

## Subtitling Strategies of Verbal-Visual Components in *The Social Dilemma*

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### Abstract

The widespread of technology and streaming platforms have highlighted the importance of audiovisual translation. Audiovisual materials consist of four components: verbal-acoustic, verbal-visual, nonverbal-visual, and nonverbal-acoustic. Subtitlers usually focus on rendering the verbal-acoustic component (i.e., the dialogue) and rarely focus on the verbal-visual component. Therefore, this article aims to identify the subtitling strategies used in rendering the verbal-visual components that are displayed simultaneously with the dialogue. The data are taken from the docudrama *The Social Dilemma*. Gottlieb's (1992) typology is used to identify the applied subtitling strategies. The analysis demonstrates that the subtitler employed seven subtitling strategies: transfer, paraphrase, imitation, deletion, expansion, condensation, and resignation. Also, the results indicate that resignation was the most frequently used strategy. Finally, the study recommends that the subtitler considers all components in the subtitling process.

**Keywords:** audiovisual translation, subtitling, docudrama, verbal-visual

### 1. Introduction

Translation is an important means of communication and one that has multiple forms. Gambier (2012) stated that audiovisual translation (henceforth AVT) is an important form of translation that has developed recently into a recognized field of study. Besides, people worldwide depend largely on AVT to understand the audiovisual (henceforth AV) materials produced in different languages and cultures. Consequently, most research in the field of AVT has been dedicated to screen translation (Chiaro, 2009). The translation of films, in most cases, is done using dubbing or subtitling. Gottlieb (2001) defined subtitling as “transcriptions of film or TV dialogue, presented simultaneously on screen” (pp. 244–245).

Lipkin (2002) described docudrama as a combination of documentary and melodrama. It was first recognized after the Second World War. In the last decade, with the advancement of technology, screen docudrama has established its firm status among other genres (Paget, 2016). Documentaries interact with a wide range of subjects, which prompted Matamala (2009a) to assert that in dealing with documentaries, translators should have high translation competence. Translation competence refers to “the underlying system of knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to translate” (PACTE, 2014, p. 87). In particular, translators must be resourceful and knowledgeable in order to be able to comprehend all necessary information. Furthermore, documentaries convey information using several channels (whether visually or acoustically), which explains why translators should be skilled so as not to neglect any of the diverse information presented in a documentary.

Díaz Cintas and Remael (2014) stressed that when the dialogue and the written words on the screen conflict, it creates a problem for the subtitler. Thus, micro-translation strategies should be used as a solution. The subtitler's choice of strategies is critical since it may result in information loss. Further, the field of semiotics and translation requires more research, as Gambier (2012) stressed, to have “a coherent field of research, combining all the different semiotic codes, including the influence of those codes on the linguistic one” (p. 57). This article, thus, investigates the strategies used in rendering the verbal-visual components (i.e., written words on the screen) when they are simultaneously presented with the dialogue in *The Social Dilemma*. The docudrama in hand presented information in different channels; some were spoken by the interviewees, and others were written in different colors on a black screen to attract the viewers. Thus, the implementation of the visual components (i.e., written words) may pose a challenge to the subtitler, especially when the dialogue and the verbal-visual element

are simultaneous.

### 1.1 Significance of the Study

Over the years, translation studies have been a printed text-oriented field of research (Díaz Cintas, 2012). Yet, the high demand for AVT in parallel with the advancement of technology and the availability of streaming platforms highlights the need for more research on AVT. While several research papers have focused on topics related to AVT (Chiaro, 2009; Gambier, 2012; Guillot, 2019; Linde & Kay, 2014; Zabalbeascoa, 2008), the field of documentary translation has received comparatively little attention (Matamala, 2009b; Thawabteh & Al-Adwan, 2021). Further, subtitling is considered a relatively new field of research; though much has been done in the field of subtitling research, “much still needs to be done” (Díaz Cintas, 2012, p. 284). Therefore, the current study is significant given that it is among the few AVT studies that tackle the topic of subtitling in documentary films.

While most research in the field has focused on the translation of the verbal-acoustic component, which is the dialogue (Chen, 2016; Cordella, 2017; Yang & Li, 2021; Zhang, 2020), this article investigates the strategies used in subtitling the verbal-visual components. Additionally, another important aspect that highlights the significance of the study is that it examines a docudrama (i.e., a subtype of documentary) as the main data of the study, which apparently has not been previously investigated, especially in terms of English-Arabic subtitling.

## 2. Literature Review

Written texts such as novels, newspapers, letters, etc., are described as monosemic texts; they are only expressed through one channel of communication (Gottlieb, 2001). On the other hand, AV materials are considered polysemiotic texts. Chiaro (2009) described polysemiotic texts as ones that are “made up of numerous codes that interact to produce a single effect” (p. 142). In other words, AV texts incorporate images, sound effects, written words, spoken words, etc. AV materials operate on two channels: firstly, the visual, and secondly, the acoustic or auditory (Delabastita, 1989; Gottlieb, 2001; Zabalbeascoa, 2008). Each channel conveys verbal and nonverbal components. The verbal-visual components are written words on the screen, whereas the verbal-acoustic components are uttered dialogues. In addition, the nonverbal-visual components are the images or pictures, while the nonverbal-acoustic components are music and special effects (Zabalbeascoa, 2008). This diversity of modes and channels and their interactions with each other create an illusion for the viewers; although they are aware of this illusion, they do not want it to be shattered (Gambier, 2012).

Gambier (2012) listed the seven modes of interlingual translation as scripts, interlingual subtitling, dubbing, free commentary, interpreting, voice-over, and surtitling. Among them, dubbing and subtitling are the most commonly used (Chiaro, 2009). Díaz Cintas and Remael (2014) defined subtitling as “a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavors to recount the original dialogue of the speaker” (p. 8). They also emphasized that subtitles are not limited to the dialogue but also render elements that appear on the screen (e.g., letters, inserts, graffiti); besides, information embedded in the soundtrack (songs, voice-over) should also be considered. Gottlieb (1992) further explained that having at least two parallel channels (i.e., visual and acoustic) to deliver the total message is an extra aspect that differentiates subtitling from other translational modes.

Subtitling is a complicated process, as it contains several modes and channels. Besides, the subtitler is restricted to the images presented on the screen. Linde and Kay (2014) discussed the issue of image constraints and noted how translators must respect cinematographic features (e.g., camera cuts) while matching subtitles to the rhythm of the speech. Zabalbeascoa (2008) stated that one of the constraints on films is the synchronization of words to the picture displayed on the screen. Also, the subtitler is restricted to a set number of words and a maximum of two lines along with no longer than 6 seconds per line. In some cases, the channels contain verbal, visual, and nonvisual information that the subtitler is required to render at once. Yet, due to the limitations of space and time, this seems to be out of reach. Chiaro (2009) highlighted that the complexity of polysemiotic texts is problematic in the translation process. The variety of channels conveying different messages makes it nearly impossible to deliver every message to the target audience, given that the subtitler is required to make all semiotic channels flow together without disturbing the viewer’s illusion.

Films have different types of genres such as drama, comedy, documentary, etc. Each genre has aspects and characteristics that distinguish it from others. The term “documentary” was first introduced by Grierson (1966) and was derived from the French word *documentaire*. Grierson (1966) defined documentary as “the creative treatment of actuality” (p. 13). A docudrama, on the other hand, is a hybrid form that combines aspects of documentary with aspects of drama (Aufderheide, 2007; Lipkin, 2002). Docudrama began as a post-World War II televisual genre (Lipkin, 2002; Rosenthal, 1999). Moreover, the presence of docudrama has increased in recent

years, which has strengthened the field against attacks on account of lacking the sobriety or apparent authenticity of a documentary (Paget, 2016). Rosenthal (1999) directed the attention toward docudramas through the idea that people enjoy watching serious subjects presented in a dramatic setting. Thus, they help viewers understand the different points of view of a story. In other words, dramatically presenting real-life stories allows viewers to make sense of events and even sometimes experience the hidden details of a story.

The discussion on the boundaries between docudrama and documentary is a long-standing debate. Docudrama crosses paths with documentary in retelling true events. However, a docudrama is delivered by actors with prewritten scripts. Consequently, docudramas feel like fictional films, but they are dramatic representations of reality (Aufderheide, 2007; Lipkin, 2002). Though one might be able to differentiate between the two, the boundaries are still blurred (Rosenthal, 1999). Terrone (2020) acknowledged the fuzzy boundaries between docudrama and documentary. However, the author argued that documentaries are based on perceptual beliefs, whereas docudrama involves forming pictorial imaginings. This means that if people were to travel back in time to the scene in a docudrama projected on a screen, unlike in a documentary, they would not be in the real event but rather in its staging. Terrone (2020) concluded that “docudramas remain on the fiction side of the border between fiction and nonfiction in cinema” (p. 53). Apparently, scholars have not agreed on a clear-cut boundary between docudrama and documentary, as features of the two types can overlap. Yet, the most obvious characteristic of docudrama is that it represents real-life stories through actors and prewritten scripts.

### 2.1 Subtitling Strategies

There are multiple models that have approached subtitling from different perspectives. Gottlieb (1992) proposed 10 subtitling strategies on the micro-level which are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation, decimation, deletion, and resignation. These strategies are based on his long experience in the subtitling profession. Besides, his typology provides several methods that meet the needs of subtitlers and sums up the most used ones in the field.

Simanjuntak and Basari (2016) conducted a descriptive qualitative study to investigate the employed subtitling strategies to translate the English movie *Real Steel* into Indonesian. The results of the study indicated that the subtitler used six out of 10 strategies: expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, and deletion. The most used strategy was the deletion strategy, and the second most used strategy was expansion. Kholiq and Agustine (2020) studied the subtitling strategies in *The Boss Baby: Back in Business* by Netflix. The results of the study showed that the subtitler used five strategies: condensation, deletion, transfer, transcription, and paraphrase. Further, in terms of frequency, the most used strategy was condensation, followed by deletion, whereas paraphrase, transfer, and transcription were the least used strategies (all three were used equally). Mehawesh and Neimneh (2021) also discussed subtitling strategies. The studied data were the Arabic movie *Theeb* translated into English; the film uses the Bedouin Jordanian-Arabic dialect. The results showed that the frequently used strategies were condensation, decimation, transfer, imitation, and deletion, whereas dislocation, transcription, resignation, expansion, and paraphrase were totally ignored.

### 2.2 Subtitling Documentary

The process of translating a documentary is not an easy task; it requires more time and effort (Matamala, 2009a). Therefore, translators who deal with documentary films should be resourceful with a high level of knowledge. Jones (2012) also addressed obstacles that might face documentary subtitlers such as technical issues, translation software, formatting, and timing. Jones (2012) stated that subtitlers could overcome these issues by obtaining solutions to reduce the dialogue. He further found that subtitlers tend to omit the source text (henceforth ST) when it is repetitive, or unimportant. Cordella (2017) also found that subtitlers tend to use reduction strategies with repetition in the ST. Besides, reduction strategies are used to solve time, space, and image constraints. However, Cordella (2017) stressed that though reduction of the ST may affect the experience of the audience, it is a requirement rather than an option.

## 3. Methodology

This article is a product-oriented descriptive study that aims to identify the subtitling strategies used to render verbal-visual components displayed simultaneously with the dialogue in *The Social Dilemma*. It is a quantitative study that identifies subtitling strategies using Gottlieb's (1992) typology.

Product-oriented research investigates the textual product that is the result of a translation process. This methodological approach can be carried out with descriptive or evaluative purposes. Further, the analysis of the target text (henceforth TT) in its context provides evidence of the translator's decision-making. This offers insights into the translation process (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014). Thus, to analyze the chosen data and identify

the used subtitling strategy, this article employed a product-oriented descriptive approach.

### 3.1 Dataset

The analysis has been based on subtitled excerpts from *The Social Dilemma*, a Netflix-produced docudrama that seeks to educate viewers about the dangers of social networking. The subtitles used in this study are a human translation; they are from English to Arabic (i.e., an interlingual subtitle). They are pop-up, closed, pre-prepared subtitles. The docudrama presents multiple visual-verbal pieces that contain important information, including written quotations, infographics, and the written biographies of interviewees. There are 70 scenes that have a verbal-visual piece of information and a dialogue simultaneously presented (i.e., the dialogue is different than the displayed verbal-visual components). This docudrama has been used as the sample of the article due to its popularity and the importance of its content. Further, it sheds light on an important matter that most people deal with, which is the addiction to social networks and how social network companies use the users for their own benefit.

### 3.2 Gottlieb's (1992) Typology

The analysis of this study has been carried out using Gottlieb's (1992) model to identify the used subtitling strategies. Gottlieb's model was chosen because it serves the purpose of pinpointing the used subtitling strategies. Moreover, Gottlieb (1992) stated that, based on his long experience in subtitling, these strategies embody the different techniques used in the subtitling profession. Furthermore, there have been multiple papers that implemented Gottlieb's (1992) typology to investigate the used subtitling strategies (e.g., Baihaqi & Subiyanto, 2021; Dehbashi Sharif & Sohrabi, 2015; Kholiq & Agustine, 2020; Mehawesh & Neimneh, 2021; Rohmawati, 2021). Gottlieb (1992) stressed that the proposed strategies embody the different techniques used in the field of subtitling.

Table 1. Gottlieb's (1992) typology

Strategy	Definition
Expansion	The ST requires an explanation due to cultural differences
Paraphrase	The ST's phraseology cannot be implemented in the same syntactic way in the TT
Transfer	Complete and accurate translation of the ST
Imitation	Maintains the same forms, usually with names of people and places
Transcription	When a term is unusual, even in the SL
Dislocation	When there is an implementation of a kind of special effect
Condensation	Shortening the text in the least obstructive way
Decimation	An extreme form of condensation
Deletion	Total elimination of parts of the text
Resignation	When no translation solution can be found, and meaning is inevitably lost

## 4. Results

This section sheds light on the analysis of the micro-strategies used by the subtitler in rendering the verbal-visual ST. The analysis will be based on Gottlieb's (1992) typology explained in the methodology section. Additionally, the examined data are the verbal-visual ST that is displayed simultaneously with the dialogue in *The Social Dilemma*. In this case, the interviewees or actors are speaking at the same time the verbal-visual ST is displayed on-screen. The problem here is that the dialogue and the verbal-visual ST are different from each other; therefore, the subtitler is faced with a translation problem that needs to be solved. The total number of instances of verbal-visual and verbal-acoustic channels simultaneously presented on-screen in *The Social Dilemma* is 70. The following tables and paragraphs will discuss the frequency of the used strategies. I underlined the translation of the verbal-visual ST in the TT section, if available, in the following tables.

The resignation strategy was used in 47 out of 70 instances (i.e., more than 50% of the instances were rendered by the resignation strategy). It was the most frequently used strategy across all instances. In this strategy, the subtitler totally omits the ST in the TT. Hence, in the analyzed instances, the subtitler omitted the verbal-visual ST and only rendered the dialogue. This demonstrates that when the subtitler was forced to choose between the verbal-visual component and the verbal-acoustic component (i.e., the dialogue), the subtitler favored the verbal-acoustic components. The 47 instances were classified into two subcategories: the first was speakers' biographies (43 instances) and the second was others (four instances).

The first and second examples in Table 2 below are speakers' biographies, whereas the last two are not. The

subtitler in all four examples only rendered the dialogue and completely ignored the verbal-visual ST. The resignation strategy, as Gottlieb (1992) stated, leads to the loss of the ST meaning. Thus, the target audience in the first two examples in Table 2 does not know who is speaking and what experience or background the speaker has. Besides, for the last two examples, the target audience is also unaware of what is written on the screen.

Table 2. Resignation strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Resignation	47	It's a little even trite to say now, but ... because we don't pay for the products that we use, advertisers pay for the products that we use.	Aza Raskin Firefox & Mozilla Labs – Former Employee Center for Humane Technology- Co-founder Inventor – Infinite Scroll	إنه قول مبتذل بعض الشيء الآن، لكن لأننا لا ندفع ثمن المنتجات التي نستخدمها، فإن الإعلانات هي التي تدفع ثمنها.

Additionally, the transfer strategy came in second in terms of the most frequently used strategies; it was used in seven samples, as shown in Table 3 below. Most micro-strategies are used to solve translational problems, yet when the subtitler uses the transfer strategy, the ST is rendered fully and directly into the TT. This indicates that the ST does not require any different interpretation and transferring the exact words is enough. Besides, in multiple cases, the verbal-visual ST was short and simple; it did not have any complicated structure or terminology. Therefore, the subtitler depended on using the transfer strategy with these samples.

Table 3. Transfer strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Transfer	7	New link! All right, we're on.	Network connections	"شبكة الاتصالات" رابط جديد! حسنًا، بدأنا العمل.

As shown in Table 4 below, the imitation strategy was used in six instances. This strategy was used with the names of people, places, and companies (e.g., Facebook, Mr. Zuckerberg, Myanmar). The example presented in Table 4 is of a speaker's biography. The subtitler transferred the ST form into the TT. This helps the audience to recognize the names of the speakers and the companies they work for.

Table 4. Imitation strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Imitation	6	because you're exploiting a vulnerability in... in human psychology.	Sean Parker Facebook Former president	لأنني أستغل الضعف في النفس البشرية. " (شون باركر) - (فيسبوك) - رئيس سابق "

The deletion strategy was used in five instances, as shown in Table 5 below. In the deletion example, the speaker (i.e., the dialogue) describes the situation during the COVID-19 pandemic; at the same time, news headlines are shown on the screen (i.e., the verbal-visual ST). The subtitler only rendered the dialogue and deleted the verbal-visual ST part. This is because the dialogue is describing the verbal-visual ST in a way; hence, the audience is still able to understand the meaning of what is shown on the screen. This means that deletion was used to avoid repetition and to help with space and time limitations.

Table 5. Deletion strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Deletion	5	People are blowing up actual physical cell phone towers. We see Russia and China spreading rumors and conspiracy theories.	Burning Cell Towers, Out of Baseless Fear They Spread the Virus. "Chinese Agents Helped Spread Messages That Sowed Virus Panic in U.S., Officials Say"	يهدم الناس أبراج الهواتف المحمولة الفعلية. نرى "الصين" و"روسيا" تنشران إشاعات ونظريات مؤامرة.

Furthermore, the paraphrase strategy was used in three samples. This strategy entails changing the ST structure in the TT. In Table 6 below, the presented example shows that the structure of the ST is not applied in the TT. The subtitle started the TT with the verb "أشار", which is the structure used in Arabic, whereas in English, the sentence starts with a subject followed by a verb.

Table 6. Paraphrase strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Paraphrase	3	It's exacerbated by the fact that you can literally isolate yourself now in a bubble, thanks to our technology.	"Your friend tagged you in a photo"	يتفاقم الأمر بسبب حقيقة أن بوسع المرء عزل نفسه حرفياً الآن "أشار صديقك إليك في صورة" في فقاعة، بفضل تقنياتنا.

Finally, Table 7 below shows the least used strategies (i.e., expansion and condensation). The expansion and condensation strategies were used only once. In the expansion example presented in Table 7, the verbal-visual ST is only "Ad preview". However, the subtitle added extra information by describing the advertisement shown on the screen.

Table 7. Expansion and condensation strategy

Strategy	Frequency	Example		
		Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
Expansion	1	Auction time. Sold! To Deep Fade hair wax.	"Ad preview"	وقت العرض. "معابنة الإعلان، شمع لإزالة الشعر" بيع! إلى شمع "ديب فايد" لإزالة الشعر.
Condensation	1	We're being bombarded with rumors.	-Anti-surveillance Protest, 2019 -5G\COVID False Captions 2020	"وضع عنوان زائف على مظاهرة ضد المراقبة" مُطر بوابل من الشائعات.

On the other hand, the condensation strategy seeks to make the ST much shorter and deliver the direct meaning by removing any redundancy from the text. As presented in Table 7 above, the verbal-visual ST in the example is shown on the screen as a description of a Twitter post (i.e., tweet) that had misleading information. The verbal-visual ST describes how the tweet shows a video, as if it is related to COVID-19, whereas, in fact, it is not. The subtitle combined the two sentences and produced a shorter TT.

## 5. Discussion

This study investigated the subtitling strategies used in rendering the verbal-visual ST that was displayed simultaneously with the dialogue. The study found that the subtitle used seven subtitling strategies based on Gottlieb's (1992) typology, which are: resignation, transfer, imitation, paraphrase, deletion, expansion, and condensation. Also, the results showed that the most frequently used strategy was resignation, which was used in 47 instances. Moreover, this section summarizes and discusses the results of the analysis. It will include two subsections that highlight the major findings of the research. These subsections tackle the translatability of the verbal-visual components displayed simultaneously with the dialogue, and micro-strategies as solutions. Further, the findings of this study will be discussed in light of relevant literature.

### 5.1 Translatability of Verbal-Visual Components

In the subtitling process, the subtitle encounters different challenges and problems. The fact that AV materials

are polysemiotic poses a challenge to the subtitler (Chiaro, 2009; Gambier, 2012; Gottlieb, 2001). Thus, subtitling the verbal-visual ST is problematic and requires the implementation of micro-strategies as a solution, which was the case with the data analyzed in this article. In the analyzed data, the subtitler used seven strategies out of ten. This indicates that having multiple channels incorporated at once (i.e., verbal-visual and verbal-acoustic) where both channels are different from each other is a translational problem. In line with this, Pedersen (2015) found that having different channels pulling the audience in different directions is problematic, which creates what Pedersen (2015) called a ‘semiotic tension’. Further, this finding also agrees with Díaz Cintas and Remael’s (2014) opinion that if the verbal-visual component is different than the presented dialogue, this creates a problem for the subtitler. Apparently, the subtitler of *The Social Dilemma* used a variety of strategies to deal with those translational problems.

Moreover, what also makes the translation of verbal-visual ST displayed simultaneously with the dialogue more problematic is the space, time, and image constraints. These limitations put the subtitler in a tough situation; for example, in Table 8 below, the duration of the verbal-visual ST is 7 seconds (17 words), and at the same time, the dialogue has 21 words uttered by the interviewee. Thus, the subtitler is required to render all these words in just 7 seconds, with a maximum of two lines presented in 6 seconds (Delabastita, 1989; Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2014; Gottlieb, 2001; Linde & Kay, 2014). Further, the subtitler is also restricted to the image presented on the screen. Thus, when the image is different, this means that the speaker’s biography (i.e., the verbal-visual ST) will not make sense. This consequently puts the subtitler in a challenging situation which calls for the use of micro-strategies.

Table 8. Subtitling constraints example

Dialogue	Verbal-Visual ST	TT
00:44:57,486 > 00:45:00,155	00:44:57,486 > 00:45:04,410	00:44:57,569 > 00:45:00,322
Perhaps the most dangerous piece of all this is the fact	Randima (Randy) Fernando Nvidia—Former Product Manager	ربما يكون الجزء الأكثر خطورة من كل هذا 00:45:00,406 > 00:45:04,410
00:45:00,239 > 00:45:04,410	Mindful Schools—Former Executive Director Center for Humane Technology—Cofounder	هو أنه مدفوع بالتكنولوجيا التي تتقدم بشكل كبير.

### 5.2 Micro-Strategies as Solution

The current study highlighted that rendering verbal-visual ST displayed simultaneously with the dialogue is problematic. Thus, when subtitlers encounter a scene where the dialogue is different from the verbal-visual ST, they need a solution for this problem. Zhang (2020) found that micro-strategies should be implemented to solve any translational problem, which has been shown in the current study.

The analysis of the main data (i.e., verbal-visual ST displayed simultaneously with the dialogue) indicated that the subtitler employed seven strategies as shown in Table 9 below. The strategies that were not used are decimation, transcription, and dislocation. The most frequently used strategy in the study in hand was resignation, whereas. In the studies carried out by Simanjuntak and Basari (2016), Kholiq and Agustine (2020), and Mehawesh and Neimneh (2021), the resignation strategy was not used at all. Further, Simanjuntak and Basari (2016) reported that the deletion strategy was the most frequently employed micro-strategy, whereas, in the current research paper, it was the third-most frequently used strategy. On the other hand, Simanjuntak and Basari (2016) stated that transcription was the least frequently used strategy, yet it was not used at all in the current research.

Table 9. Frequency of used strategies across categories

Strategy	Frequency
Expansion	1
Paraphrase	3
Transfer	7
Imitation	6
Condensation	1
Decimation	0
Deletion	5
Resignation	47
Total	70

Further, Kholiq and Agustine (2020) found that condensation was the most frequently used strategy, whereas, in the current research it was the least frequently used strategy. Additionally, deletion was the second-most frequently used strategy in the study by Kholiq and Agustine, whereas, in the current research, it was the third-most frequently used strategy. Also, transfer was the least used strategy in Kholiq and Agustine's (2020) paper, whereas in the current research, it was the second-most frequently used strategy. This difference in the frequently used strategies across various studies could be attributed to the difference between the subtitled components. In this thesis, the subtitled component is the verbal-visual one, whereas, for the other aforementioned studies, it was the verbal-acoustic component. Also, it could be because the samples were of different genres; the main samples of this study are taken from a docudrama film, whereas Simanjuntak and Basari's (2016) main sample was an action film, Kholiq and Agustine (2020) studied a comedy film, and Mehawesh and Neimneh (2021) analyzed a drama film. Thus, these different genres could require certain distinct strategies.

Moreover, the deletion strategy was used in five instances. There could be multiple reasons for omitting parts of the ST; the current study found that the subtitler used the deletion strategy in some instances to escape repetition. The examples discussed in the results section show that the subtitler was faced with repeated or very similar STs, i.e., the dialogue and the verbal-visual describe the same thing with different wording. Hence, the subtitler omitted the verbal-visual ST and kept the dialogue. This finding agrees with Cordella (2017), who studied the reasons for reduction of the ST in the TT. The results of Cordella's (2017) paper indicated that repetition was the main factor in reducing the TT. Further, Jones (2012) also stated that partial omission occurred with repeated information. Besides, the results of the current study show that if the subtitler rendered the repeated information, i.e., the verbal-visual ST and the dialogue, this would pose another issue due to space and time limitations. Therefore, partial omission of the ST helped the subtitler avoid space and time limitations, thus providing the audience with a suitable number of lines and duration to be able to read them, which might ultimately lead to improving the readability of the TT. This particular finding coincides with the results of Cordella's (2017) study, as it showed that reduction is used in some cases to avoid space and time constraints.

Furthermore, the current study found that when the dialogue and the verbal-visual ST are simultaneously presented, the subtitler favored the dialogue by using the resignation strategy with the verbal-visual ST. This complete omission occurred in 47 samples, most of which (i.e., 43 samples) were of interviewees' or speakers' biographies. There could be several factors that led the subtitler to totally omit the verbal-visual ST in the TT. First, it could be related to the working conditions of subtitling documentaries. As Matamala (2009a) discussed, this factor is the main challenge that faces documentary translators; further, the translator of a documentary usually faces higher demands, and the translation process requires more time. Additionally, the language of documentaries is usually specialized, which asks for more effort. Moreover, in a docudrama, the subtitler is faced with both specialized language and regular daily language, which could include some vernacular and slang. Thus, it could be said that a docudrama project could require twice as much effort from the subtitler than any other project. Taking this into consideration, the subtitler was required to provide the film's subtitles in a short period, since Netflix provided the Arabic subtitles on the same day that the film first was aired. Therefore, the subtitler may have omitted multiple verbal-visual components as a result of the working conditions.

Another factor that could cause the subtitler to use the resignation strategy is that subtitles are constrained. As has been mentioned before, subtitling is a constrained process that is different from any other translational mode. Therefore, reduction of the text, whether it is minimal or not, is almost essential, so the subtitler cannot escape it. The subtitler is obligated to consider different voices, images, and characters, and above all that, everything must be presented with specific guidelines of timing, spotting, and space; all these constraints pose a great challenge for the subtitler. Cordella (2017) reported that although there could be several factors for reduction, it is not an option but a requirement. Thus, it can be said that reduction is, in a way, attached to subtitling as a practice no matter what is being translated.

Additionally, in many cases, the verbal-visual ST was presented with space and time limitations; thus, the subtitler may not have been able to implement all channels at once with these constraints. Therefore, the subtitler may have omitted the verbal-visual ST to allow for the subtitles of the dialogue to be meaningful and readable. Noteworthily, Cordella (2017) found that in the analyzed data, reduction strategies were used to deal with space, time, and image limitations. This factor, however, cannot be generalized; for example, in Table 10 below, the first example is of a speaker's biography that the subtitler rendered in the TT, whereas the second example was not rendered (i.e., the resignation strategy was applied). Although the duration of both examples is similar (i.e., 9–10 seconds), they were treated differently. This difference shows that the subtitler did not follow clear guidance in using the subtitling strategies, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 10. Duration comparison

No	ST dialogue	Verbal Visual ST	TT
1	00:29:19,507 > 00:29:22,427 that a hacker like myself would come up with 00:29:22,510 > 00:29:27,015 because you're exploiting a vulnerability in human psychology. 00:29:27,807 > 00:29:29,726 And I just... I think that we...	00:29:19,507 > 00:29:29,726 Sean Parker Facebook Former president	00:29:19,507 > 00:29:22,427 الذي قد يفكر فيه مخترق مثلي، 00:29:22,510 > 00:29:27,015 لأنني أستغل الضعف في النفس البشرية. 00:29:27,098 > 00:29:28,725 " (شون باركر) - (فيسبوك) - رئيس سابق" 00:29:28,808 > 00:29:33,438 أظن أننا... المخترعون، المبدعون...
2	00:39:29,825 > 00:39:33,120 And instead, what it really is is fake, brittle popularity... 00:39:33,913 > 00:39:37,458 that's short-term and that leaves you. even more, and admit it,	00:39:28,407 > 00:39:37,458 Chamath Palihapitiya Facebook Former VP of Growth	00:39:29,825 > 00:39:33,120 وبدلاً من أنها حقاً زائفة وشعبية هشة... 00:39:33,913 > 00:39:37,458 فهي قصيرة المدى وتترككم حقاً، اعترفوا بذلك،

Further, there could be another possible factor for using the resignation strategy, which is when the speaker is stating known facts. The subtitler in this case might feel that there is no need to render the speaker's biography since the speech is simply composed of well-known facts. Jones (2012) reported that deciding on what to omit can be related to omitting information that is not important to the overall understanding. Thus, in some cases of the current study, the subtitler may drop the speaker's biography because it is not important to the overall understanding of what is being said.

Another possible reason for using resignation strategy is prioritizing the dialogue or having more important information in the dialogue. The subtitler could have compared the dialogue to the verbal-visual ST in terms of importance. Chen (2016) reported that reduction strategies might be used with less useful information, which allows the subtitler to focus on useful information only. Hence, in some cases, the dialogue contained critically important information, which made the subtitler prioritize it over the verbal-visual ST.

Although there are multiple factors for using resignation, the current research found that there is no clear basis followed by the subtitler to apply the resignation strategy. This is not surprising, as Cordella (2017) explained that there is no clear guidance on what to omit and what to keep in subtitling. So, deciding what to leave out and what to keep in might be left to the subtitler's personal judgment. However, no matter what factor urges the subtitler to omit certain parts of the ST, it is important to think carefully about the target audience.

In the presented data, the ST and the target audience are very far from each other. The topic of the docudrama is universal; however, the audience is not familiar with the majority of the speakers and events mentioned in the film. Besides, the source language and the target language are also quite far from each other. The gap in knowledge of events, culture, and language between the original product and the target audience highlights the importance of all the information conveyed in each channel. Therefore, when the verbal-visual ST is displayed on the screen and not interpreted into the TL, this creates a loss of meaning, which consequently affects the target audience.

When the audience feels that there are certain parts missing from the subtitles, this might cause some mistrust in the TT. Sánchez (2004) reported that excessive omission in the TT causes the audience to lose confidence in the translation. In some of the instances where the subtitler used the resignation strategy, the function of the ST was lost in the TT, which affected the target audience experience. Therefore, the current research coincides with Yang and Li's (2021) suggestion that the translation should highly consider the target audience when selecting the translation strategies. It is important to maintain the trust of the target audience because if their confidence in the translation is lost, this may also affect their experience and understanding of the product.

## 6. Conclusion

This article reports on a product-oriented descriptive study that focused on the translation of verbal-visual ST displayed simultaneously with the dialogue in the docudrama *The Social Dilemma*. The research aimed to explore the micro-strategies used in subtitling the verbal-visual ST displayed simultaneously with the dialogue. To identify the used subtitling strategies, the research used Gottlieb's (1992) typology and then analyzed the datasets quantitatively to discover the frequency of the used micro-strategies. The micro-strategy analysis revealed that the subtitler used seven subtitling strategies, which are: resignation, transfer, deletion, imitation, paraphrase, condensation, and expansion. Three micro-strategies were not used with the verbal-visual ST

displayed simultaneously with the dialogue, which are: decimation, transcription, and dislocation. The results also showed that the resignation strategy was the most frequently used (i.e., it was used in 47 instances out of 70).

There are a few limitations to the study that should be considered. First, the study only focused on the verbal-visual components displayed simultaneously with the dialogue and did not thoroughly discuss all the verbal-visual data in the film. Therefore, the results do not apply to rendering the verbal-visual components displayed in silence or matching the dialogue. Further, the study only investigated translation between English (ST) and Arabic (TT); therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other language pairs. Also, the study only tackled docudrama, therefore, the results cannot be utilized to other genres such as comedy, horror, cartoon, etc.

Future research could tackle the verbal-visual component in other genres, such as comedy, drama, etc. Further research could also be conducted on how dubbing and voice-over can deal with the verbal-visual component, whether in silence, matching the dialogue, or displayed simultaneously with the dialogue. Besides, further research could be conducted on a larger dataset with other language pairs.

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