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Effects of ESL Learners' Use of Subtitles on News Watching: No Subtitle, during Watching, and after Watching News[*]

Yunju Choi[**]
(Hanyang University)
Kang-Young Lee[***]
(Chungbuk National University)

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This study aims to examine effects of subtitles on English news watching among 45 ESL students with high intermediate level in an intensive English program in the States. It particularly focuses on the following three stages to see differences: (1) watching news without subtitles, (2) using subtitles during watching news, and (3) reading subtitles after watching news. The participants are chosen from high intermediate to advanced level at an ESL program of a US university and asked to take a general listening test. The listening materials for news are selected in consideration of content, length, accent of speakers since those factors play pivotal roles in the result of ESL/EFL listening comprehension. The statistical results disclose that the group provided with subtitles after viewing the news outperforms the other two groups - suggesting that using subtitles after watching news is far beneficial for ESL learners with the levels. On the other hand, being exposed to subtitles during news watch becomes distracting over listening comprehension. Identifying unclear words and expressions has also been a disturbingly burden over the phase of using subtitles during the news watching. Taking such findings into account, ESL/EFL listening pedagogy may benefit from a focus on employing appropriate listening techniques to accelerate listening proficiency especially for learners with high-intermediate to advanced level.

[news watching/subtitles/ESL listening/high-intermediate to advanced level/ cognitive overload]

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[**] First author, [***] Corresponding author

I. INTRODUCTION

For ESL/EFL learners, listening skill is one of the essential domains to meet communicative competency. With the current technological applications from the Internet, the learners can benefit such various authentic listening materials as news, entertainments, conferences, movies, reality shows, or various social networks simultaneously all over the world. These listening materials are considered as important learning sources since they all provide authentic communicative language environments to ESL/EFL learners. As Park (2007) notes in her study on ESL learners' cultural adaptation in Australia, watching TV or video is one of the most frequently used methods for them to learn English language and culture in ESL environments. Kim and Park (2008) also studied the development of English competence with a video-supported listening class and found that students' listening and speaking skills have been developed. They further concluded that the students learned more authentic expressions and showed more confidence in communicating with English speakers.

In addition, how to enhance ESL/EFL learners' listening competency by using verbal information, subtitles, and captions has been one of the sole interesting subjects while previously existing studies have brought contrasting results. In fact, many research studies have reported the positive effects on comprehension and vocabulary acquisition by using subtitles into visual information; however, there also have been concerns of cognitive overload, which becomes somehow distracting to the learners. ESL/EFL teachers have been situated to decide whether they should use visual materials or without it, in what language (i.e., English or local language) is used if being utilized, and which setting will be beneficial for their students' listening comprehension.

The purpose of the present study is to examine the effect of ESL learners' use of subtitles on English news listening. To get a more validity of the effect from this investigation, the current study has divided the participants into the following three different phases: (1) watching news without subtitles, (2) using subtitles during watching news, and (3) using subtitles after watching news.

The research questions for this study are:

1. Does watching news without subtitles affect on the listening comprehension compared to using subtitles while watching news?

2. Does using subtitles while watching news affect on the listening comprehension compared to using English subtitles after watching news?

3. Does using English subtitles after watching news affect on listening comprehension compared to watching news without subtitles?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Effects of Using Audiovisual Materials on ESL/EFL Listening Comprehension

Researchers notice the increasing use of visual media in ESL/EFL classrooms with emphasis of communicative competence. Many studies have revealed positive effects of using audiovisual materials in ESL/EFL settings. In Cakir's (2006) study, video shows the students how people talk and behave in the culture of target language by bringing a wide range of communicative situations into the classroom. For teachers, video watching is not only for fun and interest but for promoting students' comprehension level. The study argues for the positive effects of video watching on their listening skill development because it motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom - "contextualizes language naturally and enables learners to experience authentic language in a controlled environment" (Cakir, 2006, p. 68). Katchen (2002) also states that when a video is "carefully selected and used," it will help learners to practice listening skill and to stimulate their speaking and writing ones. Indeed, when a video is used appropriately, it could be highly motivational and educational for both instructors and learners (as cited in Cakir, 2006, p. 71).

2.The Effects of Using Subtitles on ESL/EFL listening Comprehension

In addition to the positive effects of visual aids on the ESL/EFL listening, a large number of studies have investigated how and what degree subtitles could have an impact on improving learners' listening competency. From the studies, subtitles have brought about benefits on productive skills such as verbal recall and retention, reuse of vocabulary in the right context, and communicative performance of specific verbal and written tasks (Baltova, 1999; Borras & Lafayette, 1994; Garza, 1991; Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011; Neuman & Koskinen, 1992; Vanderplank, 1988, 1990).

Bird and Williams (2002) examine that whether captioning is beneficial for language learning by analyzing the new word acquisition through sound and text. The following three settings have been experimented: (1) text with sound, (2) text without sound, and (3) sound without text. The researchers find out that the text-with-sound group has shown a better recognition memory than the other two groups and conclude that the simultaneous exposure to the written and aural language can bring more effective and bigger results.

As a study with bilingual students, Neuman and Koskinen (1992) report that those who have viewed captioned videos perform significantly better on word identification, word

meaning, and content learning assessment than the students who have viewed the same videos without captions. Captioned television allows viewers to focus attention on both definitional and contextual information, to enhance word meaning by providing a semantically rich visual context that includes both printed words and pictorial images.

With 42 participants in high-intermediate level of French class, Borras and Lafayette (1994) investigate the effects of subtitles upon oral communicative performance as well as listening comprehension of the contents. This study is consistent with previous studies showing the usefulness of subtitles for bridging the gap between the L2 learners' competence in reading and listening. Further, the result shows that subtitles have potential value in helping the learners to produce comprehensible communicative output.

To test the effects of subtitles, researchers have designed different settings of subtitling; i.e., the participants' L1 subtitles vs. L2 subtitles and experiments have been conducted in many countries with the diverse L1 speakers in various L2 proficiency levels. Some studies have suggested that L1 subtitles help learners understand target language films better (Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999; Markham et al., 2001) while others have found that L2 subtitles are more beneficial (Baltova, 1999; Garza, 1991; Guichon & McLornan, 2008; Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011; Neuman & Koskinen, 1992; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004). Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) observed that Dutch-speaking elementary-age students improve their reading vocabulary knowledge after watching several Dutch-captioned English programs on TV in the home. Markham, Peter, and McCarthy (2001) examined the effects of using captions in listening to Spanish-language soundtrack to learners of Spanish as foreign language with one of three conditions: Spanish captions (target language), English captions (local language), or no captions. The English captions group outperformed the other two groups in summary in English and multiple choice questions. The Spanish captions group performed better than no captions group.

Guichon and McLornan (2008) conduct an experiment with French undergraduate students (N = 40), which has concluded that L2 subtitling is more beneficial than L1 because it causes "less lexical interference" (p. 85). Some other researchers also argue that "intralingual subtitles are superior than interlingual ones in facilitating content comprehension, vocabulary acquisition" (Bianchi & Ciabattoni, 2008; Bird & Williams, 2002; as cited in Birulés-Muntané & Soto-Faraco, 2016, p. 2). Birulés-Muntané and Soto-Faraco (2016) study potential learning effects of watching subtitled media with Spanish students at EFL intermediate level. One hour-long TV drama in English has been shown in the following three settings: without subtitle, with Spanish subtitles, and with English subtitles. The English subtitle group has scored best in listening skill test. Three groups have showed no reliable difference in the vocabulary test. In plot comprehension, the native Spanish subtitle group has outperformed the other two.

A study by Winke, Gass, and Sydorenko (2010) examines the effects of captioning video on listening comprehension in foreign language learning. They also have researched the ordering effects of captions: captioning during the first showing of the videos (captioning first) or captioning during the second showing of them (captioning second). The participants are Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and Russian language learners as second language at a college. The analysis informs that captioning has been more effective than without captioning. For the Spanish and Russian learners, captioning first group shows better results than captioning second group. However, for the Arabic and Chinese learners, captioning second group has had a better score than captioning first group. According to the interview following the experiment, the various foreign language learners comment that they have used captions to increase their attention, improve processing, reinforce previous knowledge, and analyze language.

In Hayati and Mohmedi (2011)'s research, they investigate 90 students in intermediate level in Iran. They examined the effectiveness of subtitles with 6 episodes of documentary listening. The participants have been divided into three groups; English dialogue without subtitles, with Persian subtitles, and with English subtitles. After the data collection with the six-sets of multiple-choice test to check their listening comprehension, the English subtitles group shows higher level than the Persian subtitles group, next, the Persian subtitles group outperforms no subtitle group. The English subtitles group commented that they have referred to the subtitles when they need to confirm the meaning of some key words during DVD watching. It seems that they have done translation while they are watching subtitles. The Persian subtitles group reported that the Persian subtitles have distracted their attention and hindered the focus on the listening to the sound in some degree.

Taylor (2005) studies the effectiveness of using captioned video on listening comprehension with the beginning level Spanish class students. The experimental group has watched the video with captions and comparative group watched the same video without captions. In addition, the researcher compares the comprehension score between the first year students and third year students in both groups. The result indicates that the third year students in caption group outperformed the first year students in the same group. Contrarily, the without caption group did not show difference between the third and the first year students. The first year students responded to the interview that the three channels of video, audio and text have rather caused the distraction or confusion. However, third year students have commented that the better ability to use three channels. Generally, the participants have responded positively to the use of captions.

The results of these studies still show a controversy concerning the effective ways to present audiovisual materials with/-out subtitles or the provision of subtitles in the target language or native language.

3. Potential Cognitive Overload by Multiple Inputs

There are studies on cognitive overload using visual and verbal information simultaneously. Kalyuga, Chandler, and Sweller (1999) use the term "redundancy effect" to indicate learning situation in which "eliminating redundant materials result in better performance than when the redundant materials are included" (Kalyuga et al., 1999, as cited in Moreno & Mayer, 2002, p. 157). According to cognitive load theory, "when learners need to split their attention between simultaneous text and graphics, it overburdens their limited working-memory capacity" (Chandler & Sweller, 1991, as cited in Moreno & Mayer, 2002, p. 157).

Mayer and Moreno's (2003) study explores on how to use words and pictures to foster meaningful learning. The researchers conclude that written text is redundant when a multimedia presentation consists of simultaneous animation, narration, and written text. In their analysis, the potential for cognitive overload is a central challenge the designers face in multimedia using instruction in which the learner's intended cognitive processing exceeds the learner's available cognitive capacity (p. 43). Followings are the suggested solutions to avoid cognitive overload for learners. Students understand a multimedia explanation better when the words are presented as narration rather than as on-screen text and when it is presented in learner-controlled segments rather than as a continuous presentation. Students better understand multimedia narratives when expressed in narration rather than on-screen text and when presented in a learner-control segment rather than a continuous presentation. They also show a better understanding when they know the names and behaviors of the components in the system with the extraneous material excluded, and when it contains signals concerning how to process the material.

As an explanation for a cognitive overload, Plass, Chun, Mayer, and Leutner (2003) notice that visual annotation has become a redundancy factor for SL learners. The participants for their study are 152 college students in German language course. The results of this study show that multiple representations of information do not always help learning. That is, providing two options, visual and verbal annotation, is effective in addressing individual differences only when students can choose which information they would like to select and process.

Kalyuga, Chandler, and Sweller (2004) have combined the three different text conditions with the diagrams: printed text only, spoken text only, or printed and spoken text. They report that students in the spoken-text-only condition have outperformed those in both the printed-text-only and the printed-and-spoken-text conditions. They claim that concurrent presentation of identical auditory and visual technical text (without the presence of diagrams) is significantly less efficient in comparison with the auditory-only text.

Diao, Chandler, and Sweller's (2007) study the effects of simultaneous written presentations on EFL learners' comprehension of spoken English. They compare the learners' listening comprehension using three instructional formats: auditory materials only, with a full written script, and with simultaneous subtitled text – intending to see whether the written text accompanying the listening material is facilitating or interfering learners' listening skill development. For the result, the groups with a script and subtitles shows a better comprehension only to the scripted and subtitled passage, but pooler performance on a following auditory passage than auditory materials only group. Here, the use of a full script or subtitles has interfered with learners' listening skill development because the simultaneous written text while listening could impose an "unnecessary cognitive load" and might hinder "construction or automation of listening schemas" (p. 251).

From the current research analysis, there, however, has been the scant number of research studies on the effects of simultaneous or consecutive subtitles among ESL learners especially with intermediate to advanced levels. Thus, the present study conducts an experiment for the learners with focuses on the following three phases to see differences in listening comprehension: (1) watching news without subtitles, (2) using subtitles during watching news, and (3) using subtitles after watching news. The participants for this study have various first language backgrounds, so subtitling with their first language is ruled out in this study. It is also expected to investigate how using subtitles is related to the listening comprehension and which circumstances of using subtitles (i.e., simultaneous or consecutive) are more effective for it.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

The participants for this study are ESL college students with high intermediate to advanced levels. They have all enrolled in an intensive English program at a college in the United States. Students in this program take diagnostic tests in four language skills when they start it and they should demonstrate required task completion each semester to proceed to the next level.

45 students from the high-intermediate to advanced (300 level) are chosen for this study. Their first languages range from Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Malaysian, Spanish and Vietnamese. The ages are from early twenties to early forties. The ratio of gender is almost half and half. Before the experiment, participants get informed of this experiment and a consent form has been distributed. I, teaching high-intermediate listening-speaking classes, have conducted this experiment in three consecutive classes in a month.

2. Test Materials

The listening materials are selected in the respects of content, length, accent of speakers under guidance of the program instructors to minimize the other factors which may influence the result of listening comprehension. The participants have taken a pre-test to measure his/her general listening competency. The pre-test is intended to see the difference of listening competency among them. A CNN news clip titled “Energy Regulation Debate” in Culture & Society section has been used for pre-test. Immediately after watching the news without subtitle, a 20 multiple-choice listening comprehension test has been administered to the students.

Each of the listening materials for both pre and post-tests is about 2-3 minutes length, and they are chosen from various sections of CNN news such as “Secret Japanese-American Mission” in Politics, “The World Trade Organization in Seattle” in Business & Economy, and “Using Dogs to Sniff out Mold in Homes” in Science & Technology for three consecutive sessions of this experiment. Participants were included only if they declared not having watched the same news clips before.

3. Data Collection

As seen from TABLE 1, the current study divides the participants into three groups and provide them with the following three treatments: (1) Group 1 watches an English news without subtitles, (2) Group 2 watches the English news with subtitles at the same time, and (3) Group 3 watches the English news without subtitle, after then, subtitles are provided.

TABLE 1

Three groups with three different treatments

	News listening
Group 1	Without subtitles
Group 2	Using subtitles during listening
Group 3	Using subtitles after listening

For the experiment, the participants from three classes are instructed to watch the same CNN news clips. For three consecutive sessions of this experiment, three clips are chosen. These are, “Secret Japanese-American Mission” in Politics for the first week, “The World Trade Organization in Seattle” in Business & Economy for the second week, and “Using Dogs to Sniff out Mold in Homes” in Science & Technology for the third one. These are similar to the one used in the pre-test and they have answered three sets of the multiple-choice questions after viewing the news. The test composed of 20 questions is about word

choices, listening comprehension, and conclusion to check the effects of this experiment. The questions are designed to assess for main ideas, details, and inferences. The same procedure has been performed to each group for all 3 sessions (See appendix 2).

Then, the participants have been asked to answer a questionnaire about using subtitles for their news listening. It consists of 6 scale answer choices, and the respondents select an answer to express his/her opinion whether it is beneficial for them to view subtitles in news.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 2 illustrates descriptive statistics on the participants' performance on the listening comprehension tests. Each student's test score is calculated as an average of 20 points after three weeks. A possible highest score is 20 and the lowest point is 0. The average score has been calculated in each group to compare. The group 1 who watch the news without subtitles have gained the lowest scores than those two other groups. The group 2, using subtitles during the news watching has just outperformed the group 1. On the other hand, the group 3 that has been provided with subtitles after viewing news has shown such distinctively highest average score (the mean value at 16.73 with the lowest Std. deviation at 1,100) than the other two groups.

TABLE 2

Descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Group 1 (without)	15	12.33	1.113	.287	11.72	12.95
Group 2 (during)	15	14.87	1.246	.322	14.18	15.56
Group 3 (after)	15	16.73	1.100	.284	16.12	17.34
Total	45	14.64	2.144	.320	14.00	15.29

TABLE 3 illustrates the results of the one-way ANOVA for the test results. The data from the between groups indicate the differences between the comparing groups. While the within groups investigates the differences among subjects in a same group because not every subject in a group performs equally on the test. Here, the differences from the between groups are much bigger than that from the within groups, so the within groups' differences are considered not to interfere with the result of this experiment. This proves that the three groups are homogenous and have similar backgrounds from the beginning of the study as there is no significant difference between the scores of the three groups as far

as their general proficiency is concerned. As observed, the significance value is 0.000 (i.e., p = .000), which is below 0.05, therefore, there is a significant difference among the performance of the three groups [F=54.867, p<0.05]. But we do not know which of the specific groups differs; a post hoc test (i.e., TABLE 4) has been performed to determine which group is better than the other group. The test is conducted to analyze data.

TABLE 3

ANOVA of the listening comprehension test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	146.311	2	73.156	54.867	.000
Within groups	56.000	42	1.333		
Total	202.311	44			

TABLE 4

Post Hoc Tests. Multiple comparisons

					95% Confidence Interval	
(I) Var00002	(J) Var00002	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Group1	Group 2	-2.533	.422	.000	-3.38	-1.68
(No)	Group 3	-4.400	.422	.000	-5.25	-3.55
Group 2	Group 1	2.533	.422	.000	1.68	3.38
(During)	Group 3	-1.867	.422	.000	-2.72	-1.02
Group 3	Group 1	4.400	.422	.000	3.55	5.25
(After)	Group 2	1.867	.422	.000	1.02	2.72

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As shown in TABLE 4, the group 3 shows a better performance than the group 1 and the group 2. The level of significance is set at 0.05. In the mean difference section, the group 3, treated with the subtitles after watching news shows big differences – indicating that the group 3 shows a higher score than the group with the subtitles during watching news, next, the group with subtitles during watching outperforms the group with no subtitle.

Therefore, the participants with the subtitles after watching news show the highest listening comprehension proficiency among three groups. That group reports that the subtitles have helped his/her understanding of the news content. The test outcomes and the questionnaire suggest that under a similar circumstance, students who are treated with the script after watching news benefit more than the phase with watching news without subtitles, or with watching news and reading subtitles at the same time. According to the questionnaire, the no-subtitle group could not have chance to check out the words or expressions about their news watching, so their understanding has remained uncertain. And

the group with subtitles during watching news has expressed some distracting factors because they need to figure out many things at once, such as news report, screen, sound, and subtitles – indicating the cognitive overload among the participants, as reported from some previous research studies. In this case, subtitles cannot function to lead to a better/precise understanding of listening materials. Group 3, using the subtitles after watching news comments that the subtitles have improved the ability/skills to recognize, understand, and remember new English vocabularies.

V. CONCLUSION

With the ESL participants ranged from the high intermediate to advanced level, this study has compared the listening comprehension level of the participants in three different phases; watching news with no subtitle, watching news with subtitles, and watching news and then reading subtitles. The experiment has been statistically conducted with various first language ESL learners enrolled at a US university to see which phase of subtitling is an effective factor facilitating a greater listening comprehension.

Statistically, using subtitles after or during watching news have a positive effect on the listening comprehension proficiency of the participants. Specifically, using subtitles after watching news treatment is the most beneficial and effective for the high intermediate to advanced level ESL students. In the multiple comparison tests, participants who have used the subtitles after watching news perform significantly higher than those who have watched them without subtitles and using subtitles during watching. Subtitles provided during the viewing news are a distracting factor rather than a helping one for the learners' comprehension because there is a lot of simultaneous information such as visual aids, pictures, and sound effects running through the learners' brain. This, therefore, might have worn off the learners' concentration on the content: i.e., the topic and specific information. This result is accordance with the suggestions from Kalyuga et al. (1999), Mayer and Moreno (2003) and Plass et al. (2003) in respect of cognitive overload.

Pedagogically, the results from the present study could be an immediate attempt for improving EFL/ESL learners' competence in communicative/academic listening. It is recommended that carefully chosen reading materials (i.e., subtitles) in listening practice should be sought for the sake of the learners' proficiency level. Besides, how and when to apply subtitles should be determined depending on the learners' level or listening materials.

This study has also found a limitation. Since it focuses only on the high intermediate to advanced level students' listening comprehension with the three treatments of subtitles; no subtitle, during watching, after watching, the result cannot be generalized to the beginner or intermediate ESL/EFL students. To a beginner or intermediate level ESL/EFL,

examining the effects of subtitles in a similar setting with this study can be an area that needs further research due to their limited capability of English listening. Moreover, it is recommended to study with the other genre of listening materials, like movies, TV shows, or YouTube streaming with the same treatments. The movie or show has slower speed than news report and YouTube, and they contain a flow of story to follow, so it is interesting to compare effects of using subtitles between in news watching and movie/TV show watching.

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APPENDIX 1
Questionnaire

Group A. Without subtitles

1. The visual images (pictures, titles, subtitles) on the screen help me to understand the content of news.
2. I focus on watching the visual images.
3. I focus on listening to the news report.
4. I have difficulty to understand the contents of news.
5. I think the subtitle will be helpful if provided.
6. I think looking at subtitle during watching the news will be helpful for understanding the news content.
7. I think looking at subtitle after watching the news will be helpful for understanding the news content.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

Group B. With subtitles during watching news

1. The visual images (pictures, titles, subtitles) on the screen help me to understand the content of news.
2. The subtitles help recognize the words what I do not understand clearly watching the news.
3. The subtitles help me recognize the expressions what I do not understand clearly watching the news.
4. The subtitles disturb me while I am watching the news.

5. I focus on listening to the report than reading the subtitles.
6. I focus on reading the subtitles than listening to the report.

Group C. With subtitles after watching news

1. The visual images (pictures, titles, subtitles) on the screen help me to understand the content of news.
2. The subtitles help me recognize the words what I did not understand clearly watching the news.
3. The subtitles help me recognize the expressions what I do not understand clearly watching the news.
4. I think the subtitle will be helpful if provided.
5. I think looking at subtitle during watching the news will be helpful for understanding the news content.
6. I think looking at subtitle after watching the news will be helpful for understanding the news content.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

APPENDIX 2

Test Sample for Pre-test

"Energy Regulation Debate"

I. Word Choices (1-13)

1. competition: In an attempt to increase competition…
   a) two or more people or businesses trying to do better than each other
   b) control by the government
   c) the results of the regulators
   d) control by one company

2. regulators: In California, the regulators …
   a) people who measure length and width
   b) people who monitor activities according to rules
   c) who are elected as governors of states
   d) are "just regular guys"

3. utilities: In California, the regulators, the utilities…
   a) organizations that have been elected to run the government

b) organizations that sell hamburgers and hotdogs
c) organizations providing power services to consumers, such as electricity, other power, and water
d) useful department stores

4. to cap: … all want the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to cap spot market prices.
a) to take away a limit on something
b) to sell something to someone
c) to buy something from someone
d) to establish a limit on something

5. outrageous: The Californians claim it will rein in outrageous prices.
a) excessive and unrestrained
b) calm and happy
c) generous
d) realistic

6. to hike : … power producers had the right to hike prices
a) to lower a tax or price
b) to keep something rigid and unchanging
c) to raise an amount suddenly and sharply
d) to cause to disappear or go away

7. to stabilize: … contracts between power producers and the utilities to stabilize prices.
a) to change something rapidly
b) to make angry or unpopular
c) to enable something to happen
d) to make something firm and unchanging

8. to take the helm: .... is soon to take the helm.
a) to take a long trip or vacation; to play
b) to buy up the available utilities
c) to lead; to steer or direct something
d) to disappear

9. In an attempt to increase _____, California deregulated its power industry.
a) intention
b) prices
c) regulations
d) competition

10. Many people in California want the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission _____ prices.
a) to raise
b) to hike

c) to cap
d) to skyrocket

11. Californians think the current prices for electricity are _____ .
a) stable
b) outrageous
c) calm
d) intention

12. Longer-term contracts might help _____ prices for electricity
a) to stabilize
b) to skyrocket
c) to hike
d) to raise

13. The commission says its _____ is to let supply and demand regulate the market.
a) dream
b) fear
c) intention
d) guess

II. Listening Comprehension (14-17)

14. According to the article, why was the California power industry de-regulate?
a) The Governor wanted it to happened.
b) The prices for electricity were too low.
c) To increase competition and keep prices low.
d) To make more rules for the power industry.

15. What do many people in California now want the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to do about prices of electrical power?
a) People want the commission to raise prices.
b) People want the commission to cap prices.
c) People want the commission to hike prices.
d) People want the commission to deregulate the power industry.

16. According to the article, what do some energy experts think about temporary price caps?
a) Some energy experts think that the crisis will continue unless there are temporary price caps.
b) Some energy experts are quite uninterested in this issue.
c) Some energy experts that that they should be writing books about the subject.
d) Some energy experts think that this problem will go away on its own.

17. When did the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issue the recent statement about its intention in refusing to re-regulate the power industry?
a) August 15, 2000

b) December 15, 2000
c) December 25,2000
d) January 1, 2001

III. Conclusion (18-20)

18. The expression, "they are living in an ivory tower", refers to people who are out of touch with the real world. In this article, who is the Governor referring to when he says this?
   a) Poor people in San Diego who are having to find the money to pay their electricity bills.
   b) Business owners who have had their costs increase dramatically.
   c) The Governor is referring to himself.
   d) The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission members who are not putting a cap on prices.

19. When Loretta Lynch says "..all of California was beating down the door of federal regulators…", what does she mean?
   a) There was a violent demonstration in front of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.
   b) Many people and groups were demanding that the Commission do something about prices.
   c) The doors of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission building were very easily broken.
   d) The federal regulators are very popular.

20. To whom is this article referring when it says, "With an administration known to be friendly to free markets soon to take the helm…"
   a) President Clinton and Vice-President Gore.
   b) Governor Gray Davis of California.
   c) President-elect Bush and Vice-President-elect Cheney.
   d) There is not enough information to answer this question.

Test Sample for Post-test

"The World Trade Organization in Seattle"

I. Word Choices (1-12)

1. to stall
   a) to put animals in a barn for the night
   b) to stay in one place by one's own choice
   c) to bring to a standstill
   d) to shop for holiday presents

2. blockade
   a) the interruption of something
   b) the building of a friendship
   c) a celebration of joy

d) a security scare

3. obscure
   a) bright and active
   b) relatively unknown
   c) popular
   d) well-known celebrity

4. coalition
   a) coal company
   b) training place for colts and horses
   c) enemies; people who disagree about everything
   d) a union or combination

5. habitat
   a) employment
   b) place of entertainment and celebration
   c) place where plants and animals live; residence
   d) place of political power

6. agenda
   a) plan or outline of things to be done
   b) governmental action or discipline
   c) agency of action groups
   d) violence

7. self-avowed
   a) declared openly without shame
   b) simple and not complicated or hard to understand
   c) cordoned off
   d) disregarded

8. anarchists
   a) people who vote in every election
   b) people who are always against free trade
   c) people who rebel against authority or order
   d) people who like to travel around the worlds

9. to cordon off
   a) to cut into little pieces
   b) to invade
   c) to celebrate and enjoy
   d) to form a protective line or barrier

10. There were _____ moments in Seattle when delegates and protestors were near the convention center.

a) tense
b) temporary
c) obscure
d) preliminary

11. The protestors were_____ of farmers, labor gropus, and environmentalists.
a) a truce
b) a coalition
c) a delegation
d) tense

12. Protestors wanted _____the meetings of the WTO.
a) to celebrate
b) to obscure
c) to enjoy
d) to stall

Listening Comprehension (13-17)

13. Protestors wanted _____the meetings of the WTO.
a) to celebrate
b) to obscure
c) to enjoy
d) to stall

14. Why couldn't some WTO delegates get to their meetings on the first day of the trade talks?
a) Some overslept and missed the meeting.
b) A human chain of protestors blocked their way.
c) The police kept delegates away.
d) The weather was rainy in Seattle so that the traffic was terrible.

15. According to the article, why were labor groups, environmentalists, and farmers all there to protest?
a) They all fear that the WTO can "upset their world" and affect them in many ways.
b) Seattle is a good city to visit any time of the year.
c) The Seattle mayor had invited everyone to visit his city.
d) The politicians know that the meetings are important for the presidential race.

16. According to the article, why were some protestors arrested?
a) They irritated the mayor of Seattle.
b) The image of Seattle was damaged
c) They were peaceful.
d) They damaged property and looted storefronts.

17. How many protestors in Seattle demonstrated in a peaceful manner?
a) One hundred fifty.

b) Five million.
c) Tens of thousands.
d) Ten thousand.

Conclusion (18-20)

18. What does it mean that the violent protestors "stole the headlines"?
a) They stole newspapers from newstands and news boxes.
b) They got all the attention from newspapers and other media.
c) They were arrested for stealing.
d) They disrupted the meetings of the WTO.

19. What does it mean that the WTO was "such an obscure organization"?
a) It was a secret organization until the meeting in Seattle.
b) It was a group without any power.
c) It was a group that had not received a lot of world attention in the past.
d) It was a group that met only at night.

20. Why does the article conclude that U.S. presidential candidates will listen to the word "trade" in the future?
a) Protestors get arrested for violent demonstrations.
b) There might be more violent demonstrations.
c) There are people who think the issue of world trade is unimportant.
d) There are people in the United States who are concerned about issues of world trade.

Examples in: English

Applicable Language: English

Applicable Level: Secondary

Yunju Choi
Department of English Language and Literature
Hanyang University
222, Wangsimni-ro, Seongdong-gu,
Seoul, 04763, Korea
Email: cjyunju@gmail.com

Kang-Young Lee
The Office of Creative and Convergent Education
Chungbuk National University
Chungdae-ro 1, Seowon-gu, Cheongju-si,

Chungcheongbuk-do, 28644, Korea
Email: kangyounglee@cbnu.ac.kr

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