

Inter-lingual subtitling: A valued linguistics and pedagogical language learning tool

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ABSTRACT

Research on the relationship between subtitling and second language acquisition has focused, for so long, on the question of whether or not watching inter-lingual subtitling of films, TV series, etc. would actually develop one's language. Not much attention has been paid to the fact of using inter-lingual subtitling as a pedagogical tool in itself. Inter-lingual subtitling as a form of translation can enhance various second language learners' skills'. By exposure to spoken language, printed texts, visual effects and cultural contexts, inter-lingual subtitling develops learners' listening skills, writing competencies, linguistic awareness and cultural knowledge.

The purpose of the present study is to present a successful pedagogical experiment that involves a number of undergraduate Egyptian students who have studied inter-lingual subtitling (from English to Arabic and Arabic to English) for 3 successive semesters. The study will describe the steps they have undergone during each semester, highlighting problems they have met; the technical problems include spatial limitations, display-time regulations and continuous monitoring of output; semantic issues are translating idiomatic expressions, understanding different dialects, and accents, interpreting cultural allusions and understanding coined words; structural problems address tenses, word order and punctuation; finally, cultural hindrances involve how translating certain ideas can completely contradict with students' beliefs. Also presented will be means by which the above problems have been overcome, the language skills students have acquired, and finally, their overall evaluation of the process.