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ENGLISH MOVIES: EFFECTS OF L1/L2 SUBTITLES ON ESL LEARNER'S LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND VOCABULARY

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This research paper attached hereto, entitled English Movies: Effects of L1/L2 Subtitles on ESL Learner's Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary prepared and submitted by Ng Yi Ru in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English Education is hereby accepted.

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ABSTRACT

This study looks into the effects of different types of subtitles—first language (L1), second language (L2), and no subtitles—on Malaysian university students' listening comprehension and vocabulary development. A mixed-method research strategy including an experimental study and semi-structured interviews was used. The sample consisted of foundation and undergraduate students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) who were native Chinese speakers with intermediate English skills. The experimental study exposed students to a short film with either L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles, or no subtitles, followed by a listening comprehension and vocabulary test. The semi-structured interviews explored students' perspectives on the effectiveness of subtitles in enhancing language skills. The experimental study's findings revealed that there is a significant difference between the test score among the groups. The students who watched the short video with L2 subtitles scored much better on the listening comprehension and vocabulary test than the other two groups. Interviews revealed that, while both types of subtitles were useful to students, L1 subtitles were more successful for listening comprehension and L2 subtitles for vocabulary acquisition. Personal preferences differed, with some students preferring L1 subtitles for improved comprehension. The study explores the effectiveness of subtitles as a tool for improving listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Future research should look at the impact of subtitles on a larger, more diverse population, as well as longitudinal studies, to acquire a more complete understanding of their effects on language acquisition.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

English language is currently globalized as a significant communication tool. It is spoken by people all over the world as they seek a common media to speak with one another in terms of work, education, and communicating with foreigners or other races; hence, making English a worldwide international language. English is considered the second official language (L2) in Malaysia to be taught in schools. Although it is compulsory for Malaysians to learn English language as a subject for 6 years in primary school and 5 years in secondary school, studies found that majority failed to master the language after 11 years of education (Bakar et al., 2018).

Listening is one of the core components of the four English skills that affects the communication and learning process of the other language skills such as reading, speaking and writing. Many L2 learners believe that listening is the most challenging language skill to acquire (Joyce, 2019). Unable to listen effectively will affect the overall language skills performance as one needs to listen to learn. Other than that, poor listening will create language barriers such as misunderstanding and ambiguity. It is obvious that developing L2 listening competency is crucial, yet despite this, L2 learners are rarely taught to listen effectively (Vandergrift, 2007).

The Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education) lists having excellent communication skills, which includes listening abilities, as one of the essential qualities of Malaysian graduates (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Unfortunately, we have yet to achieve the goal. This was shown in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 2022 examination result statistics, 52,674 candidates (14.3%) out of 373,974 candidates failed English (Norhisham, 2023). Insufficient foundational knowledge of English will cause difficulties in tertiary education and the workplace. According to a newspaper article reported

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in The Sun Daily (2019), employers complained that majority of the Malaysian fresh graduates failed to listen effectively, which affects the quality of work. Being an active listener is a key to growth as it helps does not only in getting the gist of conversations and discussions but also in leadership development (Maya, 2023). Hence, it is significant to help improve Malaysian undergraduate students regarding their listening skills to enable smooth listening process to enhance their learning and communication and prepare them for the next phase of life in the society or workplace. This will help the students in having strong basic listening skills, preventing having problems when they deal with work and clients after graduation.

Due to the gradual advancement of technology, the current generation is unsuited to relying solely on books or conventional teaching approaches since they are raised in a world where technology is used in every part of daily life (Hashim & Aziz, 2022). Hence, it is best to seek modern media that can enable learners to improve their learning. Among the media that can be utilised to help students to get better at listening and vocabulary is the English movies and films along with subtitles in the targeted language, English (Napikul et al., 2018). Students will find movies more enjoyable than video materials designed for language instruction as a learning tool to improve their listening skills because movies are typically used for enjoyment and entertainment (Liando et al., 2018). Youngs (2021) reported on BBC News that young adults in the age range of 18-25 favour watching movies or films with subtitles.

Movies with subtitles have more potential to improve learners' listening comprehension compared to non-subtitled movies (Birulés-Muntané & Soto-Faraco, 2016, as cited in Yaacob et al., 2021). Baker and Saldanha (2019) claimed that subtitles can be inter-lingual (also known as "diagonal"), when the language of the audiovisual content differs from the language of the subtitles such as L2 audio with L1 subtitles; or intra-lingual (also known

as "vertical"), meaning same language subtitles such as when both the audio and subtitles are in L2. L1 subtitles are particularly useful in understanding the content, while L2 subtitles can be used to break up L2 speech into words (Wi & Boers, 2023). L1 subtitles benefit the learners as they provide a translation of the target language into the language that the learners have in their mind, most probably L1; while L2 subtitles aid the listening process by visualizing the audio. This study aimed to experiment with which type of subtitles: subtitles in first language (L1) or subtitles in English (L2) is more effective in enhancing listening comprehension and vocabulary among university students.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Malaysian researchers have conducted several studies mainly qualitative survey research on the topic of whether movie subtitles would help learners in improving their English skills such as listening comprehension using questionnaires without conducting experimental research and interview (Mazlan & Kamal, 2022; Hashim & Aziz, 2022). Yaacob et al. (2021) suggested conducting tests and interviews to collect more reliable data from the respondents.

Napikul et al. (2018) proved that subtitles in the students' mother tongue aided them in understanding the content more than L2 subtitles and no subtitles. The research was done with a Thai tenth-grade student context; hence, the current study is to verify whether this works the same in a Malaysian tertiary level context. This study would be a guide for the students to acknowledge what language of subtitles (L1 or L2) should they choose for an English movie to efficiently improve their English language while being entertained.

1.3 Research Questions

1. Are there any significant differences among the listening comprehension and vocabulary test scores of the students who watch the movie with L1 subtitles, the students who watch the movie with L2 subtitles and the students who watch the movie without any subtitles?

   Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference between the three groups and the students who watched the movie with L1 subtitles outperformed the other two groups of students in the listening comprehension and vocabulary test.

   Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference between the three groups and the students who watched the movie with L2 subtitles outperformed the other two groups of students in the listening comprehension and vocabulary test.

   Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the students who watched the movie with L1 subtitles, the students who watched the movie with L2 subtitles and the students who watched the movie with no subtitles in the listening comprehension and vocabulary test.

2. What are the students' perspectives on how L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles and no subtitles on movies affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary?

   Hypothesis 1: Students generally agreed that L1 subtitles enhance their listening comprehension and vocabulary.

   Hypothesis 2: Students generally agreed that L2 subtitles enhance their listening comprehension and vocabulary.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. This study aimed to experiment what type of subtitles (L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles or no subtitles) can enhance university students' listening comprehension and vocabulary.

2. This study was conducted to obtain the students' perspectives on how L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles and no subtitles on movies affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary.

1.5 Significance of Study

The purpose of the study was to experiment with whether subtitles enhance Malaysian university students in their listening comprehension and vocabulary. It is a common misconception that listening is an inherent skill that is acquired passively through linguistic exposure (Bakar et al., 2018). This is one of the core reasons that leads to poor English proficiency levels among tertiary level students. Malaysian fresh graduates are struggling to get job offers as employers consistently identify that they are lack English proficiency, which an essential soft skill is lacking from the list (Tan, 2017; The Star, 2017; The Sun Daily, 2019). Furthermore, Wang and Treffers-Daller (2017) proved that there is a significant relationship between vocabulary size and listening comprehension. The largest barrier hindering learners from mastering listening comprehension is the limited vocabulary they have (Sah & Shah, 2020). Thus, the two elements, listening comprehension and vocabulary should be given the same level of awareness to be improved. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct a study to seek a method that could assist university students in boosting their listening competency along with improving their vocabulary such as using movies with subtitles as their platform.

1.6 Limitation of Study

This study was targeting foundation and undergraduate students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Kampar campus. The study was limited as it will be testing on Chinese students only since UTAR has a majority of Chinese. Since the experimental groups are need to categorise into watching the movie with L1 subtitles or L2 subtitles; therefore, to unify the background knowledge and the participants' L1, Chinese samples from the population with intermediate English language proficiency by referring to their SPM results was recruited. According to Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2023), the range of credit to super credit (C to B+) is from 50 marks to 69 marks. Hence, samples was chosen within a particular range.

Apart from that, another limitation of the study was the difference in attention span and genre preferences of the participants. Considering that some individuals have a short attention span, English short films was used as the media for the experiment. Consequently, this minimized the impact on the listening comprehension and vocabulary test results due to short attention span. Additionally, a simple survey was conducted among the UTAR students to tackle the genre preferences. The short film was chosen based on a generalisation of the most popular genre from the survey.

Moreover, Wong et al. (2020) presented an argument that some learners might have a reliance on subtitles to such an extent that they develop a habitual tendency to read the subtitles, regardless of their understanding of the speaker. There exists a range of individual preferences regarding the utilization and existence of subtitles. As a result, the study addressed the potential issue of subtitle misuse, including instances where individuals may read for comprehension or disregard the subtitles.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Listening

Wolvin and Coakley (1995) define listening is the process of receiving, comprehending and interpreting visual and auditory cues. The act of listening involves focusing and attempting to understand what we hear.

1.7.2 Listening comprehension

Listening comprehension is a conscious and dynamic process in which students construct their understanding by interpreting speech at sentence and discourse levels using lexical knowledge (Nazarieh et al., 2022).

1.7.3 Subtitles

Subtitles benefit the audience in converting spoken language from movies or short films into text (Ray, 2022). They are lines of text that normally show on the bottom of the screen. They assist the deaf or audience with poor listening. Reich (2006) claims that subtitles serve as an audio-visual translation to ease the audience's comprehension and discourse by visualizing the spoken language (L2) into a text of language that the audience understands, most likely their L1. Subtitles that visualize spoken language (L2) into the same language (L2) are also known as captions.

1.7.4 First Language (L1)

According to Hoque (2017), L1 refers to the language an individual is first exposed to at birth, representing the initial language learned and acquired during early development, which is also known as the mother tongue.

1.7.5   Second language (L2)

The term "L2" incorporates any language acquired after the acquisition of the L1, irrespective of its numerical order in the sequence of languages learnt, which can occur in both formal classroom settings and through more informal, natural exposure (Gass et al., 2020).

1.7.6   Movie

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2023), a movie is defined as a story-telling visual medium of moving images shown in a cinematic setting or broadcasted on television. The length of a movie often falls on the average of 80 to 120 minutes, with the most favourable duration between 90 and 100 minutes (Follows, 2017; Jarząbek, 2018). Movies are written in different genres such as animation, action, drama, romance, horror, thriller and adventure. People choose, access and watch different genres according to their preferences and purposes such as entertainment and education.

1.7.7   Short film

Brown (2020) clarified that "film" and "movie" both present the concept of "motion pictures", yet can be employed in different manners. "Film" is normally used by creators such as directors and producers; "movie" is widely used by consumers namely those who attend movie screenings. Short films can be distinguished based on the timeframe. It is recognised as an innovative audio-visual production with a duration of not more than 40 minutes (Oscars, 2019).

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension is a fundamental skill to maintain effective communication in both academic and everyday life settings (Yavuz, 2017). Listening differs from hearing, which is inherent since birth while listening is a skill that needs to be cultivated (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). According to Roth (2012), hearing is a passive physical act of perceiving auditory stimuli with our ears, while listening encompasses a deliberate and active process of interpreting the implication of the sounds. In other words, receiving the sound waves is considered as hearing, whereas the attempt to comprehend and consider the meaning of what is heard is listening. The cognitive process including the recognition of speech sounds and interpretation of lexical meaning is defined as listening comprehension (Ahmadi, 2016).

The development of listening comprehension skills facilitates language acquisition and enhances their understanding of spoken language input. In short, listening comprehension is known as by far the most important skill to master in order to be known as proficient in a language. Wilkins (1972) claimed that vocabulary is more important than grammar when it comes to listening comprehension. He believed that having a large capacity of vocabulary aids in conveying meaning, whereby learners will be able to understand utterances even if they lack of grammar knowledge. Therefore, a strong bond is formed between listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition (Zhang & Zhang, 2020). Exposure to unfamiliar words will enable the enhancement of vocabulary, yet learners will need a media to help them understand. According to Katemba and Ning (2018), subtitles in movies have indeed potential to assist vocabulary acquisition as learners can refer to the unfamiliar words in the subtitle along with visual context to understand thoroughly and accurately.

2.2 Usage of Subtitles in Improving Listening Comprehension

Several aspects could hinder the understanding of spoken language. For instance, repetition, rate of delivery, changes in intonation patterns, use of colloquial language and performance variables are barriers that make listening difficult. The above aspects might lead to poor listening comprehension such as misunderstanding.

Barclay (2012) highlighted the vision role in learning. The presence of visual stimuli may have an impact on individuals' understanding. Hence, visualizing the speech can facilitate learners in their listening comprehension. Learners can refer to the subtitles whenever they cannot follow the utterances. The implementation of video materials such as movies, short films and TV programs along with subtitles to practice listening comprehension will promote motivation as learners are likely to gain interest whenever they can hear and see the language simultaneously, with the support of visual graphics (Yasin et al., 2017). Authentic movies are a better choice of learning tool compared to traditional educational materials as learners will be attracted to the storyline. This will activate a curiosity atmosphere to know what is happening in the story and, at the same time explore non-verbal linguistic elements (Aksu-Ataç & Köprülü-Günay, 2018).

Parks (1994) claimed that subtitles are capable of learners' improvement in vocabulary, listening comprehension, word recognition and decoding skills. The usage of L1 subtitles emphasizes the relationship between the role of L1 in developing L2 listening comprehension. The relationship is found positive as it reduced learners' anxiety in dealing with L2 language (Ochi, 2009). Learners will be confident in their ability to comprehend with the help of their L1. Several studies conducted in Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Japan have investigated the impact of L1/L2 subtitles on ESL learners' vocabulary acquisition and listening comprehension and resulted in proving that subtitles do bring little to significant improvement in listening comprehension (Napikul et al., 2018; Alabsi, 2020; Dizon &

Thanyawatpokin, 2021). Yet, arguments have been made from a Slovak context experimental study regarding the significance of subtitles improving listening comprehension (Metruk, 2018). The study concluded that subtitles are affecting the learners' comprehension through reading. This shows that the student's background, culture, and level of proficiency should be put into consideration to conclude whether subtitles are beneficial for their listening comprehension. The current study will be experimenting with the validity of whether subtitles are capable of aiding learners' listening comprehension in a Malaysian university context.

2.3 Theory of Krashen (i+1)

This theory emphasizes language acquisition over language learning. Acquisition refers to subconscious learning that relies on exposure and interaction in language (Yusuf, 2009). Krashen (2009) asserts in his Input Hypothesis that the accessibility of comprehensible input is an absolute necessity for language learning, with vocabulary acquisition playing a key part in facilitating this cognitive process. Comprehensible input refers to the exposure to spoken or written language that is slightly advanced from the learners' current language level (Chen, 2022). This represents "i+1", where "i" signifies the learners' current language knowledge level, and "+1" represents a language content that is slightly more complicated but still comprehensible by the learner so that it is stretching them to learn more yet not overwhelming. Comprehensible input supports learners by providing them with language content just beyond their existing understanding, fostering gradual linguistic growth and comprehension.

2.4 Theoretical Framework
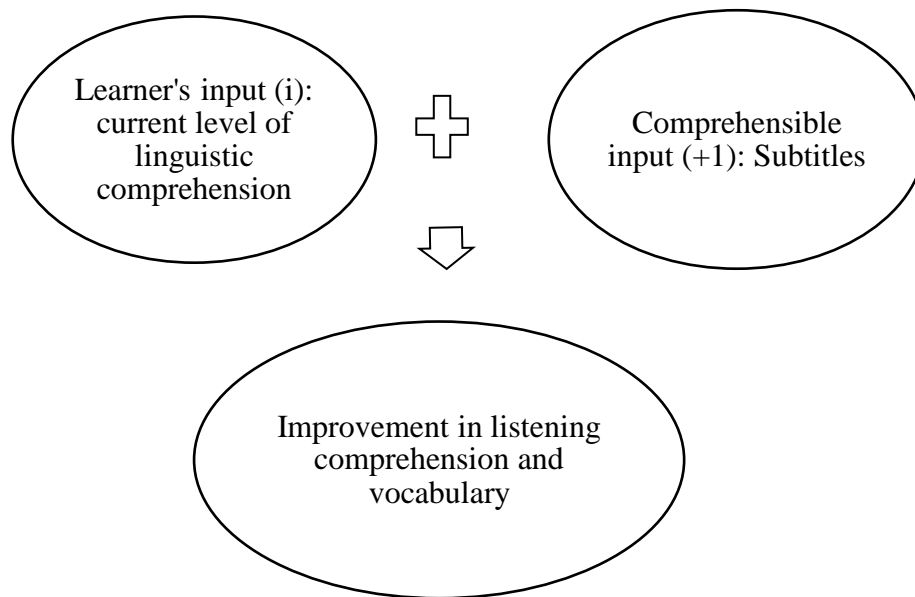
Figure 1: Implementation of Krashen's (i+1)

Krashen's (i+1) applies to the current study to experiment with the usage of subtitles in improving listening comprehension and vocabulary. Learners will watch the short film with their current level of linguistic abilities (i) and seek for the subtitles' help whenever they are presented with unfamiliar words. The implementation of subtitles accommodates to this theory as it will act as a comprehensible input (+1) that aids the audiences in gaining language knowledge in terms of comprehension and vocabulary throughout the short film.

2.5 Bloom's Taxonomy

According to Cain (2023) from Encyclopedia Britannica, the term "taxonomy" is also known as biological "systematics" or "classifications" into hierarchies. Bloom's Taxonomy is a multi-tiered classifying model of thinking (Forehand, 2005). Six cognitive levels of thinking complexity are known as remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating (Bloom, 1956). Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) had defined the six hierarchies:

a. Remembering: Learners are able to retrieve, recognize and recall knowledge from their long-term memory.

b. Understanding: Learners are able to comprehend and make sense of what they learnt through interpretation, classification, summarization, comparison and explanation.

c. Applying: Learners are able to implement and execute the gained knowledge to solve problems and apply concepts in new situations.

d. Analyzing: Learners are able to break concepts into small parts and understand the pattern and relationship of the overall structure.

e. Evaluating: Learners are able to make judgements with the support of evidence.

f. Creating: Learners are able to gather and utilize the gained knowledge to compose an original work.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a beneficial tool in paper design to evaluate students (Köksal & Ulum, 2018). Knowing the hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy will enable educators and researchers to design assessments and test to tackle different level of cognitive skills and have various types of questions such as testing on basic understanding and higher-order thinking skills.

2.6 Related Past Year Studies in Malaysia

Several past studies relating to the usage of subtitles to enhance listening comprehension and/or vocabulary were done in Malaysia. The studies were done in different context and focus.

2.6.1 Intra-lingual subtitles for vocabulary improvement

Azizi and Aziz (2019) conducted a study in a secondary school context focusing on the effect of intra-lingual subtitles in enhancing vocabulary acquisition. A similar focus and context of the study was conducted by Zakaria and Jalil (2022)

The studies resulted positively showing that English subtitles in English-dubbed videos have the potential to help learners to understand the meaning of the vocabularies. This is due to the combination of pictorial and textual cues. The learners enjoyed learning through subtitles as they viewed authentic subtitled videos are interesting; hence, gained the motivation to learn through them. The studies proved that videos, films and drama with subtitles are highly effective in helping learners to learn their target language. Another study was conducted in a rural primary school setting by Hariffin and Said (2019). A lengthy documentary film was used for the sample within the age range of 9 to 11. The samples performed slightly better than the control group in this study, showing that subtitles indeed will help the learners in vocabulary acquisition, but it is essential to choose a suitable genre as it is an important element that might determine the result. Hence, the current study will conduct a survey to indicate a suitable genre for the samples.

2.6.2   Students' perspective on subtitles as a learning tool

Several past studies were done in Malaysia to understand the student's perspective on using multimedia with subtitles as a learning tool. Nasaruddin and Kamalludeen (2020) conducted a semi-structured interview in the context of Malay primary schoolers. Interesting findings were made based on the participants' experiences within their daily lives such as watching movies and listening to songs. The participants talked from past experiences and shared that they believed subtitles are beneficial in vocabulary learning. They were exposed to new words through watching movies and films and understand the meaning through context and inter-lingual subtitles as the meaning is presented in the

subtitles as a translation; whereas inter-lingual subtitles provide them the correct spelling of the newly learnt words. Some claimed that without intra-lingual subtitles, the audience might learn the new vocabulary but misspell it. This study provides sufficient knowledge on the usage of inter-lingual and intra-lingual subtitles in vocabulary acquisition.

On the other hand, a quantitative research was done by Yaacob et al. (2021) among non-English major diploma students from Pahang to gather information on their point of view regarding the effectiveness of utilizing English movies with subtitles in second language acquisition. The survey was designed with two sections including demographic background questions and Likert-scale questions for statements related to the topic. According to the data, the percentage of the participants who prefer watching movies with English subtitles, Malay subtitles and no subtitles stands for 79%, 16% and 5% respectively. A similar quantitative study was done Mazlan and Kamal (2022) in Shah Alam also resulted majority of undergraduate students needing subtitles to understand the meaning while watching a movie, with a statistic of 88% out of 92 participants. The respondents from Yaacob et al.'s (2021) study agreed that movies with subtitles can enhance general language acquisition, as 44% of them believed it helps in listening, 33% for reading and 23% for speaking. This study shows that movies with subtitles will be a useful platform for second language acquisition. Mazlan and Kamal's (2022) research resulted in emphasized that movies with subtitles not only improve language skills, but also vocabulary.

2.7 Conclusion

In a nutshell, it is acknowledged from past experimental studies done overseas that movies with subtitles could be effective in enhancing learners' listening comprehension and vocabulary. Malaysian past studies respondents agreed to the result. This study will experiment the validity of the believes through implementing an experimental study in order to get a quantitative data on whether movies subtitles bring an increase on their listening comprehension and vocabulary, and understand the samples' perspective on the effectiveness.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology of this study, including the design of study, research framework, measurement tool, subject and sampling, data collection and analysis.

3.2 Design of Study

Several researchers claimed that mixed-method designs are likely the best research method to provide a solitary answer to research questions compared to using solely qualitative or quantitative approaches, which might be insufficient (McMillan & Schumacher, 2009; Palinkas et al., 2015). This study is a mixed-method designed research including an experimental study and semi-structured interviews. The experimental research was conducted to expose the samples with subtitles to get data on improvements in listening comprehension and vocabulary that answered to the first research question. The semi-structured interview session was to have a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of using subtitles to improve listening comprehension and vocabulary from the student's perspective, which answered the second research question. The following table presents a clear overview of the research design including the research questions, the main source of data and the data analysis method.

Table 1: Overview of research design

Research question	Main source of data	Data analysis method
Are there any significant differences among the listening comprehension and vocabulary test scores of the students who watch the movie without/with L1/L2 subtitles?	Experimental study	Statistical analysis by calculating the variance through ANOVA
What are students' perspectives on how L1 subtitles, L2 subtitles and no subtitles on movies affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary?	Semi-structured interviews	Thematic analysis by examining data to identify and classify common topics and ideas.

3.3 Research Framework
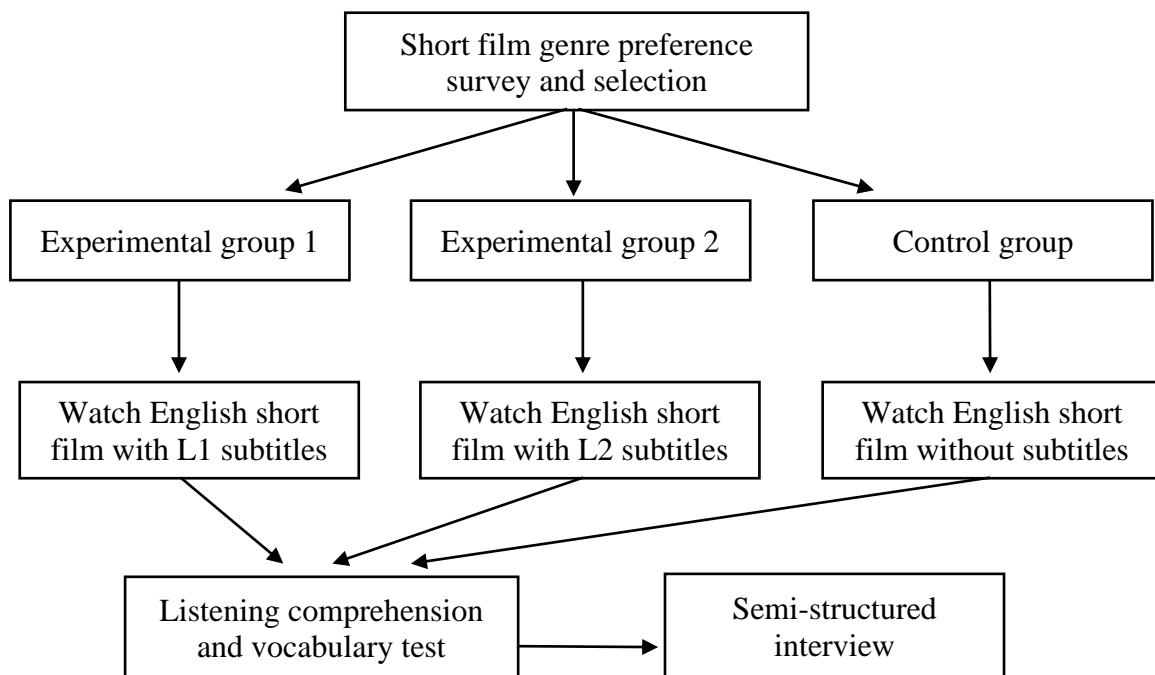
Figure 2: Paradigm of the study

The study was conducted according the procedures of a survey to collect data among the samples regarding their genre preferences, short film selection, a short film session for subtitle exposures, a listening comprehension and vocabulary test and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1   Short film genre preference and selection

Due to the wide range of movie genres such as adventure, thriller, romance and comedy, genre preferences will vary among every individual. The genre preferences are influenced by what they are mostly exposed to and their previous experience with the genre (Kamalesh et al., 2019). For example, if an individual is often exposed to and enjoys comedy TV series, the individual would likely prefer comedy movies over others. Hence, there might be a difference in the genre preferences among the sample, which will affect their willingness to pay attention to the short film. As a solution, a quick survey was done among the samples before the experiment to understand their genre preference. After gathering the data, the short film was selected according to the most preferable genre.

3.3.2   Short film session for subtitle exposures

After selecting the appropriate short film, a timeslot and three venues was booked for the experiment. The samples were randomly divided into two experimental groups and one control group. The three groups watched the same short film simultaneously in different venues. Experimental group 1 watched the short film with L1 subtitles, which is in Chinese; experimental group 2 watched the short film with L2 subtitles, which is English; and the control group watched the short film without subtitles. The groups were not allowed to interact with other groups throughout the session and the facilities such as the condition of the speaker and

projector were checked in advance to ensure there are no external factors that will influence the outcome.

3.3.3 Listening comprehension and vocabulary test

The samples were to undergo a 15-minute listening comprehension and vocabulary test after watching the short film. The participants were required to pay attention to the short film and fully utilize the subtitles as a facilitator to comprehend and improve their vocabulary in order to answer the test. Participants were not allowed to communicate within their groups nor between the other groups to ensure no exchange of any form of information.

3.3.4 Semi-structured interview

2-3 samples from each group, adding up to a minimum of 6 subjects were randomly selected to join for a 10-minute semi-structured interview session. The interview session was conducted separately according to the group to preserve the originality of their perspectives. This not only prevented the result from being affected by the other groups, but also delve deeply into each individual's view point. The subjects were to represent each group to answer a list of open-ended questions to share their perspective and feelings on the effectiveness of using movie subtitles to improve their listening comprehension and vocabulary based on the experience from the previous spectrum.

3.4 Measurement Tool

The current study utilized the listening comprehension and vocabulary test results and semi-structured interview data as measurement tools to answer the research questions.

3.4.1 Listening comprehension and vocabulary test

The duration of the test was 15 minutes. The test was designed as a multiple-choice paper based on the short film and utilizing the Bloom's Taxonomy to target a range of cognitive skills, from basic understanding to higher-order thinking, thus providing a more comprehensive evaluation of the samples' listening and vocabulary abilities. The test consisted 2 sections: Section A-listening comprehension and Section B- vocabulary. The participants were tested to recall specific information from the short film, understand the meaning from context, apply their understanding by using the vocabulary words in sentences or scenarios, identify key components, categorize information heard, synthesize information to make predictions, or generate new sentences using the vocabulary words and make judgments about the content or use of specific vocabulary words in context.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interview

A semi-structured interview is a flexible structured interview where the researcher prepares a list of open-ended questions and uses it as a guide throughout the session (Jamshed, 2014). The researcher will then probe the interviewees to get sufficient information such as elaboration of details, further explanations, and clarification of responses. According to Burges (1984, as cited in Ruslin et al., 2022), such face-to-face discussion is known as 'conversation with a purpose'. Semi-structured interviews are the potential to get in-depth information as the conversations unfold opinions, ideas, feedback and perspectives (Magaldi & Berler, 2020; Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). The duration of each interview session was about 10 minutes including probing for in-depth information from the

participant's perspective (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interview was fully recorded throughout the session via voice recording to enable transcription as a reference. Recordings and transcriptions are necessary as manual note-taking of the interview is not reliable as errors will be probable due to multitasking on interviewing and jotting down the data (Jamshed, 2014; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

3.5 Subject and Sampling

Purposive sampling was employed in this study. Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling method. In other words, samples were not be randomly selected from the population. This study implemented purposive sampling to ensure the samples are equal in terms of level proficiency. Therefore, the results regarding which type of subtitles is more effective in enhancing listening comprehension and vocabulary can be generalized to the group of learners with similar language of proficiency.

Samples were selected according to specific criteria and characteristics to suit the requirement of the study according to the objectives as different characteristics and criteria of individuals will affect the validity of the result (Robinson, 2013; Campbell et al., 2020). 144 samples were critically recruited from the target population of UTAR students. The target requirement of the samples were those who were intermediate in SPM English results, in which their grades fall within the range of C to B+ (50 marks to 60 marks), and who had Chinese as their mother tongue.

The samples were then randomly divided into two experimental groups and one control group to undergo the first spectrum of the study. Random assignment will grant the subjects equal chance in each group, which will strengthen the validity of data as there will be no bias or significant difference in characteristics of the subject (McMillan & Schumacher, 2009). On the other hand, according to Townsend (2013), the sample size for a semi-

structured interview requires a range of 5 to 255 samples. Hence, 2 to 3 samples from each group were randomly selected to join a semi-structured interview, making minimum of 6 subjects representing the groups to answer the second research question, namely to understand their perspective on the effectiveness of using movie subtitles to improve their listening comprehension and vocabulary.

3.6 Data Collection

There were two data collection procedures in this study, namely for the experimental study and the interview.

3.6.1   Experimental study

The researcher observed the samples throughout the movie session to capture the subjects' reactions (verbal or non-verbal) that could indicate the implication of whether the subtitles were facilitating their comprehension of the content. The observation data were taken into consideration in the interview data to evaluate its validity and integrity. Furthermore, the samples were tested on their listening comprehension and vocabulary understanding based on the content of the short film. The test results were collected and evaluated by granting 1 point for each correct answer. The results were recorded in a matrix table indicating the 3 groups. The data were then analysed using an analysis of variance (ANOVA).

3.6.2   Interview

Time was scheduled with the randomly selected samples from each group to conduct the interview sessions. The interviews were conducted face-to-face to include unintentional non-verbal responses. The interviewer asked questions according to the guide and probed the subjects for in-depth information. The interviewer observed and took note of the subjects' responses. The interview

sessions were videotaped for transcription and recording purposes. The interviews proceeded until they met the saturation point when no new themes were found and points were repeated (Saunders et al., 2018). After the interviews, the videotapes were transcribed and corrected in terms of grammatical errors to enhance clarity, without changing the essence. The data were then analysed using thematic analysis.

3.7 Data Analysis

The two spectra were analysed using different methods, namely statistical analysis using ANOVA, and thematic analysis where the data will be categorized into themes.

3.7.1   Statistical analysis

ANOVA was employed as a statistical analysis of the experimental study to determine the differences in mean scores among the three groups and whether there is a statistical difference among them (Sullivan, 2019; Kenton, 2023).

3.7.2   Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was applied after the transcriptions are generated, corrected and compiled. Thematic analysis is a beneficial tool in providing a systematic and rigorous approach to analyse large qualitative data (Nowell et al., 2017). Maguire and Delahunt (2017) claimed that thematic analysis will help in structuring and organizing qualitative data, making it manageable and comprehensible. It is a process of identifying and classifying themes for qualitative data, whereby a theme is an organized response or meaning within the data set that captures something meaningful about the data in relation to the research topic. Braun and

Clarke (2006) developed a six-phase approach to conduct thematic analysis. The six-phase will be employed in the study as below:

1. Data familiarization

    The researcher is required to understand the data thoroughly by going through the dataset at least once including the transcriptions, interview responses, non-verbal reactions and observations from the experimental study, to become immersed in the material. This phase will enable the researcher to identify elements that may apply to the research question.

2. Generating initial codes

    In thematic analysis, a code is a name or tag applied to certain segments of data, such as phrases, sentences, or paragraphs, that have similar meanings or content in thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Codes play the role of markers that help the researcher to identify, categorize, and organize these segments according to their thematic relevance or patterns within the data. In this phase, the researcher will describe and summarize the data.

3. Searching for themes

    After having the codes, the researcher will then review and identify similarities to group-related codes. The groups will be formed into potential themes or significant patterns within the data that will address the research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Hence, the draft of themes will be generated in this phase.

4. Reviewing drafted themes

This phase is crucial as it is a quality control step that ensures the discovered themes are correctly representing the core of the data and fit with the research objectives. The researcher will check on the consistency and coherence among the themes to make sure the themes are valid and not overlap nor contradict with one another. If any above issues are found, refinements and adjustments will be needed to merge, split or rename the themes.

5. Defining themes

The researcher will then name the themes accordingly through a concise and detailed description in order to represent the essence accurately. It is crucial to ensure there is no overlapping of themes.

6. Report writing

Lastly, having the properly defined themes of data, the researcher creates a coherent, complete report that presents the selected themes in a relevant context, supporting the research objectives and drawing answers to the research questions.

4.0 Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the findings and analysis of the data collected from the experimental study and interview. The experimental study data was collected using Google Forms and analysed with ANOVA to show the significant difference between each group to answer the first research question; the interview was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis which answers the second research question.

4.2 Experimental Study Findings

Descriptives		N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Items					
Total_Score_13	No Subtitles	48	5.8	2	9
	English Subtitles	48	9.6	6	13
	Chinese Subtitles	48	7.0	2	11
	Total	144	7.5	2	13
Listening comprehension_Score_8	No Subtitles	48	3.7	1	7
	English Subtitles	48	5.9	3	8
	Chinese Subtitles	48	4.4	0	7
	Total	144	4.7	0	8
Vocabulary_ Score_5	No Subtitles	48	2.1	0	4
	English Subtitles	48	3.9	2	5
	Chinese Subtitles	48	2.6	0	5
	Total	144	2.9	0	5

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Test Score

The listening comprehension and vocabulary test was designed with 2 sections, which is Section A- listening comprehension and Section B- vocabulary. There were 8 questions in Section A and 5 questions in Section B, making a total of 13 questions. Based on Table 2, the samples from the No Subtitles (NS) group scored an average of 5.8 for the test. Breaking the scores according to sections, the average score for Section A is 3.7 and Section B is 2.1. Samples from the English Subtitles (ES) group scored a total mean of 9.8, namely 5.9 in listening comprehension and 3.9 in vocabulary. The Chinese Subtitles (CS) group scored an average of 7 for the test, with an average scoring of 4.4 in listening comprehension and 2.6 in vocabulary.
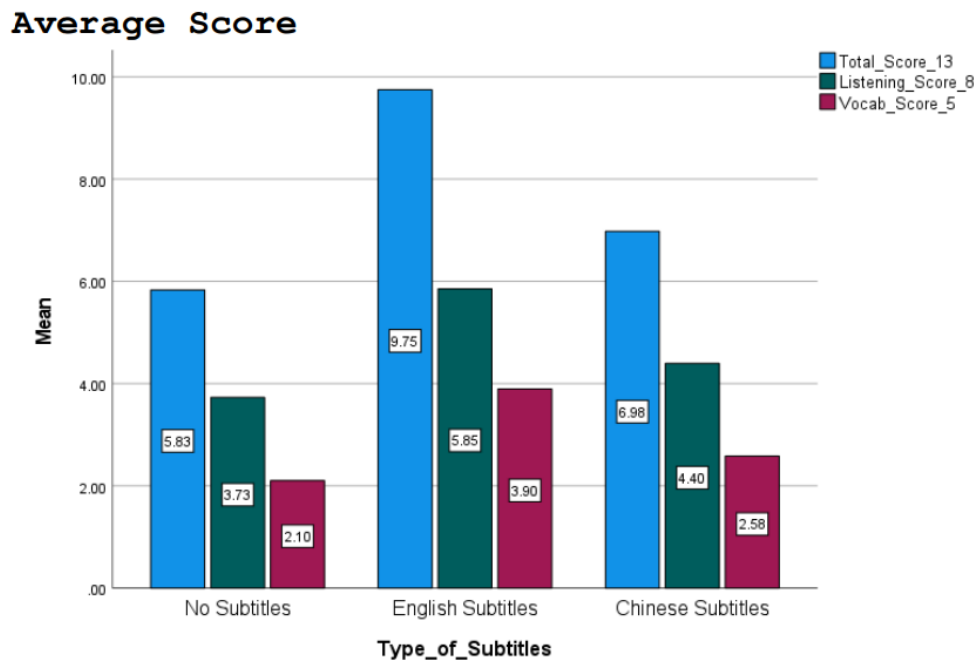
Graph 1: Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Test Average Score

According to Graph 1, the NS group resulted in scoring the lowest among the three groups for both listening comprehension and vocabulary sections; whereas the CS group and the ES group achieved a moderate and the highest score respectively for the test. ES group performed the best among the three groups regardless the overall paper or each section. The results reflected that the samples in the ES group managed to understand the context and vocabulary better than the other two groups. By comparing the results of the CS group to the NS group, it shows that Chinese subtitles do enhance the learner's understanding and minimum improvements on vocabulary, but not as effective compared to the English subtitles, as the overall ES group obtained a better result than the CS group.

4.3 Statistical Analysis of ANOVA

The results of the listening comprehension and vocabulary test were analyzed via ANOVA which aims to indicate the significant difference between the groups, in order to answer the first research question.

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)
Total_Score_13	Between Groups	389.292	2	194.646	41.417	.000
	Within Groups	662.646	141	4.700		
	Total	1051.938	143			
Listening comprehension_ Score_8	Between Groups	113.389	2	56.694	24.302	.000
	Within Groups	328.938	141	2.333		
	Total	442.326	143			
Vocabulary_ Score_5	Between Groups	82.597	2	41.299	29.317	.000
	Within Groups	198.625	141	1.409		
	Total	281.222	143			

Table 3: ANOVA Statistics of Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Test Score

The above Table 3 shows the ANOVA statistic of the test, showing the between group and within group variance. The F-value shows whether the mean between the groups is significantly larger than within the groups (Bobbitt, 2021). The F-value will be high if there is a significant difference between the mean variations between groups compared to mean variations within groups. A high F-value indicates that the results of the groups deviate significantly, proving that the independent variables are not similar and impactful. On the other hand, a low F-value implies that there is not a substantial difference between the groups. However, the F-value itself could not prove whether the independent variables are the ultimate cause of the variety of results. It will be assisted by the p-value which is the key guidance on whether to reject or accept the hypotheses made (Feldman, 2018). According to Dahiru (2011), p-value analyzes the probability that the group differences were the result of pure chance. A p-value lesser than 0.05 is a threshold in research that proves the results are

statistically significant. In other words, a lower p-value that is closer to 0 means that the results are not formed by chances, but more towards the impact of the independent variables. Vice versa, a p-value higher than 0.05, closer to 1, shows that the results are most probably formed due to chances.

According to Table 3, the F-value for the overall test is 41.417, which is relatively high. This shows that the mean variance between NS, ES and CS groups are statistically significant, implying that the types of subtitles do bring a large impact toward the result of the overall test. This is supported with the p-value of 0.0 (p-value < 0.05), statistically supporting that the results are truly affected by the types of subtitles. Similar interpretations are applied to the detailed sections, namely the Section A that tested on listening comprehension and Section B that tested on vocabulary. The F-values that reflect the mean variance between and within the 3 groups are significant. The listening comprehension test had an F-value of 24.302, with p-value of 0.0 (p-value < 0.05); the vocabulary test had an F-value of 29.317, with p-value of 0.0 (p-value < 0.05). Although the subtitles are statistically significant and real for both sections, it is shown that the impact on vocabulary skills is more pronounced than the impact on listening comprehension abilities. This is proven through the figures of the F-values. The F-value for the vocabulary section is higher than the listening comprehension section. Hence, it can be concluded that truly the mean results on the listening comprehension and vocabulary test among the NS, ES and CS groups are statistically significant.

4.4 Interview Findings

The interview was conducted with 7 participants which are labelled as NS1, NS2, NS3, CS1, CS2, ES1 and ES2. This indicates which group are they from and the numbers differentiate the individuals. There were 6 interview questions as below:

1. How did you feel when watching the short film with/without the subtitles?

2. Is subtitle helpful in your listening comprehension and vocabulary? How?

3. Do you prefer to watch English short films/movies with or without subtitles? If the answer is with subtitles, L1/L2? Why? Can it help you in your listening comprehension and vocabulary?

4. Do you think the subtitles are distracting you from focusing on the content?

5. Do you think you are referring to the subtitles or reading the subtitles?

6. Will you be able to understand the meaning of words and content without subtitles?

The responses from the interviewees can be represented by 5 codes:

a. Experiences: The interviewees reflected on how they felt while watching the movie with/without the subtitles during the experiment. This reveals whether they can focus and understand the movie, and the problems they faced throughout the session.

b. Preferences: The interviewees shared on their personal preferences on the presence or type of subtitles while watching English movies.

c. Comprehension: The interviewees shared their viewpoints on whether subtitles can help improve the understanding of the movie.

d. Learning vocabularies: The interviewees shared their viewpoints on whether subtitles can help in learning vocabularies.

e. Distractions: The interviewees responded on whether subtitles distract their focus on the movie.

These codes are addressed into 5 themes: usage of subtitles on comprehension, usage of subtitles on learning vocabulary, effect of subtitles on content focusing, preference of subtitles and effectiveness of L1/L2 subtitles on comprehension and vocabulary.

4.4.1　　　Usage of subtitles on comprehension

This theme explored on whether the absence of subtitles or the types of subtitles (L1/L2) affected on the understanding of the short movie. All 7 interviewees agreed on the fact that it is difficult to understand the content of the movie if there are no subtitles. They struggle to grasp what the actors are saying upon the absence of subtitles, especially if the spoken language is not their native language or mother tongue. The followings are some responses from the interview:

"I can guess the meaning but not the exact meaning."

"Very hard actually because no translate and the people speak very fast."

"I think it is hard because will not sure what they say and can misheard."

"I don't think I can understand too well without the subtitles because my prior knowledge or focus."

They reflected on that they would mishear the speech due to the pace, which will affect their listening comprehension since they could not follow what the actors are saying. Other than the pace of speech, the language itself is also a challenge due to different cultural background of the language. The interviewees proposed that they can roughly guess the meaning of the speech or the movie itself through the gestures, images and animations, but not the exact meaning. Hence, having the subtitles will enable them to hold more information and understand accurately and deeply. The findings from the interview resulted in that the subtitles are relevantly helpful in listening comprehension as shown in the following responses:

"Of course, can make me understand the content of video because it shows me the words they say."

"It can improve my listening comprehension because I can check what I hear in the subtitles."

"It helps me build the memory stronger so I could remember the content and everything better."

Subtitles are beneficial for listening comprehension as they visualize the speeches. According to the interviewees, visualizing the speech through subtitles is convenient for them to check their listening, rather than having time to process on whether they received the correct information. This will also help those who are not confident in their listening skills as they can keep track on whether they heard the speech correctly. Having subtitles can also build up memories for those who learn better through vision over auditory.

4.4.2   Usage of subtitles on learning vocabulary

This theme probed for the information regarding the capability of subtitles in improving the learners' vocabulary. The participants see that having subtitles can help them learn new vocabulary as they visualize or provide the translation of the word. Yet, it is controversial as some interviewees disagree on the effectiveness of learning vocabulary through subtitles. The responses are as:

"I think it's quite helpful because the vocabulary that I know is actually very limited, like there's a lot of word I might have misheard, so I think it's better to have subtitles and it helps me a lot"

"I did learn some new words from the subtitles like introducing new words and can figure out the meaning from the acting and content"

"I would like if the subtitle got some words that I cannot understand I would go and Google search and use the translator so can improve a bit my vocabulary."

"It is quite hard to learn vocabularies because I only see it once in the subtitles."

Most of the interviewees believed that subtitles can help them overcome their limited vocabulary by reducing misinterpretations and improving their comprehension. Some will actively engage with subtitles, using them to learn new words and meanings based on the contextual clues found in the movie. Furthermore, some individuals use proactive tactics, such as internet resources (Google), to enhance their language knowledge, mainly to check on the meanings of unfamiliar vocabularies. This is applied for those who eager to learn the target language as they have the autonomy and willing to put in effort to research more on the vocabularies instead of merely learning from the contextual clues. The effectiveness of learning vocabulary might not be as high for those who watch movies for pleasure. This is proposed by one of the respondents who had noted that it is true that new vocabularies will be introduced, yet it is difficult to retain them as they are shown in the subtitles for only a few seconds. Due to the short period exposure and their focus is on the movie itself, it is difficult to learn and remember vocabulary. Despite this, most participants agreed that subtitles are useful tools for developing vocabulary, however they do necessitate other learning strategies and learner's self-awareness for more effective retention.

4.4.3   Effect of subtitles on content focusing

This theme discovered whether the subtitles are distracting the audiences from focusing on the audio stimuli such as the conversation of the actors. It is basically to acknowledge whether the participants' attention was drawn toward the subtitles, resulting in not understanding through listening but having the potential of getting access to the context via reading comprehension. The responses are as below:

"This movie is without subtitles so I think I can't focus, I'm lost."

"I am not so focused on the Chinese subtitles. I most focus on the movie actually. But sometimes I will refer to the subtitles in case there's some word that I'm not sure or I couldn't understand."

"If there are no subtitles, sometimes I can't understand what they are saying so I'll be less focused on the movie."

"I don't really think so because from my experience I consider subtitles as a very helpful thing in watching all kind of videos."

"I think yes because I focus more on the subtitles."

"Maybe sometimes. When I didn't listen carefully to the conversation, then I want to watch at the subtitle to grasp back what the person or the character is saying so I might be concentrated on the subtitles and didn't focus on what they say at the moment."

According to the interview findings, 5 out of 7 of the participants claimed that subtitles are not a distractor for them in focusing on the content; in fact, they assisted them to focus on the movie as they act as a guidance on understanding. 2 interviewees asserted that they will struggle to focus on the movie if there is no

subtitles as they don't understand the content. This issue will gradually reduce their interest on attempting to focus on the movie. However, 2 other interviewees protested that relying on subtitles will affect the focus on the movie as their attention will be on the subtitles when they check on the meaning. This situation will vary for those who refer to subtitles to check the meaning, and those who read the subtitles to understand the context.

"I do both listening and scan through the subtitle. I do it together to help me understand the content of the storyline."

"I think it's scan through. I don't really read it, just scan like take the subtitle as a part of the movie."

"I am more to reading it because the listening one very hard because my English listening skill is not very good and the language they use also different from what our Malaysian people say."

"I think referring because a lot of time I was actually focusing on the characters, the scene and everything, and sometimes like if I dose off halfway, I would scan the subtitles and then, "oh, so this thing is going on," something like that to catch up with everything."

The interview shows that most of the participants are referring to the subtitles rather than reading them word by word. A common verb used by the participants is "scanning", which would be a fast process and will not affect them from paying attention in listening to the actors. They mainly rely on listening and see subtitles as a facilitator to understand and keep up to the fast-speaking pace since especially for the native speaking actors.

4.4.4 Preference of subtitles

This theme aimed to dive into the learner's personal thoughts to get access to which type of subtitles do they prefer to use while watching movies.

"I prefer the Chinese subtitles because Mandarin is my first language so English is not really proficient as Mandarin for me."

"Chinese. It is not need to think much about it and just see the subtitle and know what they say about."

"Maybe Chinese subtitle because my English is not very good enough like until I can understand the whole movie content with just English subtitle. So Chinese subtitles can help me understand because it translate. "

"For me my opinion I prefer Chinese subtitles. If I couldn't understand, I am taking the Mandarin course, so if some words I couldn't understand I still can refer to the Mandarin subtitles as Mandarin is quite easy for us to understand what the conversation is trying to tell us during the movie."

"I prefer to have subtitles as I feel that learning vocabulary is quite important for me. I can watch with either English or Chinese. It doesn't really matter. "

"I'll prefer English subtitles too. Because with the subtitles I can catch the lines and everything easily."

The interview results reflected that subtitle preferences varies among individuals, but a common preference found is that all the interviewees prefer to have subtitles while watching movies. This preference includes either having Chinese subtitles or English subtitles. Those who prefer Chinese subtitles responded in a pattern claiming that they are more competent in their mother tongue; hence, watching

English movies with L1 subtitles will smoothen their understanding. They will not struggle in guessing what is heard and at the same time comprehending what is the meaning of the words in the subtitles. On the other hand, those who insisted on having English subtitles are found to be from the upper group (those who scored B+ in English for their SPM) among the intermediate proficient students. Those who fall under this category are able to follow the verbal conversation with the help of the subtitles.

4.4.5 Effectiveness of L1/L2 subtitles on comprehension and vocabulary

Despite the statistic results from the experimental study, the learner's perspective on which type of subtitles are more beneficial in enhancing their listening comprehension and vocabulary is relatively important.

"Chinese subtitles can help me double check what I hear and what I understand, but I don't think I can learn many vocabulary because I don't see the English word. English subtitles a bit hard to understand but if learn vocabulary I think will be better than Chinese subtitles. I can guess the meaning of the word then check on Google what the meaning. I cannot do this if I watch Chinese subtitles because I no see the word, so I don't know the spelling and hard for me to remember."

"Chinese subtitles can help me learn new vocabularies but not as efficient as the English subtitles are I think because I need to read the English word and see the spelling to improve my English vocabulary."

"Like for English subtitles I can learn vocabularies because I can find some dictionary if there is some difficult vocabulary."

"Chinese subtitles can help me understand because it translate. But for vocabulary, with Chinese subtitles I can know what is said by the people but cannot know the word like the spelling so maybe a bit poor in learn new vocabulary."

According to the interviewees, subtitles can generally improve their listening comprehension and vocabulary. However, the effectiveness on each component differs for Chinese subtitles and English subtitles. They agreed on that Chinese subtitles can boost the listening comprehension as it provides guidance in understanding the auditory cues, but it is relatively poor for improving their vocabulary as they are not presented with the word itself. This will provide the correct spelling and memory of the new vocabulary. Through the contextual clues, the learners will be able to get the rough meaning of the vocabulary. Additionally, for those who are enthusiast to learn more about the vocabulary such as the actual definition and implied meaning in different context, they would be able to have further research on it since they are exposed to the spelling of the word.

4.5 Discussion of findings

The experimental study was conducted to answer the first research questions, while the interview was to answer the second research question.

4.5.1   Research question 1

The average score of the ES group in the listening comprehension and vocabulary test is the highest among the three groups. This is caused due to a significant difference of the type of subtitles exposed. It was statistically proven that the types of subtitles, specifically no subtitles, Chinese subtitles (L1 subtitles) and

English subtitles (L2 subtitles) indeed led to a significant difference to the listening comprehension and vocabulary test as the results are determined by the independent variables (the types of subtitles) rather than it happened by chance. In other words, the exposure towards which type of subtitles during the movie will directly affect the result of the test. The high F-values obtained in ANOVA suggest significant differences in mean variations across groups compared to mean variations within groups, supporting the hypothesis that the kind of subtitles had a significant impact on test scores. The low p-values (< 0.05) imply that these changes are likely related to the presence or absence of subtitles, rather than chance. This implies that both L1 and L2 subtitles have a noticeable impact on students' listening comprehension and vocabulary scores, and L2 subtitles is more beneficial to enhance the learner's listening comprehension and vocabulary.

Surprisingly, the effect on vocabulary skills appeared to be stronger than on listening comprehension skills. This is evidenced by the higher F-values observed in the vocabulary component vs the listening comprehension section. This suggests that students profited more from vocabulary acquisition when subtitles were accessible, regardless of whether they were in their first or second language. With these findings, the second hypothesis is proved to be valid and accepted which there is a significant difference between the three group and the students who watched the movie with L2 subtitles, which are the ES group scored better than the other two groups.

4.5.2   Research question 2

The interview findings are revealed the students' perspectives on five themes, which are the usage of subtitles on listening comprehension, the usage of subtitles on learning vocabulary, the effect of subtitles on content focusing, their preference of subtitles and the effectiveness of L1 and L2 subtitles in improving their listening comprehension and learning of vocabulary.

According to the general findings, subtitles are indeed beneficial to facilitate the listening comprehension and learning of vocabulary. This is because the learners can visualize the verbal content, enabling to check on their listening and comprehension accuracy, and retain the newly introduced vocabulary through visual aids, which is the subtitles. Subtitles are normally seen as not a distractor as the interviewees take the subtitles as part of the movie which facilitate the understanding of the content. As long as they design of the subtitles are not too eye-catching or blocking the view, the learners will have more focus on the actings and lines, and cross check the subtitles whenever they are uncertain about their comprehension. Yet, a possible challenge was proposed which there is a chance of over reliance on the subtitles to grasp the meaning of the content. This will cause that the learners will only focus on the subtitles. Instead of understand through listening and using the subtitles as a support, they will start to read the subtitles, which this is stated in the limitation. In terms of preferences, the learners prefer to have L1 subtitles over L2 subtitles as they are more competent in their mother tongue. They will be able to rapidly check on their listening comprehension without putting too much focus on the subtitles itself. On the other hand, they will need time to process the meaning of the words in English as

they are less competent in the language. Hence, they find it more comfortable to watch movies with L1 subtitles as it smoothens the understanding. Lastly, regarding the effectiveness of each type of subtitles in improving the listening comprehension and vocabulary, the interviewees claimed that L1 subtitles are more beneficial in facilitating their listening comprehension while L2 subtitles have more potential in aiding the learning of new vocabularies.

Hence, the answer to the second research question is that subtitles in general are advantageous when it comes to listening comprehension and vocabulary. They generally prefer to have L1 subtitles if they opt for a casual watching, which they aim to understand the content. This is because they will struggle to understand the content if there is no subtitles, as they are required to rely on their listening skills. Without any comprehensible input, the students will not be able to improve their listening comprehension. The reason why they chose L1 over L2 subtitles for listening comprehension is that L1 subtitles are more convenient to be understood. On the contrary, L2 subtitles are more of an assistance for the learners to increase their vocabulary. This is because they can withhold the spelling of the word and guess the meaning through contextual clues. For those who have the autonomy, L2 subtitles also enable them to do simple research on the definitions as they were visually exposed to the word. All in all, both hypotheses are accepted as the respondents agree that subtitles in general do enhance their listening comprehension and vocabulary.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a conclusion of the study and discusses on the recommendation for future studies.

5.2 Conclusion

The current study investigated the effects of different types of subtitles: L1, L2, and no subtitles on Malaysian university students' listening comprehension and vocabulary learning. The results of the mixed-method research, which included an experimental research and interviews, revealed significant differences across the groups and the students' perspectives of the effectiveness of subtitles in enhancing the listening comprehension and vocabulary. Students who watched the short film with English subtitles (L2) performed the best on the listening comprehension and vocabulary tests, indicating that L2 subtitles are more helpful at improving these language skills.

Interviews revealed students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of subtitles. Participants largely felt that subtitles, particularly L2, are useful for vocabulary development, although L1 subtitles are more successful for listening comprehension. However, personal preferences differed, with some students preferring L1 subtitles for ease of comprehension.

These findings highlight subtitles' potential as a useful tool for language acquisition. Both types of subtitles have distinct advantages, and students' preferences and needs should be considered when introducing subtitles into language learning practices. Educators can help students improve their English listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition by adapting the use of subtitles to their specific learning styles and preferences.

5.3 Recommendations

Some recommendations are suggested to be done for future studies to explore more in the particular field.

5.3.1　　Broaden the participant diversity

The current study is conducted within the population of Kampar UTAR foundation and undergraduate students of those who fulfilled the criteria: intermediate in English and has Chinese as their mother tongue. It is necessary to conduct similar research in a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds as the current population is not qualified to be generalizing the population in Malaysia. Through conducting the study with different criteria of participants such as targeting those who have low proficiency in English, having Tamil or Malay as their mother tongue, students from rural areas and secondary school students, it will offer insights of how subtitles impact the learners' language acquisition and comprehension from different population. By gathering the data from different population, we can acknowledge the effectiveness of using movie subtitles in the education field.

5.3.2　　Longitudinal study

Due to the limitation of time period to conduct the current study, the results were collected after having only one intervention movie session. It is recommended to conduct a long-term study in exploring how the subtitles affect the learners' listening comprehension and vocabulary for a long run. Therefore, the reliability of the findings could be enhanced as the data collection can be collected through observation along the study rather than having the learners to share their viewpoint.

In conclusion, the findings of this study are not to generalize the whole population of Malaysia and they are the results of instant exposure towards movie subtitles. It is recommended to have further studies with different populations in Malaysia and conduct longitudinal researches to investigate to what extent that subtitles are beneficial for the language acquisition and comprehension. By acknowledging these, educators can implement movie subtitles as a teaching pedagogy for the younger generation.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Short Movie- The Breakthrough
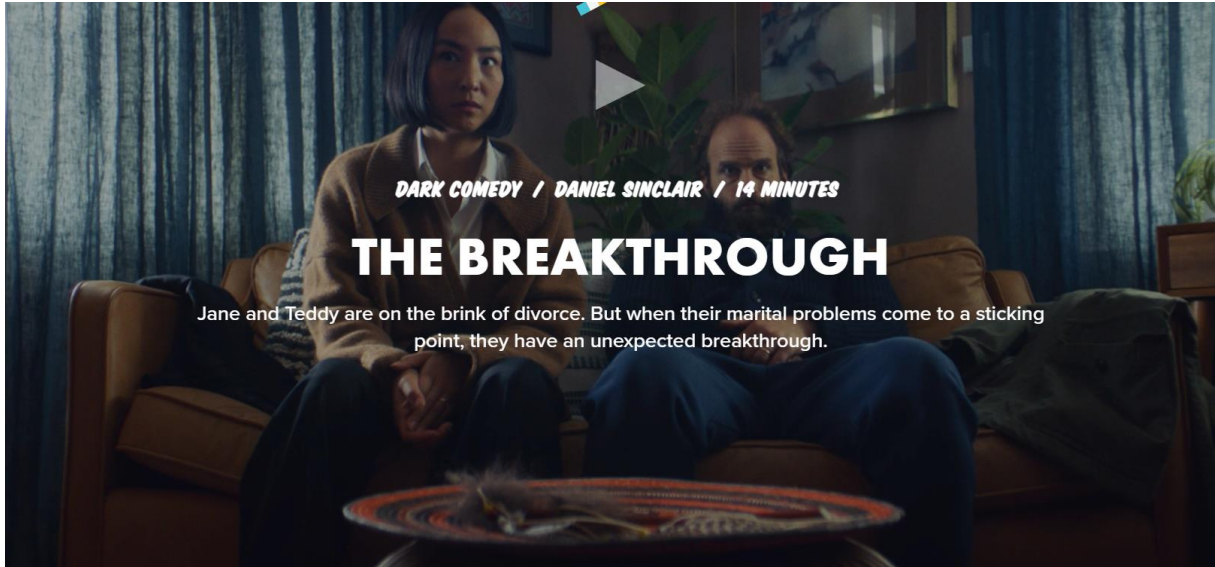
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Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Test

Read the following questions carefully. Choose the best answer based on the short film "The

Breakthrough".

1. What made the husband want to die?

    A. Picking up their daughter.

    B. The wife not being at home all the time.

    C. The wife not taking out the leftover food.

    D. The wife spent thousands of dollars on consulting a therapist.

2. Why does the wife want to send their daughter to college?

    A. So that the husband doesn't need to be so busy.

    B. So that she can end her marriage with her husband.

    C. So that she can focus on her work to make enough money.

    D. So that the daughter will be well educated and prepared for a good job.

3. Why were the couple fighting for the stick?

    A. To hurt each other.

    B. To decide who will be the chairman of the council meeting.

    C. To decide who will take care of their daughter after their separation.

    D. To hold the authority to speak and demand the other one to listen.

4. What is the main incident in the story?

   A. Dr Angelo was killed accidentally.

   B. The relationship of the couple is toxic.

   C. The wife wants custody of the daughter.

   D. The husband was mad at the wife for spending thousands on the therapy.

5. Why did the couple decide to not call the police?

   A. They are scared of going to jail.

   B. They don't want their daughter to suffer.

   C. They never thought of calling the police.

   D. They got interrupted because they needed to pick up their daughter.

6. Who do you think the daughter is closer to?

   A. The mother, because the daughter was cold to the father and asked him when the mother would be back.

   B. The father, because he gets pizza for the daughter and allows her to watch television as long as she wants.

   C. The mother, because she makes more money than the father and she is the one tutoring the daughter regarding homework.

   D. The father, because he is the one taking care of the daughter all the time including sending her to school, picking her up, cooking meals and shopping.

7. What was the worst scenario that could happen mentioned by the husband if he turns himself in?

A. He will be accused as a killer.

B. He will be subjected to the death penalty.

C. He will be sentenced to a prison term of 30 years.

D. He will be accused guilty for killing unintentionally.

8. Why did the couple tip the waiter very well?

A. Because the couple have enough money.

B. Because the waiter served them very well.

C. Because the couple want to post it on social media.

D. Because the couple wants the waiter to remember them.

9. "I want a divorce and I want <u>custody</u> of Laney."

What does the wife want when she says she wants custody of her daughter?

A. She wants to imprison her daughter.

B. She wants to send her daughter to college.

C. She wants the guardianship of her daughter.

D. She wants her daughter to take care of her after college.

10. "Well, we need an <u>alibi</u>," said the husband.

What is the meaning of "alibi"?

A. Someone to accuse as a killer.

B. A proof that they were innocent.

C. Someone to help them dispose of the body.

D. A proof that they were not at the crime scene.

11. "You're <u>abusing</u> the stick."

What is the meaning of the word "abusing" in the context?

A. misusing

B. breaking

C. assaulting

D. not respecting

12. What did the wife mean to compost Dr Angelo?

A. To get rid of the body.

B. To put the body with the garbage next to the sink.

C. To decay her using microorganisms to form fertile soil.

D. To hide the body on the outskirts of town so no one will find her.

13. The wife said that using the talking stick was a kind of cultural appropriation. What is

the meaning of cultural appropriation?

A. An ancient culture from their society.

B. A method to establish order and respect in therapy.

C. A belief that was passed down from their ancestors.

D. Adoption of a behaviour that belongs to another society.

Interview Transcription

No	Questions	Responses
1	How did you feel when watching the short film with/without the subtitles?	NS1: I think I was distracted uh because I'm a person who not really like to watch movie and this movie is without subtitles so I think I can't focus, I'm lost. NS2: I think it is hard to know what they say, like I don't understand what they say. NS3: I think it is difficult for me to watch the video without the subtitle because the foreign the speaking style. They are native speakers, so maybe the words that they use is not the ones that I am familiar with, and a bit fast they speak. CS1: I feel entertained as the story is very interesting and I understand most of it. I can see they are arguing and the turning point there also the wife killed the doctor. CS2: I am not so focused on the Chinese subtitles. I most focus on the movie actually. But sometimes I will refer to the subtitles in case there's some word that I'm not sure or I couldn't understand so I will refer to the Chinese subtitles. ES1: Actually, I feel not much different because the movie is also using in English so it's easier to understand along

		with the English subtitles, especially the spelling because sometimes even though I know the word, I would like to search for the spelling also. ES2: I feel like quite convenient because me myself actually watch a lot of videos with or without the subtitles.
2	Is subtitle helpful in your listening comprehension and vocabulary? How?	NS1: It will be really helpful, I think. Because sometimes maybe like the ancient for the foreigner or maybe they talk too fast or I can't catch it up, so I think it's better that it will be a caption below. I think this is also correct for me that it helps my vocabulary because sometimes you know you don't really know that what they are saying. If the movie has a subtitle, I think I can also know some vocabulary or also can improve my learning skill. NS2: Yes, subtitle is useful for me to understand what the actor is saying about. I think subtitles also help to learn new words but I think I forget about which word I learned. It is quite hard to learn vocabularies because I only see it once in the subtitles. NS3: Of course, can make me the understanding the content of video because it show me the words they say. Then I can know what the overall meaning of the story. CS1: I think yes it can improve my listening comprehension because I can check what I hear in the

| | | subtitles. I would like if the subtitle got some words that I cannot understand I would go and Google search and use the translator so can improve a bit my vocabulary.
CS2: Actually, I can say partly helpful because for me I prefer to listen to the English, like English songs or the watching the English movie or having the English language tuition that will be quite helpful for me. So, I will open the subtitles only sometimes I don't understand.

ES1: I did learn some new words from the subtitles like introducing new words and can figure out the meaning from the acting and content. I also Google for the meaning after the movie to check whether I understand it correctly. But personally, for the comprehension, it didn't bring much difference for me.
ES2: I think it's quite helpful because the vocabulary that I know is actually very limited, like there's a lot of word I might have misheard, so I think it's better to have subtitles and it helps me a lot. I think it helps with the understanding too because I sometimes I might get distracted like if I watched something without the subtitles. I might have missed something or maybe I'll be frustrated and I'm trying to think what does that mean and then I might can't understand the whole thing. So the subtitles can help me clarify for understanding. |
|---|---|---|

3	Do you prefer to watch English short films/movies with or without subtitles? If the answer is with subtitles, L1/L2? Why? Can it help you in your listening comprehension and vocabulary?	NS1: I prefer the Chinese subtitles because Mandarin is my first language so English is not really proficient as Mandarin for me. I think I can more focus if have Chinese subtitles, also get to know what is the storyline or what are the actors in the movie doing. Chinese subtitles can help me learn new vocabularies but not as efficient as the English subtitles are I think because I need to read the English word and see the spelling to improve my English vocabulary.
		NS2: Chinese. It is more understandable for me. It is not need to think much about it and just see the subtitle and know what they say about. Like for English subtitles I can learn vocabularies because I can find some dictionary if there is some difficult vocabulary.
		NS3: I think I prefer Chinese one because I can understand better in Chinese. But if for learning new words, I think English subtitles can better help.
		CS1: Maybe Chinese subtitle because my English is not very good enough like until I can understand the whole movie content with just English subtitle. So Chinese subtitles can help me understand because it translate. But for vocabulary, with Chinese subtitles I can know what is said by the people but cannot know the word like the spelling so maybe a bit poor in learn new vocabulary. So, I

actually prefer having the two Chinese subtitles and English subtitles.

CS2: For me my opinion I prefer Chinese subtitles. If I couldn't understand, I am taking the Mandarin course, so if some words I couldn't understand I still can refer to the Mandarin subtitles as Mandarin is quite easy for us to understand what the conversation is trying to tell us during the movie. With Chinese subtitles, I was able to understand the storyline well. I personally will say Chinese subtitles can help me learn new words but sometimes it's hard because the subtitles only come out for a few seconds then it will go.

ES1: I prefer to have subtitles as I feel that learning vocabulary is quite important for me. I can watch with either English or Chinese. It doesn't really matter. As for understanding, I don't really rely on subtitles. I listen and can understand.

ES2: If it is English movies, I'll prefer English subtitles too. Because with the subtitles I can catch the lines and everything easily. And the subtitles it helps me build the memory stronger so I could remember the content and everything better. But I without the subtitles, I think I couldn't remember the content that much.

4	Do you think the subtitles are distracting you from focusing on the content?	NS1: I think no because the I think I can focus more on the content. If there are no subtitles sometimes, I can't understand what they are saying so I'll be less focused on the movie.
		NS2: No for me. The subtitles are not blocking the screen so it no distracts.
		NS3: I think yes because I focus more on the subtitles.
		CS1: I don't think so because it helps me to understand what the movie talk about more deeply. If English subtitle maybe will distract but if Chinese subtitle no because my Chinese is better so I can read the sentence very quickly, but for English I think I will use some time to read it.
		CS2: Not so a distractor actually because the subtitle is not too big. But I know some of the subtitles they will put the black colour background so it will a bit distract because it is eye-catching and will make us more focus on it. But if it is not bold and contrast, I will focus more on the animation.
		ES1: Maybe sometimes. When I didn't listen carefully to the conversation, then I want to watch at the subtitle to grasp back what the person or the character is saying so I might be concentrated on the subtitles and didn't focus on what they say at the moment.

		ES2: I don't really think so because from my experience I consider subtitles as a very helpful thing in watching all kind of videos.
5	Do you think you are referring to the subtitles or reading the subtitles?	NS1: I do both listening and scan through the subtitle. I do it together to help me understand the content of the storyline. NS2: I think it's scan through. I don't really read it, just scan like take the subtitle as a part of the movie. NS3: I will refer to subtitles, I don't read everything. CS1: I am more to reading it because the listening one very hard because my English listening skill is not very good and the language they use also different from what our Malaysian people say. CS2: I referring to subtitles not reading. Normally I more focus on the acting and look at the subtitles only when I don't understand. ES1: Refer. Because we already know what they are saying, but we look back just to be double confirming. ES2: I think referring because a lot of time I was actually focusing on the characters, the scene and everything, and sometimes like if I dose off halfway, I would scan the subtitles and then, "oh, so this thing is going on,"

		something like that to catch up with everything.
6	Will you be able to understand the meaning of words and content without subtitles?	NS1: I think still can but not really not fully understand that maybe like I can roughly know what they are doing and roughly know what the content of the movie, but I think I will miss the details. I can guess the meaning but not the exact meaning. NS2: I think it is hard because will not sure what they say and can misheard. NS3: I think cannot. I still need subtitles to help me understand the meaning of the content. CS1: Very hard actually because no translate and the people speak very fast. My English and listening skill is not that good to understand without subtitles. CS2: For me it depends if the words is too hard to understand I would still prefer to have the Mandarin. Without the subtitles I think I maybe can understand a bit but not the detail. Like I know they happen a argue but don't know what cause it. ES1: Sometime can, sometime cannot. Depends on the word, how usual I listen or how much the word is used. Because sometimes the words I never seen before, I also don't know the meaning. So whenever I am introduced to new words, it will be helpful.

| | | ES2: I don't think I can understand too well without the subtitles because my prior knowledge or focus. If I depend only on listening, I don't think my listening is that good, so I might have misheard a lot of things. But with the subtitles like the listening and the subtitles reading is ongoing at the same time, so it helps me to understand everything better. |