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The Effect of Video on the Performance of Iranian Pre-Intermediate English Language Learners' Listening Comprehension Activities regarding Gender

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Abstract: This study was an attempt to investigate the Iranian learners' listening comprehension performance when provided with Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) materials. 58 students were included as the participants of this study who were classified into a control group (N = 28) and an experimental group (N = 30). In the experimental group, the videos were used to practice the listening activities and in the control group, no technology-based teaching was utilized. The results of independent samples *t*-test showed that there were significant differences between the experimental and control groups, with the experimental participants outperforming their control peers in listening comprehension. For the second research question which was concerned with the students' differences with regard to their gender, the results of independent samples *t*-test showed non-significant differences. In addition, the results of independent samples *t*-test indicated significant differences between the multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank formats of test input, such that learners obtained a higher score in the fill-in-the-blank type of questions.

Keywords: technology, listening comprehension, video, gender, test Input

1. Introduction

Listening provides learners with an important knowledge about the target language and culture (Vandergrift, 2011). Many factors play a role in the improvement of learners' listening skills, one being the type of the instructional methods and activities used in the classroom context (Swain, Friehe, & Harrington 2004; Wagner 2010). In this regard, there is a need to consider the characteristics of the classroom structure and methods to see which one is the best for promoting the listening ability of the learners. Hence, numerous studies have been conducted about different strategies of listening instruction to find the most effective ones and to improve listening comprehension (e.g., Cross 2009; Flowerdew & Miller 2005; Lynch & Mendelsohn 2002; Rost 2002).

A central concern of scholars interested in Second/Foreign Language Acquisition (S/FLA) has always been the factors most significantly contributing to success in S/FLA. Scholars in various camps of the discipline have laid emphasis on different situational factors as the most important variables contributing to the process. Factors such as the speed of the input and the occurrence of low-frequency words (Webb 2010) make listening a challenging skill for L2 learners. However, one of the advantages of using CALL and multimedia environments is that the environments would use different types of help options (Cardenas-Claros & Gruba 2013) such as visual delivery and on-screen options. In the remainder of this paper, the focus is on the potential of videos on L2 listeners listening comprehension. In recent years, a number of studies have investigated multimedia usage in foreign language classrooms (e.g., Coniam, 2001; Gruba, 1997). Since the 1970s and 1980s, video has become widely available as a teaching resource. Altman (1990) states that video improves the listening process mainly by virtue of the fact that seeing the speakers' faces and gestures enables listeners to get some hints of what speakers say or might be going to say.

While some studies showed that visuals can improve students' performance on listening tests (e.g., Ginther 2002), others could not find positive effects, or in some cases even a detrimental impact of visuals on test-takers' listening ability was found (e.g., Coniam 2001; Gruba 1997; Ockey 2007). The reason for the negative findings

obtained in these studies can be ascribed to the fact that learners may be unaware of the ways to deal with the inherent complications of videos, often identifying visuals as a distraction and ignoring them in favor of struggling to comprehend and remember every detail of the audio. Considering the nature of videos, learners can be better helped by changing the focus of instruction towards initially developing their skills in using both audio and visual channels in line with encouraging a higher priority for utilizing top-down processes (e.g., exploiting contextual information) to try to reconstruct meaning.

It seems evident that the education process cannot be restricted to helping learners learn new practices and information in the classroom; rather it should give them the opportunity to make better use of these practices and information in their real life activities (Harmer 2001). In other words, teachers need to scaffold the learners' learning in an attempt to prepare them for later tasks that they will encounter in real life context. For listening comprehension purposes, one of the helpful methods is the use of technology. The present study aims to investigate the facilitative role of videos as a form of technology-enhanced method for the purpose of listening development.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Technology-enhanced language learning

The use of technology in teaching and learning languages has been dramatically increasing worldwide over the past decades (e.g., Chen, Belkada, & Okamoto 2004; Hubbard & Levy 2006; Son 2008). Rob (2004) recommends maximizing the opportunities for the EFL/ESL teachers to experience “with technology, both new and old, to interact with their colleagues and to access other sources of information on technology” (p. 346). Considering the recent focus on technology and the resources that it can provide to education, it is reasonable that Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) has become a major topic in applied linguistics and foreign and second language instruction. The general question of how best to employ technology in the interactive, learning-oriented Foreign Language (FL) classroom is a focus of professional arguments. Applying digitization, teachers and researchers have become capable of recording and illustrating high-

quality audio and video in the classroom, presenting learners with authentic oral and visual materials that could not be provided otherwise in past years or were of lower quality. These procedures, methods, and programs have enabled instructors to find the available sources about the target language and culture and bring them to the language classroom, supplying a worthwhile source of authentic input for language learners.

In a foreign language classroom context, a lack of this interaction can be observed between the teacher and the individual learner. Therefore, in the class time the teacher would not be able to give a contingent and step-by-step guidance and input based on the learner's level of development. One of the solutions to nullify this problem is to give the opportunity to the learners to have this kind of interaction out of the classroom context through making use of the technology of computer and the internet. Today, it is an invaluable and effective medium in the context of second/foreign language teaching and learning. With the emergence of technology including computers, internet and all the included facilities, there is a chance for learners to learn in the outside world in addition to what they learn inside the classroom. One of the challenging issues for learners in FL contexts is that they are exposed to language solely in the classroom for 4 hours a week and they might even have undesired moral and physical conditions in the classroom, thereby preventing them from using the language authentically. Fortunately, the appearance of technology has given learners the opportunity of communicating authentically with people outside the classroom with classmates, the teacher and even the individuals in distance. Thus, language learning is more effective when integrated with integration which is according to the theories of Vygotsky (1978), Long (1983), and Schmidt (1990).

The power of technology to ease the process of learning has been specifically helpful in the enhancement of communicative competence. Contributing aspects to communicative competence such as improved listening comprehension and cultural awareness take the most advantage from the technological opportunity to provide oral aids that show grammatical issues, culture, and communication strategies. The accessibility to advanced technological tools including digitized

video and audio and multi-modal inputs provides learners with the chance to use their schemata and background information more appropriately and get involved in hypothesis testing when facing unknown or difficult linguistic situations. Moreover, as technology continues to be normal and common part of life for learners worldwide, language pedagogy needs to integrate these resources that learners have tended to rely on in order to sustain and show the relevancy and usefulness of FL learning in learners' immediate and future needs (Rob, 2004). The quick evolution of technological resources raises the question of how best to employ them to improve learners' comprehension and learning.

2.2. Digital video technology

Over the recent decades, videos have become increasingly accessible in the language classrooms which add an element of interest to listening instruction and cultural learning in a communicative context. The growth of these video sources, however, has attached additional focus on the importance of communicative and learning- oriented language teaching. Video provides both the auditory and visual input about appropriate language use and extra-linguistic information which are assumed to be needed for successful interaction. The use of videos or films as a resource for learning has received a lot of attention from researchers and has been successfully applied to various educational applications (Yang, Huang, Tsai, Chung, & Wu 2009). Researchers have shown that learning through multimedia materials is more successful than traditional paper-based instruction (Mackey & Ho 2008). Videos which provide visual, contextual, and non-verbal input provide foreign language learners with the same visual and aural stimuli which can make up for any deficiency of comprehension resulting from listening alone (Brett 1995; Hoven 1999; Seo 2002). Several previous studies have indicated that such videos are highly accepted by learners during the learning process (Choi & Johnson 2007; Mackey & Ho 2008). From among recent projects, Potosi (2009) conducted an experiment in a public university in Colombia with 5 students, without considering the gender of the learners and also without a control group. The findings suggest improvements in the students' listening skill. In a similar way,

Arosenius (2011) did a research on Swedish learners of English to investigate the impact of visual cues in listening comprehension. The results showed that visual groups improved slightly more than the non-visual group.

Smith and Rawley (1997) believe that the use of videos in the classroom increases visual knowledge since learners become familiar with the ways of decoding sentences and the extra-linguistic elements that exert a certain impact on meaning construction. Baltova (1994) considers the essentiality of video use in the classroom due to the fact that visual input is a complement of auditory input since both reinforce the other, invoke previous information, and bring about a deeper processing of the topic. Swaffar and Vlatten (1997) suggested that video presents learners with numerous ways of decoding information in the target language. Corresponding audio and visual input permits learners to process not only the mere linguistic sounds but also the functioning of these sounds in the larger socio-cultural context. Their consecutive model for video watching directed attention to the fact that videos encourage a multisensory medium and they provide learners with opportunities to read visual and auditory speech as well as listening. Therefore, it seems clear that reading the visual and auditory message and listening to that simultaneously can enhance learning (Montero, Peters, & Desmet 2013). As a result, learners can be exposed to different areas of communicative competence including linguistic and sociolinguistic competence when provided with the videos.

Herron and Hanely (1992) believe that applying videos in the language classroom increases efficient cultural contextualization of language if the visual part permits learners to view and hear conversation in its real socio-cultural context, which can lead to increased interest in the use of the target language. Moreover, since learners' decoding abilities are less forced when the visual components is available, communication becomes less stressful.

In a similar way, in comparing listening comprehension during video watching with and without any explicit instruction in listening strategy use, Rubin (1994) came to the conclusion that those

participants who received both explicit instruction and contextually-rich video exposure showed higher performance in listening skills than those who did not receive explicit listening strategy instruction, nor did they watch videos. Rubin asserted that when the videos are selected logically and incorporated effectively in the language curriculum, they can present a context-rich procedure of promoting learners' listening performance. In accordance with the findings of the above-mentioned studies, it seems evident that the inclusion of both the auditory and visual input can activate interest and prior schema knowledge, along with providing learners with a comprehensive picture of communication in the target language and culture.

In spite of many benefits in using videos identified in the abovementioned studies, some researchers have argued that the use of video may interrupt comprehension, because of its potential for distraction. MacWilliam (1986) stated that the visual aspects of a video text can distract learners' attention from the audio input and may actually prevent comprehension. Gruba (1993) compared the performances of university students who took an audio-only test of listening comprehension with those who took a context-only video version of the same test. Gruba found no differences in test performance between the experimental and control groups, adding that some test takers could have been distracted by the visual stimuli, apparently. A study was carried out by Suvorov (2009) to examine the effect of video on listening comprehension of international English learners who came to the result that video had a negative effect on listening comprehension of the learners.

Although there are still certain doubts about the use of videos in the FL classrooms, they have been identified as valuable resources for language pedagogy since video materials can provide a total communicative situation. Studies have suggested that visual support can facilitate listening comprehension (Wagner 2007). Rubin (1990) found that the listening comprehension of high-beginning Spanish students who watched dramas on video improved significantly in comparison to those who received no video support for their listening training. She argued that "video is a useful tool to enhance listening comprehension if it is selected so that it provides sufficient clues

for information processing. It is the selection that is critical, not just the use of video alone” (35).

Having identified the advantages associated with the use of videos in the classroom, it becomes equally important to determine how it can be most effectively applied in the classroom. In spite of the significance of these issues, relatively few studies have been conducted to address the effects of employing different types of videos or the tasks that accompany them in the communicative language classroom. While studies have focused on the important status of technology use in language learning, many methods and technological procedures are still used in the classrooms without an empirical research base to advocate their use or to recommend the most appropriate implementation (Salaberry 2001).

Although different studies have indicated the advantages associated with the use of language videos in the FL classroom, controversies exist about the most effective method of employing such videos into the curriculum. Lyman-Hager (1994) pinpoints the significance of the integration of videos as sources of authentic input to the curriculum so that learners’ output and communicative practice remains a purpose in the classroom. Put it another way, videos cannot be used alone; rather, they need to be accompanied by tasks that help the learners to process the input and integrate it into their current knowledge about the target language and culture.

In general, the increased learner interest advocates the assumptions that technologically assisted oral material can enhance motivation and bring about improved listening comprehension performance (Altman 1988; Baltova 1994; Herron & Hanley 1992; Meinhof 1998; Secules, Herron, & Tomasello 1992; Weyers 1999).

Sherwood, Kinzer, Hasselbring, and Bransford (1987) carried out three different experiments with university learners and concluded that video used as a macro-context enables learners to accompany previous knowledge and new information and to infer and make decisions with new input. They introduced two hypotheses based on the enhanced reading performance of learners who received the video macro-context.

The first hypothesis was “redundancy hypothesis” according to which learners showed better reading because of numerous exposures through both video and text to the same material. The second hypothesis, i.e., the “synergy hypothesis” pinpoints the power of macro-context in providing general ideational scaffolding and rendering input meaningful and facilitating comprehension.

Chung (1994) compared the listening comprehension of participants who were exposed to visual support, a single picture, several pictures, or a video dependent on a listening text in the target language. Chung found that those learners who were exposed to some type of visual aids presented a higher performance. However, those participants who received videos outperformed those learners who were presented with still pictures. This result highlights the fact that since videos have images of communication dynamics and the socio-cultural elements of interaction, they can provide more appropriate visual organizational support for an audio-only listening text than either no visual or still pictures.

Hadley (2001) argue that the receptive skills of listening and reading require problem-solving abilities such as hypothesis-testing, interpretation, and drawing conclusions, all of which are also the significant skills required in viewing videos in the target language. As learners try to decode the numerous messages that are delivered by a videotext, it becomes important to scaffold their hypothesis testing and in their interpretations and conclusions. The review of literature revealed that while video technology can present learners with access to authentic and natural linguistic and cultural input in the target language, teachers need to appropriately prepare learners in order to ascertain efficient processing of the input. According to Lyman-Hager (1994), the potential advantages of authentic input are often not realized when learners listen to a listening text without prior preparation. By activating language schemata before the activity, teachers can provide the required help in receiving and integrating new input under relevant subsuming concepts, and therefore, creating a meaningful and interactive learning context for all learners.

The present study was conducted to further examine the effect of

using visual aids through video as a technological tool on the listening comprehension of EFL learners. In addition, the effects of gender and test input were investigated. The study is an attempt to find answers to the following research questions:

- Q1: Does the use of videos significantly affect Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension?
- Q2: Is there any significant difference between male and female pre-intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension through the use of videos?
- Q3: Do video group learners have significantly different performance when provided with various formats of test input?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants were 58 EFL learners in Jahad Daneshgahi Language Institute of Urmia who were selected out of 69 learners according to their level of proficiency. All the students in two classes (class 1 (control group) = 28, class 2 (experimental group) = 30) were invited and they agreed to participate in the study. Class 1 acted as the control group and consisted of pre-intermediate participants. Class 2 was considered as the experimental group and included pre-intermediate learners too. The participants in each class were considered to constitute a fairly homogeneous group in terms of their learning background and English proficiency as measured by the pre-test. The learners whose level of proficiency was not in the pre-intermediate category were excluded from the study. They were between 17 and 22 years old. Each group was composed of both male and female learners, with 12 males and 18 females in the experimental group and 12 males and 16 females in the control group. The participants of this study had learned their English more or less entirely in an instructed setting. None had ever been to an English-speaking country, and they had had little opportunity to use English for communicative purposes outside the classroom. As language institute students, they had 3 hours of English per week, focusing on all the language skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing, with a larger amount of time devoted to listening activities. The textbook that was used in each class was the

Top Notch 2 compiled by Saslow and Ascher (2006).

Both groups received pre-test and post-test; however, they did get different instructions. Video teaching was used with experimental group participants while conventional instruction was employed in the control group. Participants were told that the test was for purposes of research only and they accepted this. They were not told the precise purpose of the study and were assured that the information collected would not impact their course grades. No participant withdrew from the study.

3.2. Materials

The following materials were used in this study to elicit data on learners' listening comprehension performance.

3.2.1. Pre-test and post-test

The placement test of Top Notch series by Saslow and Ascher (2006) was administered to the experimental and control group participants in order to determine their level of proficiency and ensure that they constitute fairly homogeneous groups. Only the listening section was used since the purpose of the present study was to evaluate learners' level of listening proficiency and their gains after the treatment. The pretest contained an audio program with two sets of activities which included multiple choice questions for the first time of listening and fill- in-the blanks for the second time of listening.

The post-test for the experimental group was a video program (the video version of the audio program) with the same questions, and the control group had the audio version. The video and audio tests were used according to the type of the instruction that is the video program was used with the experimental group and the audio program was used with the control group. The listening comprehension questions required the learners to provide answers to the questions related to the content. Two types of test input formats including the multiple choice questions (N = 10) and fill-in-the-blank type questions (N = 9) were used to evaluate learners' gains after the treatment process.

3.2.2. Top Notch 2, students' book

For the treatment, Top Notch 2, students' book written by Saslow and Ascher (2006) was used. In fact, the video programs and the audio versions of the same videos were used during the term, and one video and audio program was left to be used as the post test. This textbook includes different language skills and some supplementary materials such as related videos which were used for the purpose of assessment in the experimental group and the audio versions of the same videos were used for assessing listening comprehension of control group in this study.

3.3. Procedure

There were two groups in the present research, namely the experimental and the control groups in order to evaluate the effect of video use on their listening performance. After having been screened in terms of their level of listening proficiency, the participants in one class were considered as control group and those in the other class were considered as experimental. At the beginning of the term, all the participants in both control and experimental groups were exposed to an audio program with 2 kinds of activities, multiple choices for the first time of listening and fill-in-the blanks for the second time of listening as a pre-test to answer. The treatment lasted for 10 sessions – two sessions in a week – with each session lasting for 90 minutes and the devoted time to work on the students' listening comprehension skill was 30 minutes in each session. In contrast to the experimental group participants, the control group students received language instruction without the employment of videos. In this class, the teacher presented the listening activities by using the audio players providing only the sound of the text and excluding the visuals. After transmitting the required knowledge, the teacher asked some of the learners to answer the listening exercises individually to save time for other class activities and skills. She taught the new vocabulary items encountered in the listening activity via using the target language. Students could ask question about the unclear points. In fact, the type of instruction was similar in both the experimental and control groups except for the fact that the control group participants were not exposed to videos

as opposed to their experimental group peers. It should be mentioned that the same teacher instructed the experimental and control groups. Then, at the end of the term, the control group had a listening test (audio version), while the experimental group had the video version of the same audio with the same kind of questions.

4. Results

At first, the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to provide an answer to the first research question of the study. The major assumption of ANCOVA is homogeneity of variances; as a result, Levene's test was applied. Table 1 manifests the results of the homogeneity of variances.

Table 1.
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances in Listening Comprehension

F	df1	df2	Sig.
4.840	56	50.410	.032

The homogeneity of variance assumption ($F = 4.84, p = .032, p < \alpha$) was violated in which the p value for Levene's test ($p = 0.32$) was less than .05, and F observed was 4.84, with (56, 50.41) degrees of freedom. Therefore, an independent samples t-test was utilized to compare the mean differences of the pre-test and post-test in control and experimental groups.

Having ascertained the assumptions of independent samples t-test as a parametric test (i.e., the normality of data), the next step was to conduct the t-tests.

Table 2.
Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups

	groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	experimental	30	2.2333	3.27670	.59824
	control	28	-2.2143	2.92318	.55243

As the mean and standard deviation scores in Table 4.3 show, there are differences between the experimental ($M=2.23, D=3.27$) and

control (M = -2.21, SD = 2.92) group learners' performance in the post-test. However, in order to get more accurate and reliable results, an independent samples t-test was run, the results of which are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3.
T-test Results of Group Differences in the Post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	.000	.999	5.44	56	.000	4.44	.817	2.80	6.08
	Equal variances not assumed			5.46	55.89	.000	4.44	.814	2.81	6.07

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.99$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically significant difference ($t(56) = 5.44, p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control groups in the post-test. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that learners in the experimental group (M = 2.23, SD = 3.27) outperform those in the comparison group (M = -2.21, SD = 2.92).

In order to examine the second research question which is concerned with the differences between the male and female learners' listening performances after the treatment, an independent samples t-test was run. First, the results of descriptive statistics are shown in Table 4.

Table 4.
Descriptive Statistics of Listening Performance across Gender

	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	male	12	32.7500	5.91031	1.70616
	female	18	31.2222	5.95627	1.40391

As Table 4 shows, there are not mean differences between the male ($M = 32.75$, $SD = 5.91$) and female ($M = 31.22$, $SD = 5.95$) participants' performance in the post-test. The results of t-test are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5.
T-test Results of Listening Performance across Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	.056	.81	.69	28	.49	1.52	2.213	-3.00	6.06
	Equal variances not assumed			.69	23.86	.49	1.52	2.209	-3.03	6.08

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.81$, which means that the variances for the two groups (male and female) are the same. The results of independent samples T-test show statistically non-significant differences ($t(28) = 0.690$, $p > 0.05$) between the male and female participants in the post-test.

In an attempt to identify the differences between the multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank types of activities, an independent samples t-test was run. The results are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6.
Descriptive Statistics of Experimental Learners' Listening Performance across Activities

	activities	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
scores	multiple-choice	30	61.6000	8.38142	1.53023

	fill-in-the-blanks	30	67.5333	9.82163	1.79318
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The mean scores show differences between the multiple-choice ($M = 61.60$, $SD = 8.38$) and fill-in-the-blanks ($M = 67.53$, $SD = 9.82$) input formats in the participants' post-test performance.

Table 7.

T-test Results of Listening Performance across Activities

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
scores	Equal variances assumed	1.52	.22	-2.51	58	.01	-5.93	2.35	-10.65	-1.21
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.51	56.60	.01	-5.93	2.35	-10.65	-1.21

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.22$, which means that the variances for the two groups (multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically significant differences ($t(58) = -2.517$, $p < 0.05$) between the multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank types of activities. These results are in line with those of descriptive statistics, showing that learners in the fill-in-the-blanks activities ($M = 67.53$, $SD = 9.82$) had a higher listening performance compared to the multiple-choice activities ($M = 61.60$, $SD = 8.38$).

5. Discussion

The findings of this study get support from Shmarak and Dostal's (1965) and Gottschalk's (1965) assumptions about the improved interest as a result of the application and integration of videos in the foreign language classroom. Elaborating on this issue further, the

findings also advocated other studies highlighting the fact that the introduction of technologically advanced visual and auditory material can be a determining factor in enhanced motivation and interest, which in turn can bring about better and improved listening comprehension (Baltova, 1994; Harmer, 2001; Herron, et al., 1995; Herron, et al., 1999; Lin, 2002; Meinhof, 1998; Nunan, 2005; Safarali & Hamidi, 2012; Wagner, 2006). A teaching method that evokes interest for language learners meets directly the pragmatic and social needs of the language learners in the real world outside the classroom, thereby establishing an environment in the classroom that the learners do not passively listen but are encouraged to actively process the input and relate it to the existing cognitive structures (Nunan, 2005). Shrum and Glisan (2005), too, advocate the importance of learner interest as a major factor in listening comprehension. Especially, if the interest is matched with the background knowledge and working memory, it can be a significant determiner of comprehension and processing in an authentic text.

Harmer (2001) refers to the suitability and appropriateness of employing visual-auditory materials in language classes simply because the learners observe the language in use. In addition to familiarity with the authentic and actual language, learners, according to Harmer, are also familiarized with the cultural and the life style of the target language people by means of videos.

In addition, Wagner (2006, p. 74) refers to the advantages associated with the videos in language assessment:

Depending on the purpose of the test, the inclusion of nonverbal components of spoken communication through the use of video texts in L2 listening test tasks might be advantageous, since not only would the tasks more closely simulate the characteristics of authentic spoken language, but the inclusion of the visual channel in presenting the spoken input might lead to construct more relevant variance in the assessments, allowing for more valid inferences to be made from the results of those assessments.

The result obtained certainly rejects the arguments put forward by Just and Carpenter (1992) and Mayer and Sims (1994) about the failure of videos in language learning curriculum because of their production of cognitive load. It should be mentioned that the materials introduced in the classroom by means of the videos were the main material that were reviewed and assessed in the coursework. Therefore, the creative integration of videos to the curriculum without producing an anxiety for the testing and exam, could have led to fun and in turn motivation in learners for listening. Moreover, the videos were thematically related to the lesson objectives in the sense that they were of appropriate length and difficulty and therefore did not overextend the learners' ability to process the foreign language videos.

Results of analysis for the second research questions which dealt with the differences between male and female learners showed no difference. Results of independent samples t-test indicated no-significant difference between them. This could probably mean that both the male and female participants in the experimental group benefited from the exposure to the videos.

Lastly, the results of third research question signified the superiority of fill-in-the-blank type of input in eliciting higher number of correct responses from learners. The reason behind the learners' preference for the fill-in-the-blanks questions could be that they are rich in the context provided before and after the blank. In other words, they supply extra hints and clues to assist learners in arriving at an answer.

And this finding clearly shows the necessity of considering the significance of test types and contextualization in evaluating the learners' language performance. The provision of context can help learners make better sense of the relatedness of the language learning in the educational environment and their real life needs. In other words, they are provided with more authentic approaches to the learning and assessment of the language.

6. Conclusion

In sum, results of the statistical analyses seem to reject the

assumption that visual aids can present distraction to the listening process of L2 learners. The findings have two pedagogical implications. Firstly, teachers need to be encouraged to use videos for listening tasks because they improve overall listening comprehension. Secondly, based on the necessity of the integration of all four language skills in the language classroom, learners need to be helped to expand their vocabulary to ensure that they have adequate lexical coverage to gain sufficient comprehension of the L2 video input. Thus, the use of pre- and post-listening activities and tasks for the preparation of learners for the listening task seem inevitable.

However, there are a number of limitations in this study. A first limitation is concerned with the difficulty level of the video materials. Although the videos were assumed to be appropriate for the participants, a number of low frequency words might have led to the complexity of some parts. A specific analysis of the transcripts according to word frequency and lexical coverage could determine (Webb, 2010). However, this was beyond the scope of the present study. Second, participants' learning styles were not examined prior to the study which might influence their success or failure in listening comprehension.

This study is concluded with two future research tracks. First, future investigations can examine the effectiveness of visual aids for improving comprehension in full-length TV programs (Rodgers, 2012) rather than short videos. Studies can also focus on the effect of systematic and long-term exposure on learners' comprehension, attitudes and perceptions of visual aids through technology. Secondly, it would be beneficial if future investigations study learners' attention allocation while watching videos. Through using eye-tracking technology, these areas can be analyzed in an objectified manner. Further insights into the whole functioning of technological aids including videos will undoubtedly shed new light on the potential of technology as a pedagogical tool and therefore open new paths for researching its value.

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