



## **SUBTITLING OR DUBBING? AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE AUDIENCE AND THE CONTENT CREATORS**

Amaya Nanayakkara<sup>1</sup>

Correspondence: amaya95d@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

Subtitling and dubbing are the two most prominent approaches to audiovisual translation in a globalised context. A foreign audiovisual product is subtitled or dubbed in a target language to match the preferences of its target audience. In the Sri Lankan context, many audiovisual products are broadcasted on television channels either dubbed or subtitled in Sinhalese. The Sri Lankan audience equally embraces both such products. However, it has not yet been demonstrated which of these two options are most preferred by the Sri Lankan audience. This study aims to analyse the perceptions of the Sri Lankan audience and the audiovisual content creators on subtitling and dubbing to identify the most preferred translation method. In pursuance of the above objective, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are followed. As the first phase of the research, the subtitled and dubbed versions of a movie clip are shown to a group of twenty audience members, inclusive of both children and adults, and a questionnaire is administered to identify their most favoured version among the two. The analysis was based on the cognitive process and the hedonic aspect involved with the viewing experience of the audience. As the second phase of the research, a group of audiovisual content creators were interviewed to identify their perception of the matter. Through the analysis of the gathered data, it could be perceived that a majority of both the child and adult audience groups preferred the dubbed version over the subtitled version on both cognitive and hedonic aspects of the viewing experience. A majority of the professionals of the audiovisual translation industry agreed upon the dubbing approach to be the best option of audiovisual translation among the two methods. Based on the above data, it was perceived that the dubbing approach is the most preferred approach of audiovisual translation in the Sri Lankan context.

**Keywords:** Audience, Audiovisual Translation, Dubbing, Preference, Subtitling

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya