# The Effect of Employing Animated Films in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) to Non-Native Speakers in Thailand Schools

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Teaching and learning a second language are crucial in numerous countries. Yet, the skills of listening, writing, and reading have remained generally ignored. This research examines the question as to whether the provided subtitles for animated films help vocabulary achievement and improves listening skills among non-native speakers. A total of 66 Thai Arabic as a foreign language (AFL) students watched an animated film which has one of the following: animation, subtitles, or keyword subtitles. After completing watching the animated film, students sat for vocabulary recognition along with listening comprehension post-tests. In addition, a contest was conducted on 22 teams, each team consisted of three students, and done through Quizzes platform. The competition was done in three phases. This result of this study confirmed the importance of animated film in enhancing learning Semitic skills for non-Arabic speakers. Moreover, this study revealed the use of animated films with subtitles among foreign language pupils with synchronized visual and aural incentives could compensate for any lack of understanding. Subtitles also are useful language education instrument that influenced the learning of new vocabulary.

#### Keywords

Animated film; Arabic language; Non-native speakers

## Introduction

The existing progress in multimedia technology has facilitated making all educational materials more genuine and easier since such technologies can add several styles and approaches which could ease learning any second language. Research indicates that learners' ability to understand the written communication by only reading yet on categorical themselves through both written and speaking language are directly linked to learners' experience within the listening role of any language enhancement (Alhamami, 2014; Azman & Mei, 2015). Besides listening to or perceiving sounds stream; hearing the desires comprehension of the speaker's intended message. Listening and understanding have been keystone many various theories of second language learning (Vasu & Dhanavel, 2015; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). The primary key of these theories is that exposure to authentic listening associated reading texts to an enormous degree helps related implicit approaches through different linguistic and language statutes are internalized and will be able to be simulated automatically (Brett, 1997). It has been suggested that the skill achieved amount throughout any foreign language shall be directly tormented depending on the exposure quantity to the tended language throughout its' natural environments (Rott, 1999). Natural materials describe both written and oral language resources utilized daily by the language native speakers (Rogers & Medley, 1988). Employing accurate speaking into the classroom listening lets pupils have "direct and immediate contact with input data that can reflect honest communication in the language targeted (Breen, 1985). Experimental research has verified the advantages of using authentic materials in teaching and learning (Heron, 199). In their investigation, Gilman, and Moody (1984) stated that educators utilize original materials in applying listening-comprehension instruction at all levels.

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Moreover, Bordley (1989) claimed that authentic listening materials could be utilized at all levels, whether advanced or beginners. Subsequently, accurate materials are considered to be a medium of communication for everybody. Therefore, yet beginners' learners listen to exposure to authentic language (Oxford, 1996). Instructors must utilize more authentic texts, whether for advance or beginning language teaching, to engage learners in in-class activities that reveal real-life hearing (Herron and Seay, 1991). While all types of authentic materials are generally recognized as beneficial for students, watching movies in a foreign language (e.g. Arabic language) represents one of the richest methods of offering original contribution, since it is a mix of three forms named: textual, visual, and aural (Ogasawara, 1994). Despite technology's role in enhancing the process of teaching and learning, there are no researchers in Thailand, as per the researcher's knowledge, who have examined new technologies effectiveness in teaching a new language, for instance, animation film with subtitles, exactly on listening skills in teaching new languages. Since students in Thailand (Islamic schools) study Arabic as a foreign language, the opportunity to be subjected to the target language beyond the classroom is restricted and impossible for these students. Moreover, the quantity and quality of such language information they collect within a limited time inside their schools from their language studying materials and educators is insufficient to offset the lack of coverage to the real written and spoken language utilization. Lately, AFL educators must offer their learners more authentic input material regarding these issues (Rahimi &Allahyari, 2019; Ramezanali & Faez, 2019).

The best significant duty learners must present themselves to their target language as far as possible (Lin & Tseng, 2012). Consequently, they might use a variety of authentic aids, such as magazines, movies, clips, and shows in Arabic, to address this task. Subtitles. Offers additional linguistic aspects, such as gestures and facial expression, which might strengthen students' conversations comprehension (Chapple & Curtis, 2000). With the availability and growing popularity of movies with subtitles, utilizing such films to simplify language education has become widely accepted (Brett, 1998). Subtitles can enhance Arabic learners' reading comprehension and listening, vocabulary gain as well as word acknowledgement. Similarly, Chai and Erlam (2008), in their research of Chinese pupils, determined that pupils had the opportunity to learn more new phrases and lyrics when they watched movies with subtitles. Furthermore, the blend of video with subtitles may be able to assist learners in understanding the spoken language and how it is pronounced correctly (Chai & Erlam, 2008). A significant amount of research regarding the advantageous effects of subtitles on listening of foreign language students have been stated (Chung, 1999; Huang & Eskey, 2000; Hwang, 2003; Markham, 2001; Markham, Peter, & McCarthy, 2001). For instance in Markham, Peter, and Mccarthy (2001) research examined three different conditions that affect comprehension regarding Spanish as a foreign language; they have used a DVD soundtrack material into the case of undergraduates students of medium-level (Markham et al., 2001), their study outcome demonstrated that the pupils increased their general communication in the Spanish language, using DVD video through the aid of Spanish subtitles in contrast to the watching the same DVD video without subtitles (Markham et al., 2001). Consequently, this research examines whether subtitles availability in multimedia videos in listening activities, which includes that subtitles aids facilitate listening skills and vocabulary gain.

## **Background of the Problem**

Arabic language classes are crucial in numerous countries despite the significance of listening practice in teaching and learning a new language. Yet, the skills of listening, writing, and reading have remained generally ignored (Jung & Lee, 2013). Specifically, this issue is a typical case of an Arabic-as-a-foreign-language (AFL) condition where Arabic is lectured at school as a subject and is only used inside classrooms, whereas it is ignored outside schools. In their respective countries in which Arabic remains not their native language, AFL pupils are studying Arabic. However, these learners have a limited chance of listening to simple language so that they are not exploited to hearing Arabic as it is spoken only inside Islamic schools. Consequently, once they interact with native speakers, pupils from countries in which Arabic is educated as a foreign language frequently have significant difficulty knowing the Arabic spoken to them. Additionally, the amount of language feedback and the consistency they are receiving from their language educational material and educators in schools at a limited period is insufficient to utilize written and spoken language (Boonkongsaen & Intaraprasert, 2014). Incorporation into authentic aural communication, for instance, movies subtitles in the classroom for listening skills, is a solution to this trouble. Numerous educators suppose that words shed new light on a much better way to use various construction in Arabic education. It has been proposed that movies with subtitles make education more readily available, and teachers have constantly been attempting to simplify language instruction and language studying (Chung, 1999; Koskinen, 1993; Parks, 1994; Vanderplank, 1993). Overall, movies subtitles are a potent educational instrument that can accelerate vocabulary studying and listening skills. Technology and multimedia have progressed movies mode by adding additional navigational means which students could utilize.

Studies results to date suggest that Subtitles helps in vocabulary advancement in addition to listening skills. To investigate this issue, this paper tries to answer the question below:

• Do animated films with subtitles affect learning (from the perspective of vocabulary recognition, (i.e., written) vocabulary production, listening skills, and listening recall) for both short and long term?

### **Research Methods**

## **Participants**

The participants in this study were 66 non-native speakers of Arabic enrolled in Arabic schools in Thailand. They were participated by 27 teams from 13 secondary schools of three different states: Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat. The schools are Azizstand foundation school, Maahad Muhammadi Krue Se, The education of Islamic School, Lalor Witya Saiburi Pattani, Wattanatam Islamic School, Piraya Nawin Klonghin Wittaya School, Padungsat Witya School, Stree Islam Witaya Foundation School, Thama Witya Mulniti School, Maahad Islamic School, Islahiah School, Maahad Darussalam Gontor, Santi Witaya Education Foundation School. As part of the course, these pupils were getting intensive classes in Arabic, emphasising speaking, listening, writing, and reading. All pupils would have gone on to major in scientific subjects at different colleges. All the students were enrolled in Islamic Arabic schools, and they were able to speak and communicate in Arabic.

#### **Instrumentation and validation**

The current study instrument is a test that has been designed to fit the objectives of the study. The teacher of the course designed the test. This test aimed to examine students' knowledge regarding the Arabic language post watching the cartoon film. The test was first given to 5 teachers in the field of teaching Arabic as a second language to validate the purpose of the test and its consistency with the objective of this study.

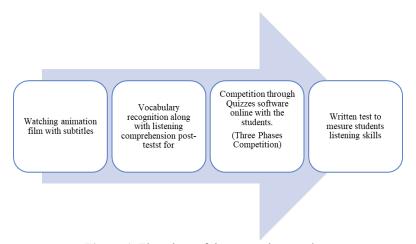


Figure 1. Flowchart of the research procedure

## Materials and approaches

The researcher's main objective was to show the participant an Arabic animation film called Bilal, where all participants get the chance to watch the animated film using three different modes: (a) animation, captions, and keyword annotations (see Figure 2), (b) animation and captions (see Figure 3), and (c) animation (see Figure 4). The animation was used in all three treatments because it was compatible with the text, and it effectively depicted the events of the story. In addition, the animated film was chosen for its narration, which was clear and very expressive in its tone and pitch. Furthermore, the movie was presented along with the subtitle to make it easy for the students to follow.



Figure 2. Animation, subtitle and keyword annotations



Figure 3. Animation and subtitle

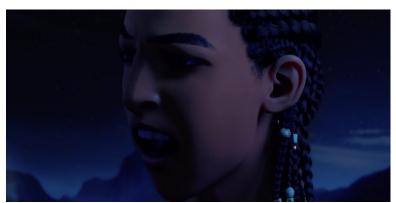


Figure 4. Animation

The animated film was played in a cinema hall in Yala Rajabhat University (YRU) which enabled all of the students to watch the animation while listening to the narration of the animated film. Moreover, all students could read the subtitle presented with the animation. A competition was held for 27 teams, where each team consists of three students, and conducted through the Quizzes program, under three phases (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** The competition phases

# Results

## Phase 1

Twenty-seven teams from the 13 schools in south Thailand were given half an hour to watch animated film. They were then tested on their listening, writing, and speaking skills based on the 15 questions in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Specifications for phase one of the study

On actions		Class level	
Questions	# Correct	# Incorrect	# Unattempt
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following	14	13	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following	8	19	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following	11	15	1
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following	9	18	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following	11	16	0
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Bilal and Ghufairah: Bilal, are you okay? Bilal: Yes, fine. Great, Ghufairah: the same dream again? Take, Bilal kept this for you:	11	16	0
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between umaiyah and seller idols: delayed because I had to help your son, Safwan Umaiyah: Safwan? Idol seller: There was a? The idol seller: Call him	12	15	0
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Umayya and Bilal. Umayya: Who is this apple for? Who is it for? Bilal: for you. Umaya: What is the difference between you and this apple? Bilal: Complete illiteracy: Continue	8	19	0

Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Safwan and his friends, Safwan's friends: Safwan, made a mistake: Safwan: intentionally, my shares need important goals. I will not waste them on a chicken, but a deer, Safwan's friends: And where will we find a deer? What? Safwan's friends:	10	17	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers.  Types of idols that are sold by Uqbah are:?	12	15	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers.  Bilal hopes that when he grows up, he will become:?	5	22	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers: what did Safwan said to Bilal when the guard took him to hit him:?	15	12	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers.  Benefits of the slave that Uqbah wants to sell to umayya are:?	5	22	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers: How to prove the faith of the idols of the gods as the priest said is:?	11	16	0
Choose the faces in Bilal's animated film when he was young	16	11	0
TOTAL	158	246	1

The results of this phase (see Table 1) showed that 158 answers were correct, 246 answers were incorrect, and one unattempt question. The highest answer was for question 15 "Choose the faces in Bilal's animated film when he was young" with 16 correct answers, on the other hand, the lowest answer was for both question 13 and question 11 "Bilal hopes that when he grows up, he will become: ......", Benefits of the slave that Uqbah wants to sell to Umayya are".

## Phase 2

Thirty-six students from the 12 schools in southern Thailand who have passed the first phase questions participated in this phase. Again, they were given half an hour to watch another animated part of the animated film and then they were tested on the listening, writing, and speaking skills, based on the 15 questions in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Specifications for phase two of the study

Questions	Class level		
	# Correct	# Incorrect	# Unattempt
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	11	1	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	8	4	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	8	4	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	10	2	0
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	7	5	0
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Abu Bakr and Bilal Abu Bakr: would you rather lose what you have than cause loss to the gods? Bilal: I wanted to protect the boy from being beaten him. Abi Bakr: You care more about a boy begging than the idols. Abu Bakr:	5	7	0

Continue the dialogue Bilal: ........... Continue the dialogue. Translate the Thai word (vin a) wordsida) into Arabic

Translate the That word (นัก ล่า แอปเปิล) into Arabic			
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between			
Safwan and Umayya: Are there other traitors in my			
house? Stand up! And reveal yourselves! Safwan: Perhaps	6	6	0
you should ask your servant? Umayya: Complete			
Safwan: Continue			
Choose the correct answers from the following answers. The	7	5	0
types of deities mentioned by Abu Bakr are:?	/	3	U
Choose the correct answers from the following answer: Abu			
Bakr told Bilal: This sacred shrine was not built to contain	3	8	1
all this corruption; it was built to be And to	3	0	1
follow Fill in the blank			
Choose the correct answers from the following. Sohaib	9	3	0
described himself as:?		J	0
Choose the correct answers from the following answers:	9	3	0
Abu Bakr, the Messenger of God, described to Bilal:?		3	U
Choose the correct answers from the following answers			
between Abu Bakr, the Messenger of God, to Bilal that he	9	3	0
publishes:?			
Choose the faces in Bilal's great animated film before Islam	0	12	0
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Abi			
Al-Hakam and Hamza. Abi Al-Hakam: Hamza, I arrived at			
the appropriate time. Abi Al-Hakam: Hamza	5	7	0
continued: Hamzah continued: You are a disgrace			
to Mecca and your ancestors			
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between			
Ghafirah and Bilal. Ghafirah: Where were you? The time			
for celebration has approached a great deal: they will flog	1	10	1
you if you are late Bilal: I am not late Bilal: The master			
asked me to bring a great Safwan: Did they harm you?		_	
Translate in Arabic (บาทหลวง) meaning of the Thai word	9	3	0
The meaning of the word (الظلم) in the Thai language is	8	4	0
The meaning of the word "مهودس" in Thai is	3	9	0
The meaning of the word ()=) in Thai is	6	6	0
TOTAL	136	102	2

The results of this phase (see Table 2) showed that 136 answers were correct, 102 answers were incorrect, and two unattempts questions. The highest answer was for question 7 "The meaning of the word (tin in the block) in Arabic is" with 12 correct answers, on the other hand, the lowest answer was for question 11 "Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Bilal and Ghafirah: Where were you".

## Phase 3

Twenty-eight students from the 16 schools in south Thailand who have passed both first and second phases were involved at this phase. They were given half an hour to watch another part of animated film and were tested on their listening, writing, and speaking skills. The 15 questions are listed in the Table 3).

**Table 3.** Specifications for phase three of the study

Questions	Class level		
	# Correct	# Incorrect	# Unattempt
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	9	7	2
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	12	4	2

Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	5	11	2
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	9	7	2
Listen carefully, then choose the correct answer from the following writings	7	9	2
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Umayya and Bilal. Umayya: Do you want me to remove the cuff? Umayya: Bilal continued: Continue the dialogue Umayya: This is strange! Because I see her	3	13	2
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Bilal and Safwan. Bilal: Why did you kill her? Bilal:complete! Safwan: Safwan: You believe that a person is judged by his actions	8	8	2
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Abu Bakr and Umayya Abu Bakr: his sister! Abu Bakr: Umayya Umayya: I gave her a gift to Safwan	5	11	2
Choose the correct answers from the following: Bilal raises the call to prayer to call?	0	16	2
"طلع Choose the correct answers from the words of the song البدر علينا"	9	7	2
Who killed an Umayya?	16	0	2
What is the secret of Hamza's strength? As told Abu Bakr	12	4	2
Abu Bakr, could not buy Bilal's sister because she is	11	5	2
In Arabic (อย่า สิ้น หวัง) meaning of	14	2	2
Complete the correct dialogue that took place between Abu Bakr and Bilal. Abu Bakr: The strong can control his anger Abu Bakr: And the one who forgives when he can take revenge Abu Bakr: Bilal continued: I will do my best	8	8	2
In Arabic (แหล่ง แรง บันดาล ใจ) meaning of	11	5	2
In Arabic (เพื่อ จะ ได้ เผยแพร่ ความ หวัง) meaning of	13	3	2
The meaning of the phrase "طلع البدر علينا" in Thai is	11	5	2
in Thai is حقن الدماء The meaning of the phrase	8	8	2
The meaning of the phrase الكراهية امر فظين in Thai is	12	4	2
TOTAL	183	137	40
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The results of this phase (see Table 3) showed that 183 answers were correct, 137 answers were incorrect, and two unattempts questions. The highest answer was for question 11 "Who killed Ummaya" with 16 correct answers, on the other hand, the lowest answer was question 9 with 0 correct answers "Choose the correct answers from the following: Bilal raises the call to prayer to call?".

#### **Discussions**

Subtitles have proven to be one of the beneficial supplementary to watch movies. Learners who watch movies in a different language will not be able to fully understand exactly what they are listening to, because the connection between a foreign language as well as its intended meanings is limited. Accordingly, listening skills quality will be significantly enhanced through the utilization of new technology especially when using subtitles.

The outcome of the research showed that, the pupils in the first group (experimental group) who have watched the animated film with Arabic subtitles outpaced the pupils in the other group (control group). Moreover, the first group reacted to the test questions better than the other group. Hence, it can be said that by offering subtitles with the animated film can be beneficial in enhancing the knowledge of the Arabic language and listening skills among Thai students. Through the aid of subtitles, students had a better opportunity to understand the animated film content. Moreover, this study outcomes are in line with previous research (see Markham & Peter, 2003; Dannan, 2004; Borras & Lafayette, 1994). From this research, students are able to verify the relevant information they listened to using the assistance

provided by the subtitles (Vanderplank, 1998; Grammer, 1992; Froehlich, 1998). Research findings were also consistent to those of (Bird & William, 2002; Danan, 2004) The researchers discovered that subtitles envision the aural knowledge of the foreign language that students listen to in the movie (Danan, 2004). Because of this intellectual processing, subtitles have proven to enhance second language skill (Bird & William, 2002). Moreover, (Paulston and Burder, 1976; Nagle and Sander, 1986) concluded that educators must use listening substances that comprise a sampling of real foreign language from diverse sources so that the pupils have skilled ranges of subjects, speakers, and circumstances. Furthermore, to prepare pupils better for actual-world circumstances besides permitting them to respond precisely to the vocal language outside schools, it is essential that educators offer their pupils through sufficient chances to listen to examples of real language (Joiner, Adkins and Eykyn, 1998). The findings also corroborate with study by Seo (2002) where video with subtitles offer foreign language pupils with synchronized visual and aural incentives that could compensate for any lack of understanding. However, the outcomes of the current research, regarding the subtitles effect of Thai AFL learners listening skills are not consistent with Vandergrift's (2007) study. Moreover, Wang (2007) also considers that it does not matter what language students are learning, subtitles may be confusing and generate a shape of text addiction.

Based on the findings of this research, it could be determined that using subtitles with Arabic movies, improves foreign language learners in their comprehension and understanding of the movie content, and the language in general. Subtitles could increase the pupils' understanding of the objective language and improve the language instruction using new phrases and vocabularies in a suitable perspective. Once learners are able to access and read the subtitle, that will assist their listening skills, thus their comprehension of the movie will be enhanced. Additionally, offering subtitles may decrease the anxiety level which commonly occurred throughout the listening skills tasks.

### Conclusion

This study revealed the effect of using animated films with subtitles among foreign language pupils with synchronized visual and aural incentives that could compensate for any lack of understanding. Moreover, subtitles are useful language education instrument to influence the learning of new vocabulary.

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