



The Impact of Subtitled Videos on Accidental Vocabulary Learning of EFL students

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out whether watching subtitled videos influences incidental vocabulary learning. The subjects of the study were 40 students from English departments at college of Education and Basic Education University of Salahaddin in the Academic year 2017-2018. The students were divided into two groups, control and experimental. The control group watched the video without subtitle twice while the experimental group watched the same video twice within subtitle. To collect the data, a 5-point vocabulary knowledge scale was used. After conducting the pilot study, 10 words were selected. To achieve the purpose of the study, pre-test post-test were utilized.

The results of the study indicate that the latter outperformed the since there were differences between the groups according to t-test results. It's worth mentioning that there was a significant improvement in both of the groups from pre-test to post-test scores. This progress was attributed to the presentation of target words in videos. Thus, the target words were contextualized and it became easy for participants to elicit the meanings of the words.

Keywords: vocabulary knowledge scale, control, experimental.

1. Introduction

The dramatic development of technology has influenced language learning and teaching, especially in language classes. According to Krashen (1983, 1985), students receive ample comprehensive intake while they are exposed to the target language in the real environment. Thus, subconscious language learning occurs through using a laptop, DVD player, TV, and video materials. Language teachers attempt to apply various teaching materials to provide students with sufficient authentic materials and the environment. Students could expand their knowledge of target language slowly through exposing to the real-life situations inside the classrooms. Since the communicative phase of language usage has importantly been focused on; there has been a rapid growth in using video and DVD in EFL classrooms. However, learners might encounter challenges in understanding the materials. Consequently, subtitled videos are considered as effective materials to enhance students' incidental learning.

This research is an attempt to explore the effectiveness of subtitled videos on student's incidental vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, it examines how would videos enhanced with or without subtitle influences the progress of students' vocabulary learning. Moreover, it investigates the significant difference transpired regarding incidental vocabulary learning between groups who watch subtitled videos and those who do not.

This research entails three sections. Next section, the literature review, discusses subtitled videos as teaching material and incidental vocabulary learning. Additionally, the background of the study is presented at the end of section two. Section three is the methodology section where participants design and procedures of the research are discussed. This is followed by



result and discussion section where the finding is displayed and argued. The last part is the conclusion.

2. Literature review

In this section, an explanation of subtitled audiovisual materials is discussed and several previous research is presented. Then, it explains the incidental vocabulary learning process. The last paragraph is about the situation in Kurdistan.

2.1 subtitling of audiovisual materials

Language learning has currently transpired to be more accessible by applying multimedia with spoken and visual context. The inclusion of video clips in teaching is growing increasingly to be dominant in the second language (L2) learning curriculum, such as subtitled videos. Subtitling is known for its intention of translating oral speech from films or television programs into words. This frequently involves viewers whose L1 is not the same as the language in the spoken dialogue and is provided with subtitles so that they can understand the action on the screen. Since subtitled videos demonstrate both oral and visual forms, words and pictures in the human mind are activated simultaneously. According to the theory (dual-coding) proposed by Paivio (1971), suggests that when pictures are added to the meaning, the number of signals connected with the message increases. Viewers then will be more probable to keep the message in mind. Therefore, these information inputs enhance the language learning process, improve the content comprehension and facilitate successful retention of vocabulary by looking at subtitle words in stimulating and meaningful situations (Ockey, 2007; Cross, 2009 and Harji et al, 2010).

The subtitle is currently used in an instructional context by teachers to challenge students as their levels become more advanced. Besides, people who want to improve their language levels and methods watch videos enhanced with subtitles. Danan (2004) claims that subtitles can be applied by teachers as teaching tools and by learners as learning aids:

- (1) Audiolingual materials enhanced with subtitles improve the listening comprehension skills of second/foreign language learners.
- (2) captioning facilitate language learning by helping students visualize what they hear especially if the input is not too far beyond their linguistic ability
- (3) Subtitles increase language comprehension and lead to additional cognitive benefits, such as greater depth of processing (p. 67).

However, he reports that some teachers reject using audio-lingual materials enhanced with subtitles since students' attention is affected and they might feel a sense of laziness (Taylor, 2005).

Several studies have been produced regarding the effectiveness of subtitles on reading and listening comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition. The studies aimed to examine whether subtitled videos or TV programs are more useful than non- subtitled ones (Neuman & Koskinen, 1992; Baltova, 1999; Markham, 1999 and Danan, 2004). The overall findings of these studies supported the assumption that subtitles and captions are effective instructional tools in learning vocabulary and enhancing the reading and listening comprehension skills of language learners.

In research by Vanderplank (1988), the students reported that they achieved great benefits from watching subtitles and "they were able to develop strategies and techniques for using sub-titles flexibly and according to need" (p.272). He suggests that subtitles are more appropriate to be applied to post-intermediate-level learners. However, Guillory (1998) found that subtitles are no longer beneficial with material for advanced levels, and the subtitle cannot compensate for challenging vocabulary and fast speech (as quoted in Danan, 2004: 71). Vanderplank's result shows quite a good congruence with Danan's point of view in which she reports that "learners often need to be trained to develop active viewing strategies for



efficient use of captioned and subtitles material" (2004, p. 67). Importantly, the teacher has a significant role in the process and she/he should provide learners with sufficient instruction and motivate them to be interested in and reactive to the process (Vanderplank, 1990).

2.2 Incidental vocabulary learning

Vocabulary, the essential elements of the language, is not an effortless acquisition process; it necessitates a prolonged process that develops meaningful communication skills. During the process, students develop their knowledge of vocabulary and they could be familiarized with the encountered words. These occur when students are offered sufficient time to utilize the words in various and meaningful contexts (Nation, 1990; Schmidt, 2001). Yüksel and Tanrıverdi (2009) claim that one of the most frequently accepted points of views of vocabulary acquisition is that it takes place along a continuum of development, such as the following figure. They proposed there should be a long period between undertaking pre-test and the post-tests.

Figure 1: a continuum of vocabulary knowledge



Additionally, Akbulut (2007) argues that "combining text with visuals is more effective in facilitating vocabulary learning than providing only definitions of words" (5). This assumption is following the theory of teaching vocabulary (Krashen, 1983) in a way that teachers attempt to deliver vocabulary knowledge indirectly and offer samples for the vocabulary acquisition incidentally (Hunt & Beglar, 1998) instead of teaching vocabulary explicitly. Correspondingly, Duquette and Painchaud (1996) contended, "current pedagogical trends emphasize incidental or indirect learning by resorting to contextual cues" (143).

2.3 Situation in Kurdistan

With the belief that EFL learners heavily depend on visual aids to reinforce their understanding (Çakır, 2006), it is recommended EFL teachers and students have better opportunities to enhance the language learning process through audio-visual materials with or without subtitles. However, there are not enough studies in regard to the influence of subtitled videos on students' incidental vocabulary learning in the Kurdish context. A research was produced by Tahir (2015) entitled "The Impact of Using Movies on Learning English Language".

3. Methodology

In this section a number of components are discussed, namely setting where the intended research is produced, participants who participating in answering the questionnaire, the steps of collecting the data and its analysis.

3.1 Setting and participants

A total of 40 students from the second year at Salahaddin University/ colleges of Education and Basic Education/ English department were the subjects of the study. The sample includes (20) males and (20) females. Their native language is Kurdish and their English proficiency levels were the same (Intermediate) based on their scores achieved from the baccalaureate exam. The students were randomly assigned into two groups, each contains 20 students. The former (control) watched a video clip without subtitle and the latter (experimental) watched the video enhanced with subtitle.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

The students were randomly appointed to participate in the study and they were divided into two groups. A famous video series was selected to be the material and tool in the study (Seinfeld, season 02, episode 05/the jacket). It deals with life issues and contains not much slang. Pre-test and post-test were constructed according to the vocabulary introduced in the video (figure 2). A laptop and projector were available to present the video in the classroom. Both groups watched the video clip twice and twenty words from the episode was chosen depending on the proficiency level of the students and their schemata (see Appendix A). The vocabulary belonged to the same category (noun). A pilot study was undertaken with a similar group of students from the same colleges to ensure the appropriateness of the selected vocabulary. After the pilot study, ten selected vocabulary were kept according to the participants' preferences see (appendix B). The rationale behind conducting this study was kept confidential, and the students were not allowed to use the dictionary since the main purpose was to determine students' vocabulary knowledge. Both groups watched the video clip and it took about 20 minutes for each group. The students recorded their responses on the five-point scale see (figure 3).

As a final point, SPSS was employed to analyze participants' responses. Following descriptive statistics, one sample T-test was used to see the progress in each group. Additional analysis was produced to understand whether one of the groups progressed considerably than the other group. For this reason, an independent sample t-test was developed (Table 4) below.

Figure 2: Design of the study

Post-test	Treatment	Pre-test
VKS is given to both groups	Control group (video clip without subtitles)	VKS is given to both groups

Figure 3: Wesche and Paribakht's (1996) Vocabulary Knowledge scale

1	I don't remember having seen this word before.
2	I have seen this word before but I don't know what it means.
3	I have seen this word before and I think it means _____ (synonym or translation).
4	I know this word. It means _____ (synonym or translation).
5	I can use this word in a sentence. e.g.: _____ (if you do this section, please also do section 4)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

The results were coded and analyzed through a 5-point self-report scale of vocabulary knowledge which was designed by (Wesche and Paribakht, 1996) see figure 3 above. The scale used in this study is one of the most commonly utilized Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) which identifies the stages in which students acquire vocabulary from their first exposure to the output.

If $\text{sig} > 0.05$ mean that there is no evidence to reject H_0 (in another word our data are distributed as normal).



**Table: 1 Group A normality test
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

		Pre-B	Post-B
N		19	19
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	22.55	26.40
	Std. Deviation	3.531	2.234
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.106	.213
	Positive	.063	.137
	Negative	-.106-	-.213-
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.474	.953
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.978	.324

**Table 2: Group B normality test
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

		Pre-B	Post-B
N		19	19
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	21.30	26.80
	Std. Deviation	4.791	2.648
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.116	.225
	Positive	.116	.113
	Negative	-.093-	-.225-
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.517	1.005
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.952	.264

To find out the normality of the test, the researchers conducted descriptive statistics and applied the T-test to ensure the normality of the test. The data follow a normal distribution as indicated in the tables (1 & 2). Both tests have a p-value greater than 0.05, which indicated normal distribution of date (group A .978 , .324- group B .952 , .264).

Further analysis was conducted to display whether the groups show improvements. After conducting the descriptive statistics, T-test revealed that both groups had significant differences from pretest to posttest. Students in group A displayed improvement which means that there was no evidence of homogeneity.

To see the general distribution of the data and average scores, the researchers administered descriptive statistics on SPSS. As Table 3 illustrates, the highest mean value lies in the posttest of Group B (Mean= 26.80). Further, the means in pretests in group A was higher than group B (Group A = 22.55, Group B = 21.30). The T-test between group analyses on the pretests demonstrated that there was a slight difference between the groups. This Finding reveals that both groups were familiar to some extent to the target words before the treatment. In other words, both groups had grasped most of the words before, however; they had not enough knowledge about the content of the words. After watching the video twice, both



groups have attained progress. The students' progress in vocabulary knowledge specifies that the groups not only remembered the words but also they could precisely estimate at least half of the words and provide the Kurdish translations or synonyms of them.

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-A	22.55	20	3.531	.790
	Post-A	26.40	20	2.234	.499
Pair 2	Pre-B	21.30	20	4.791	1.071
	Post-B	26.80	20	2.648	.592
Pair 3	Pre-All	21.93	40	4.202	.664
	Post-All	26.60	40	2.426	.384

The researchers produced further analysis to find out the progress in the post-test compared to the pre-test. For this purpose, the T-test was used. Depending on the results of the study, participants in Group A improved on an average of (0.859) from pretest to posttest, whereas their peers in group B progressed 1.025 points averagely.

Table 4: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-A	-3.85	3.843	0.859	-5.648	-2.052	4.481	19	0.000256
	PostA								
Pair 2	Pre-B	-5.5	4.583	1.025	-7.645	-3.355	5.367	19	0.000035
	Post-B								
Pair 3	Pre-All	4.675	4.257	0.673	-6.036	-3.314	6.945	39	0.000001
	Post-All								

To come up with stronger evidence for this claim, Paired Samples Statistics was applied. The results of this test showed that both groups A and B between pre and post are significantly improved. (see table 4).

4.2 Discussion

This study revealed that both groups (i.e. subtitle and without subtitle) improved from pretest to posttest. In a study which was conducted by Neuman (1990), it was discovered that students acquired more new words when they watched subtitled videos. Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) suggested if students watch subtitled audiovisual materials; they are able to acquire new English vocabulary and develop their word recognition. In regard to the progress of vocabulary knowledge of group B, they progressed much better if compared to the first group (A) as it is shown in table 4. However, the difference between groups in terms of gains was slightly statistically significant. Therefore, it can be argued that watching the movie clips



facilitated the development of the vocabulary knowledge of the students regardless of the subtitle.

The researchers believe that the development in the knowledge of the target words stemmed from the significance of encountering the words in the context. In general, the study supported the idea that vocabulary is learned when derived from context (Sternberg, 1987). Based on the previous studies on vocabulary development, contextualization in vocabulary teaching might be a way of vocabulary improvement. This study might have indicated to the assumption that incidental or indirect learning of vocabulary can be achieved by resorting to contextual cues (Duquette & Painchaud, 1996). This calls for an important pedagogical implication for the teacher about implementing contextual communication materials to support students' vocabulary learning rather than explaining of the words in an isolated manner.

Conclusion

The study aimed at elaborating on the effectiveness of viewing videos with subtitles on Kurdish EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. Selecting the sample from Salahaddin University, they were given a test to assess their levels of proficiency. The scores resulted from the test assisted in determining that there were differences between the proficiency levels of the two groups. Depending on the findings of the study and literature review that have been mentioned in the previous sections, it can be concluded that associating additional references in teaching a foreign language (events, context, emotion) leads to the better vocabulary learning process. Further, real-life experience or authentic materials can provide an efficient association. Regarding the findings, it was proved that the existence of subtitles on the videos assisted learners better obtain vocabulary.

Modernized language teaching methods, through including multimedia in the teaching process, may assist EFL learners to gain an optimal knowledge of vocabulary because subtitled videos contain genuine use of language which leads to developing second language learner's knowledge of vocabulary.

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Appendix A

1. Outfit
2. Closet
3. Solid
4. Inn
5. Idiot
6. Palm
7. Buffer
8. Suede
9. Ballpark
10. Stripe
11. Lining
12. Clients
13. Composer
14. Puppet
15. Confidence
16. Secure
17. Challenge
18. Dove
19. Cab
20. Candidate

Appendix B

Mark the appropriate column for each word and provide an answer, if necessary.

Note: you can write synonyms, translations, and sentences in **Kurdish** if you wish.

words	levels				
	1	2	3	4	5
Outfit					
Dove					
Candidate					
Challenge					
Buffer					
Client					
Puppet					
Suede					
Vacation					
Closet					

كاربگهري فيديو ژيرنوسكراوه كان له سهر فيربووني وشه ناڤاڤايانه له لايهن قوتاياني EFL

ژين حمدامين عبدالله

شيلان احمد حمدامين

كۆليزي پهره رده - به شى زمانى ئينگليزى/ زانكۆي سه لاهه ددين - هه وليتر
كۆليزي پهره رده ي بنه ره تى - به شى زمانى ئينگليزى/ زانكۆي سه لاهه ددين - هه وليتر

پوخته

ئهم توژينه وه ئامانجيه تى ئه وه ده ربخات كه وا سه يركردنى فيديو ژيرنوسكراوه كان ناڤاڤايانه كاربگهري ههيه له سهر فيربووني وشه. به شداربووانى ئهم توژينه وه يه 40 قوتايى بوون له به شى زمانى ئينگليزى هه ردوو كۆليزى پهره رده و پهره رده ي بنه ره تى زانكۆي سه لاهه ددين سالى خويندنى 2017-2018. قوتايه كان دابه شكران به سهر دوو گروپ، كۆنترۆل (گروپى فيديو ژيرنوسكراوه) وه ئه زموونى (گروپى فيديو ژيرنوسكراوه). گروپى كۆنترۆل دوو جار سه يرى فيديو كه يان كرد به ينج ژيرنوسكراوى، به لام گروپى ئوژموونى دوو جار سه يرى فيديو كه يان كرد به ژيرنوسكراوى. بۆ كۆكردنه وه ي داتا له سهر به شداربووانى توژينه وه كه، پيوهرى 5 خاله ي زانبارى وشه. دواى ئه نجامدانى توژينه وه يه كى سه ره تاي، 10 وشه هه لئوژدران. بۆ گه يشتن به ئامانجى توژينه وه كه، تاقيكردنه وه ي پيشينه و پاشينه به كارها ت.

ئه نجامى توژينه وه كه ئه وه ده رده خات كه وا گروپى ئه زموونى ده رنه نجامى باشتريان پيشاندا به گوتيره ي ئه نجامى توژينه وه كه (ت). مايه ي باسكردنه كه وا دوو گروپه كه پيشكه وتبى به رچا و هيا ن پيشاندا له تاقيكردنه وه ي پاشينه. كه وا ته قوتايان باشت له مانا ي وشه كان تبه ده گن كاتيك به كۆنتيكتكران.

وشه كلييه كان: پيوهرى 5 خاله ي زانبارى وشه، كۆنترۆل، ئه زموونى.

تأثير مقاطع الفيديو المترجمة على تعلم المفردات العرضية لطلاب EFL

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ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة ما إذا كانت مشاهدة مقاطع الفيديو المترجمة تؤثر على تعلم المفردات العرضية. كان موضوع الدراسة 40 طالباً من أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية في كليتي التربية والتربية الأساسي بجامعة صلاح الدين في العام الدراسي 2017-2018. تم تقسيم الطلاب إلى مجموعتي، الثابتة والتجريبية. تشاهد المجموعة الثابتة الفيديو دون أي بدون معلقاً باللغة النكليزية مرتين بينما تشاهد المجموعة التجريبية الفيديو نفسه مرتين معلقاً عليه باللغة النكليزية. لجمع البيانات ، تم استخدام مقياس المعرفة 5 نقاط المفردات. بعد إجراء الدراسة التجريبية ، تم اختيار 10 كلمات. لتحقيق هدف من الدراسة تم استخدام الاختبار والبعدي.

تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى أن أداء المجموعة الاخيرة فاق أداء المجموعة الاولى نظراً لوجود اختلافات بين المجموعتين وفقاً لنتائج. اتجدر الإشارة إلى أنه كان هناك تحسن كبير في ل المجموعتين في الاختبار التمهيدي مقارنة بدرجات ما بعد الاختبار. يعزى هذا التقدم إلى عرض الكلمات المستهدفة في مقاطع الفيديو. وهكذا ، تم وضع الكلمات المستهدفة في السياق وأصبح من السهل على المشاركين استخلاص معاني الكلمات.

الكلمات الدالة: مقياس نقاط المفردات، كوتنرول، التجريبي.