

Subtitling and the Relevance of Non-verbal Information in Polyglot Films

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the relevance of non-verbal information when subtitling films belonging to the polyglot film genre. As this cinematic production normally uses language diversity to portray communication problems among cultures, fictional characters tend to resort to non-verbal signs to surmount language barriers. This means that non-verbal elements tend to play a key role in understanding this film genre and, consequently, need to be carefully considered when translating. Due to the polysemiotic nature of audiovisual products and following Vanoye's differentiation of horizontal and vertical dimensions of artefactual conversation (1985), a multimodal approach is used with the purpose of analyzing the function of non-linguistic signs and how they are used when subtitling two scenes from a polyglot film titled *Spanglish*. The analysis reveals the important interplay of subtitles and non-verbal signs for the understanding of the multicultural and multilingual problems depicted in this film genre.

KEYWORDS: non-verbal information, subtitling, polyglot film, multimodality.