

Review of Theoretical Frameworks in Audiovisual Translation

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Abstract: Audiovisual Translation has gained massive popularity among translators as a thriving genre of translation studies. This reality is represented by the massive role played by audiovisual translation in shaping global communication within modern societies. Therefore, the paper attempts to analyze the overlap of the most fundamental theories within the scope of audiovisual translation. The primary purpose of this analysis is to identify the relationship and intersection between several theories to provide an overall and comprehensive overview of these theories, their underlying principles and paradigms, the purposes and justifications of their application, and their functioning and consequences within rendering meaning from audiovisual products with various modes such as subtitling, dubbing, and voice-over, to name but a few. Consequently, Audiovisual Translation, which has grown into a distinct area of research with its own limitations and unique characteristics, is supported by various theories designed for different modes of delivery and reception. This growth encompasses creating and applying diverse strategies, methods, and technologies and examining and comprehending how it is received and impacted. Nonetheless, the researchers discovered that the creation of theories specific to Audiovisual Translation must either align with or, at the very least, be influenced by the foundational theoretical frameworks, primarily from translation studies.

Keywords: Translation Studies, Audiovisual Translation, Theoretical Framework, Theories, Approaches to Audiovisual Translation, Implication for use.

1. Introduction

In its many forms, Translation has existed throughout history and has been the antechamber of intercultural sharing and exchange. (Yule, 1985; Newmark, 1988; Dweik, 2000). It is no wonder that Translation has been codified in its terms in the Western tradition, and considerable research has been developed within the scholarly movements of culture that advocate the role of translators as ‘cultural mediators.’ (Limon, 2010, p. 37) According to Gaber (2005), “culture means all aspects of the life of a nation or group of people who live in a place and share the same language, beliefs, customs, traditions, and history.” (P.18). While Audiovisual Translation (AVT) lags behind other branches of Translation, distance communication, particularly TV and radio broadcasting, deserves mainly focused attention. Luyken et al. (1991) stated that “there exists only very limited theoretical and scholarly knowledge about the specific linguistic implications of the language transfer process in the audiovisual media” (p. 165). The current situation of AVT as a fully-fledged discipline has flourished due to the extension of Information Communication Technologies (ICT), which has spawned massive digital devices that have caused a significant growth of interest in this discipline, in which the debates about the influence it has on of media inclusion with all kinds of restrictions imposed by current practices have played an essential part in shaping the research agenda of AVT. Dore (2018) explains the current situation of

AVT by stating that “Over the last decade, a growing number of Translation Studies scholars has focused on the many aspects of AVT, as demonstrated by the proliferation of research papers in journals, essay collections and monographs devoted to this topic.” (p. 1). Likewise, Matamala, cited in (Deckert, 2019) reflects on the flourishing of AVT as

Research in Audiovisual Translation (AVT) is thriving. A lot has been done in recent years, and a lot can be done in the near future. The continuous transformation of a society where audiovisual content is ubiquitous, technology is paramount and citizens are becoming netizens impacts directly on AVT practices and, by extension, on AVT research. (p. 11).

AVT has also taken a first step towards being categorized within the curricula of undergraduate and postgraduate translation courses at many universities, with growing public interest being reflected in the organization of specialized courses and seminars. Therefore, translation scholars, experts, and teachers are encouraged to include AVT in their syllabus because AVT reflects “extraordinary transparency with respect to understanding the function of a translation and the reason behind its being carried out.” (Chaume, 2002, p. 2). The role of theory in translation studies (TS) has been analyzed from many different angles over the past decades to identify strategies and techniques that facilitate the process. (Hatim and Mason, 1990; Baños 2018) While the primarily shared understanding points towards the lack of a unified theory of Translation, on the assumption that Translation is not purely a linguistic fact and that it may have several different scopes, pointing at metalinguistic, cultural, communicative, and critical implications, it seems plausible that other lines of inquiry and methodological approaches will flourish coherently and then develop individually in what some authors have termed as major and minor theories. This perspective assumes generally recognized common core concerns for any theory to be effective or even considered in translation studies and the idea that theory in Translation is typically applicable. By comparing the relation subject/theory in other fields, one can infer that the extent to which we can implement a processual and dialectical approach consists of the theoretical framework as the very space wherein that foundational relationship historically is established “to develop its very own theoretical and methodological approaches, allowing it to claim the status of a scholarly area of research in its own right” (Díaz-Cintas, 2009, p. 7). There is a constant circularity, almost a reverberation between the theoretical and the practical dimensions, an interface where transformation and implementation are inextricably entwined. Once one establishes a theory or a system, one must apply it to test the potential for innovation and adaptation. Wagner, cited in (Chesterman & Wanger, 2002, p. 133), “a different kind of theory that we [professionals] could help to create: practice-oriented theory – a theory rooted in best practice, directed at improved practice, and attentive to practitioners throughout the profession.” This crossroads of disciplines and curricular proposals in Translation has constituted, in many cases, an immeasurable potential for harmonization and cohesion, being incredibly adaptive to interdisciplinary parameters. In these terms, structuring theoretical parameters for Translation becomes indispensable. The imposition of a multidisciplinary component as a requirement indicates advanced phases of the relationship between science and literature. It provides the fundamental structure for the research-training nexus that has historically justified contact between universities and society.

This paper proposes theories and methods employed in the theory and analysis of the translation process, the leading translation theories, and the descriptive analysis of AVT, covering procedures like synchronization and condensation. The main scope of the study is to analyze the theoretical frameworks of AVT to understand the underlying assumptions of theories, kinks, and the paradigm shift it may contribute to the flourishing of AVT.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition, Background, and Importance of AVT

Translation is a process of encoding the information presented in the source language as a sequence of the target language’s symbols, sounds, and images. This realization of specific sounds becomes a proclamation valid in AVT. Valdeón (2024). “The focus on the linguistic and technical aspects of films

and television programs has gradually changed over the past two decades as researchers have acknowledged the significance of the sound and the visual layers.” (p.2). Encoding is a concept that backs Audiovisual Transfer from the valid conception. AVT is defined from many perspectives. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2006), “AVT refers to the translation of products in which the verbal dimension is supplemented by elements in other media.” (p. 13). On the other hand, Matkivska (2014) defines AVT as “a translation of the verbal component of the video. Its main specific feature is the synchronization of verbal and nonverbal components.” The most recognized and appreciated definition of AVT is explained by Essays, UK. (November 2018), “AVT is also known as ‘screen translation’ or ‘film translation.’ Screen translation stresses the location of the medium where the translation product appears (e.g., TV, cinema, or video screen)”. In a broader sense, and according to the definition mentioned above, AVT is the Translation of media products, Screen translation, multimodality of text translation, and Translation of any component with a set of multimedia tools and in multimedia formats. Chiaro (2009) contributes to the definition of AVT as

One of several overlapping umbrella terms that includes media translation, multimedia Translation, multimodal translation and screen translation. These different terms all set out to cover to cover the inter-lingual transfer of verbal language when it is transmitted and accessed visually and acoustically, usually but not necessarily, through some kind of electronic device. (p.210)

Consequently, AVT involves transferring audiovisual components, including motion pictures and their associated audio sources, from one language to another. This process goes beyond simply replicating the spoken words from the original audio material; it also includes transcribing, dubbing, voice-over, narrating, and interpreting the content.

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks in AVT

The interrogation of whether AVT is regarded as an academic discipline (Di Giovanni & Gambier, 2018) with a dominant theoretical and practical consideration remains controversial in translation studies. However, tremendous research, studies, and books have already probed into AVT through theoretical perspectives and valuable frameworks. (Kruger & Liao, 2022; Gambier & Pinto, 2018). Nobody assumes that AVT lacks proper theoretical and practical knowledge. As long as the field has flourished, especially in the 21st century as a discipline, the implications of AVT in different media sectors reflect the reality of having solid theoretical practices generated from the actual implementation of the theory. This statement is in sharp agreement with Larson (1991), who states, “Good theory is based on information gained from practice. Good practice is based on carefully worked-out theory”. (p. 1).

Consequently, AVT, as a discipline, has embraced a profound and solid account of theories and approaches in connection with various fields of knowledge, such as cultural studies, sociology, and some of the linguistics branches. This connectivity advocates AVT as an interdisciplinary field of translation studies. Therefore, the paper discusses the relevant theoretical and practical concepts within the scope of descriptive translation studies (DTS) and their impact on AVT as a sub-discipline of translation studies. Moreover, some other theories that fall under DTS will also be explained.

2.2.1 Descriptive Translation Study and Poly-system Theory

Holmes (1994) identified translation studies as a discipline with prevailing theoretical backgrounds. He identifies two main objectives of translation studies: “(1) to describe the phenomena of translating and translation(s) as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience, and (2) to establish general principles employing which these phenomena can be explained and predicted”. (p. 71). The conceptualization of the objectives of translation studies leads to two different branches. “An empirical one which he calls descriptive translation studies (DTS) or translation description (TD) and another of a more theoretical nature that he refers to as Theoretical Translation studies (ThTS) or Translation Theory (TTh).” Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) entails several theories. (Cintas, 1999). One of these theories is the Poly-system, which is defined by Cintas (1999) as:

A group of semiotic systems that co-exist dynamically within a particular cultural sphere. It is characterized by continuous changes and internal oppositions, whose main aim is to occupy the center position in the system, and it is regulated by socio-historic norms. (P, 23).

Poly-system theory, which Itamar Even-Zohar coined, represents the direct relationship between various components of literary works as a system with many sub-categories. Even-Zohar (2005, defines Poly-system theory as “a continuation of dynamic functionalism. Its concept of an open, dynamic, and heterogeneous system is perhaps more able to encourage the emergence of favorable conditions to allow the discovery power of relational thinking.” (p. 35). Likewise, Zhang (2014) states, “Poly-system theory is based on Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism. It was suggested by Even-Zohar in the 1970s when he was working on Hebrew literature models”. (p. 138). The theory’s assumptions are based on establishing a dynamic and heterogeneous system that relates literature study within social, cultural, and historical contexts. These contexts have a mutual impact on each other. Hence, these contexts should not be isolated in any literary work.

In Translation, the contribution of poly-system theory is seen in how literary work, cultural reference, ethics, and behavioral norms are translated. The relationship between the polys-system theory and AVT might manifest in the core of poly-system theory, which addresses the impact of translated literary works that focus on translating literary products. In AVT, poly-system theory and literary approaches represent how translators tackle particular translation issues through the perspectives of literary works rather than linguistic endeavors. Hence, poly-system theory represents one of the theories that is well connected with AVT. The reality behind that is that most audiovisual products are literary.

2.2.2 Multimodal theory

Through discourse perspectives, Multimodal theory connects multiple modes of communication, such as text, sounds, colors, and images, to the meaning-making process. The underlying assumption of Multimodal theory is how people interact and communicate with each other in the form of spoken and written gestures, as well as social semiotics. Multimodality, in its broadest definition, is the study of communication practices and social semantics. It describes communication practices by reference to the textual, acoustic, phonetic, semantic, and visual sources (or modes) used to compose communications. Multimedia generally encompasses the technologies employed in the creation of multimodal texts.

Consequently, the radio employs speech and sound, whereas television and the internet utilize images, which may include gestures and facial expressions, among other elements. (Adami, 2023). The use of the term “multimodality” in AVT represents the combination of various modes “Each mode has its specific task and function” (Kress, 2010, p. 28) of communication in a particular context that requires a deep understanding of the components of multimodality of texts in contrast to the traditional, ordinary texts. These components could manifest in various modes accompanied by sounds, moving pictures, videos, texts, and images. The multimodality of texts is in sharp contrast with the traditional texts. The former represents heterogeneous modes that work together to perceive the communicated messages and display them in various formats to consolidate the audience’s perception.

In contrast, the latter represents the only primary source for the audience to grasp the meaning. Based on the previously mentioned distinction, multimodality is recognized as a social semiotic approach to studying human communication and behavior through various situations. According to (“Overview of Multimodal Literacy,” 2019), Multimodality texts have three broad types: 1) Paper-based multimodal texts, including picture books, textbooks, graphic novels, comics, and posters; 2) Live multimodal texts, such as dance, performance, and oral storytelling, convey meaning through combinations of various modes, such as gestural, spatial, audio, and oral language, and 3) Digital multimodal texts include film, animation, slide shows, e-posters, digital stories, podcasts, and web pages that may include hyperlinks to external pronunciation guides or translations.

Through the perspectives of multimodal theory, AVT has taken advantage of this theory to address and recognize different types of meanings embedded in audiovisual products. Audiovisual translators must tackle the meaning of various modes in media production to better interpret and translate a particular meaning associated with written meaning, spoken meaning, visual meaning, audio meaning, spatial meaning, and gestural meaning (“Overview of Multimodal Literacy,” 2019).

2.2.3 Semiotics Theory

Semiotics is a way of looking at things that involve signs. It is also known as semiotic studies. Any activity, behavior, or process involving signs is considered semiosis. A sign sends a meaning (not the sign itself) to the person interpreting it. It can be intentional, like a word that says something specific, or unintentional, like a symptom that says something about a medical condition. Sign language can be sent through any of the senses, like seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, or tasting. Likewise, the Encyclopedia Britannica, inc. (2024, July 15) defines Semiotics as “*Semiotics, also called semiology, the study of signs and sign-using behavior. One of its founders, the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, defines it as studying “the life of signs within society.”* Accordingly, Semiotics Theory elucidates the relationship between signs, objects, and meaning and how meaning can be created based on that relation. Hence, *Semiotics* and AVT theories shape indispensable relations. The idea is illustrated by Petrilli (2015) as

The question we wish to explore is whether semiotics can be translated into translation theory and whether translation theory can be translated as semiotics. This does not mean to suggest that translation theory and semiotics are the same thing. These two different disciplines are intent upon exploring the same process, i.e., that of semiosis, of the infinite deferral among signs, but under different aspects. (p. 96)

Moreover, the theory explains how humans interpret these signs and objects while communicating in verbal and written formats to understand their meaning. As an attempt to answer the questions mentioned earlier, it is of great value to consider Langer’s Theory of Symbols, which demonstrates the relationship between signs, objects, and meaning. Langer has made a clear distinction between these three elements that have contributed much to developing the meaning of symbols and analogy. Correspondingly, Nordquist (July 12, 2019) identifies semiotic takeaways as

1. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, mainly as they communicate things spoken and unspoken.
2. Common globally understood signs include traffic signs, emojis, and corporate logos.
3. Written and spoken language is full of semiotics in the form of intertextuality, puns, metaphors, and references to cultural commonalities”.

Translating audiovisual products represents enormous challenges for translators, often associated with verbal and non-verbal components. These complexities define the connection between semiotics theories and AVT as a sub-discipline in translation studies. Most audiovisual products accommodate verbal (linguistic codes/theater codes/paralinguistic codes) and non-verbal (sound effects/musical codes/paralinguistic code) formats that make handling them in any translation endeavor a real

challenge for translators. The following table represents different types of semiotic codes.

	Audio channel	Visual channel
VERBAL ELEMENTS (signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>linguistic code</i> (dialogue, monologue, comments/voices off, reading) - <i>paralinguistic code</i> (delivery, intonation, accents) - <i>literary and theatre codes</i> (plot, narrative, sequences, drama progression, rhythm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>graphic code</i> (written forms: letters, headlines, menus, street names, intertitles, subtitles)
NON-VERBAL ELEMENTS (signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>special sound effects/sound arrangement code</i> - <i>musical code</i> - <i>paralinguistic code</i> (voice quality, pauses, silence, volume of voice, vocal noise: crying, shouting, coughing, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>iconographic code</i> - <i>photographic code</i> (lighting, perspective, colours, etc.) - <i>scenographic code</i> (visual environment signs) - <i>film code</i> (shooting, framing, cutting/editing, genre conventions, etc.) - <i>kinesic code</i> (gestures, manners, postures, facial features, gazes, etc.) - <i>proxemic code</i> (movements, use of space, interpersonal distance, etc.) - <i>dress code</i> (including hairstyle, make up, etc.)

Source: Gambier (2019)

Gambier (2013) contributes to clarifying the role of codes in making meaning.

AV implies quite a number of signifying codes that operate simultaneously in the production of meaning. The viewers and the translators comprehend the series of codified signs articulated in a certain way by the director (framing and shooting) and the editor (cutting). The way in which all these signs are organized is such that the meaning of each element or each semiotic code. All the verbal and non-verbal means are used to achieve coherence, internationality, formatively, intertextuality, and relevance. (p, 51).

2.2.4 Skopos Theory

Based on the scope of translation theories, the Skopos Theory is one of the functional theories of translation studies. The German translator Vermeer coined the Skopos theory in 1978. The theory focuses on the practical aspect of the translation process by considering the source texts' aim and purpose rather than the linguistic equivalents. "The origin of the notion of Skopos is Greek, and the word means aim, purpose, goal or function" (Schjoldager, 2008, p. 154). Based on the theory, the purpose of translating a source text is categorized into three main streams: 1) the generic purpose of the source text, 2) the communicative message that the text tries to address, and 3) the purpose of the translation strategies and techniques being implemented in translating the source texts. These claims enhance the interactional and pragmatic scope of the Translation. According to Nord (1991), the rules of the Skopos theory are "translate/interpret/ Speak/ write in a way that enables your texts/Translation to function in the situation it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function. "(p. 29). The theory, therefore, addresses three rules that govern the methodological strategies that are involved in the translation process: 1) the Skopos rules that are deeply associated with the general purpose of the source text in association with the translation strategies, 2) the coherence and unity of the source text in particular social and cultural contexts, and 3) the fidelity which indicates the degree of faithfulness exists between the source and target texts. Skopos Theory has significantly translated various texts within different domains and specialties. Legal, media, literary, and religious are among the well-known types of Translation that accommodate the principles and techniques of Skopos Theory.

2.2.5 Sociolinguistic Theories

In a broader sense, Sociolinguistics theory identifies the relationship between various societal elements such as family, class, traditional norms, and cultural references that influence the process of meaning from “a wide range of categories including dialect, style, register, genre, sociolect, diglossia, and code-switching.” (Yau, 2018, p. 282). Spolsky (1998) defines sociolinguistics as ‘the field that studies the relations between language and society, between the uses of language and the social structures in which the users of language live’ (p. 3). These meaning-making processes involve many practices, such as translating a particular social phenomenon entails huge language variation to produce meaning in the target language. Hence, Translation contributes significantly to the process of meaning-making. The relation between sociolinguistics theory and Translation is based on the role of the interlocutors in the communication process concerning the language structure they might use. As-Safi explains, “These theories endeavor to link translation to communicative theory and information theory, with special emphasis on the receptor’s role in the translation process.”. (n. d.). In the sporadic relationship between translation and sociolinguistics theory, translating any text based on a social situation with unique features requires an in-depth analysis of the source text with all communicative discourse to understand better the speech act reflected in a particular context. Hence, translators need to be aware of the social aspects that govern the use of language to convey a specific message and how this message is rendered in the target language with precisely the same purpose.

2.2.6 Cognitive Load Theory

Given the complexity of the translation process, theoretical frameworks for translation studies embrace diverse disciplinary backgrounds by integrating specific research issues into broader open problems. Within the field of psychology, it gives those exploring AVT access to a psychological research object to reach an exploratory analysis that brings to light fundamental theoretical and methodological framework dilemmas. AVT is a psychological research object focusing on theoretical and methodological framework challenges. The rapid progress in the area is reviewed, with an analysis of cognitive load theory (CLT) contributing significantly to “understand how people generally learn and store new information and the types of instructional practices that best support learning.” (Howley-Rouse, 2021). Within the translation studies, Incalcaterra and Laura (cited in González (2018). Explain: Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning Channels, on the other hand, draws attention to the limited capacity of those two information-processing systems to encode information by using only verbal or visual resources. In light of such limitations, it postulates that learning takes place through the co-deployment of verbal and visual representations, i.e., through a combination of words and pictures. (pp. 6-7).

The exploration identifies principles, features, and knowledge of the CLT that must be considered when designing translation tools. It presents a reflection and an agenda for future empirical research concerning particular dynamics in AVT, such as human action in a situated context, the effectiveness of different techniques and modalities, and mediators’ roles.

4. The relation and intersection between the Theoretical frameworks

This part of the study explains in detail the overlapping of various translation theories that play a crucial role in translating audiovisual products. Even though there are varying opinions on how precise translations and interpretations should be, the analysis might bring an intersection among these theories regarding their practical applications in AVT. Examining these theories would be pertinent to the theoretical viewpoints representing distinct methodologies for translating a wide range of multimodal texts. This involves analyzing and differentiating these viewpoints within the fundamental assumptions of each theory and identifying their essential strengths and weaknesses in terms of their application.

The translator of text in audiovisual form deals not only with words or signs but also with semiotics and multimodality in which texts are immersed, in a system where each has a very different

significance. Therefore, dealing with multimodality requires integrating pedagogical frameworks based on theories that work hand in hand to create sense and meaning. Depending on a “single coherent methodology” (Saldanha and O’Brien (2013, p. 2) in the translation process seems to be unrealistic and impractical.

Numerous theories have paved the way for translating audiovisual products. Some of these theories investigated in the study are Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), Multimodal Theory (MT), Poly-system (System theory), Semiotic Theory, Sociolinguistic Theory, and Skopos Theory (functional theory), which are the most recognized theories that shape the pedagogical application within the scope of translation studies. The approaches based on these theories overlap and intersect to contribute to supporting translators in rendering meanings from similar texts of audiovisual products that usually contain signs, images, sound, and gestures that represent a daunting task for translators. The AVT theories, however, have distinct principles; they contribute significantly to translating audiovisual products. Translators have to deal with these complexities of audiovisual texts in association with the approaches of the major theories in the scope of AVT. Gambier (2023) reveals the reason behind these complexities:

The complexity of the AV is also reflected in the concept of sense or meaning. Sense results from the interaction between signs on the screen, between those signs and the different stakeholders of the film industry, and between them and the viewers

Although the AVT theories vary in their basic assumptions, they tend to have a common ground with the AVT, i.e., translators should faithfully render the meaning. For instance, Skopos theory outlines the position of the original text and how translators can discover different methods to achieve their goal, freeing them from the constraints of the original text. That viewpoint might be considered a merit for the theory; however, it eliminates translators’ capabilities to deal with literary texts as the theory does not address them. In contrast, the Polyssystem theory, compared to Skopos, places translation activities within literature and literary components and has a recognizable impact on translating multimodal texts and audiovisual products.

Nevertheless, comparing Semiotic and Multimodal theories reflects each theory’s fundamental and distinct essential notion. The former concentrates on interpreting meaning within a social context, while the latter concentrates on decoding meaning from different modalities based on the signs, gestures, and images embedded in the multimodal texts. However, these two theories intersect in translation studies, especially when investigating the social semiotics within various multimodalities. Multimodal theory contributes to the process of “how we make meaning by combining multiple signifying means or modes – for example, image with writing, music and body movement, speech with gesture – into an integrated whole” (Pérez-González, 2019, p. 346).

Translators are exposed to the multimodal source language product equipped with audio, video, and images in translating audiovisual products. The initial step in involvement of the translation process involves listening to the dialogue carefully, interpreting meaning related to images, and understanding the semiotic features of the product they are watching to deepen their understanding of the relation between these various types of modes and successful meaning-making. Throughout the translation process of the audiovisual products, translators apply a cognitive mechanism to establish a connection between the images, sound, and movements and see how all these parts contribute to the creation of meaning. “The visual and auditory systems are the most important information processing systems in the brain. When people perceive and obtain the external environment, they usually get visual and auditory cues concurrently.” (Lu & Pan, 2020, p.1). At this point, Arab translators imply their deep knowledge of the CLT and Multimodal theories to understand how each component of the audiovisual products is combined to develop explicit and implicit meaning from all modes involved. Therefore, it is crucial to understand what these theories offer so that Arab translators can render meaning successfully. Remael and Reviere (2019) have gone further to integrate another theory in the process of meaning creation by considering the contribution of semiotic theory in the process. They state,

Multimodality is fast becoming the main conceptual framework for the study of audiovisual texts, i.e., texts that create meaning through the use of multiple semiotic modes, such as films. Individual semiotic modes include the aural-verbal mode (dialogues and lyrics), the aural, non-verbal mode (music and sound effects), the visual-verbal mode (various types of text on screen). (p. 260).

As a result of combining various theories and after careful consideration and understanding of the link between audiovisual components, Arab Translate faces another challenge: whether or not the

outcomes of the Translation of multimodal texts suit the Arab audience in terms of language variation and culture. This challenge results from the overlapping between the sociolinguistics theory and CLT, Multimodal theory, and semiotic theory. According to Spolsky (cited in Yau, 2019, p. 18), sociolinguistics is defined as “the field that studies the relation between language and society, between the uses of language and the social structures in which the users of language live.” (p. 3). Moreover, the text comprises different signs and sign systems - that simultaneously reflect, create, and support social reality and must be understood in “terms of cross-cultural communication.” (Qian & Chuanmao, 2020, p. 874). language Audiovisual products contain tremendous language variation, dialects, slang, and colloquial language that call for a proper understanding of the source language to develop a suitable equivalent in the target language within socio-constructive and sociocultural approaches. Conversely, the Poly-system contributes to Audiovisual Translation by placing the task of translating within the realm of literature and literary studies, offering clear guidelines for dealing with social, cultural, and historical contexts. It provides broad advice on how to encourage translation efforts.

Nonetheless, in terms of actual Translation, the significance of the translator is overlooked, particularly in matters of decision-making. Then again, Skopos's theory emphasizes the purpose of multimodality texts: " It is the function or purpose of the text, which takes precedence in the translation process" (Nkululeko Nzimande, 2023, p. 16). Hence, Arab translators must clearly understand the functionality of the Source text to identify the methodological approaches they will apply in the translation process.

4. The contribution of the Translation Theories to the development of AVT

The Analyses have ranged from translating specific words in film dialogue to describing the unique techniques that must be employed by some of the translation modalities present in the broader category of audiovisual Translation. However, theorists have hardly evaluated whether the theories under which the analysis is conducted can also be applied to these translation modalities (such as subtitling, dubbing, and voice-over) and their impact on the modalities. In the same context, knowing about the theoretical framework of various theories does not guarantee the successful rendering of meaning. Translators should consider other factors, such as “new consumption habits, new devices and technologies, new audiences and new ways to understand translation is not limited to a theoretical description.” (Chaume, 2018, p. 88). However, being acquainted with the theoretical frameworks represents the core of understanding how these frameworks are applied. Therefore, some of the applications of AVT modalities are briefly explained below:

4.1 Semiotics Theory: (social semiotics, linguistics semiotics, and cultural semiotic)

Contributes to the interpretation of signs as a means of communication and how these signs are interpreted. This interpretation of signs is based on global understanding, as culture and social norms represent a critical element in decoding “meanings as a sign is formed by the relation between forms (signifiers) and concepts (signified), one of the elements of the sign does not have equivalence, the problem of the Translation will occur. (Hasyim et al., 2020, p. 389).

AVT is impacted by semiotics theory in several ways. This includes embracing its conceptual tools, exploring its translation techniques, and incorporating elements of its theoretical framework for particular areas within translation activities. Consequently, “Semiotics is of great theoretical relevance and methodological value to translation (including literary translation), but it does not provide us with enough analytical apparatus in analyzing concrete problems.” (Jianzhong, 2004, p. 950).

Enhances the successful cultural transfer from English culture to Arab culture.

Signs, gestures, and images must be understood in a social context before they are transferred to acceptable contexts in the target language.

4.2 Poly-system Theory

The theory’s primary assumption is to place translation activities within literature and literary components, which has a recognizable impact on translating multimodal texts and audiovisual products. Chang (2001) suggests that translators’ work and activities, particularly those dealing with literature, are primarily influenced by standards from six central systems, though not solely. These standards are:

1. The political polysystem, which is made up of institutions of power and marginalized groups;
2. The ideological polysystem consists of competing and conflicting ideologies of all sorts that exist in a given culture, sponsored by different groups;
- 3—the economic polysystem, whose norms would bind translation activities to certain ‘economic principles’;
4. The linguistic polysystem would require

conformity to the norms of a language variety; 5—the literary polysystem, which offers certain “recognized” literary models; and 6. The translational polysystem, whose norms may be partially reflected in certain classroom exercises where the texts to be translated are not posited to serve any real purpose, and students are instructed just to translate, as if in a cultural vacuum. (p. 321).

4.3 Multimodal Theory

The theory provides translators with guidelines that enhance their skills and competence to understand the relation and interaction between various modes of audiovisual products and how these modes are interpreted to make meaning. Translators must consider the variation of each mode’s meaning based on the viewers’ social and cultural backgrounds and how they cognitively process meaning, which helps translators gain deeper insights into the nature of multimodal texts.

Different strategies and approaches are utilized to extract understanding from texts that use multiple modes, which “helps translators gain deeper insights into the nature of multimodal texts” (Borodo, 2015, p. 40). The systemic functional approach to multimodality and systematic functional analysis examines various aspects of AVT, including subtitling. Therefore, the methodological approaches to translating multimodality must be identified as a cluster. (Tuominen et al, 2018).

Multimodal texts are interdisciplinary, as various modes and patterns intersect and overlap. Hence, translators might apply various approaches from multiple social, psychological, and cultural contexts. “As is the case with Translation Studies generally, it is impossible to delineate a single, coherent methodological framework for multimodal translation.” (Tuominen et al., 2018, p.6)

Multimodality means that translators’ fundamental job when dealing with various modes of AVT (subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, or any other mode) is to mediate between various components of the semiotic and multimodal features and decode signs in the target language. Therefore, their work is a “trans-creation” rather than a “translation” (Rike, 2013, p. 82).

4.4 Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)

The theory enhances translators’ cognitive abilities as they attempt to comprehend and understand the message encoded in the source language. Lee (2018) explains cognitive Translation as:

Cognitively, Translation involves the same major processes: understanding of the source text message, conversion of it into the target language, with as much preservation of the style, register (if possible and appropriate: registers can differ in languages), syntactic structure, and, of course, absolutely the meaning of the original text.

The theory contributes to understanding the cognitive skills translators need to implement in the translation process by revealing what activities are going on in their minds through the Translation.

The cognitive process covers how sensory information is changed, simplified, expanded, saved, retrieved, and utilized. Consequently, cognition is about the mind’s capacity to handle data and use understanding within data processing from the source text.

The widespread globalization and digitization of audiovisual content in film, television, and the internet have altered both the production and reception of messages included in various audiovisual products. According to Ulati & Pratama (2022). “The messages can be transferred through four channels namely audio, visual, verbal, and non-verbal. There are four different types of signs: audio-verbal (words uttered), audio-nonverbal (all other sounds), visual-verbal (writing), visual-nonverbal”. (p. 57). Recently, the demand for translating audiovisual products in various forms has increased dramatically. Technology has remarkably contributed to the dissemination of media and, at the same time, facilitates the production of these media in languages other than the original language of media. Therefore, a tremendous burden has been placed on translators as the mediators between these media outlets and the target audience.

Global practices within the media industry have created new challenges for translators to understand the underpinning principles, methods, and techniques based on various theories and how these theories are manifested and formed in translators' choices of particular strategies and approaches. For instance, in subtitling, the Skopos theory supports translators in identifying the purpose of the translation process. Meanwhile, polysystem theory deals with the various aspects of translation in separate systems, which allows translators to deal with each system in isolation. The best example of these systems is the cultural aspects in films, movies, and TV shows that relate cultures broadly as an assemblage of systems. Consequently, translators must choose between various strategies to successfully render the meaning by adapting the original program's cultural context and socio-cultural elements to those of the target program, along with textual and lexical adjustments that fit the target

culture. Hence, various strategies might contribute to the process, such as the adaptation strategy, Foreignization, domestication, euphuism strategy, and the euphemism theory, which deal with refining unpleasant language, such as swear words, into accepted forms in the target language. (the case of translating swear words into Arabi as observed in movies broadcasted in MBC). Within the same context, translation is a complex and multi-faceted process of decoding the meaning of signs with deep literary, linguistic, and cultural semiotic layers. Paolucci (2021) identifies signs as:

A thought, a sensation, a perception or an image which makes itself present to the consciousness (cognition) is a sign in the place of an object (sub-personal level) and in the place of previous knowledge (interpretants) of the same object (supra-personal level)". (p. 68).

Consequently, Semiotic translation involves any translation that employs at least two distinct semiotic systems, like converting words to images, to numerical representations, or to sounds without words. (Loddo & Lorini (2022)). Semiotic theory equipped translators with practical guidelines to decode signs properly. Strategies such as Cultural Adaptation and Localization. Moreover, the theory advocates transcreation rather than translation, which provides free space for translators to adopt a creative adaptation of meaning and cultural elements in the source text; thus, it acts as a strategy for respelling these semiotic features in the translation through transcreation.

5. Implication for Practice

In this paper, we have outlined the various theoretical frameworks available in the literature on AVT. We have highlighted each approach's strengths and weaknesses and attempted to show what questions each framework is trying to negotiate. A relevant question, looking forward, might be whether all these questions will ever be addressed by one theoretical framework, whether a complex balance of approaches most usefully addresses these problems, or whether the entire ensemble of the issues (or the questions proposed to date) should be reconceptualized in theoretical terms before we begin to consider how (or indeed whether) they can be answered. This paper aims not to debunk any of the presented theories but to outline and problematize these approaches to highlight the need for reflection on these essential choices within an academic field.

One consideration that must always underlie this choice is the question of who and why such theories are generated. We may be working towards theory for the sake of the discipline, but we may also be generating knowledge to practice. Accessibility to practitioners, of course, will inform how attractive an approach might be. One might be interested in whether the chosen theory integrates research, training, and practice within the presented theories. Further, do all the immediate participants in the translation process (translators, film or content creators, television audiences, language students) and beyond (theatergoers, conference participants, multiculturalism policymakers) stand to benefit from this choice? Indeed, is the discipline positioned to benefit from undertaking more meaningful research projects in the future? In section 1.2, we have outlined the main decision-making components and the conflicting ideologies at play when AVT occurs, addressing questions of who translates, for whom, for what, and through which method. These decisions actively involve our colleagues from surrounding academic disciplines, professions, our publishers, and our governments.

Moreover, recent technological advances make the critical theoretical perspectives fundamental for designing translation tools based on distributed representations, which are necessary when reaching an understanding through interaction and from data sources beyond text. The expertise synthesis, directedness, restrictions, time allocation, etc., which are relevant within practically oriented disciplines, are also applicable within a much broader theoretical context in which they need to work to understand the effectiveness of different techniques' legitimation based on the fundamental theoretical approaches, which also considers the features of the understanding of the various modalities involved in AVT.

6. Conclusion

The paper considered for this review mainly discussed existing theories to derive present suggestions. The development of AVT-specific theories that address the constraints posed by the various means of delivery and recipients is overdue. While a few contributions to such theories exist, they derive from a limited number of works. They are, therefore, in need of expansion and development, both theoretically and empirically. A taxonomy of existing theoretical concepts and classifications elaborated on an exploratory framework was proposed. AVT, as an expanded field of study with specific constraints and particularities, has been and is currently underpinned by several theories tailored to different forms of delivery and reception. Such expansion includes developing and implementing various strategies, techniques, and technologies and studying and understanding reception and effects. However, the authors found that the development of such AVT-specific theories needs to catch up or at least be shaped by the existing theoretical upper structures mainly derived from translation studies.

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