual translation and media accessibility in Iran: State of the art. *Language Related Research*, 17(1), 255–282. <https://doi.org/10.48311/LRR/lrr.2026.7149>