



The Relation between Cinema, Subtitled Series and Spanish Learning for Chinese Students of Spanish Language

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between watching subtitled Spanish films and series and Spanish learning for Chinese students. A survey was developed with 207 university students from 42 universities (Chinese and Spanish) who voluntarily responds to a questionnaire. A pilot study was performed in order to test the correspondence validity of the two versions (Chinese and Spanish) of the same questionnaire. The results show that watching subtitled Spanish films and series has been preferred by the respondents and they do it frequently. In addition, they take it as an effective way to learn Spanish. Likewise, the results indicate that the respondents are not satisfied with the current situation of the film and television market with subtitling neither in China nor Spain. Therefore, they wish to have more access to Spanish films and series resources in China and more subtitled version in Spain.

CCS CONCEPTS

- Applied computing~E-learning

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KEYWORDS

ELE, enjoyment, Chinese students, multimedia resources, Spanish films and series, subtitling

1 INTRODUCTION

During the last ten years, China and Spain have sensed that a big wave of population has become interested in learning Spanish and Chinese.

With the globalisation of technological advance of information in communication, the necessity of the cinematographic market is clearer day by day. Nowadays, there are more and more films and series exported overseas, through which students can obtain more knowledge, more experience and better education. Due to the phenomenon and the tendency of the learning fever of both languages, more ways to improve both teaching and learning are searched. Therefore, it is considered that a very relevant way would be applying the use of audiovisual resources in the language teaching class, which could be a method based on the innovative ideas from edu-entertainment.

In the same way, China has sensed a big wave of population motivated to learn Spanish in order to work in Spain and Latin America, due to the interests the economic globalisation has brought. Spanish, as the second most spoken language in the world, keeps forging more and more influence in China. This has made more people start learning Spanish every year, more universities found Spanish language and literature departments, more Spanish licensed students and more people decide to study overseas, mostly in Spain and Latin America. According to an investigation developed by the CECLA (Latin American Cultural Studies Centre) [1], until year 2016, there were 96 universities that had a Spanish language and literature department, and between 20.000 and 22.000 university students who were pursuing the aforementioned degree.

Due to the phenomenon and the trend in learning Spanish, more ways to improve both teaching and learning are sought. As a result, there are more language institutions, especially of Spanish, and more books written for this reason. However, it is considered that another relevant way would be to apply the use of audiovisual resources in the Spanish learning class.

Nowadays, as a matter of fact, teachers project Spanish films or series in their classes to ease teaching of both language and Spanish culture and history. Nevertheless, it is not a teaching way traditionally performed, but it includes other methods in the sense that it does not use a book. This learning way could be an innovative method, using entertainment for the Spanish language and literature students.

Thus, it would be pertinent in this work to examine the perceptions of Spanish language students about the relevance of

using subtitling in films and series in their learning process. The outlook of the few access to watch Spanish subtitled films and series in China or in Spain is also presented, since there are only two television channels in China and are little known, and in the cinema market, from 2012 to 2016, only eight Spanish films have been released in China. Furthermore, films and series in Spain are almost always released dubbed without subtitles. Apart from the access to cinema and television, there are others by the internet, which are audiovisual products made with double subtitle by translation and subtitling associations and the most well-known learning platform in China - Hu Jiang.

2 STATE OF THE ART

As it was mentioned in the previous epigraph, audiovisual format: cinema and television have become, without a doubt, new technologies and support for teaching, with the purpose in ELE class (Spanish as a Foreign Language, this shortening will be used from now on) has been confirmed by Brandimonte [2] and Lopes [3], who have confirmed the roles of technological means in Spanish teaching, have applied methodologies and strategies for using films in ELE classrooms, coming to the conclusion that the most relevant competence of applying audiovisual means in lessons is improving the audiovisual comprehension of the students.

In order to choose among the cinematographic products for teaching and learning foreign languages, there is a debate in opinions from doctors of University College of London [4] about the purposes of subtitling and the reasons why subtitling is chosen preferably instead of dubbing in foreign language learning. In the mentioned work conducted by Díaz Cintas, the first interviewed expert believes that on the one hand, subtitles can help students to improve their vocabulary, and on the other hand subtitles help handle themselves and understand better the foreign language, and at the same time, boost the develop of other necessary skills. The interviewed came to the conclusion that subtitling multiplies the benefits of audiovisual products for learning foreign languages, so they recommend that more importance should be given to subtitling, as it can be a tool and a strategy to apply inside and outside the classes. In such debate, the second participant shares the idea from the first one and thinks the message that they both really want to transmit is not that people learn languages by watching subtitles, but when they already have some language knowledge, they can establish themselves and consolidate in a more effective and efficient way by using subtitles. The fansubbing programme was mentioned as well, which consist of subtitles made by fans for fans. In China there are plenty of associations of this type, formed by a non-profit-making group of translators. According to them, the reasons why this kind of associations appear are the desire to improve, know, and practise the language. In disagreement over the two previous participants, the third expert expresses their opinion in the interview saying that dubbing has a lot of advantages for language learning, due to dubbing actors use a more standard pronunciation and it is easier to understand. However, regarding the relation between subtitling in cinema or series and Spanish learning, as for Chinese, there are not enough

published works. There are ELE teachers [5-7] who have analysed in class the difference between Chinese students and others from different countries. All of them coincide in the use of different ways of teaching for the Chinese students. There is also an article [8] that advocates for the purposes of the cinema and television subtitling basis in the Spanish learning. Even so, there is a lack of two work lines inclusion: -Spanish teaching for Chinese students in the class; -application of audiovisual products with subtitles in class with the same text, especially in the case of China. The present situation of the available publications does not provide enough bibliographic resources in order to be a support for this work. With the present one, the authors have the motivation to fill out this shortage.

3 OBJECTIVE

Our main study is aimed to investigate the relations among the Spanish subtitled audiovisual media, specially films and television series, and the Spanish learning for the Chinese people. With this general purpose on mind, the first study of this research project is centered on analyzing the habits of use and opinions of Chinese students on audiovisual products for Spanish learning.

4 HYPOTHESIS

H1. Chinese students watch subtitled films and series with more frequency than dubbed because of their interest in learning Spanish.

H2. Between the three modalities of audiovisual products (interlinguistic subtitled; intralinguistic subtitled; double subtitled), double subtitled is the preferred one by the students with the purpose of achieving a better comprehension.

H3. Chinese students of Spanish take learning Spanish by watching audiovisual subtitled means as an entertainment.

H4. Chinese students who use subtitling in Spanish audiovisual products think it is a useful way to learn Spanish.

H5. The frequency of using subtitles in audiovisual media and the level of Spanish acquired has a positive relation.

H6. There are not enough resources of subtitled audiovisual products compared to the demand of the students for the language learning.

H6a. About Chinese market.

H6b. About Spanish market.

H7. The Hu Jiang platform is an useful tool for Chinese students of Spanish language.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Instrument design: Questionnaire

A survey using a two-version questionnaire (in Chinese and Spanish) was developed with 51 items that enquired respondents' habits, likes, opinions, satisfaction degree and attitudes toward

the use of subtitling in audiovisual products for Spanish learning. The Likert scale was applied for the items measuring.

5.2 Pretest: Correspondence validation of meaning in both languages

Before applying the designed questionnaire, a pretest was cautiously carried out with the purpose to check if the meaning of the questionnaire in the two versions, Chinese and Spanish, has reached a satisfactory level of correspondence (95,3%) in the meaning that has been translated. A measuring scale with five degrees is established.

5.3 Participants

In this study 207 students of Spanish from China took part as volunteers from 42 universities, among them, 29 universities were Chinese, and the other 13 were from Spain. The subjects were informed that they could be part of this study. The age of the participants varied between 18 and 27 years old (M=22,8, DT=1,972) 82% were female and 18% were male. However, 24 participants (11,6%) did not fill the answers in an appropriate way, and as a result, they were excluded from this analysis. This way, the definitive number remained N=183.

5.4 Survey realization process

The collective data are conducted through SOJUMP, a platform where surveys, exams and public or online votings are done. SOJUMP allows to share URL by different platforms. In the case of this present work, the questionnaire has been published by SOJUMP and sent to students sharing the link through Wechat. To maximise the sampling size in this work, the methodological technique of snowball has been used. In the first place, the questionnaires were sent to the Chinese students of Spanish through social networks (Wechat), and these were forwarded to acquaintances who meet the requirements for the survey. In second place, several Chinese student associations of Spanish and translation and subtitling associations have collaborate to spread the link in the survey across their members. In the survey there are two types of questions: open and closed. To answer the closed questions, the participants filled in two scales of Likert type to measure the frequency and the attitude/agreement level. This answer data has been gathered and processed using SPSS V21. The open questions deal with demographic data and study experience.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Habits of subtitled and dubbed films and TV series consumed

The analysis results show that the Chinese students of Spanish language watch films and series in subtitled version (M=3.42, DT=.98) with more frequency than in dubbed version (M=2.74,

DT=.96). Regarding the subtitled version, the majority of the survey respondents "sometimes" (39.3%), "almost always" (29.5%) and "always" (15.3%) watch the subtitled version. This equals a total of 84,1%. Unlike this version, the Chinese students watch Spanish films and series in dubbed version with less frequency; it focuses on "sometimes" (41%), "few times" (30.6%), making a total of 71,6%. The distribution of the uses of the two versions is presented in an unequal way, with a statistic significance: subtitled version ($\chi^2(4)=77.246$, $p=.000$), and dubbed version ($\chi^2(4)= 87.027$, $p=.000$) (Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency of the use of two versions

Version	Media		5 levels of frequency %					Square Chi	
	M	DT	1	2	3	4	5	$\chi^2(4)$	p
Subtitling	3.42	.98	2.2	13.7	39.3	29.5	15.3	77.25	.000
Dubbing	2.74	.96	9.3	30.6	41.0	15.3	3.8	87.03	.000

N=183

6.2 The preference of watching Spanish films and series among three subtitled modalities

The survey respondents prefer as a priority watching Spanish films and series with "double subtitle" (M=3.84, DT=1.21) and only with "Spanish subtitle" (M=3.25, DT=1.09) compared to watching them only with "Chinese subtitle" (M=2.63, DT=1.23). This result shows that a majority of 37.2% "totally agree" and other 32.2% "agree" with the use of double subtitle to watch Spanish series and films.

Table 2: The preference of three modalities

Version	Media		5 degrees of agreement					Square Chi	
	M	DT	1	2	3	4	5	$\chi^2(4)$	p
Double S	3.84	1.21	6.0	10.4	14.2	32.2	37.2	70.01	.000
S Spanish	3,25	1.09	4.9	21.9	30.6	29.0	13.7	42.44	.000
S Chinese	2.63	1.23	22.4	27.3	21.9	21.9	6.6	22.60	.000

N=183

6.3 The opinion about the efficacy of double subtitle for Spanish learning

The results of the correlational analysis from Pearson show that the preference of double subtitle in the answers of the survey respondents correlates positively and significantly both the subjective perception that watching the double subtitle has helped greatly in Spanish learning ($r=.533$, $p<.001$), and the objective opinion ($r=.688$, $p<.001$) (Table 3).

Table 3: Correlation of “double subtitle”, “help” and “better”

Double S	Help		Better	
	r	Sig. (p)	r	Sig. (p)
	.688**	.000	.533**	.000

N=183, **p<.001

6.4 Watching Spanish subtitled films and series as an entertainment

On the basis of significant correlation results (table 4), the aim of study of this section is focused on analyzing if the exposure to subtitled films and TV series means an entertainment for the survey respondents.

A descriptive study of the answers is carried out about the opinion that if the way of learning Spanish by watching subtitled series and films is an entertainment.

Table 4: Response about the level of “enjoyment”

	Media		5 degrees of agreement					Square Chi	
	M	DT	1	2	3	4	5	$\chi^2(4)$	p
Enjoyment	3.87	.90	2.2	4.4	20.8	49.2	23.5	130.47	.000

N=183

The general profile presents that 49.2% of the respondents “agree” and 23.5% express their “total agreement”, making a total of 72.7% of the respondents to believe that learning Spanish by watching Spanish subtitled films and series is an entertainment. This data present a result of $\chi^2(4)=130.470$, a level of statistical significance of p<.001.

On the other hand, it has been confirmed that the level of entertainment is negatively associated with the frequency of watching subtitled Spanish films and series (r=-.01, p=.456), although it has not reached the established level of statistical significance.

6.5 The relation between the frequency of watching subtitled versions and the Spanish level

The analytic results carried out by the Pearson correlation test show that the frequency of watching double subtitled version correlates positively with the Spanish level acquired both in Spain (r=.094, p=.204 and r=.092, p=.215) and in China (r=.075,

p=.311 and r=.045, p=.543), though the correlation has a low intensity level and does not reach the established significance level (Table 5).

Table 5: Correlation of the frequency of the use of two versions and the Spanish level

Acquired Spanish level	Subtitled		Double S	
	r	Sig. (p)	r	Sig. (p)
In Spain	.094	.204	.092	.215
In China	.075	.311	.045	.543

N=183, ***p<.001; **p<.001; *p<.05; +p<.0.1

6.6 Attitude of the survey respondents about the present situation of the Spanish audiovisual products in China

The results of the analysis carried out by the Pearson correlation test show that the “bother” about the shortage of Spanish audiovisual resources in China from the survey respondents correlates positively and significantly both with the “complains” that in China there is not much access to watch them in subtitled version, and the “desire” of having more ease to watch them in China, presenting the two of them r=.312, p<.001 and r=.447, p<.001 respectively (Table 6).

Table 6: Correlation of “bother”, “complains” and “desire”

Bother	Complains		Desire	
	r	Sig. (p)	r	Sig. (p)
	.312**	.000	.447**	.000

N=183, p<.001

6.7 Attitude of Chinese students of Spanish facing the present situation of subtitled cinema and television market in Spain

The results of the analysis carried out using Pearson correlation test show that the bother about being able to access only to talking dubbing in Spain correlates positively and significantly with not being able to understand the series and films in Spain due to the shortage of subtitling, presents r=.396, p<.001 respectively (Table 7).

Table 7: Correlation of “bother about being able to access only to talking dubbing” and “not being able to understand the series and films”

	Bother about being able to access only to talking dubbing	
Not being able to understand the series and films	r	Sig. (p)
	.396**	.000

N=183, p<.001

6.8 The utilization and function of the Hu Jiang platform

According to the previous analysis, it is known that the Chinese students of Spanish language feel distress for the lack of access and resources to watch Spanish films and series in China, so they would like to make things easier in order to watch them. In China, apart from watching the audiovisual products in the cinema and television, two other access also exist: by the Internet on the platform Hu Jiang, as well as series and films translated and subtitled by the associations. Therefore, a correlational study is conducted over the variables of using Huijiang for the “learning” of Spanish and for “watching series and films” in Spanish with subtitles, and the variables of the Spanish level in both the test “conducted in China” as well as the one “conducted in Spain”.

Table 8: Results of the relation between frequency of the use of Hu Jiang with the level of Spanish

Acquired Spanish level	For learning Spanish		For watching series and films subtitled	
	r	Sig.(p)	r	Sig.(p)
In Spain	-.043	.563	-.007	.927
In China	-.118	.110	-.143	.053

N=183

The analysis results conducted by the Pearson correlation test show that the utilization of Huijiang for Spanish learning and watching Spanish subtitled series and films correlates negatively with the level of Spanish in the tests conducted as much in Spain ($r=-.043$, $p=.563$; $r=-.007$, $p=.927$) as in China ($r=-.118$, $p=.110$; $r=-.143$, $p=.053$) respectively. However, the correlation has a low intensity level and does not reach the established statistical significance.

7 DISCUSSION ON SURVEY STUDY

This work focuses on the investigation about the relation between the cinema and series with subtitles, and the learning of

Spanish language for Chinese students using a quantitative form to carry out this research. The obtained results answer significantly the questions in this study.

The frequency of watching Spanish subtitled/dubbed films and series of the Chinese students of Spanish language

According to the advantages and disadvantages of subtitling and dubbing, apart from knowing the opinions and theories from the experts and teachers, it would be relevant to know the habits of consuming subtitled and dubbed films and TV series from the Chinese students of Spanish language. The results show that the survey respondents watch the subtitled version ($M=3.42$, $DT=.98$) with more frequency than the dubbed version ($M=2.74$, $DT=.96$). The respondents who “sometimes”, “almost always” and “always” watch the subtitled version make a total of 84.1%. On the contrary, those who “sometimes” and “rarely” watch the dubbed version make a total of 71.6%. This data could show that for the respondents the subtitled version has been watched with more frequency than the dubbed version. The reason for this result could be that in China subtitled is always done, so watching subtitled version is a custom for Chinese. Therefore, H1 has been confirmed.

The preference for watching films and series between three modalities

As it was mentioned before, subtitling is divided into three types: interlinguistic subtitle, intralinguistic subtitle and double subtitle. Given that it is clear that for the Chinese students of Spanish language the subtitled version is the most used one, it would be significant to know more about subtitling in order to learn which subtitling modality is preferred among the respondents.

The results show that the respondents who prefer watching Spanish films and series with double subtitle ($M=3.84$, $DT=1.21$) and with only Spanish subtitle ($M=3.25$, $DT=1.09$) have an average between 3 and 4 (indifferent and agree). As opposed to them, the only Chinese subtitle version ($M=2.63$, $DT=1.23$), has an average between 2 and 3 (disagree and indifferent). The data could indicate that between the three modalities of subtitling, double subtitle is the most favourable modality for the respondents. The next one is Spanish subtitle, and lastly, only Chinese subtitle, which has not been cherished by Chinese students. As a result, H2 has been confirmed.

Opinion about the efficacy of learning Spanish by using Spanish subtitled audiovisual products

Without the slightest doubt, the Chinese students of Spanish language frequently watch subtitled series and films, and according to the experts, the audiovisual aid in ELE class (films and TV series) could be a useful tool in ELE class. Many teachers and researchers [1]; [9-16] have confirmed the application function in them for both linguistic and cultural knowledge. The obtained results coincide with the opinions from the experts and teachers aforementioned, which seem to show that the double subtitled version not only make the Chinese students of

Spanish language think it is effective for the Spanish learning ($r=.688$, $p<.01$) but also their Spanish has indeed improved by this ($r=.533$, $p<.01$). Therefore, H3 has been confirmed.

Watching Spanish subtitled films and series as an entertainment

Researchers like Orozco Gómez [17] confirm that television and cinema are an entertainment that can educate spectators at the same time in an invisible and easy way. So, apart from being effective, it could be a learning way together as an entertainment, since a majority of 49.2% of the respondents agree in the idea of taking it as an entertainment, and other 23.5% totally agree. Because of that H4 has been confirmed. However, a negative correlation exists between the frequency of watching Spanish subtitled series and films and the opinion of thinking about them as an entertainment ($r=-.01$, $p=.456$) as it does not reach the statistical significance established level. The reason could be that on one hand, the participants who watch subtitled series and films with much frequency would have the motive to learn Spanish and would enjoy it, but they would take it as an obligation in order to improve the language. On the other hand, the respondents who think that this way of learning is an entertainment would not do it with frequency.

The relation between the frequency of watching subtitle audiovisual means and the Spanish level acquired.

As it is obvious that watching Spanish subtitled series and films is effective in the Spanish learning for the Chinese students, it would be interesting to discover if a relation between the frequency of use and the Spanish acquired level exists. The results show that the frequency of watching subtitled version and with double subtitle has a positive correlation in both Spanish tests ($r=.094$, $p=.204$ y $r=.092$, $p=.215$) and the Chinese ones ($r=.075$, $p=.311$ y $r=.045$, $p=.543$). Nevertheless it has a low level of intensity that does not reach the Statistical significance established level. This data could indicate that although the students think that watching subtitled films and series is an effective way to improve their Spanish, it does not have a direct and intensive relation between both of them. Therefore, H5 has been rejected.

Attitude of Chinese students of Spanish facing the current market situation of subtitled cinema and television in China/Spain

The obtained data could indicate that even though the students think that watching subtitled series and films is an effective way to improve their Spanish, it does not have a direct and intensive relation between both of them. At last, unfortunately, Chinese students of Spanish are not satisfied with the present situation of the cinema market and television in China, and they desire to have more ease to watch them in China ($r=.312$, $p<.001$; $r=.447$, $p<.001$). Therefore, the H6a has been confirmed.

As for the present market situation of the subtitled cinema and television in Spain, the annoyance of the respondents for being only able to access to dubbing with sound has a positive correlation and significant with the opinion that the lack of

visualisation of the subtitle sign prevents from understanding ($r=.396$, $p<.001$). For that reason, H6b has been confirmed. The annoyance and the incapacity of understanding properly could come from the Chinese custom of watching the subtitled version. In China, visualising is very important for both learning and watching films and series. Also, for this reason Chinese students of Spanish are usually better at reading comprehension than listening comprehension or oral expression. However, The word 'audiovisual' consists of audio and visual, and the visual part does not only count on images, the language is also an essential part of it. Therefore, the language should be able to be visualised. In this field, China has done better than Spain.

The efficacy of the Hu Jiang platform according to the Chinese students of the Spanish language

Another way of accessing to a source of Spanish subtitled series and films is through the Hu Jiang platform which is popular and greatly used in China. However, according to the obtained results, the using of the Hu Jiang platform for both the Spanish learning and watching subtitled audiovisual products has a negative correlation and not significant with the Spanish level acquired according to both the test conducted in Spain ($r=-.043$, $p=.563$; $r=-.007$, $p=.927$) and China ($r=-.118$, $p=.110$; $r=-.143$, $p=.053$). Therefore, H7 has been rejected.

8 CONCLUSIONS

Achievements

The experimental results have been successfully interpreted by the dynamic matrix method which permits to calculate both the mode frequencies and the spatial profiles. In this work, a quantitative investigation has been done following the study questions. Due to the reduced number of Chinese students of Spanish language taking part in the surveys, the obtained results could be good to show the opinions, attitudes and general preferences of the respondents about the relation between series and films subtitling, especially with double subtitle, and Spanish learning.

Through research, besides knowing the relation between subtitling series and films and the Spanish learning, it is possible to know the preference of Chinese students when using double subtitle. Additionally, their attitude regarding the current situation of subtitled cinema and television in China and Spain can be known, coming to the conclusion that they are not very satisfied and wish to have more access and resources in China in order to watch Spanish audiovisual products. We can also come to the conclusion that students wish to watch more subtitled version content in Spain. Therefore, the relation between the Spanish level with the use of the Hu Jiang platform and the subtitled films and series by the associations has been analysed, and even though the results have not been significant, it has been possible to know that depending on the opinions from the

respondents, the way to watch subtitled films and series is actually effective for the Spanish learning.

The process of carrying out the present work is also a process of amassing knowledge, which has greatly helped me to obtain more information about investigation, obtain more experience, train to become a future researcher, and get new ideas that could be different interesting lines of research that I could achieve in the near future.

Limitations

- a) In this study, only 207 Chinese students of Spanish language have taken part, having 183 of them their answers validated. However, there are currently a lot of Chinese students of Spanish in both China and Spain, so the sample is reduced.
- b) Through this work we can only know about the opinions and attitudes of the respondents about the relation of watching Spanish subtitled series and films with Spanish learning. The real result achieved by visualisation has not been investigated.
- c) The Spanish level does not only depend on the frequency of watching films and series in original version with subtitles, nor the subtitling type, but plenty of other aspects and variables exist that affect the Spanish level. In the present work, other influence factors have not been avoided.
- d) The questionnaire consists of questions using the Likert scale type. However, the Likert scale has disadvantages for research. Firstly, it is difficult to deal with neutral answers, like “indifferent”. Secondly, it does not allow to know with precision the “amount” of agreement or disagreement.

Future project

Regarding future projects, they could be done based on a considerable sample with more participants. And to avoid the limitations of the present work, another methodology type could be adapted, like the next experiment: choosing Chinese students of Spanish language and dividing them into two groups. One group is taught with Spanish subtitled audiovisual means. The second group is taught without that aid. All the pertinent controls are carried out as not to affect the results. Then, the notes, achievements and results of the study are compared through two different ways of teaching in both groups. This way, not only the Chinese students’ opinions are investigated, but also the purpose and effectiveness of the way of learning Spanish is ascertained through watching the Spanish subtitled series and films.

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