

TRANSLATING CULTURAL REFERENCES IN JAPANESE ANIMATION FILMS: THE CASE OF *SPIRITED AWAY*

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ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on the Oscar-winning animated feature film *Spirited Away* as a case study in Audiovisual Translation and analyzes the translations of three types of Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR): honorifics, characters' names, and religious references. This analysis aims to shed light on the predominant translation strategies used in the film's English and Portuguese dubbings and subtitles and the effect of a relay translation on the Portuguese versions. The results of the analysis indicate that the predominant translation strategies for the ECRs in the English dubbing and subtitling are target-oriented, except for the case of characters' names, and source-oriented in the Portuguese counterparts, with a greater tendency for source orientation in subtitling. The English dubbing used a variety of target-oriented strategies to clarify ECRs to the target audience, whereas the Portuguese hardly used such strategies and avoided departing from the Japanese original storyline.

KEYWORDS: Audiovisual Translation, Extralinguistic Cultural References, Anime, Relay Translation, *Spirited Away*

1. Introduction

Anime (or Japanese animation) is, beyond question, a global phenomenon. Many of the anime series and films are translated worldwide. Thanks to technological advances, viewers are often given the choice between dubbed and subtitled versions of animated content on DVD, Blu-ray, and online video streaming services like Netflix. An interesting fact is that translation strategies sometimes vary between these two translation modes and according to language. There are many possible factors for this. However, the most significant ones are the translation difficulties inherent to audiovisual media, cultural differences, and the pivot translation method.

Like the translation of other audiovisual products, the dubbing and subtitling of anime involve complex processes. Works of animation are made up of a blend of many different semiotic codes: dialogue, sound effects, background music, images, onscreen action, and so on. In animation films, for example, viewers hear sound effects and dialogue whilst watching what is happening on the screen. The action includes characters' movements, postures, gestures, and facial expressions as well as background settings. Firstly, translators deconstruct a series of semiotic codes that operate simultaneously. Then, they carefully choose strategies in accordance with a set of conventional editing rules and technical constraints so that the target text (TT) fits the scenes.

One of the greatest challenges is dealing with cultural references. Anime often includes many Japanese cultural traits which may be erased in the TT or are poorly conveyed to the target audience due to the difficulty of translation. Intercultural translation

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difficulties can be broadly divided into two categories: intralinguistic and extralinguistic problems (Leppihalme, 1997, p. 2). Intralinguistic problems include rhymes, proverbs, puns, metaphors, allusions, and idioms. In addition, there are problems inherent to grammatical categories that exist in the source language (SL) but not in the target language (TL). Furthermore, there are issues related to spoken language, such as dialect (Nedergaard-Larsen, 1993, p. 210). Extralinguistic problems encompass culture-specific phenomena, such as food, rituals, place names, and so on.

There are also difficulties in relay translations. In Portugal, anime is commonly subbed and dubbed using English as a pivot language (personal contact with PSB Audiovisual Productions). In this method, Japanese source texts (ST) are firstly translated into English and then from English into Portuguese. In this relay translation, STs go through two different “cultural filters”. Firstly, the Japanese ST goes through the English language “cultural filter”. Here, the nuances of the ST are retained, changed, or discarded as a result of the translator’s choices and of various constraints. Secondly, this filtered ST, which is the English TT, is again “filtered” to be adapted to the Portuguese culture. If there are errors or misunderstandings in the English translation, these will most likely be replicated in the Portuguese translation. Also, the greater the number of cultural adaptations in the English translation, the greater the gap between the Japanese ST and the Portuguese TT.

This paper focuses on the Oscar-winning animated feature film *Spirited Away* as a case study in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) and analyzes the translations of cultural references in the English subtitling and dubbing, as well as in their Portuguese counterparts. The objective of this analysis is to shed light on the predominant translation strategies used in the film’s dubbings and subtitles and the effect of a pivot translation on the Portuguese version. The paper starts by presenting the film and its translation process. It then briefly discusses the characteristics of dubbing and subtitling, highlighting their differences in terms of constraints and fidelity to the ST. Finally, it describes Pedersen’s (2011) taxonomy and uses it to analyze the film.

2. *Spirited Away*

Spirited Away is a Japanese animated fantasy film directed by Hayao Miyazaki and produced by Studio Ghibli. Released in 2001, the film won various awards, including the Oscar for Best Animated Feature at the 75th Annual Academy Awards, in 2003. Its vast popularity encompasses both children and adults throughout the world. The story is about the adventures of a ten-year-old girl named Chihiro. Her family is moving to the countryside. On the way to their new home, they accidentally wander into a mysterious land where gods and spirits dwell. Feasting on forbidden food, her parents turn into pigs. In order to save her parents and find her way back, Chihiro has to give up her name and work at a bathhouse ruled by a witch. In her adventures, Chihiro faces many challenges, but also makes new friends, discovers her inner power, and finds her way out. The film is steeped in Japanese culture, including elements such as traditional folktales, legends, and religious beliefs. Indeed, the film’s main theme is deeply connected to the Japanese

indigenous religion, Shinto. This animistic belief is the core of the storyline that makes *Spirited Away* so profound.

3. Translation processes

This section provides an overview of the processes used to subtitle and dub Japanese animation films in general, highlighting their different technical constraints and characteristics. It then discusses the specific processes of translating *Spirited Away* from Japanese into English and Portuguese.

In subtitling, translators are usually provided with a copy of the source video and the original script (Clemente and McCarthy, 2006, p. 671). Then, they carry out their translation according to the time and space available. The available space for subtitles on DVD is usually two lines, totaling forty characters. The duration of each subtitle is generally set from one to six seconds (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 96-98). In addition to such constraints, translators have to respect the rhythm of characters' speech, its duration, and shot changes. These rules ensure a comfortable reading experience, but sometimes force translators to eliminate irrelevant information and reformulate relevant information to make it more concise. Therefore, subtitles tend to be shorter than the original dialogue (Chiaro, 2009, p. 148). One important characteristic of this mode is that the original text is available to the audience at all times, which may lead the translator to choose "faithful", i.e. source-oriented strategies as much as possible in order to meet the audience's expectations.

In dubbing, the translator produces a literal or source-oriented translation of the ST. The adapter uses this translation to write a dubbing script (Yegulalp, 2017). Dubbing aims to create the illusion that the characters are actually speaking the viewers' language. Thus, emphasis is put on creating a natural dialogue that matches characters' lip movements (Chaume, 2012, pp. 15-16). In the scriptwriting process, lines in the initial source-oriented translation are paraphrased, modified, or deleted. Even new lines are added so that the script follows the target culture (TC) communication style. In the US, adapters pay special attention to synchronizing the script to the animated lip flap movement. In Japan, however, such requirement is less strict. Dubbing is acceptable so long as the dialogue starts when the character's lips open and ends when the last lip flap closes (Reesman, 2005). It is important to mention that this type of constraint only applies when the character's mouth is shown in detail on the screen. In dubbing, line additions are possible as long as they fit the scene.

The English subtitles and dubbing of *Spirited Away* were made in collaboration with the production company, Studio Ghibli (credits in the English DVD) (The Hayao Miyazaki Web, 2005). The Portuguese translations of *Spirited Away* were produced using English as a pivot language (personal contact with Outsider Films). The Portuguese subtitles were translated from their English counterparts (personal contact with translator Sara David Lopes). The information on the Portuguese dubbing process could not be obtained, but it seems safe to assume that the Portuguese dubbing text is based on the Portuguese

subtitles, for around 40% of the dubbing lines are identical to those of the subtitles.¹ In addition, the great majority of lines in these two Portuguese TTs are very similar, with only minor differences, such as the use of interjections, nouns of direct address, and redundant or emphatic expressions that are typical of spoken Portuguese, such as “é que”. It seems that the English subtitles were also used and cross-checked against each other when adaptations were necessary due to lip-sync issues. On the other hand, it appears that the English dubbing text was rarely used in writing the Portuguese dubbing script. This is based on the fact that the Portuguese dubbing text is very close to the English subtitles and does not include the same kind of line additions or the significant line alterations that are found in the English dubbing script.

To conclude the presentation of translation processes, it is important to mention that dubbings of anime often target children due to their limited reading ability. In such cases, translators may opt for child-friendly translation strategies, like simplifying difficult lines and avoiding educationally inappropriate expressions for children in the TC. On the other hand, viewers of subtitled animes are usually middle/late teens or adults. Those who choose subtitles over dubbing tend to be more interested in the original message and the source culture (SC). For this reason, translators may try to preserve the cultural traits of the ST as much as possible in subtitles.

4. Translation strategies

Pedersen’s (2011) taxonomy is selected as the basis for this analysis. The taxonomy, which is based on the analysis of strategies for the translation of Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECR) in a large corpus of English STs (TV series and feature films) and their Danish and Swedish subtitles, is regarded as one of the most complete and detailed taxonomies for ECRs:

Source-oriented translation

Retention

Specification

Direct translation

Target-oriented translation

Generalization

Substitution

Omission

Others

Official equivalent

The following paragraphs present each strategy with examples from *Spirited Away*. *Retention* occurs when the ST ECR is retained in the TT unchanged or slightly adapted to meet TL conventions (e.g. dropping an article, transliterating) (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 77-79).

¹ A close comparison between the Portuguese subtitling and dubbing shows that 471 lines out of 1,159 are identical.

Strategy example 1: Retention	
CONTEXT: Haku tells Chihiro his real name.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION ²
HAKU: Chihiro arigatou. Watashi no hontou no na ha Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi da.	HAKU: Chihiro, thank you. My real name is Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi .
ENGLISH SUB	
HAKU: Chihiro, thank you. My real name is Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi .	

The ECR in this example is *Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi*, which is the name of one of the main characters and literally means “Master/God of the Plenteous-swift Amber Water/River”. This ECR is retained, discarding the meaning of this reference.

Specification occurs when the translator makes the ST ECR explicit for the TT audience. Examples include spelling out acronyms or abbreviations, adding the first name of a person, completing an official name, and the use of retention with a short explanatory expression (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 79-82).

Strategy example 2: Specification	
CONTEXT: Haku is telling Chihiro that she should go look for Kamaji.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
HAKU: Naka ni Kamaji to iu hito ga iru kara, Kamaji ni au n da.	HAKU: A person called Kamaji is inside. Meet Kamaji .
ENGLISH DUB	
HAKU: There you’ll find Kamaji, the boiler man .	

The ECR *Kamaji* is a person’s name, which literally means “old boiler man”. The English dubbing conveys this connotation to the TT audience through specification.

Direct translation involves only the change of language. The semantic weight of the ST reference is unchanged: nothing is added or subtracted. In this process, the translator reprocesses the ST ECR literally, morpheme by morpheme, making shifts to produce a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL expression (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 83-85).

² ST Direct Translation refers to a translation that uses Pedersen’s direct translation strategy as much as possible. References that cannot be easily translated through this strategy are reprocessed using either retention or one of the other strategies that closely conveys the feeling/idea of the original reference.

Strategy example 3: Direct translation	
CONTEXT: Kamaji found a train ticket to give it to Chihiro, who is talking with Lin.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
KAMAJI: Atta kore da. Sen atta zo. LIN: Jiisan ima isogashii n da yo.	KAMAJI: There was. It's this. Sen, there was. LIN: Gramps , now we are busy.
ENGLISH SUB	
KAMAJI: Found it! Here it is, Sen! LIN: We're busy, gramps .	

The ECR in this example is *jiisan*, which literally means grandfather/grandpa and is also used to refer affectionately to any old man. In the English subtitles, this ECR is translated directly.

Generalization involves replacing a reference with a superordinate term (hypernym or holonym) or paraphrasing a reference. The replacing of the reference by deictics is also considered a type of generalization (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 88-89).

Strategy example 4: Generalization	
CONTEXT: Chihiro's mother saw the elementary school that Chihiro is going to attend.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
MOTHER: Hora, are ga shougakkou da yo.	MOTHER: Look, that's the elementary school .
ENGLISH SUB	
MOTHER: Look, there's the school .	

The ECR in this example is *shougakkou*, which refers to "elementary school". This ECR is replaced by a more generic word in the English TT.

Substitution involves replacement of the reference with another cultural reference or something totally different that fits the situation (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 89-95).

Strategy example 5: Cultural substitution, Omission

CONTEXT: Chihiro and her parents are driving in their car. Chihiro holds a bouquet of flowers with a goodbye card. This scene implies that Chihiro’s family is moving.



ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)

MESSAGE CARD: Chihiro, genki dene mata aoune, **Risa**.

ST DIRECT TRANSLATION

MESSAGE CARD: Chihiro, Be well. Let’s meet again, **Risa**.

ENGLISH DUB

A GIRL’S VOICE: I’ll miss you, Chihiro. Your best friend, **Rumi**.

ENGLISH SUB

SUBTITLE: Good Luck, Chihiro. We’ll meet again.

In this excerpt, an off-screen voice reads out the message on the card in the English dubbing. The ECR is the name of the person who signed the card, *Risa*. In the TT, this name is replaced by *Rumi*, which is the Japanese voice actor’s name.

Omission refers to the strategy where the ST ECR is not included in the ST (Pedersen, 2011, p. 76). There are two possible results: either the ECR is conveyed to the TT audience by the other semiotic codes at work or every sense of the ECR is eliminated. In example 5, the name *Risa* is omitted in the English subtitles.

Differently from the other strategies, *official equivalents* are neither source- nor target-oriented, as they are ready-made solutions. This strategy is normally used when there is an already established or standardized translation (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 97-100). A typical example is the name of Disney’s character *Goofy*, who is called *Pateta* in Portuguese. Translators automatically use this name because it is the character’s already-established official Portuguese name.

To conclude this presentation of Pedersen’s taxonomy, it is important to point out that *concretization*, i.e. the replacement of an ECR by a more specific TL term, is deliberately left out. Pedersen (2011) and Ranzato (2016) point out that concretization rarely occurs in both subtitling and dubbing, because such strategy narrows down the meaning of the reference and may not meet the expectancy norms of most TT audiences. However, when the cultural distance between the SC and the TC is greater, as is the case in Japanese-to-English or Japanese-to-Portuguese translations, this strategy can be used more frequently than in the cases studied by these two researchers, in which the SC and the TC are in the same European cultural sphere. As shown below, there are several examples that require concretization when translating between Japanese and English or Portuguese.

5. Analysis of *Spirited Away*

5.1 Methodology

This section analyzes the translation strategies used in the English and Portuguese translations of *Spirited Away*. The aim of this analysis is to reveal: (1) whether the predominant translation strategies used in the film's subtitles and dubbings are more source- or target-oriented; and (2) in which ways the pivot translation method influenced the Portuguese translation of this same film. Three types of ECRs were selected for this analysis: honorifics, characters' names, and religious references.

1. Honorifics: The convention of addressing people is different between Japanese and English. Unlike most Anglophone countries, in Japan it is unusual to call someone you do not know well only by their first name, because it is considered rather rude. Japanese people often use names with honorifics in order to show respect to and/or acknowledge the different social status of the addressee.

2. Characters' names: In *Spirited Away*, characters' names have meanings. Some are highly relevant to the story. Some are not, but denote characteristics of their owners.

3. Religious references: Animistic elements are the core of the storyline. However, handling these elements is a challenge for Western translators, who first have to understand the animistic ideas in the story and then convey them to the TT audience so that those who are not familiar with the Japanese native religion can still understand it.

The study of translation strategies is both quantitative and qualitative. For the quantitative part of the study, all occurrences of the three types of ECRs in the ST were extracted and compared with their translations in the English TTs. The ECRs in the English subtitles (the pivot text) were then compared with their translations in the Portuguese TTs. As a result of these comparisons, translation strategies were categorized according to Pedersen's taxonomy. The number of occurrences of the various strategies was used to measure source- or target-oriented tendencies in the translations. For the qualitative study, we carried out an in-depth examination of the most relevant translations of ECRs, focusing on the cases where the translation strategy differs between dubbing and subtitling.

5.2 Corpus

The corpus³ for this study consists of the original Japanese animation film *千と千尋の神隠し* (*Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*), the English subtitles and dubbing of *Spirited Away* (2005), as well as the Portuguese subtitles and dubbing of *A Viagem de Chihiro* (2003). The English and Portuguese subtitles were extracted from the original DVDs. The Japanese,

³ The corpus is available upon request so that students and scholars who wish to conduct further research on the translation of *Spirited Away* can use it.

English, and Portuguese dubbing scripts closest to their originals were downloaded from the internet (<https://www.opensubtitles.org>) and revised to obtain exact matches of the original DVD dialogues. All the scripts in these subtitled text files were collated in an Excel spreadsheet and organized in two different ways:

No.	In-Time --> Out-Time	JP Script	JP oriented tran	ENSub	ENDub	PTSub	PTDub
1	00:00:13,047 --> 00:00:15,126	ちひろ 元気でね また会おうね	Good Luck, Chihiro	Good Luck, Chihiro	I'll miss you, Chihiro	Boa sorte, Chihiro	Boa sorte, Chihiro
2	00:00:15,287 --> 00:00:16,720	千尋	Chihiro	Chihiro	Chihiro	Chihiro...	Chihiro...
3	00:00:17,068 --> 00:00:18,287	千尋	Chihiro	Chihiro	Chihiro	Chihiro,	Chihiro,
4	00:00:18,287 --> 00:00:22,687	もうすぐだよ。	We're almost there	We're almost there	We're almost there	Estamos quase a	Estamos quase a
5	00:00:22,687 --> 00:00:32,167	やっぱり田舎ね	This really is the	This really is the	This really is the	Isto fica mesmo	Isto fica mesmo
6	00:00:32,167 --> 00:00:34,287	買い物は隣町に	I'll have to shop	I'll have to shop	I'm gonna have to	Tenho de fazer c	Terei de fazer
7	00:00:34,287 --> 00:00:37,007	住んで都にすぞ	It'll be great, once	It'll be great, once	We'll just have to	Vai ser óptimo, a	Vai ser óptim
8	00:00:37,007 --> 00:00:46,847	ほら、あれが小	Look, there's the	Look, there's the	Look, Chihiro. Th	Olha, lá está a es	Olha, lá está
9	00:00:46,847 --> 00:00:48,000	千尋、新しい学	That's your new	That's your new	Looks great, doe	É a tua escola nã	É a tua escol
10	00:00:48,000 --> 00:00:49,000	結構きれいな学	It looks quite go	It doesn't look sc	It doesn't look sc	Não parece ser n	Não parece s
11	00:00:49,000 --> 00:00:50,000	前の方がいいも	I liked my old sch	I liked my old sch	I'm gonna stink	Eu gostava da m	Eu gostava d

Figure 1. Each equivalent line is arranged side by side

This arrangement is convenient when searching for occurrences of certain expressions in a selected range (e.g. looking for the occurrences of “Chihiro” in the English dubbing column).

ECR Type	Strategies	Type	Interlocutors	Scripts
		No.		1
		Time		00:00:13,047 --> 00:00:15,126
Name		JP Script	Text onsc	ちひろ 元気でね また会おうね 理砂
Name		JP oriented translation	Text onsc	Chihiro, Be well. Let's meet again. - Risa
Name	Omission	ENSub	Text onsc	Good Luck, Chihiro We'll meet again
Name	Substitution	ENDub	Text onsc	I'll miss you, Chihiro. Your best friend, Rumi.
Name		PTSub	Text onsc	Boa sorte, Chihiro. Até à vista.
Name		PTDub	Text onsc	Boa sorte, Chihiro. Até à vista.
		No.		2
		Time		00:00:15,287 --> 00:00:16,720
Name		JP Script	Dad	千尋

Figure 2. Each equivalent line is horizontally aligned

This arrangement of the ST and the TTs allows for an easy comparison of lines. This sheet was also used to check whether the subtitling and dubbing lines are identical, whether lines include ECRs and, if so, what strategies are used.

5.3 Analysis of honorifics

This analysis focuses on the honorifics attached to characters' names. There are 28 occurrences of honorific suffixes (-san or -sama) or prefixes (o-). Their descriptions are as follows:

Honorific	Type	Description
-san	Suffix	Similar to “Mr.”, “Ms.”, “Mrs.” and is used when respectfully addressing people who are of more or less the same status.
-sama	Suffix	More formal and respectful than <i>san</i> and is used when addressing people who are of much higher rank than one’s own, such as deities, and the empress. It is also used for customers or guests.
o-	Prefix	Used to add a feeling of politeness or respect to the expression.

Figure 3. Honorifics and their descriptions

Figure 4 provides a list of honorifics and their translations.

Honorific	Meaning	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Kamaji-san	Name-honorific	Kamaji	Kamaji	Kamaji	Kamaji
Rin-san	Name-honorific	Lin	Lin	Lin	Lin
Zeniba-san	Name-honorific	ma’am	Zeniba	Zejiba	Zeniba
Yubaba-sama	Name-honorific	Yubaba, madam	Yubaba	Yubaba	Yubaba
Haku-sama	Name-honorific	Master Haku	Master Haku	Mestre Haku	Mestre Haku
Kasuga-san	Name of a group of gods-honorific	Radish spirit	Kasuga sama	Kasuga	Kasuga
Kami-sama	God-honorific	Little spirit, spirit	god	deus	deus
O-kusare-sama	Honorific-rotten-honorific	Smelly one	Stinker	Deus Fedorento	Fedorento
O-kusare-god	Honorific-rotten-god	Stink spirit	Stink God	Deus Fedorento	Deus Fedorento

Figure 4. Translations for honorifics

Each translation is classified according to its translation strategy, as shown in Table 1.

Honorifics	JP to EN		EN to PT	
	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Source-oriented translation				
Retention		3.4%	0%	
Direct translation		0%	50.0%	87.5%
Source-oriented translation (Total)		3.4%	50.0%	87.5%
Target-oriented translation				
Substitution	31.0%	24.1%		
Omission	69.0%	72.4%	50.0%	12.5%
Target-oriented translation (Total)	100%	96.6%	50.0%	12.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 1. Strategies for honorifics

The quantitative analysis of honorifics shows a target-oriented tendency in Japanese-to-English translations. The majority of honorifics were omitted and a small number of them were translated using substitution. Omission was applied in the circumstances where

the TC audience would not use honorifics. Substitution was used when those addressed are in the bathhouse’s high ranks, such as Haku, Yubaba, and Zeniba. In this strategy, honorifics were substituted by corresponding expressions in the American culture.

The English into Portuguese translations are much more source-oriented. This should be attributed to the fact that the use of honorifics in Portuguese is very similar to that in English. The majority of problematic honorifics had already been eliminated in the Japanese-to-English translation process. The rest of the honorifics, such as *madam*, *ma’am*, and *master*, were less problematic. In fact, they have corresponding words in Portuguese and were translated using direct translation. In the Portuguese dubbing, some lines including honorifics were omitted. For example, in the scene where the bathhouse workers are looking for Haku, a repetitive line, “Master Haku! Master Haku!”, is eliminated and substituted by the noise of confused bathhouse workers. This type of line elimination would be awkward in the subtitles, because the audience hears “Haku” but the name is not shown on the screen.

An interesting finding in the qualitative analysis is that some examples suggest high target orientation of the English dubbing and high source orientation of the English subtitling. A good example of this is the translation of *Kasuga-sama*, which refers to a group of deities from the Kasuga shrine. Kasuga comes from a place name. The reference is used only once in the ST and is irrelevant to the storyline. The image of the reference and its translations are shown below.

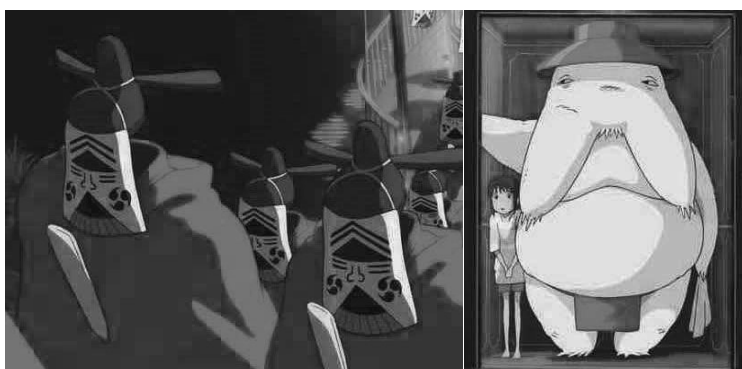


Figure 5. Kasuga-sama (left) and Oshira-sama or Radish Spirit (right)

Reference: *Kasuga-sama* [deities from the Kasuga shrine]

	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Translations	Radish Spirit	Kasuga sama	Kasuga	Kasuga
Strategies	Substitution, Omission	Retention	Retention, Omission	Retention, Omission

The English dubbing eliminates the honorific and replaces the reference with an invented name for another deity, Radish Spirit. This substitution cannot be explained by the constraints of lip sync, since retention makes it easier to match lip movements. It is then logical to consider that adapters intentionally replaced such exotic reference with another that sounds more familiar, especially for those who can identify it with the spirit

who rides the elevator together with the protagonist in a previous scene. This substitution makes the TT easier to follow. Indeed, the English dubbing is created on the premise that an audience without any SC knowledge can fully understand the story (The Hayao Miyazaki Web, 2003). On the contrary, the English subtitles retain this exotic reference. It seems that this mode targets those who have some SC knowledge and expect a translation that is “faithful” to the original. In the English-Portuguese translations, *Kasuga* is retained, although the honorific attached to this name is omitted. In this particular example, the Portuguese subtitles and dubbing are very much source-oriented, but the level of source orientation is not as high as in the English subtitles.

5.4 Analysis of character’s names

This analysis focuses on the names of the eight main characters. Most of them are addressed by their respective names or substitutes. There are eleven different names or substitutes and a total of 204 occurrences of these references are confirmed in the ST. The names that occur with honorifics in the ST are excluded from the analysis. Figure 6 provides a list of these names/substitutes and their translations:

Name/ substitute	Meaning	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Bou	Baby	baby, I, you, me, sweetie, sweetie pie	baby, I, me	Bou, bebé eu, comigo	bebé eu, comigo
Chihiro	Thousand fathoms (given name)	Chihiro, you, your, yours, sweetie	Chihiro, you, yours	Chihiro, tu, teu, tuas, esse	Chihiro, tu, teu, te, esse
Ogino Chihiro	Silver grass field (family name), Thousand fathoms (given name)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)
Sen	Thousand	Sen, you, it, that girl, her	Sen, you, that girl, she	Sen, tu, ela, essa rapariga	Sen, tu, ela, essa rapariga
Haku	White	Haku, I, you, your, he, him	Haku, Hakus, I, you, your, he, him	Haku, eu, Hakus, teu, tu ele, o, te	Haku, eu, Hakus, teu, tu, ele, o
Kohaku	Amber	You	Kohaku	Kohaku	Kohaku
Kamaji	Boiler old man	Kamaji, Kamaji, the boiler man, Haku	Kamaji, him	Kamaji, o	Kamaji, o
Kaonashi	No face	No Face	No Face	Sem Face	Sem Face
Rin	(unknown, given name)	Lin	Lin, you	Lin, tu	Lin, tu
Yubaba	bath crone	Yubaba, he, No Face	Yubaba	Yubaba	Yubaba
Zeniba	money crone	Zeniba, your sister	Zeniba	Zeniba	Zeniba

Figure 6. Translations for characters’ names/substitutes

Each translation is classified according to its translation strategy, as shown in Table 2.

Characters' names/substitutes	JP to EN		EN to PT	
	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Source-oriented translation				
Retention	61.8%	74.5%	72.8%	74.5%
Retention from the JP ST			4.0%	4.5%
Specification	0.5%	0%	0%	0%
Direct translation	4.4%	7.4%	13.4%	16.5%
Direct translation from the JP ST			3.5%	1.5%
Source-oriented translation (Total)	66.7%	81.9%	94.6%	98.0%
Target-oriented translation				
Generalization	14.7%	11.3%	1.0%	0.5%
Substitution	4.9%	0%	0%	0%
Omission	13.7%	6.9%	4.5%	1.5%
Target-oriented translation (Total)	33.3%	18.1%	5.4%	2.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2. Strategies for characters' names/substitutes

The quantitative analysis of characters' names shows that both the English dubbing and subtitles are predominantly source-oriented. The English subtitles are more source-oriented than the English dubbing, given that the latter mode adopts more frequent substitutions and omissions. Retention is the predominant strategy in both modes. Indeed, six out of eight characters' names are transferred using this strategy. However, this procedure does not convey their meanings to the general TT audience. For example, the connotation of the name Haku ("white") is discarded in the English subtitles, affecting the understanding of the scene where Chihiro sees Haku in the white dragon form. The English dubbing, on the other hand, clearly explains that he is the white dragon by introducing an extra line. The remaining two characters – Kaonashi ("No Face") and Bou ("baby") – are translated using direct translation in the English TTs. Translating Kaonashi is essential because of the impact of his name, which is associated with his creepy appearance and monstrous behavior in the story. Bou is a character's name in *Spirited Away* and, at the same time, an old-fashioned term to address a baby boy or little boy in Japanese. This word is translated as "baby" in the English subtitling and as "baby", "sweetie", or "sweetie pie" in the English dubbing. In this example, the English dubbing better conveys the nuance of this reference through substitution. Sometimes names were replaced by pronouns so that the TTs sound natural. As a matter of fact, the English language tolerates less frequent use of personal proper names than the Japanese language (Baker, 1992, pp. 184-185). In the English dubbing, substitution was also used to change the subject of a sentence. In the following example, the subject Yubaba is replaced with a personal pronoun that indicates another character.

Name example 1: Subject substitution	
CONTEXT: No Face is causing problems at the bathhouse. The owner of the house, Yubaba, is furious and says that it was Sen who led No Face to the bathhouse. Lin finds Chihiro and tells her what is happening.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
LIN: Yubaba ga kankan ni natte omae no koto sagashite iru zo. Kimae ga ii to omotte ta kyaku ga, Kaonashi tte bake mon datta n da yo. Yubaba wa Sen ga hikiire ta tte iu n da.	LIN: Yubaba’s hopping mad and looking for you. The customer who we thought was a big-spender turned out to be a monster, No Face. Yubaba says, “Sen brought him here”.
ENGLISH DUB	ENGLISH SUB
LIN: Everyone’s looking for you. Yubaba is furious. The guy with all the gold turned out to be a monster called “No Face”. And he says that you let him into the bathhouse.	LIN: Yubaba’s tearing the place apart looking for you. The big tipper turned out to be a horrible monster, No Face. Yubaba says you led him here.

In the ST, Lin first talks about Yubaba, then about No Face, and then again about Yubaba. This sudden change of subjects in few lines is a little confusing. It is likely that the dubbing adapters changed the subject to No Face in order to make this dialogue simple and easy to follow. In this excerpt, the English subtitles are faithful to the ST.

Omissions are observed mainly in the following four circumstances: a) where the name is considered redundant; b) where the line is paraphrased; c) where the line is replaced by a completely different line; and d) where the line itself is omitted. The first two types of omission cause only subtle changes and are often used because of technical constraints. The third and fourth types are highly target-oriented. One of the most notable changes by this third type was observed in the English dubbing at the end of the film.

Name example 2: Line omission, substitution and addition	
CONTEXT: This is the last scene in the film. Chihiro’s parents get their car ready to leave to go to their new home. When they are ready, they call for Chihiro to get into the car.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
MOTHER: Oorai oorai, heiki yo. FATHER: Chihiro iku yo. MOTHER: Chihiro hayaku shinasai!	MOTHER: All right. All right. It’s all right. FATHER: Chihiro , we’re off. MOTHER: Chihiro , hurry up!
ENGLISH DUB	ENGLISH SUB
MOTHER: Come on, Chihiro . Let’s get to our new home. FATHER: You’re not scared, are you? MOTHER: Don’t be afraid, honey. Everything’s gonna be okay. FATHER: A new home and a new school. It is a bit scary. CHIHIRO: I think I can handle it.	MOTHER: OK, all clear. FATHER: We’re off, Chihiro . MOTHER: Hurry up, Chihiro !

The English subtitles provide an accurate translation of the original, while the English dubbing involves line substitutions and additions. This way the English dubbing makes it clear that Chihiro is now stronger and has the power to face any difficulties.

Both Portuguese TTs show a high degree of fidelity to the English subtitles. Only four strategies are used in the Portuguese translations: retention, direct translation, generalization, and omission. Retention was used for almost all the names that are retained in the Japanese-to-English translation. Direct translation was applied to pronouns and names that are translated using the same strategy in the Japanese-to-English translation. A few names were translated as pronouns using generalization. Omissions were observed in the following three circumstances: a) where the name was considered redundant; b) where the line was paraphrased; and c) where the line itself was omitted. The third type of omission is rarely observed and only used in dubbing. One such example is as follows:

Name example 3: Line omission vs. Direct translation	
CONTEXT: No Face starts devouring bathhouse staff and tries to attract Sen's attention.	
ENGLISH SUBTITLES (PIVOT TEXT)	
NO FACE: Try this, it's yummy. Want some gold? I'm not giving it to anybody else. Come over here, Sen . What is it you want? You can tell me.	
PORTUGUESE DUB	PORTUGUESE SUB
SEM FACE: Prova isto. É saboroso. Queres ouro? Queres ouro? Eu não o dou a mais ninguém.	SEM FACE: Prova isto, é saboroso. Queres ouro? Não o dou a mais ninguém. Anda para aqui, Sen . O que é que tu queres? Podes dizer-me.
DUB BACK TRANSLATION	SUB BACK TRANSLATION
NO FACE: Try this. It's delicious. Want gold? Want gold? I'm not giving it to anybody else.	NO FACE: Try this. It's delicious. Want gold? I'm not giving it to anybody else. Come over here, Sen . What do you want? You can tell me.

In this scene, the Portuguese subtitles are very closely translated from the English subtitles, and no lines are omitted. On the other hand, No Face's lines are shortened in the Portuguese dubbing, which omits three sentences but repeats a short question, "Queres ouro?" ("Want gold?"), twice. These dubbing lines best fit No Face's mouth movements, emphasize the creepiness of this character, and create a stronger impression of the scene.

Interestingly, the translations of some names in both Portuguese TTs seem to be based on the ST. The translator and the adapters must have consulted the original Japanese film in order to recreate a similar experience in the TTs. One such example is as follows:

Name example 4: Translation from the Japanese ST	
CONTEXT: Yubaba is frantically looking for her baby, Bou.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
Yubaba: Detekite okure! Bou! Bou! Bou!	Yubaba: Come out, please! Bou! Bou! Bou!
ENGLISH DUB	ENGLISH SUB (PIVOT TEXT)
Yubaba: Come out! Please, come out! Where are you? Sweetie! Sweetie pie!	Yubaba: Come out, please! Baby!
PORTUGUESE DUB	PORTUGUESE SUB
Yubaba: Aparece, por favor! Bou! Bou! Bou!	Yubaba: Aparece, por favor! Bebé! Bebé! Bebé!
DUB BACK TRANSLATION	SUB BACK TRANSLATION
Yubaba: Come out, please! Bou! Bou! Bou!	Yubaba: Come out, please! Baby! Baby! Baby!

In this excerpt, the English subtitles omit the name “baby” twice. However, the Portuguese subtitles directly translate *bou* as “bebé” (“baby”), repeating it exactly three times as in the Japanese ST. On the other hand, the Portuguese dubbing text retains the name Bou from the Japanese ST.

5.5 Analysis of religious references

This analysis focuses on the film’s religious references. Eighteen of them are found in the ST. However, there are many other religious objects and practices which are only presented visually and acoustically. These elements hint at the story development and suggest reasons for the occurrence of certain events. Such religious allusions are essential for a more profound understanding of the film, but they can only be understood by viewers who are familiar with the SC. Figure 7 provides a list of the religious references and their translations.

ST	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Kami kakushi [hidden away by the gods]	Spirited Away	Spirited Away	Viagem	Viagem
Kami [gods/sacred spirits]	spirit, little spirit	god	deus	deus
Yaorozu no kami [eight million gods]	the spirits	8 million gods	8 milhões de deuses	8 milhões de deuses
Kawa no kami [River god]	River spirit	River God	Deus do Rio	Deus do Rio
Kusare gami [Rotten god]	Stink spirit	Stink God	Deus Fedorento	Deus Fedorento
Kusare [Rotten]	smelly one	Stinker	Deus Fedorento	Fedorento
Kasuga [the gods from Kasuga shrine]	Radish Spirit	Kasuga	Kasuga	Kasuga

(continues)

Kawa no nushi [River master/god]	that spirit	River God	Deus do Rio	Deus do Rio
Nigihayami [Plenteous-swift River/Water]	river spirit	Nigihayami	Nigihayami	Nigihayami
Nigihayami kohaku nushi [Master/God of the Plenteous- swift Amber River]	Spirit of the Kohaku River, Kohaku River	Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi	Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi	Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi
Hokora [a miniature shrine for a minor gods/sacred spirits]	shrines	shrines	santuários	santuários
Kami sama no ouchi [houses of gods]	Some people think little spirits live there.	People pray to them.	As pessoas vão ali rezar.	As pessoas vão ali para rezar.
Omamori [amulet, good luck charm]	It'll protect you.	It'll protect you.	Vai proteger-te.	Vai proteger-te.
san nin [three people]	three people	two frogs and a slug	dois Sapos e uma Lesma	dois Sapos e uma Lesma

Figure 7. Translations of religious references

Each translation is classified according to its translation strategy, as shown in Table 3.

Religious references	JP to EN		EN to PT	
Strategies	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Source-oriented translation				
Retention	6.9%	16.7%	22.2%	23.5%
Direct translation	17.2%	16.7%	66.7%	70.6%
Source-oriented translation (Total)	24.1%	33.3%	88.9%	94.1%
Target-oriented translation				
Concretization	0%	29.2%	0%	0%
Generalization	41.4%	12.5%	0%	0%
Substitution	20.7%	20.8%	5.6%	5.9%
Omission	10.3%	4.2%	0%	0%
Explicitation	3.4%	0%	5.6%	0%
Target-oriented translation (Total)	75.9%	66.7%	11.1%	5.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3. Strategies for translating religious references

The quantitative analysis of religious references reveals a rather low proportion of source-oriented strategies in the Japanese-to-English translations. In most cases the translator avoided the use of retention, which suggests that religious references are regarded as too obscure for the TT audience to be retained. Only the names of two gods were maintained: one is irrelevant to the storyline, while the other is one of the main

characters. However, the most important connotation of his name was conveyed to the audience because the protagonist explains it in the story. Some references are reprocessed using more than one strategy, e.g. one of the main characters' name, Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi ("Master/God of the Plenteous-swift Amber Water/River") is translated as "Kohaku River" using retention, direct translation, and omission. Contrary to the Japanese-to-English translations, the English-to-Portuguese are highly source-oriented. This tendency can be attributed to the fact that Shinto references had already been well clarified for the Western audience in the Japanese-to-English translation process.

The English dubbing and subtitles show quite different tendencies in translating religious references. The dubbing script tends to tone down the religious essence, whereas the English subtitles elevate it. A good example is the translation of the definition of *hokora*:

Religion example 1: Explanation of <i>hokora</i>	
CONTEXT: When Chihiro and her parents are driving, Chihiro sees a number of little stone houses scattered around a huge old tree and she wonders what they are.	
ORIGINAL DIALOGUE (ST)	ST DIRECT TRANSLATION
CHIHIRO: Ano uchi mitai no nani? MOTHER: Ishi no hokora . Kami-sama no o-uchi yo.	CHIHIRO: What are those? They look like houses. MOTHER: They're stone made hokora , houses of gods/sacred spirits .
ENGLISH DUB	ENGLISH SUB (PIVOT TEXT)
CHIHIRO: What are those stones? They look like little houses. MOTHER: They're shrines . Some people think little spirits live there .	CHIHIRO: What are those little houses? MOTHER: They're shrines . People pray to them .
PORTUGUESE DUB	PORTUGUESE SUB
CHIHIRO: Que casinhas são aquelas? MOTHER: São santuários . As pessoas vão ali para rezar .	CHIHIRO: Que casinhas são aquelas? MOTHER: São santuários . As pessoas vão ali rezar .
DUB BACK TRANSLATION	SUB BACK TRANSLATION
CHIHIRO: What are those little houses? MOTHER: They're shrines . People go there to pray .	CHIHIRO: What are those little houses? MOTHER: They're shrines . People go there to pray .

ECR: *hokora* (a small shrine for minor gods/sacred spirits)

	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Translations	shrines	shrines	santuários	santuários
Strategies	Generalization	Generalization	Direct translation	Direct translation

ECR: *Kami-sama no o-uchi* (houses of gods/sacred spirits)

	EN DUB	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Translations	Some people think little spirits live there	People pray to them	As pessoas vão ali para rezar	As pessoas vão ali rezar
Strategies	Generalization	Substitution	Direct translation	Direct translation

In the ST, Chihiro asks about the scattered miniature stone houses and her mother gives a matter-of-fact reply, simply stating what is obvious to her, i.e. that they are houses of gods. Both the English dubbing and subtitles translate *hokora* with the more general word “shrine”, which conveys the idea of their sacredness. The explanation that follows, however, is very different in the two AVT modes. In the English dubbing script, Chihiro’s mother explains that “little spirits live there”, which seems to convey *hokora* as elements deprived of their religious essence. The English subtitles, on the other hand, seem to reinforce the idea of sacredness by adding the sentence “People pray to them”. What the image shows, however, is that most probably no one prays to them, because their state (scattered and neglected without any offerings) suggests that they are abandoned. Moreover, the fact that Chihiro does not know what they are suggests that Japanese children are not taught about their traditions.

One of the most problematic religious references is *kami*, which encompass all superlative and awe-striking phenomena: God, deities, divine spirits, and the numinous energy of places or objects (Matsumura, no date). No exact correspondence can be found in either English or Portuguese. Interestingly, the choice of strategies differs between the two AVT modes in English. The dubbing chooses the more global term “spirit”, whose definition, however, lacks sacredness. The subtitles use the more specific term “god”.

The Portuguese subtitles and dubbing employed the same strategies throughout, except in the following example:

Religion example 2: Explication	
CONTEXT: The bathhouse is in an uproar because a huge stink god is heading to the bathhouse.	
ENGLISH SUB (PIVOT TEXT)	
BATHHOUSE STAFF: It's a Stink God ?! An Extra Large Stinker at that.	
PORTUGUESE DUB	PORTUGUESE SUB
BATHHOUSE STAFF: É um Deus Fedorento ?! É um Deus Fedorento enorme!	BATHHOUSE STAFF: É um Deus Fedorento ?! É um enorme fedorento !
DUB BACK TRANSLATION	SUB BACK TRANSLATION
BATHHOUSE STAFF: It's a Stink God ?! It's a huge Stink God !	BATHHOUSE STAFF: It's a Stink God ?! It's a huge Stinker !

ECR: *Stinker*

	JP ST	EN SUB	PT DUB	PT SUB
Translations	O-kusare-sama [honorific-rotten honorific]	Stinker	Deus Fedorento	Fedorento
Strategies		Omission, Substitution	Explication, Direct translation	Direct translation

The reference “Stinker” in the English subtitles refers to the “Stink God”. The Portuguese dubbing makes this clear by adding an explanatory word “Deus” (“god”). At the same time, this addition contributed to lip sync. This type of strategy is not included in Pedersen’s taxonomy. We categorized this as explicitation, i.e. addition of information that is implicit in the ST to explain or clarify the reference to the TT audience) following Ranzato’s (2016) strategy.

6. Conclusions

The result of the analysis indicates that the predominant translation strategies for the ECRs in the Japanese-to-English dubbing and subtitles are target-oriented, except for the case of characters’ names. The tendency towards source orientation is highly influenced by the difficulty in conveying ECRs as well as their relevance. Indeed, honorifics were generally omitted because the convention of addressing people is different between Japanese and English. Honorifics had to be adapted to the American culture so that the audience could understand the character relationships correctly. Many religious references do not have corresponding expressions in English. However, they had to be clarified using target-oriented strategies, as they are the core of the story. On the other hand, most characters’ names were retained in the English TTs, discarding their meanings or connotations, probably because this does not considerably affect the understanding of the story.

The predominant translation strategies for the ECRs in the Portuguese subtitles and dubbing are source-oriented. The distance separating English and Portuguese cultures is not as wide as that separating Japanese and English ones. Most intercultural translation problems were dealt with when the Japanese ST was reprocessed into English.

On the whole, subtitles are more source-oriented than dubbing. One fundamental reason is that subtitling is, by its very nature, more source-oriented than dubbing. Another significant reason is that the English dubbing and subtitles have apparently different target audiences. The English dubbing aimed to clarify and explain the story for those who are unfamiliar with Japanese culture and especially for children. For this the adapters used various target-oriented strategies and adapted the ECRs to the TC. On the other hand, the English subtitles frequently used source-oriented strategies to preserve the exotic nature of the ECRs. It seems that the English subtitles are directed towards those who have some SC knowledge and are interested in the original message.

Another finding is that the gap in the level of source orientation between Portuguese dubbing and subtitles is much smaller than that of English dubbing and subtitles. This is due to the fact that the Portuguese dubbing used a much smaller number of target-oriented strategies than the English dubbing. Given that the Portuguese subtitles and dubbing also include translations from the original Japanese text, the Portuguese translators most probably aimed to avoid divergence from the original. It is reasonable to assume that such strategy promoted a source-oriented translation in both Portuguese subtitles and dubbing.

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