FINNISH UNIVERSITY ENGLISH STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND INTENTIONS IN VOCABULARY LEARNING BY WATCHING ENGLISH TV SERIES WITH SUBTITLES AND CAPTIONS

Bachelor's thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Kielenoppimisen ja multimedian välistä yhteyttä on tutkittu jo muutaman vuosikymmenen ajan, mutta uudelle tutkimukselle on tarvetta kehittyvän median vuoksi. Modernisoituvassa yhteiskunnassa ja etenkin koulumaailmassa videon ja tekstin yhdistämisen on todettu olevan hyödyllinen keino oppia englannin kieltä, ja etenkin uutta sanastoa. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on tutkia Jyväskylän yliopiston englannin kielen opiskelijoiden kokemuksia tekstitysten hyödyntämisestä sanaston oppimisessa katsottaessa englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia. Lisäksi tutkimus kartoittaa tulevien englannin opettajien mielipiteitä sekä heidän kokemuksiaan siitä, miten tekstityksiä voitaisiin hyödyntää opetuksessa tulevaisuudessa. Tutkimuksessa selvitetään myös, kokevatko vastaajat suomenkieliset vai englanninkieliset tekstitykset hyödyllisemmäksi.

Tutkimusta varten laadittiin kyselylomake, johon saivat vastata kaikki englantia joko pää- tai sivuaineenaan opiskelevat opiskelijat Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Yhteensä 48 englannin opiskelijaa vastasi kyselyyn, joka koostui sekä monivalinta- että avoimista kysymyksistä, ja sisälsi osioita sekä kaikille englannin opiskelijoille että opettajalinjalla opiskeleville. Tutkimuksessa hyödynnettiin sekä laadullisia että määrällisiä menetelmiä, ja tutkimuksen analyysi toteutettiin sisällönanalyysin lisäksi myös tilastollisen analyysin avulla.

Tulokset osoittivat, että vastaajat kokevat molempien tekstitysten kielet hyödyllisiksi omilla tavoillaan, mutta toteavat englanninkielisten tekstitysten olevan hyödyllisempiä sanaston oppimisen kannalta katsottaessa englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia. Lisäksi opettajaopiskelijat ovat halukkaita hyödyntämään audiovisuaalisia oppimismateriaaleja, kuten tekstityksiä ja tv-sarjoja omassa opetuksessaan tulevaisuudessa. Näin ollen tekstitykset koetaan hyödyllisiksi sanaston oppimisen ja tulevaisuuden kieltenopetuksen kannalta.

Asiasanat – Keywords Subtitles, captions, multimedia learning, vocabulary learning, language teaching
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1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of multimedia language learning was first introduced by Richard E. Mayer in the late 1990s. Combining images or videos with words is a beneficial tool for learning a new language, especially new vocabulary. When it comes to modern day language learning, watching different TV programs with subtitles or captions is a useful tool to gain more vocabulary. The present study focuses on English students' experiences and intentions in vocabulary learning while watching English TV series with English captions or native language, such as Finnish, subtitles. In addition, the present study takes into consideration English teacher students' experiences, and how they would utilize multimedia language learning in their own teaching in the future.

Learning with subtitles and captions has been studied for a few decades now. Nevertheless, the majority of the studies conducted have focused on learning while watching English films. The present study focuses on TV series, since their role especially in language teaching is still an unfamiliar method, and more research needs to be done on the topic. For instance, it will be determined whether it would be supportive for vocabulary development to watch multiple episodes of the same TV series, in order to gain knowledge about the characters of the show, their accents and specific vocabulary. Moreover, the previously conducted studies have focused on different countries' perspectives on learning with subtitles and captions, while the Finnish context remains to be quite unexplored. The present study therefore takes the views of the students who study English in Finland into account.

First, the present study introduces the theoretical background. The concepts of subtitles and captions will be defined, the two main theories considering multimedia language learning by Mayer (1997) and Sweller (2011) will be explained, and the pedagogical aspects of multimedia language learning will be discussed. Second, the methodology of the present study will be explained in more detail, notably which data collection methods and analyzing strategies were used. Third, the results of the present

study will be presented in relation to the theoretical framework. And finally, conclusions of the present study will be presented.

2 SUBTITLES AND CAPTIONS WITH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework concerning the present study's topic, which is Finnish university English students' experiences and intentions in vocabulary learning by watching English TV series with subtitles and captions. First, the concepts of subtitles and captions will be defined. Second, the theoretical framework will be explained with the help of Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning and Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory. Finally, the pedagogical implications of multimedia learning concerning the use of subtitled and captioned materials in the foreign language classroom will be discussed.

2.1 Language learning via subtitles and captions

Language acquisition is a complex process that begins by learning one's first language. Learning a second language, also referred to as L2, however, differs from acquiring a first language. Usually, a first language is acquired at home, whereas an L2 is acquired in a more educational environment, such as school (Hummel 2014: 21). Nonetheless, a second language can also be acquired at nearly any occasion today due to modern technology and digitalization. The present study focuses on multimedia learning that is one of the subcategories of second language acquisition.

Multimedia learning has become a beneficial and essential tool in today's foreign language acquisition. Multiple streaming services, such as Netflix or HBO Max, containing foreign TV series and films have become more accessible, which enables especially vocabulary learning outside of the classroom. The audio-visual input of this kind includes video, audio and on-screen text. Subtitles and captions consist of the language of the audio and the language of the on-screen text, and they are an alternative for dubbing that signifies adding a track of the learners' first language to an existing television show or film's original audio (Chaume 2020: 1). According to Perez (2022: 165),

subtitles can be defined as interlingual subtitles, which refers to the text being in the learner's first language. He also specifies that captions, by contrast, are referred to as intralingual subtitles, meaning that the text is in the learner's second language, such as English.

The use of subtitles has been the subject of research since as early as the 1980s. Most of the studies have been conducted by Robert Vanderplank, who is well recognized for their expertise in television and language learning. Thus, Vanderplank's findings support the topic of the present study as well. In their study (1988: 275), Vanderplank concluded that despite concentration being an issue, subtitles have multiple benefits to foreign language acquisition, such as learning new words. Unlike the studies today, Vanderplank refers to both subtitles and captions with the term "subtitles". He conducted a study in Finland, and while observing the participants watching English TV series with both Finnish and Swedish subtitles, he discovered that English captions would also be beneficial. As more recent studies, such as Mitterer and McQueen (2009) and Peters, Heynen and Puimège (2016) have shown, English captions seem to be more beneficial to foreign language learners than subtitles in their first language. However, as Peters, Heynen and Puimège (2016: 145) also discovered, the participants in their study managed to gain new vocabulary with both subtitles and captions despite their previous knowledge or proficiency. Thus, both native language subtitles and English captions can be used to acquire new vocabulary, although it is possible to have various conclusions due to studies using different methods and having participants from different countries with their own languages.

2.2 Multimedia learning theories

Multimedia is a significant component in today's language learning. As Mayer (2002: 27) defines the concept, the content that combines both images and words is referred to as multimedia. These visual, textual and auditory elements are processed simultaneously, which creates preferable settings for learning new vocabulary and languages in general. In other words, watching TV programs with subtitles or captions creates a

setting for multimedia learning as a consequence of the audio-visual input that includes video, audio, and on-screen text. Seeing what is happening on the screen and reading the text at the same time makes the interpretation and the understanding of challenging phrases and words easier (Mayer, Lee and Peebles 2014: 656).

Multimedia learning is a wide concept, which includes multiple different elements. Thus, Mayer (2002: 27) introduces the five following key points that characterize multimedia learning. First, he presents the key element of multimedia, which is selecting essential images or videos. Second, choosing suitable words from narration or texts will make the learning more effective. Third, creating a verbal representation by arranging the chosen words also makes interpretation easier. Fourth, putting the images together to create a visual representation helps the learner perceive the content. And finally, connecting both representations with previous knowledge about the topic supports learning new words (Mayer 2002: 27). Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) and Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) are the two main theories that will be discussed in the present study while taking foreign language learning with subtitles and captions into consideration.

2.2.1 Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

The question of multimedia learning was first introduced in 1997 by Richard E. Mayer, whereafter he presented the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML). Mayer's theory has become increasingly admired in the field of multimedia language learning. For instance, multiple scholars such as Frumuselu (2018) and Perez (2022) have utilized Mayer's theory in their own studies.

In Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2005), multimedia presentation consists of pictures and words, such as a TV series and subtitles. These components are being acknowledged in sensory memory, or in other words with one's ears and eyes. Through selecting words and images, the observed information is being proceeded into the working memory. Prior knowledge integrates with the absorbed information, and finally moves to the long-term memory.

In their article (2002: 27–29), Mayer introduces nine principles that summarize multimedia learning. The most significant ones of these are the Multimedia Principle, the Spatial Contiguity Principle, the Temporal Contiguity Principle and the Personalization Principle. First, as Mayer (2002: 27) argues, the Multimedia Principle suggests that language learning is more beneficial with words and images than with only words. Mayer also states that due to the combination of visual and verbal models the learners are capable of creating connections between them. Second, the Spatial Contiguity Principle introduces a learning method in which images and words are close to each other, for example on the screen. The Temporal Contiguity Principle supports the latter one, since it suggests that learning is more effective when the presentation of images and words happens simultaneously. Finally, Mayer's Personalization Principle allows learners to adapt new words more efficiently when they are being presented in a regular conversation, such as in a TV series with less formal language. Thus, multimedia learning happens as a consequence of a simultaneous occurrence of words and images, such as subtitles over video footage.

2.2.2 Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)

The Cognitive Load Theory was first introduced by John Sweller in the 1980s. In their more recent article (2010: 116) together with Paas and Van Gog, they explain the phenomenon of cognitive load as the learning of challenging cognitive tasks, such as a new language that one must process before being effectively learned. Prior knowledge is located in the long-term memory, and the working memory is cooperating with it when receiving new information, such as new vocabulary.

Three interconnected categories can be found in the Cognitive Load Theory: intrinsic, extraneous and germane. As Paas, Van Gog and Sweller (2010: 117) point out, complicated tasks and schemas that must be learned are in the intrinsic load, whereas unsuccessfully developed instructional processes that increase the amount of unnecessary information create extraneous load. Moreover, germane load includes parts of working memory needed to handle intrinsic cognitive load (Paas, Van Gog and Sweller

2010: 117). In other words, germane load refers to new information being connected to the already adapted knowledge in the brain.

2.2.3 Subtitles and captions with CTML and CLT

Frumuselu (2018) has studied the impact of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning and the Cognitive Load Theory while concerning the use of subtitles and captions in foreign language learning. Both theories support multimedia learning. As mentioned earlier, Sweller's categories of the Cognitive Load Theory can be utilized when learning vocabulary. As Frumuselu (2018: 57) agrees, the germane load should be emphasized in the choice of learning materials instead of the extraneous load, which can also be considered as the aim of the Cognitive Load Theory. Particularly, the learning materials should contain relevant information that supports language development.

Concerning Mayer's (2002) theory, the principles can be beneficial when studying the impact of subtitles and captions in language learning. The Spatial Contiguity Principle supports learning via subtitles or captions. To illustrate, while watching TV series, subtitles or captions are usually at the bottom of the screen, and they occur over a video clip related to the situation. One significant aspect of learning new words through TV programs is narration. Mayer's Modality Principle (2002: 28) suggests that learning is more effective when narration and animation occur simultaneously.

According to Frumuselu (2018: 71), both the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning and the Cognitive Load Theory indicate that by being exposed to visual, textual and auditory aspects, information is being adapted in the most effective way. Thus, simultaneous learning can be overloading, but it is also one of the most effective ways to learn new vocabulary. Frumuselu's study was conducted in a dubbing country, and as suggested, further research is needed in order to receive more information about subtitling countries, especially qualitatively.

2.3 Language learning and pedagogical aspects of multimedia learning

As mentioned, learning via interlingual and intralingual subtitles combines both visual and auditory aspects, which provides more effective language learning. Frumuselu's article (2018) includes two studies that consider the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning and the Cognitive Load Theory and their pedagogical implications in the foreign language classrooms when learning vocabulary through subtitles and captions. In Frumuselu's first study (2018: 65), on the one hand, the participants were given several weeks to internalize the informal vocabulary they had learned while watching episodes of an English sitcom *Friends* (1994–2004) with intralingual subtitles in class. In the second study, the participants were asked to answer questions about the learned vocabulary immediately after watching the episodes. Referring to the Cognitive Load Theory and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia learning, in the first study the participants had a longer period of time to move the acquired information from the working memory to the long-term memory. In the second study, on the other hand, the participants did not have time to process the vocabulary in relation to previous knowledge. These two studies by Frumuselu (2018: 70) have revealed that watching subtitled or captioned TV programs with written, visual and auditory elements makes storing new information in the long-term memory more effective. By using these methods, teachers are able to make learning more entertaining, while learning new vocabulary stays productive in the classroom.

Aksu Ataç and Günay-Köprülü (2018) have studied English teacher students' attitudes towards learning with subtitles in Turkey. They point out that watching English TV programs with Turkish subtitles has not supported learning new vocabulary as efficiently as with English captions (Aksu Ataç and Günay-Köprülü 2018: 531). Hence, teachers support using captions in their teaching. Talaván (2007: 8) also points out that the use of subtitled materials in vocabulary learning should be more encouraged in the classroom. These two studies by Aksu Ataç and Günay-Köprülü (2018) and Talaván (2007) support one of the aims of the present study, which is investigating the use of subtitled or captioned audiovisual materials in foreign language classrooms. As

multiple researchers in this field suggest, further studies need to be done in order to discover more beneficial information about using subtitled and captioned programs as learning materials.

2.3.1 Pedagogical implications of subtitles and captions

Utilizing subtitles and captions can be a functional tool in foreign language teaching, although one must consider their pedagogical aspects. Lertola (2015: 259) mentions several advantages of using audio-visual materials in the foreign language classroom. According to them (2015: 259), the learners will develop their linguistic skills, watching different programs can be motivating, and the language is mostly spoken at an understandable pace and it being colloquial helps in understanding new words and phrases. Teachers need to carefully consider the materials that they will be using in the classroom, considering the CEFR proficiency levels, age group and linguistic content of the programs (Lertola 2018: 261).

Peters and Webb's study (2018: 570) suggests that by watching English television programs in the L2 classroom, teachers can encourage students to watch programs in their free time as well. Taking pedagogical aspects into account, Lertola (2012: 69) also points out that in foreign language classrooms, subtitled programs can be considered to be a functional tool. Both Peters and Webb's (2018) and Lertola's studies (2012) provide valuable data regarding pedagogical implications for future foreign language teachers, and they support the results of the present study as well, especially future teacher students' experiences.

2.3.2 Pedagogical aspects of multimedia learning in Finnish class-rooms

As mentioned in the subchapter above, pedagogical aspects are a significant part of utilizing new teaching methods especially in a foreign language classroom. English being taught in Finland as a foreign language creates a unique context, which needs

further research. It is essential to investigate the most efficient ways of teaching the language in the classroom. Existing research covers the area of audiovisual learning materials, although no research has approached the topic of using subtitles and captions in foreign language teaching from for example the Finnish context.

Studies concerning vocabulary learning via subtitled and captioned TV programs remain exceptionally low in Finland. However, a couple of studies have been conducted in the Finnish context. Vanderplank, who has conducted multiple studies in this field of study, has also researched the use of subtitles in Finland. In their study (1988: 272), Vanderplank discovered that the Finnish participants' proficiency in English increased after watching English TV series with either Finnish or Swedish subtitles. Thus, proficiency would also develop with using English captions (Vanderplank 1988: 273).

According to a study conducted by Terhemaa (2018: 55), the majority of Finnish upper secondary school students use English captions when watching television programs, and they believe those have helped them to learn new vocabulary. In addition to Terhemaa and Vanderplank's studies, there have been many other studies in different contexts in different countries. Dizon's study (2021) was conducted in Japan, and the results indicate contrasting views. English captions were less beneficial for vocabulary development than subtitles in the participants' native language, Japanese (Dizon 2021: 58). The conducted study focused on dual subtitles, which indicates that while watching a TV show one is able to use both interlingual and intralingual subtitles simultaneously (Dizon 2021: 52). As far as the Finnish context is concerned, it is not always possible to utilize both subtitles and captions at the same time. Dizon's study therefore does not completely support the objective of the present study, which is examining whether to use Finnish subtitles or English captions, and not both at the same time. However, Dizon' study had also taken pedagogical aspects into account, which is one point of interest in the present study. As Dizon (2021: 62) suggests, teachers can encourage the students to use subtitles with different streaming services at home. The researcher also refers to Peters and Webb's study (2018) and mentions that dual subtitles could be a beneficial tool for vocabulary learning in the foreign language

classroom, and the teachers could show the students several episodes of a certain TV series (Peters and Webb 2018, cited in Dizon 2021: 62). Thus, if feasible, teachers in Finland could also teach vocabulary by showing TV programs that include both subtitles and captions.

This chapter has discussed subtitles and captions, their features in foreign language learning, and theories related to this field of study. With regard to learning via subtitles and captions, the audio-visual input is an essential part of understanding the phenomenon. When receiving new information in visual, textual and auditory forms, one is able to learn new vocabulary more effectively rather than only receiving knowledge by using one of them. The aim of the present study is to gain more knowledge in students' experiences in vocabulary learning via watching foreign TV series either with Finnish subtitles or English captions, but also studying possible pedagogical implications that occur in this field of study. Despite the fact that there is quite a lot of research, the Finnish context remains to be quite unexplored. English teacher students' experiences and future implications here in Finland will therefore be taken into consideration.

3 PRESENT STUDY

The present chapter introduces the aims and the research questions of the present study. The questionnaire, which was used to collect the data, will be presented together with the methods of analysis. Finally, the ethical aspects that were considered during and after the data collection process are discussed.

3.1 Aims and research questions

Research has been done about the benefits of subtitles regarding language learning acquisition, such as Gambier's study in 2012. The present study is interested in investigating the learning outcomes of utilizing subtitles or captions while watching English TV series and furthermore, the pedagogical aspects of multimedia vocabulary learning. The aim is to gain more knowledge with the help of English students' experiences. In addition to studying the respondents learning habits, one of the aims is also to investigate future teachers' implications regarding multimedia language teaching. Pedagogical aspects and the interaction with the students are a necessity before trying new teaching methods, and this area of vocabulary study and how to properly create functional tools should therefore be researched further (Gambier 2015: 78). As Perez (2022) also mentions, there are some gaps in previous research concerning pedagogical implications of using audio-visual input in the classroom. The present study investigates for instance, if students and teachers would prefer to watch educational videos with English captions or Finnish subtitles in the classroom. Thus, there are two research questions that will be investigated in this study:

1. What kinds of experiences do English university students have about learning vocabulary through subtitles and captions?

2. How would English teacher students utilize multimedia language learning such as using subtitles and captions in their own teaching in the future?

3.2 Data and respondents

The method used for data collection was a questionnaire that is available as an appendix at the end of the present study. This method was regarded as the most practical one since the aim was to study the respondents' experiences and opinions. This type of research is also known as introspection, which indicates that the researcher requests the participants to share their personal experiences (Alanen, Dufva and Kalaja 2011: 18). Questionnaire surveys can be both qualitative and quantitative since the responses can be given in the form of both multiple-choices and open-ended questions (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2009: 9). The questionnaire included both above mentioned question types, and the present study therefore is both quantitative and qualitative. As Denscombe (2017: 254) explains, quantitative data, on the one hand, involves numbers. In the present study, the responses of the multiple-choice questions were analyzed as percentages. Qualitative data, on the other hand, offers an option to use one's own words, such as in open-ended questions (Denscombe 2017: 286).

Data collection in this specific method included creating the questions and conducting the questionnaire itself. A questionnaire consists of two sections: a demographic section includes relevant personal information about the respondents, such as age and native language, and an information section covers the actual questions (Davies and Mosdell 2006: 78). This is the structure that is used in the present study as well. One key element that was considered before the data collection is piloting. This concept is often referred to as testing the questionnaire, and something that must be completed before using the survey (Davies and Mosdell 2006: 108). Objectivity, the length of sections, and the right wording such as understandable vocabulary are aspects that one must consider when conducting the questionnaire. Pilot data will give possible results in advance, and it will therefore be easier to predict the actual results of the questionnaire (Davies and Mosdell 2006: 112). The questionnaire was piloted by two English teacher students, and as a result, one question was rephrased. The questionnaire was sent through a mailing list to the students majoring or minoring in English and who

are studying to become either teachers or language specialists at the University of Jyväskylä. Altogether 48 English students responded to the questionnaire, and 23 of them answered the teacher-related questions.

3.3 Methods of analysis

Analyzing the results of the questionnaire was the following part of the process. Data analysis in questionnaires usually includes statistical analysis, as far as quantitative research is concerned. The present study illustrates the results of multiple-choice questions with different charts, such as bar charts, which is an effective way to study frequencies between the responses (Denscombe 2017: 274). By contrast, the most beneficial data analysis method for the open-ended questions is content analysis. As mentioned earlier, the present study aims to study the respondents' experiences, and open-ended questions are therefore the most practical choice for the most advantageous answers. Going through qualitative answers with the help of content analysis, it is possible to understand certain actions and phenomena.

Having enough background knowledge, the observations are easy to connect to previous research, which makes it possible to get new insights. The present study refers to the theories of Mayer and Sweller in order to relate the results to previous studies. Moreover, coding was used to separate the respondents' open-ended answers into different categories. To be specific, their experiences whether they have used English captions or Finnish subtitles were coded. As this subchapter suggests, the present study utilizes a few different analyzing methods, which enables examining the results from different perspectives.

3.4 Ethics

One must consider ethical responsibilities whenever there are humans involved in a study. Referring to the views of Dörnyei and Taguchi (2009: 79), the participants should not experience any damage from the survey, and they have the right to choose

which questions to answer and how much information to give. In any case, they need to be informed about the aims and intentions of the study, and the researcher is responsible for ensuring that these principles are being followed throughout and after the study (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2009: 79).

In the present study, the respondents were given information regarding the aims of the study, and before answering the questionnaire they needed to accept the terms and conditions. In contrast to the majority of the multiple-choice questions, some of the open-ended questions were optional. Hence, the last three of the open-ended questions were directed to only English teacher students, which indicates that the language specialist students were able to respond to the other questions and therefore take part in the study as well. In addition, the questionnaire was anonymous, and the responses have been deleted after the present study was completed.

4   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results of the questionnaire will be analyzed and compared to the theoretical background. The research questions will also be taken into consideration, and the findings will be presented in relation to them. The results chapter will include the respondents' direct quotes from the questionnaire, and the researcher of the present study has translated the Finnish responses into English.

4.1 The respondents' experiences

One of the aims of the present study was to investigate English students' experiences in learning vocabulary through subtitles and captions. Prior to examining the respondents' experiences, it is relevant to investigate their first language and how often they watch English TV series. As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was targeted at students studying English at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. Thus, all the respondents identified Finnish as their first language, and English as the language that they can speak fluently. Additionally, the respondents listed a variety of languages that they can somewhat speak, Swedish and French being the most frequently mentioned. More than half, 52.1% of the respondents, watch English TV series daily, 41.7% of the respondents watch them weekly, and 6.2% mention that they consume English television monthly. None of them answered that they would not watch English programs at all. The results of the questionnaire revealed that almost 90% of the respondents have learned English with the help of subtitles or captions. Conversely, the rest could not say whether they have or have not learned English while watching English TV series with English captions or Finnish subtitles.

The questionnaire included a question about what the respondents have learned while watching English TV series. In order to illustrate different linguistic divisions of this question, a five-point Likert scale was utilized. As the results show, the majority of the respondents have learned new vocabulary and phrases, as well as improved their

pronunciation. However, grammar was the category that was believed to be the most difficult or unnoticeable to learn according to the respondents. The process of learning grammatical regularities differs from learning single vocabulary items, which makes it more challenging to acquire grammar while watching different programs with sub-titles or captions (Perez 2022: 176). However, in addition to the response options, the respondents had the chance to elaborate other areas of language learning. Surprisingly, word order and wording were mentioned, and they fall into the category of grammar. Other answers included slang and concepts that relate to for instance culture.

Table 1: What the respondents have learned with subtitles or captions.

	1: Disagree	2: Somewhat disagree	3: Neutral	4: Somewhat agree	5: Agree
New vocabulary	0.0 %	0.0 %	2.1 %	31.9 %	66.0 %
Grammar	10.6 %	23.4 %	19.2 %	34.0 %	12.8 %
Pronunciation	4.3 %	8.5 %	2.1 %	31.9 %	53.2 %
Phrases	0.0 %	2.1 %	4.3 %	31.9 %	61.7 %
Other (elaborate if you want)	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	60.0 %

The present study also focuses on whether the vocabulary the respondents have learned is more formal or informal. While the majority, 74.5% of the respondents, be-lieved they had learned more informal vocabulary, 25.5% of the respondents said that they had gained more formal language. The respondents had a chance to elaborate on their responses.

> *(1)* "Tv-ohjelmat sisältävät usein paljon hahmojen välistä dialogia, joten puhe on luonnollisesti valtaosin informaalia"

*"TV shows contain a lot of dialogue between the characters, so the speech is naturally mostly informal."*

(2) "Olen oppinut esim. "hienostuneempia" tai vähemmän käytettyjä sanoja, tieteellistä sanastoa."

"I have learned for example more 'sophisticated' or less used words, for example scientific vocabulary."

The most frequent response was that the respondents have learned informal vocabulary by watching TV series that contain mundane conversations between the characters. The vocabulary used in informal TV series tends to be dominated by slang and profanity, to mention a few. Conversely, according to the respondents, formal language uses terms related to for instance law or medicine, at least in the programs that they normally consume. Based on the respondents' responses, the majority of them tend to watch English TV series on a regular basis, and they have learned more informal language. Referring to the views of Bednarek (2018: 19), as the speech in television shows is intended to be understandable, the language is inherently informal.

4.2 Choice of language

As Perez (2022: 178) has studied, most of the participants in the conducted study preferred to use native language subtitles while watching more entertaining and casual programs, whereas English captions were more popular among participants who wished to learn new vocabulary and other characteristics of the target language, English. In the present study, similar findings were discovered.

Table 2: Preferred type of subtitles or captions.
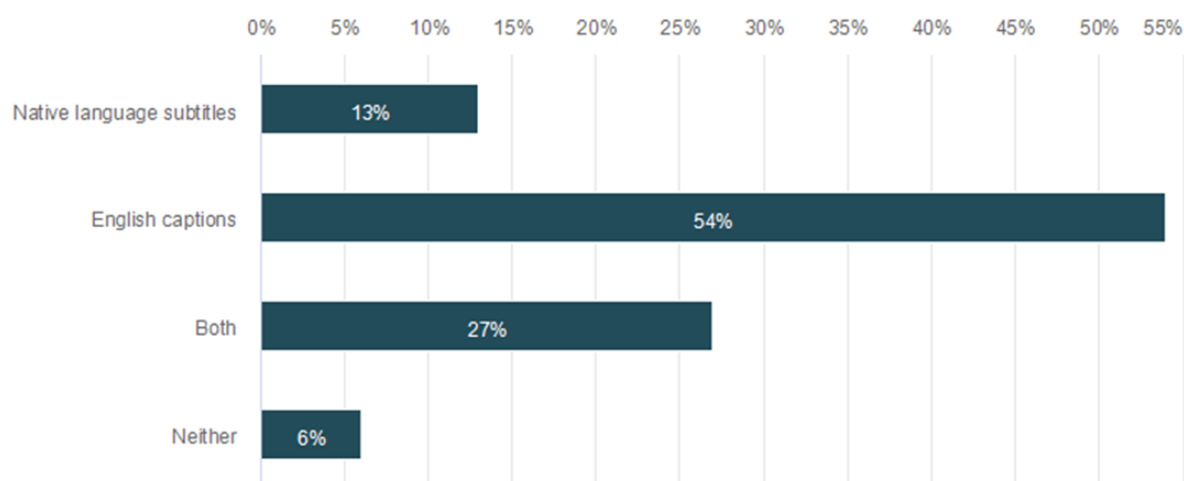
As illustrated in Table 2 above, more than half of the English students in the present study prefer to use English captions. However, given that 13% of respondents utilize Finnish subtitles and 27% use both English captions and Finnish subtitles, the remaining responses appear to be distributed more evenly. The remaining group, 6% of the respondents, use neither English captions nor Finnish subtitles while watching English programs.

The decision whether to use captions or subtitles is influenced by a variety of circumstances. However, some categories have a greater impact than others, as seen in Table 3. First, the respondents' own proficiency level seems to affect their choice of using subtitles or captions. According to Peters' study's (2016: 13) findings, watching brief videos, such as episodes of certain TV series, with captions or subtitles can have a positive effect on vocabulary learning despite the learners' proficiency levels. The results of the present study indicate that the proficiency level does affect the choice of language and therefore the learning goal. To give an instance, English captions are used to see the right spelling, whereas native language subtitles help in translating the content.

Second, accents or pronunciation of the characters of the TV series, which was also the category with the highest percentage of responses, is a remarkable determinant when

choosing between subtitles and captions. As the results of the present study show, 44% of the respondents who submitted their response to this category of pronunciation prefer to use English captions. According to Gorman, Crabb and Armstrong (2021: 2), English captions especially help in understanding unfamiliar accents and support learning new regional words. In terms of learning outcomes, the respondents are eager to learn more about foreign accents and various pronunciations. As Mitterer and McQueen's study (2009: 4) also points out, the spoken words are being displayed to the viewers with English captions.

Third, the level of vocabulary of the show was also a frequently answered response. Most of the respondents in this category claimed to utilize both Finnish subtitles and English captions. Professional terminology includes advanced words; thus, especially native language subtitles help translating and understanding new meanings. Surprisingly, from the remaining categories, the genre of the TV show was rarely mentioned, considering that the vocabulary varies depending on the theme of the series.

Table 3: What affects the choice of choosing between native language subtitles and English captions?
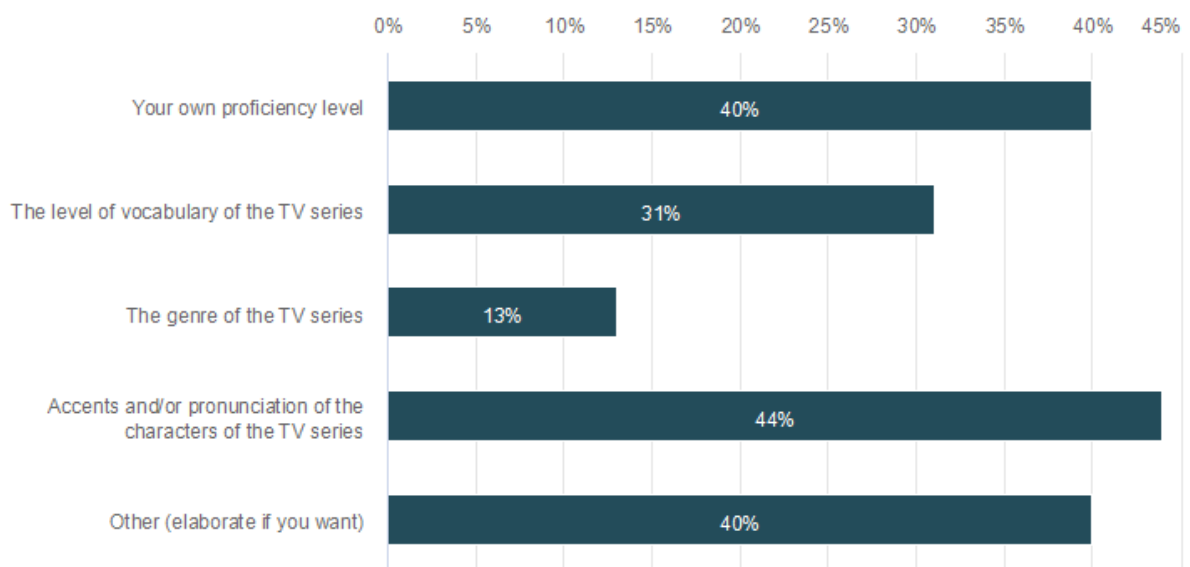
Moreover, the respondents were also given the opportunity to submit their own responses to the question of what affects their choice of language, as Table 4 demonstrates. Among these elaborated responses, eight different reasons were highlighted and all together 18 respondents answered this question.

Table 4: Respondents' elaborated answers.

	Number of the responses
Helps to concentrate	2
Available languages	3
Spelling	2
Company / Other viewers of the TV series	2
Inaccuracy of Finnish subtitles	2
Quality of subtitles and/or captions	2
Volume / Background noise	2
Vitality / Energy level of the viewer	3

The results demonstrate that while the respondents would prefer to view English television programs with English captions, it is not always possible. Despite many streaming services offering English captions, some programs do not include them in Finland. Thus, the respondents choose Finnish subtitles due to English not being available. Since Finnish subtitles are also frequently viewed as inaccurate or not suitable for the context of the TV series, the respondents provided contradicting opinions. As the results of a study conducted by Aksu Ataç and Günay-Köprülü (2018: 531) suggest, students in Turkey also experience that their native language, Turkish, provides inaccurate translations as subtitles. Nevertheless, the present study included only English language students. Furthermore, the results could have been more diverse if the respondents had represented other majors or minors. Most of the elaborated responses in Table 4 referred to the language itself, yet there were other choices mentioned as

well. Some of the responses indicated that the choice of the language is influenced by how the viewers are feeling at the time. It can be beneficial to watch shows without any pressure when considering language acquisition, and in particular informal vocabulary growth can be seen outside of school hours. Lastly, the viewer's company affects the choice of language while watching TV series together. The respondents being English students, it is understandable that their acquaintances, who do not study English, do not always prefer to use English captions.

In sum, the learners' own proficiency levels, pronunciation in the TV series and the level of vocabulary of the TV show are seen as the most important factors that affect the choice of using Finnish subtitles and English captions. Furthermore, there are numerous other elements that influence the decision, as shown in Table 4. Thus, English captions are the most preferable option despite the factors affecting the choice.

4.3 English teacher students' views on multimedia language learning

As the second research question suggests, the aim of the present study is to investigate the English teacher students' views on utilizing either Finnish subtitles or English captions in their own teaching in the future. The questionnaire was targeted at the English students studying to become either a teacher or a language specialist at the University of Jyväskylä. The questionnaire included three separate questions specifically for the teacher students, in order to receive their opinions on the topic. Out of the total of 48 responses, 23 teacher students answered these questions. The data shows that the teacher students would use both Finnish subtitles and English captions, depending on the situation in the classroom and the learning goals of the students.

Firstly, the questionnaire investigated the respondents' own experiences in the foreign language classroom. The majority, 16 out of 23 teacher students who answered the teaching-related questions, claimed that they did not have experience in learning new vocabulary with subtitled or captioned materials in the classroom as a student.

(3) "Hirveän vähän käyttivät opettajat meillä mitään "erilaisia" opetuskäytän-
töjä."

"Very few of our teachers used any 'different' learning methods."

(4) "Emme katsoneet kovinkaan monta videota/elokuvaa/sarjaa englannin-
tunneilla."

"We didn't watch many videos, movies or TV shows in English lessons."

Secondly, there were a couple of responses that suggested that the respondents had experienced vocabulary learning through subtitles and captions in the classroom. However, despite the respondents having watched videos or films with both Finnish subtitles and English captions, a few of them cannot recall whether they learned new vocabulary or not.

(5) "Joskus peruskoulussa katsottiin elokuvia englannin tunneilla (suomalai-
silla teksteillä), mutta en muista, auttoivatko tekstitykset oppimaan jotain."

"We sometimes watched movies in English classes (with Finnish subtitles) in comprehensive school, but I don't remember if the subtitles helped me learn anything."

The respondents recalled having watched films during English lessons at school, but no one mentioned that they would have watched English TV series. In fact, watching TV series specifically could be a useful method considering vocabulary learning in the future. Alternatively, the respondents shared views on utilizing subtitles and captions in their own teaching while watching English TV programs in the classroom.

(6) "– tekstityksissä esiintyvä englanti esiintyy usein autenttisessa muodossa.

"– *English captions are often in an authentic form.*"

(7) "Jos keksin hyvän tavan käyttää tekstityksiä opetuksessa, varmasti voisin käyttää!"

"*If I came up with a great way to use subtitles or captions in teaching, I would definitely do so!*"

(8) "Ehdottomasti, koska se on oppilaistakin yleensä kivaa."

"*Absolutely, because it's usually fun for the students too.*"

When asked about their views on using multimedia language learning in their own instruction, English teacher students' thoughts on whether to utilize Finnish subtitles or English captions varied. Although both options have advantages and disadvantages, the majority of the respondents agreed on using both subtitles and captions in various circumstances in their teaching in the future. Using audiovisual materials is seen as a motivating tool for the students, which develops learners' language skills (Lertola, 2015: 259).

After discussing the respondents' attitudes on using captions and subtitles in teaching, the present study will now focus on which language of subtitles or captions the teacher students would prefer to use in their own teaching materials when teaching English in the foreign language classroom in the future. All the questions aimed towards English teacher students were open-ended, allowing the respondents to express their own opinions on the topic. More significantly, arguments for the language choice were similar between the respondents. According to the respondents, Finnish subtitles offer translations for challenging or advanced English words which makes it easier for younger learners to comprehend the meaning of the watched program. On the contrary, English captions provide the spelling of the words, and additionally they are more suitable for older learners whose proficiency levels are higher.

(9) "Molemmista on varmasti hyötyä: englanninkielisissä tekstityksissä huomio kiinnittyy enemmän sanan kirjoitusasuun ja suomenkielisissä taas sanan merkitykseen."

> *"Both are definitely useful: English captions help to focus on spelling, while Finnish subtitles show the learner the meaning of a word."*

(10) "– matalammilla taitotasoilla äidinkieliset tekstitykset voisivat olla hyödyllisemmät, myöhemmin taas englanninkieliset."

> *"– native language subtitles would be more beneficial on lower proficiency levels, whereas later on English captions would be more useful."*

(11) "– sarjoissa kontekstin kautta voi ymmärtää sanojen merkityksen, vaikka sekä puhe että teksti olisivat englanniksi."

> *"– in TV series the context helps to understand the meaning of the words, even though both speech and text are in English."*

Despite the fact that the respondents were open to utilizing both types of subtitles, the majority of them preferred English captions and their advantages. To exemplify, English captions develop orthographic skills, help identify right wording and pronunciation, and the students need to genuinely concentrate in order to understand the meanings. English captions are a preferable and suggested choice when it comes to language teaching (Aksu Ataç and Günay-Köprülü 2018: 527).

In comparison to the benefits of learning with subtitled or captioned materials, using multimedia learning still effectively presents certain challenges that the respondents are conscious of.

(12) "– englanninkielisillä tekstityksillä näkee kirjoitusasun ja joutuu tekemään päättelyä, jotta saa selville mitä sana tarkoittaa, mutta en ainakaan itse jaksa lähteä selvittämään sitä jos en saakaan selville."

"– with English captions one can see the spelling and must derive the meanings of the words, but I don't have the effort to actually look them up if I don't figure out the meaning."

(13) "Molemmista voi myös olla haittaa, koska enkunkielisillä teksteillä ei välttämättä ymmärrä kaikkia merkityksiä, ja suomenkielisillä saattaa keskittyä vain siihen tekstitykseen, jolloin kuuntelu jää vähemmälle."

"Both subtitles and captions can have disadvantages, because with English captions one might not understand all the meanings, and with Finnish subtitles one might concentrate on the subtitle itself while listening comprehension is being more or less ignored."

(14) "– suomeksi niin kaikkea ei välttämättä käännetä ja mistä tiedät, miten sana kirjoitetaan."

"-- in Finnish everything might not be translated, and you might not know how to spell the word in English."

Despite these disadvantages mentioned above, English is still seen as a preferable option, according to the responses. The teacher students are willing to utilize subtitled or captioned materials in their own vocabulary instruction in the future. However, the question is what the most efficient method would be to achieve vocabulary learning goals.

4.4 Summary

All the respondents have experience in watching English TV series with either Finnish subtitles or English captions, claiming to have learned vocabulary due to multimedia materials. The English students in the present study prefer to use English captions, however, they see benefits in both languages. There are multiple factors that affect the choice of subtitles or captions, proficiency levels and for instance pronunciation in different TV series being the most frequently answered responses. The benefits of

using either native language subtitles or English captions in vocabulary learning especially with TV series is a topic that could be researched further in the future. As Perez (2022: 185) mentions, other aspects, such as learning and practicing pronunciation via subtitles or captions, needs further research.

As the data shows, the majority of the English teacher students have experience in watching subtitled or captioned films during English classes. The responses indicate that there are still a few unanswered questions. For example, would learning new vocabulary be more beneficial if teachers utilized TV series instead of films. On the contrary, the effects of TV series have been studied before. As Lertola (2015: 261) suggests, TV series use authentic language, which makes them convenient for the teachers to create different types of exercises for the students in class. In addition, considering Frumuselu's two studies (2018) mentioned earlier, watching multiple episodes of certain TV series within a longer period of time can be more beneficial for vocabulary development.

> *(15)* "Sitä voisi hyödyntää välillä, mutta uskon että oppimista syntyy paremmin, jos esim. tv-ohjelmaa katsoo useamman jakson, jolloin hahmojen käyttämä sanasto saattaa toistua usein."

> *"Subtitled materials could be utilized occasionally, but I believe that learning would be more effective if we watched several episodes of specific TV series."*

Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning supports the results of the present study. As the theory suggests, learning is more effective when pictures, videos and words occur together. The Personalization Principle (Mayer 2002: 27) supports the fact that learning new vocabulary is more expected when the learners hear the words in mundane conversations. Thus, the respondents claimed to have learned new English vocabulary by watching subtitled or captioned English TV series that include informal language.

All things considered, both Finnish interlingual subtitles and English intralingual subtitles are seen as beneficial for vocabulary development. However, the majority of the

respondents would prefer to use English captions, in the view of the fact that English would be more beneficial for students' vocabulary learning.

5 CONCLUSION

The objective of the present study was to investigate Finnish university English students' experiences and intentions in vocabulary learning through Finnish subtitles and English captions while watching English TV series. The data was collected by conducting a questionnaire, in which the respondents answered both multiple-choice and open-ended questions.

The results of the present study indicate that subtitles and captions are a beneficial, authentic and functional tool for vocabulary acquisition in both individual and in foreign language classroom settings. As Mayer (2002: 27) confirms, animation together with narration has been shown to encourage language learning. As the first research question suggests, the aim was to investigate English university students' experiences in learning vocabulary with subtitles and captions. Both Finnish subtitles and English captions have their own advantages and disadvantages, and the respondents utilize both options depending on the circumstances. Nevertheless, English captions are more widely used and regarded as a preferable choice.

Regarding the second research question, which suggests how English teacher students would utilize multimedia language learning such as using subtitles and captions in their own teaching in the future, the results indicate that future teachers are willing to utilize multimedia materials in their own teaching. Correspondingly, they would specifically attempt to incorporate television series into their vocabulary teaching. Another point that the teachers and especially schools need to consider is the practicality of utilizing different English TV series, since most of the streaming services are chargeable. However, if subtitles and captions become a more common tool in foreign language vocabulary teaching, it is conceivable that the schools will provide the required supplies and materials.

As mentioned previously, Mayer (2002: 27) lists five different characteristics of multimedia learning. These steps can be utilized when developing multimedia foreign

language teaching. To give an instance, choosing the right materials including videos and narration and using them continuously supports learning. Due to being able to connect previous scenarios with new ones, the students are able to learn new vocabulary by remembering situations from previous episodes of TV series. This is also what Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory supports with the concept of germane load. Mayer's theory has been utilized by multiple other scholars, such as earlier mentioned Perez (2022) and Frumuselu (2018). It is essential to utilize other studies that have used the same theories in order to receive reliable results. Mayer's theory is well recognized in this field of study, and it supported the results of the present study as well.

According to the teacher student respondents, learning vocabulary with different TV series remains to be low, and they asserted that they have only learned from watching films rather than television episodes. Moreover, as Vanderplank (2016: 235) suggests, long-term language learning regarding the use of subtitles and captions remains to be unexplored. A suggestion for further research would be investigating using TV series habitually in the foreign language classroom and examine whether the students acquire vocabulary by watching English TV programs. In addition, a more effective way to collect data for further research would be through an oral interview in order to receive more extensive results.

In conclusion, the present study offered valuable insights into English students' views on utilizing multimedia language learning, such as Finnish subtitles and English captions with English TV programs. As the learning materials continue to develop, multimedia is a considerable tool especially in foreign language learning and teaching. Referring to the views of the teacher student respondents, TV series would be a beneficial tool to encourage entertaining, genuine and efficient learning. Learning vocabulary while watching English TV series has become a subconscious manner due to accessible streaming services, and it remains to be seen when multimedia learning including subtitles and captions becomes a permanent part of foreign language vocabulary teaching.

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APPENDIX

Kyselytutkimus: Englannin kielen sanaston oppiminen tekstityksien avulla katsottaessa englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia

(i) Pakolliset kysymykset merkitty tähdellä (*)

Olen Emilia Poikonen, 3. vuoden englannin aineenopettajaopiskelija Jyväskylän yliopistosta. Tutkielmani käsittelee englannin kielen sanaston oppimista katsottaessa englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia joko suomen- tai englanninkielisten tekstityksien avulla. Tutkielman tavoitteena on saada lisätietoa englannin opiskelijoiden kokemuksista sekä erityisesti tulevien opettajien näkemyksistä koskien tekstityksien hyödyntämistä opetuksessa. Tulen käsittelemään tämän kyselyn tuloksia kandidaatin tutkielmassani.

Suostumus osallistua tieteelliseen tutkimukseen, jossa henkilötietoja ei käsitellä:

Olen ymmärtänyt, että tutkimukseen osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista ja voin keskeyttää osallistumiseni milloin tahansa esimerkiksi jättämällä kyselyn kesken. Tutkimuksen keskeyttämisestä ei aiheudu minulle minkäänlaisia kielteisiä seuraamuksia.

Olen saanut tiedotteen tutkittavalle, jossa on riittävät tiedot tutkimuksesta ja minusta kerättyjen tietojen käsittelystä niin, että henkilötietojani ei kerätä, ei myöskään epäsuoria tunnisteita, joista minut voitaisiin tunnistaa.

1. Olen lukenut yllä olevan tiedotteen ja vakuutan, että olen vähintään 18-vuotias ja annan luvan käyttää vastauksiani datana kyseisessä kandidaatin tutkielmassa. *

◯ Kyllä

2. Ikä

○ 18 - 24 vuotta

○ 25 - 30 vuotta

○ 31 - 40 vuotta

○ 41 - 50 vuotta

○ 50 +

3. Mitä kieliä puhut? *

Äidinkielenä	.

Kielet, joita puhut sujuvasti	.

Kielet, joita puhut jonkin verran	.

4. Kuinka usein katsot englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia? *

○ Päivittäin

○ Viikoittain

○ Kuukausittain

○ En katso englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia

5. Katsotko englanninkielisiä tv-ohjelmia mieluummin äidinkielisillä tekstityksillä, englanninkielisillä tekstityksillä, molemmilla vaihtelevasti, vai ilman tekstityksiä? *

◯ Äidinkieliset tekstitykset

◯ Englanninkieliset tekstitykset

◯ Molemmilla vaihtelevasti

◯ Ilman tekstityksiä

6. Mikä vaikuttaa valintaasi tekstityksien kielten välillä? *

☐ Oma kielitaitosi

☐ Tv-ohjelman sanaston vaikeusaste

☐ Tv-ohjelman genre

☐ Tv-ohjelman hahmojen aksentit ja/tai ääntäminen

☐ Muu (voit tarkentaa vastausta halutessasi)

7. Tunnetko oppineesi englantia tekstityksien avulla? *

◯ Kyllä

◯ Ei

◯ En osaa sanoa

8. Tekstityksien avulla olen oppinut...

	1: Eri mieltä	2: Jokseenkin eri mieltä	3: En samaa enkä eri mieltä	4: Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	5: Samaa mieltä
Uutta sanastoa	○	○	○	○	○
Kielioppia	○	○	○	○	○
Ääntämistä	○	○	○	○	○
Fraaseja	○	○	○	○	○
Muu (voit tarkentaa vastausta halutessasi)	○	○	○	○	○

9. Jos koet oppineesi uutta sanastoa, onko oppimasi sanasto enemmän formaalia vai informaalia?

◯ Formaali
◯ Informaali

10. Jos vastasit edelliseen kysymykseen, osaatko antaa esimerkin?

Jos opiskelet englannin aineenopettajaksi, vastaa myös seuraaviin kysymyksiin:

11. Onko sinulla kokemusta englannin sanaston oppimisesta tekstityksien avulla luokkahuoneessa oppilaana? Jos on, millaista?

12. Haluaisitko hyödyntää sanaston oppimista tekstityksien avulla myös omassa opetuksessasi tulevaisuudessa? Miksi?

13. Opeteltaessa englannin kielen sanastoa kumpien uskot olevan hyödyllisempiä: englanninkieliset vai suomenkieliset tekstitykset? Miksi?