Research Article

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Multimodal Translation Theory and Dynamic Equivalence in Animated Cinema: A Scene-Based Comparative Analysis of *Hotel Transylvania*

https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5871-7635 Ömer Faruk Yılmaz[1]

https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8465-9803 Abdülbaki Yılmaz[2]

[1] English Translation and Interpreting, Sakarya University, Türkiye (Alumnus)
[2] English Translation and Interpreting, Sakarya University, Türkiye (Alumnus)

abstract

In this study, the Turkish subtitle (Netflix) and dubbing translations of the animated movie *Hotel Transylvania* are assessed through a comparative and holistic approach within the frameworks of Eugene Nida's Dynamic Equivalence Theory and Multimodal Translation Theory. Based on the premise that meaning in audiovisual texts is generated not only through language but also through the interaction of distinct communicative modes—such as visuals, gestures, facial expressions, vocal performance, and visual context—both linguistic and non-linguistic elements are taken into account. In this research, the movie's original English dialogues serve as the source text, while the Turkish subtitles and dubbing translations constitute the target texts. Qualitative, descriptive, and scene-based comparative analysis methods are used to evaluate whether Turkish viewers experience a similar impact to the target audience, how cultural/linguistic elements are localized, and how humor and idioms are rendered. The results of the study indicate that dubbing translation—despite the requirement of synchronization with lip and body movements—provides translators with greater flexibility and a larger space for creative mediation in transferring cultural, linguistic, and multimodal elements. It also looks at the strategies used by translators to preserve narrative coherence and emotional tone when some of the visual or auditory cues have no direct equivalent in the target language, and assesses the combined effort of voice actors and editors in the resulting product. The present study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on audiovisual translation and to the academic debate on global me by showing the workings of dynamic equivalence and multimodal element in subtitling and dubbing. Subtitle translation, on the other hand, is seen as more restrictive due to technical limitations such as character limitations and reading speed, which often necessitate the omission, reduction or simplification of content.

Keywords: audiovisual translation (AVT), dynamic equivalence theory, multimodal translation theory, subtitling, dubbing, *Hotel Transylvania*, cultural adaptation, lip-sync

Correspondence: Ömer Faruk Yılmaz, e-mail: bunyaminyavuz2355@gmail.com

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study and the Evolution of Meaning in the Digital Age

Globalization and digital media have progressed at a rapid pace, facilitating an unprecedented international diffusion of multimedia assets and transporting complex audiovisual products across a variety of linguistic and cultural barriers (Smith, 2024). Within the framework of Translation Studies, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) has become a primary discipline for the management of this cross-cultural flow. In the contemporary digital landscape, the exponential growth of over-the-top (OTT) streaming platforms—frequently termed the *streaming wave* or the era of *Netflixication*—has fundamentally altered global media consumption patterns and accelerated the demand for rapid, high-quality localization (Choi et al., 2023; Moreau, 2025). This massive expansion of subscription video-on-demand services has transformed the traditional distribution of media, forcing translation workflows to adapt to highly dynamic transnational strategies (Díaz-Cintas & Hayes, 2023; Massidda, 2023).

Therefore, the traditional text-based translation paradigms and the literal word-for-word translation strategies can not satisfy the needs of modern audiovisual media. In cinematic storytelling, semantic weight is rarely limited to dialogue alone: a character's eye contact, changes in lighting, and the tempo of the scene all play a part in construing the story. As social semiotic frameworks argue, translation in the digital age should not be viewed as a passive linguistic code-switching mechanism. Instead, it needs to be re-conceptualized as an active intersemiotic and intercultural mediation that harmonizes visual, auditory and textual signs across cultural barriers for functional efficacy.

1.2. Key Research Focus and Theoretical Framework

The main challenge in AVT is to achieve communicative equivalence without producing semiotic dissonance between what the audience hears, sees and reads. To study this multidimensional issue, this study builds a broad theoretical bridge by synthesising multimodal translation theory and Eugene Nida's dynamic equivalence theory. Unlike previous analyses of *Hotel Transylvania* that primarily focus on isolated *linguistic shifts*, *deixis*, or *verbal humor*, this research provides a unique contribution by systematically mapping how these specific theoretical frameworks operate across both subtitling and dubbing modalities to preserve humor and character identity.

The study combines the semiotic channel model of Frederic Chaume and the social semiotic models of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen and treats the film text as an organic whole where visual and verbal signs interact. At the same time, the dynamic equivalence theory by Eugene Nida is used to underline the importance of the receiver's response and claims that a translation is highly successful if it evokes a response from the target audience similar to the experience of the source audience.

Animated cinema is a very dense multi-modal environment, with exaggerated physics, caricature movements and rapid-fire visual humour, which requires rigorous multi-channel decoding and creative localization strategies. The study examines the translator's shift from being just a text renderer to becoming an active cultural mediator, balancing semiotic cohesion with functional communicative impact.

1.3. Material and Methodology

The study uses a qualitative, descriptive, and scene-based comparative methodology to assess the functional efficiency of translation strategies in multimodal and technical constraints (Hsieh

& Shannon, 2005, pp. 1280-1282). The research corpus is the animated feature film *Hotel Transylvania* (2012), chosen for its high degree of rapid visual wordplay, cultural metaphors, and unique character kinetics. The analysis covers only the first 60 minutes of the film and concentrates on 10 main and supporting characters, which should constitute a representative sample of linguistic and semiotic shifts, for the sake of objectivity and replicability. In the empirical investigation, we examine the original English source dialogue and Turkish target modalities with the help of a systematic comparative matrix:

Subtitling (TT1) is defined as a diagonal translation mode in which spoken acoustic data is condensed into written screen text within strict spatial and temporal parameters (Gottlieb, 1994, pp. 101-121). This process adheres to a 35–40 Characters Per Line (CPL) ceiling and reading speed constraints measured in Characters Per Second (CPS) (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2018; Bogucki, 2018, p. 3).

Dubbing (TT2) is defined as a horizontal replacement process in which the source audio track is substituted with a localized vocal performance (Gottlieb, 1994, pp. 102-105). This process is governed by the requirements of phonetic synchrony (lip-sync), isochrony, and kinetic matching.

1.4. Research Questions

To meet the objectives of this consolidated approach, the investigation is structured along the following core research questions:

Audiovisual and Semiotic Interaction. How do the visual-nonverbal channels - e.g. character gestures, facial expressions and overall mise-en-scène in *Hotel Transylvania* influence the cultural localization choices and colloquial expressions in the Turkish target texts?

Technical and Constraints-Driven Shifting. How do the physical constraints of a phonetic synchrony -*lip-sync*- in dubbing and the spatio-temporal constraints of subtitling restrict, turn around or channel the translator's lexical choices and the application of dynamic equivalence?

Comparative Multimodal Coherence. How do subtitling -diagonal translation- and dubbing -horizontal translation- differ in their preservation of visual humor, and which modality maintains a higher degree of multimodal coherence along with functional equivalent response for the target audience?

Table 1

Technical Specifications of the Research Material

Feature	Data / Detail
Movie Title	Hotel Transylvania
Production Year / Studio	2012 / Sony Pictures Animation
Analyzed Period of Time	00:00:00 - 01:00:00 (First 60 Minutes)
Source Language	English (Original)
Target Language (Dubbing)	Turkish (Gülseren BAYINDIR)
Target Language (Subtitle)	Turkish (Official Netflix Subtitles)
Number of Analyzed Characters	10 (Main and Supporting)

Source:Created by the authors.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Traditional translation and audiovisual translation (AVT) vary essentially in their active environments. Traditional text-based translation is mainly concerned with the linguistic dimension, whereas AVT is a multidimensional platform in which spoken words, written text, images, sound effects and music operate simultaneously to create meaning. With the growth of digital media platforms shaped through fast technological developments across television, cinema, and streaming media, AVT has emerged as one of the most vital, fast-growing branches within modern translation studies, crossing linguistic, cultural, social, and contextual boundaries (Ahonen, 2024, pp. 2-3).

In the process of audiovisual translation, the translator's role goes far beyond a simple code-switching operation between two language systems. Translators must look outside the limits of pure language to consider visual consistency, precise timing, acoustic performance, the emotional atmosphere of the scene, character mouth movements, and the overall rhythm of the screen image to ensure effective audience reception. AVT encompasses diverse modalities—including subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, and audio description each featuring distinct technical, semiotic, and communicative challenges (Aleksandrova, 2020).

2.1. Historical Development of Audio-Visual Translation

The history of audiovisual translation has always been linked to the evolution of cinema technology, starting with the intertitles of the silent film era and arriving at the current multi-channel digital systems. As international distribution grew, the need to move screen content across language barriers forced the industry to develop systematic ways of translating, broadly split between the opposing traditions of subtitling and dubbing (Karamitroglou, 2000). A basic point of reference for classifying these AVT modes according to the communicative channels they make use of is Henrik Gottlieb's (1994) classification.

According to Gottlieb's framework, translation strategies are structurally determined by the semiotic shift between the source and target channels:

Dubbing is classified as a *horizontal translation* because the original auditory channels of the source language are completely removed and replaced with new auditory tracks recorded by target-language voice actors.

Subtitling is classified as a *diagonal translation* because the source text's auditory verbal channel is simultaneously supplemented by a target-language written track on the screen.

When evaluated through modern systemic frameworks, such as Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, both modes act as vital instruments that actively expand, challenge, and transform the literary corpus and cultural structures of the target polysystem.

2.2. The Paradigm Shift: From Linguistic Equivalence to Multimodal Complexity

Until the late 20th century, translation studies was heavily restricted by the *linguistic turn*, which narrowly framed translation as an algorithmic process of code-switching between two static semantic systems. However, the explosive proliferation of screen-based digital media radically expanded the definition of a *text* from a static, paper-bound written form to a fluid, dynamic structure formed from sounds, images, spatial layouts, and physical movements. This major transformation initiated what is known as the multimodal turn in translation studies.

Mary Snell-Hornby's (1988) integrated approach represents one of the pioneering academic responses to this paradigm shift, arguing that translation must be re-evaluated not as a mechanical

linguistic operation, but as an active cultural, contextual, and performative act. Within an audiovisual context, rendering a scene—especially a humorous or emotionally charged one—requires far more than translating literal dialogue. It demands acute academic attention to the characters' physical transformations, kinetic speed, facial distortions -such as Count Dracula's sudden, exaggerated facial mutations when angry in *Hotel Transylvania*-, underlying sound effects, and integrated visual cues.

As a consequence, audiovisual translation can no longer be evaluated through lenses of formal or word-for-word linguistic equivalence. Instead, it must be addressed as an intersemiotic process—the transfer of meaning not merely across two syntactic frameworks, but across entirely different semiotic systems, allowing for the systematic reinterpretation, restructuring, and reconstruction of meaning as information dynamically shifts between verbal and non-verbal modes on the screen (Metin Tekin, 2019).

2.3. Multimodality: The Semiotic Architecture of Visual Communication

Multimodality is the systematic study of how meaning is co-constructed through the simultaneous interaction of multiple communicative channels working in tandem. Formulated and expanded by semioticians like Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, this conceptual framework fundamentally dismantles the historical, logocentric dominance of language as the exclusive or primary carrier of human meaning (Van Leeuwen, 2005). Under a multimodal lens, every single element presented on the screen—including color palettes, camera angles, kinetic movements, soundscapes, character expressions, lighting, and paralinguistic gestures—functions as an active semiotic resource playing a role in the overall meaning-making architecture in the text (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001).

This system redefines the identity of the translator. No longer viewed as a passive, transparent conveyor of dictionary words, the translator is recognized as an active, creative mediator and information engineer who decodes, interprets, and reconstructs a dense, multi-layered world of visual and auditory signs. Animated movies offer an exceptionally rich paradigm for multimodal analysis. Because animation is characterized by the deliberate manipulation of physical reality, highly exaggerated character kinetics, and rapid visual humor, it offers a complex semiotic puzzle where words cannot be separated from the visual and auditory environment in which they are embedded (Beer, 2010).

2.3.1. The Interplay of Four Semiotic Channels (Frederic Chaume's Framework)

Frederic Chaume (2004) has developed an empirical model to evaluate the operational mechanics of audiovisual texts that identifies four main semiotic channels working in parallel during a screen broadcast. In order to explain the strategic motivations that underlie a translator's choices, it is necessary to map these channels, as a change in one channel directly changes the functional weight of the others:

Auditory-Verbal Channel. Spoken dialogue, voice-over narration, internal monologues and explicit song lyrics belong to this channel. Crucially, this channel is never isolated; its semiotic delivery depends entirely on paralinguistic features such as pitch, tone, volume and stress. In *Hotel Transylvania*, for example, the authoritative, dominant vocal tone of Count Dracula often requires the translator to implement sharp, imperative linguistic structures in the target language in order to preserve character cohesion.

Auditory-Nonverbal Channel. This channel includes acoustic parameters besides regular language, such as background musical scores, ambient soundscapes, localised sound effects, and natural paralinguistic sounds—e.g. gasps, cries, groans or laughter—. It controls the emotional timing and the reality of the environment in the scene.

Visual-Verbal Channel. This channel includes all the written linguistic signs visible on the screen, such as environmental text —e.g. street signs, posters, book titles—insert titles, newspaper headlines, and interlingual subtitles inserted during post-production.

Visual-Nonverbal Channel. This channel includes the entire visual architecture of the screen layout, including lighting, color cues, set design—*mise-en-scène*—camera movements, and the physical kinetics, gestures, and facial expressions of the characters.

2.4. Eugene Nida's Dynamic Equivalence Theory and the Functional Turn

To traverse the complex technical and semiotic limits of AVT, translators rely heavily on Eugene Nida's foundational dynamic equivalence theory (1964). In direct opposition to literal equivalence which focuses on a rigid, word-for-word replication of source-text structures dynamic equivalence privileges the communicative function and the final response of the receptor. Nida claims that a translation is highly successful when the relationship between the target audience and the translated text triggers a reaction that substantially replicates the cognitive and emotional response elicited between the original audience and the source text.

The theory provides a strong theoretical basis for localized adaptations, transcreation and functional interventions in global media. The dense presence of cultural references, idiomatic expressions, youth slang and rapid wordplay means that literal translations in audiovisual translation are often a complete failure. Dynamic equivalence liberates the translator from linguistic fidelity so that the text can be changed, replaced or filtered culturally so that the audience can experience a similar humorous or dramatic impact. In animation, the content has to be universally accessible, immediate and entertaining for family audiences. Nida's framework serves as a core guiding principle to ensure the coherence of narrative and function.

2.5. Dubbing: The Multi-Layered Art of Synchronization and Technical Elements

Dubbing translation is one of the most technically restrictive modes of AVT, in the form of a high stakes *juggling act* where the translator has to simultaneously balance semantic fidelity, phonetic constraints and natural acoustic performance (Chaume, 2012). As Frederic Chaume points out, a dubbing translator cannot just translate semantic meaning, but has to carefully construct a target script which will fit smoothly with the already available physical actions, breathing patterns and mouth movements that are shown on screen. The goal of dubbing is to maintain the —*auditory illusion*— that the audience hears in a 1:1 ratio, meaning that what they hear is completely consistent with the character's lip movements (Bosseaux, 2015, pp. 27-29).

2.5.1. Phonetic Synchrony (Lip-Sync)

Phonetic synchrony is the alignment of the target wording with the explicit opening and closing of the character's mouth. Special attention should be paid to labial consonants—like b, p, m, v, f—where the lips need to be seen to close. In fast-moving animations like *Hotel Transylvania*, with highly caricatured and rapid mouth movements, the translator has to hit these visual anchor points exactly, avoiding *overrun* (the character's mouth moving silently) or "underrun" —the sound continuing after the lips have closed—(Chaume, 2012).

Table 2

Lip-Sync and Phonetic Comparison

Character	Original (EN)	Turkish Dub (TR)	Technical Analysis and Impact
Dracula	"I don't know from 'Zing.'"	"Haa "şıp" mıp bilmem ben."	A perfect lip opening ensured with preserving the "A" sound. With adding "Haa" to the translated product.
Jonathan	"What? It's a good jam. Don't be a grandpa.?"	"Bu şarkı çok iyidir abi. Dedemleşme bak?"	The "d" sound is preserved while ensuring lip opening and closing at target language.
Quasimodo	"Bonjour, Monsieur Dracula!"	"Uyyy Dracula beycuğum!"	The character's long mouth movement while saying "Bonjour" is changed with "uyyy" which allows us with a good lip-sync.

Source: Created by the authors.

Isochrony. Isochrony dictates that the precise duration of the dubbed utterance must perfectly match the exact timeframe of the original utterance, down to the fraction of a second (Williamson & Pedro Ricoy, 2014, pp. 165-166). If a character delivers a extremely concise, five-syllable sentence in English that translates into a long, grammatically complex Turkish sentence, the translator cannot use the literal rendering. They must instead compress the phrasing or utilize a *fast-talk* vocal technique to fit the technical constraints of the screen without sacrificing the scene's semantic weight (Peter, 2018). Conversely, if the target language is too short, temporal gap-filling—expansion strategies—must be employed.

Table 3

Temporal Gap Filling (Expansion) Analysis

Character	Original (EN)	Turkish Dub (TR)	Technical Analysis and Impact
Dracula	"Now go and never return!" (3.0 second)	"Şimdi git ve asla dönme!" (3.0 second)	The mouth movement sequence was completed without any complication, since Dracula closes his mouth in this scene.
Quasimodo	"I What? Esmeralda, you smell it again?" (2 second)	"Ne? Yine mi kokuyu aldın Esmeralda?" (2 second)	He changed the original sound with the Black Sea dialect and elongations.
Dracula	"Whatever!" (1.8 second)	"Oğlum bak git!" (1.8 second)	Instead of making a long one-word translation, they chose to translate using a popular internet meme of the time.

Source: Created by the authors.

2.5.2. Kinesic and Paralinguistic Matching

Kinesic Matching. Requires the absolute alignment of spoken words and acoustic emphasis with the physical gestures, body language, nods, and kinetic movements taking place on screen. For example, if a character forcefully points at an object or pounds a table on a specific word, the corresponding target word must be strategically positioned at that exact timestamp (Bosseaux, 2015, p. 26).

Paralinguistic Matching. Focuses on preserving the raw emotional architecture, pitch, stress, vocal tone, and delivery style of the source performance. (Pettit, 2005)

2.5.3. Advanced Technical Elements in Dubbing Operations

A professional dubbing script must also manage complex acoustic engineering environments through specialized channel management:

M&E (Music & Effects) Channel Management. Dubbing studios isolate dialogue tracks while leaving the M&E channel untouched. However, script writers must note specific markers such as—effect or laughter—to indicate when a voice actor must step back to let the original mixed audio track carry the scene, preventing local audio overlays from degrading the film's native sound quality. (Netflix, n.d.)

"Walla" and Crowd Effects. In busy background settings (like hotel dining rooms or pool scenes) translators will use *Walla* - the building of structured background crowd noise. This is dynamic equivalence . This is where you have off-script side conversations in the target language that are appropriate to the world—e.g. vampires in the background arguing about dietary restrictions , or tired werewolves complaining about parenting— instead of just having background monsters making generic non-verbal growls . This adds immense story depth .

Perspective Recording and Panning. Sound designers adjust the directional movement of the audio track—panning between left and right speaker channels— based on explicit directional cues marked in the dubbing script (such as left-g or right-u) to perfectly match characters flying or running across the visual frame. (Liu & Amirdabbaghian, 2025)

2.6. Subtitle Translation: Technical Constraints and Spatial Economy

However, in stark contrast to the performative flexibility of dubbing, subtitling is subject to strict laws of spatial economy and spatial-temporal reduction. Subtitles must be carefully designed to avoid creating a cognitive overload, and to avoid distracting the viewer from the visual humour and key developments of the narrative, because the target audience has to read text while watching fast-moving visual action, and to listen to the original background sound track (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 9).

2.6.1. Technical Specifications of Subtitling

The spatial-temporal boundaries of subtitle creation are restricted by industry-standard metrics:

Spatial Limits. A subtitle block is strictly limited to a maximum of two lines on screen at any given time. Each line can contain an average of roughly 35 to 40 characters (including spaces and punctuation marks) depending on the platform's specific specifications. (Van Loenhout, n.d.)

Temporal Limits (Reading Speed). Subtitles must remain on screen long enough to match standard viewer reading speeds, measured via Characters Per Second (CPS) metrics. Text exceeding these thresholds triggers immediate cognitive fatigue, forcing viewers to focus entirely on reading rather than enjoying the cinematic visuals. (Fresno & Sepielak, 2020, p. 416)

2.6.2. The Reduction Strategy and Dynamic Equivalence in Subtitling

The invisible technical barriers mean that a subtitle can seldom be a word-for-word transcription of the spoken dialogue. On the contrary, the subtitler works in the paradigm of functional minimalism, using the strategy of systemic reduction (Bogucki, 2004). It has to do with removing unnecessary language, cutting out repeated phrases , getting rid of redundant names or titles , and deleting words that have little meaning. Dialogue is usually reduced by 20% to 30%. In Nida's

theory, this reduction of structure is not a loss of information but rather a very sophisticated manifestation of dynamic equivalence. The subtitler reduces dialogue to its semantic essence, thereby saving the cognitive resources of the target viewer and allowing sufficient time for the effortless understanding of visual humor, fluid character gestures and environmental signs.

2.7. Translation of Animation: Localization, Character-Based Transcreation, and Humor

Translating fast-paced animated features like *Hotel Transylvania* calls for skills far beyond simple bilingualism, requiring a profound cultural awareness, artistic creativity and an organic understanding of character-based transcreation. Animation is a highly semiotically cohesive medium, where the construction of character archetypes is accomplished through a detailed interplay of visual features, vocal accents and specific linguistic registries.

2.7.1. Transcreation of Humor and Cultural Filtering

Humor in animation is often based on rapid-fire puns, cultural idioms and visual-verbal synchrony. If the joke in the source language refers directly to an object or action that is visible on screen, the translator cannot translate it into a text that ignores that visual reality; they are forced to engage in an intersemiotic negotiation. However, if there is no direct equivalent in the target language for a linguistic joke, the translator will resort to cultural filtering and domestication strategies (Davies, 2009).

This is reflected in the different strategies used by the two modalities. As a result of the spatial constraints, subtitling often adopts a more formal and standardized register, sometimes rendering humor more literal or glossed. Dubbing provides a much more fertile playground for dynamic equivalence by harnessing the expressive, acoustic freedom of the voice actor. It allows for the complete replacement of source-text jokes with highly colloquial target-language idioms, slang, and localized cultural substitutes that feel immediately natural and relatable to the target audience.

2.7.2. Characterization Through Accents and Dialectal Adaptation

A major dimension of character design in animation is sociolinguistic branding through distinct vocal accents. In the original English version of *Hotel Transylvania*, characters are assigned specific accents to evoke culturally embedded stereotypes e.g., Quasimodo's thick French accent immediately signals culinary expertise, short-tempered volatile behavior, and eccentric volatility to Western audiences. (Satkauskaite & Kuzmickienė, 2022, pp. 36-37)

To evoke an equivalent functional response in the target polysystem, the translator acts not merely as a language mediator, but as a creative character designer. For example, by mapping Quasimodo's personality onto a localized regional dialect—such as the Black Sea *Laz* dialect in the Turkish dub—the translator taps into an existing domestic comedic trope (quick to anger, hyperactive, loud, yet intensely comical). This tactical adaptation ensures that the target audience instantly recognizes, categorizes, and emotionally connects with the character's designed archetype in an identical manner to the source audience, fully validating Nida's model of dynamic effect in the digital age.

2.8. Comprehensive Systemic Summary: Subtitling vs. Dubbing Matrix

Here is a structurally mapped systematic decision-making matrix showing the operational divergence of subtitling and dubbing strategies, evaluated through the combined perspectives of multimodal translation theory and Eugene Nida's dynamic equivalence framework, to conclude this theoretical framework:

Table 4

Subtitling vs. Dubbing Strategic Matrix

Criteria	Subtitling Strategy	Dubbing Strategy	Relation to Nida's Theory / Multimodal Framework
Space/Time Constraints	Character limits (Max 32-42 per line); spatial-temporal restrictions; strict CPL and CPS limits.	Lip-sync synchronization; strict temporal and physical boundaries; phonetic lip-sync, isochrony, and kinesic matching.	Defines the technical "invisible walls" that force translators to restructure or manipulate incoming information channels / Creating space for dynamic equivalence.
Language Register / Information Hierarchy	Formal and Standard register; focuses on Spatial Economy. Dialogue is condensed via systemic reduction (20–30% text elimination).	Colloquial and Slang-heavy; focuses on Phonetic and Rhythmic Synchrony. Preserves the auditory illusion via syllabic and labial matching.	Directly influences the capacity to elicit a similar response and evoke an equivalent emotional and cognitive response in the target viewer.
Cultural Transfer	Foreignization (Preservation); leans toward foreignization or literal glossing to preserve the native source soundtrack.	Domestication (Localization); maximizes Domestication and Transcreation, embedding highly localized cultural substitutes.	Operates as a cultural bridge; cultural filtering naturalizes foreign myths so they resonate intimately with domestic audiences.
Humor Transfer	Literal/Glossed puns due to reading time limits.	Cultural substitutes; highly colloquial target-language idioms, slang, and localized cultural substitutes.	Functional equivalence; playground for Nida's dynamic equivalence to maximize comedic impact.

Source: Created by the authors.

3. METHODOLOGY

As emphasized from the very beginning, the research design departs from a simple, isolated translation comparison. The primary objective is to shift from a traditional, text-only perspective to examine the translation process through a broader, more dynamic lens. This methodology section demonstrates how the mechanics of the dubbing process are uncovered, revealing that the final Turkish audio track functions as a carefully engineered product of a holistic screen analysis. This process is driven equally by multimodal awareness and the pursuit of dynamic equivalence.

The study is structured as a qualitative case study because translation choices especially within the creative and visually stimulating medium of animation cannot be adequately captured through numbers or statistical metrics alone. This research is informed by Shazeen and Chandana's (2025, p. 86) framework, which argues that animation translation must account for dual-audience reception by addressing the distinct linguistic and cultural expectations of both children and adults. Inspired by this dual-layered approach, an explanatory method is employed to observe the Turkish dubbing of *Hotel Transylvania* within its natural context and to clarify the underlying rationale behind

specific adaptation strategies. Consequently, the investigation extends beyond identifying what was translated; it isolates the specific ways in which the visual environment and the anticipated target audience response conditioned the translator›s decisions.

3.1. Corpus Selection: Why *Hotel Transylvania*?

The primary material for this study is the 2012 movie *Hotel Transylvania*. The original English version and the Turkish dubbed version were systematically compared. *Hotel Transylvania* was selected for this study due to its high multimodal density and its heavy reliance on immediate comedic effect, which allows for the simultaneous testing of both multimodal translation theory and dynamic equivalence. The film offers an ideal framework for this joint analysis because it features:

Diverse Characters: The cast ranges from Dracula's overprotective father figure to Johnny's relaxed, modern slacker persona. Each profile requires a distinct vocal identity and a specialized linguistic register in the target language.

Extreme Movements: Due to the distinctive animation style of director Genndy Tartakovsky, characters exhibit exaggerated, lightning-fast kinetic actions. This characteristic places significant structural pressure on the translation to maintain absolute synchronization with the physical movements on screen.

Cultural Riddles: The source text is saturated with jokes, contemporary slang, and monster folklore specific to Western cultural contexts. The analysis focuses on how these elements are decoded and reconstructed using localized Turkish cultural signs.

3.2. Technical Constraints vs. Dynamic Intentions

The translator in AVT is always in a fight with the technical boundaries of the screen. In subtitling, the *enemy* is spatial and temporal: the 42-character limit per line and the duration a human eye takes to read text relative to the scene's pace. In dubbing, the challenge shifts to *lip synchronization* —matching labial sounds like P, B, M— and *isochrony* —matching the length of the utterance to the character's mouth movements—.

In the practice of audiovisual translation, technical constraints often dictate lexical choices more profoundly than the source text itself. Maintaining temporal alignment is essential; when a character makes a specific hand gesture, the target text must be calibrated so that a key lexical unit 'lands' at the exact moment of that gesture to preserve semiotic cohesion. This requirement highlights that the screen acts as an active agent in the translation process, fundamentally shaping the outcome. Drawing inspiration from the work of scholars such as Taylor (2016) regarding synchrony and Antonini and Bucaria (2023) concerning the creative management of screen constraints, this study views the translator as an *information engineer*. The translator must strategically strip away secondary linguistic details to safeguard the primary visual-verbal connection, ultimately ensuring that the final product possesses the natural fluidity of a work originally created in Turkish.

Table 5

Environmental and Graphic Translation

Visual Element	Context	Turkish Strategy	Rationale
"Beware of Humans"	Hanging Sign	"İnsan Giremez"	Vital for plot understanding; forced narrative.
"Lizard Goulash"	Menu Board	"Kertenkele KeKebabı"	Domestication to match the auditory Laz chef.
Newspaper	Close-up shot	"Canavar Haberleri"	Translating only the high-impact visual font.
"Keep Out"	Door Sign	"Uzak Durun"	Matches the dark, gothic visual of the entrance.
Postcard	Mavis's hand	"Cennetten Selamlar"	Visual overlay to maintain emotional tone.
"Monster Festival"	Banner	"Canavar Festivali"	Essential for the visual setting of the scene.
Exit Sign	Background	"Çıkış"	Standardized functional translation.
"No Sun"	Sunscreen bottle	"Güneş Geçirmez"	Humor depends on the visual-verbal pun.

Source: Created by the authors.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The findings are presented using a standardized model that maps character kinetics to specific translation strategies across all analyzed scenes. This model ensures technical consistency by evaluating how the four semiotic channels interact with the translator's choices.

Standardized Mapping of Character Kinetics: The model maps rapid physical movements of high kinetic energy characters such as Quasimodo to the application of dialectal adaptation and condensed phonetic phrasing to maintain isochrony.

Technical Consistency in Translation Strategy: For all characters, the analysis employs a consistent framework to evaluate how the visual-verbal channel—such as on-screen text or situational cues—determines the *forced narrative strategy* adopted by the translator. As Matkivska (2014, p. 38) highlights, the defining constraint of audiovisual translation is the synchronization of verbal and nonverbal components, which forces the translator to move beyond simple linguistic transfer. Building on this premise, this study focuses on how these technical constraints dictate translation choices, prioritizing plot-critical information to preserve multimodal coherence. By isolating the specific ways in which the visual environment conditions these choices, the analysis clarifies how the translator navigates the tension between linguistic fidelity and the requirements of the visual medium.

Synchrony Compliance: Dubbing strategies are evaluated according to a uniform criterion of phonetic synchrony, specifically labial consonants—b, p, m, v, f—in order to verify that the vocal performance is consistent with the character's lip movements during the whole analysis.

4.1. The Intersemiotic Negotiation: Balancing Visual and Verbal Modes

Audiovisual translation in *Hotel Transylvania* demands continuous negotiation between dialogue,

visual movements, sound effects, and music. Translators re-code the total semiotic experience for a new cultural audience.

This chapter applies empirical data to show how Eugene Nida's dynamic equivalence theory intersects with multimodal animation layers. Analysis of target language humor, culture, and language shows how translators achieve a comparable audience response.

The visual-nonverbal channel is the dominant one in animation. Physical actions are overdone. It gets its message across quickly. Fast timing means no long or formal sentences. Translators forego literal fidelity for multimodal coherence. This alignment manages viewer cognitive load. It is matched by visual action .

4.2. Comprehensive Character-Centered Strategic Analyses

This section demonstrates how meaning and structural choices were altered in the translation into Turkish. Your analysis follows the changes in the specific linguistic and physical identities of the characters.

The following overview details the rationale for the multimodal and functional across the cast. It shows how physical designs, color palettes, and kinetic cues directly impacted particular translation strategies:

Table 6

Character-Based Dynamic Equivalence and Multimodal Rationale Index

	Visual / Kinetic Cue & Color	**Original Dialogue (EN)**	**Turkish Dubbing (TR)**	**Strategy & Implementent Rationale**
Dracula	Glowing red eyes / Aristocratic posture	"I don't say 'Bleah'!" / "Welcome to Hotel Transylvania"	"Ben öyle konuşmuyorum!" / "Otel Transilvanya'ya hoş geldiniz"	Phonetic preservation & register: Conserves bilabial openings while establishing his formal "Beyefendi" host status.
Mavis	Head tilt / Soft lines / Bright blue eyes	"Is it safe?" / "I thought we Zinged, Dad."	"Gerçekten güvenli mi?" / "İlk görüşte aşk sanmıştım."	Enthusiastic tone: Soft visual lines matched with high-pitched youthful delivery; localizes "Zing" as an emotional spark.
Johnny	Wide mouth / Jumping / Warm orange tones	"Whoa, awesome!" / "That's how we do it! Half-pipe, baby!"	"Oha, müthiş bir şey!" / "Öğren de gel! Alırım bak anahtarını!"	Cultural & generational slang: Connects hyperactive movements to recognizable Turkish youth idioms and memes.
	Hyperactive motion / Distorted features	"Bonjour, Dracula!" / "I smell it! It is not a rat!"	"Uyy Dracula!" / "Uyy burnuma insan kokusu geliyu da! Fare değul bu!"	Dialect/Accent adaptation: Matches volatile kitchen persona with a culturally equivalent Black Sea (Laz) archetype.
Frank	Bared teeth / Heavy stance / Cool blue tones	"Fire bad!"	"Ateş kötü!"	Physical weight: Low-tempo, blunt delivery to match a heavy, muscular visual frame.

Murray	Bouncing body / Round bandage design	"Party time!" / "Here comes the party!"	"Eğlence başlasın!" / "İşte kamber de geldiii!"	Functional equivalence: Rhythmic tempo and target idioms match his boisterous, large body shape.
Wayne	Drooping eyelids / Messy fur	"Being a dad is hard." / "Yeah, it's a mess back there."	"Baba olmak zor zanaat." / "Birader alda arabayı temizle"	Parental fatigue: Sluggish speech pacing matching local archetypes of exhausted fatherhood.
Eunice	Finger pointing / Towering hairdo	"Frank, listen to me!" / "Bingo, Bingo!"	"Frank, beni dinle diyorum!" / "Çinko, Çinko!"	Genderlect & rhythm: Concise, high-frequency, rapid-fire nagging delivery to match her frantic hand gestures.
Griffin	Floating glasses / Invisible face	"I'm right here." / "I stink at this!"	"Tam buradayım." / "Bu oyunda bana ekmek yok!"	Acoustic autonomy: Compensation for missing facial features through highly natural, sarcastic idiomatic slang.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.2.1. Jonathan: Popular Culture, Slang, and Youth Sociolect

Johnny's visual style relies on high energy: a bouncy frame, bright orange clothes, a skateboard, and wide-eyed facial expressions. Capturing this specific American slacker identity required a total departure from literal text. The translator chose local youth slang like *efsane, oha, çakma,* and *kanka* to make the character relate to Turkish teenagers.

"That's how we do it! Half-pipe, baby!" doesn't translate well on screen. They named it "Öğren de gel! Alırım bak anahtarını!" a well known line from a popular local Opet television commercial, featuring Cem Yılmaz. The words changed completely but the comedic energy was intact. Johnny uses slang words like *kanka*, *yıkılıyor* and *harbi* and sounds like a real teenager hanging out in Kadıköy or Beşiktaş, not a dubbed character.

The musical sequences demanded similar creative freedom. "Werewolf man give me a jam!" switcheroo The line "Hadi kurt adam girelim fa dan!" fits the natural rhythm of the scene. Later, when Johnny escapes Quasimodo's kitchen, the translator replaced a niche Western reference to a Slipknot metal concert with a joke about a wine-and-cheese festival "Şarap festivalinde peynir kılığına girmiştim". This change maximized the humor for local viewers. Throughout these edits, the fast-paced delivery from the voice actor fits Johnny's constant jumping and frantic movements.

4.2.2. Count Dracula and Mavis: Traditional Register vs. Modern Expression

Count Dracula is a dual character, an ancient vampire aristocrat and a protective, exasperated father. He grounded his old-world status in a social framework Turkish viewers understand, with formal greetings like "Hoş geldiniz" or "Buyurun." This option fits the usual etiquette between host and guest. The nearest natural equivalent of Nida has been reached.

The mouth movements of Dracula are phonetically sharp. The English "Welcome to Hotel Transylvania" begins with a bilabial—W—which is retained in the Turkish choice "Otel Transilvanya'ya hoşgeldiniz" by means of the rounded vowel—O—. When dealing with absurd

situations, Dracula switches to domestic colloquial expressions. For example, scolding the Zombies with "Alo napıcaksın mankeni. Let's not get a job, dude adds a relatable comedic tone. In the sauna scene, swapping a generic question for the popular idiom "Ben ne bileyim müneccim miyim!" maximizes his frustration. During the table-sliding sequence, turning "Whatever!" into the famous Turkish internet meme "Oğlum bak git!" increases the scene's modern comedic punch.

But in contrary, Mavis has a youth goth-cute aesthetic with big eyes and soft visual lines. Bright blue tones lend support to an enthusiastic, high-pitched vocal style in her scenes. One of the key decisions is the word play, "Holy rabies!"– a monster play on Holy Cow–. A direct translation like "kutsal aşkına" or "kuduz aşkına" exposes her vampire status but could mislead child viewers. Evaluating her visual shock, with her mouth in a wide "O", picking "aman yarabbim!" or "hadi canım!" preserves the emotional punch while the phonetic delivery matches her facial stretch.

4.2.3. Quasimodo: The Hunchback

Quasimodo is a very successful part of the movie's Turkish version. The main finding is the perfect coherence between the character's physical appearance and the dialect choice. Because Quasimodo is a very hyperactive and "impulsive" character, the fast-paced Black Sea dialect reflects his on-screen energy far more effectively than standard Turkish. My observation shows that using "uyy" instead of "bonjour" is a technical success in terms of lip-sync. In conclusion, the Turkish dubbing transformed a French chef into a local character, making the humor much more accessible for the Turkish audience.

Spoken lines are heavily condensed using short, punchy Turkish suffixes to keep pace with his rapid frame rate.

Phrasing like "uyy burnuma insan kokusu geliyu da! Fare değul bu!" blends his wide-open sniffing actions with local comedic tropes.

When yelling at guards, using "uşaklar" "açın hemen o gapıyı uşaklar!" reinforces his impulsive regional cook persona.

His rhyming boast "Quasi wins again. When you bump with the hump, You'll land on your butt." is brilliantly transcreated into a traditional Turkish folk-style rhyme: "Quasi yine kazandi. Saldırma onun kamburuna, oturtur seni tamburuna". By abandoning a rigid, word-for-word translation in favor of a culturally resonant adaptation, this approach effectively preserves the comic impact of the original.

4.2.4. Murray, Frank, Eunice, and Griffin: Structural Representation of Identity

With a big round and bouncing high and hard, Murray the Mummy. Since his verbal humor relies heavily on American pop culture, the main approach is functional equivalence. When he shouts "Here comes the party !", English word "comes" requires the bilabial closure of M sound . The Turkish translation, "İşte kamber de geldiii!" strategically places the M sound in "kamber", according to his mouth shape, which is wide open. "Kamber" also makes for a perfect slang word for an essential, high energy party presence and helps his cool monster persona hit home in the target language.

Frank is gentle, moving with a lot of physical weight and slow, simple movements. His Turkish sentences are given in a rhythmic, ponderous cadence that fits his muscular build. In the warning scenes his voice changes a little from a reassuring tone to a sharp cautionary warning "Sen sen ol ateşten uzak dur. Ateş kötü!" The choice follows a classic comedic formula: confident strides are

immediately undone by visual threats.

Eunice features frantic kinetic energy, constant finger-pointing, and rapid-fire nagging complaints. Her rapid mouth movements require strict isochrony. When she emerges from her box, her rapid speech is met frame-for-frame with high-frequency Turkish delivery "Frank botoks randevumu aldın mı? Notre Dame'da yer ayırttın mı? Hiç bişey yapmadın mı?", substituting localized modern concepts like "botox" for humor. In the Bingo scene, her reproach becomes "Bana Frankenstein!'ın gelini derler. Benimle uğraşma", capturing her high-society monster persona through a traditional, defensive genderlect register.

Griffin—the Invisible Man—is a special case, as we never see his face or lips. In your analysis, you track his presence entirely by the movement of his floating glasses. This structural lack makes the translator highly free from the phonetic mouth-matching and shifts the whole analytical focus to character personality and acoustic signs. The translation does not stick to a literal translation, but uses the natural Turkish idiom "Bu oyunda bana ekmek yok" when he says "I stink at this!" The free-from-lip, sarcastic, sharp vocal tone compensates for the lack of facial expressions, proving that tone of voice can function as an autonomous semiotic mode.

4.3. Cultural Transposition and the Strategy of Domestication

An important overarching finding in the Turkish localization of *Hotel Transylvania* is its heavy reliance on *domestication* strategies, as defined by Lawrence Venuti. Domestication involves making the translated text invisible by conforming it to the cultural, linguistic, and social norms of the target audience (Chaume, 2021, p. 204). In this film, this strategy is thoroughly multimodal; the translator matches the characters' visual kinetic energy with recognizable cultural archetypes from Turkish society.

Table 7

Idiomatic Adaptation and Visual Harmony

Character	Source Phrase (EN)	Target Phrase (TR)	Applied Strategy
Dracula	"Holy Rabies!"	"Aman Yarabbim!"	Substitution / Functional
Johnny	"Check it out!"	"Bak hele!"	Dialectal Register
Quasimodo	"You fool!"	"Hamsi kafalı!"	Creative Localization
Wayne	"I'm exhausted."	"Canım çıktı."	Domestication / Idiomatic
Mavis	"Holy Smokes!"	"Hadi canım!"	Modernization
Frank	"Piece of cake."	"Çantada keklik."	Idiomatic Equivalence
Eunice	"Talk to the hand!"	"Lafımı bölme!"	Contextual Adaptation
Murray	"Rock on!"	"Kopalım o zaman!"	Youth Slang
Dracula	"Zip it!"	"Kes sesini!"	Imperative Shift
Johnny	"My bad."	"Kusura bakma."	Informal Standard

Source: Created by the authors.

Turkish dubbing works within a unique cultural tradition: local audiences expect to feel the comedic presence of an animated film rather than merely watch it. If these monsters spoke a cold, formal Istanbul Turkish, they would remain distant strangers on screen. By embedding regional dialects, internet memes, and localized parental vocal gestures, the translator eliminates the multimodal gap between the American animation and the Turkish audience. According to Mariana Yonamine (2022, p. 13) The translation takes advantage of the visual freedom of the

animation genre to re-invent the culture within the target language.

4.4. Analysis of Visual-Verbal Signs and Environmental Text

Meaning in *Hotel Transylvania* is frequently embedded directly within graphic materials, background iconography, and environmental texts. The following table details how these graphic elements were managed, revealing that when text is vital for story development, it imposes a forced narrative strategy on the translation.

Table 8

Environmental and Graphic Translation Analysis

Visual Element	Cinematic Context	Turkish Strategy	Methodological Rationale
"Beware of Humans"	Hanging Sign	"İnsan Giremez"	Vital for plot understanding; forced narrative constraint.
"Lizard Goulash"	Menu Board	"Kertenkele Kebabı"	Domestication to match the auditory Laz chef archetype.
Newspaper	Close-up shot	"Canavar Haberleri"	Translating only the high-impact, prominent visual font.
"Keep Out"	Door Sign	"Uzak Durun"	Semiotically matches the dark, gothic visual of the entrance.
Postcard	Mavis's hand	"Cennetten Selamlar"	Visual text overlay to maintain the emotional tone of the scene.
"Monster Festival"	Large Banner	"Canavar Festivali"	Essential for clarifying the visual setting of the scene.
Exit Sign	Background	"Çıkış"	Standardized functional, low-impact translation.
"No Sun"	Sunscreen bottle	"Güneş Geçirmez"	Humorous impact depends entirely on a visual-verbal pun.
Visual Element	Cinematic Context	Turkish Strategy	Methodological Rationale

Source: Created by the authors.

4.5. Paralinguistic Elements and the Sound of Emotion

Table 9

Non-Verbal Auditory Modes and Localizations

Character	Vocal Sound	Narrative Context	Turkish Adaptation	Functional Effect on Audience
Wayne	Deep Breath / Sigh	Parenting stress	"Off ki ne off!"	Culturally specific auditory mode for heavy fatigue.
Dracula	Intense Hissing	Scaring humans	"Tıslama"	Maintains his traditional vampire semiotic identity.
Mavis	Soft Giggle	Seeing Johnny	"Kıkırdama"	Perfect acoustic match for her youthful visual pitch.
Zombies	Low Groaning	Moving luggage	"İnleme"	Synchronizes with slow-motion physical movements.
Frank	Muscular Grunt	Lifting weight	"Ihh!"	Acoustically matches his massive, heavy visual frame.

Murray	Loud Laughter	Telling a joke	"Kahkaha"	Boisterous sound directly matches his large body shape.
Eunice	Sharp Gasp	Being shocked	"Hiii!"	Deploys the specific Turkish intake of breath for sudden shock.
Quasimodo	Sharp Sniffing	Smelling a human	"Koklama"	Exaggerated acoustic tracking matches his pointed nose design.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.6. Visual Semiotic Triggers: Color Cues and Phonetic Constraints

4.6.1. Color Cues and Translation Tone

The voice actor adds a growl, while the translator supports this visual peak by selecting words dominated by sharp, aggressive consonants—k, t, p, r—and urgent imperative verbs "korkunç," "rezalet," "kes sesini!".

Table 10

Visual Color Cues and Translation Tone Alignment

Character	Visual Color Change	Emotional State	Translation Strategy	Applied Rationale
Dracula	Red (Eyes/ Face)	Intense Anger	Aggressive Lexis	Use of sharp, imperative Turkish verbs to match the "red" visual alert.
Mavis	Bright Blue (Eyes)	Curiosity / Joy	Enthusiastic Tone	High-pitch vocal adaptation to match the visual brightness.
Johnny	Warm Orange (Clothing)	Relaxed / Friendly	Informal Slang	Matches his "warm" and approachable visual design.
Frank	Cool Blue / Grey	Sadness / Clumsiness	Low-tempo Speech	Slow Turkish delivery to match the "heavy" visual tones.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.6.2. Lip-Sync and Phonetic Constraints

Dubbing is governed strictly by phonetic synchronization, where the translator must respect the character's visible mouth shapes (bilabial closure, rounded vowels, wide openings). Preferring "Böğğ!" in Turkish to maintain the closed-lip bilabial movement of the original English "Bleh!" eliminates the sensory contradiction between what the viewer sees and hears. When a character's mouth is wide open in shock, selecting "Olamaz!" with its prominent rounded open vowel —O— stands as a phonetic necessity.

Table 11

Lip-Sync and Phonetic Constraints Index

Original Word	Character Mouth Shape	Turkish Choice	Phonetic Match	Multimodal Benefit
"Bleh!"	Bilabial (closed lips)	"Böğğ!"	B-Sound	Maintains the initial lip closure of the vampire.
"Monster"	Open / Rounded	"Mahluk"	M-Sound	Matches the labial starting point and open vowel flow.
"Please"	Spreading (smile)	"Peki"	P-Sound	The "P" and "E" sounds mirror the character's facial stretch.
"No!"	Wide Open	"Olamaz!"	O-Vowel	The round "O" in Turkish matches the wide-open shock expression.
"Great"	Narrow	"Gerçekten"	G-Sound	Matches the throat-based sound and narrow jaw movement.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.6.3. Kinetic Speed and Rhythmic Synchronization

The physical pacing of a character dictates sentence duration a concept known as isochrony. Hyperactive characters require a *condensation* strategy to fit localized language into split-second frames without losing semantic value. Conversely, the slow, lethargic movements of the Zombies unlock an *expansion* strategy, permitting longer, more formal Turkish phrasing to fill the visual silence.

Table 12

Kinetic Speed and Rhythmic Synchronization Pacing

Character	Kinetic Movement	Speech Pace	Translation Result	Adaptation Strategy
Quasimodo	Hyper-fast / Erratic	Very Rapid	Condensed Text	Using short, punchy Turkish suffixes to keep up with the frame rate.
Zombies	Slow / Lethargic	Very Slow	Expanded Text	Using longer, formal Turkish words to fill the visual silence.
Eunice	Sharp / Pointing	Constant / Fast	Rapid-fire Delivery	Matching her rapid blinking with high-frequency Turkish speech.
Wayne	Sluggish / Tired	Heavy / Dragged	Stretched Vowels	Using "eee..." or "ıı..." fillers to match his weary movements.
Johnny	Bouncy / Energetic	Upbeat / Casual	Syncopated Rhythm	Matching his jumps with short, exclamatory Turkish words.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.7. Subtitling vs. Dubbing: A Multimodal Decision-Making Matrix

The structural divergence between subtitle and dubbing strategies comes down to their respective mechanical limitations, forcing meaning into distinct survival modes (Dubbing and Subtitling, n.d.). While subtitles are bound by rigid spatial boundaries, character-per-line (CPL) constraints, and reading speed limits, dubbing is governed by temporal, phonetic, and kinesic matching.

Table 13

Decision-Making Matrix in Subtitling vs. Dubbing

Evaluative Criteria	Subtitling Strategy (Spatial)	Dubbing Strategy (Lip-Sync)	Relation to Nida's Theory
Space / Time Constraints	Character limits (Max 32-42 CPL); text reduction.	Phonetic lip-sync, isochrony, and kinetic matching.	Creating unique tactical paths for dynamic equivalence.
Language Register	Formal, standardized, and clean text strings.	Colloquial, dialectal, and slang-heavy phrasing.	Eliciting a highly similar emotional response in the target audience.
Cultural Transfer	Foreignization / Preservation of source items.	Domestication / High-intensity localization.	Cultural filtering to ensure immediate cognitive processing.
Humor Transfer	Literal / Glossed puns at the bottom of the screen.	Cultural substitutes and transcreated idiomatic frameworks.	Prioritizing functional equivalence over formal structures.

Source: Created by the authors.

In dubbing, the focus is on phonetic and temporal synchronization. There are no reading character limits at the bottom of the screen, but the physical mouth movements of the character establish an absolute ceiling. Cinematic study of Korean films in English dubbing, 2024 Dubbing provides a richer substrate for dynamic equivalence. The voice actor can utilize intonation, local dialects and paralinguistic cues. According to Zoë Pettit (2005, p. 51) The functional impact on the viewer is thus considerably stronger and more natural than the formal limitations of subtitling.

Table 14

Modal Dissonance and Tactical Shifts in a Single Scene

Scene Context	Visual / Semiotic Constraint	Dubbing Strategy (Lip-Sync)	Subtitling Strategy (Spatial)	Multimodal Result
Dracula's Rage	Exaggerated open mouth (Bilabial closure).	"Bunu Bana Pasla!"	"Durdur şunu!"	Dubbing prioritizes P/B consonants for lip alignment; subtitles prioritize text brevity.
Johnny's Slang	Rapid physical hand gestures.	"Kanka, baksana!"	"Bak!"	Dubbing fills the temporal void of the physical gesture; subtitles omit vocatives to save space.
The Monster Feast	Background iconographic signage.	No auditory mention.	[İnsan Giremez]	Subtitles assume the active burden of the visual-verbal channel.

Source: Created by the authors.

4.8. Summary of Findings

This comprehensive qualitative data analysis shows that the translator in AVT operates as an information engineer rather than a literal word-transferrer. The screen acts as an active agent shaping translation decisions, forcing meaning to bend to the physical and mechanical dimensions of the medium—whether that requires compressing a phrase to fit high-frequency mouth flapping, stretching an utterance to match a slow physical gait, or completely rewriting cultural references to preserve the comedic soul of the animation frame-by-frame and second-by-second.

The ultimate success of the localized version of *Hotel Transylvania* relies on this deep synchronization, proving Nida's key principle that the receiver's experience remains the definitive metric of translation quality.

5. CONCLUSION

Writing this study provided an exploration of the invisible world behind the screen. Translation in audiovisual media operates as a live negotiation unfolding second by second. You cannot separate the verbal text from accompanying visual and acoustic channels.

The present study explored the operation of Eugene Nida's dynamic equivalence theory in the context of audiovisual translation. The research extended the theoretical view to include multimodal translation theory as a related theoretical framework. The study reveals that the original emotional resonance, communicative intent and cultural punch are recaptured by putting primary and secondary character profiles under analysis in successful audiovisual translation. Nida's notion of dynamic equivalence offers a functional instrument for this purpose, but it requires to be structurally incorporated with the visual, kinetic and paralinguistic modes that manage the screen environment.

The results of the analysis provide empirical support for these conclusions. Different character profiles are examined and the failure of formal, literal translations in a comedy context is demonstrated. To get the same spontaneous laugh from a child in Istanbul that you get from a child in New York, the translation changes its tactics. Nida says that target receptors should be related to the message in the same way as the original audience's experience. This research supports that claim. The most functionally accurate translations are not literally word for word, intentionally, to protect character identity, visual pacing and core humor. The study draws attention to the creative challenges of audiovisual translators and the importance of linking translation theory with practice-based localization approaches.

To achieve the naturalness of expression, which Nida considered the main criterion of quality, Quasimodo's original persona was replaced with a recognizable Black Sea dialect, and Jonathan's dialogue was updated with localized Turkish youth memes and idioms. The stage version was less about a literal translation and more about hitting recognizable cultural and social touchstones. This strategy eliminated the foreign feel of the movie.

This alignment itself represents the truest triumph of the translation. From a multimodal perspective, the image dictates the rules in animation. As demonstrated in the analysis of Quasimodo, the translator avoided translating a generic French chef. The translator observed a volatile, hyperactive character on screen and recognized that a Black Sea regional dialect mirrored that kinetic energy and frantic frame rate. The comprehensive multimodal tables demonstrate that translators do not operate as passive linguistic transmitters. Instead, they act as active bridge builders who overhaul literal words to maintain the semiotic harmony of the scene.

This study reinforces Nida's classic statement that the relationship between receptor and message should correspond to the relationship between the original receptor and message. The relationship in *Hotel Transylvania* is determined by the interactive process of dynamic equivalence and the multimodal translation theory which is achieved through three specific mechanisms:

1. Functional substitution: Translators replace untranslatable jokes specific to the character, such as "Zing", with target expressions that resonate culturally: "Love at first sight" or "Bam". This choice makes sure that the young viewers respond emotionally right away.
2. Sociolinguistic Mapping: The text maps the archetypes of animated characters—Wayne's tired fatherhood, Johnny's rebellious youth, Eunice's frantic nagging—onto the Turkish society. Domestication is a strategy in Turkish dubbing The local audience wants to feel the film in their own cultural space. The target audience can connect to the story on an emotional level when they hear a werewolf sigh like an exhausted Turkish father with the classic, dragged "Off ki ne off!" or when Johnny uses contemporary slang like "kanka".
3. Visual-audio synchronization: Phonetic alignment and frame timing are strategic elements of dynamic equivalence, not technical problems.By associating Dracula's closed-lip bilabial movements with "Böğğ!" instead of a literal text string, the illusion of reality is maintained, preventing sensory contradictions between what the child sees and hears.

The comparison between subtitling and dubbing points out that the translator's role is a constant management through a number of semiotic channels. The translator is working under severe temporal and spatial constraints, be it dealing with spatial constraints at the bottom of the screen or phonetic mouth-matching in close-ups. These multi-channel constraints are not walls, but catalysts for creative localization.

When considering the ethical tension between domestication and foreignization, this paper discusses the debate between Nida's receiver-oriented approach and concerns regarding cultural erasure. Extensive domestication takes priority here because it provides high levels of amusement and cognitive accessibility for Turkish viewers. This choice creates an ethical dilemma. Prioritizing immediate emotional resonance minimizes the visibility of the original American cultural production. While these strategies threaten to perpetuate cultural homogeneity by making foreign elements familiar rather than distinct, this study takes a clear stance: the immediate communicative needs of young viewers outweigh the requirement for cultural preservation. The primary ethical duty of the translator is to assist the child in engaging with the text. Effective entertainment and education require a strategy that bridges the cultural gap, even when that entails compromising literal fidelity to the source culture.

In the current literature on translation there are divergent opinions as to whether domestication always has negative consequences. Systematic application of a domesticating approach can enhance emotional engagement and inclusiveness, and can facilitate the young audience's comprehension of the embedded narrative and its central values.

This study argues that in weighing this balance, the immediate goals of children's animated media, education and entertainment, are the most important. To test this fragile moral equilibrium, future studies could follow the long-term effects of domesticated media on the wider cultural literacy of young viewers.

This study addresses the main research questions by exemplifying the Turkish localization of *Hotel Transylvania* as an ideal case study for the utilization of both dynamic equivalence and multimodal

translation theory in audiovisual translation. The study points out that the professional responsibility of the translator is much more than simply decoding a written text. The translater is required to actively choreograph multiple semiotic channels to reproduce the desired communicative effects for the target audience.

This research brings a fresh, multi-channel perspective to translation studies in Turkey. The analysis determines that high-quality, professional translation demands total harmony with every frame, color shift, sound effect, and physical movement on the screen rather than a simple exchange of words.

Viewers who evaluate these findings will look at audiovisual productions differently. The audience no longer merely hears the dialogue. The audience actively sees and appreciates the complex puzzles that the translator solves behind the scenes. Ultimately, this study highlights the efficacy and significance of the multimodal approach in both reading and translating the world.

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