Attention Allocation to Words with Full Space and Half Space in Two Subtitled French Movies: An Eye Tracking Study

Saber Zahedi

PhD in Translation Studies, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Masood Khoshsaligheh (Corresponding author)[1]

Professor in Translation Studies, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract

The use of eye-tracking technology has become a prevalent and accurate method for measuring challenges the audience may face while reading subtitles in different languages. Using the same technology, this study investigates if reading words with full space and half space in Persian subtitles is in any way different from each other. To fulfill this goal, 32 participants voluntarily took part in an eye tracking experiment where they read the segments of two French films. Each segment included two versions (one with half space and the other one with full space). Meanwhile, SMI eye-tracking suite was used to record and analyze the participants' eye movement parameters and data. Fixation duration, fixation number, first fixation duration and subject hit count of the participants were analyzed in SPSS. The results showed that there was a non-significant difference between the words with half space and full space. Still, the attention allotted to words with half space was lower compared to the words with full space. According to the heatmaps, in words with full space, the attention is split between the two parts that are separated by the full space. Thus, the word itself is not considered as a whole when full space is used.