
Types and Forms of Audiovisual Translation and Their Roles in the Translation Process

Bozorova Vasila Ilkhomovna

ilkhomovnavasila07@gmail.com

Teacher, Department of Practical Translation
of English Language,
Uzbekistan State World Language University

Annotation *Audiovisual translation (AVT) refers to a broad set of techniques used to make audiovisual products understandable and accessible to multilingual and multicultural audiences. This paper deals with the issues related to investigating the principal forms of AVT, including dubbing, voice-over, subtitling, localization, adaptation, and summary translation, emphasizing their role within the translation process. Each form of AVT is shaped by specific linguistic, cultural, and technical constraints that influence translators' decisions. Issues such as time and space limitations, synchronization between sound and image, cultural references, audience expectations, and technological standards are central to the quality of the final product. The abstract also underlines that AVT is not a purely linguistic activity but a multimodal practice requiring close interaction between language, visuals, and sound. By analyzing these interconnected factors, the study argues that successful audiovisual translation depends on a holistic approach that carefully balances accuracy, clarity, and cultural appropriateness to ensure effective communication and audience engagement.*

Keywords *Audiovisual translation, dubbing, voice-over, subtitling, localization, adaptation, translation process, audiovisual content*

Виды и формы аудиовизуального перевода и их роль в переводческом процессе

Бозорова Васи́ла Илхо́мовна

ilkhomovnavasila07@gmail.com

Преподаватель кафедры практического перевода английского языка,
Узбекский государственный университет
мировых языков

Аннотация *Аудиовизуальный перевод (АВП) представляет собой широкий спектр методов, направленных на обеспечение понятности и доступности аудиовизуальных продуктов для многоязычной и мультикультурной аудитории. В данной аннотации рассматриваются основные формы АВП, включая дубляж, закадровый перевод (voice-over), субтитрование, локализацию, адаптацию и сокращённый перевод, а также подчеркивается их роль в переводческом процессе. Каждая форма аудиовизуального перевода обусловлена специфическими лингвистическими, культурными и техническими ограничениями, которые влияют на решения переводчика. Такие факторы, как временные и пространственные ограничения, синхронизация звука и изображения, культурные реалии, ожидания аудитории и технологические стандарты, имеют ключевое значение для качества конечного продукта. В аннотации также подчеркивается, что АВП не является исключительно лингвистической деятельностью, а*

представляет собой мультимодальную практику, требующую тесного взаимодействия языка, визуальных образов и звука. Анализ этих взаимосвязанных факторов позволяет утверждать, что успешный аудиовизуальный перевод основывается на целостном подходе, обеспечивающем баланс между точностью, ясностью и культурной адекватностью для достижения эффективной коммуникации и вовлечённости аудитории.

Ключевые слова Аудиовизуальный перевод, дубляж, закадровый перевод, субтитрование, локализация, адаптация, переводческий процесс, аудиовизуальный контент

Audiovizual tarjimaning turlari va shakllari hamda ularning tarjima jarayonidagi o'рни

Bozorova Vasila Ilhomovna

ilkhomovnavasila07@gmail.com

Ingliz tili amaliy tarjima kafedrası o'qituvchisi,
O'zbekiston davlat jahon tillari universiteti

Annotatsiya Audiovizual tarjima (AVT) audiovizual mahsulotlarni ko'p tilli va ko'p madaniyatli auditoriyalar uchun tushunarli va qulay qilishga xizmat qiladigan keng ko'lamli usullar majmuasini anglatadi. Ushbu annotatsiyada AVTning asosiy turlari – dublyaj, ovoz ustidan tarjima (voice-over), subtitrlash, lokalizatsiya, adaptatsiya va qisqa mazmunli tarjima – ko'rib chiqilib, ularning tarjima jarayonidagi o'рни yoritiladi. AVTning har bir turi tarjimon qarorlariga ta'sir etuvchi muayyan lingvistik, madaniy va texnik cheklovlar bilan belgilanadi. Vaqt va makon cheklovlari, tovush va tasvir o'rtasidagi sinxronlik, madaniy ishoralar, auditoriya kutishlari hamda texnologik standartlar yakuniy mahsulot sifatida muhim ahamiyatga ega. Shuningdek, AVT sof lingvistik faoliyat emas, balki til, tasvir va tovushning o'zaro uyg'unligini talab etuvchi multimodal amaliyot ekanligi ta'kidlanadi. Shuni ta'kidlash joizki, ushbu o'zaro bog'liq omillarni tahlil qilish asosida tadqiqot muvaffaqiyatli audiovizual tarjima aniqlik, tushunarlilik va madaniy moslik o'rtasidagi muvozanatga tayangan holda samarali muloqot va auditoriya ishtirokini ta'minlashini asoslaydi, shuningdek zamonaviy raqamli platformalarda kontentning global tarqalishida AVTning strategik ahamiyatini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar Audiovizual tarjima, dublyaj, ovoz ustidan tarjima, subtitrlash, lokalizatsiya, adaptatsiya, tarjima jarayoni, audiovizual kontent

Introduction

The global reach of audiovisual media-films, television, streaming content, educational videos, and online clips has amplified the importance of effective translation. Audiovisual translation (AVT) is not merely a linguistic exercise; it is an interdisciplinary process that integrates

linguistics, media studies, cultural mediation, and technical production. Different AVT forms serve different purposes and contexts. Subtitling preserves original voice while providing textual access; dubbing replaces dialogue with localized performance; voice-over offers a narrated overlay; localization and adaptation tailor content to cultural and market

specifics; and concise formats distill essential information for limited viewing contexts. Understanding the roles and limitations of these forms helps content creators reach diverse audiences while maintaining artistic and narrative integrity (Chaume, 2012). The rapid globalization of media and the exponential growth of digital platforms have transformed audiovisual content into one of the most influential means of communication in the contemporary world. Films, television series, documentaries, video games, online courses, and social media videos now circulate across linguistic and cultural boundaries almost instantaneously. In this context, audiovisual translation (AVT) plays a crucial role in mediating meaning between producers and audiences who do not share the same language or cultural background (Gambier, 2003).

Unlike traditional written translation, AVT operates within a multimodal environment where meaning is created through the interaction of verbal language, images, music, sound effects, and performance. Translators must therefore work under strict temporal, spatial, and technical constraints while ensuring linguistic accuracy, cultural relevance, and audience comprehension. These constraints make AVT a highly specialized field that requires not only linguistic competence but also cultural awareness, technical skills, and an understanding of media production processes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

Furthermore, the choice of a particular AVT form such as subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, localization, or adaptation is not arbitrary. It is influenced by factors including target audience preferences, distribution platforms, accessibility requirements, budgetary limitations, and national audiovisual traditions. Each form fulfills a distinct communicative function and contributes differently to the overall translation process. This essay explores the main types and forms of audiovisual translation and analyzes their respective roles within the translation workflow, emphasizing how translation decisions affect accessibility,

reception, and cultural mediation in audiovisual content (Díaz Cintas, 2018).

Communicative Functions, Linguistic Constraints, and Cultural Embeddedness of Audiovisual Translation Forms

Audiovisual translation encompasses a broad spectrum of forms that respond to different communicative needs, media environments, and sociocultural contexts. Each form – subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, surtitling, fansubbing, and accessibility-oriented translation – operates according to specific linguistic constraints and fulfills a distinct communicative function. The selection of an audiovisual translation strategy is therefore a functionally motivated decision shaped by language structure, cultural norms, audience expectations, and technological conditions (Zabalbeascoa, 2008).

Subtitling as a Text-Based Mediation Strategy

Subtitling functions primarily as a mediating and interpretive communicative tool that allows viewers to access spoken language through written text while maintaining the original audio. Linguistically, subtitling is governed by severe spatial and temporal constraints that necessitate semantic prioritization and information reduction. Research in cognitive processing demonstrates that viewers can only process a limited amount of textual information while simultaneously attending to visual content. As a result, subtitlers must identify core semantic units and eliminate redundancies without compromising narrative coherence (Ivarsson & Carroll, 2020). From a cultural perspective, subtitling often retains culture-specific references, proper names, and original discourse patterns. This relative preservation of source-culture elements positions subtitling as a foreignizing translation strategy, fostering intercultural exposure. However, this approach assumes a certain level of cultural competence on the part of the audience, which may not always be present, particularly in mass-market contexts (Venuti, 2008).

Dubbing as Performative and Audience-Oriented Translation

Dubbing serves an immersive communicative function, aiming to minimize the perceptual distance between the viewer and the audiovisual product. By replacing the original dialogue with target-language speech, dubbing allows audiences to focus fully on visual and narrative elements without the cognitive effort of reading subtitles. This makes dubbing particularly effective for entertainment content, children's programming, and audiences with limited literacy (Chiaro, 2010).

Linguistically, dubbing requires extensive syntactic and pragmatic flexibility to achieve synchronization with lip movements, facial expressions, and body language. Translators often restructure sentences, alter discourse markers, and adjust register to achieve performative naturalness. Culturally, dubbing tends to adopt domestication strategies, adapting humor, idioms, and sociocultural references to align with target-culture norms. While this enhances accessibility, it may reduce the visibility of the source culture and alter the original stylistic tone (Chaume, 2004).

Voice-over as Informational Mediation

Voice-over translation primarily fulfills an informational and documentary communicative function. It is commonly used in factual genres where clarity and credibility outweigh dramatic immersion. Linguistically, voice-over allows for greater completeness of meaning because it is not bound by lip synchronization. Translators can preserve more of the original discourse structure and terminological precision (Orero, 2004).

Culturally, the continued audibility of the source voice signals authenticity and authority, reinforcing the documentary value of the content. However, voice-over offers limited opportunities for emotional engagement and character identification, restricting its use in fictional genres (Gambier, 2016).

Surtitling in Live and Performative Contexts

Surtitling is a specialized form of audiovisual translation designed for live performance environments, such as opera, theatre, and multilingual conferences. Its communicative function is supportive rather than substitutive, providing audiences with essential verbal information while preserving the integrity of the live performance (Mateo, 2007).

Linguistically, surtitles demand extreme condensation and high lexical density. Cultural considerations play a central role, as surtitles must balance respect for artistic tradition with audience comprehension. Unlike screen-based subtitles, surtitles are consumed collectively in a public setting, which further constrains reading time and necessitates careful synchronization with live performance cues.

Fansubbing as Participatory and Culture-Preserving Translation

Fansubbing represents grassroots, community-driven form of audiovisual translation that operates outside institutional and commercial frameworks. Its communicative function extends beyond information transfer to include community identity formation, cultural preservation, and knowledge sharing. Linguistically, fansubs frequently retain source-language honorifics, discourse particles, and culturally specific expressions (Pérez-González, 2014). Explanatory notes and glosses are often added, reflecting a strong source-oriented approach. Culturally, fansubbing exhibits a high tolerance for foreignness and prioritizes cultural authenticity over mainstream accessibility. This practice challenges traditional notions of translation authority and highlights the evolving role of audiences as active participants in the translation process.

Accessibility-Oriented AVT Forms

Additional audiovisual translation forms, such as subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) and audio description for visually impaired audiences, foreground accessibility as a primary communicative goal. Linguistically, these forms extend beyond

dialogue translation to include paralinguistic and visual information. Culturally, they reflect broader societal commitments to inclusivity and equal access to media (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021).

Interdependence of Language, Culture, and Communicative Function

Across all forms, audiovisual translation demonstrates a strong interdependence between linguistic structure, cultural context, and communicative purpose. Languages differ in syntactic density, information packaging, and pragmatic conventions, which directly affect translation strategies. Cultural norms influence humor, politeness, narrative conventions, and audience expectations. Consequently, audiovisual translation is best understood as a context-sensitive, culturally embedded communicative practice rather than a purely linguistic operation (Chaume & Agost, 2019).

Conclusion

Audiovisual translation has emerged as a vital interdisciplinary field that addresses the challenges of multilingual and multicultural communication in an increasingly media-driven world. As this study has demonstrated, audiovisual translation encompasses a wide range of forms – subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, surtitling, fansubbing, localization, and accessibility-oriented practices – each shaped by specific communicative functions, linguistic constraints, and cultural considerations. These forms do not merely transfer verbal content from one language to another; they mediate meaning across semiotic systems, technological environments, and audience expectations.

The analysis highlights that the choice of an audiovisual translation form is a strategic and functionally motivated decision. Subtitling prioritizes semantic fidelity and intercultural

exposure while operating under strict temporal and spatial constraints. Dubbing emphasizes immersion and performative naturalness, often favoring cultural domestication to enhance audience engagement. Voice-over serves informational clarity and authenticity, particularly in factual genres, whereas surtitling facilitates access to live performances with minimal disruption to artistic integrity. Fansubbing and accessibility-focused forms further illustrate how audiovisual translation responds to participatory culture and inclusive communication needs.

Moreover, the study underscores the interdependence of language, culture, and technology in shaping audiovisual translation practices. Linguistic structures influence condensation and reformulation strategies, cultural norms guide adaptation and mediation, and technological platforms impose technical standards that affect translation quality and reception. Consequently, audiovisual translation must be understood not as a purely linguistic task but as a context-sensitive communicative practice that integrates theoretical insight, technical competence, and cultural awareness.

In conclusion, effective audiovisual translation requires a holistic and interdisciplinary approach that balances fidelity, intelligibility, cultural relevance, and accessibility. As global media circulation continues to expand and new technologies reshape production and consumption patterns, the role of audiovisual translators will become increasingly strategic. Future research and professional practice should therefore continue to integrate linguistic theory, reception studies, and technological innovation to ensure that audiovisual content remains accessible, meaningful, and culturally resonant for diverse audiences worldwide.

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