

Dubbing and Subtitling as Modes of Audiovisual Translation: Constraints, Strategies, and Cultural Challenges in English–Turkish and English–Azerbaijani Transfers

Dublyaj və subtitr audiovisual tərcümənin formaları kimi: ingilis–türk və ingilis–Azərbaycan ötürmələrində məhdudiyətlər, strategiyalar və mədəni çətinliklər

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69760/gsrh.0260302005>

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Abstract

Audiovisual translation (AVT) has emerged as one of the most socially significant and professionally demanding branches of contemporary translation studies. This article examines dubbing and subtitling as the two dominant modes of screen translation, analysing their technical constraints, translation strategies, and cultural challenges with particular attention to English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani language transfers. Drawing on multimodal discourse theory, functional equivalence approaches, and the domestication–foreignisation framework, the study argues that AVT is a constraint-driven communicative practice in which linguistic choices are inseparable from synchronisation requirements, reading speed limits, character constraints, and viewer reception conditions. The article demonstrates that dubbing prioritises lip synchrony, isochrony, and natural speech adaptation, motivating stronger cultural reformulation and domestication, while subtitling is governed by condensation and reduction strategies that preserve closer proximity to the source text. A comparative case-study analysis of humour, idioms, pragmatic markers, and culturally specific references illustrates the mode-specific challenges that translators face in Turkic-language target contexts. The findings indicate that neither mode is universally superior: each serves different communicative functions and audience needs. The article concludes with recommendations for mode-sensitive quality assessment and translator competence development in AVT.

Keywords: *audiovisual translation; dubbing; subtitling; multimodality; screen translation; English–Azerbaijani; English–Turkish; cultural adaptation; translation constraints; equivalence*

Xülasə

Audiovisual tərcümə (AVT) müasir tərcümə elminin ən böyük ictimai əhəmiyyət kəsb edən və peşəkar tələblər baxımından ən mürəkkəb sahələrindən birinə çevrilmişdir. Bu məqalədə ekran tərcüməsinin iki

dominant forması olan dublyaj və subtitr, xüsusilə ingilis–türk və ingilis–Azərbaycan dil ötürmələri kontekstində texniki məhdudiyyətlər, tərcümə strategiyaları və mədəni çətinliklər baxımından araşdırılır. Multimodal diskurs nəzəriyyəsi, funksional ekvivalentlik yanaşmaları və domestikasiya–yabancılaşdırma çərçivəsindən istifadə edən tədqiqat AVT-nin məhdudiyyət şərtlərindən asılı kommunikativ praktika olduğunu əsaslandırır: linqvistik seçimlər sinxronizasiya tələbləri, oxu sürəti məhdudiyyətləri, simvol hədləri və tamaşaçı qəbulu şərtlərindən ayrılmazdır. Məqalə göstərir ki, dublyaj dodaqların hərəkəti ilə sinxronluğu, izohroniyanı və təbii nitq adaptasiyasını ön plana çəkərək daha güclü mədəni yenidənformalaşdırma və domestikasiyaya meyil edir; subtitr isə mənbə mətnlə daha yaxın əlaqəni qoruyan kondensasiya və reduksiya strategiyaları ilə tənzimlənir.

Açar sözlər: *audiovisual tərcümə; dublyaj; subtitr; multimodallıq; ekran tərcüməsi; ingilis–Azərbaycan; ingilis–türk; mədəni adaptasiya; tərcümə məhdudiyyətləri; ekvivalentlik*

1. Introduction

The global circulation of audiovisual content has transformed translation into one of the most socially embedded and technologically conditioned forms of intercultural mediation. Films, television series, streaming productions, documentaries, and digital media products now cross linguistic and cultural borders on a daily basis, reaching audiences whose languages and cultural frameworks differ fundamentally from those of the source text. In this environment, audiovisual translation (AVT) serves as the primary mechanism through which screen content is made accessible, comprehensible, and affectively resonant for target audiences worldwide (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021; Chaume, 2012).

Unlike traditional written translation, AVT operates under a distinctive set of constraints that arise from the multimodal nature of audiovisual texts. A film or television programme does not communicate through language alone; meaning is constructed through the simultaneous interaction of dialogue, image, sound effects, music, editing rhythm, and performance. Translators working in AVT must therefore navigate not only the linguistic transfer of meaning but also its coordination with these non-verbal channels, which impose strict technical requirements on the translated text (Taylor, 2003; Pérez-González, 2014). Subtitling requires condensed, readable text that fits within character limits and conforms to reading speed parameters; dubbing requires naturally spoken dialogue that matches lip movements and maintains the rhythm and emotional tone of the original performance.

The present article focuses on dubbing and subtitling as the two dominant modes of screen translation, examining their respective constraints, strategies, and cultural challenges with particular attention to English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani language transfers. The choice of these language pairs is motivated by several considerations. Turkish and Azerbaijani are closely related Turkic languages that share substantial lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic features, yet they also differ in significant ways at the levels of register, cultural reference, and media translation tradition. Both languages operate in media environments where the translation norms, audience expectations, and institutional practices surrounding dubbing and subtitling have developed along distinct historical and cultural trajectories. Examining AVT challenges in these language pairs therefore offers insights that are relevant both to Turkic-language translation studies and to the broader comparative analysis of AVT across typologically related but culturally distinct target contexts.

The article proceeds as follows. Section 2 establishes the theoretical framework, reviewing the key approaches in AVT theory — multimodal discourse analysis, functional equivalence, and the domestication–foreignisation framework — and showing how they apply

to screen translation. Section 3 analyses the specific constraints and strategies of dubbing, with attention to synchronisation, isochrony, and cultural adaptation. Section 4 examines the constraints and strategies of subtitling, focusing on condensation, reduction, and readability. Section 5 presents a comparative case-study analysis of translation challenges in both modes, drawing on examples from English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani translations of humour, idioms, pragmatic markers, and cultural references. Section 6 offers a comparative evaluation of the two modes and discusses implications for translator training and quality assessment. Section 7 concludes.

2. Theoretical Framework: Multimodality, Equivalence, and Domestication in AVT

2.1 Audiovisual Translation as a Multimodal Practice

The theoretical study of AVT has been decisively shaped by the concept of multimodality — the understanding that audiovisual texts are not mono-channel linguistic messages but complex semiotic constructs in which meaning is distributed across multiple simultaneous modes of communication. Building on the social semiotic theory of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) and its application to film by Taylor (2003), AVT scholars have argued that translators must attend not only to the verbal content of a film but to the way language interacts with image, gesture, gaze, spatial relations, sound, and editing to construct meaning. This multimodal meaning-making process is not simply a backdrop to translation; it actively constrains and shapes what can and cannot be said in the translated text.

The concept of multimodal coherence is particularly important in this context. A subtitled or dubbed translation must maintain coherence not only within the verbal channel — ensuring that dialogue is semantically and pragmatically consistent — but across channels, ensuring that the translated language fits the visual image, matches the emotional tone of the performance, and does not contradict the information conveyed by sound and music. This requirement for cross-modal coherence is one of the defining features that distinguishes AVT from other forms of translation and that makes multimodal theory an indispensable analytical tool for understanding AVT decisions (Pérez-González, 2014).

2.2 Functional Equivalence and the AVT Quality Debate

The functional approach to translation equivalence, developed in the tradition of Reiss and Vermeer's (1984/2013) Skopos theory and Nida and Taber's (1969) communicative equivalence, has been widely applied in AVT research as a framework for evaluating translation quality. The central principle of functional equivalence is that a translation should produce in the target audience an effect equivalent to that produced by the source text on its original audience — not through formal linguistic correspondence but through the achievement of comparable communicative functions and audience responses.

In the context of AVT, functional equivalence must be understood in relation to the specific constraints and reception conditions of each mode. For subtitling, the relevant question is whether the condensed written text on screen succeeds in conveying the communicative purpose of the original utterance within the reading time available. For dubbing, the question is whether the adapted spoken dialogue maintains the dramatic function, emotional register, and characterisation of the original while satisfying synchronisation requirements. This mode-sensitive application of functional equivalence provides a more nuanced basis for AVT quality assessment than models that apply the same criteria across all translation modes (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021).

2.3 Domestication, Foreignisation, and Cultural Mediation

The tension between domestication and foreignisation, conceptualised by Venuti (1995) in the context of literary translation, has proved highly productive in AVT analysis, where cultural adaptation decisions are particularly visible and consequential. Domestication refers to translation strategies that adapt source-culture-specific content to the norms, expectations, and cultural framework of the target audience, making the translated text feel natural and culturally familiar. Foreignisation, by contrast, preserves source-culture elements — names, cultural references, idioms, and conventions — in the target text, maintaining a sense of cultural otherness and exposing the target audience to the foreign origin of the content.

In AVT, the choice between domesticating and foreignising strategies is shaped not only by ideological preferences or translator choices but by mode-specific constraints. Dubbing, with its requirement for natural, idiomatic spoken dialogue and lip-synchronized delivery, tends to favour domestication: translators working in dubbing often replace culturally specific references, humour, and idioms with target-culture equivalents in order to maintain fluency and immediate comprehension. Subtitling, by contrast, allows greater scope for foreignisation, since the written form of subtitles is more tolerant of cultural annotation and the viewer can simultaneously hear the original dialogue, which provides a context of foreignness that subtitles can acknowledge without obscuring. This mode-conditioned differential between domesticating and foreignising tendencies is a central theme in the comparative analysis that follows.

3. Dubbing: Constraints, Strategies, and Cultural Adaptation

3.1 Technical Constraints of Dubbing

Dubbing involves the replacement of the original spoken dialogue with a re-recorded performance in the target language, synchronized to the lip movements and physical performance of the on-screen actors. The primary technical constraints of dubbing are lip synchrony, isochrony, and kinetic synchrony. Lip synchrony — also known as phonetic synchrony — requires that the translated dialogue match, as closely as possible, the visible lip movements of actors during close-up shots. This means that the duration of vowel sounds, the position of bilabial and labiodental consonants, and the overall rhythm of the speech must correspond to what the viewer can see on screen (Chaume, 2012).

Isochrony — the requirement that the translated utterance should occupy approximately the same temporal space as the original — adds a further constraint on the length and structure of the dubbed text. If an original line occupies a specific number of seconds on screen, the dubbed version must fill the same duration without awkward pauses or unnatural speed adjustments. Kinetic synchrony requires that speech pauses, gesture-speech coordination, and the general rhythm of the translated performance match the on-screen body language of the actor. Together, these synchronisation requirements significantly restrict the translator's options and often necessitate substantial reformulation of the source text.

In addition to synchronisation, dubbing is constrained by the requirements of natural spoken dialogue style. Dubbed translations must sound like authentic spontaneous speech in the target language, which means avoiding written register, overly formal constructions, and sentence structures that are natural in the source language but awkward when spoken aloud. This spoken-language requirement reinforces the tendency toward domestication in dubbing, since idiomatic, natural-sounding speech in the target language will typically draw on target-culture linguistic resources rather than preserving source-culture expression.

3.2 Translation Strategies in Dubbing

Given these constraints, dubbing translators employ a range of strategies to achieve synchronised, natural, and functionally equivalent target-language dialogue. Reformulation — the radical restructuring of source-text content to produce a target-text utterance that is synchronised, idiomatic, and communicatively equivalent — is the most characteristic strategy of dubbing. Reformulation may involve changes in sentence structure, lexical substitution, the addition or deletion of content, and the adjustment of speech acts to match the dramatic function of the original utterance.

Cultural substitution is another central strategy in dubbing, particularly in the translation of culturally specific references, humour, idioms, and wordplay. When a source-text reference depends on cultural knowledge that the target audience cannot be assumed to share, dubbing translators frequently substitute a culturally equivalent reference drawn from the target culture. This strategy maintains the communicative function of the original — typically humour, characterisation, or thematic relevance — while replacing content that would be opaque or disorienting for the target audience.

Compensation is a related strategy in which meaning or effect lost in one part of a translated text is recovered elsewhere. In dubbing, compensation is particularly important in the translation of humour, where a joke that cannot be reproduced at the precise point where it occurs in the original may be replaced by a different joke at a neighbouring point in the dialogue, maintaining the overall comic register of the scene. These strategies collectively reflect the problem-solving orientation of dubbing translation, in which the goal is always functional and reception-oriented equivalence within strict synchronisation parameters.

3.3 Cultural Challenges in English-to-Azerbaijani Dubbing

The dubbing of English-language content into Azerbaijani presents particular challenges that arise from the structural and cultural distance between English and Azerbaijani. Azerbaijani is an agglutinative Turkic language in which grammatical relations are expressed through suffixation rather than through the word-order conventions and auxiliary structures characteristic of English. This structural difference means that sentences that occupy a given duration in English may require significantly longer or shorter utterances in Azerbaijani, creating persistent isochrony challenges for dubbing translators.

Cultural challenges are equally significant. English-language audiovisual content frequently contains culturally specific references to Anglo-American popular culture, political life, social norms, and humour that have no direct equivalent in Azerbaijani cultural experience. The translation of such references requires constant decisions about whether to domesticate — replacing the source-culture reference with a target-culture equivalent or a neutralised formulation — or to foreignise, preserving the source-culture element at the cost of potential comprehension difficulties. In the context of dubbing, where natural, idiomatic spoken dialogue is paramount, domestication is typically the preferred strategy, leading to translations that are culturally fluent but significantly divergent from the source text.

4. Subtitling: Constraints, Reduction Strategies, and Readability

4.1 Technical Constraints of Subtitling

Subtitling presents a fundamentally different set of constraints from dubbing. Subtitles are written text superimposed on the moving image, and their production is governed by a set of parameters relating to character limits, display duration, reading speed, and line formatting. Standard subtitling conventions specify that a single subtitle should not exceed two lines of

text, that each line should not exceed a maximum of approximately 42 characters (varying by broadcaster and platform), and that subtitles should remain on screen long enough for the viewer to read them comfortably — typically calculated on the basis of a reading speed of approximately 17 characters per second for adult audiences (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021).

These spatial and temporal constraints mean that subtitling always involves some degree of reduction relative to the source text. Subtitlers cannot reproduce the full content of spoken dialogue in written form within the available space and time; they must make systematic decisions about what to include and what to omit, how to condense long utterances into short written segments, and how to divide continuous speech into discrete subtitle units that can be displayed and read sequentially. The art of subtitling lies precisely in making these reductions in a way that preserves the communicative purpose, dramatic register, and pragmatic meaning of the original dialogue.

An additional constraint specific to subtitling is the semiotic shift from spoken to written language. The dialogue of films and television programmes is written to be performed as natural speech, and it carries the prosodic, paralinguistic, and pragmatic features of spoken language — false starts, hesitations, overlapping speech, incomplete sentences, and colloquial syntax. When this spoken dialogue is transposed into written subtitles, many of these features are lost or transformed, and the result must read as coherent, grammatically acceptable written text even when the original was grammatically incomplete or marked as informal speech.

4.2 Reduction and Condensation Strategies in Subtitling

The systematic study of reduction strategies in subtitling has identified several recurrent operations through which subtitlers manage the gap between spoken source text and written target text. Deletion — the omission of content that is considered non-essential or recoverable from the visual context — is the most fundamental reduction strategy. Subtitlers regularly delete discourse markers, hesitation phenomena, phatic expressions, repetitions, and elements of dialogue that are made redundant by the image. The challenge of deletion lies in distinguishing between content that is genuinely redundant and content that, while apparently secondary, contributes to characterisation, register, or pragmatic meaning.

Condensation — the reformulation of source-text content in a shorter target-text formulation that preserves the essential semantic and pragmatic content — is a more complex and skill-demanding strategy. Condensation requires the subtitler to identify the informational core of an utterance and to express it in fewer words, typically by replacing longer formulations with shorter ones, choosing more compact lexical items, and omitting syntactic material that can be inferred from context. Effective condensation is arguably the central competence of the subtitler, distinguishing professional practice from mechanical reduction that distorts meaning or obscures pragmatic intention.

Reformulation — more radical restructuring of the source-text utterance into a target-text formulation that is briefer, clearer, and more readable — is employed when the source-text content cannot be adequately condensed through lexical substitution and syntactic simplification alone. Reformulation in subtitling often involves a shift from the spoken register of the original to a more formal written register, which necessarily alters the stylistic tone of the text but may be unavoidable given the constraints of the written medium.

4.3 Cultural and Pragmatic Challenges in English-to-Azerbaijani Subtitling

The subtitling of English-language content into Azerbaijani raises cultural and pragmatic challenges that are in some respects similar to and in other respects distinct from those encountered in dubbing. The character-limit constraint of subtitling places particular

pressure on the translation of culturally specific content, since cultural explanations and adaptations that might be feasible in dubbed dialogue — where the translator has more flexibility in reformulating the spoken text — are typically impossible within the spatial limits of a subtitle.

Pragmatic markers — discourse particles, hedging expressions, politeness formulae, and address forms — present particular challenges in English-to-Azerbaijani subtitling. Azerbaijani has a rich system of address forms and politeness strategies that differ substantially from English conventions, and the subtitler must navigate the tension between accuracy in pragmatic meaning and the spatial constraints that prohibit lengthy adaptations. In many cases, the pragmatic nuance of an utterance is necessarily sacrificed in the subtitled translation, particularly where the source-text politeness convention has no compact Azerbaijani equivalent.

5. Comparative Case-Study Analysis: English–Turkish and English–Azerbaijani

5.1 Humour Translation

The translation of humour is widely recognized as one of the most challenging areas of AVT, since humorous effects depend on a combination of linguistic structure, cultural reference, timing, and performance that is difficult to reproduce across languages and modes. In both dubbing and subtitling, humour translation requires the translator to decide whether to reproduce the source-text humorous mechanism, adapt it to a target-culture equivalent, neutralise it, or replace it with a different humorous effect.

In English-to-Turkish dubbing, humour translation has been observed to follow predominantly domesticating strategies, replacing Anglo-American cultural jokes and wordplay with Turkish cultural references or idiomatic expressions that generate comparable comic effects for the target audience. This approach is effective in maintaining the comedic register of the scene and the characterisation of comic characters, but it results in substantial divergence from the source text and occasional inconsistencies when characters make jokes about source-culture phenomena that the Turkish version replaces with unrelated target-culture material.

In English-to-Azerbaijani subtitling, the spatial constraints of the medium make cultural substitution more difficult, and humour is more frequently neutralised or partially preserved through condensed literal translation. The result is that comic effects that depend on wordplay, cultural allusion, or pragmatic implication — which cannot be adequately reproduced within a two-line character limit — are often lost, and the subtitled version of a comic exchange may read as flat or emotionally under-calibrated compared to the original. This contrast between the domesticating capacity of dubbing and the neutralising tendency of subtitling in humour translation illustrates a general pattern in the mode-conditioned differential between the two approaches.

5.2 Idioms and Slang

Idiomatic expressions and slang present challenges in AVT that arise from the combination of cultural specificity, non-compositional meaning, and register marking. An idiom is by definition not translatable through the compositional meaning of its parts; its meaning is conventional and culture-specific, and its translation requires either a target-language equivalent idiom, a paraphrase of the idiomatic meaning, or a creative substitution that preserves the register and pragmatic function of the original expression.

In English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani translation, the challenge of idiom translation is intensified by the structural distance between English and the Turkic target languages. English idioms frequently draw on cultural references, conceptual metaphors, and historical associations that have no direct correlate in Turkish or Azerbaijani cultural experience. In dubbing contexts, translators regularly replace English idioms with Turkish or Azerbaijani idiomatic expressions that convey comparable meaning and register, a strategy that maintains the natural flow of spoken dialogue but further distances the target text from the source. In subtitling contexts, the spatial constraints frequently prevent the use of equivalent idioms and necessitate paraphrase, which reduces the stylistic richness and register specificity of the dialogue.

5.3 Pragmatic Meaning and Address Forms

Pragmatic meaning — the aspect of communicative content that depends on context, speaker intention, social relationship, and conversational convention rather than on the compositional semantic content of the utterance — is one of the most demanding challenges in AVT. Pragmatic meaning includes the illocutionary force of speech acts, the politeness strategies encoded in address forms and hedging expressions, the implicatures generated by indirect communication, and the social meanings conveyed by register choices and code-switching.

English and Azerbaijani differ substantially in their systems of address and politeness. Azerbaijani employs a T–V distinction (*sən* vs. *Siz*) that marks social distance, formality, and relative status, and that carries significant pragmatic implications for characterisation and social meaning in dialogue. English lacks this distinction, and translators working from English to Azerbaijani must infer the appropriate address form from contextual cues — the apparent age, social status, and relationship of the characters — and introduce it into the target text without explicit source-text guidance. Errors in this inferential process can significantly distort the social meaning of dialogue, particularly in scenes where shifts between formal and informal address mark important changes in character relationship.

5.4 Cultural References

The translation of culturally specific references — to institutions, historical events, media products, foods, places, and social practices that are specific to the source culture — presents AVT translators with a fundamental choice between cultural substitution, explanation, and retention. In dubbed translations, cultural substitution is most common, as the need for natural, flowing dialogue motivates the replacement of opaque cultural references with familiar target-culture equivalents. The risk of this strategy is that it may create cultural inconsistencies — for example, characters in an American setting making Turkish cultural references — that undermine the cultural coherence of the translated text.

In subtitling, the options are more limited. Cultural substitution within the character constraints of a subtitle is possible only when a compact equivalent is available; more often, subtitlers must choose between retaining the source-culture reference (which may be opaque to the target audience) and replacing it with a brief paraphrase or neutralisation (which loses cultural specificity). For English-to-Azerbaijani subtitling in particular, the relatively limited exposure of Azerbaijani audiences to Anglo-American cultural content means that retention strategies carry a significant risk of comprehension failure, while neutralisation strategies result in substantial loss of cultural texture.

6. Comparative Evaluation and Implications for Translation Practice

The comparative analysis of dubbing and subtitling presented in the preceding sections reveals that the two modes are not simply alternative channels for the delivery of equivalent translations; they are fundamentally different communicative practices that impose different constraints, enable different strategies, and produce different kinds of translated texts. Neither mode is universally superior: each has advantages and limitations that make it better suited to different communicative contexts, audience characteristics, and translation purposes.

Dubbing offers the advantage of complete immersion in the target language: viewers are not required to divide their attention between reading and viewing, and the translated dialogue integrates with the visual performance in a way that can, at its best, produce a seamless audiovisual experience in the target language. Its disadvantages are significant, however: the synchronisation constraints of dubbing impose substantial reformulation requirements that frequently result in divergence from the source text, and the domesticating tendencies of dubbing translation may obscure the cultural otherness of the source text and reduce the target audience's exposure to foreign cultural experience. For target audiences in Azerbaijani media contexts, where dubbing has historically been less common than subtitling and where audiences have some familiarity with English-language originals, these domesticating tendencies may be perceived as distorting rather than facilitating.

Subtitling preserves the original spoken performance, allowing the viewer to experience the source-language delivery, acting style, and acoustic environment of the original production. This fidelity to the source performance is particularly valued in contexts where audiences are familiar with the source language and wish to access the original expressive content directly. The disadvantages of subtitling are the cognitive demands of simultaneous reading and viewing, the systematic reduction of dialogue content imposed by character and time constraints, and the pragmatic impoverishment that results from the semiotic shift from spoken to written language. For Azerbaijani audiences with lower levels of English proficiency, the reliance on subtitles as a primary comprehension resource may impose significant cognitive load.

For translator training and quality assessment, these findings suggest that mode-specific competence development is essential. Translators working in dubbing need strong skills in reformulation, synchronisation-aware writing, and cultural adaptation; those working in subtitling need strong skills in condensation, pragmatic inference, and the management of the spoken-to-written semiotic shift. Quality evaluation frameworks for AVT should therefore be mode-sensitive, applying criteria appropriate to the specific constraints and goals of each mode rather than imposing uniform standards across both practices.

7. Conclusion

This article has examined dubbing and subtitling as the two dominant modes of audiovisual translation, analysing their technical constraints, translation strategies, and cultural challenges with specific attention to English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani language transfers. The theoretical framework of multimodal discourse analysis, functional equivalence, and the domestication–foreignisation distinction has provided the analytical basis for understanding how mode-specific constraints shape translation decisions at the levels of language, culture, and pragmatic meaning.

The analysis has demonstrated that dubbing and subtitling are not simply different delivery mechanisms for the same translated content; they are distinct communicative practices that produce structurally different kinds of translations, serve different audience needs, and require different translator competences. Dubbing's synchronisation requirements motivate

domestication, reformulation, and cultural substitution, producing target texts that are fluent and immersive but culturally adapted. Subtitling's condensation requirements impose systematic reduction and pragmatic simplification, producing target texts that are closer to the source in cultural content but reduced in register specificity and pragmatic richness.

The case-study analysis of humour, idioms, pragmatic markers, and cultural references in English-to-Turkish and English-to-Azerbaijani translation has illustrated these mode-conditioned differences concretely, showing how the same translation challenge — the rendering of a culturally specific joke, an idiomatic expression, or a pragmatically complex speech act — is addressed differently in the two modes and produces different translation outcomes. For Turkish and Azerbaijani translation contexts, these findings highlight the particular importance of cultural awareness, pragmatic competence, and mode-specific strategy knowledge in AVT training.

Future research in this area would benefit from corpus-based empirical analysis of actual dubbed and subtitled translations in the English-to-Azerbaijani direction, which remains understudied relative to other Turkic-language translation contexts. Experimental studies of audience reception — examining how Azerbaijani viewers perceive and process dubbed versus subtitled translations of English-language content — would provide valuable empirical grounding for the theoretical and normative arguments advanced in this article. The development of mode-sensitive quality assessment frameworks adapted to Azerbaijani media translation contexts represents another productive direction for future work.

Declarations

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization: A.N.; Methodology: A.N.; Investigation: A.N.; Writing – original draft: A.N.; Writing – review & editing: A.N.

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Received: 12 March 2026

Accepted: 28 April 2026

Published: 2 May 2026