EDUCARE
JURNAL PENELITIAN PENDIDIKAN DAN PEMBELAJARAN

From Screen to Speech: Exploring EFL Students' Beliefs About the Role of Bimodal Subtitles in Speaking Practice

Lasim Muzammil [1*] , **Andy** [1] , **Ayu Liskinasih** [1] , **Mallaury Milliard** [2]

[1] Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang, Indonesia
[2] Université Catholique de Lille, Prancis
* Author Correspondence

Check for updates

Abstract

This study explores English language learners' perceptions of bimodal subtitles—simultaneous audio and text in the same language—as a tool for developing speaking skills. While previous research has predominantly focused on the benefits of subtitles for receptive skills such as listening and vocabulary acquisition, limited attention has been paid to their influence on productive skills like speaking. Adopting a qualitative approach, this study gathers learner insights (N=62) through structured surveys and open-ended responses to examine how subtitled audiovisual materials shape learners' confidence, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency. Five open-ended questions were grouped into thirty-six thematic EFLs' responses (N = 532). Findings reveal that learners perceive bimodal subtitles as beneficial in enhancing speech production by offering real-time lexical and phonological reinforcement. Participants also reported an increase in their confidence when practicing spoken English. These perceptions align with prior research on multimodal learning and suggest that bimodal subtitles can be an accessible and effective scaffolding tool in language instruction. The study advocates for greater integration of subtitled media in pedagogical design, particularly in online and self-directed learning environments.

Introduction

The long history of ancient humans' verbal contacts was dated earlier than the recognised writing systems as means to get the message accross. Faten & Benkaouche (2022) depict the speedy evolution of humans' daily speaking conduct to accomodate language flexibility. Up to now, they believe that speaking is, to some extent, one of the most used means for communication. By no means, it is one of the most used tools for communication. Hence, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners need to be aware of the magnitude of speaking and to strive to master this skill. In the present day of digital setting, audiovisual resources available on online platforms are said by Viriya & Paranapiti (2025) to become a significant collection of recreation farther than formal classrooms for language learners, this is due to self-supporting reinforcement of both visual and oral construction. Thus, multimedia learning has become essential to language acquisition.

Communication skills depend on linguistic and non-linguistic ability across multimodal, covering sound, picture, motion, and caption (Ponzio & Deroo, 2023), so the input of multimodal makes learning more comprehensible (Huang et al., 2023). Therefore, the visual information from texts helps understand the information from audio, which contributes to learners' performance (Chong & Aryadoust, 2023). The learning media and information process impact on the multimodal learning and contribute to semiotic multimodal resources in individual understanding in the process of understanding meaning (Lee et al., 2023; Lu, 2023; Xu et al., 2022).

English movies are of great benefit for learning, but they also puzzle learners to grasp the storyline, which eventually causes boredom and distraction (Latief et al., 2024). They suggest that learners require the aid of subtitles to follow the story of the movie. It is also supported by Van Hoecke & Parrila (2023) that subtitles support retrieving the lecture's essence. The integration of subtitles in audiovisual resources is also claimed by Viriya & Paranapiti (2025) to bring positive implications to language learning and teaching in discriminating word pairs, boosting resourceful English glossary learning along with their pronunciation grasp and audiovisual comprehension. Accordingly, Kwarteng (2023) suggests the benefit of integrating movies subtitles in ESL language education. These subtitles support learners by enhancing listening comprehension, reinforcing vocabulary, and potentially improving speaking skills. Li et al. (2025) portray linguistic complication profiling involving intermodal transfer with language transfer both among diverse modalities and across languages. They admit unimodal form with the engagement of similar modalities of both the source and target languages.

Among various technological aids, bimodal subtitles–subtitles that present both the audio and corresponding text in the same language–are increasingly recognized for their pedagogical value. Febrina (2022) clearly illustrates bimodal subtitles as intra (same)-language or L2 audio-video transcription. They build up the association involving the written form and the auditory, which is believed to be of great benefit by Viriya & Paranapiti (2025) in supporting learners sorting out their speech experience. The other advantage is claimed by Van Hoecke & Parrila (2023) stating that bimodal input (subtitles and audio) assists learners to pursue and figure out information flow at ease, and helps them stay focused. Learners confirmed to have a positive response, as stated by Febrina (2022) that they are more engaged and motivated to learn, could follow the flow of the video, and gain a higher proficiency score. She believes that bimodal subtitled movies need to be more frequently integrated into school pedagogical instruction. Faten & Benkaouche (2022) add that such movies can provide problem-solving to speaking and writing problems, with growing awareness of cultural attachments. Moreover, written support like captions helps learners improve comprehension while listening (Hui, 2024). One of the ways to develop comprehension is by providing simultaneous captions and their audio (Pannatier & Béntrancourt, 2024).

Foreign language learning is said by Çekiç & Demirezen (2020) to undergo change and to accelerate up the adaptation from unimodal to multimodal learning milieu, this is facilitated by growing ease to meet the expense of digital gadget and of use across the world access to the Internet. Within a recognized situational context, the interweaving semiotic stock of both verbal and non-verbal sign involved in meaning-making process contributes to the fundamental nature of making communication as being multimodal (Bonsignori, 2018; Morell, 2017). Meanwhile, Morell (2017) claims that it is the resolution of educators to synchronize this multimodal and to build up awareness of its positive support to boost academic proficiency growth in classroom setting. The other benefit is claimed by Canals (2021), that multimodal promotes self-repairs and verbal contact by way of translanguaging particularly in so doing meaning negotiation.

For more than half a decade, the center of attention is predominantly given on the linguistic feature of communication. Coccetta (2018) suggests it to advance to become multimodal communicative competence with growing focus on capability to occupy assorted semiotic reserve in order to negotiate meanings. The use of subtitles in language learning has a well-documented history. Firtst, Dumlao et al. (2020) reported that bimodal subtitling significantly enhanced ESL learners' listening comprehension. Second, Yulia and Fazaki (2023) found that vocabulary retention improved markedly when students watched English TV series with bimodal subtitles. Similarly, Jaber and Dollar (2019) demonstrated positive effects on vocabulary acquisition through meta-

analysis. Learners perceived vocabulary and expressions as most learned and elementary learners struggled without L1 support (Pattemore et al., 2024). Moreover, Subtitles had a medium positive effect on L2 learning, especially vocabulary and comprehension (Alotaibi et al., 2023). Finally, in terms of pronunciation, synchronized and unsynchronized enhancements improved response speed; only unsynchronized improved accuracy in mispronunciation rejection as stated in Galimberti et al. (2023) and all groups improved in speech segmentation; pronunciation gains only occurred with either focus on phonetic form (no captions) or captions without phonetic focus (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020).

While several studies have emphasized the impact of bimodal subtitles on receptive skills like listening (Dumlao et al., 2020), listening, and vocabulary acquisition (Alotaibi et al., 2023), reading plus listening resulted in better vocabulary gains than reading plus watching or reading only (Çekiç & Demirezen, 2020), word recognition but not meaning recall, yet proficiency influenced vocabulary gain (Alsharif & Kruger, 2022). Few have focused on their effect on productive skills such as speaking (Faten & Benkaouche, 2022; Muzammil et al., 2017). This study shifts the focus from measurable improvements to learner-centered perspectives, aiming to understand English language learners' (ELLs) perceptions of bimodal subtitles and their perceived influence on speaking proficiency. To capture these evolving insights, the current study collects perception data from learners who experienced bimodal subtitles in a learning context, focusing on their subjective views regarding speaking skills development.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate the perceptions of English language learners regarding the use of bimodal subtitles in developing speaking skills. Sixty-two undergraduate students from Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang participated, all of whom were purposively selected due to their prior experience with English-language videos featuring bimodal subtitles (English audio with English subtitles). The participants, aged between 18 and 24, represented beginner, intermediate, and advanced proficiency levels. Data were gathered via a structured online questionnaire using Google Forms, which included Likert-scale items, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended prompts targeting learners' self-reported changes in fluency, pronunciation, confidence, and vocabulary use. Additional information on media usage habits and motivational factors was also collected. The instrument's content validity was ensured through expert evaluation. Participants completed the form anonymously over two weeks, with informed consent obtained beforehand. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative responses, allowing for the

identification of recurring patterns related to speaking development. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed, ensuring participant confidentiality and voluntary participation throughout the study. For a pedagogical integration model and clearer articulation of instructional design strategies for using subtitles in EFL speaking classrooms, can be elucidated as in the following process. First, learners should select video content matching their language proficiency and interests. Second, learners should focus on simultaneously listening to the spoken English and reading the subtitles to reinforce sound–text connections and enhance their awareness of pronunciation and intonation while watching the videos. Third, Key phrases and sentences should be paused and repeated aloud to mimic native pronunciation and rhythm, helping to improve both segmental and suprasegmental features of speech. Fourth, Learners are encouraged to take notes on new vocabulary, including pronunciation patterns, and practice using these expressions in their spoken output. Fifth, Regular reflection on progress, such as improvements in fluency, pronunciation, and speaking confidence, can guide goal-setting for future practice. Finally, by repeating this process consistently, learners can gradually strengthen their speaking skills in a self-directed and engaging way.

Results and Discussion
Results

This section presents the results of a questionnaire designed to explore English language learners' perceptions of using bimodal subtitles to improve their speaking skills. The questionnaire was distributed to 63 undergraduate EFL students; however, one participant was excluded due to non-consent, resulting in a final sample of 62 valid responses. The participants completed a structured online questionnaire that included a series of Likert-scale items, where they rated their level of agreement on a 4-point scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. These items assessed various aspects of speaking skill development, such as improvements in pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, fluency, listening comprehension, and speaking confidence after engaging with English videos featuring bimodal subtitles. The Likert items also captured learners' enjoyment of the learning method and their willingness to continue using subtitles in the future. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate mean scores and standard deviations, providing a quantitative overview of learner perceptions. The results, summarized in Table 1, offer insight into which aspects of speaking were most positively influenced by the use of bimodal subtitles and which areas might require additional instructional support. These statistical outcomes were further triangulated with thematic analysis of open-ended responses to provide a richer understanding of learners' experiences.

Table 1. The mean score and standard deviation of using bimodal subtitles (N=62)

No.	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Bimodal subtitles helped me understand spoken English better.	4.11	1.01
2	I became more confident in speaking English after using bimodal subtitles.	3.89	.96
3	Bimodal subtitles helped improve my English pronunciation.	4.21	.94
4	I could learn new vocabulary more easily using bimodal subtitles.	4.19	.99
5	Reading subtitles while listening improved my ability to speak more fluently.	4.03	.96
6	Bimodal subtitles helped me notice natural patterns of English speech (e.g., intonation, stress).	4.13	.88
7	Subtitles made it easier to understand fast English speech.	4.15	1.01
8	I found subtitles distracting while watching.	2.66	1.19
9	I enjoyed learning English using bimodal subtitles.	4.00	.92
10	I would like to use bimodal subtitles more in the future to improve my speaking.	4.00	1.01

Table 1. summarizes learners' self-reported experiences with bimodal subtitles across ten statements, using a Likert scale (presumably 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The mean (M) indicates the overall level of agreement, while the standard deviation (SD) reflects the variability in responses. Participants' agreement was divided into three categories, including High Levels of Agreement, Moderate Agreement, and Lower Agreement or Potential Concern.

Participants generally responded positively to the use of bimodal subtitles. Several items received mean scores above 4.00, indicating strong agreement. Item 3: "*Bimodal subtitles helped improve my English pronunciation*" had the highest mean score of 4.21 (SD = 0.94), suggesting a strong perceived benefit for pronunciation development. Item 4: "*I could learn new vocabulary more easily using bimodal subtitles*" followed closely with a mean of 4.19 (SD = 0.99). Item 7: "*Subtitles made it easier to understand fast English speech*" also scored highly at 4.15 (SD = 1.01). Item 6: "*Bimodal subtitles helped me notice natural patterns of English speech (e.g., intonation, stress)*" had a mean of 4.13 (SD = 0.88). Item 1: "*Bimodal subtitles helped me understand spoken English better*" scored 4.11 (SD = 1.01). Item 5: "*Reading subtitles while listening improved my ability to speak more fluently*" received a mean of 4.03 (SD = 0.96). These results indicate that participants perceived bimodal subtitles as particularly helpful for listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and recognizing features of natural speech, all of which are important for improving spoken English.

Item 2: "*I became more confident in speaking English after using bimodal subtitles*" had a slightly lower mean score of 3.89 (SD = 0.96), suggesting a more moderate but still positive effect on learners' confidence. Items 9 and 10: Learners also reported enjoyment (M = 4.00, SD = 0.92) and expressed willingness to continue using bimodal subtitles in the future (M = 4.00, SD = 1.01), highlighting a generally favorable attitude toward this learning strategy.

Item 8: "*I found subtitles distracting while watching*" had the lowest mean score of 2.66 (SD = 1.19). This indicates that most learners did not find bimodal subtitles to be a major distraction, although the relatively higher SD suggests some variation in opinions on this issue.

It can be summarized that overall, the results suggest that learners viewed bimodal subtitles as a highly beneficial tool for improving speaking-related skills, particularly in pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and listening to fast-paced or natural speech. Confidence-building and enjoyment were also noted, although to a slightly lesser extent. The low mean score for distraction indicates that subtitles were largely seen as helpful rather than hindering.

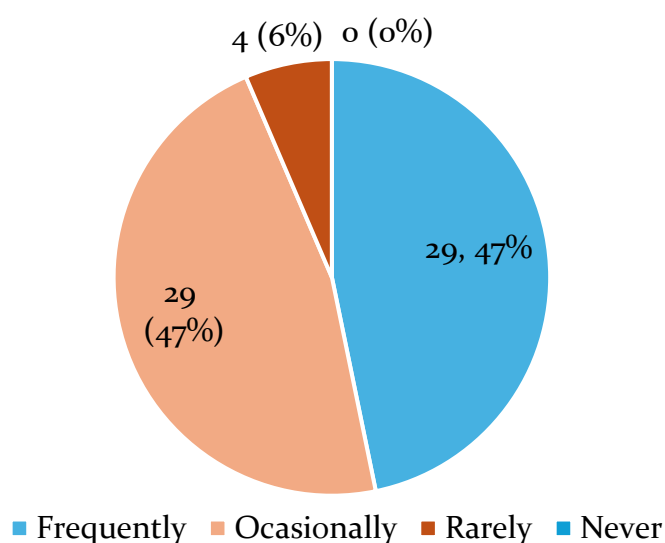## How often do you watch English videos with subtitles?

Figure 1. Frequency of watching English videos with English subtitles

This data indicates that all respondents reported at least some level of engagement with watching English videos using subtitles. It was reported that 47% of participants "frequently" used English subtitles, 47% of participants "occasionally" used English subtitles. However, only 6% of participants "rarely" used English subtitles, and 0% of participants never used English subtitles. It means that English subtitles were required by the participants when they were watching English videos or movies. The responses

show a strong inclination toward the use of subtitles when watching English videos. A combined 94% (58 out of 62) of participants reported watching English videos with subtitles either frequently or occasionally, split evenly between the two groups. Only 6% (4 participants) stated they do so rarely. Importantly, none of the respondents reported never using subtitles, suggesting that subtitle use is universal among the sample.

Responses in the form of qualitative data were gathered from the questionnaire (N=62) using Google Forms at the link: https://forms.gle/UEzYN7Urc14atLuD9. The results of EFLs' open-ended questionnaire were based on the questions and their classification of the answers, as seen in Table 2 below. The five questions were grouped into thirty-six thematic EFLs' responses suggested by the software of chatgpt.com (N = 532).

Table 2. Open-ended questions and thematic responses

No.	Questions	Thematic EFLs' Responses
1.	In your own words, how did bimodal subtitles help (or not help) improve your speaking skills?	Pronunciation improvement
		Vocabulary acquisition
		Fluency and speaking practice
		Listening comprehension
		Exposure to real English
		Dual-mode reinforcement
		Distraction or over-reliance
		Language transfer aid
2.	What was most useful or enjoyable about using bimodal subtitles?	Comprehension & Meaning
		Vocabulary Acquisition
		Pronunciation & Listening
		Reading-Listening Connection
		Enjoyment & Motivation
		Learning Efficiency
3.	Did you face any challenges while watching videos with bimodal subtitles? If yes, please explain.	Over-Focus on Reading
		No Challenges / Positive Response
		Subtitle Speed / Sync Issues
		Split Attention / Cognitive Load
		New Vocabulary / Language Difficulty
		Obstruction of Visuals
		Technical or Formatting Issues
		Initial Adaptation Difficulty
		Lack of Clarity About Bimodal Subtitles
4.	In what ways, if any, did subtitles affect your pronunciation or speaking fluency?	Matching Sound to Spelling
		Improved Speaking Fluency
		Imitating and Repeating
		Vocabulary Building

		Increased Awareness of Pronunciation Features
		Over-Reliance / Negative Impact
		Unclear or Mixed Reflections
5.	Should bimodal subtitles be included in English learning programs? Why or why not?	Support for Pronunciation and Fluency
		Improvement in Listening and Reading Comprehension
		Vocabulary and Sentence Structure Acquisition
		Learner Confidence and Motivation
		Conditional Use Based on Proficiency
		Multisensory Learning and Comprehension

Q#1. "In your own words, how did bimodal subtitles help (or not help) improve your speaking skills?"

Participants (N = 155) shared their perceptions of how bimodal subtitles influenced their speaking skills, resulting in eight prominent themes. The most frequently cited benefit was pronunciation improvement (n = 44), where learners emphasized that seeing and hearing words simultaneously helped them recognize and correct their pronunciation. Sample responses included: *"Helped improve my pronunciation"* and *"I could hear and read the words at the same time."* Vocabulary acquisition was the next most common theme (n = 27), as learners reported that subtitles supported their understanding and retention of new words, often alongside pronunciation, as seen in Figure 2 about the impact of bimodal subtitles on speaking skills.
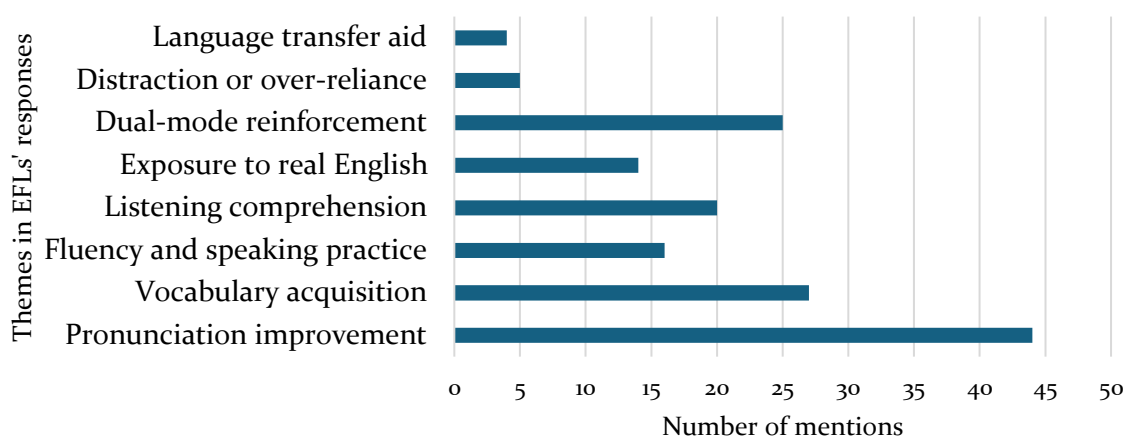
The impact of bimodal subtitles on speaking skills

Figure 2. The impact of bimodal subtitles on speaking skills

Additionally, dual-mode reinforcement (n = 25) was valued for reinforcing learning by combining auditory and visual input. Learners noted how bimodal subtitles

helped them *"see and hear at the same time"* and *"connect spoken and written words."* Listening comprehension (n = 20) also improved, particularly for fast or unclear speech, with responses such as *"I don't miss the message"* or *"hear and read at the same time."* Meanwhile, fluency and speaking practice (n = 16) was highlighted as subtitles helped learners speak more smoothly and confidently.

Other participants appreciated exposure to real English (n = 14), noting benefits such as *"natural speech"* and *"correct sentence structures."* A smaller group expressed concerns about distraction or over-reliance (n = 5), stating they *"read too much"* and focused less on active listening. Finally, a few learners mentioned language transfer aid (n = 4), where seeing their L1 alongside L2 facilitated comprehension. Overall, the findings suggest that bimodal subtitles provide a multidimensional support system that benefits learners' speaking development through enhanced pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension, though with caution against overdependence.

Q#2. *"What was most useful or enjoyable about using bimodal subtitles?"*

Learners (N = 125) expressed a range of positive experiences with bimodal subtitles, highlighting their role in making language learning more effective and engaging. The most frequently mentioned benefit was comprehension and understanding of meaning (N = 32), with many stating that subtitles helped them follow conversations and understand video content more easily (see Figure 3, the usefulness of using bimodal subtitles).
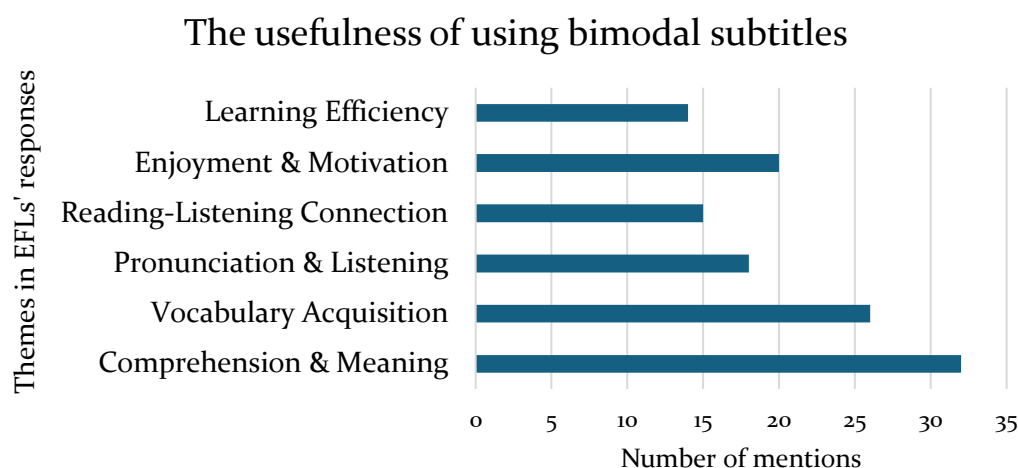

Figure 3. The usefulness of using bimodal subtitles

Vocabulary acquisition (N = 26) was also a significant theme, as learners reported being able to notice and recall new words more effectively. In addition, subtitles were noted to enhance pronunciation and listening (N = 18), allowing learners to better identify how words are pronounced and spoken in context. The reading-listening

connection (N = 15) further supported this, with participants appreciating the simultaneous exposure to spoken and written words for reinforcing memory and recognition. The use of subtitles also contributed to enjoyment and motivation (N = 20), making learning feel more relaxed, fun, and similar to watching a movie. Lastly, learning efficiency (N = 14) was cited, as subtitles reduced the need to pause or look up unfamiliar words, streamlining the learning process. These findings suggest that bimodal subtitles are a valuable tool for enhancing multiple dimensions of English language learning.

Q#3. *"Did you face any challenges while watching videos with bimodal subtitles? If yes, please explain."*

When asked whether they faced any challenges while watching videos with bimodal subtitles, participants (N = 79) reported a range of responses, categorized into nine distinct themes. The most frequently reported issue was over-focus on reading (n = 18), where learners noted that concentrating too much on the subtitles reduced their attention to listening. For example, one participant stated, *"I focused too much on reading and forgot to listen carefully."* A nearly equal number of respondents (n = 17) expressed no significant challenges, and many viewed subtitles positively, commenting that they were helpful and made the experience more enjoyable (see Figure 4).
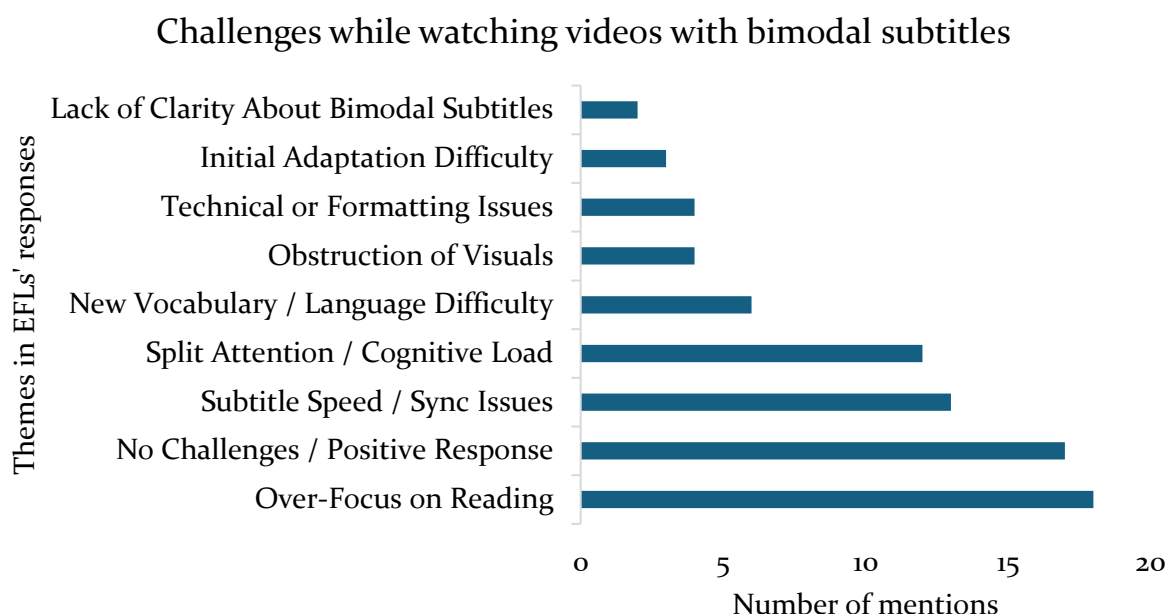
Challenges while watching videos with bimodal subtitles

Figure 4. Challenges while watching videos with bimodal subtitles

Other challenges included subtitle speed or synchronization issues (n = 13), where learners noted that subtitles appeared or disappeared too quickly or did not align with speech. Split attention or cognitive load (n = 12) was another theme, with participants

describing difficulty in simultaneously processing audio and text, leading to feelings of being overwhelmed. A smaller group cited language difficulty or unfamiliar vocabulary (n = 6), while others mentioned visual obstruction (n = 4), where subtitles covered important visual content. Additionally, technical or formatting issues (n = 4) were noted, such as inaccurate transcriptions or poor subtitle placement. A few participants described initial adaptation difficulties (n = 3), particularly when first encountering bimodal subtitles. Lastly, a small number (n = 2) expressed uncertainty or lack of familiarity with the concept of bimodal subtitles, indicating a need for clearer instructional support. These findings suggest that while bimodal subtitles are generally well-received, their implementation should be carefully designed to mitigate cognitive overload and technical issues.

Q#4. *"In what ways, if any, did subtitles affect your pronunciation or speaking fluency?"*

Learner responses indicated that subtitles had a generally positive impact on their pronunciation and speaking fluency. The most frequently mentioned benefit was the ability to match spoken words with their written forms (n = 26), which helped learners connect pronunciation with correct spelling and reinforced phonological awareness. Many participants (n = 22) also reported that subtitles contributed to improved speaking fluency by supporting their understanding of rhythm, stress, and the natural flow of spoken language. Additionally, a significant number of learners (n = 18) engaged in imitation and repetition of phrases or sentences seen in subtitles, using this as a strategy to practice pronunciation and build fluency. It can be seen in Figure 5, the effect of subtitles on pronunciation or speaking fluency.

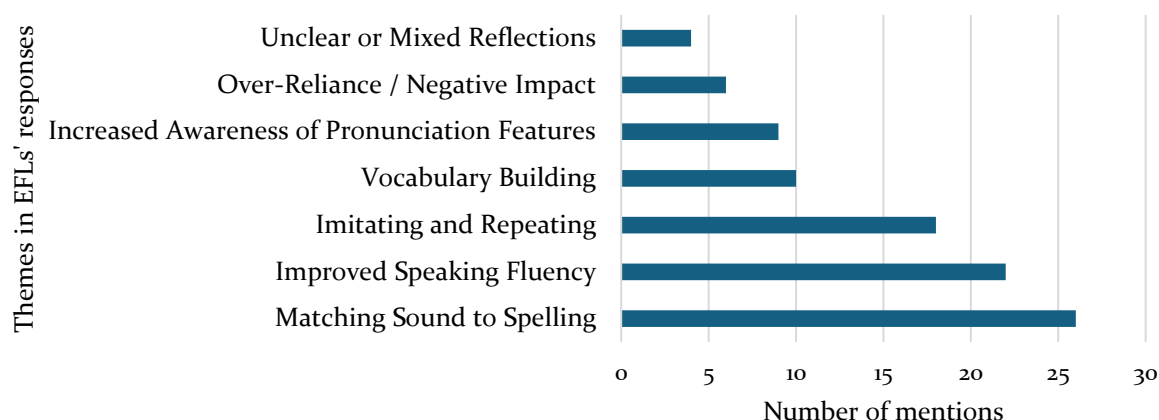The effect of subtitles on pronunciation or speaking fluency

Figure 5. The effect of subtitles on pronunciation or speaking fluency

Subtitles were also seen as helpful in expanding vocabulary (n = 10), as exposure to new words alongside their pronunciation made it easier to learn and apply them.

Some learners (n = 9) noted an increased awareness of specific pronunciation features, such as linking sounds, silent letters, and intonation patterns. However, a few respondents (n = 6) expressed concerns about over-reliance on subtitles, suggesting that it could potentially slow down speaking or distract from listening comprehension. A small number of responses (n = 4) were unclear or reflected mixed views, indicating uncertainty about the subtitles' effectiveness. Overall, the data suggests that subtitles serve as a valuable aid in pronunciation and fluency development when used in a balanced and purposeful manner.

Q#5. *"Should bimodal subtitles be included in English learning programs? Why or why not?"*

The majority of learners expressed strong support for the inclusion of bimodal subtitles in English learning programs, citing a variety of pedagogical benefits. The most commonly reported advantage was their contribution to pronunciation and speaking fluency (n = 22), with learners noting that subtitles help connect spoken and written forms, making pronunciation more understandable and accessible. Closely following this, many respondents highlighted improvements in listening and reading comprehension (n = 18), stating that subtitles enhanced their ability to follow spoken English and better understand various accents, as seen in Figure 6, the inclusion of bimodal subtitles in English learning programs.
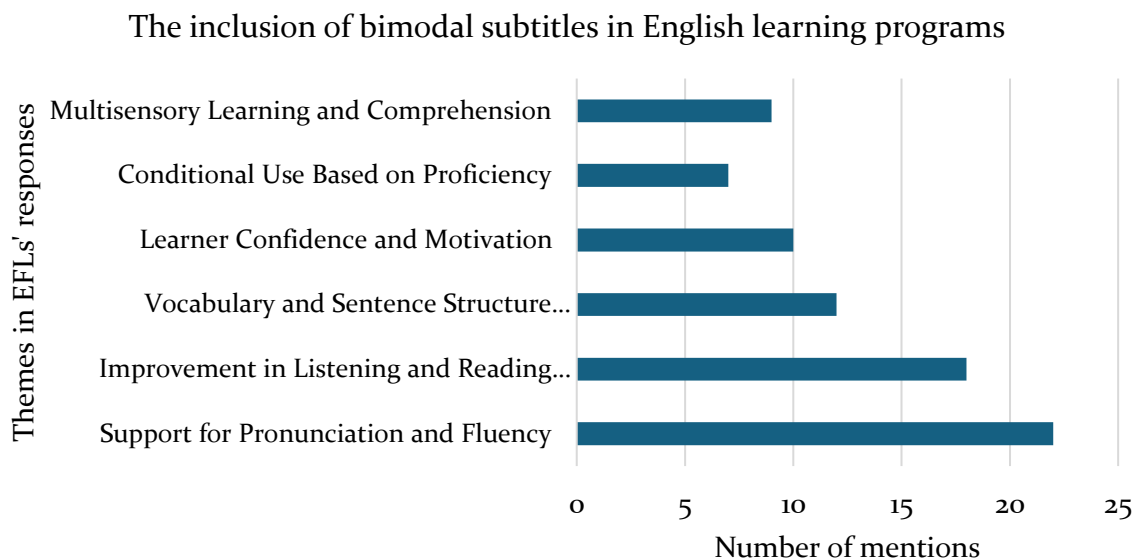
The inclusion of bimodal subtitles in English learning programs

Figure 6. The inclusion of bimodal subtitles in English learning programs

Another significant theme was the role of subtitles in vocabulary and sentence structure acquisition (n = 12), as learners found that seeing and hearing words simultaneously helped them recognize and retain new language. Increased motivation

and confidence (n = 10) also emerged as important factors, with several learners describing subtitles as making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. Some participants (n = 7) suggested a conditional use based on proficiency level, arguing that while subtitles are beneficial, they may be more appropriate for beginners or intermediate learners rather than advanced users. Lastly, several responses (n = 9) emphasized the value of multisensory learning, explaining that bimodal subtitles enhance comprehension by linking auditory and visual inputs. Overall, the findings strongly support the inclusion of bimodal subtitles in English learning contexts, particularly for their role in promoting active language engagement and supporting multiple aspects of language acquisition.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong support for the perceived effectiveness of bimodal subtitles–simultaneous L2 audio and subtitles–in enhancing various aspects of EFL learners' speaking performance, especially pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and confidence. This aligns with the theoretical foundations of Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 2006) and Multimedia Learning Theory (Mayer & Richard E, 2009), which argues that the concurrent presentation of auditory and visual language input strengthens learners' memory traces and facilitates language processing.

Participants overwhelmingly agreed that bimodal subtitles improved their pronunciation, as evidenced by the highest mean score (M = 4.21) on that item. This perception reflects findings by Wisniewska & Mora (2020), who demonstrated that extended exposure to captioned videos could benefit L2 speech processing skills, including speech segmentation and fluency. Similarly, learners in the present study reported enhanced awareness of pronunciation features such as intonation and word stress. Galimberti et al. (2023) also supported textual enhancement through subtitles improved phonological awareness and response accuracy.

The results also suggest that bimodal subtitles played a significant role in vocabulary acquisition (M = 4.19), further aligning with the literature on incidental vocabulary learning through audiovisual media (Alotaibi et al., 2023; Yulia & Fazaki, 2023). Subtitles helped participants learn new words more easily and apply them in speaking, supporting the argument that subtitles serve as lexical reinforcement tools (Jaber & Dollar, 2019; Viriya & Paranapiti, 2025). Another notable benefit perceived by learners was speaking fluency (M = 4.03), especially in terms of rhythm and natural speech flow. Participants frequently mentioned that matching sounds to text and imitating speech patterns supported smoother and more confident delivery. This echoes findings by Çekiç & Demirezen (2020), who concluded that multimodal input combining reading and listening promotes stronger oral output than reading or watching alone.

Beyond linguistic aspects, the results also highlight affective gains, including enhanced motivation and learning enjoyment (M = 4.00). Learners reported that subtitles made language input more engaging and less anxiety-inducing, thus creating a positive learning environment conducive to language production. This confirms prior research showing that learners feel more motivated and in control when subtitles scaffold comprehension and production tasks (Faten & Benkaouche, 2022; Febrina, 2022).

Despite the overall positive views, some participants raised concerns about over-reliance on subtitles and issues like split attention or subtitle speed mismatches, which could increase cognitive load (Kruger et al., 2022). These issues are consistent with existing concerns in the literature that subtitles, especially when not well-synchronized, can distract from processing spoken input (Van Hoecke & Parrila, 2023). However, the low distraction score (M = 2.66) and limited number of negative responses suggest that these drawbacks were relatively minor in the current study and may be mitigated through proper instructional design and gradual learner adaptation.

In connecting these results to previous research, this study validates claims by Pattemore et al. (2024) that learners appreciate subtitles for developing vocabulary and expressions, while also addressing a research gap regarding the productive use of language. While much past work focused on listening comprehension or word recognition (Alsharif & Kruger, 2022; Dumlao et al., 2020), in the present study emphasizes learner-reported improvements in output-oriented skills, a direction less explored in subtitle research.

Conclusion

This study highlights the potential of bimodal subtitles as a supportive tool in enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Participants reported that subtitles significantly contributed to their pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary knowledge, and overall confidence in speaking. These perceived benefits stem from the multimodal reinforcement provided by the simultaneous visual and auditory input, which aligns with established theories of multimedia and dual coding learning. Moreover, the affective advantages, such as reduced anxiety and increased motivation, further support the value of integrating subtitles into language learning environments. Despite some challenges, including potential over-reliance and occasional cognitive load, learners viewed bimodal subtitles as a practical and accessible resource. Given the increasing availability of subtitled media and the rise of autonomous language learning, educators are encouraged to incorporate bimodal subtitles into both classroom and online speaking activities. Future research could explore the long-term impact of subtitle use on oral performance and examine how learner proficiency levels mediate these effects.

Overall, this study affirms the pedagogical relevance of bimodal subtitles in fostering more effective and engaging speaking practice.

Acknowledgments

Authors' Note

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

References

Alotaibi, H. M., Mahdi, H. S., & Alwathnani, D. (2023). Effectiveness of Subtitles in L2 Classrooms: A Meta-Analysis Study. In *Education Sciences* (Vol. 13, Issue 3). MDPI. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13030274

Alsharif, A., & Kruger, J.-L. (2022). *The Impact of Subtitles and Language Proficiency on L2 Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition by Saudi University Students*. Macquarie University.

Bonsignori, V. (2018). Using films and TV series for ESP teaching: A multimodal perspective. *System*, 77, 58–69. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.01.005

Canals, L. (2021). Multimodality and translanguaging in negotiation of meaning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 54(3), 647–670. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12547

Çekiç, A., & Demirezen, M. (2020). Comparison of the impacts of different multimodalities on incidental l2 vocabulary learning. *Moderna Språk*, 114(2), 109–138. https://doi.org/10.58221/mosp.v114i2.7405

Chong, J. J. Q., & Aryadoust, V. (2023). Investigating the effect of multimodality and sentiments on speaking assessments: a facial emotional analysis. *Education and Information Technologies*, 28(6), 7413–7436. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11478-7

Coccetta, F. (2018). Developing university students' multimodal communicative competence: Field research into multimodal text studies in English. *System*, 77, 19–27. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.01.004

Dumlao, K. C. S., Alfonso, R. C., Paguirigan, E. S., & Subia, G. S. (2020). The Efficacy of Bimodal Subtitling in Improving the Listening Comprehension of English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 5(6), 2196–2201. https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.56.54

Faten, B., & Benkaouche, H. (2022). *The Role of Bimodal Subtitled English Videos in Enhancing EFL Learners' Productive Skills: A Case Study of EFL Learners at Mila University Center*.

Febrina, M. B. (2022). The correlation between the frequency of watching bimodal subtitled videos and students' listening comprehension. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia, 14*(1), 91–111. https://doi.org/10.21274/ls.2022.14.1.91-111

Galimberti, V., Mora, J. C., & Gilabert, R. (2023). Audio-synchronized textual enhancement in foreign language pronunciation learning from videos. *System, 116.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103078

Huang, H., Zheng, O., Wang, D., Yin, J., Wang, Z., Ding, S., Yin, H., Xu, C., Yang, R., Zheng, Q., & Shi, B. (2023). ChatGPT for shaping the future of dentistry: the potential of multi-modal large language model. *International Journal of Oral Science, 15*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41368-023-00239-y

Hui, B. (2024). Scaffolding comprehension with reading while listening and the role of reading speed and text complexity. *Modern Language Journal.* https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12905

Jaber, R. A. (2019). A meta-analysis of the effect of bimodal subtitling on vocabulary learning among adult EFL learners. *Focus on ELT Journal.* https://doi.org/10.14744/felt.2019.00001

Kruger, J. L., Wisniewska, N., & Liao, S. (2022). Why subtitle speed matters: Evidence from word skipping and rereading. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 43*(1), 211–236. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716421000503

Kwarteng, A. H. (2023). Incidental vocabulary acquisition through watching movies with bimodal and standard subtitles: The case of L2 Swahili learners. *Journal for Language Teaching, 57*(2). https://doi.org/10.56285/jltvol57iss2a5935

Latief, N., Otoluwa, M. H., & Badu, H. (2024). The use of bimodal subtitling in English movie to increase students' vocabulary mastery. *Deleted Journal, 2*(2), 284–292. https://doi.org/10.54923/researchreview.v2i2.61

Lee, G.-G., Shi, L., Latif, E., Gao, Y., Bewersdorff, A., Nyaaba, M., Guo, S., Wu, Z., Liu, Z., Wang, H., Mai, G., Liu, T., & Zhai, X. (2023). *Multimodality of AI for Education: Towards Artificial General Intelligence.* http://arxiv.org/abs/2312.06037

Li, R., Liu, K., & Cheung, A. K. F. (2025). Exploring the impact of intermodal transfer on simplification: Insights from signed language interpreting, subtitle translation, and native speech in TED talks. *Language Sciences, 110.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2025.101726

Lu, Z. (2023). A Theory of Multimodal Learning. *37th Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS 2023),* 1–12.

Mayer, & Richard E. (2009). *Multimedia Learning* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Morell, T. (2017). Multimodal competence and effective interactive lecturing. *System, 77,* 70–79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.12.006

Muzammil, L., Latief, M. A., & Basthomi, Y. (2017). Investigating the Utilization of Subtitles on EFL Learners' Spoken Production. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, 4*(4), 243–258.

Paivio, A. (2006). Dual Coding Theory and Education. *Pathways to Literacy Achievement for High Poverty Children,* 1–20.

Pannatier, M., & Béntrancourt, M. (2024). Learning from academic video with subtitles: When foreign language proficiency matters. *Learning and Instruction, 90.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2023.101863

Pattemore, A., Suárez, M. D. M., & Muñoz, C. (2024). Perceptions of learning from audiovisual input and changes in L2 viewing preferences: The roles of on-screen text and proficiency. *ReCALL, 36*(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344024000065

Ponzio, C. M., & Deroo, M. R. (2023). Harnessing multimodality in language teacher education: expanding English-dominant teachers' translanguaging capacities through a Multimodalities Entextualization Cycle. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 26*(8), 975–991. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2021.1933893

Van Hoecke, S. M., & Parrila, R. (2023). *Subtitles for Access to Education*. Macquarie University.

Viriya, C., & Paranapiti, K. (2025). The roles of standard, bimodal, and reversed subtitles on English vocabulary learning. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences, 46,* 460112. https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2025.46.1.12

Wisniewska, N., & Mora, J. C. (2020). Can captioned video benefit second language pronunciation? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 42*(3), 599–624. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263120000029

Xu, L., Naserpour, A., Rezai, A., Namaziandost, E., & Azizi, Z. (2022). Exploring EFL Learners' Metaphorical Conceptions of Language Learning: A Multimodal Analysis. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, 51*(2), 323–339. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-022-09842-2

Yulia, M., & Fazaki, M. (2023). The effect of an English TV series with a bimodal subtitle on students' vocabulary acquisition. *English Education Journal, 13*(4), 478–490. https://doi.org/10.24815/eej.v13i4.29673