

Dubbing or Subtitling Interculturalism: Students' Perspectives

Iruma Ratnayake

Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya

marat191@kln.ac.lk

Although a relative newcomer to the field of Translation Studies, Audio-Visual translation (AVT) has advanced from the field's borderline to its' centre over the past period. AVT is a specialized area of translation that deals with transferring multimedia texts into another language and/or culture. Making Audio-Visual products is one of the most visible demonstrations of multiculturalism worldwide. Given this situation, it is evident that translators play a crucial role in transferring such material. This paper attempts to determine whether dubbing or subtitling, two main approaches of AVT, can be more effective in manifesting cultural differences. Data were collected through a questionnaire from 20 final-year undergraduates reading special degrees in Translation Studies at the University of Kelaniya. The reason for selecting such a sample to gather data is that their final year comprised a course unit titled Introduction to Audio-Visual Translation. Analysis of the results discovered that 1) A considerable amount of students are aware of interculturalism, 2) The majority of students perceive that AVT can promote interculturalism, 3) and dubbing has the most impact on promoting interculturalism 4) The most common reason stated is that oral language is the best mode to experience a culture, 5) The most common challenges in promoting interculturalism are lack of translator's knowledge on both cultures, contradictory ideologies between different cultures, particularly between religions, and technical constraints, and 6) The most suggested solutions are providing professional training to AVT translators, broadening the knowledge of translators on both cultures before translating, and conducting Audio-Visual translation from a neutral and common position that is acceptable to the majority in the respective target audience in consultation with professional translators without making decisions alone. In manifesting cultural differences dubbing and subtitling are subject to their restrictions and regarding interculturalism that must be taken into consideration.

Keywords: Audio-Visual Translation, Dubbing, Multiculturalism, Promoting Interculturalism, Subtitling