

Cultural Representation in Children's Cartoon Programmes: Insights from the Nida/Newmark Typology

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a study on the cultural manifestation of foreign children's cartoon programmes made available for viewing in the Middle East, focusing specifically on verbal cultural references that may conflict with the values of the Arab audience. While prior research explored general cultural aspects in audio-visual media, limited attention has been given to the specific challenges of verbal cultural references in children's cartoons. This study addresses this gap by analysing how verbal cultural inappropriateness is manifested and assessing the applicability of the Nida/Newmark typology of culture in this unique context. This study also evaluates the effectiveness of the Nida/Newmark typology of culture in identifying and categorising inappropriate cultural content. A qualitative analysis was conducted on selected Netflix cartoon series, with particular attention given to scenes that showcase various cultural elements, including customs, traditions, food, social organisation, and religion. Employing purposive sampling, the research deliberately selected culturally rich programmes to ensure a comprehensive examination that captures a variety of cultural representations. The findings revealed that the category of linguistic culture is the most prominent. In contrast, representations of social culture, religious culture, organisations and customs, material culture, and ecology are significantly less common. Notably, no cases are found in the categories of ecology, gestures, and habits. This absence is likely due to the study's focus on verbal content, as these elements are often conveyed through non-verbal communication. The study concludes that although the Nida/Newmark typology is effective for analysing verbal cultural inappropriateness in cartoons, it proves limited in scenarios where non-verbal cues, implicit cultural meanings, and evolving social norms are pivotal. Social or religious hints are conveyed through tones or gestures, and modern slang may not fit traditional categories. The insights gained from this research underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity in children's media, highlighting the need for further investigation into the broader implications of cultural representation in animated content.

Keywords: Children's cartoons, Cultural inappropriateness, Nida/Newmark typology, Verbal cultural references.

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INTRODUCTION

Children's cartoons play a significant role in early childhood education, shaping social learning and intellectual development. These animated programmes often serve as foundational tools, teaching children language, numbers, and basic problem-solving skills in a fun and engaging way. As noted by Erlidawati and Rahmah (2022), cartoons designed specifically for young audiences typically aim to enhance academic readiness and foundational knowledge.

In addition to their educational benefits, cartoons influence children's personality development by presenting various ethical dilemmas, social roles, and emotional responses through their characters and stories. These animated depictions often act as role models, guiding children in understanding cooperation, empathy, and the consequences of different behaviours (Harriger, 2018). However, the content in some Western-produced cartoons, such as the popular series *Shrek*, is intended for a broader audience, including adults. These programs often incorporate cultural elements and adult themes that may not align with the values of more conservative cultures, such as those in the Arab world.

In the Arab context, where these Western cartoons attract audiences of all ages, the issue becomes more pressing. Children may be inadvertently exposed to inappropriate verbal content, such as taboo language or cultural references that conflict with local norms and morals. This issue is compounded by parents' tendency to assume that all cartoons are inherently child-friendly, resulting in a lack of supervision when children consume potentially harmful content (Aldarmaki, 2010).

Given the increasing global access to Western audiovisual media, the reception of such content within conservative societies like the Arab world requires closer examination. Understanding how cultural inappropriateness is manifested and transmitted in children's cartoons is essential for identifying the necessary interventions to protect young viewers from exposure to culturally unsuitable materials.

Within the context of the Arab world, foreign audiovisual content is also mostly received through the mediation of subtitling or dubbing. This implies that the question of translation often parallels the reception of this foreign content, whether in subtitling or dubbing. It is within this framework that the current study explores the different manifestations of cultural inappropriateness in audio-visual content. Based on the definition of culture as "the way of life and manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (Newmark, 1988, p. 94), and relying on the Nida/Newmark typology of culture, the present research aims to analyse how verbal cultural inappropriateness is manifested in children's cartoons and evaluate the effectiveness of the Nida/Newmark typology of culture in depicting inappropriate cultural content, specifically within the context of children's cartoons.

Hence, this study aspired to answer the research questions below:

1. How is verbal cultural inappropriateness manifested in children's cartoons?
2. How effective is the Nida/Newmark typology of culture in depicting inappropriate cultural content within the context of children's cartoons?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Children's cartoons represent a specific genre that has attracted the attention of multiple researchers. Among the major issues that have been addressed are related to the influence of

cartoons on children's language acquisition (Kol, 2021) and the effect these programs have on children's behaviour, which involves aggression and violence (Habib & Soliman, 2015). Besides that, the issue of the psychological impact of cartoons on young audiences had also been studied and discussed, either from the perspective of cognitive development (Kocak & Goktas, 2020) or from that of cultural representation (Kol, 2021). The present study aimed to further investigate the issue of cultural representation in children's cartoons by analysing the manifestation of verbal cultural inappropriateness and evaluating the effectiveness of the Nida/Newmark typology of culture in depicting inappropriate cultural content.

The issue of cultural adequacy in audiovisual translation has been widely discussed by numerous scholars. However, many of the studies approached the subject without employing a specific framework for the classification of cultural manifestations (Al-Adwan, 2015; Al-Jabri, Allawzi & Abushmaes, 2021; Almjirab, 2020; Alsharhan, 2020; Altahri, 2013; Abu-Rayyash, Haider & Al-Adwan, 2023; Hosseinnia, 2014; Gholami & Rahbar, 2018; Ndhlovu & Botha, 2017; Wu & Wan, 2021 and Yaqoub, 2016). A framework is necessary as it represents a theoretical grounding that provides a structured approach to the discussion. The absence of categorisation of the cultural items discussed deprives the analysis of a potentially significant technical aspect. Exceptions to the situation depicted above exist. Debbas and Haider (2020) used their threefold categorisation of cultural challenges: religious remarks, humour, and taboos. However, the rationale behind selecting these three categories was not explained, drastically reducing the relevance of their finding in other contexts.

Several typologies of culture are available, each proposing unique perspectives on categorising and understanding cultural elements such as Bennett (1993), Hall (1976), Hofstede (1984), Schwartz (1992) and Trompenaars (1997). With a particular focus on Translation Studies, scholars such as Antonini and Chiaro (2009), Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007), Pedersen (2005), Nida (1945), and Newmark (1988) have also developed classifications for different aspects of culture. Antonini and Chiaro (2009) distinguished intralinguistic issues from culture-specific references (CSRs) in their analysis of intercultural translation challenges. They identified four key categories: culture-specific references, including food, place names, and institutions; lingua-cultural drops in translational voltage, such as rhymes, songs, and puns; language-specific features, like terms of address, taboo expressions, and honorifics; and visual cultural specificity (Antonini and Chiaro, 2009). Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) categorized cultural references into three primary domains. Geographical references encompass terms related to physical geography, specific locations, and endemic species. Ethnographic references pertain to aspects of daily life, occupations, art, culture, lineage, and measurement systems. Socio-political references include administrative divisions, institutional roles, socio-cultural phenomena, and military-related terminology. Pedersen (2005) outlined seven key factors that shape a subtitler's decision-making process: transculturality, extratextuality, centrality of reference, intersemiotic redundancy, co-text, media-specific constraints, and paratextual considerations.

To our knowledge, only two studies have integrated established cultural frameworks in their analysis of cultural categorisation. These are Asakura (2017) and Al Abwaini & Hussein (2013). Asakura (2017) based her work on Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2007) framework, whereas Al Abwaini and Hussein (2013) utilized Pedersen's (2005) model. As a basis for our analysis, the present study applies Nida's (1945) cultural framework, which consists of five categories described in Table 1. This framework was subsequently further developed by Newmark (1988). Newmark's edited categories are presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Nida's 1945 cultural categories

Category	Examples
Ecology	Ecological culture-loaded words vary due to the location, geological structure, and ecosystem, such as seasons, temperature, and mountains.
Material culture	Clothes, food, accommodation, transportation, and communications. For example, the villages of local communities differ significantly from the fortified cities of antiquity. Consequently, the idea of a city's gates being locked seems unbelievable. It is likely that the indigenous language lacks a term for "gate," and even if it does exist, the concept would likely be absent in the city or village.
Social culture	Social culture-loaded words have symbolic meanings because they are connected with some special events, such as work and leisure (national games like tennis, cricket, and bullfighting). For example, "When the people from Totonac read about a man carrying a pitcher of water, they are tremendously amused. It seems very silly to the women to think of a man doing women's work, and the men are astonished at the man's ignorance of propriety" (p.201).
Religious culture	Religious culture-loaded words are related to religion such as activities of Christianity (Church) and the names of gods.
Social organization	Political and Administrative like the title of a head of state ('King', 'Sultan', 'President', 'Prime Minister',) or the name of a parliament.
Linguistic culture	"For example, in Mazatec, there are no nouns corresponding to the English lexical items "food," "faith," "love," "baptism," and "repentance." All expressions which contain these English nouns must be translated into Mazatec by verbal expressions" (p.203).

Table 2

Newmark's (1988;2003) cultural categories

Category	Examples
Ecology	Mountains, plains, floras, ice, creatures (animals, birds), winds etc.
Material culture	Clothes, food, accommodation, transportation, and communications.
Social culture	Work and leisure (national games like tennis, cricket, and bullfighting).
Organisations & customs	Companies or agencies (private, governmental, and international) and lifestyle.
Gestures and habits	Kiss the fingertips to greet or to praise' (p.102).

Newmark's classification includes some small changes that reflect his viewpoint. He adds "Organizations & Customs" and "Gestures and Habits" to broadly cover organizational structures and non-verbal cultural cues. In contrast, Nida's classification includes "Religious Culture" as a separate category, emphasizing the unique role of religious features in cultural contexts. This is due to the fact that Nida was drawing on his experience as a Bible translator for secluded peoples, such as the indigenous tribes inhabiting the Amazon Forest. Nida/Newmark's categorisation is one of the earliest categorisations used widely by scholars (Aldweikat, 2015; Al-Jabari, 2008; Al Taai, 2011; Dweik, & Suleiman, 2013 and Maasoum, & Davtalab, 2011). Several studies have adopted cultural categorisations similar to Nida and Newmark but use different terms while dealing with the same fundamental concepts of culture in translation (Davies, 2003; Díaz-Cintas and Remael

2007; Florin, 1993; Klingberg, 1986; Nedergaard-Larsen, 1993; Oltra Ripoll, 2005; Santamaria, 2001; and Vandeweghe, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

The project relies on a corpus of instances of cultural inadequacies extracted from cartoons. The data for the research was sourced from the Netflix platform. Netflix has become the focus of research and examination in different academic disciplines, including media studies, cultural studies, and linguistics. In translation Studies, in particular, the use of materials from Netflix as a focal point for analysis is common, especially in examining subtitling practices and cultural adaptation in audio-visual content. Researchers adopting the platform as a basis for their investigations have, for instance, revealed how Netflix content is consumed in various cultures, and how the practices of subtitling and dubbing are employed to ensure availability and address cultural expectations (Hosseini & Karmestål, 2021; Osur, 2016; Sánchez-Mompeán, 2021). These studies show the significance of Netflix as a case study in comprehending the connection between media, language, and cultural representation. In the Arab world, Netflix represents a major streaming platform (Netflix Media Centre, 2021). It offers a wide selection of programs, including many with Arabic subtitles. Its diverse range of animated content from various regions allows for a thorough examination of cultural aspects. As a major player in the entertainment industry, Netflix influences content production and audience behaviour, making it valuable for understanding current media trends (Kuscu-Ozbudak, 2021).

The Netflix platform catalogue contains a long list of programmes that correspond to the typology the project focuses on, i.e., subtitled cartoons primarily aimed at a young audience. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of programs for the study. Purposive sampling, also called selective or judgmental sampling, is a non-probability sampling procedure normally used to purposefully select components, cases, or individuals from a bigger population based on set criteria (Palinkas, 2015). The cartoon programmes in this study were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Programmes that are tagged as suitable for audiences aged 12 and above: This age group is exposed to more sensitive and nuanced content, making it ideal for examining how verbal cultural references, which might convey cultural sensitivities, are presented and possibly influence their understanding of cultural standards.
2. Animated cartoon programmes: Younger audiences are usually attracted to this type of content.
3. Originated from Western cultural contexts: Western cartoons are often used to study how cultural differences affect the way contents are understood in other countries. By focusing on Western content, this study examines how these differences might cause issues for audiences in non-Western areas, like the Middle East.
4. Use English as the original language: English represents the major original language of the targeted programs emerging from Western cultural contexts. In addition, restricting the research to English arises from the limitation of the research team; English is the only foreign language spoken by the contributors to this research.

The result of this selection is a total of 11 analysed cartoon programmes, with a combined duration of 26 hours and 34 minutes. The list is provided in Table 3 below:

Table 3

List of the cartoon programs used in the study.

#	Name of cartoon programmes	Duration	Year released
1	Dragons (Season1, episodes 1 to 9)	207 min	2021
2	The Smurfs (film)	103 minutes	2011
3	Hotel Transylvania (Parts 1, 2& 3)	91 min, 89 min, 97 min	2012,2015,2018
4	Shrek (Parts 1, 2 & 4)	90 min, 93 min, 93 min	(2001), (2004), (2010)
5	Teen Titans Go (7 episodes)	146 min	2018
6	SpongeBob (2 episodes)	95 min, 95 min	2015, 2020
7	Kung Fu Panda the Drago (Season1, episodes 1 to 3)	72 min	2023
8	The Loud House Movie	87 min	2021
9	Masha and the Bear (1 episode)	36 min	2009
10	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (film)	114 min	2005
11	Madagascar (film)	86 min	2005

The second stage in the data collection phase consisted of identifying all cases of cultural inappropriateness in the cartoon programmes. Hence, all cases that were deemed to involve culturally inappropriate content were collected and added to the project spreadsheet database. During this phase, which spread from June to August 2021, the researcher played each of the targeted cartoon series and movies. The video paused when a relevant scene was identified, and oral language content was transcribed parallel to its subtitled target text. For each case, metadata was added, including the programme from which the entry was extracted and its time stamp. The third stage consisted of further screening and categorising of the collected data, relying on the framework initially developed by Nida (1945) (Table 1) and further elaborated upon by Newmark (1988) (Table 2). In order to confirm the validity of the extracted cases, i.e., to ascertain that they carry culturally inappropriate content, two independent raters, both of whom are translation lecturers with knowledge in both English and Arabic, were asked to review the list and provide their feedback. Their background in translation, along with their proficiency in both languages and more than ten years of professional experience in the profession, ensured that they could correctly assess the cultural appropriateness of the content from both cultural and linguistic perspectives.

RESULTS

At the end of the data collection stage, a total of 102 cases of cultural inadequacies were recorded, as illustrated in Table 4. This amounts to an average occurrence of 1 case every 15.6 minutes.

Table 4

Distribution of cases over the programmes

Name of the cartoon programme	Number of cases
1. Dragons	26
2. The Smurfs	23
3. Hotel Transylvania	15
4. Shrek	12
5. Teen Titans Go	10
6. SpongeBob	5
7. Kung Fu Panda: The Dragon Knight	4
8. The Loud House Movie	3
9. Masha and the Bear	2
10. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	1
11. Madagascar	1
TOTAL	102

An inter-rater reliability analysis was performed between the responses of Rater 1 and Rater 2 on their agreement on whether the samples do indeed represent culturally inappropriate content. For this purpose, the Cohen's Kappa was calculated, which is a measure of the agreement between two dependent categorical samples. The Cohen's Kappa showed that there was a substantial agreement between *Rater 1* and *Rater 2* with $\kappa = 0.8$ as displayed in Table 5. A p-value of $<.001$ is less than the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating that the observed level of agreement (Kappa = 0.8) is statistically significantly different from zero. In other words, there is a low probability that the observed agreement is due to random chance.

Table 5

Inter-rater reliability

		Rater 1			
		5	4	2	Total
Rater 2	5	93	0	0	93
	4	2	6	1	9
	2	0	0	0	0
Total		95	6	1	102

Cohen's Kappa	p
0.8	<.001

The results for the Cohen's Kappa test were obtained using DATAtab.

The results of the categorisation process are provided in Table 6, ranked from most to least common.

Table 6

Percentage of cases by category

Category	Number of cases	Percentage
Linguistic culture	54	52.94%
Social culture	22	21.56%
Religious culture	18	17.65%
Organizations and customs	6	5.88%
Material culture	2	1.96%
Gestures and habits	0	0%
Ecology	0	0%
Total	102	100%

LINGUISTIC CULTURE

This category focuses on words or phrases deemed taboo or unsuitable in the target language because they are deemed vulgar. Vulgar language refers to words that are considered “rude and likely to upset or anger people, especially by referring to sex and the body in an unpleasant way” (Cambridge Dictionary). In this study, instances of vulgarity involve references to body parts, as illustrated in Example 1. This category also involves verbal violence, which is the use of aggressive or offensive language that inflicts emotional harm. Examples 2 and 3 encompass making threats of violence and displaying hostility towards others.

Example 1

ST: Well, I have to **save my ass** (Shrek, Part 1)

Example 2

ST: No, you won't be able to shake hands cause **your limbs will be gone**. (Kung Fu Panda)

Example 3 **ST:** I was about to **make haggis with your innards**. (The Smurf)

SOCIAL CULTURE

Social culture includes elements of social customs and actions. According to Nida (1945) and Newmark (1988), this classification involves components that hold symbolic meaning because of their link to particular activities such as work and leisure (for example, popular sports like tennis, cricket, and bullfighting). In the context of the current investigation, aspects of social culture that may constitute cultural inappropriateness can manifest in different ways. The given instances demonstrate promiscuous (Example 1), aggressive behaviour (Example 2), and magic and sorcery (Example 3).

Example 1

ST: **To get** that prince with the sexy tush. (Shrek, Part 2)

Example 2

ST: If not, then **my head will be on a pike** next to the last guy. (The Smurf)

Example 3

ST: Well, **a sect of mages**, ones with bad intent. (Kung Fu Panda the Drago)

RELIGIOUS CULTURE

Words with religious connotations, like Christian practices and names of gods (Nida,1945), are generally considered inappropriate when referring to religions other than Islam. This is because they could be seen as conflicting with Islamic teachings. In example 1, a character wants to acquire a weapon that is appropriate for a deity, which contradicts Islamic tenets and might be viewed as disrespectful or offensive. There is also a reference to ‘Neptune,’ who is a Roman god connected with the sea, in example 2. In example 3, “the reaper” is used as the name of a ship, but in Western folklore, it symbolises death, representing a figure that collects souls or harvests lives.

Example 1

ST: But first, I must claim a weapon **befitting a god!** (Kung Fu Panda).

Example 2

ST: Oh, my Neptune, he's mixing garbage and recycling! (SpongeBob).

Example 3

ST: It is called **the Reaper** (Kung Fu Panda the Drago).

ORGANIZATIONS AND CUSTOMS

Nida (1945) defines social organization as entities that include political and administrative elements, while Newmark (1988) classifies organizations and customs to include companies, agencies, and lifestyles. It is important to note that customs from one culture may be offensive in another. The use of “wailing banshees,” “pig-strangling blood,” and “stitches in all the places”. In the examples below can be considered culturally distasteful in Islamic societies. This is because it is associated with beliefs that are not accepted in Islamic culture.

Example 1

ST: Oh, those are just some **wailing banshees** checking in (Hotel Transylvania).

Example 2

ST: I have **pig-strangling blood** in my arm? That’s kind of cool. Well, cuz, great to meet you (Hotel Transylvania).

Example 3

ST: She got **stitches in all the places**.

MATERIAL CULTURE

Material culture encompasses clothing, food, housing, transportation, and communication (Nida, 1945 & Newmark, 1988). Aspects of material culture can be deemed inappropriate if they are linked to religiously or morally objectionable conduct, as illustrated in the following examples.

Example 1

ST: Can't we just settle this over **a pint**? (Shrek, Part 1).

Example 2

ST: little skirts climbing way up her knee (The Smurf).

In the first context, it is essential to acknowledge that the term 'pint' traditionally signifies a specific measure of beer, an alcoholic beverage. Given the prohibition of alcohol consumption in Islam, casual references to it, even indirectly, in cartoons could be considered inappropriate for young audiences raised in Islamic or conservative environments. Such content may inadvertently convey unsuitable messages or endorse behaviours that are contrary to their morals.

The phrase "little skirts climbing way up her knee" in the second example refers to the wearing of short skirts, which might be viewed as inappropriate in traditional or religious communities, such as those following Islamic principles. In these settings, attire that reveals specific body parts, particularly for women, could be seen as unsuitable or disrespectful. Even the portrayal of immodesty in cartoons, even in a light-hearted or informal way, might clash with cultural or religious standards of modesty, raising concerns about whether the content is appropriate for young audiences in these environments. This might contribute to the continuation of behaviours or norms that go against local cultural and ethical values.

DISCUSSION

In order to achieve the first objective of the study, data were analysed to identify the manifestation of verbal cultural inappropriateness in children's cartoon programmes. The findings show that the distribution of cases over cultural categories is noticeably uneven. As can be seen in Table 6 in the previous section, the category of "linguistic culture" largely outnumbered the other categories with a total of 54 (52.94%) occurrences out of a total of 102 (100%). On the other hand, different aspects, including social culture, religious culture, organizations and customs, material culture, gestures and habits, and ecology, are less prominent. Notably, the categories of gestures and habits, as well as ecology, had no recorded cases.

These proportions are indirectly reflected in the literature, judging from the amount of attention each category has attracted. The dominance of linguistic culture over other categories is evident in subtitling research, which often focuses on taboo language, as shown in works by Abu-Rayyash, Haider, and Al-Adwan (2023); Almijrab (2020); Al-Adwan (2015); Al-Jabri, Allawzi, and Abushmaes (2021); Alsharhan (2020); Altahri (2013); Farghal (1995); Furgani (2016); Lestari and Sutrisno (2023); Rishah (2013); Thawabteh (2017); Trupej (2019); and Yaqoub (2016). Studies on sexual references and expressions include those by Al-Adwan (2015); Al-Jabri, Allawzi, and Abushmaes (2021); Alsharhan (2020); Debbas and Haider (2021); Wu and Wan (2021); and Yaqoub (2016). Violent language is explored by Asakura (2017) and Furgani (2016), while emotional expressions like "adore," "kiss," "love," and mentions of physical attraction are discussed by Gholami and Rahbar (2018).

The numerous studies focusing on linguistic culture highlight the importance of this dimension. There are several reasons for the prevalence of this category. Firstly, language inherently holds significant cultural weight, including idiomatic expressions and slang. Secondly, linguistic culture includes elements such as profanity, vulgarity, and aggressive language, which are particularly frequent, especially in spoken language. Consequently, any differences in the use of this language between the initial audience for which a programme is produced and other audiences that are exposed to this content can be perceived as offensive, especially when both audiences are from different cultural backgrounds.

The categories of social culture, religious culture, organizations and customs, material culture, gestures and habits, and ecology are comparatively less common because they depend on specific topics that come across in the programme script rather than the language used to express them. It is this infrequent occurrence of cases belonging to these categories that makes cases in linguistic culture stand out. Due to their rarity, these categories are not commonly represented in the literature.

Along the same lines, it was found that there were no cases in the categories of ecology, gestures, and habits. This absence can be explained by various factors. Ecological aspects typically involve nature, climate, and environmental issues, which are inherently culturally neutral. On the other hand, gestures and habits are deeply tied to culture. However, they are often communicated non-verbally through practice and body language. Obviously, being restricted to instances of verbally expressed cultural inappropriateness, this study did not cover non-verbal elements. This conclusion is further supported by the literature, as no studies specifically focusing on these aspects have been identified up to the time of writing this research.

Additionally, it must be emphasized that the uneven distribution of culturally inappropriate instances over cultural categories is not anomalous. However, these results necessitated a closer look at the tool used for the investigation, Nida/Newmark's categorisation of cultural categories, which is the second objective of the study. As its name indicates, the purpose of this categorisation was to provide a logical framework that would help scholars and translators identify, discuss, and handle differences between the source and target language cultures they are handling (Jamoussi, 2017). Consequently, instances in these categories may represent cultural gaps (Nida, 1964) that become challenging to bridge in cross-cultural communication. However, these cases of cultural differences are not necessarily culturally inappropriate. The present project adds to the categorisation a further layer of analysis focusing on "(in)appropriateness" as a specific aspect of culture. Results show that this distinction is not transversal, i.e., cutting across all cultural categories, but is mainly focused on specific ones, particularly linguistic culture.

Contrary to the prevailing trends in literary translation, where cultural fidelity is often prioritised (Bassnett 2003; Liu 2011; Yan and Huang 2014), not all cultural discrepancies need to be transferred to the target language. In the approach brought to fame by Venuti (1995), the focus is on preserving cultural elements from the source text to maintain authenticity (foreignization). However, this approach may not always be practical or desirable, especially when dealing with culturally sensitive content. In certain translation contexts, such as audiovisual translation, maintaining every cultural reference may lead to misunderstandings, discomfort, or a clash with the norms and expectations of the target audience (Cui, 2012). For instance, cultural references involving religion or taboos may be inappropriate for the target culture and require careful filtering.

The study provides crucial insights for translation professionals by highlighting the importance of cultural awareness in the translation process. These insights can enrich translation practices, ensuring that culturally sensitive material is appropriately handled, preserving the original

meaning while remaining suitable for the cultural context of the target audience. It provides theoretical and practical perspectives on managing cultural references, which is an underexplored area in translation and subtitling research.

This research is part of a larger project, and as such, the scope was intentionally narrowed to focus only on the verbal elements of the programmes, excluding the visual components. This narrowed scope enables a more focused exploration of cultural components in audio-visual programs, especially those dealing with culturally sensitive language and expressions. Verbal elements can negatively impact Arab culture by presenting language and expressions that conflict with its values and norms. Inappropriate adaptation could normalise taboo language or culturally offensive phrases, affecting young viewers and causing a cultural disconnect. Future research may integrate verbal and visual components for a more holistic treatment of the issue.

CONCLUSION

The data from the study was sourced from animated cartoons on Netflix, targeting content from Western cultural contexts rated for audiences aged 12 and above. A corpus of 11 cartoon programmes was selected, with instances identified based on the researcher's expertise in cultural sensitivities. All cases of cultural inappropriateness were recorded, transcribing both oral content and its corresponding subtitle. The collected data were then categorised using Nida's (1945) framework, further refined by Newmark (1988). The reliability of the categorisation was later checked by two independent raters.

The results of this study highlight the significance of linguistic culture in audio-visual content and its role in shaping audience perceptions. Existing research has extensively focused on the cultural importance of linguistic culture, such as taboos, slang, and aggressive language. The presence of these elements poses challenges for negotiating the cultural divide, especially when audiences are exposed to content that could be perceived as offensive due to differences in language. Categories such as social culture, religious culture, organisations and customs, material culture, gestures and habits, and ecology are less frequently represented in the literature. Ecological themes are culturally neutral, and gestures are often communicated non-verbally. Therefore, there appears to be a parallel between the frequency of cultural categories identified in this research and the focus areas found in the literature, reinforcing the validity of the current study.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, as it only focuses on verbal expressions of cultural inappropriateness without taking into consideration the significant role of non-verbal communication in conveying cultural nuances. Investigating the crucial impact of non-verbal cues on cultural understanding in audiovisual contexts is a possible future research worth exploring.

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