

Emotional value of English and Polish subtitles for Studio Ghibli movies

keywords: audiovisual translation; emotions; subtitles; emotional value

The use of emotion words and the differences in their emotional value that arise across languages have been a topic of interest for many scholars, including Wierzbicka (1992), who states that words expressing emotions are cultural artifacts, naturally bound with languages. Consequently, research on emotion words in languages inspired scholars to further examine such expressions in the process of translation. Rojo (2017) argues that emotions may influence both the outcome of the translation process and its perception by translation users. Some attention has been paid to the role of emotions in audiovisual translation (AVT), for example by investigating potential differences between emotions experienced by visually impaired and sighted audiences while using audio description (Ramos 2015). However, research on translating emotionally-laden expressions in subtitles, one of the main AVT modes, is still scarce.

In order to test the differences in the intensity of emotions between Polish and English subtitles for Studio Ghibli movies, a group of one hundred Polish and English speakers were recruited to participate in the study. The participants were invited to fill in a questionnaire which aimed at assessing expressions in terms of their emotional valence and arousal. Expressions (i.e. fragments of subtitles) were selected from fourteen movies produced by Studio Ghibli, originally in Japanese. Participants assessed expressions in their native language only. Additionally, the study aimed to check whether the results gathered from the participants match the existing lists of affective norms for Polish and English words (Bradley & Lang 1999, Imbir 2016). Results from the questionnaire together with an analysis of affective norms in the two languages may provide an insight into the importance of translating emotions, especially in AVT, and highlight the areas where differences between emotions in languages occur. The findings may be useful for translation process research by pointing to the role of emotion in translation reception.

304 words

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