

# ASSESSING SUBTITLING IN A DUBBING COUNTRY: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ON LEARNER-VIEWERS

Maria Pavesi, Elisa Perego, Elisa Ghia, Valentina Coletto

Studi Italiani di Linguistica Teorica e Applicata, XLVIII, 1 (2019), pp. 5-26

## ABSTRACT

The potentials of audiovisual translation in general go well beyond its original scopes and can expand into the acquisitional realm. This applies in particular to subtitling in all its forms, which has recently started to be popular, appreciated and used more than in the past also in traditionally dubbing countries. This study focuses on assessing the impact of differing subtitling modes (standard, bimodal and reversed) on L2 film comprehension and vocabulary retention among Italian intermediate-level learners of English as a foreign language ( $n = 80$ , mean age = 21). Furthermore, it investigates the appreciation of the audiovisual resource, as well as the perception of its accessibility, within the sample. Results show that differing subtitling modes do affect learners' performance. All types of subtitles have a beneficial impact, including the reversed condition, a rather neglected viewing mode which, however, appears to be particularly effective in vocabulary recall. The article discusses the empirical findings drawing wider applied implications for both subtitling and dubbing, thus contributing to partially reshape the role and the agenda of audiovisual translation research.