

## Impact of Song Dubbing on Singer's Characterization: *Frozen* in Persian

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### Abstract

Interventions in the extent and quality of the portrayal of characters in dubbed musical films can induce a change in the original characterization in the film as characters play the role of singers who reflect their inner emotions and thoughts through diegetic songs. To examine the impact of dubbed diegetic songs on the singer's characterization, the study contains two main phases, theoretical and empirical. Initially, the development of the notions on characterization in dubbed films is illustrated to justify and present a merged model drawing on Bosseaux (2015) and Reus (2020) from the realm of Translation Studies, and the cinematic standpoints inspired by Dyer (1998). Then, to apply the model, the different dimensions of the merged model, including the visual dimension (synchrony and visual deixis) and the verbal dimension (sense, style, and voice quality) are investigated in a case of private sector, professional Persian dubbing (Khoshsaligheh, 2022). The case study was the Persian dubbed version of the diegetic songs of *Frozen* (Buck & Lee, 2013). The analysis reveals that the shifts in two dimensions lead to a fairly dissimilar presentation of the singers' characterization.

**Key words:** song translation, characterization, animated musical, professional dubbing, multimodality, *Frozen*.

Citation: Khoshsaligheh, M., Sarvghadi, F., & Mohammad-Alizadeh, B. (2022). Impact of Song Dubbing on Singer's Characterization: *Frozen* in Persian, *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 5(1), 186–206.

<https://doi.org/10.47476/jat.v5i1.2022.189>

**Editor(s):** E. di Giovanni

**Received:** April 2, 2021

**Accepted:** March 23, 2022

**Published:** November 18, 2022

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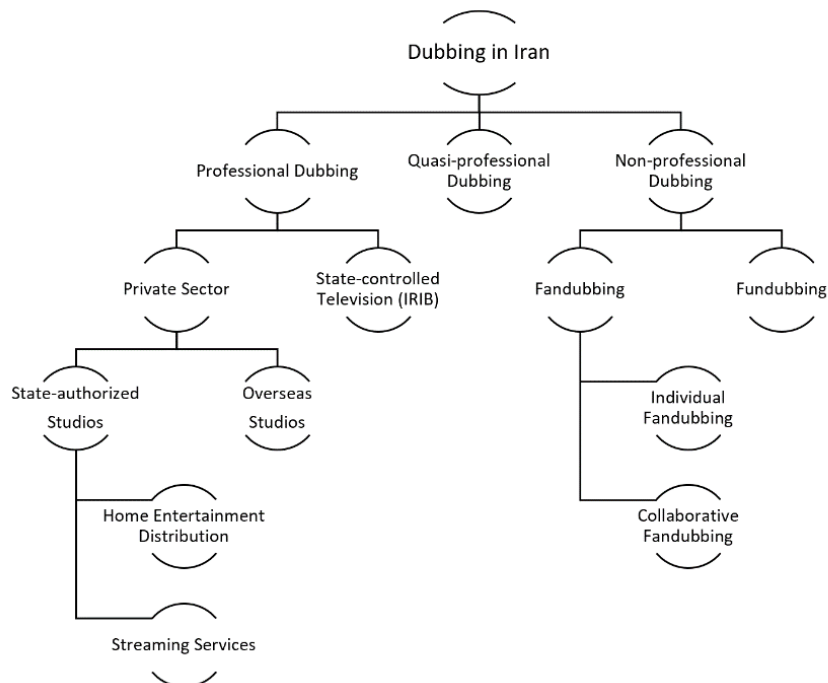
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## 1. Introduction

The integration of music and songs in musical films has raised a challenge to dubbing. Songs are used to express the inner feelings and thoughts of the characters. Songs are inseparable components of the narrative, to the extent that musical films are irrevocably defective in the absence of songs, when localized. Songs can be diegetic or non-diegetic. A diegetic song is performed by a character in a film (Banfield, 1993), offers insights into the vicissitudes of the characters' lives, and tends to foreshadow future events (Reus, 2020). As far as audiovisual translation (AVT) is concerned, when musical animations are aimed at children, diegetic songs usually tend to be dubbed rather than subtitled since children cannot follow subtitles (Chaume, 2012).

In song translation, various characteristics and strategies have been expounded for both song subtitling (see Drinker, 1952; Kelly, 1992; Low, 2005; Franzon, 2008) and song dubbing (see Bosseaux 2008, 2011, 2015; Reus, 2020). Regarding diegetic songs in dubbed animated films, some studies have been conducted in Iran in recent years (see Mohammad-Alizadeh et al., 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Mohammad-Alizadeh, 2019; Khoshsaligheh & Ameri, 2016). The focus of these studies is on the rendition of the musical elements in line with the linguistic elements of song dubbing. Nevertheless, no research has investigated the effect of song dubbing on singers' characterization in dubbed films into Persian. To fill this gap, this article investigates how the songs of *Frozen* (2013) dubbed into Persian affected the singers' characterization. In 2014, this Oscar-winning Disney animated film was recognized as the top-grossing animated film in history (BBC News, 2014), and dubbed into over 40 languages (Muhanna, 2014). As can be seen in Figure 1, there are numerous varieties of professional and non-professional dubbing in Iran (Khoshsaligheh, 2022), the dubbed version of *Frozen* (Raeesi, 2014) is assumed to be one of the enduring works in the history of modern dubbing into Persian.

Figure 1

*Dubbing Varieties in the Iranian Mediascape*

Source: Khoshsaligheh, 2022.

From a cultural standpoint, Disney's films are inclined to achieve a "homogeneous global culture" by the Americanization of other cultures (Lee, 2010, p. 41). It is cultural imperialism that imbues the audience with American social values (Lee, 2010). As Reus (2020) maintains, Disney productions enjoy "a near-monopoly position" in the global market of animated musical films (p. 74). Therefore, they have a considerable socio-cultural impact on both source and target cultures. Target audiences, especially children, absorb the values of animations unconsciously since they are less acquainted with the values of their own culture (Ames & Burcon, 2016; Fouts & Lawson, 2004). Children seek to imitate the protagonists of animated movies in real life. This article concentrated on whether the singer's characterization of *Frozen* (2013) is altered in the process of song dubbing and how the singer's characterization is presented to the Iranian audience in the dubbed songs. As musical animations are prominently multidimensional products, the study merges the models proposed by Reus (2020) and Bosseaux (2015) in AVT, and Dyer (1998) in Film Studies.

## 2. The Merged Model

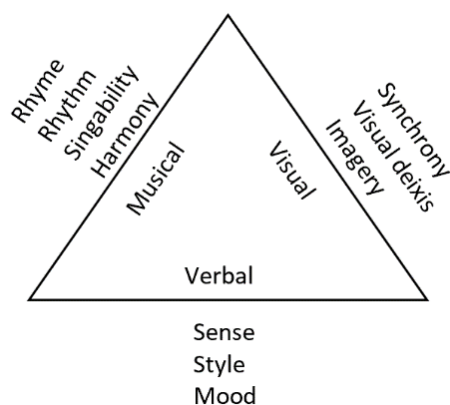
A song is an amalgamation of music and lyrics in which "one has been adapted to the other, or both to one another", composed for a singing performance (Franzon, 2008, p. 376). Song translation has received special attention from the 1990s onwards (Bosseaux, 2011). In Franzon's words (2008), song translation is "a second version" of an original song that reconstructs the central values of the music,

lyrics, and performance of the source song (p. 376). Low (2005) suggests that the target song should convey the overall impression of the original song. Low (2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013) and Franzon (2008) stress the importance of harmony between music and lyrics in song translation. However, the aspects like the different types of synchrony and visual elements of songs dubbing are not explored in their models since they primarily examine subtitling and surtitling.

Reus (2020) introduces the triangle of aspects model to analyze dubbed songs (Figure 2). The model is a combination of the musical, visual, and verbal aspects, “a coherent whole that signals a narrative beat, presents an instance of character development, or fulfills another role in the film” (Reus, 2020, p. 27). Reus (2020) maintains that the model can be applied for characterization analysis in song dubbing.

Figure 2

*The Triangle of Aspects*



Source: Reus, 2020, p. 27.

Rhyme involves the analysis of the rhyme scheme and the types of rhymes. Rhythm includes the stress pattern and syllable count (Low, 2005; Franzon, 2008). Singability is attributed to “vowel and consonant quality” (Reus, 2017, p. 183), and harmony concerns “the relation between the music and the lyrics” (Reus, 2020, p. 41).

Lip synchrony is the translation adapted to the character’s mouth movements, in close-ups and extreme close-ups (Whitman-Linsen, 1992). Isochrony is concerned with the duration of the translation compared to the character’s utterance on screen (Whitman-Linsen, 1992). Reus (2020) evaluates them through three types of the differences between the pronounced syllables and the mouth movements, including nonexistent differences, minor differences, and major differences. Nonexistent differences indicate that the dubbing voice pronounces the sounds exactly or nearly the way the character does on screen. Minor differences occur when vowels differ in degree of closeness, or consonants differ in the consonant cluster (Reus, 2020). Major differences include “changes to front vowels greater than one degree”, “any differences in bilabial consonants”, and “the changes

from labiodental consonants to vowels” (p. 84). Visual deixis, i.e., “verbal references to visual cues” (Reus, 2020, p. 49), is classified into two types: direct and indirect. In the former, the lines of lyrics refer explicitly to the visual cues (e.g. a character pointing to the sky while singing words related to the sky). In the indirect type, the meaning of the lines implicitly and metaphorically pertains to the visual cues (e.g. a character looking at the night sky while singing about suffering oppression; the night sky contributing to the oppression). Indirect references can also be the singer’s facial expressions and gestures. In the translation, the references may be retained, removed, altered, replaced, or added. The aspect of imagery deals with “the implicit, connotative relationship between the lyrics and the visual codes”, including *mise-en-scène*, montage, shot size and duration, focus, position, and camera movement (Reus, 2020, p. 50–51).

To assess the aspect of sense, the differences between the translated lyrics and original ones are classified into three categories: no differences, minor differences, and major differences. When the translated lyrics convey the same pragmatic codes and implications as in the source one, there is no difference between the source and target lyrics. The minor differences assign to the added or eliminated implications, the change of the character’s tone, and the modification of parts of the denotative message. Regarding the major differences, the denotative message is eliminated or added (Reus, 2020). Style pertains to the linguistic and paralinguistic parameters that a character uses in their singing. Linguistically, some variables such as lexical and grammatical complexity are categorized as “1) simple, 2) average, and 3) complex” (p. 59). Lexical complexity is evaluated on the basis of the origin of the words (e.g., words of Latin origin are considered more complex), word length (longer words seems to be more complex) are deemed more complex), and lexical frequency (rarer and archaic words are regarded more complex). Grammatical complexity is assessed with reference to the number of dependent clauses or phrases, sentence length, and syntactic construction. Mood examines the association between the lyrics and the plot of the film.

Likewise, De Los Reyes Lozano (2017) introduces a model consisting of the linguistic codes existing in the source and target texts; the iconographic codes involving the relationship between the meaning and visual components; and musical codes conveying emotion and complementing the image. Although De Los Reyes Lozano’s model (2017) is analogous to Reus’s (2020), the triangle of aspects model includes more aspects relevant for the examination of animated films. Therefore, this article concentrates on Reus’s model (2020). To improve on his approach, a merged model will be proposed by incorporating into Reus’s model elements of another model proposed by Bosseaux (2015).

Bosseaux (2008) analyzes characterization in the dubbed French version of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* series (1997–2003) through linguistic elements and cinematic modalities like shot composition, performance, and voice quality. In 2015, she improves her model and presents the multimodal model, including three main components – the oral, visual, and linguistic dimensions – for the examination of performance and characterization in original and dubbed films. The oral dimension mainly draws on Van Leeuwen’s criteria (1999) for examining the voice quality that consists of tension, roughness, breathiness, loudness, pitch register, vibrato, and nasality.

Bosseaux (2015) suggests that the visual dimension incorporates “camera position, angles, and distance” (p. 143). This dimension seems analogous to the imagery aspect by Reus (2020), but under a different subcategory. The linguistic dimension is analyzed by applying Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) (1994), underlying the interpersonal and ideational metafunctions. However, she declares that the examination of the linguistic codes is not her primary focus, relegating it to “the third position” in the model (2015, p. 119). Bosseaux’s linguistic dimension (2015) parallels Reus’s aspects of sense and style (2020). Nevertheless, Reus conducts the analysis of style based on Leech and Short’s (2007) theory. The review of the models proposed by Bosseaux (2015) and Reus (2020) demonstrates that Reus’s model (2020) is more exhaustive than Bosseaux’s (2015). Reus (2020) includes the examination of more aspects of the featured films in both original and dubbed versions. However, he does not take the analysis of voice quality into account. Therefore, Reus’s model (2020) can be improved by adding the aspect of voice quality to the verbal dimension. Although both Bosseaux (2015) and Reus (2017) seek to investigate the impact of dubbing on characterization, they do not investigate the different ways of the presentation of characterization in Film Studies.

### 3. Characterization

Characters have “particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities” which are inferred from their dialogues and actions (Abrams & Harpham, 2009, p. 42). In the context of Film Studies, Dyer (1998) states that a character’s personality is formed by both the filmmaker and audience — across the entire film, and not in a single shot. There are ten “signs” that “viewers latch on to constructing the characters”, including audience foreknowledge (preconceptions on a character), name (implication about character’s personality), appearance (physiognomy, dress, and the image of the character), objective correlatives (the relation of character’s environment to the character’s traits), the speech of characters (both “what a character says and how s/he says it”), the speech of others, gesture (the indication of personality and treatment), action (“what a character does in the plot”), structure (of the plot and the role of a character within the narrative), and *mise-en-scène* (e.g., lighting, color, framing, composition, and the placing of actors) (pp. 107–117).

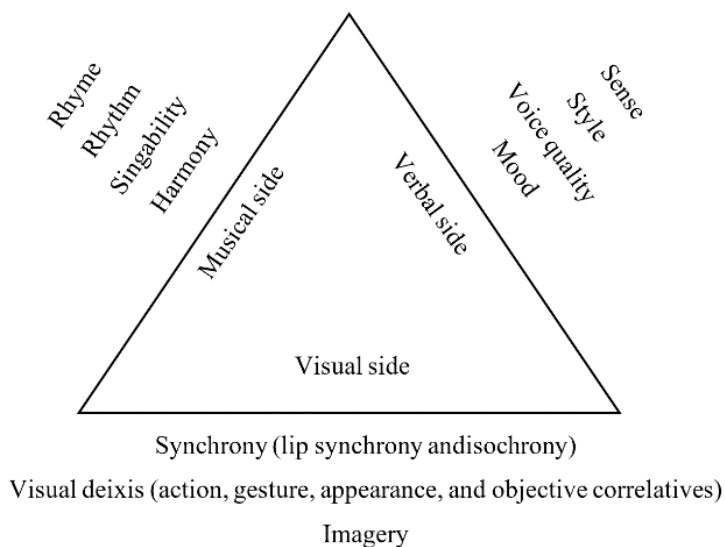
The study of characterization can be carried out as one of the main components of motion pictures in AVT. Reus (2017) examines the characterization of the protagonists of *Frozen* (2013) in one of the Dutch dubbed songs by employing the triangle of aspects model. Moreover, Bosseaux (2008, 2015) analyzes Buffy’s persona in the French dubbed version of the musical episode of the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* series (1997–2003). However, in the portrayal of characterization in musical films, they do not consider all the signs proposed by Dyer (1998) like action, appearance, objective correlatives, and gesture.

#### 4. The Study

The purpose of the study was to apply the merged model and empirically test its feasibility. In brief, by the integration of Bosseaux's voice quality (2015) as well as Dyer's signs (1998) into Reus's model (2020), the characterization of the singers in the original and dubbed versions were to be investigated and compared under several subcategories (Figure 3):

Figure 3

##### *The Triangle of Aspects for Characterization Analysis*



The multimodal model for characterization analysis drew on the three interrelated modes. For instance, when the aspects of the visual dimension were examined, their relation with the verbal aspects was simultaneously investigated to find out whether the same relation was reconstructed in the dubbed version or there was a shift to be observed. Therefore, the dimensions were not examined independently, but their interrelations were inspected.

To investigate the impact of song dubbing on characterization in *Frozen* (2013), the lyrics of eight songs sung by the main characters, Elsa, Anna, Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf, were selected. Reus (2017) examined the effect of the duet, *For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)*, on Elsa's and Ann's characterization in the Dutch translation, and the present article analyzed the diegetic songs performed by the main characters and translated into Persian meant for distribution in Iran, according to the new integrated model. To this end, the Persian dubbed version by the *Glory Entertainment* dubbing studio released in 2014 was selected. Glory Entertainment is one of the few professional Persian dubbing companies in the private sector which is currently based outside Iran.

A bilingual unidirectional parallel corpus consisting of the original and dubbed versions, and the English and Persian transcripts of the lyrics were provided. Then, the visual and verbal dimensions of

the samples were analyzed and compared between the original and the dubbed version. Additionally, the reformation of the interrelation between these dimensions was detected in the dubbed *Frozen* (2014). To limit the scope of the study, Reus's musical dimension (2020) was excluded and not considered.

Table 1

*Descriptive Information on the Selected Songs*

| Samples | Song title                                 | TCR                 | Character(s)  |
|---------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| S01     | Do You Want to Build a Snowman?            | 00.08.24 – 00.11.15 | Anna and Elsa |
| S02     | For The First Time in Forever              | 00.13.30 – 00.17.01 | Anna and Elsa |
| S03     | Love Is an Open Door                       | 00.23.49 – 00.25.29 | Anna and Hans |
| S04     | Let It Go                                  | 00.31.10 – 00.34.44 | Elsa          |
| S05     | Reindeer(s) Are Better than People         | 00.38.40 – 00.39.25 | Kristoff      |
| S06     | In Summer                                  | 00.47.41 – 00.49.09 | Olaf          |
| S07     | For the First Time in Forever<br>(Reprise) | 00.55.46 – 00.57.45 | Anna and Elsa |
| S08     | Fixer-Upper                                | 01.05.43 – 01.08.30 | Trolls        |

## 5. Results and Discussions

The results of the song analysis in Persian-dubbed *Frozen* based on our proposed model are presented below.

### 5.1. Visual Analysis

#### 5.1.1. Synchrony

The analysis of lip synchrony and isochrony was conducted based on Reus's system of values (2020): nonexistence differences, minor differences, and major differences. The number of lines performed in close-ups, medium close-ups, and medium shots, during which the character's mouth became visible on screen was counted. As Table 2 demonstrates, there is almost no difference in terms of both lip synchrony and isochrony; the Iranian dubbers voice the singers as if they sang in Persian. Both lip synchrony and isochrony are flawless. Given the significance of all types of synchronies in the Iranian viewer's reception of the dubbed products (Ameri et al., 2018), the dubbing actors probably attempt to preserve the synchronies.

Table 2

*The Synchrony in the Persian Version*

| Song | Visible lines | Lip synchrony | Isochrony |
|------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| S01  | 19            | 18            | 19        |
| S02  | 47            | 47            | 47        |
| S03  | 28            | 28            | 28        |
| S04  | 39            | 39            | 39        |
| S05  | 7             | 7             | 7         |
| S06  | 26            | 26            | 26        |
| S07  | 29            | 29            | 29        |
| S08  | 39            | 39            | 39        |

**5.1.2. Visual Deixis**

According to Reus (2020), to reflect the connections between the verbal and the visual reference in the dubbed films, translators adopt strategies like retention, removal, alteration, and addition. In Persian-dubbed *Frozen*, these connections are mostly retained. As Table 3 shows, out of 109 lines featuring visual deixes in the original, only 12 (11%) lose the same association with visual deixes in translation. Most deviations of all songs are attributed to alteration (5.5%) and removal (4.6%) in the dubbed version. To illustrate the types of deviation, the examples are provided under Dyer's visual categories of characterization (1998): action, gesture, appearance, and objective correlative.

Table 3

*Visual Deixis in the English and Persian Version*

| Song | Original Lines<br>with Visual Deixis | Visual Deixis in Persian |         |         |       |
|------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---------|-------|
|      |                                      | Retained                 | Removed | Altered | Added |
| S01  | 9                                    | 9                        | 0       | 0       | 0     |
| S02  | 19                                   | 16                       | 1       | 3       | 0     |
| S03  | 7                                    | 7                        | 0       | 0       | 0     |
| S04  | 20                                   | 17                       | 1       | 2       | 0     |
| S05  | 8                                    | 7                        | 1       | 0       | 0     |
| S06  | 14                                   | 13                       | 1       | 0       | 0     |
| S07  | 14                                   | 12                       | 1       | 1       | 0     |
| S08  | 18                                   | 17                       | 0       | 0       | 1     |

**5.1.2.1. Action**

In the following example, the relation between Anna's action and the line of the lyrics is altered in the dubbed film probably according to Iranian context and Islamic foreknowledge.

(1) *For the First Time in Forever* (00:14:12)

English original version:

I'll be dancing through the night

Dubbed version (English back translation):

The whole city will dance gracefully

Anna sings this line while playing on a swing. In the translation, the subject is changed from Anna to "the whole city", a metonymy for people inhabited there, apparently to tone down the unconventionality of dancing. According to Islamic traditions, females are forbidden from dancing in a public ceremony because they should uphold modesty and guard their chastity. Therefore, the originally indirect association between Anna's action of swinging in the morning and dancing at night is altered to people's dancing in the Persian version.

#### 5.1.2.2. Gesture

Elsa vocalizes the following line while turning away from Anna. By making this gesture, Elsa tries to drive Anna away. It implies Elsa's authority over Anna and her desire to be left alone.

(2) *For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)* (00:56:30)

English original version:

But leave me be

Dubbed version (English back translation):

I want you to know

The modified translation removes the affinity between Elsa's direct gesture and the line which shuts out Anna. In Persian, the distance between the two sisters and Elsa's mistreatment of Anna is played down presumably to avoid emphasizing the disagreement between the siblings.

#### 5.1.2.3. Appearance

Dyer (1998) believes that clothes, hairstyles, and accessories are "obviously culturally coded and widely assumed to be indicative of personality" (p. 110). In *Let It Go*, when building her sequestered palace, Elsa rebels against the conventional idea of a perfect girl which restricts her from using her power. She throws away her crown, unveils her sexuality and femininity by letting her hair down, creates a revealing tight-fitting dress for herself to replace her modest, full-length gown, and walks coquettishly around her palace. The indirect visual deixis renounces the idea of a constrained girl limited by her own society.

(3) *Let It Go* (00:34:22)

English original version:

That perfect girl is gone

Dubbed version (English back translation):

Thereafter, you don't have any signs of it

However, in the dubbed version, the verbal reference to her changed appearance is almost removed, and the translation is ambiguous, not referring to the concept of a perfect girl. As a result, the Iranian character of Elsa seems to be perceived as less defiant.

#### 5.1.2.4. Objective Correlative

In *Let It Go*, the snowy weather, distant mountains, black, dark blue, and white colors of the *mise-en-scène*, and Elsa's action of blowing her royal purple robe symbolize her feeling of isolation and rebellion, and the sense of the deprecation of the past.

(4) *Let It Go* (00:32:41)

English original version:

It's funny how some distance  
Makes everything seem small

Dubbed version (English back translation):

It is amazing that a little distance  
Makes everything easy

Elsa sings these lines when looking over the city from the mountain. The grip of fear and care for what people said seem trivial in her eyes. Elsa gains an insight that she can live freely and fearlessly on the snowy mountain without repressing her power and passion, tolerating the social pressure, and conforming to the norms. However, in the dubbed film the correlation is altered between the same objectives and the translated lines, suggesting a different interpretation of Elsa's feeling. According to the Persian translation, Elsa thinks that her challenges to her parents' advice and social norms are solved easily by moving away from society to the snowy mountains. Apparently, the Persian-speaking Elsa does not deem her challenges as trivial like the English-speaking character, but she imagines that distance gives her the ability to handle them easily, and to exploit her power freely in a secluded corner.

## 5.2. Verbal Analysis

### 5.2.1. Sense

According to Reus (2020), there are three types of semantic differences: no semantic difference (nearly accurate translation of a line), a minor difference (modification of the connotative meaning or parts of the denotative meaning), and a major difference (complete change of the denotative meaning of a line). Table 4 shows the result of comparison of the source lines of all songs with their target language versions. Accordingly, 23% of the lines of all songs are translated with no semantic difference, and 65% of the modified lines of all lyrics are rendered with minor semantic differences. Although most of semantic modifications are minor, they affect the singers' characterizations in the dubbed version. These modifications may be motivated by a desire to preserve the relation of the

verbal components with musical aspects (rhyme, rhythm, singability) and the visual aspects (lip synchrony, isochrony), or to adapt the lyrics to the target culture and the audience's Islamic foreknowledge, or both of the reasons. Regardless of the precise reasons, the current paper investigates what can be inferred from the translated lyrics and how these semantic changes may affect each singer's characterization. To illustrate their impact, a few examples are discussed below.

Table 4

*Sense in English and Persian Version*

| Song | Total lines | Extent of Semantic Difference in Persian Dub |       |       |
|------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
|      |             | No                                           | Minor | Major |
| S01  | 32          | 8                                            | 18    | 6     |
| S02  | 66          | 21                                           | 31    | 14    |
| S03  | 40          | 13                                           | 9     | 18    |
| S04  | 50          | 5                                            | 30    | 15    |
| S05  | 15          | 2                                            | 10    | 3     |
| S06  | 29          | 6                                            | 11    | 12    |
| S07  | 53          | 13                                           | 26    | 14    |
| S08  | 75          | 15                                           | 47    | 13    |

Elsa is considered as “a new brand of heroine” (Streiff & Dundes, 2017, p. 38). Contrary to most fairy tale female protagonists, she does not seem to conform to the stereotype of the flawless princess because she plagues her sister and the citizens of Arendelle with her power, albeit inadvertently. Example 5 shows that she is a reserved and repressed girl, intimidated by her power. However, in the dubbed version, Elsa's character comes across as a wise and self-controlled princess suppressing her passion and power more.

(5) *For the First Time in Forever* (00:15:43)

English original version:

Don't let them in  
Don't let them see  
Be the good girl you always have to be  
Conceal  
Don't feel

Dubbed version (English Back translation):

Don't say  
Don't change  
I'm a good and wise princess  
Chain it  
Conceal it

As the minor differences, the connotation of the translated sentences “don't change” and “chain it” sound more rigorous and repressed than the original lines “don't let them see” and “don't feel” respectively. This suggests that in the Persian version, Elsa's father advises her to be more repressed

than in the original version. Epstein (2008) claims that contrary to the traditionally Iranian authoritarian style of parents, government, and clergy, “child-centeredness, liberalism, and a laissez-faire approach to child-rearing” have increased in the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to the modern communication, parents’ education, and exposure to different cultures (p. 84). The translation seems to be more in line with the Iranian government’s policies since the Persian-speaking Elsa is assumingly less rebellious than the English-speaking character, who can disobey her father’s advice and social conventions. Moreover, in the source text (ST), her father addresses Elsa as a good girl while in the target text (TT), Elsa addresses herself as “a good and wise princess”, which may suggest her social status to the audience and her belief in herself rather than her father’s imperative words. Furthermore, goodness and wisdom are taken to be the necessary qualities of an Iranian princess.

Example 6 shows major semantic differences.

(6) *Let It Go* (00:32:48)

English original version:

And the fears that once controlled me  
Can't get to me at all  
It's time to see what I can do  
To test the limits and break through  
No right, no wrong  
No rules for me  
I'm free!

Dubbed version (English back translation):

The fear of abandonment  
Doesn't bother me anymore  
I know myself; I grow excited  
I cross the limits  
There is no longer any coercion and rule  
It's freedom!

In the ST, Elsa fears that her power is revealed in public, hurting others. The fear controls her to conceal her power. In the TT, the type of fear that Elsa experiences is different. It is “the fear of abandonment” which does not restrict her, but merely bothers her. The fifth line is not translated. In the ST, Elsa shows greater audacity to question the rightfulness of social values. However, in Iran, critical thinking is undervalued in the educational system (Mojab, 2013). As a result, the conception of skepticism seems to be dismissed in the dubbed version. Furthermore, in her secluded palace, Elsa is free from all social constraints, whereas in the dubbed *Frozen*, Elsa’s freedom is undermined by omitting the subject of “I’m free”, and generalizing it to “it’s freedom”. It can be inferred that if the idea of freedom is suggested to children and adolescents as the result of rebellion against social values, they may be encouraged to do so, and become uncontrollable.

The next lines reveal Elsa’s internal struggle.

(7) *For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)* (00:56:48)

English original version:

Anna: Arendelle’s in deep, deep, deep, deep snow

'Cause for the first time in forever  
Elsa: I'm such a fool, I can't be free  
Anna: You don't have to be afraid  
Elsa: No escape from the storm inside of me

Dubbed version (English back translation):

Anna: Arendelle is submerged in snow  
Because for the first time in forever  
Elsa: Oh, how simply I was chained  
Anna: You don't have to be afraid  
Elsa: I'm challenging with the storm inside me

The repetition of "deep" emphasizes that people are in severe difficulty due to Elsa's power which later she identifies as a "curse". However, in the TT, the emphasis is displaced as a minor semantic difference; consequently, the destructive side of her power is not stressed as the original line. In the third line, Elsa observes that she is a helpless fool deceiving herself by the illusion of freedom while in the TT, due to the major semantic difference, she is a victim who is simply chained by her power. The Persian version does nothing to undermine the viewers' belief in the main protagonist. If Elsa's power jeopardizes people's lives, it is beyond her control. The queen herself is a wise person, but is chained by the calamitous gift which she is trying to tackle.

The character of Anna also changes in the dubbed version. In Iran, as an Islamic society, women should wear a hijab, which is reflected in the Persian version in a way that Anna cares about the hijab.

*(8) For the First Time in Forever (00:14:37)*

English original version:

Tonight, imagine me a gown and all  
Fetchingly draped against the wall  
The picture of sophisticated grace

Dubbed version (English back translation):

I wear a beautiful *radā*  
I will be fetching and charming  
The figure of dignity and charm

In Persian, [*radā*] is a Chador, a long loose piece of clothing covering the whole body of a woman. In the dubbed version, solely the verbal dimension is modified while the musical and visual ones persevere. Although in the dubbed version, Anna's clothes are not changed visually, the verbal reference is altered in a way that a different interpretation is offered. In the dubbed film, when Anna twists the curtain around her body like a gown, she says "I wear a beautiful *radā*" since the twisted curtain resembles a *radā* and can be considered equivalent to a hijab in the Islamic culture. Therefore, the scene is localized only in terms of language to reconstruct a proper model for Iranian Muslim girls; Anna can look charming while wearing the hijab to be modest.

In the following passage, Anna as a younger sister has less authority over Elsa in the dubbed song. Anna's words, "don't have to" are translated to "don't need to" as a minor semantic modification. The former is the sign of external obligation in English; the latter is nevertheless a face-saving act and

lessens the possible threat to Elsa's face in Persian language. In Iranian culture, it is regarded as polite if the younger sibling indirectly asks the older one.

(9) *For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)* (00:55:50)

English original version:

You don't have to keep your distance anymore

Dubbed version (English back translation):

I'm gone away, you do not need to be cold like this

As regards the character of Kristoff in the dubbed animation his idiolect and choice of words make him look like a person belonging to the lower social class. In Example 10, he does not consider himself a member of society, but as a recluse raised by trolls. He compares people and reindeer, distancing himself from humans. However, in the TT, "people" is translated to "us" and "we"; Kristoff includes himself as people. As a minor semantic difference, it suggests that in the dubbed version Kristoff does not feel estranged from society but considers himself to be a part of it.

(10) *Reindeer(s) Are Better than People* (00:38:40)

English original version:

Kristoff: Reindeers are better than people

Sven, don't you think that's true?

Sven: Yeah, people will beat you, and curse you, and cheat you

Every one of em's bad, except you

Kristoff: But people smell better than reindeers

Dubbed version (English back translation):

Kristoff: Reindeers are better than us

Sven, Isn't true? Tell

Sven: They curse, beat, cheat

All.... ll of them are bad except you

Kristoff: We smell better than reindeers

Kristoff is speaking for his reindeer, Sven, symbolizing the rough side of Kristoff's character. Through the fierce tone that he emulates for Sven, he unleashes his anger toward people indirectly. However, in the dubbed song, when putting on Sven's voice, Kristoff expresses less sense of acerbity through his tone in the third line. Therefore, the Persian character of Kristoff expresses less misanthropic feelings.

(11) *Fixer-Upper* (01:05:54)

English original version:

He washes well

Dubbed version (English back translation):

He rinses himself with water

The translation of this line has the Islamic connotation; it refers to the Islamic rinse which is done when something is najis. In the Islamic context, najis is attributed to ritually unclean things. Parts of the body also can be najis when in contact with najis. For ritual purification, najis things should be rinsed based on Islamic law. Since he lives in the wild, Kristoff may not easily have access to water,

and consequently, he may seem najis because if he touches the najis like blood and liquid or solid waste, he becomes najis and should rinse himself ritually. However, as an outdoorsman, Kristoff rinses himself with water, which may have Islamic connotations and may suggest that Kristoff is a Muslim.

In addition to the semantic analysis of the lyrics, the style of the lyrics was also investigated and will be discussed in the next section.

### 5.2.2. Style

Reus (2020) evaluates style in terms of three categories: simple, average, and complex (p. 59). He does not precisely determine the criteria of categorization, but only explains that grammatical complexity is determined by the number of dependent clauses or phrases, sentence length, syntactic construction, and subject position, whereas lexical complexity depends on the etymological class of the word, word length, and word rarity. Accordingly, the analysis of style is qualitative in nature (Reus, 2018, 2020). In the current article, the stylistic analysis of English lyrics was carried out based on Reus's qualitative examination of songs (2018, 2020), and the style analysis of the Persian translations was conducted according to Reus's criteria of lexical and grammatical complexity (2018, 2020). In this respect, Persian simple style is defined as featuring sentences without subordinate clauses and using colloquial vocabulary. For the translated lyrics of this study, average style is understood as using literary language and subject-verb inversion, one of the features of Persian poetry (Taiyeb, 2005). These features are incorporated into the translation so as to adopt the Persian poetry style for American lyrics. The complex style will be characterized as using long sentences with subordinate clauses and archaic vocabulary. Table 5 indicates the style of all lines of the lyrics in both versions in which "S" stands for simple, "A" for average, and "C" for complex style. The stylistic notes reveal the most important ways in which each Persian translation deviates from the original.

Table 5

*Style in English and Persian Version*

| Song | Stylistic notes in the dubbed version                             | English |    |   | Persian |    |   |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----|---|---------|----|---|
|      |                                                                   | S       | A  | C | S       | A  | C |
| S01  | The childish language remains                                     | 30      | 2  | 0 | 32      | 0  | 0 |
| S02  | The literary language replaces the modern slang                   | 58      | 8  | 0 | 12      | 47 | 0 |
| S03  | The colloquial language remains                                   | 32      | 7  | 1 | 41      | 2  | 0 |
| S04  | The literary language replaces the informal one                   | 39      | 11 | 0 | 16      | 34 | 0 |
| S05  | The usage of the Persian street slang                             | 12      | 3  | 0 | 15      | 0  | 0 |
| S06  | The unnatural and awkward phrases replace informal language       | 22      | 7  | 0 | 28      | 0  | 0 |
| S07  | The usage of Persian literary language instead of an informal one | 46      | 7  | 0 | 27      | 24 | 0 |
| S08  | More colloquial language                                          | 47      | 25 | 3 | 71      | 0  | 0 |

In the Persian lyrics, some English lines are not translated, or two lines are translated as one line; therefore, the total number of Persian lines in a given song may differ from that of English original. According to table 5, in all lines of the original lyrics, the percentages of the stylistically simple lines (79%) and average lines (19%) are considerably changed in all lines of the Persian lyrics including the percentage of stylistically simple lines (69%) and average lines (30%). In the Persian version, the number of stylistically average lines increased drastically in the songs that Elsa performs, including two duets by Elsa and Anna, *For the First Time in Forever* and *For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)*, and one solo song by Elsa, *Let It Go*. The stylistic variation among the Persian-speaking singers is increased; each singer develops their distinctive style which apparently shows their social status. Elsa, as a queen, mostly uses formal and literary language suggesting she is probably literate and wise while in the English version she usually adopts the simple style. For instance, the following stylistically simple line is translated with literary language and the inversion of the subject and verb order.

(12) *Let It Go* (00:31:10)

English original version:

The snow glows white on the mountain tonight

Dubbed version (English back translation):

Clothed in white, the mountain and meadow

Anna, as a princess holding the socially lower status than Elsa, uses the literary language in the duets with Elsa and the colloquial language in the solo song, *Do You Want to Build a Snowman?* and in the duet with her beloved, *Love Is an Open Door*. Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf sing in the vernacular. They use the Persian street slang associated with those belonging to the lower classes, people who are illiterate or have low literacy. Besides, Olaf's awkward choice of words in Persian implies that he is

more superficial than Kristoff and Sven. Olaf forms the unnatural words and phrases in the song, *In Summer*, which is not used in Persian; for example, [lamān] and [lamzadegī] instead of [lamīdan] orloungeing, [shootānat] instead of [shoot kardan] or shooting. He also exploits the literary phrase humorously such as [bande shavam khoshnood] (or “I personally appear pleased”, and [āsmānash che nīlgoon] or) “what an indigo sky is”. Moreover, he inverts the order of the parts of speech like poetic language in Persian while his choice of words are informal or awkward and his tone is absurd and ridiculous that results in the humorous characterization, and boosts the jocular side of his character.

### 5.2.3. Voice Quality

To analyze the voice actors’ voice quality in the original and dubbed versions, Bosseaux (2015) borrows Van Leeuwen’s criteria (1999). Accordingly, the features of each singer’s voice actor/actress in all selected songs of both versions were examined. The voice actress of the Persian-speaking Elsa has almost the same voice quality as the original one. In both versions, Elsa’s voice is a little rough, breathy, and loud; her pitch range is low. As regards the character Anna, the voice quality of both American and Iranian voice actresses apparently feature the same tension, loudness, breathiness, and vibrato. However, the Iranian dubbing artist has a higher pitched range and more polished voice, presumably suggesting a more emotional and tender-hearted girl in the Persian version.

Considering Kristoff’s voice, the original and dubbed voices almost sound alike. However, when the American actor voicing Kristoff sings Sven’s lines, he produces a lower pitched range, and a tenser and harsher voice than the dubbed one. Since tension and harshness may show aggression (Van Leeuwen, 1999), the English-speaking Sven seems to be a more temperamental character than the Persian-speaking one. Moreover, the actor voicing Kristoff in the Iranian version adds stutter when putting on Sven’s voice, making Sven a less sociable character. Olaf’s American voice actor also uses a lower vocal range, and a harsher voice in which tension is more apparent than in his dubbing actor’s voice. As vocal tension may also express excitement (Van Leeuwen, 1999), in the case of the animated film, the English-speaking Olaf sounds more excited than the Persian-speaking one. This analysis of reveals that differences in voice quality between Persian and American voice actors in the two versions of *Frozen* contribute to a change in how the characters are portrayed in the dubbed version, although the visual aspect remains intact.

## 6. Conclusions

The current study has tried to improve Reus’s model for the analysis of song dubbing (2020) by combining it with Bosseaux’s multimodal modal of characterization in dubbing (2015) and Dyer’s criteria for constructing characters’ personality in Film Studies (1998). Bosseaux’s model (2015) mostly overlaps with Reus’s triangle of aspects (2020) except for the aspect of voice quality that the latter excludes. To improve Reus’s model (2020), voice quality has been added to the verbal dimension. Moreover, to make Reus’s analysis of visual deixis (2020) more systematic, it has been

subcategorized using Dyer's visual signs (1998) including action, gesture, appearance, and objective correlative to examine the relation of the verbal message with the visual references from different angles. Therefore, the current study refines Reus's model (2020).

To empirically apply the merged model of characterization in song dubbing, eight songs from *Frozen* (2013) have been selected. A bilingual unidirectional parallel corpus was created comprising video recordings of the songs and transcriptions of the lyrics of both English and Persian versions, which made it possible to examine the visual and verbal dimensions and their multimodality. Regarding the visual dimension, lip-synchrony and isochrony are flawless in the dubbed songs, making the singers plausible as Persian characters. The relation between the verbal references and visual deixes for 3.9% of the lines of all songs is altered, removed, or added so that the deviations in multimodality change the singers' characterization in the dubbed version.

In the verbal dimension, over half of the lines of all songs are translated with minor or major semantic deviations which change the singers' characterization. The analysis of style reveals that the stylistic variations among the singers in the Persian songs are more apparent, and each Persian-speaking singer forms their distinctive style reflecting their social status. Regarding voice quality, the higher pitched voice of Persian-speaking Anna makes her character seem kinder; Sven's higher range and less vocal tension make him appear less aggressive than in the original, and the higher pitched range and more polished and less tense voice of Olaf's dubbing actor depict him as a less excited character in the Persian version. The analysis of the visual and verbal dimensions of the songs based on the integrated framework reveals a shift in terms of characterization of each singer in the dubbed version.

The English-speaking Elsa is a reserved, repressed, and isolated girl who is incapable of controlling her rising power. When she is crowned as queen, her repressed gift is revealed, and she escapes to snowy mountains where she can enjoy freedom, breaking the limits imposed by society, and rebelling against social values. The Persian characterization of Elsa shows her as a good and wise princess who is more repressed, less conflicted about suppressing her power and passions, and less dubious and rebellious against the rules and her parents' advice. Her preference for freedom and alienation over repression and reconciliation with society is less apparent. As an older sister, she is more authoritative over Anna. As a queen, she seems to be a victim of her power, not a fool deluding herself by the illusion of freedom. The original Anna is a passionate and impetuous girl who endeavors to bridge the distance between herself and Elsa, to help bring Elsa back to civilization, and to save Arendelle. However, in the Persian dubbing, the distance between the two sisters is less emphasized. Anna's individuality and subjectivity are mostly undermined. Moreover, she is inclined to be modest, and wants to wear a hijab for the coronation. The English version depicts Kristoff as a rough and rustic outdoorsman and a secluded youth. Nevertheless, in the Persian version, Kristoff is characterized as a lonely and shallow character belonging to the lower social class. Moreover, he appears to be a Muslim. By singing with a stutter for Sven, he expresses his introverted side with less misanthropic feelings. Olaf, as a flat character, is warm-hearted, comical, and foolish. In the Persian version, he is reshaped as more feeble-minded and ludicrous. The analysis demonstrates how song

dubbing impacts the characterization and how the singers are presented differently through visual and verbal dimensions in the Persian dubbed version.

To conclude, this article presents a merged model for the analysis of characterization in song dubbing to examine the various dimensions in AVT products, including musical, visual, and verbal modes. The merged model can be applied to other case studies and improved in the course of further research.

## Acknowledgements

This research was supported by Ferdowsi University of Mashhad [Grant Number 2/52661].

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