THE INFLUENCE OF SUBTITLES AND DUBBING ON THE PERCEPTION OF A FILM USING THE EXAMPLE OF THE CARTOON «TOY STORY»

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Abstract: The article shows an experiment using second-year foreign language students to investigate the effect of subtitles and dubbing on film perception. During the experiment, students were shown a video from the cartoon «Toy Story» in two translation formats: with subtitles and dubbing. Following the watching, a survey was administered to determine their grasp of the plot, emotional engagement, impression of cultural features, and preferences for translation approaches. The findings revealed that subtitles help viewers have a better knowledge of language and cultural nuances, whereas dubbing allows for a more comfortable sense of visual features. The study emphasizes the need of selecting a suitable translation approach in order to optimize the effectiveness of foreign cinema interpretation.

Keywords: subtitles, dubbing, lip movement, idiomatic and expressive translation, language comprehension, translation strategies, audiovisual translation, film perception, viewer preferences.

Introduction: Modern cinema is becoming more worldwide, with films generated in many regions of the world being available to almost everyone. As a result, there is a greater need for high-quality translation services, such as subtitles and dubbing. It is vital for translators to understand how different audiovisual translation methods influence the perception of cultural and linguistic nuances. The goal of this study is to look at the impact of subtitles and dubbing on viewers from both a linguistic and translation theory perspective.

Subtitles retain the actors' original speech, including nuances of style, intonation, and accent, which are essential for properly portraying cultural and sociolinguistic qualities. Subtitles are a sort of condensed text that requires content compression as well as syntactic and lexical structural changes. Translation specialists must be able to present content concisely and accurately while avoiding information loss—a necessary skill in audiovisual translation.

Because dubbing requires not only transmitting meaning but also matching speech tempo, duration, and articulation, a great level of adaptability is required. Dubbing is linguistically equivalent to phrase-level translation, in which translators and adaptors employ cultural linguistic markers to change speech to match the lip movements of characters. As a result, dubbing requires translation skills, linguistic acumen, and the ability to produce an idiomatic and expressive translation while remaining loyal to the original tone and context.

Linguistically, dubbing is an example of pragmatic adaptation because it seeks to preserve the original speech's meaning, intent, and key aspects while not altering the narrative material. Some academics argue that dubbing may result in the loss of

linguistic features such as idioms or dialects, affecting the worldview expressed in the original language.

Subtitles and dubbing are key topics for translation students to learn. According to research, seeing subtitled films in one's native language on a frequent basis improves vocabulary and listening comprehension. In this case, subtitles are perceived subjectively, allowing viewers to swiftly compare text to spoken language, hence improving perception and comprehension of linguistic structure. Dubbing, on the other hand, is a good instrument for translation studies since it requires the ability to translate across genres and styles while being fluid and expressive. These traits may be particularly useful to translation students in their future careers. Furthermore, cultural and linguistic factors play a crucial role in translation training, making these themes especially appealing to learners.

The purpose of this experiment was to identify differences in film perception among second-year foreign language students based on translation methods (subtitles vs. Dubbing). The study investigated how subtitles and dubbing influence story comprehension, emotional response, and cultural awareness among Russian-speaking students studying foreign languages.

Methods:

1. Sample.

The experiment involved 30 second-year students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages, divided into two groups of fifteen each. All the participants understood some basic English.

2. Material and experimental conditions.
3. Students were shown a 5-7-minute excerpt from the animated film Toy Story in two different formats:

Group 1 viewed a sample with Russian subtitles.

Group 2 viewed the sample with complete Russian dubbing.

4. Procedure.

Following the extract, students from both groups completed a questionnaire with many sections meant to test plot comprehension and vocabulary. Emotional engagement with on-screen events. Cultural and linguistic aspects of the original film were perceived. Preferences about the chosen translation technique.

5. Questionnaire

The questionnaire included the following questions:

Was it simple to follow the story?

Did you feel an emotional connection with the characters?

How well did you understand cultural nuances (e.g., jokes and references to American culture).

Which translation method seemed to be more effective for understanding the film?

Results:

1. Storyline Comprehension

Subtitles Group: 80% of participants indicated that following the storyline was simple, but 40% said they had to work hard to read the subtitles while watching the screen. Despite this, 70% of respondents said subtitles helped them capture more details and original expressions.

Dubbing Group: 95% of participants found it easier to understand the plot because they did not have to read. However, 60% felt that dubbing made it difficult to understand some of the original's language and cultural nuances.

2. Emotional Engagement

Subtitles Group: 60% of students said that subtitles preserved the original emotional tone by allowing them to hear the actors' inflection. However, 30% stated that reading subtitles distracted them from emotionally connecting with the scene.

Dubbing Group: Because dubbing did not detract from the images, 80% of participants developed an emotional connection with the characters. However, 20% reported that the Russian voice acting appeared less expressive than the original, slightly decreasing the emotional effect.

3. Cultural Perception

Subtitles Group: 75% of students said subtitles helped them grasp American cultural themes in the film. For example, they noted original humor and dialects, which are frequently lost during dubbing.

Dubbing Group: Only 40% of participants said they understood cultural aspects. Most people noticed that dubbing changed accents and localized some jokes, weakening their validity as cultural indicators.

4. Preferences

Subtitles Group: 65% of students preferred subtitles for watching films to better understand linguistic nuances and original content.

Dubbing Group: 70% of participants said they would prefer dubbing, especially for films with complex visual effects, because it does not take away from the visual components.

Discussions: The study's findings illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of both subtitles and dubbing in foreign film perception. Subtitles were especially efficient in preserving linguistic authenticity and cultural nuances, which is consistent with prior research that has highlighted the importance of subtitles in language learning and cross-cultural comprehension. However, they required more cognitive work because participants had to divide their focus between reading and watching the screen. This shows that subtitles may be more effective to language learners while being less immersive for mainstream audiences.

Dubbing, on the other hand, made the viewing experience more fluid and comfortable, allowing participants to concentrate on the film's visual components. This lends credence to the claim that dubbing improves emotional engagement by eliminating the distraction of reading text. However, the removal of language cues, cultural references, and original voice acting resulted in a less strong connection to the film's cultural background. This agrees with the criticism that dubbing frequently trades authenticity for accessibility.

These findings highlight the importance of a balanced approach to audiovisual translation, particularly in educational and professional situations. While subtitles can help you improve your linguistic abilities and cultural knowledge, dubbing is still necessary to make content more accessible and emotionally engaging. The data also indicate that viewers' tastes are determined by their primary goal—whether they want language and cultural immersion or a more effortless cinematic experience.

Future research could increase the sample size and add participants with diverse levels of foreign language competency in order to determine how translation methods affect different viewing groups. Investigating how subtitles and dubbing affect comprehension in genres other than animation could provide additional insights into audiovisual translation tactics.

Finally, the study emphasizes the necessity of choosing the right translation process based on the intended audience and viewing purpose. Subtitles and dubbing play important roles in making foreign films accessible to a wide range of people, whether the goal is language acquisition, cultural immersion, or ease of understanding.

Conclusion: The study found that subtitles improve the authenticity of the original film by helping viewers to appreciate linguistic and cultural nuances. However, subtitles can be distracting, especially in visually appealing scenes. Dubbing, on the other hand, was found to be more convenient for overall comprehension and permitted a greater emphasis on the visuals and storyline. These findings underscore the importance of choosing a translation method based on the viewer's goals: subtitles are better suited for in-depth cultural understanding, whereas dubbing increases overall plot comprehension and visual engagement. Understanding how subtitles and dubbing affect film perception is important for translators and linguists because it helps them develop international communication skills and linguistic analysis. Both translation procedures have different effects on the audience and can be effective instruments for foreign language learning and cultural adaptation. The choice between them is dependent on the viewer's needs, the translation's goal, and the film kind.

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