

國立清華大學 102 學年度碩士班考試入學試題

系所班組別：外國語文學系(所) 乙組(語言認知與教學組)

考試科目 (代碼)：英文閱讀與寫作 (3503) 共 8 頁，第 1 頁

\*請在【答案卷、卡】作答

This Reading and Writing test consists of two parts. The first part evaluates your professional reading ability and whether you could write a concise and effective summary of the reading. The second part assesses your academic writing ability based on academic readings in TESOL field. Read carefully the instructions for each part in the following.

**PART I : 50%**

The following excerpt is taken from an article published in Language Learning and Technology in 2010. Read the excerpt and write an abstract of no more than 300 words. The abstract should be a complete but concise summary of the study to entice readers to read its full text for details.

THE EFFECTS OF CAPTIONING VIDEOS USED FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LISTENING ACTIVITIES

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Language Learning & Technology  
<http://llt.msu.edu/vol14num1/winkegasssydorenko.pdf>

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### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate L2 learners' use of captions while watching videos in a foreign language. Audiovisual materials enhanced with captions are powerful pedagogical tools that are believed to help improve L2 listening and reading comprehension skills (Borras & Lafayette, 1994; Danan, 2004; Garza, 1991; Markham & Peter, 2003). Captions facilitate language learning by helping learners visualize what they hear, especially if the input is slightly beyond their linguistic ability (Danan, 2004). Captions may also serve to increase language comprehension by facilitating additional cognitive processes, such as greater depth of spoken-word processing (Bird & Williams, 2002).

Captioned video is increasingly used in foreign language classes, most likely because of the recent accessibility of authentic videos ( e.g., via DVD, YouTube, ViewPoint) which, if not already captioned, can be easily captioned by teachers and curriculum developers using software such as Adobe Premier, iMovie, or ViewPoint. Many universities, overwhelmed by increased interest in foreign language learning (Welles, 2004), are turning to online foreign language course offerings, normally by implementing hybrid or blended-instruction courses, in which part of the instruction is in the classroom and part is conducted independently online (Blake, 2005; Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday, 2006; Sanders, 2005; Scida & Saury, 2006). Such classes incorporate more online and automated content, which often includes captioned videos. It is especially true for language programs such as Arabic and Chinese, mostly because it is difficult to find enough qualified instructors (Dahbi, 2004; Freedman, 2004), and because videos are a good resource for presenting native speaker voices.

Captioning may be a bonus because it helps language learners connect auditory to visual input (Garza, 1991), which may aid form-meaning

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mapping, an essential process for foreign language acquisition (Doughty, 2004). With regard to the present study, the mapping of form to meaning is facilitated since captioning helps identify word boundaries. In other words, it helps learners segment what might otherwise be an incomprehensible stream of speech. However, a question that concerns both theory and pedagogy is what learners actually do with captions when they are presented with them. We do not know whether they read captions fully or only in part, and if in part, what part. In other words, where is the learner's attention focused? How do learners balance the intake of audio, video, and text? Another question concerns the level of proficiency required to make captions beneficial. Past research has found that captions are more of a distraction than help for lower-level learners (Taylor, 2005), but that lower-level as well as upper-level learners have positive attitudes toward captions. Could teachers simplify captions for certain learners (for example, only present key words or italicize or embolden key words within the text) to make them more salient? A final important area that has not been addressed is how learners of languages with non-Roman scripts, such as Arabic, Chinese, and Russian, process captions. It is for this reason that this study investigated the use of captions by learners of Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish to understand better how captions aid comprehension. The present study also investigated how the support captions provide may be mediated by the target language script and/or by the proficiency level of the learners.

### **LITERATURE SUMMARY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In sum, captioned videos for foreign language learning are becoming more common because they are more accessible, easy to produce, and fit well into online course offerings. They are viewed as an important pedagogical tool because they bring more native voices into the learning environment and help learners integrate written and aural information, which supports language acquisition. Robust research needs to be conducted to understand (a) the ordering effects of captions (captions

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shown during the first or second viewing), and (b) what the processing issues surrounding captions are and how those issues may be tied to learners' individual differences in proficiency and/or the target languages, especially those with non-Latin scripts. The following research questions guide the present study. Languages used to address each question are given in parentheses.

1. Do captioned videos result in better comprehension of video content and learning of vocabulary than noncaptioned ones? (Spanish)
2. When a video is viewed twice, is captioning more effective (as measured by comprehension tests and vocabulary learning tests) when the first viewing is with captions or when the second viewing is with captions? (all languages)
3. Are there different benefits derived from captioning order depending on the target language? (all languages)
4. Do proficiency differences affect the benefits of captioning derived from captioning order? (Russian and Spanish)

Based on prior research, the first hypothesis is that captioning will result in comprehension and vocabulary gains. We cannot hypothesize, based on prior literature, (a) the ordering effects of captions, (b) the differential benefits of captioning order depending on the target language, or (c) whether proficiency differences affect any benefits derived from the ordering of captions. Thus, in relation to the last three research questions, we assume null hypotheses, that is, that there is no ordering effect of captions, no differential effects from captioning order in relation to the language being learned, and that proficiency will not affect the benefits of any ordering effect of captions.

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### RESULTS

This study set out to investigate foreign language learners' use of captions while watching videos in a foreign language. By presenting captioned and noncaptioned video to groups of Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Spanish learners, we found that, in response to the first research question, captioned rather than noncaptioned videos aid novel vocabulary recognition. This occurred regardless of whether the vocabulary test words were presented to the learners in written or aural mode. Captioned videos also aid overall comprehension of the videos. In other words, the use of different modalities appears to facilitate vocabulary recognition and overall comprehension. The benefit of multiple input modalities is supported by previous research, such as Bird and Williams (2002), who found that a bimodal presentation (in their case, text and sound) resulted in better recognition memory. Essentially, it appears that more input is better, leading to increased depth of processing since learners utilize different input modes differently, and these input modes reinforce one another. Similarly, when considering the vast literature on learning styles in educational research (see Dörnyei, 2005), we recognize that individual learners may be able to process one mode of input better than another. As Dörnyei noted, learners interact differently with the environment and approach learning tasks differently. Thus, as noted by our participants, captioned video allows this to happen.

The second research question relates to the ordering effect of captions. We found that when a video is shown two times, once with captioning and once without, the order of viewing has an effect on the subsequent recognition of vocabulary presented in the aural mode: learners presented with captions in the first viewing are better able to aurally recognize novel vocabulary than learners presented with captions in the second viewing. We suggest that this is due to the important role of attention in learning a second language. This is supported by comments from our participants. Many of their comments indicated that the captions served the function of drawing learners' attention to the language in the video. The captions seemed to help isolate what the learners perceived to be

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important and helped them determine what to pay attention to in subsequent viewings.

With regard to attention, it is well documented that language learners are often faced with a string of sometimes incomprehensible input and need to focus attention on particular parts of language as aspects of the learning process. In fact, Schmidt (2001) claims that attending to particular parts of language “appears necessary for understanding nearly every aspect of second and foreign language learning” (p. 6). This claim is integral to Schmidt’s (1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2001) noticing hypothesis: awareness (through attention) is necessary for noticing, which in turn is essential for learning. Schmidt and Frota (1986) suggested that “a second language learner will begin to acquire the target like form if and only if it is present in comprehended input and ‘noticed’ in the normal sense of the word, that is, consciously” (p. 311). The idea presented here is that learning requires a learner to be actively involved or attending to L2 forms in order for learning to take place. However, at times, the language input (in this case the video) may be so complex that it is necessary for learners to have some sort of aid (in this case captioning), as was found by Markham (1993).

In a similar vein, Gass (1997) argued that interaction often serves as a priming device, setting the stage for learning rather than being a forum for actual learning. The same may be the case for captioning. When captioning occurs first, it may draw learners’ attention to something they do not know. This allows for further information-gathering during the second listening. This is easier for those who can easily read the script (Spanish, Russian). When captioning occurs second, the unknown word/phrase that a learner hears is salient precisely because it is unknown (see Gass, 1988). The second listening allows for confirmation. Reading an unknown script requires more prior knowledge, which in this case comes from hearing the unknown word. In other words, with scripts that are similar to the native language script, it is easier to be alerted to something unknown through seeing it in writing; with scripts that are different from the native language script, it is easier to be alerted to something unknown through hearing it spoken.

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The second video provides additional confirmatory/nonconfirmatory evidence of what was comprehended. Acquisition is not necessarily instantaneous; it takes time and often requires repeated input, especially when the input comes through multiple modalities.

The third research question concerned orthographic differences between participants' native and the target language. It may be that language input, presented simultaneously through multiple modalities (aurally and in writing), is taken in differently depending on the orthography of the language. There was a trend for learners of Russian and Spanish to do better on comprehension and vocabulary tests when the captioning was first, and for learners of Arabic and Chinese to do better with captioning second. However, Arabic and Chinese learners did not appear to obtain consistently better test scores depending on a single ordering of captions. We suggest that learners of a language whose orthography is closer to that of the target language are better able to use the written modality as an initial source of information. Thus, Russian and Spanish learners benefitted when the first exposure to the language included the written mode. On the other hand, when there is a great distance between the native and target language orthographies, the aural modality is preferable, that is, it is more difficult to avail oneself of the written modality and there is a reliance on listening because the written symbols are not well learned.

Finally, this study did not find that proficiency differences affect any benefits derived from captions ordering. For Spanish and Russian learners who were either in their second year or fourth year of study, seeing a video with captions the first rather than the second time was equally beneficial regardless of year of study. This may suggest that captioning, as a language learning tool to aid processing, may function similarly for all proficiency levels. Concerns about whether lower-level students can benefit from captions in the same way as upper-level learners (Guillory, 1998; Markham, 1993; Taylor, 2005) may be more about the appropriateness of the video's complexity level for the lower-level

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learners rather than the appropriateness of the captioning for lower-level learners. As in Taylor's (2005) study, we found that when captions are used, upper-level learners performed better than lower-level learners on comprehension, as one would expect, since both groups watched the same videos. In light of our study, we suggest that the lower-level learners in Taylor's study who reported that it was more difficult to attend to captions than upper-level students were perhaps having a harder time with the content of the video as it may not have been as appropriately matched to the lower-level students' abilities. Thus, it appears that captions are beneficial for a range of proficiency levels, as long as the videos are matched appropriately in terms of content and complexity (not too hard and not too easy) to the proficiency level of the language learners.

### **PART II : 50%**

Based on the findings of the study and your prior experience of being a student or English instructor, write an essay that describes how videos with or without captions can be appropriately used in ESL/EFL listening class. The essay should reflect considerations of learner difference and instructional strategies.