

The Effect of Subtitling on the Enhancement of EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension

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Abstract

In Egypt most foreign-language audiovisual materials are viewed in the original audio version with the Arabic subtitles. With the increasing access to audiovisual material, EFL learners are more exposed to oral input in English than ever before. However, what has unfairly remained unresolved is the use of subtitles. Thus, the present study represents an effort to empirically examine the effect of feature movies with and without subtitle on listening comprehension of Egyptian EFL learners. The participants of this study were randomly selected from a larger pool of 180 fourth year students from the Department of English Language, Minoufia University, Egypt. 104 participants were randomly chosen and then randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group. The first experimental group viewed the movie with English subtitles (ESG), the second group viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles (ASG), and the control group viewed the movie without subtitles (WSG). After screening the 14 excerpts from 8 movies, 14 multiple-choice listening comprehension tests were administered in order to evaluate their listening comprehensions. Then, each group was asked to complete a questionnaire in order to know their opinions about the way the movie was presented. In the last session, all participants sat on the listening section from the TOEFL test. The results of the data analysis revealed that for Multiple Choice tests, the subtitles groups outperformed the WSG, and ASG performed better than the ESG; however, on the TOEFL test, the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the ESG compared to other groups.

Keywords: Arabic Subtitles, EFL learners, English subtitles, Language Learning, Listening Comprehension, Movies

1. Introduction

English has been well recognized as being an important language for international communications. A teacher of English as a foreign language (EFL) faces a great challenge that students do not utilize English authentically in the setting in which they live. Learners do not have many natural opportunities to be exposed to the language or use it in any authentic interaction. Therefore, learners find it easier to have access to authentic material in printed form; however, the situation becomes worse when it comes to developing oral comprehension and production skills (Stempleski, 1992). It is additionally estimated that learners listen to the foreign language they are studying approximately twice as much as they speak it (Nunan, 1999); consequently, teachers perceive that they should give more attention to this receptive language skill to fulfill the learners' good oral language production. Furthermore, it is important to refer that listening is used daily nearly twice as much as speaking and four to five times as much as reading and writing (Van Duzer, 1997).

Knowing the refreshment and recreation they provide and the impact that they have, EFL teachers in Egypt have begun, in recent years to use movies in their classes at different levels. However, what has unfairly remained unresolved is the use of subtitles in movies. Teachers of English are sometimes in a dilemma whether they should show a movie with or without subtitles and in what language, and above all, which way will benefit their students most in relation to listening comprehension (Robin, 2007). Studies regarding the use of subtitling in EFL classroom teaching are still very limited in Egypt. Therefore, the present study aimed to find out which of the following was more beneficial for the Egyptian EFL learners in developing their listening comprehension: a) movies with; Arabic subtitles with English dialogues (standard subtitles), b) English subtitles with English dialogues (bimodal subtitles) , or c) English dialogues without subtitles. In order to achieve this, after viewing 14 excerpts of the seven movies, 104 participants were asked to complete 14 comprehension tests immediately after viewing the excerpts. The second test administered in this study was the listening section from the TOEFL test as a pre and post-test in order to measure the development achieved by the participants after one month experiment.

1.1. *Research Question*

1. To what extent do movies with or without subtitles enhance the listening comprehension ability of Egyptians EFL learners in general?

2. Review of Literature

2.1. *Theoretical Background*

Movies are profoundly useful resources in the English classroom for a number of ends. It has been proposed that movies can be used to increase students' critical thinking skills (Eken, 2003), their awareness of pragmatic usage (King, 2002) and their motivation (Ryan, 1998), and to promote comprehension-based learning (Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997), fluency, etc. Feature movies, alongside other authentic materials, are contextually rich sources of authentic material which can be used in the language classroom. Through movies learners see how people communicate in real life in distinctive conversational contexts since movies help bring the outside world into the classroom (Tomalin, 1986). Sherman (2003, p. 2) also notes that learners can benefit from films in terms of comprehension of the target language as they are presented

with all kinds of voices in all kinds of situations, with the visual dimension being a particular advantage for comprehension and in understanding the pragmatics of dialogues.

The receptive skills reading and listening used in input processing share similar cognitive processes and represent two different sources of input. The relationship between receptive skills and productive skills in language learning as a whole is clearly elucidated in Krashen's input and output hypotheses; as has widely been recognized, comprehensible linguistic input will gradually become intake - i.e., comprehended, reusable input; much of the mental processing of input to become intake has to do with the quality and quantity of this comprehensible input. Krashen believes that the best activities for the classroom are those that are natural, interesting and understood. (Krashen, 1985)

Baltova (1999) mentioned that in watching audio-visual material, there are three channels of information available to the viewer all conveying the same content: the auditory channel (sound), the verbal visual channel (subtitles) and the nonverbal visual channel (visuals). He added that the combination of the three channels combined should create a better environment for learning than exposure to videos without subtitles or written text accompanied by visual information.

Danan (2004) added that "audiovisual material enhanced with subtitles is a particularly powerful pedagogical tool which can help improve the listening comprehension skills of second-language learners. Subtitling can increase language comprehension and leads to additional cognitive benefits, such as greater depth of processing" (p.67)

2.1.1. The Effect of Subtitles on the listening comprehension skill

According to Reich (2006), subtitling is a branch of translation called audiovisual translation in which viewers can read statements of dialogues on the screen as well as watch the images and listen to the dialogues. Subtitling is most known for its purpose of translating the oral dialogue from films or television programmes into text. This often involves viewers who have an L1 that is not the same as the language in the spoken dialogue and are given subtitles so that they can understand the action on the screen. This type of L1 subtitling is what we normally find in English speaking videos on Egyptian and Middle Eastern television, where Arabic subtitles are provided for the viewer.

Many studies have suggested that far from being a distraction and a source of laziness, subtitles might have a potential value in helping the learning process by providing learners with the key to massive quantities of authentic and comprehensible language input (Vanderplank, 1988). They also maintain that the proponents of subtitles contend that subtitles may help develop language proficiency by enabling learners to be conscious of language that they might not otherwise understand.

Stewart & Pertusa (2004) also stated that with the aid of the first language subtitles, learners can understand, possibly with relative ease, the listening input and the visual clues through the translation. The L1 subtitles have been considered to make movies intelligible by many instructors.

Bianchi & Ciabattini (2008) argue that the reason for this is that native language subtitles are automatically processed, whereas target language subtitles require a more advanced

knowledge of the language in order to be processed without interfering with other involved cognitive processes such as listening and taking stock of the visual content. Bird & Williams (2002) claim that it remains unclear whether subtitles lead to better or worse listening comprehension. They argue that although some studies suggest that subtitles have some beneficial effects, it may be only that text presents the easiest path to comprehension.

2.2. Empirical Studies on Subtitling

Markham et al. (2001) found that the L1 subtitles were more beneficial. The researchers examined 169 intermediate native English learners of Spanish. The learners wrote a summary in their L1 and completed an L1 multiple-choice test after viewing native and target subtitled and without subtitles TV episodes. The results indicated that the L1 subtitle group outperformed the other two groups.

Zanon (2006) investigated the contribution of computer-based subtitling to language learning and concluded that subtitling could motivate learners to appreciate the huge amount of content of the movie that doesn't reach the audience when it is presented to them dubbed. Moreover, Guichon & McLornan (2008) studied 40 intermediate native French speakers. An experiment was designed to compare the understanding of an authentic BBC audiovisual recording, which was presented to four groups of French undergraduate students. They examined the effectiveness of being exposed to four different conditions - the sound only; the sound and images; the sound, images, and the texts of the L2 subtitles; the sound, images and the texts of the L1 subtitles. The learners watched a BBC news recording and completed a detailed written summary in English with the assistance of their notes. The results revealed the superiority of L2 subtitles and indicate that comprehension improves when learners are exposed to a text in several modalities.

Hayati & Mohamadi (2009) studied 90 intermediate native Iranian speakers. They examined the effectiveness of using Documentaries about nature with and without subtitles. The material consisted of six episodes of a DVD entitled 'Wild Weather'. The students viewed only one of the three treatment conditions: English subtitles, Persian subtitles, no subtitles. After each viewing session, six sets of multiple-choice tests were administered to examine listening comprehension rates. The results revealed that the English subtitles group performed at a considerably higher level than the Persian subtitles group, which in turn performed at a substantially higher level than the no subtitle group on the listening test.

Alkhatnai (2010) investigated the effectiveness of subtitles in aiding English comprehension of nonnative Saudi speakers. Research was carried out in a qualitative manner, and participants were 12 Saudi students pursuing their studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Participants in the study were asked to compose a narrative after viewing a 5-minute movie segment, both with and without subtitles. Their responses were then analyzed, and results indicated that subtitles improved the participants' listening comprehension.

Selim (2010) investigated the effects of SLS (Same-Language subtitling) on content comprehension and vocabulary acquisition of MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) as L2 at the intermediate level. Twenty seven students of AUC's ALI program with English as their mother tongue were chosen for the study and divided between a control group (without SLS) and a

treatment group (with SLS). Both groups watched an authentic 3:11 minute documentary twice after completing an individual background questionnaire and taking a multiple choice vocabulary pre-viewing test. Post-viewing, participants took the same vocabulary test, then wrote a summary in L1 based on their notes taken during/and in-between the viewings and completed a questionnaire/questions related to their experience with and -/out subtitles. The results showed that the SLS group outperformed the control group.

Winke, Gass & Sydorenko (2010) investigated the effects of subtitled video on listening comprehension in foreign language learning. The participants were Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian language learners as second language at a college. The analysis was conducted with t-tests and two-way ANOVA, it showed that subtitles were more effective than without subtitles. According to the interview following the experiment, the various foreign language learners commented that they used subtitles to increase their attention, improve processing, reinforce previous knowledge, and analyze language.

Latifi, et al (2011) included 36 Iranian intermediate learners in their study, then assigned them into three groups: Bimodal-Subtitles Group (BSG), Standard-Subtitles Group (SSG) and No-Subtitles Group (NSG). Each group viewed 12 excerpts from a movie entitled 'Alvin and Chipmunks.' After viewing the movie, a Multiple Choice (MC) Comprehension test was given to the learners. The results of the data analysis revealed that for MC tests, the subtitles groups outperformed the NSG, and SSG performed better than the BSG. In the last session, all participants sat on an IELTS test, the same as the one the participants took in the first session. On the IELTS test the NSG performed significantly better than the SSG, and there was no meaningful difference between NSG and BSG. Overall, the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the NSG compared to other groups. This shows that movie subtitles only boosted the immediate comprehension of the participants. But in the general listening improvement test and its long term effect, the subtitles groups were outperformed by No subtitles group. This was attributed to the fact that reading the subtitles merely enhanced the comprehension, not their listening ability.

Some of the reviewed studies revealed the positive effect of using authentic materials on listening comprehension and help to develop a learning environment with content-rich contexts and a motivating atmosphere. They tended to support watching films with the use of subtitles regarding listening comprehension (Markham, 2001), and others have obtained conflicting results (Taylor, 2005). The results tended to be inconclusive due to the fact that some studies suggested the presence of L1 subtitles assist learners' understanding of the target language films while others found the L2 subtitles more beneficial (Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Markham et al., 2001; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004).

Besides, which subtitled language is more beneficial for learners to acquire the target language remains unclear. The results of these studies show that there is a controversy concerning the best way to present movies with the target language subtitles, the native language subtitles or without subtitles. The existing literature addresses the effectiveness of subtitling on learners' listening comprehension, but none of it addresses the effectiveness of subtitling on specific listening comprehension skills of Egyptian EFL learners.

Moreover, the previous studies did not attempt to address the effect of the exposure to the different types of subtitling over a certain period of time and whether this enhances EFL learners' listening comprehension or not. Vandergift (2011) writes that

the consensus of research conducted on the usefulness of subtitles for listening comprehension is that 'L2 subtitles facilitate comprehension', but that it is still not clear how well it fares for long-term effects of learning, in the case of listening improvement and vocabulary learning (p.462).

Research in this field is still limited in Egypt compared to that conducted in other countries. To the best of the present researcher's knowledge, there have not been any previous attempts to investigate the use of subtitling in movies in Egypt using both, Arabic and English subtitles. Moreover, all the previous studies on this topic attempted to investigate the use of languages like Spanish, Russian, English and Iranian as native languages, but not the Arabic language. This is a serious gap in the literature that the present study will attempt to fill up. Besides, most of the studies did not focus on the examination of learner's listening comprehension. They focused on the effect of watching movies on certain elements like verbatim retention and the use of vocabulary in proper context.

Therefore, the present study intended to uncover which mode (watching movies without any subtitles, with the L2 subtitles or with the L1 subtitles) is more beneficial for understanding the actual language presented in movies and the enhancement of EFL learners' listening comprehension. The main goal of the present study is to examine whether subtitles can improve actual listening comprehension. Moreover, it was hoped to find out the extent to which movie subtitles influence the long-term improvement of actual listening comprehension skills of L2 learners after viewing the excerpts of the movies for four weeks, the issue that was not adequately addressed in the previous literature.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Participants

One hundred and four participants were randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group, each one consists of 40 participants. The first experimental group viewed the movies with bimodal subtitles (English subtitles). The second group viewed the movies with standard subtitles (Arabic subtitles). The control group viewed the movies without subtitles. In order to ensure that all the learners had similar background knowledge of the movies, the participants were asked each session if they viewed any of the movies before, the results of those who confirmed viewing any of the movies were excluded.

3.2. Pre-test and Post-test

The listening part from a comprehensive English Language Proficiency Test was used in order to determine the participants' baseline knowledge of their listening skill prior to the exposure to the excerpts of the movies. The test results were used as the basis to determine the learners' current listening proficiency and to provide grounds of comparison between their proficiency level before and after the exposure to the movies for four weeks. Only the listening part of the test was administered to the learners due to the fact that watching movies basically

requires listening abilities. The experiment lasted for six weeks, the participants took the pre-test in the first week and at the end of the experiment, they took the same test they took in the first week as a post-test in order to see if viewing movies for four weeks affected the participants' listening comprehension.

3.3. *The 14 Excerpts from 7 Movies*

The researcher selected seven movies that were produced in 2013 and 2014 in order to make sure that they were not shown on TV yet and minimize the possibility that the participants watched them before. Moreover, the researcher didn't inform the participants of the movies they were supposed to watch so that they couldn't watch them before the sessions. Although there is no conclusive opinion about the length of a movie that should be shown to learners in class, five to ten minute extracts of movies are found to be preferable for most researchers (John, 1995). Therefore, each excerpt ranges from 6 to ten minutes.

3.4. *Comprehension Tests*

In order to examine the participants' understanding of the movies, 14 comprehension tests were constructed. The questions were phrased in English and the focus of the comprehension tests was to elicit the main ideas of the passage and the inference of context-based meaning. The questions were designed according to the main three sub-skills of the listening comprehension skill according to Brown (2007): listening for main ideas, listening for details, and making inferences.

3.5. *Procedures*

1. A consent form was distributed to the participants. Then, the participants received a training session on taking the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) ITP (Institutional TOEFL Program) during the fall semester, 2015.
2. One hundred and four participants were chosen and then randomly assigned to the two experimental groups and the control group. The participants were then asked to take the listening part from a comprehensive English Language Proficiency Test in order to determine the participants' baseline knowledge of their listening skill. The Listening section of the test is a pre-test and at the end of the experiment, the participants took the same test in order to see if there is any progress in their listening comprehension skill.
3. Then the three groups viewed the 14 parts of the movies over 4 weeks in three different conditions: Experimental group 1 viewed the scenes with Arabic subtitles, Experimental group 2 viewed the scenes with English subtitles and the control group viewed the scenes without subtitles. Each time the participants viewed four to three scenes.
4. Immediately after screening the parts of the movies, multiple-choice listening comprehension tests were administered to the students in order to evaluate their listening comprehension and provide grounds for comparison. The same procedure was followed for each group for all the 4 consecutive sessions.
5. Finally, in the last session, each group was asked to complete a questionnaire in order to know their opinions about the way the movie was presented and whether it is beneficial for them to view subtitling in movies. The questionnaires were distributed over the three groups including the control group.

3.6. Data Analysis

The multiple choice comprehension tests' results were analyzed as follows: In the comprehension tests one point was assigned to every single item which means the total score for each test would be 8. Then, the subjects' performance was analyzed. There were 14 scores for each participant, since, there were 14 tests. To extract a total number, all of the scores were added up. The sum score was considered as the final score of the individuals on the multiple choice tests. Thereafter, the performance of the three groups was analyzed using a One-Way ANOVA and a post hoc Bonferroni test. The results of the comprehension tests and the sub skills of listening comprehension were analysed statistically using also analysis of variance (ANOVA). The second test administered in this study was the TOEFL listening test as a pre and post-test. The obtained scores were then analyzed using Paired Samples T-test.

4. Results

4.1. Results of the Total Score of the Listening Comprehension Tests

Table 1. ANOVA of the total listening achievement of the three groups

Scores					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25555.902	2	12777.951	115.448	.000
Within Groups	10957.471	99	110.682		
Total	36513.373	101			

Table 1 illustrates the results of the one-way ANOVA for the total listening comprehension achievement of the participants. As can be observed, there is a difference among the performance of the three groups (.000) [F=115.448, $p < 0.05$]. And it shows that the difference between the three groups was significant. This means that the type of subtitling had a significant effect on the immediate comprehension of the learners. In order to determine which group is superior to the other, a post hoc Bonferroni test was run.

Table 2. Post Hoc Tests, multiple comparisons of the total listening achievement of the three groups

Multiple Comparison						
Total Scores Bonferroni						
(I) Groups	(J) Groups				95% Confidence Interval	
		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
WSG	ESG	-23.94118*	2.55160	.000	-30.1552	-17.7272

	ASG	-38.38235*	2.55160	.000	-44.5964	-32.1683
ESG	WSG	23.94118*	2.55160	.000	17.7272	30.1552
	ASG	-14.44118*	2.55160	.000	-20.6552	-8.2272
ASG	WSG	38.38235*	2.55160	.000	32.1683	44.5964
	ESG	14.44118*	2.55160	.000	8.2272	20.6552
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

According to the data presented in Table 4.3., it can be observed that:-

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the ESG and the WSG. The mean difference between the scores of the ESG and WSG is (23.94118) in favor of the ESG. The level of significance was set at 0.05; therefore, the difference is significant (0.000). This shows that the general listening ability of students who viewed the movies with English subtitles achieved higher listening comprehension than those who viewed the movies with no subtitling.
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the ASG and the WSG in favor of the ASG. The mean difference between the scores of the ASG and WSG is (38.38235). The level of significance was set at 0.05; therefore, the difference is significant (0.000). This shows that the general listening ability of students who viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles achieved higher listening comprehension than those who viewed the movies with no subtitling.
- 3- ASG showed a better performance than ESG. The mean difference between the two groups is (14.44118) in favor of the ASG. The difference between the ESG and the ASG is significant (0.000). In the mean section in the descriptive statistics, the participants of ASG got a higher mean than ESG, and WSG (84.3529). The participants who viewed the movie with Arabic subtitles showed higher listening comprehension proficiency than those of the ESG and WSG.

4.2. Results of the Pre-test and Post-test

In order to know whether different learners benefited distinctly from the listening practice, the paired-sample t-test was run to measure whether the three groups made any significant development from pre-test to post-test. The paired-sample t-test was run independently for each of the three groups firstly. According to the results presented in Table 3, it can be said that the difference between the pre-test and the post-test of the learners reached significant level in the three groups ($p=0.000$). The mean difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the WSG is (3.14706), the ESG (3.70588), and the ASG (3.67647). The mean difference results indicate that the ESG achieved the highest difference between the pre-test and the post-test, followed by the ASG, and then the WSG. This gives strong evidence that the use of movies

(audiovisual material) with the three conditions either with or without subtitles helps in the long term improvement of EFL learners' listening comprehension.

Table 3. Paired samples statistics of students' scores on the pre-test and the post-test of the three groups

			Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower	Upper			
WSG	Pair 1	POSTTEST -PRETEST	3.14706	4.46625	.76596	1.58871	4.70541	4.109	33	.000
ESG	Pair 1	POSTTEST -PRETEST	3.70588	5.21379	.89416	5.52506	1.88671	4.145	33	.000
ASG	Pair 1	POSTTEST -PRETEST	3.67647	4.55086	.78047	5.26434	2.08860	4.711	33	.000

The paired sample t-test indicated that each of the three groups performed significantly different in the post-test than the pre-test. The researchers conducted further analysis to see if one of the groups improved significantly better than the other. Therefore, a One-way ANOVA was used for this purpose. Table 4 illustrates the results of the One-way ANOVA for the results of the pre and post- test. As it can be observed, there is no significant difference among the performance of the three groups on the pre-test [$F = 1.100$, $p = 0.470$ (hence $>.05$)]. This proves that the three groups were homogenous and have similar background from the beginning of the study as there is no significant difference between the scores of the three groups as far as their general proficiency was concerned. Besides, the results show that there is no significant difference among the performance of the three groups on the post-test [$F = .760$, $p = 0.337$ hence $>.05$]. This means that the treatment was effective equally in favor of the three groups. There is no significant difference between the enhancements achieved by the three groups.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA for the pre and post-test

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
POSTTEST	Between Groups	112.137	2	56.069	1.100	.337
	Within Groups	5047.235	99	50.982		
	Total	5159.373	101			
PRETEST	Between Groups	70.255	2	35.127	.760	.470
	Within Groups	4573.118	99	46.193		
	Total	4643.373	101			

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. *The Effect of Subtitling on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension*

Based on the results reported in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the type of subtitling is an effective factor influencing listening comprehension. Participants who watched the excerpts from the movies with subtitles (L1 Arabic, L2 English) performed significantly higher than those who watched them without subtitles. This shows that both English and Arabic subtitling have a positive effect on the listening comprehension ability of the participants and in this way the results indicate clear short term effects of the two types of subtitles.

The facilitative effect of the subtitles is in line with the conclusion made by Baltova (1999) that the combination of auditory, verbal visual and nonverbal visual information creates a better language learning environment. This is also in line with previous studies which suggested the positive effects of subtitled videos in language learning (Markham et al, 2001; Taylor, 2005; Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Hayati & Mohamadi, 2009; Alkhatnai, 2010; Winke et al., 2010).

In agreement with Markham et al. (2001) and Latifi, et al (2011), the first language subtitling group outperformed the other two groups when general listening comprehension ability is concerned. The combination of L2 dialogue and L1 subtitles, served as a powerful device for learners to work out video materials pronounced in L2. This shows that this kind of subtitling generates significantly better results than bimodal subtitling and significantly better results than without subtitling. The reviewed literature shows a considerable number of works revealing the positive effect of subtitling.

The superiority of the Arabic subtitled could be attributed to the fact that Egypt is a subtitling country, where any kinds of videos with the English language shown on TV are presented with the Arabic subtitles. Moreover, the participants were fourth year students and their proficiency level in terms of the listening skill was high enough.

In this way, learners are able to get the gist of the spoken L2 easily from the L1 text. This prepares the students for the upcoming flows of messages and releases the spare language-processing capacity (Vanderplank, 1988). The existence of the L1 subtitles enabled the participants to pay extra attention to the context of the videos for the details. In other words, subtitles provide an opportunity for learners to take advantage of their mother tongue.

It can be argued that the immediate improvement of the learners in the present study on the comprehension tests could be due to the fact that reading the subtitles enhanced the comprehension, not the listening ability. It seems that the participants in the ASG have to perform an additional process and that is translation. With L1 (Arabic) subtitles, Egyptian EFL students grasped the meaning by reading L1 subtitles and simultaneously translated the L2 (English) information for chunking the flow of L2 audio.

Stewart & Pertusa (2004) also stated that with the aid of the first language subtitles, learners can understand the listening input through this mode of subtitling. The L1 subtitles have been considered to make movies intelligible by many instructors. The reason for this is that native language subtitles are automatically processed, whereas target language subtitles require a more

advanced knowledge of the language in order to be processed without interfering with other involved cognitive processes such as listening and taking stock of the visual content (Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008)

However, the results of the present study contradict those of other studies. Unlike Hayati and Mohamadi (2009) who examined the effectiveness of using Documentaries about nature with and without subtitles and their results revealed the superiority of the target language over the native language subtitles, the present study came up with different results. Unlike the present study, most of the studies reviewed in the literature supported the use of subtitles, mostly the target language one (Baltova 1999; Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Tsai (2009); Tsai & Huang 2009; Alkhatnai, 2010; Winke et al., 2010). This may be due to the different language that was being investigated.

5.2. *Long-term effect of subtitles*

In terms of the long-term effect of subtitles, the findings of the present study are in conflict with all the mentioned previous studies. Few researchers like Latifi, et al (2011) and Aurstard (2013) tried to investigate the effects of subtitling in terms of the long-term listening comprehension enhancement. In their study, Latifi, et al (2011) produced the opposite results to the present study, they concluded that the analysis of groups' performance revealed a better mean score for the No Subtitles Group compared to other groups. The difference in the results could be attributed to the fact that the participants in their study were exposed only to 12 excerpts from the same movie; each one's duration was only 2 minutes. Moreover, the participants of the study were 36, 12 for each group, therefore, the results of the study wouldn't be considered very reliable.

According to Aurstard (2013), the results indicated that subtitles have only short term effects with the Norwegian subtitling group and the English subtitling group in the comprehension questionnaire and they have no effect on the long-term. The possible explanation for this difference could be due to the fact that Aurstard's (2013) utilized research instrument in order to measure the gains was by considering the word definition task and the lexical decision task on the post test. However, the better performance of the English subtitles group is more likely to be attributed to memorization as the subtitles helped the participants throughout the four week exposure to the movies for recognition of more words from the subtitles as they were reading them and hence aided them in their listening comprehension improvement.

In general, in terms of the long-term listening comprehension enhancement it was found by the present study that the three treatments proved to be effective. This proves that learning listening skill through videos is effective in increasing most students' long-term listening abilities significantly. This may imply that the videos as a teaching tool was good for helping students enhance listening abilities. This is consistent with King (2002) who supported that movies have several advantages; one of them is that they contain visual elements. That might be the main factor to help student increase their listening abilities.

This implies that students perceived information through both their eyes and ears; this helps them in gaining most of the presented information, not only verbal but also non-verbal features

and culture as well. With the visual elements, they could quickly and easily understand the information presented to them.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study were that subtitling proved to be more effective in enhancing participants' general listening ability and their listening sub-skills. Moreover, based on the previous researches and the present study we come to conclusion that the role of subtitles in boosting listening comprehension especially Arabic and English subtitling is crucial and not to be neglected. According to Markham et al. (2001) and Stewart & Pertusa (2004), the presence of learners' L1 language, learners may rely on it instead of paying their attention to the target language. Hence, learners' L1 dominate their cognitive processes and influenced their L2 acquisition. Therefore, Markham et al. (2001) suggested in their conclusion that watching the same movie with the following procedure may yield better results. They recommended learners to watch a movie first with the L1 subtitles, to watch the same film again with the L2 subtitles, and finally to watch it again without the subtitles.

This sequence allows learners to use their stronger native language reading skills first, followed by using their emerging but more or less weaker target-language reading skills. Finally, learners would be ready to rely totally on their much weaker target language listening skills. In sum, the findings of this study imply that the use of L1 and L2 subtitles can be more effective in assisting learners' comprehension of the aural language presented in a movie. Subtitling proved effective in developing the skill of identifying the main idea in 14 excerpts of the 7 movies. It proved even more effective in developing the skill of identifying specific details regardless of the difficulty of the text.

Besides, movies turn out to be an effective teaching tool to develop the EFL learners' listening skills. It is important to mention that after each session; most of the participants often personally express their great interest in the movies selected for them and the ways they were presented to improve listening skills. Concerning their responses to the questionnaires, most students were positive to the usage of subtitles in an educational setting, especially English subtitles. Previous research in the area of subtitling and comprehension showed that subtitles do help comprehension. On the whole, the researcher has received encouraging feedback from the participants and therefore suggests that movies should be utilized in the teaching of EFL listening because of their pedagogical advantages and English teachers should be encouraged and trained to use movies more efficiently and effectively in their classes.

As it was stated earlier, the role of subtitled movies in classroom in enhancing listening comprehension has not been considered seriously in Egypt. The findings of this study can be beneficial to everyone, engaged in language program including curriculum and course designers, teachers and students. These findings might encourage learners to devote more time to watch subtitled movies, cartoons and news in order to improve their overall language skills. To sum up, the findings of this study and other related researches should encourage professional developers in Egypt to update methods of language teaching in a way that multimedia in general and subtitled movies in particular are included in teaching and learning programs.

7. Pedagogical Implications

For a long time subtitling has been acknowledged to be pedagogically beneficial. This study confirms the positive role of subtitling mode in the learning outcomes. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to include subtitled movies in class activities. Based on the results of the present study, it is suggested that when the teaching goal is the enhancement of listening comprehension, subtitled movies can give great help to Egyptian EFL learners. With regard to listening comprehension immediate achievement, the present study found that the use of subtitles can help EFL learners in this ability. Subtitles, in general, can be used as valuable authentic materials in EFL classroom settings. It may be suggested that by using movie subtitles for while-listening, the listening input may be processed more easily and deeply and EFL learners can automatize their knowledge of language.

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