

TARTU UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
NARVA COLLEGE
STUDY PROGRAMME:
“TEACHER OF LANGUAGES IN A MULTILINGUAL SCHOOL”

Vasily Nosov

**THE ROLE OF INPUT MODALITY IN VOCABULARY ACQUISITION:
SUBTITLED VIDEO VS. READING FOR UPPER-INTERMEDIATE EFL STUDENTS**

Master's thesis

Supervisor: Anna Golubeva

NARVA 2025

Olen koostanud töö iseseisvalt. Kõik töö koostamisel kasutatud teiste autorite tööd, põhimõttelised seisukohad, kirjandusallikatest ja mujalt pärinevad andmed on viidatud.

19.05.2025

.....

Töö autori allkiri ja kuupäev

PREFACE

Informal observations in the EFL classroom have indicated that students who engage extensively with English-language media—particularly movies and television series—often demonstrate more rapid and natural progress in language development. In many cases, such students exhibit greater lexical range, improved fluency, and increased confidence in using the language (Kabooha & Elyas, 2018; Yawiloeng, 2020; Helsing & Gunnarsson, 2021). These patterns suggest a potential link between sustained exposure to video content and vocabulary growth, particularly when learners view such content with subtitles.

This observation has informed a broader pedagogical interest in the use of video as a tool for language development. While reading continues to be a staple of language instruction, audiovisual input more closely reflects the media habits of many adolescent learners today (Kabooha & Elyas, 2018; Helsing & Gunnarsson, 2021). Video-based input, often consumed voluntarily and in large volumes, appears to offer rich and engaging exposure to the target language—especially in relation to vocabulary. Over the course of more than fifteen years of teaching upper-secondary students preparing for Cambridge English examinations, the consistent correlation between extensive video viewing and strong lexical development has been a recurring feature in the classroom experience.

Although a study measuring the long-term effects of students' free-time media habits would be difficult to design and implement under controlled research conditions, it remains a relevant line of inquiry. In response to these practical limitations, the present study focuses on a narrower but related research question: whether a single exposure to subtitled video input, as compared to reading input, can support measurable short-term vocabulary acquisition in an upper-intermediate EFL context.

The resulting classroom intervention—though modest in scale—was carefully structured to isolate input modality as a variable while maintaining equivalent content, timing, and follow-up activities across groups. Beyond its immediate findings, the study aims to offer a practical and adaptable framework for classroom-based vocabulary research that can be replicated in other teaching contexts.

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter I presents the theoretical background, including key research on vocabulary acquisition, input modalities, and the pedagogical use of video and subtitles. Chapter II describes the research design, including the participant group, materials,

procedures, and data collection methods. Chapter III reports the results of the vocabulary tests and student feedback, while Chapter IV offers a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions and broader pedagogical implications. The thesis concludes with a summary of key insights and suggestions for further research.

PREFACE.....	3
<i>Contents</i>	5
INTRODUCTION	8
Vocabulary Learning in English: The Path Beyond Grammar	8
The Role of Cambridge Exams in Estonia.....	9
Video in the 21st Century Language Classroom	10
Study Focus and Research Questions	11
Why TED Talks?	12
CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW	14
1.1 Vocabulary Acquisition in Second Language Learning	14
1.1.1 The Role of Input in Language Learning	14
1.1.2 Lexical Input Processing (Lex-IP) and Learning Mechanisms	15
1.1.3 The Role of Frequency and Repetition in Vocabulary Retention	16
1.1.4 Implications for Audiovisual Learning and Subtitled Videos	16
1.2 Incidental vs. Intentional Vocabulary Learning	17
1.2.1 Incidental Vocabulary Learning	17
1.2.2 Intentional Vocabulary Learning.....	18
1.2.3 The Incidental-Intentional Continuum	19
1.2.4 Implications for Audiovisual Learning and Subtitled Videos	19
1.3 The Role of Subtitles in Language Learning	19
1.3.1 How Subtitles Support Language Acquisition	20
1.3.2 Potential Challenges of Using Subtitles	21
1.3.3 TED Talks as a Source of Authentic Input.....	21
1.4 Cambridge Exam Preparation and Study Design	22
1.4.1 Overview of the Cambridge First (FCE) and Advanced (CAE) Exams.....	23
1.4.2 Aligning the Study Design with Cambridge Exam Preparation.....	23
1.4.3 Advantages of Subtitled Videos for Exam Preparation.....	24
CHAPTER II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND INTERVENTION	26
2.1 Methodology and Research Procedure	27
2.1.1 Research Design	27
2.1.2 Participants	28
2.2 Materials	29
2.2.1 TED Talk and Script.....	29

2.2.2 Target Vocabulary Selection	30
2.2.3 Description of Pre- and Post-Tests	32
2.2.4 Lesson Plan and Activities	33
2.3 Timeline of the Intervention	35
CHAPTER III. RESULTS.....	37
3.1 Overview of Data Collected	37
3.2 Vocabulary Test Results	38
3.2.1 Overall Performance.....	39
3.2.2 Vocabulary Item-Level Analysis.....	40
3.3 Statistical Comparison Between Groups	43
3.4 Student Feedback Summary	45
3.5 Summary of Key Results	47
CHAPTER IV. DISCUSSION	48
4.1 Overview of the Chapter.....	48
4.2 Interpretation of Quantitative Results.....	48
4.2.1 Overall Performance and Statistical Results	49
4.2.2 The Role of Motivation and Group Variation	49
4.2.3 Vocabulary Load and Test Design	49
4.2.4 Item-Level Insights and Word Characteristics	50
4.2.5 Cultural and Contextual Factors Affecting Input Modality.....	50
4.2.6 Reflections on Effectiveness and Future Adaptations.....	51
4.3 Student Reflections and Modality Preferences	51
4.4 Pedagogical Implications	52
4.5 Limitations of the Study	54
4.6 Suggestions for Future Research	55
4.7 Final Summary.....	56
CONCLUSION	58
SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN	60
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	67
APPENDIX A. STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS FOR TED TALK SELECTION.....	67
APPENDIX B. MODIFIED SCRIPT USED WITH THE CONTROL GROUP	68
APPENDIX C. TARGET VOCABULARY LIST WITH CEFR LEVELS AND FREQUENCY IN SCRIPT	71
APPENDIX D. VOCABULARY PRE- AND POST-TEST.....	72

APPENDIX E. INTERVENTION LESSON PLAN	75
APPENDIX F. MATCHING DEFINITIONS WITH CONTEXT SENTENCES	76
APPENDIX G. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	80
APPENDIX H. DISCUSSION PROMPTS	81
APPENDIX I. WORD FORMATION TASK.....	83
APPENDIX J. STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE	85
APPENDIX K. FULL STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES.....	86
APPENDIX K.1. DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES BY QUESTION	95

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary Learning in English: The Path Beyond Grammar

Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental component of second language (L2) proficiency and plays an especially critical role in the development of communicative competence at intermediate and advanced levels. Scholars such as Nation (2013) and Milton (2009) have consistently emphasized that vocabulary knowledge is the strongest predictor of success in all language skills—listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Without sufficient vocabulary, learners struggle to comprehend input or express themselves fluently, regardless of their grasp of grammar. As learners move from the B1 level toward B2 and C1, the demand for lexical sophistication and nuance increases significantly. According to CEFR descriptors (Council of Europe, 2020), the ability to use precise and varied vocabulary to convey abstract ideas and subtle distinctions is a hallmark of high-level proficiency.

For learners of English in particular, the balance between grammar and vocabulary is worth highlighting. English grammar is often considered relatively accessible in comparison to many other languages. It lacks noun cases (except for pronouns), uses a simplified verb conjugation system, and relies heavily on word order rather than morphological changes to convey meaning (Miestamo, 2008). This is in stark contrast to Russian and Estonian—the two dominant languages in the linguistic environment of many learners in Estonia. Russian features a highly inflected grammatical system with six cases, verbal aspect, and complex conjugations (Shcherbakova et al., 2023). Estonian, while unrelated to Russian linguistically, is even more morphologically complex, with 14 noun cases, extensive agglutination, and vowel harmony (Miestamo, 2008; Shcherbakova et al., 2023). In this context, English may appear grammatically more straightforward, yet deceptively so: its vocabulary is vast, irregular, and layered with synonyms, phrasal verbs, idiomatic expressions, and borrowings from Latin, French, and Germanic roots.

This disparity places vocabulary at the center of language mastery for English learners in Estonia. While early-stage learners often devote significant time to grammar, it becomes increasingly clear at the B2 and C1 levels that a limited vocabulary holds learners back more than grammatical gaps, as vocabulary knowledge strongly predicts reading comprehension and productive language skills at these stages (Verhoeven et al., 2011). This is particularly evident in classroom practice, where students can often construct syntactically correct sentences but

lack the lexical precision or variety needed for nuanced expression (Brooks, Clenton & Fraser, 2021). Furthermore, high-stakes assessments such as the Cambridge English exams and academic writing tasks place heavy demands on a learner's vocabulary range and depth. To succeed, learners must not only recognize words but use them appropriately and flexibly across registers and contexts.

Despite this, vocabulary instruction remains somewhat neglected or implicit in many classroom settings. Teachers may focus on coverage of coursebook vocabulary without sufficient recycling, contextualization, or strategic practice. As Schmitt (2008) and Webb (2008) argue, vocabulary knowledge develops over time through repeated, meaningful exposure. It cannot be acquired through incidental contact alone—especially when learners are expected to operate at advanced proficiency levels. For this reason, classroom strategies that prioritize vocabulary acquisition—both intentional and incidental—are essential, particularly when addressing the needs of learners preparing for upper-intermediate and advanced qualifications.

The Role of Cambridge Exams in Estonia

In Estonia, the Cambridge English exams—particularly the B2 First (FCE) and C1 Advanced (CAE)—have become increasingly popular among upper-secondary students. These exams offer internationally recognized certification of English proficiency and, crucially, provide a practical alternative to the national English state exam. Since 2014, students who pass a Cambridge English exam at the B1 level or above are officially exempt from the national exam, making Cambridge qualifications a widely accepted and attractive option. For ambitious learners and their families, these certificates serve as a valuable asset for university admission and future employment, both within Estonia and abroad. As a result, exam-focused English instruction is common in Estonian secondary schools, particularly in academically strong language groups.

Based on both classroom experience and research literature, success in these exams depends heavily on vocabulary knowledge (Milton, 2009; Nation, 2013; Cambridge English, 2019b). This is especially evident in the Reading and Use of English paper, which assesses a wide range of lexical competencies. Tasks such as multiple-choice cloze, word formation, and key word transformation require students not only to recognize vocabulary but to actively manipulate word forms, understand collocations, and apply context-appropriate usage. According to Nation (2013), such vocabulary knowledge—deep as well as broad—is essential for advanced language proficiency, and Milton (2009) emphasizes its central role in formal language

assessment. Even the Cambridge handbooks (Cambridge University Press, 2020) highlight vocabulary mastery as a key component of success at the B2 and C1 levels.

Within this context, the present study gains added relevance. It was conducted with a group of 11th-grade students who were actively preparing for Cambridge exams and who regularly engaged in vocabulary-rich classroom instruction. The materials, including the vocabulary test and post-input activities, were carefully designed to reflect the lexical demands of the exams. In this way, the study does not examine vocabulary acquisition in a vacuum, but rather in a setting where lexical competence is a concrete and immediate goal for learners. By aligning the intervention with the exam preparation needs of the students, this study contributes not only to academic knowledge but also to the practical development of exam-readiness skills in an Estonian classroom.

Video in the 21st Century Language Classroom

While vocabulary acquisition plays a central role in achieving success on high-stakes exams such as the Cambridge First and Advanced, the question of how best to support this lexical development remains open. Given the exam-oriented focus of many secondary school classrooms in Estonia, and the increasing availability of diverse teaching materials, it is important to consider how emerging media can be meaningfully integrated into vocabulary instruction. In particular, the rapid shift in young people's media habits raises important pedagogical questions about how language input is delivered. As Nation (2013) argues, effective vocabulary learning depends on varied, repeated exposure through multiple modalities that align with learners' evolving media habits and preferences. Moreover, research suggests that relying solely on traditional reading input may limit vocabulary gains, underscoring the pedagogical potential of incorporating multimedia resources in language teaching (Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Cambridge English, 2019b).

Over the past decade, there has been a noticeable shift in how learners—especially adolescents and young adults—consume language. Reading for pleasure has declined, while video-based content consumption has skyrocketed. Platforms such as YouTube, Netflix, and TikTok dominate the attention of secondary school students, often displacing more traditional modes of language exposure. These platforms deliver a rich blend of language, visual storytelling, and emotion, but are not typically designed with pedagogy in mind (Bernard, 2021; Klinjuy, 2025). As learners become increasingly habituated to acquiring information visually and aurally,

classroom instruction must consider how to leverage this modality for effective language development (Opsahl & Levin, 2022).

Despite the widespread use of video in English language classrooms, it is often employed for developing general listening comprehension or introducing cultural content. In most cases, it serves as a “break” from heavier reading tasks, rather than a central tool for vocabulary acquisition. When subtitles are available, they are usually treated as passive support mechanisms rather than active components of learning. As a result, a valuable opportunity for reinforcing vocabulary through multimodal input—where learners hear, see, and read new words in real-time—is frequently missed (Chen, 2024).

This reflects a broader gap in both research and pedagogical practice. Although studies have demonstrated the value of multimodal input for vocabulary retention (e.g., Montero Pérez et al., 2014; Rodgers & Webb, 2020), there is limited guidance in teaching materials or training programs on how to exploit subtitled video purposefully for lexical development. Subtitles are rarely integrated into vocabulary-focused tasks, and few lesson plans explicitly tie audiovisual input to lexical learning objectives (Aloqaili, 2014). As a result, teachers may lack both the theoretical grounding and practical tools needed to turn subtitled videos into a structured source of vocabulary input.

This study seeks to address that gap. It starts from a simple but under-explored question: If young learners are already drawn to video—engaging with it daily across multiple platforms—can that interest be harnessed to support vocabulary growth in a systematic, replicable way? By comparing vocabulary acquisition outcomes between students exposed to subtitled video and those who read the same content in written form, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of video as a vocabulary learning tool. At the same time, it proposes a practical framework that can be used or adapted by teachers who wish to integrate subtitled video into their own vocabulary instruction in a structured and research-informed manner.

Study Focus and Research Questions

Building on this question, the current study takes a comparative approach to input modality in the EFL classroom. It was conducted with two groups of upper-intermediate secondary school students preparing for Cambridge English exams—one exposed to a subtitled TED Talk video, the other to a written transcript of the same content. The goal was not only to evaluate vocabulary learning outcomes, but also to collect learner reflections on the experience and to

assess the viability of using video as a structured tool for lexical development in exam-oriented instruction.

The rationale for this comparison lies in the tension between established classroom practices and emerging learner preferences. Reading has long been recognized as a reliable and well-researched input modality for vocabulary development (Nation, 2013; Horst, 2005). In contrast, subtitled video—while widely consumed in informal settings—is rarely treated as a serious vehicle for vocabulary instruction, despite growing evidence of its effectiveness (Montero Pérez et al., 2014; Peters & Webb, 2018). Few classroom-based studies have directly compared these two modalities under controlled conditions, and even fewer have done so with upper-intermediate learners in a real educational setting. This study responds to that gap by evaluating not only the outcomes of each modality, but also the learners’ subjective experiences and preferences.

Importantly, the study also aims to contribute something beyond its immediate findings: a replicable framework that other teachers and researchers can adopt or adapt. The design—a pre-test, a single input session (video or reading), and a post-test—can be used in various instructional contexts with minimal adaptation. Vocabulary items, texts, or video materials can be substituted to fit different syllabi or learner levels. As such, the study serves not only as a case-specific investigation but also as a model of how to explore input modality and vocabulary acquisition in an efficient, classroom-friendly format. This added value helps justify the study even though it involved only a single 45-minute intervention.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) How does the input modality (video vs. text) influence learners’ exposure to target vocabulary items and result in different levels of vocabulary gains?
- 2) Which vocabulary items show the greatest or least improvement, and what patterns emerge across the two groups?
- 3) How do learners perceive the effectiveness and engagement level of the intervention activities?

Why TED Talks?

To answer the research questions outlined above, the study required an input source that would be authentic, lexically rich, and adaptable to both video and text-based formats. TED Talks emerged as an ideal solution for this purpose. Known for their educational tone and clear

structure, TED Talks feature real-world spoken English that is accessible yet challenging—particularly for upper-intermediate learners preparing for exams such as the Cambridge First (FCE) or Advanced (CAE). In contrast to casual video content such as TV shows or social media clips, TED Talks tend to avoid slang and region-specific expressions while still providing exposure to natural speech.

Equally important was the practical value of TED Talks for research design. Each talk comes with official transcripts and subtitle files, making it possible to create parallel versions of the same input: one video-based and one text-based. This made TED Talks especially suitable for a controlled comparison of input modalities. Moreover, they are free to use for educational purposes, which helped to avoid the copyright concerns typically associated with using commercial video content in classroom settings.

The specific TED Talk selected for this study was chosen through a student survey in which participants rated a range of talks on interest and comprehensibility (see Appendix A). The final selection was not only engaging but also aligned with the learners' proficiency level and vocabulary needs. The talk featured a manageable number of potentially unfamiliar lexical items—challenging enough to promote learning, but still accessible within a single lesson. This made it well-suited for focused, short-term vocabulary instruction aimed at upper-intermediate students.

By using TED Talk content for both groups in this study, the design ensured that the two modalities (video and reading) were comparable in length, topic, tone, and vocabulary load. At the same time, the use of an authentic and educationally relevant video format allowed the study to maintain a high degree of ecological validity. The following chapter reviews the theoretical foundations and research literature that inform the study's design and goals.

CHAPTER I.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of key theoretical concepts and recent research related to vocabulary acquisition in second language learning. It outlines the role of input modality, explores the distinction between incidental and intentional learning, and discusses the pedagogical potential of subtitled video materials as an authentic input source.

1.1 Vocabulary Acquisition in Second Language Learning

Vocabulary acquisition plays a fundamental role in L2 learning, forming the basis for developing of all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A robust vocabulary is essential for learners to comprehend texts, engage in conversations, and express themselves effectively in the target language (Nation, 2013). However, acquiring vocabulary in an L2 environment presents challenges, particularly regarding exposure to authentic language input and retention of newly learned words.

This study not only investigates how input modality (subtitled video vs. reading) affects vocabulary acquisition but also serves as a practical model for conducting similar research. The clear, structured design of the intervention—comprising a pre-test, an input session (video or reading), and a post-test—can be replicated by other educators or researchers interested in exploring the impact of different input types on vocabulary learning. Such a model provides a consistent method for testing and comparing the effectiveness of diverse input modalities.

1.1.1 The Role of Input in Language Learning

One of the most influential theories in L2 acquisition is Krashen's input hypothesis (1985), which posits that learners acquire language through exposure to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current proficiency level (i.e., $i + 1$). Research supports the notion that input-rich environments facilitate vocabulary acquisition by providing learners with opportunities to encounter new words in meaningful contexts (Muñoz & Spada, 2021) Exposure to vocabulary in context is particularly effective for retention, as learners associate words with real-life situations and authentic discourse (Muñoz et al., 2021)

Furthermore, studies on intensive exposure programs suggest that increased input frequency accelerates vocabulary learning and grammatical development (Serrano, 2011). Immersion settings and study-abroad experiences provide learners with significant exposure to L2 input,

allowing for more substantial vocabulary gains compared to traditional classroom instruction (Collins & White, 2011). However, in foreign language (FL) contexts where learners have limited exposure outside the classroom, structured input through media, such as subtitled videos, can serve as an alternative means of providing enriched vocabulary input (Danan, 2004; Montero Pérez et al., 2017; Peters & Webb, 2018; Talaván, 2006).

1.1.2 Lexical Input Processing (Lex-IP) and Learning Mechanisms

Lexical Input Processing (Lex-IP) refers to the cognitive mechanisms through which learners process and internalize new words as they encounter them in input (Barcroft, 2012). Understanding how words are processed at different linguistic levels — phonological (sound recognition), orthographic (spelling recognition), and semantic (meaning interpretation) — is crucial for improving vocabulary learning strategies (Poepel & Embick, 2005). Effective Lex-IP facilitates word retention and enhances a learner's ability to retrieve vocabulary during communication.

Research suggests that visual input can enhance lexical processing by providing contextual support that reinforces word meaning. For instance, audiovisual materials that combine spoken language with synchronized text, such as subtitles or captions, help learners map sound to meaning more efficiently (Danan, 2004). This effect is particularly strong in multimodal learning environments where learners engage with both auditory and textual representations of new words (Montero Pérez et al., 2014).

Moreover, input frequency plays a critical role in lexical processing. Studies show that repeated exposure to vocabulary within varied contexts strengthens retention and facilitates the transition from recognition to active usage (Rodgers & Webb, 2020). Learners are more likely to remember words that appear frequently in meaningful interactions or multimedia content. For example, TED Talks provide rich lexical input combined with authentic speech patterns, which supports vocabulary learning through repeated exposure in an engaging format (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).

Additionally, Lex-IP interacts with learners' prior knowledge, influencing how quickly new vocabulary is integrated. Learners often rely on cognates (words that have similar forms and meanings across languages) to process new vocabulary more efficiently (Nation, 2013). However, false cognates and idiomatic expressions can pose challenges, making it essential for learners to engage with vocabulary in context rather than relying solely on word-for-word translations (Muñoz et al., 2021).

1.1.3 The Role of Frequency and Repetition in Vocabulary Retention

One of the key factors influencing vocabulary acquisition and retention is the frequency of exposure to new words. As has been mentioned in the previous subsection, research has consistently shown that encountering a word multiple times in meaningful contexts strengthens a learner's ability to recognize, recall, and ultimately use the word productively (Webb, 2007). The more frequently a learner is exposed to a particular lexical item, the more likely it is to be processed, stored, and retrieved from memory when needed. Nation (2013) emphasized that a word should be encountered at least 6–12 times in various contexts to be deeply learned and retained over time. Similarly, Rodgers and Webb (2020) demonstrated that television programs and films provide substantial lexical repetition, reinforcing the learning of vocabulary through contextualized exposure. Learners who repeatedly hear or see words in audiovisual materials tend to retain and use them more effectively than those who encounter words in isolated exercises (Webb & Nation, 2017).

Studies on listening-based vocabulary acquisition further confirm this. Van Zeeland and Schmitt (2013) found that learners who listened to new words repeatedly in context demonstrated better retention and recall than those who encountered them only once. The study highlighted that words appearing frequently in speech input—such as in TED Talks or other video-based materials—are more likely to become entrenched in learners' long-term memory.

1.1.4 Implications for Audiovisual Learning and Subtitled Videos

Repetition is especially powerful when combined with multimodal input, such as subtitled videos, where learners process words through both auditory and textual channels. Montero Pérez et al. (2014) observed that learners watching videos with captions retained more words compared to those who watched without captions, as subtitles reinforced word recognition and contextual understanding. TED Talks, in particular, offer an effective balance of lexical repetition and natural discourse, providing multiple exposures to high-frequency words in academically and conversationally relevant contexts (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).

In addition to understanding how input type influences vocabulary retention, it is equally important to consider the cognitive processes behind how learners acquire vocabulary — particularly the distinction between incidental and intentional learning.

1.2 Incidental vs. Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Building on the importance of input type and lexical processing, vocabulary acquisition in L2 learning can be further understood by examining two primary pathways: incidental learning, where words are acquired as a byproduct of engaging in communicative activities, and intentional learning, where explicit focus is placed on memorizing vocabulary (Nation, 2013). These two approaches are often viewed as distinct, but in practice, they exist on a continuum, with many learning experiences incorporating elements of both (Hulstijn, 2001). Understanding the balance between incidental and intentional learning is crucial for designing effective instructional strategies, particularly when integrating audiovisual materials such as subtitled videos, which can serve as a bridge between these two modes of learning.

This study provides a structured and replicable framework for exploring both incidental and intentional vocabulary learning. By comparing vocabulary gains across two input modalities—subtitled video and reading—it allows educators and researchers to test the impact of different conditions on vocabulary acquisition in a controlled, consistent manner.

1.2.1 Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Incidental vocabulary learning occurs without the explicit intention to learn new words but rather as a byproduct of exposure to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985). Learners encounter unfamiliar words in meaningful contexts—such as through reading, listening, or watching videos—and infer their meanings based on contextual cues (Lenhart, Lenhard, Vaahtoranta, & Suggate, 2017; Nation, 2013; Schmitt, 2000). This form of learning aligns with Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, which posits that exposure to rich, comprehensible input facilitates natural language acquisition (Krashen, 1985).

Studies have shown that incidental vocabulary learning is highly dependent on the frequency of word encounters and the richness of contextual support (Rodgers & Webb, 2020). Learners exposed to repetitive lexical items in meaningful contexts are more likely to retain them in long-term memory (Webb, 2007). This is particularly relevant in audiovisual input, where learners process both spoken and written forms of words simultaneously (Montero Pérez et al., 2014).

For example, TED Talks with subtitles provide learners with rich, repeated exposure to vocabulary in a natural, engaging format, reinforcing lexical learning through multimodal input (Nguyen & Boers, 2018). This aligns with usage-based language acquisition theories, which emphasize the importance of frequent exposure to words in varied contexts for robust vocabulary retention (Ellis, 2002).

Despite its advantages, incidental vocabulary learning is often slow and inefficient for acquiring low-frequency words or technical vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008). Learners may fail to notice new words or derive incorrect meanings if context cues are insufficient (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). Additionally, retention rates vary significantly among learners, depending on their level of language proficiency and attentional resources (Van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013). As a result, researchers advocate for combining incidental exposure with explicit learning strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition (Hulstijn, 2001).

1.2.2 Intentional Vocabulary Learning

Intentional vocabulary learning refers to deliberate efforts to study and memorize words, often through explicit instruction, direct translation, or vocabulary exercises (Nation, 2013). This approach typically involves structured learning activities such as:

- Word lists and flashcards (Webb, 2007)
- Dictionary use and translation exercises (Schmitt, 2008)
- Targeted vocabulary exercises integrated into lessons (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001)

Compared to incidental learning, intentional vocabulary learning leads to faster and more efficient word retention (Webb & Nation, 2017). Studies have shown that explicit instruction can significantly improve learners' ability to recall word meanings and use them correctly in speech and writing (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). Research on output-based learning suggests that actively producing vocabulary (e.g., through speaking and writing tasks) strengthens retention and enhances retrieval processes (Swain, 1995).

For instance, TED Talks can be used not only for incidental exposure but also for intentional learning, where students are required to summarize key points, discuss vocabulary in context, or complete exercises targeting specific words (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).

Despite its effectiveness, intentional learning alone does not guarantee deep processing of vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008). Words learned through rote memorization may not be retained long-term unless learners encounter and use them in meaningful contexts (Nation, 2013). Furthermore, learners often find explicit vocabulary study less engaging, particularly when compared to contextual learning through rich input sources like subtitled videos (Aloqaili, 2014; Yawiloeng, 2020).

1.2.3 The Incidental-Intentional Continuum

Rather than viewing incidental and intentional learning as opposing methods, *Hulstijn (2001)* argues that they exist on a continuum, with most effective vocabulary learning strategies incorporating elements of both. Balanced approaches that integrate rich input with explicit instruction have been found to yield the best results in L2 vocabulary acquisition (Webb, 2007).

Audiovisual materials, particularly TED Talks with subtitles, provide an ideal blend of incidental and intentional learning (Montero Pérez et al., 2014). Learners first acquire vocabulary incidentally through repeated exposure to words in authentic speech, but retention is enhanced when explicit activities—such as focused exercises, word recognition tasks, and content discussions—are incorporated into lessons (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).

1.2.4 Implications for Audiovisual Learning and Subtitled Videos

Repetition is especially powerful when combined with multimodal input, such as subtitled videos, where learners process words through both auditory and textual channels. Montero Pérez et al. (2014) observed that learners watching videos with captions retained more words compared to those who watched without captions, as subtitles reinforced word recognition and contextual understanding. TED Talks, in particular, offer an effective balance of lexical repetition and natural discourse, providing multiple exposures to high-frequency words in academically and conversationally relevant contexts (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).

While the previous section emphasized learning processes and instructional approaches, it is also essential to explore the specific role that subtitled input plays in facilitating vocabulary acquisition, especially in multimodal environments.

1.3 The Role of Subtitles in Language Learning

As one of the most prominent forms of multimodal input, subtitles and captions play a significant role in L2 learning by providing dual-modality input, where learners engage with both spoken and written forms of language simultaneously. Numerous studies have shown that subtitles enhance listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and word recognition, particularly in audiovisual learning contexts (Montero Pérez et al., 2014; Rodgers & Webb, 2020). However, the effectiveness of subtitles varies based on factors such as learner proficiency, cognitive load, and type of subtitling used (Peters et al., 2016; Vanderplank, 2016; Muñoz et al., 2021).

In this study, subtitles are used as one of the input modalities within a replicable framework, allowing for the systematic investigation of their impact on vocabulary acquisition. This framework can be adapted to test different types of subtitles (e.g., full, keyword, or no subtitles), making it a versatile model for further research or classroom application.

1.3.1 How Subtitles Support Language Acquisition

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2005) suggests that learners process information more effectively when they receive input through multiple modalities—in this case, auditory and visual input. Subtitles create a dual-channel effect, reinforcing the connection between spoken language (auditory processing) and written language (visual processing), which supports vocabulary retention and comprehension (Lo, 2024; Paivio, 1991).

Research shows that subtitles help learners segment speech, making it easier to distinguish individual words within continuous speech streams (Vanderplank, 2010). This is particularly beneficial for L2 learners, who may struggle with fast-paced spoken language and reduced speech clarity in natural discourse. Captions allow learners to map phonological forms to orthographic representations, making it easier to recognize and retain new vocabulary (Danan, 2004).

Subtitles also improve listening comprehension by making unfamiliar words more accessible (Peters et al., 2016). Many learners struggle to decode fast, native speech, especially when dealing with connected speech and informal contractions. Subtitled videos allow them to see the words they hear, facilitating better speech segmentation and meaning extraction (Montero Pérez et al., 2014).

A study by Rodgers and Webb (2020) found that L2 learners who watched television programs with captions performed significantly better in listening comprehension tests than those who watched without captions. Similarly, Danan (2004) suggests that captions provide crucial reinforcement for learners by reducing uncertainty in word recognition. This effect is particularly strong when learners are exposed to fast, spontaneous speech, such as that found in TED Talks.

One of the greatest advantages of subtitles is their role in incidental vocabulary acquisition. Studies show that learners acquire new words naturally while watching subtitled content, as they repeatedly see and hear vocabulary in authentic contexts (Rodgers & Webb, 2020). Webb and Rodgers (2009) demonstrated that films and television programs provide substantial lexical repetition, reinforcing the acquisition of high-frequency words. Learners who frequently

encounter words in audiovisual materials tend to retain and recall them more effectively than those who rely solely on written or spoken input alone (Muñoz & Miralpeix, 2024; L. Shaojie, Samad, & Ismail, 2022).

1.3.2 Potential Challenges of Using Subtitles

One concern regarding subtitles is that learners may focus more on reading the subtitles than on listening to the audio. This can reduce their ability to develop listening skills, as they become dependent on the visual text rather than training their ears to process spoken input (Winke et al., 2010). Some researchers recommend a progressive approach where learners first watch with subtitles, then transition to listening without text support. This method gradually enhances auditory processing skills while still allowing learners to benefit from subtitle reinforcement in the early stages of learning (Vanderplank, 2016).

Subtitles may increase cognitive load, especially when learners struggle to process both auditory and visual input simultaneously (Peters et al., 2016). The rapid appearance and disappearance of subtitles can also challenge reading speed, particularly for lower-proficiency learners (Winke et al., 2010). A possible solution is keyword captioning, where only the most important words are highlighted, rather than full text subtitles. Research suggests that keyword captions may be more effective for learners, as they allow for enhanced focus without overwhelming cognitive processing (Montero Pérez et al., 2014).

Not all learners benefit from subtitles in the same way. Studies indicate that beginner learners benefit the most from full subtitles, as they provide maximum support for comprehension. In contrast, advanced learners may find subtitles less necessary, as they can process spoken input more efficiently (Vanderplank, 2016).

For some learners, bimodal input (audio + subtitles) helps bridge the gap between spoken and written language, whereas for others, it may not be as effective in improving spontaneous language production (Etemadi, 2012). This highlights the importance of tailoring subtitled materials to the learner's proficiency level.

1.3.3 TED Talks as a Source of Authentic Input

TED Talks are an excellent resource for L2 learners because they provide authentic, engaging, and diverse language input. Unlike scripted textbook dialogues, TED Talks offer real-world discourse, featuring natural intonation, pronunciation, and vocabulary use (Nguyen & Boers, 2018). TED Talks also contain high-frequency academic and professional vocabulary, making

them ideal for both incidental and intentional learning. Compared to TV series and films, which often focus on colloquial expressions, TED Talks expose learners to formal discourse and structured speech.

TED Talks can be integrated into language learning in multiple ways:

- **Incidental Learning:** Watching TED Talks with captions on allows learners to acquire new words passively.
- **Intentional Learning:** Teachers can design activities where students focus on specific vocabulary from a TED Talk (Nguyen & Boers, 2018).
- **Flipped Classroom Approach:** Students watch TED Talks before class, then engage in discussion and vocabulary exercises in class.

Research shows that learners retain more vocabulary from TED Talks than from traditional lectures, as the multimodal input reinforces word recognition, pronunciation, and discourse structure (Rodgers & Webb, 2020).

Building on the theoretical and empirical support for subtitled videos and TED Talks, the following section situates these insights within the specific educational context of the current study — Cambridge English exam preparation.

1.4 Cambridge Exam Preparation and Study Design

Building on the discussion of subtitled input and its role in vocabulary acquisition, this section introduces the specific educational context in which the present study was conducted. The students participating in the intervention were 11th-grade learners preparing for the Cambridge First (FCE) and Cambridge Advanced (CAE) exams—internationally recognized qualifications that assess English proficiency across all four language skills.

Since 2019, Estonian upper-secondary students who demonstrate English proficiency at the B1 level or above through Cambridge English exams have been able to use these internationally recognized qualifications as an alternative to the national English state exam, increasing accessibility and opportunities for motivated learners (Cambridge English, 2019a). As a result, many motivated learners—often with the encouragement of their parents—choose to pursue a Cambridge qualification, which offers broader opportunities for employment and further study abroad. Since these students engage in regular coursework aligned with Cambridge exam tasks, the study’s instructional design incorporated exam-format activities, ensuring that the

vocabulary acquisition methods tested would be directly applicable to their real-world language learning goals.

This study aligns with the Cambridge exam preparation context while also providing a replicable framework for other teachers and researchers. By using exam-oriented materials and vocabulary tasks, the study can be directly applied to similar exam preparation settings, making it a practical model for educators aiming to enhance vocabulary learning through diverse input modalities.

1.4.1 Overview of the Cambridge First (FCE) and Advanced (CAE) Exams

The Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE) and Cambridge Advanced Certificate in English (CAE) assess upper-intermediate (B2) and advanced (C1) English proficiency, respectively (Cambridge University Press, 2020). These exams measure a learner's ability to:

- Understand and use a wide range of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions and academic language.
- Process and analyze written texts effectively.
- Produce coherent written responses across various formats (e.g., essays, articles, reports).

Vocabulary knowledge is a key component of success in both exams, particularly in the Use of English section, which assesses lexical and grammatical competence through tasks such as:

- Multiple-choice cloze (choosing the correct word to complete a sentence).
- Open cloze (filling in blanks with appropriate words based on grammatical context).
- Word formation (modifying root words to fit a sentence).
- Key word transformation (rewriting sentences using given words while maintaining the original meaning).

These exercises require not only memorization of vocabulary but also an understanding of word forms, collocations, and contextual usage, reinforcing the need for effective vocabulary acquisition strategies (Nation, 2013).

1.4.2 Aligning the Study Design with Cambridge Exam Preparation

Given that students in this study are accustomed to exam-style learning, the study's intervention will include activities that reflect Cambridge exam tasks, particularly in the areas of:

- Vocabulary acquisition and reinforcement:

- Activities that require students to recognize and apply words in different contexts.
- Exercises focusing on word formation and transformation, similar to FCE/CAE question types (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).
- Exam-style tasks for structured practice:
 - Incorporating elements from the Use of English section into vocabulary exercises.
 - Activities that encourage active engagement with new words, such as paraphrasing, summarizing, and gap-fill exercises.
- Academic and communicative application:
 - Encouraging learners to use newly acquired vocabulary in structured written responses.
 - Emphasizing collocation awareness to help students use vocabulary more naturally in both spoken and written formats (Nation, 2013).

By integrating exam-related exercises, the study ensures that students not only acquire new vocabulary but also develop the ability to use it effectively in exam conditions, where time constraints and accuracy are critical (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

1.4.3 Advantages of Subtitled Videos for Exam Preparation

The use of subtitled videos in this study aligns with Cambridge exam preparation by exposing learners to high-frequency academic vocabulary commonly found in exam tasks. TED Talks and other audiovisual materials provide rich, authentic input, which mirrors the lexical complexity of Cambridge exams (Rodgers & Webb, 2020). By engaging with real-world speech, students encounter words and expressions that are both exam-relevant and applicable to broader academic and professional settings.

Unlike traditional vocabulary study methods that rely on isolated word lists, subtitled videos present vocabulary in meaningful discourse, helping students remember words through contextual association rather than through rote memorization (Nguyen & Boers, 2018). The multimodal nature of subtitled videos, which combine auditory and textual input, facilitates deeper lexical processing, making it easier for learners to recognize, understand, and recall words in different contexts.

Additionally, subtitled videos help reinforce grammar and word formation, both of which are essential for the Cambridge Use of English section. By seeing words used in various grammatical structures, students gain a better understanding of collocations, suffixes, and

prefixes, which are directly applicable to Cambridge-style word transformation tasks (Mohammed, 2013). Exposure to natural speech patterns in subtitled videos also enhances awareness of sentence structure, reinforcing learners' ability to construct grammatically correct and contextually appropriate sentences.

Beyond vocabulary acquisition, the engaging nature of audiovisual materials helps increase student motivation. Traditional vocabulary exercises, such as gap-fill tasks or word transformation drills, can sometimes feel mechanical and disconnected from real-life language use. In contrast, subtitled videos provide an immersive learning experience, where learners engage with language in an authentic and dynamic format (Aloqaili, 2014). The combination of visual, textual, and auditory input makes vocabulary learning more interactive and enjoyable, which in turn supports better retention and application of new words.

The literature reviewed in this chapter highlights the theoretical and empirical foundations that support the use of subtitled audiovisual input as a tool for vocabulary development in EFL contexts. These insights inform the present study, which investigates how different input modalities—specifically subtitled video and reading—affect vocabulary acquisition among upper-intermediate learners preparing for high-stakes English proficiency exams. The following chapter outlines the research design, participants, materials, and procedures used to explore this question.

CHAPTER II.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND INTERVENTION

Vocabulary acquisition has long been a central focus in L2 learning research, particularly in contexts where learners are exposed to EFL in formal educational settings. While traditional vocabulary instruction has relied heavily on explicit teaching and memorization, more recent approaches have highlighted the importance of meaningful input, contextual learning, and opportunities for authentic use. In this light, input-based and output-based instructional practices have received growing attention, particularly regarding their effects on both incidental and intentional vocabulary learning.

This study is situated within this evolving understanding of L2 vocabulary acquisition. It explores the effectiveness of an intervention that exposed learners to selected vocabulary items through either a video-based input modality (watching a subtitled TED Talk) or a text-based modality (reading the transcript of the same TED Talk). The aim was to investigate how different types of exposure, grounded in authentic content, affect learners' ability to recognize and use new vocabulary items.

The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) How does the input modality (video vs. text) influence learners' exposure to target vocabulary items and result in different levels of vocabulary gains?
- 2) Which vocabulary items show the greatest or least improvement, and what patterns emerge across the two groups?
- 3) How do learners perceive the effectiveness and engagement level of the intervention activities?

The intervention was carefully designed to reflect real-world classroom conditions while maintaining the rigor required for experimental research. It included a pre-test and post-test to measure vocabulary gains, and a structured lesson in which the target and control groups engaged with the same lexical items through different modalities. A series of interactive and scaffolded vocabulary tasks followed the main input phase, allowing learners to engage with the new items receptively and productively.

This chapter outlines the research design and provides a detailed description of the participants, materials, procedures, and instruments used in the study. It also presents the timeline of the intervention and discusses the pedagogical rationale for each phase of the lesson.

2.1 Methodology and Research Procedure

This section outlines the methodological framework used in this study to explore the impact of input modality on vocabulary acquisition among EFL learners. By comparing two groups—one exposed to a subtitled video and the other to a reading text—this study provides a structured, replicable model for testing how different types of input affect vocabulary learning.

The clear, three-phase structure of the study (pre-test, intervention, and post-test) allows for consistent data collection and analysis, making it suitable for adaptation in various educational settings. This approach ensures that the effects of input modality can be systematically measured and compared, providing valuable insights for educators and researchers.

2.1.1 Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design to examine how different input modalities—video and reading—affect incidental vocabulary acquisition among secondary school EFL learners. The intervention compared two groups of students: a target group that watched a subtitled TED Talk video and a control group that read an adapted transcript of the same talk. Both groups completed an identical vocabulary test before and after the intervention to measure gains in vocabulary knowledge.

The research was conducted with 11th-grade students at a secondary school in Narva, Estonia. The intervention took place during their regular English lessons as part of the standard timetable.

The study was carried out in three stages:

- 1) **Pre-test:** One week before the intervention, students completed a vocabulary test designed to measure their existing knowledge of 21 target vocabulary items. The test was paper-based and scored manually. At the time of testing, students were informed that the test was part of a research project, but they were not told what kind of lesson it would be connected to, nor that a follow-up test would be administered.
- 2) **Intervention lesson:** One week later, students took part in a vocabulary lesson based on a TED Talk titled *"How to Speak So That People Want to Listen"*. After a brief whole-class warm-up activity, students were randomly divided into two groups. The target

group watched the video, while the control group read an adapted version of the transcript in an adjacent classroom. Upon completing the viewing or reading phase, both groups were reunited in the main classroom and continued with a series of identical post-input vocabulary activities. At this stage, students worked in mixed pairs or small groups, following the usual classroom practice.

- 3) **Post-test:** One week after the intervention lesson, students completed the same vocabulary test again, with the sentence order altered to reduce recognition effects. As with the pre-test, the post-test was paper-based, scored manually, and did not affect students' academic records.

The students were not made aware that they would be tested again until the post-test was distributed. Since the activities were framed as part of a research project and were unrelated to academic grading, it is unlikely that students engaged in independent revision of the vocabulary items during the interval.

The test used in the study was not piloted or formally validated but was reviewed and approved by the thesis supervisor. The selection of the TED Talk and target vocabulary is discussed in Section 2.2.

The use of a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test structure provides a replicable framework for similar studies. Researchers and educators can adopt this model to test various input types (e.g., audio-only, interactive texts) while maintaining a consistent method for measuring vocabulary gains. This approach ensures reliability and comparability across different contexts.

2.1.2 Participants

The participants in this study were 17-18-year-old 11th-grade students from Narva Keeltelütseum, a secondary school located in Narva, Estonia. The group had been formed at the beginning of the students' 10th grade and had studied together for one and a half academic years prior to the intervention. The group was pre-selected by the school administration to include academically strong and motivated learners, with the intention of preparing them for higher achievement levels in English by the end of secondary school.

As such, the group was following a curriculum designed to prepare students for the B2-level Cambridge First (FCE) examination, with the longer-term aim of progressing to the C1-level Cambridge Advanced (CAE) exam by the end of 12th grade. In practice, not all students reach the C1 level, and some sit the FCE exam in their final year instead.

At the time of the intervention, the group consisted of 20 students. However, 2 students were absent on the day of the intervention lesson, and therefore the final sample size for this study was 18 students. All participants shared Russian as their mother tongue and were accustomed to working together in the same classroom environment. English was taught as a foreign language, and the students had six 45-minute English lessons per week.

Based on the results of regular Cambridge First practice tests, administered periodically throughout the academic year, the students' proficiency levels ranged from B1 to B2 on the CEFR scale, with 1–2 students performing at a borderline B2–C1 level. Approximately half of the group could be classified as B1 learners, while the other half were performing at a B2 level. The most recent practice test had been conducted approximately two months before the intervention.

Although demographic data such as age and gender were not a focus of this study, all participants were in the same grade level and had similar educational backgrounds. The existing classroom dynamic and shared learning history helped ensure consistency in how the intervention was delivered and received across both the target and control groups.

2.2 Materials

This section presents the materials used during the intervention, including the input sources, vocabulary selection process, testing instruments, and classroom activities. All materials were carefully designed or adapted to ensure that both the target and control groups were exposed to the same lexical content under comparable conditions. The only variable that differed between the two groups was the input modality: video versus reading.

The selection and adaptation of materials—particularly the use of an authentic TED Talk and a carefully prepared transcript—demonstrate a replicable approach that can be applied in similar vocabulary studies. Educators and researchers can adopt this model using different videos, texts, or vocabulary sets while maintaining the same controlled conditions for meaningful comparisons.

2.2.1 TED Talk and Script

The primary input material for the intervention was a TED Talk titled “*How to Speak So That People Want to Listen*” by Julian Treasure. This talk was selected through a student-driven process aimed at ensuring high levels of engagement and topic relevance.

The selection process began approximately three months before the intervention. A web-based search was conducted to identify TED Talks that were commonly recommended for teenagers on websites such as youth magazines and educational blogs. From these recommendations, 19 talks were shortlisted based on their duration—each between 5 and 10 minutes long—to fit the time constraints of a single lesson and ensure equal exposure for both input groups.

To determine which of these topics would be most engaging for the students, a Google Form-based survey was created. Each entry in the form included the TED Talk's title, a cover image, and a brief 2–3 sentence description of its content. During one of their regular English lessons, the same group of students who would later participate in the intervention was asked to complete the survey by rating their interest in each talk on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating the highest level of interest.

Based on the average ratings, *“How to Speak So That People Want to Listen”* emerged as one of the highest-scoring topics. Its relevance to real-life communication and practical presentation tips made it a suitable and appealing choice for the vocabulary-focused intervention. The talk's transcript was downloaded from the official TED website and slightly adapted for the reading group to ensure consistency and clarity while preserving all key content and vocabulary. This adaptation process involved removing interjections (e.g., “um,” “you know”) to streamline the text and reformatting it into coherent paragraphs rather than the original line-by-line layout. To ensure comparability between groups, the final segment of the video—featuring live audience vocalization exercises—was omitted from both the transcript and the viewing experience.

A summary of the student survey results and the list of considered TED Talks are included in Appendix A. The final transcript used with the control group is provided in Appendix B.

The process of selecting an authentic TED Talk and adapting its transcript for the reading group illustrates a replicable approach to input material preparation. Researchers and educators can use this model with other authentic videos and corresponding texts, ensuring that different input modalities are directly comparable while maintaining the same lexical focus.

2.2.2 Target Vocabulary Selection

The target vocabulary items for this study were selected through a careful, teacher-informed process based on the TED Talk transcript. As the teacher of the participant group for over one and a half academic years, the researcher had extensive familiarity with the learners' lexical knowledge, the vocabulary syllabus associated with the Cambridge First and Advanced exams, and the types of words that had already been taught or encountered in class. Approximately 40–

50% of regular English lessons for this group are dedicated to vocabulary development, making it possible to make informed and confident decisions about which words were likely unfamiliar to the students.

The selection process began with a manual review of the TED Talk transcript. Words that appeared potentially unfamiliar, based on the researcher's pedagogical intuition and prior classroom interaction, were highlighted. The goal was not to target a specific part of speech or thematic field, but rather to focus on words that would likely offer meaningful learning opportunities. At the same time, overly technical or highly context-specific terms—such as *timbre* or *prosody*—were excluded from consideration due to their limited relevance and low communicative value outside the specific talk.

The initial shortlist contained 23 words. These were cross-referenced using online learner dictionaries (Cambridge Dictionary and Oxford Learner's Dictionaries) to determine their CEFR level classification, where available. Most of the shortlisted words were marked as B2 or C1, with a few listed at C2 or not associated with a CEFR level at all. The frequency of each word within the script was also noted; most occurred only once. This observation informed the design of the post-viewing tasks: in order to reinforce contextual meaning, the first activity provided example sentences taken directly from the script with the target vocabulary highlighted.

Following this review, two words were removed from the list. The word *dogmatism* was excluded due to its high similarity to the equivalent term in the students' mother tongue (Russian), which could make its acquisition less meaningful or memorable. The word *conflate* was excluded because it was deemed too abstract and difficult for the learners' current level. The remaining 21 items were confirmed as the final target vocabulary list.

Not all post-viewing activities engaged with all 21 items equally. The first task—matching definitions with context sentences—included all of them. However, subsequent tasks, such as comprehension questions and discussion prompts, targeted a smaller selection due to time constraints and pedagogical appropriateness. The vocabulary test, used in both the pre- and post-testing phases, included all 21 words and served as the primary instrument for measuring learning gains.

The full vocabulary list, along with CEFR level estimates and frequency data, is included in Appendix C. The selection process and final list were reviewed and approved by the thesis supervisor.

The method of selecting target vocabulary—balancing lexical difficulty, relevance to the input text, and alignment with exam preparation—offers a replicable model for similar studies. Researchers and educators can adapt this process to their own contexts, choosing target words that are appropriate for their learners' proficiency level and instructional goals.

2.2.3 Description of Pre- and Post-Tests

The primary instrument used to measure students' vocabulary acquisition was a gap-fill test designed by the researcher. The test consisted of 21 sentences, each targeting one of the selected vocabulary items. All sentences were created using the base form of the target words and constructed to be clear, accessible, and contextually illustrative. To ensure linguistic appropriateness, the sentences avoided other complex vocabulary and were generated with the assistance of a language model (ChatGPT), based on prompts requesting neutral, level-appropriate language.

The target words were removed from each sentence and placed in a word bank at the top of the test. The word bank included the 21 target vocabulary items along with four distractors—*falsetto*, *penultimate*, *prosody*, and *timbre*—which were present in the TED Talk but excluded from instruction due to their relative complexity or specificity. The distractors added a degree of challenge and reduced the likelihood of answers being deduced solely by process of elimination.

The same test was used for both the pre-test and post-test phases, with only the order of the sentences randomized between the two administrations. This was done to control for familiarity with the test structure while still allowing for a consistent measure of vocabulary knowledge. The test was scored by the researcher, with each item worth one point. Partial credit was not awarded, although minor spelling errors were overlooked, as the primary focus was on correct word selection based on contextual understanding.

This test design—using a single, consistent format with identical target words for both pre- and post-test—provides a replicable model for vocabulary assessment. Researchers and educators can adapt this approach to measure vocabulary gains across different input types or language contexts, ensuring reliable comparisons while minimizing test familiarity effects.

The tests were administered in the students' regular classroom setting, under controlled conditions. Students were seated individually and instructed not to interact with one another. In line with established classroom norms, dictionaries and smartphones were not permitted.

Students were given sufficient time to complete the test without pressure, and the testing environment mirrored that of typical summative classroom assessments.

The test was designed to measure students' receptive vocabulary knowledge—specifically their ability to recognize word meaning in context and match a lexical item to a semantically appropriate sentence. No translation into students' mother tongue (Russian) was involved at any stage, reflecting the immersion-based instructional approach used in the classroom and the format of the Cambridge First and Advanced examinations.

The complete version of the vocabulary test is provided in Appendix D.

2.2.4 Lesson Plan and Activities

The intervention lesson was delivered within a single 45-minute English lesson and followed a tightly structured sequence. The lesson was divided into five main stages: a pre-input warm-up, the input phase (video or reading), and four post-input vocabulary-focused tasks. The only difference in treatment between the two groups lay in the input modality. All post-input activities and materials were identical for both groups, and learners worked in mixed pairs and as a whole class regardless of group assignment.

The lesson began with a brief pre-input warm-up lasting approximately five minutes. This stage aimed to activate students' schema and generate personal engagement with the topic. The teacher posed the following discussion prompts to the whole class:

- 1) *Remember a time when you had to talk in front of a class or another large audience. Why did you enjoy or not enjoy the experience?*
- 2) *What are some common challenges people face when speaking in public?*
- 3) *Today we are going to watch/read a talk titled “How to Speak So That People Want to Listen” by Julian Treasure.*

Following the warm-up, students were randomly divided into two groups. The target group remained in the main classroom to watch an 8-minute video segment of the subtitled TED Talk, while the control group moved to an adjacent room, accompanied by a teaching assistant, to read a slightly adapted transcript of the same talk. The reading group was told they would have exactly eight minutes to complete the text, matching the length of the video. No interactions or discussion occurred during the input phase.

Once the input was complete, both groups were reunited in the main classroom, and the rest of the lesson was conducted with the class fully integrated. Students engaged in four post-input

tasks designed to consolidate vocabulary through a range of receptive and productive techniques. The sequence and approximate timing of the activities were as follows:

- **Task 1: Match definitions with sentences from the TED Talk (8 minutes)**

Working in self-selected pairs, students were given sentences from the talk with key vocabulary highlighted. They were asked to match each highlighted word to its corresponding definition. This task aimed to reinforce meaning through contextual cues and supported the recognition of target items in authentic usage.

- **Task 2: Comprehension questions (7 minutes)**

Students discussed several comprehension questions based on the content of the talk. The teacher displayed each question on the board. Students were first given a moment to discuss possible answers with a partner, after which volunteers shared their responses with the whole class. All of the questions were designed to prompt the use of target vocabulary.

- **Task 3: Discussion prompts (10 minutes)**

This task focused on the productive use of vocabulary. Students worked in pairs, each receiving a discussion prompt designed to elicit opinions or experiences related to the TED Talk's themes. Prompts were printed on small slips of paper and rotated between pairs every 45–60 seconds, allowing students to engage with multiple prompts and recycle target vocabulary in different contexts.

- **Task 4: Word formation activity (5 minutes)**

In the final stage, students worked individually on a word formation exercise modeled after the Cambridge Advanced (CAE) Use of English exam. The task required students to produce grammatically correct forms of the target vocabulary or its derivatives in a series of sentences.

All tasks were integrated seamlessly into the classroom routine and required no adaptation based on group membership. The students were familiar with the format and expectations of such tasks, particularly the Use of English-style activity. No homework or follow-up activities were assigned. The teacher conducted the entire session, while the teaching assistant was only present during the 8-minute reading period to supervise the control group.

The structured format of this lesson—pre-input, input, and post-input stages—provides a replicable framework for vocabulary instruction. Educators and researchers can adopt this model, using different videos, texts, or vocabulary sets while maintaining consistent, scaffolded

activities. This approach ensures that learners engage with new words in varied contexts, supporting both recognition and productive use.

The complete lesson plan and all materials used in the post-input activities are provided in the appendices. The lesson plan is included in Appendix E, while the four post-input activities—matching definitions, comprehension questions, discussion prompts, and the word formation task—are presented in Appendices F through I, respectively.

2.3 Timeline of the Intervention

The planning and implementation of the intervention took place over the course of several months, culminating in the delivery of the lesson and data collection in March and April 2025. The process began in December 2024, when students were invited to complete a survey to help select a TED Talk topic for the lesson (see Appendix A). Based on their preferences, the talk *“How to Speak So That People Want to Listen”* by Julian Treasure was chosen.

The lesson materials—including the adapted reading script, post-input tasks, and vocabulary test—were designed and finalized during February 2025. All three stages of the intervention were carried out on Tuesdays, as this day offered the most suitable scheduling conditions based on the students’ regular lesson timetable and academic workload.

- **Pre-test:** Administered on Tuesday, March 4, 2025
- **Intervention lesson:** Delivered on Tuesday, March 11, 2025
- **Post-test:** Administered on Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Each stage was conducted as part of the students’ regular English lessons. No piloting or trial runs were carried out beforehand, and the spacing between sessions was determined by the school's fixed timetable.

To complement the quantitative data collected through pre- and post-testing, students were also invited to complete a short feedback questionnaire on April 3, 2025 (see Appendix J). The aim of this follow-up activity was to gain insight into students’ subjective experience of the intervention and their perceptions of the lesson's format, content, and vocabulary focus. These reflections were intended to inform the interpretation of the test results and to address the third research question concerning learner perceptions. Responses from the feedback questionnaire are discussed alongside the test results in Chapter III.

With the intervention procedures completed and all data collected, the next step is to analyze the results and evaluate the impact of input modality on vocabulary acquisition. The following chapter presents both quantitative findings from the vocabulary tests and qualitative insights from student feedback, offering a comprehensive view of the study's outcomes.

CHAPTER III.

RESULTS

Following the methodological outline provided in the previous chapter, this section presents the results of the vocabulary intervention, focusing on both quantitative test outcomes and qualitative student feedback. The aim is to determine the effect of input modality (video vs. text) on incidental vocabulary acquisition and to examine learners' subjective responses to the lesson activities. Results are reported at both the group and item levels, with attention given to measurable vocabulary gains and patterns in learner perception. The findings are organized according to the data sources used: pre- and post-test scores and post-intervention questionnaire responses.

3.1 Overview of Data Collected

This study collected both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the effects of input modality on incidental vocabulary acquisition. The primary dataset consisted of scores from a vocabulary test administered at two points: once prior to the intervention (pre-test) and once following it (post-test). The same test was used in both phases, with only the sentence order altered between administrations to reduce recognition effects. The test targeted 21 pre-selected vocabulary items, and each student's score was recorded out of a maximum of 21 points.

The participant group included 18 secondary school students, all enrolled in an English course at Narva Keeltelütseum. These students were randomly divided into two groups of nine:

- **Target group:** received video-based input (subtitled TED Talk)
- **Control group:** received text-based input (adapted reading script)

The results from the vocabulary tests were recorded for each student and analyzed both at the group level and at the individual word level to track learning outcomes.

In addition to the vocabulary test data, qualitative feedback was collected via a post-intervention student questionnaire. This instrument included a combination of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions designed to capture students' perceptions of the lesson's format, their engagement with the activities, and the effectiveness of the input modality.

These data sources allowed for a mixed-methods exploration of the research questions, offering insights into both performance outcomes and learner experience. A summary of the data collected is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *Summary of collected data*

Data Type	Date	Participants	Format
Vocabulary Pre-Test	March 4, 2025	18 students (Target + Control)	Paper-based gap-fill (21 items)
Vocabulary Post-Test	March 18, 2025	18 students (Target + Control)	Same test, reordered sentences
Feedback Questionnaire	April 3, 2025	18 students	Likert-scale and open-ended questions

3.2 Vocabulary Test Results

This section presents the quantitative findings from the vocabulary tests administered before and after the intervention. The results are reported at both the group level (overall scores) and the item level (performance on individual vocabulary items) to address the first two research questions:

1. *How does the input modality (video vs. text) influence learners' exposure to target vocabulary items and result in different levels of vocabulary gains?*
2. *Which vocabulary items show the greatest or least improvement, and what patterns emerge across the two groups?*

The analysis focuses on the comparison between the target and control groups across the following dimensions:

- Mean pre- and post-test scores per group
- Average vocabulary gains
- Item-level performance across the 21 vocabulary words

The results are presented in tabular and graphical format to facilitate interpretation and comparison. This approach—using a standardized vocabulary test for both pre- and post-assessment—offers a replicable model for other educators and researchers. By maintaining a consistent testing format, it is possible to accurately measure and compare vocabulary gains across different input conditions.

3.2.1 Overall Performance

To evaluate the overall impact of the intervention, the average pre- and post-test scores were calculated for each group. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, both the target and control groups demonstrated vocabulary gains over the course of the intervention.

The target group, which received video-based input, had a higher starting point, with a mean pre-test score of 7.44 out of 21. Their average post-test score increased to 8.67, resulting in a mean gain of 1.22 points. The control group, exposed to the reading-based input, began with a lower average pre-test score of 3.22, but showed a more substantial relative increase, reaching an average post-test score of 4.78, for a mean gain of 1.56 points.

Although the control group started with a significantly lower baseline, the relative gain observed in their scores suggests that the reading modality may have been equally or even slightly more beneficial in facilitating vocabulary acquisition for this group under the conditions of the intervention. However, this trend should be interpreted cautiously, as group sizes were small ($n = 9$ per group), and statistical significance is considered in the next section.

Table 2 provides a summary of the mean scores and gains for both groups. Figure 1 illustrates the same data visually, making the differences in gains across modalities more apparent.

Table 2. *Group mean vocabulary test scores*

Group	Mean Pre-Test Score	Mean Post-Test Score	Mean Gain
Control	3.22	4.78	1.56
Target	7.44	8.67	1.22

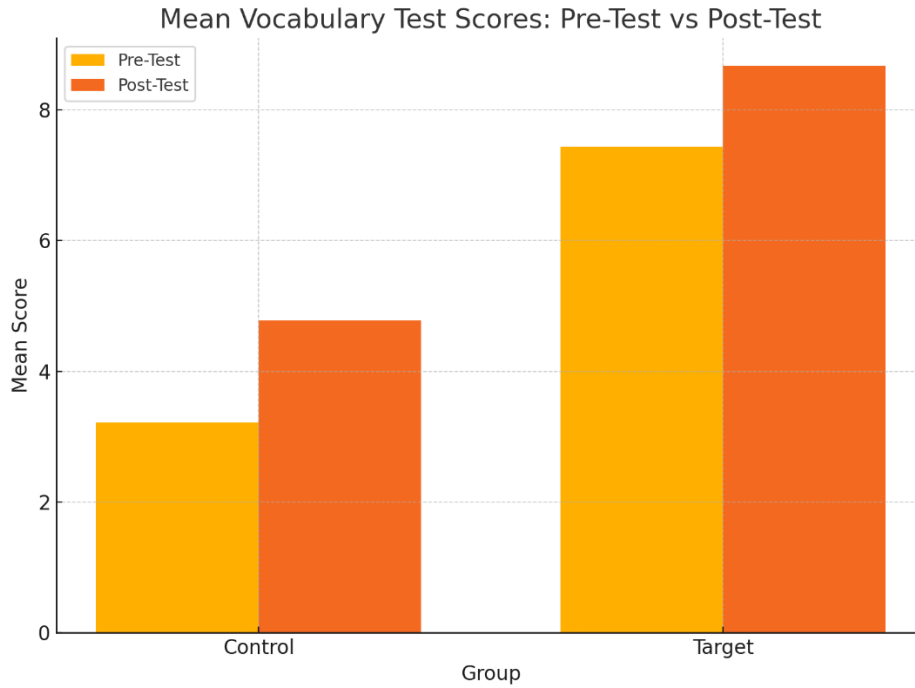


Figure 1. Mean vocabulary test scores for the target and control groups before and after the intervention.

3.2.2 Vocabulary Item-Level Analysis

To provide a more detailed view of vocabulary acquisition, item-level accuracy was calculated for each of the 21 target words. Table 3 displays the proportion of students who answered each item correctly in the pre- and post-tests, disaggregated by group (target and control) as well as for the whole group.

Table 3. Vocabulary item accuracy by group and test

Vocabulary Item	Whole Group Pre-Test	Whole Group Post-Test	Control Group Pre-Test	Control Group Post-Test	Target Group Pre-Test	Target Group Post-Test
assemble	0.11	0.17	0.0	0.0	0.22	0.33
authenticity	0.06	0.17	0.0	0.11	0.11	0.22
cornerstone	0.28	0.33	0.33	0.22	0.22	0.44
demean	0.22	0.17	0.22	0.11	0.22	0.22
dreadful	0.39	0.61	0.22	0.44	0.56	0.78
emphasize	0.17	0.28	0.0	0.11	0.33	0.44
exaggeration	0.39	0.22	0.22	0.0	0.56	0.44
exhaustive	0.28	0.28	0.22	0.22	0.33	0.33
hail	0.11	0.22	0.0	0.11	0.22	0.33
impart	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.11	0.22
indicate	0.28	0.67	0.22	0.56	0.33	0.78
integrity	0.28	0.06	0.22	0.0	0.33	0.11

lightness	0.11	0.11	0.0	0.0	0.22	0.22
misery	0.11	0.22	0.0	0.11	0.22	0.33
posture	0.11	0.06	0.0	0.11	0.22	0.0
restrict	0.44	0.5	0.22	0.33	0.67	0.67
rummage	0.17	0.28	0.11	0.44	0.22	0.11
simultaneously	0.56	0.61	0.22	0.56	0.89	0.67
sin	0.33	0.39	0.22	0.22	0.44	0.56
tempered	0.44	0.56	0.22	0.44	0.67	0.67
toolbox	0.33	0.61	0.33	0.44	0.33	0.78

The results indicate variability in how different vocabulary items were acquired. Words such as “dreadful” and “posture” showed relatively high post-test accuracy across both groups, suggesting that these terms were presented in contexts that facilitated comprehension. On the other hand, several items remained difficult for both groups despite the intervention—for example, “rummage” and “hail”—which may point to limited contextual clues or a lack of meaningful reinforcement during the post-input activities.

These patterns are also reflected in Figure 2, which shows gains across all vocabulary items for the whole group.

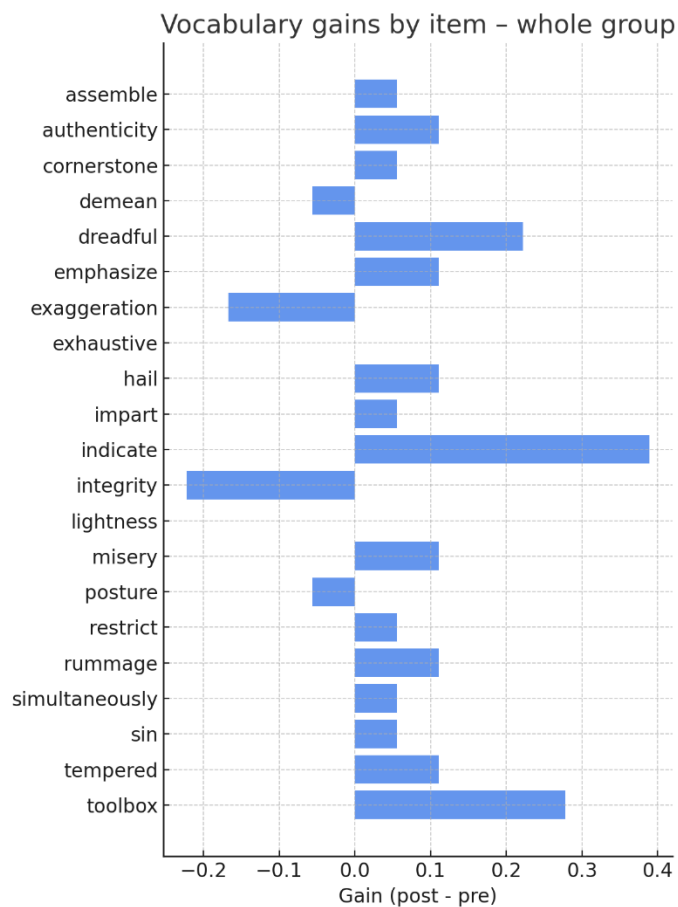


Figure 2. *Vocabulary gains by item for the whole group.*

Some differences between the groups also emerged. The target group (video input) showed higher gains on words like “toolbox” and “tempered,” potentially due to stronger visual or auditory cues supporting comprehension. In contrast, the control group (reading input) performed better on items such as “indicate” and “assemble,” which may have benefited from textual clarity and the opportunity to reread.

These group-level trends are visualized in Figures 3 and 4, which display vocabulary gains for the control and target groups, respectively.



Figure 3. *Vocabulary gains by item for the control group (reading input).*

The charts illustrate item-level variation in learning outcomes and suggest that certain words were more responsive to specific input modalities. This visual evidence reinforces the numerical patterns observed in Table 3 and will be further interpreted in Chapter IV.



Figure 4. *Vocabulary gains by item for the target group (video input).*

3.3 Statistical Comparison Between Groups

To determine whether the observed differences in vocabulary gains between the two groups were statistically meaningful, a series of t-tests were conducted.

An independent samples t-test was used to compare the gain scores (post-test minus pre-test) of the target and control groups. The result, $t(16) = -0.19, p = 0.849$, indicates that the difference in mean gain between the two groups was very small and not statistically significant. A negative t-value suggests that the target group had a slightly lower average gain than the control group, but the high p-value of 0.849 indicates that this difference could easily have occurred by chance. Since statistical significance is typically accepted at $p < 0.05$, this result supports the conclusion that both input modalities (video and reading) produced comparable vocabulary learning outcomes under the conditions of this study.

To examine within-group improvement, paired samples t-tests were conducted for each group. The target group showed a mean increase from 7.44 to 8.67 points ($t(8) = 0.95, p = 0.371$),

while the control group improved from 3.22 to 4.78 points ($t(8) = 1.36, p = 0.211$). Although both groups demonstrated numeric gains, neither reached statistical significance. This is likely due, at least in part, to the small sample size ($n = 9$ per group), which reduces the statistical power of the tests.

These findings are summarized in Table 4, which presents the test results for all comparisons conducted. The overall patterns are further illustrated in Figure 5, a boxplot of vocabulary gain scores across the two groups. The similar height and overlap of the boxes reinforce the conclusion that vocabulary improvement was broadly comparable, and no meaningful advantage was associated with either input modality.

Table 4. *Statistical comparison of vocabulary test scores*

Comparison	t-value	df	p-value	Significance
Target vs Control (gains)	-0.19	16	0.849	Not significant
Target group (pre vs post)	0.95	8	0.371	Not significant
Control group (pre vs post)	1.36	8	0.211	Not significant

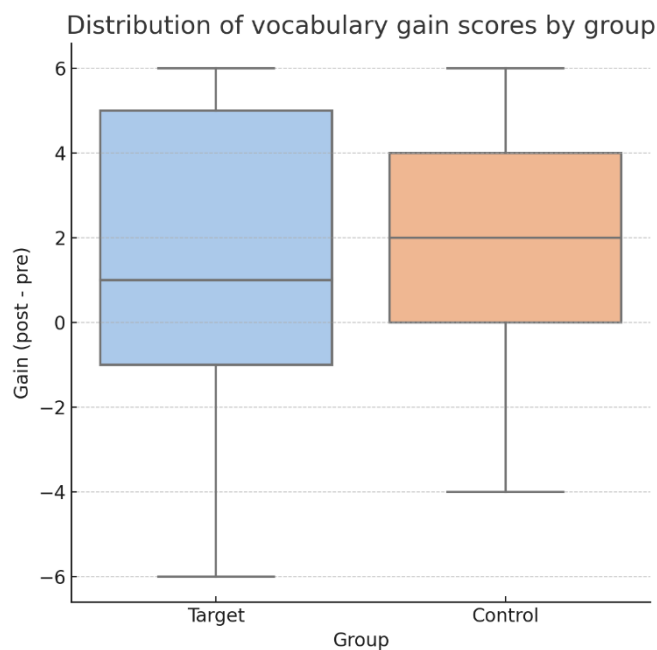


Figure 5. *Distribution of vocabulary gain scores in the target and control groups.*

3.4 Student Feedback Summary

To complement the quantitative test results, a feedback questionnaire was administered to collect students' reflections on the intervention. Out of the 18 students who participated in the lesson, 14 were present on the day the questionnaire was conducted. The survey included seven Likert-scale statements (rated from 1 to 5) and a series of open-ended prompts.

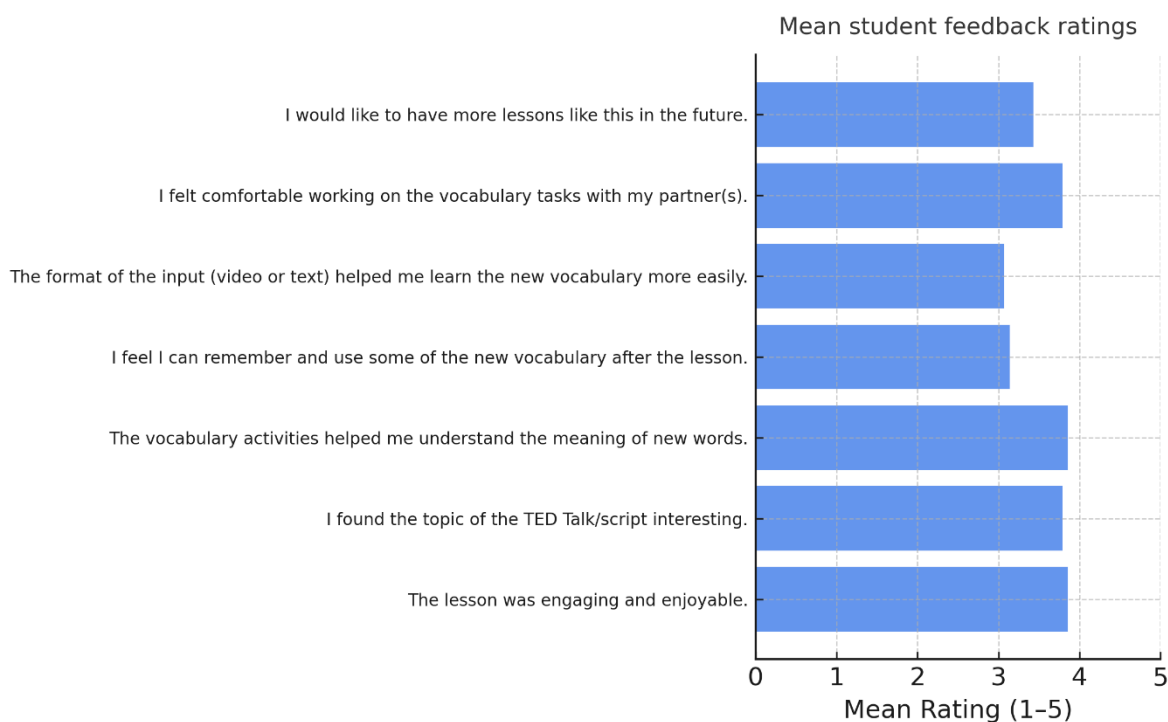


Figure 6. Mean student feedback ratings on various aspects of the vocabulary intervention lesson.

As shown in Figure 6, students responded positively to all aspects of the intervention. Ratings for all seven statements ranged from 3.71 to 4.36, with the highest scores assigned to “I would like to have more lessons like this in the future” and “The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.” These responses suggest that the majority of students found the experience enjoyable, useful, and worthwhile.

Table 5. Mean student ratings of the intervention lesson by group

Question	Whole Group	Control Group	Target Group
The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.	3.86	4.0	3.78
I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.	3.79	3.8	3.78

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.	3.86	3.8	3.89
I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.	3.14	3.2	3.11
The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.	3.07	3.0	3.11
I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).	3.79	4.0	3.67
I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.	3.43	3.4	3.44

Table 5 provides a breakdown of the same ratings by group, allowing for a more nuanced view of how the two input modalities were perceived. While both the control group (reading input) and target group (video input) rated the lesson positively overall, slight differences emerged. The target group reported a somewhat higher level of engagement and enjoyment, whereas the control group gave slightly higher ratings for vocabulary retention and clarity of input. These differences are not large and were not subjected to statistical testing, but they may reflect subtle variations in learner preference or comfort with modality.

Open-ended responses reinforce these trends. Students frequently mentioned partner work and the format of the lesson as particularly enjoyable. Comments such as *“I enjoyed doing tasks with a partner”* and *“I found out more useful and interesting vocabulary”* reflect positive engagement. Others appreciated the variety from standard lessons. When asked what was less helpful, a few control group students mentioned frustration with having to read while others watched the video. One student wrote, *“Probably nothing, but maaaaaaaybe confusing was the fact that I was reading stuff instead of watching. Like WHY ME?”* In contrast, one video group student felt the talk was overwhelming: *“Too much information in one video, that is not interesting.”*

Students also expressed varied preferences for input modality. Although a slight majority leaned toward reading, citing greater control and visual clarity, others preferred video for its engagement and natural flow. Responses included: *“When you are reading, it’s easier to remember the words,”* and *“Video, because it takes less time and memorising is easier.”*

The full set of anonymized questionnaire responses is included in Appendix K, with response distributions by question presented in Appendix K.1.

This method of collecting student feedback—using a combination of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions—serves as a replicable tool for similar studies. Educators and researchers can adapt this approach to gather qualitative insights on learner experiences in various contexts.

3.5 Summary of Key Results

This chapter presented the findings of the intervention study based on three primary sources of data: vocabulary test scores, student feedback questionnaire responses, and statistical comparisons between the control and target groups.

Both groups showed improvement from pre- to post-test in terms of vocabulary scores, with mean gains of 1.22 for the target group and 1.56 for the control group. However, the difference between the groups was not statistically significant. Item-level analysis revealed variability in vocabulary gains, with certain items improving more consistently across groups.

Statistical testing confirmed that neither group showed significant within-group improvement, and no significant difference was found between the gains of the two groups. These results were supported visually through tables and figures summarizing score distributions and group comparisons.

Feedback from the students indicated generally positive reactions to the intervention. Both groups rated the lesson highly in terms of engagement, vocabulary usefulness, and activity design. Minor differences in perception emerged between groups, particularly regarding preferred input modality, but overall satisfaction was high. These perspectives provide valuable context for interpreting the test-based outcomes.

The implications of these findings, including their pedagogical relevance and potential limitations, are explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

DISCUSSION

This chapter interprets the results of the intervention study and considers their implications in the context of vocabulary acquisition research and classroom practice. It addresses the research questions, integrates quantitative and qualitative findings, and reflects on the strengths and limitations of the study.

4.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to its original aims and research questions. It interprets the results presented in Chapter III, drawing connections between the quantitative and qualitative data and relevant literature in the field of second language acquisition. In particular, the chapter examines how the mode of input—subtitled video versus reading—affected learners’ vocabulary development and their reflections on the learning experience.

The discussion is structured around the following research questions:

- 1) How does the input modality (video vs. text) influence learners’ exposure to target vocabulary items and result in different levels of vocabulary gains?
- 2) Which vocabulary items show the greatest or least improvement, and what patterns emerge across the two groups?
- 3) How do learners perceive the effectiveness and engagement level of the intervention activities?

The sections that follow analyze the test results, explore learner feedback, and consider the broader implications for vocabulary instruction and material design in the EFL classroom.

4.2 Interpretation of Quantitative Results

This section interprets the results of the vocabulary pre- and post-tests in light of the study’s design, context, and participants. While no statistically significant differences were found between groups, the patterns in vocabulary acquisition, along with student motivation and classroom dynamics, offer valuable insight into how input modality interacts with other instructional factors. The subsections that follow explore these aspects in more detail.

4.2.1 Overall Performance and Statistical Results

Both the control group (reading input) and the target group (subtitled video input) demonstrated modest gains in vocabulary knowledge following the intervention. However, these gains were not statistically significant. While it might be tempting to interpret this as a failure of the intervention to produce measurable learning outcomes, the context and conditions of the lesson point to a more complex picture.

Although the input modality differed between groups, the majority of the lesson time was spent on shared vocabulary-focused activities. These included matching definitions, comprehension questions, discussion prompts, and a word formation task. As a result, the influence of the initial modality may have been diluted by the shared post-input work. Given that the input phase lasted only eight minutes, while the remaining 35 minutes were spent on common tasks, it is likely that this disproportionate distribution minimized the impact of input modality on vocabulary gains.

4.2.2 The Role of Motivation and Group Variation

In hindsight, several contextual and learner-specific factors may also help explain the lack of statistical significance. While there was an expectation that the video group would outperform the reading group—based on the assumption that video is more engaging for 21st-century learners—the outcomes suggest otherwise. The decision to make the intervention ungraded, in order to minimize cheating and maintain research integrity, may have inadvertently lowered student motivation. Some students, particularly those who tend to be externally motivated by grades, may not have taken the test seriously, especially the post-test.

Moreover, although the group was nominally preparing for a C1-level exam, many students were still functioning closer to B2 or below. The disparity in student level and motivation likely influenced their engagement with the material and the cognitive effort they invested in both the input and the test.

4.2.3 Vocabulary Load and Test Design

Another factor worth considering is the vocabulary load. The list of 21 target items may have been too ambitious for a single 45-minute lesson. Students were expected to grasp the meaning of unfamiliar, often abstract words, and recall them in a gapped-sentence test format. This was a cognitively demanding task—especially for lower-level or less motivated students—and may have resulted in incomplete processing or surface-level guessing. The test included 25 word

options (21 targets and 4 distractors) and 21 gaps, which may have further taxed students' attention and memory.

Some students did improve noticeably, but these were typically the more motivated and linguistically advanced students in the group. The results thus reflect not only input type but also individual differences in effort and baseline vocabulary knowledge.

4.2.4 Item-Level Insights and Word Characteristics

At the item level, several interesting trends emerged. Some vocabulary items—such as *toolbox*, *dreadful*, and *indicate*—showed stronger improvement, while others—such as *exaggeration* and *integrity*—proved more difficult. This variation can likely be attributed to factors such as word concreteness, presence of visual or contextual support, and cross-linguistic transparency. For instance, *toolbox* is a compound noun whose meaning follows logically from its components and was also visually represented in the video. *Indicate* has a close Russian cognate, which may have facilitated recognition and understanding. In contrast, abstract nouns like *exaggeration* and *integrity* were harder to grasp and apply, particularly given the limited contextual cues in the TED Talk.

Interestingly, some items even showed a decline from pre- to post-test. While unexpected, this may reflect test fatigue, inattention, or a lack of deep processing. These outcomes highlight the importance of selecting target vocabulary carefully and ensuring that students receive sufficient exposure and opportunities for meaningful use.

4.2.5 Cultural and Contextual Factors Affecting Input Modality

Another important consideration is the cultural familiarity with subtitles. The original assumption was that the subtitled video input would give the target group an advantage. However, many of the students in this study, all of whom were Russian speakers, may not be accustomed to reading subtitles while processing spoken language. In Russian-language media, dubbing is far more common than subtitling, unlike in smaller European countries such as Estonia or Portugal, where subtitles are the norm. This lack of habitual subtitle processing may have reduced the effectiveness of the video input modality in this context.

In contrast, reading offers direct and prolonged exposure to word forms, and several students noted in their feedback that they found it easier to learn vocabulary from text. These observations align with broader findings in second language acquisition literature, which support the effectiveness of reading for vocabulary development (Nation, 2013; Horst, 2005).

4.2.6 Reflections on Effectiveness and Future Adaptations

Despite the absence of statistically significant gains, the intervention can be seen as pedagogically successful. Students reported high levels of enjoyment and engagement in their feedback. The lesson offered variety, collaboration, and real-world relevance, all of which contribute to positive learner attitudes and motivation. Additionally, the content of the TED Talk itself was perceived as useful and meaningful, even beyond the language-learning context.

For future implementation, some refinements are advisable. A smaller, more manageable list of target vocabulary items would allow for deeper processing. More interactive or visually supportive video content could enhance comprehension, particularly for abstract concepts. While TED Talks offer many advantages, scenes from subtitled films or TV shows may provide greater engagement—though they require careful selection and adaptation to ensure sufficient lexical density.

Finally, it is worth noting that while reading remains highly effective for vocabulary learning, it should not be overlooked simply because it is perceived as less “modern.” Several students in the control group expressed a preference for reading, stating that it helped them focus on word forms and meanings. These insights reinforce the value of offering diverse input modalities and tailoring instruction to learners’ strengths and preferences.

4.3 Student Reflections and Modality Preferences

The student feedback gathered through the post-intervention questionnaire provided valuable insight into learners’ perceptions of the lesson, the activities, and the input modality. Despite the absence of significant gains in test scores, student responses were overwhelmingly positive. This reflects an important pedagogical outcome: learner engagement and positive attitudes are foundational to long-term language development and cannot be captured by quantitative measures alone.

The Likert-scale data revealed high ratings across all aspects of the lesson, with the highest scores awarded to the statements “*I would like to have more lessons like this in the future*” and “*The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.*” Students clearly appreciated the novelty and interactivity of the intervention, especially in contrast to more traditional lesson formats. The collaborative elements—such as pair work and rotating discussion prompts—were frequently mentioned as enjoyable in the open-ended feedback. The fact that the lesson was not graded may have further contributed to this sense of ease and enjoyment.

These trends are further supported by the response distribution charts provided in Appendix K.1, which show generally high ratings across all categories, with only minor variation between the two input groups.

Interestingly, although subtitled video is often assumed to be the more engaging and preferred modality for younger learners, student preferences were more balanced than expected. While several students expressed a clear liking for video, others indicated a preference for reading when it came to learning vocabulary. Reasons cited included greater control over pace, easier focus on individual words, and the visual clarity of printed text. These comments align with findings in vocabulary research that highlight the effectiveness of reading for retention of form and meaning (Nation, 2013).

Students' comments also highlighted how the input modality interacts with individual learning preferences. Those who preferred video often cited efficiency and listening comprehension as advantages, whereas those who preferred reading felt they were better able to internalize vocabulary visually. These observations suggest that modality choice may not be universally effective or ineffective, but rather dependent on learner profiles.

The responses also underscore the need for variation in classroom input. While students generally enjoyed the video component and the TED Talk format, there were occasional mentions that the video contained “too much information” or was difficult to follow. This echoes findings in second language acquisition research indicating that the benefits of audio-visual input are influenced by factors such as cognitive load, density of information, and subtitling format (Peters & Webb, 2018).

Taken together, the feedback points to the value of offering multiple modalities within the same curriculum. Students benefit not only from engaging formats but also from materials that align with their processing preferences. In future classroom practice, teachers may wish to combine video and reading strategically—introducing new content through one modality and reinforcing it through another.

4.4 Pedagogical Implications

This study offers several important insights for EFL classroom practice, particularly for teachers working with upper-intermediate and advanced learners. Although the quantitative results did not show a statistically significant difference in vocabulary gains between the control and target groups, the intervention revealed a number of pedagogically useful outcomes that can inform future lesson design.

First, the lesson made clear that input modality alone does not determine success in vocabulary learning. While video may be perceived as more engaging—especially for younger learners accustomed to screen-based content—reading input remains a highly effective means of vocabulary acquisition, especially when students are given the opportunity to engage with the text in a focused and interactive way. Surprisingly, a number of students expressed a preference for reading over video, highlighting the importance of not making assumptions about learner preferences based on generational stereotypes.

The experience also highlighted some of the limitations of using subtitled video as a standalone input for vocabulary learning. While it can certainly enhance motivation and engagement, the subtitled video used in this intervention—despite its clarity and relevance—did not result in noticeably greater gains. One reason may be that Russian-speaking learners are not typically trained to process subtitles for meaning in the way learners from other cultural contexts (e.g., Estonia or Portugal) might be. This raises an important point for classroom planning: the effectiveness of audio-visual input depends not only on its format but also on how it aligns with learners' prior experiences and cognitive habits.

In terms of practical lesson design, one clear implication is that the number of vocabulary targets should be reduced. Attempting to introduce 21 new words in a single 45-minute session—especially with unfamiliar or abstract items—proved overly ambitious. A smaller set of carefully selected target items, reinforced through meaningful use in class activities, would likely result in deeper processing and better retention.

The teacher's reflection also emphasizes the importance of lesson length. In this case, the 45-minute limit imposed by the school's scheduling left little room for consolidation or wrap-up, which are critical stages in vocabulary learning. In schools where 60- or 70-minute lessons are the norm, similar interventions could be expanded to include follow-up discussion or more time for student interaction.

Looking ahead, the experience has encouraged the teacher to continue using reading input as a foundation for vocabulary instruction—perhaps with greater confidence than before. It also opens the door to experimenting with alternative video formats, such as documentary-style clips or short educational films designed for younger audiences. In these cases, the focus may shift away from vocabulary acquisition toward broader comprehension, critical thinking, or content-based instruction. If vocabulary is to remain a focal point in video-based lessons, future

adaptations would benefit from reducing the lexical load and integrating new words more consistently throughout post-viewing tasks.

Ultimately, this study confirms that while input modality matters, it is only one of many factors influencing vocabulary acquisition. The quality of instructional design, the balance of input and output, and the degree of learner engagement all play essential roles in determining the success of a vocabulary lesson. Teachers are encouraged to make informed decisions about modality based on the needs and preferences of their learners, rather than assumptions about what is most “modern” or engaging.

The consistent lesson structure used in this study—pre-input, input, and post-input stages—provides a replicable instructional model that can be easily adopted by other educators. By maintaining this structure, teachers can ensure that students are exposed to new vocabulary in a systematic and scaffolded manner, supporting both recognition and active use.

4.5 Limitations of the Study

While this study offers several valuable insights into the role of input modality in vocabulary acquisition, it is important to acknowledge its limitations.

First, the small sample size ($n = 18$) limits the generalizability of the findings. The study was conducted with a single group of learners in a specific secondary school in Estonia, meaning that the results may not extend to broader populations or different educational contexts.

Second, the time constraints imposed by the school’s 45-minute lesson format presented a challenge for in-depth vocabulary processing. The input stage was necessarily brief, and there was limited time for consolidation or discussion, both of which are key components of effective vocabulary instruction. A longer lesson period could have allowed for more repetition, deeper contextualization, or reflective follow-up tasks.

Another limitation was the size and complexity of the target vocabulary list. Attempting to introduce and assess 21 advanced-level lexical items in a single lesson was arguably too ambitious. Students were asked to process unfamiliar words in a short time and then recall and use them in a cognitively demanding gap-fill test. This may have disadvantaged lower-performing students or those who were less motivated, particularly given that the lesson and tests were not graded.

The test format itself may have posed additional difficulties. Students had to match 21 blanks with 25 options, which could have led to cognitive overload or random guessing, especially in cases where the meaning was only partially understood.

In terms of content, the intervention used only one subtitled TED Talk as input. While the video was carefully selected and generally well received, it may not have been rich enough in contextual or visual support to facilitate deep understanding of abstract lexical items. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the subtitled video may have been influenced by the learners' background: as native Russian speakers, students may be less accustomed to reading subtitles for meaning, given that Russian media is typically dubbed rather than subtitled.

Finally, motivation was a potential confounding factor. Students were informed that the tests would not be graded, which likely reduced anxiety but may also have led some learners to invest less effort—particularly in the post-test. While this choice was made to reduce cheating and create a more authentic learning environment, it may have limited the validity of the assessment data.

Despite these limitations, the study still provides meaningful insights into how modality, task design, and learner engagement intersect in vocabulary learning. The next section offers suggestions for future research that may address some of the constraints identified here.

4.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Building on the findings and limitations of this study, several directions for future research are suggested.

First, future studies would benefit from involving a larger and more diverse sample. A larger participant pool would allow for more robust statistical analysis and increase the generalizability of the results. It would also be valuable to compare learners from different linguistic or cultural backgrounds, particularly in relation to how they process subtitled video input. For example, future research might compare students from subtitle-rich cultures (e.g., Portugal, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries) with those from dubbing-dominant environments (e.g., Spain, Germany) to explore the impact of prior exposure on learning outcomes.

Second, extending the intervention over a longer period would likely yield more meaningful results. A single 45-minute lesson offers limited time for students to internalize and retain new vocabulary. A multi-lesson sequence or even a longitudinal design could allow for spaced repetition, delayed post-testing, and a better understanding of long-term retention.

Future research should also explore different types of input. While TED Talks are educational and relevant, their visual content is often minimal. Other video formats—such as short documentary clips, film scenes, or YouTube mini-lessons—may provide more dynamic and visually supportive contexts for vocabulary learning. At the same time, the potential of reading-based input should not be overlooked. Studies comparing different genres (e.g., authentic articles, graded readers, blog posts) could provide insight into how textual variation affects vocabulary uptake.

Another area of interest lies in reducing and refining the vocabulary load. Introducing a smaller set of high-utility words and recycling them through various activities may lead to stronger learning outcomes. Future studies could also experiment with alternative test formats—such as translation tasks, multiple-choice definitions, or productive vocabulary tasks—to assess depth of vocabulary knowledge, not just recognition.

Finally, it would be valuable to incorporate follow-up interviews or focus groups to better understand how learners experience different modalities and why they prefer one over the other. These qualitative insights could complement quantitative findings and help educators tailor instruction more effectively to learner needs and preferences.

4.7 Final Summary

This chapter has explored the results of the intervention study through both quantitative and qualitative lenses. The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in vocabulary gains between the reading and subtitled video input groups, suggesting that under the conditions of this study, input modality alone did not determine vocabulary learning outcomes. However, several factors—including the design of the lesson, student motivation, test complexity, and prior exposure to subtitled media—emerged as influential variables.

Students responded positively to the lesson overall, regardless of input group. Their feedback highlighted both the effectiveness of the activities and the value of variation in input types. Notably, some learners expressed a preference for reading as a vocabulary learning tool, challenging the assumption that video is inherently more engaging or effective for younger generations.

The study's limitations—including sample size, vocabulary load, and time constraints—were acknowledged, along with their implications for the reliability and generalizability of the results. Nevertheless, the intervention offered meaningful insight into classroom practice and reinforced the importance of lesson design, learner engagement, and contextual awareness.

The structured, replicable design of this study—comprising a pre-test, input session, and post-test—offers a clear model for exploring vocabulary acquisition in classroom settings. Educators and researchers can adopt this approach, modifying the input materials or vocabulary focus as needed, while maintaining a consistent and reliable method for measuring learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the effects of input modality—subtitled video versus reading—on short-term vocabulary acquisition in an upper-intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The investigation was motivated by a desire to test whether video, a medium strongly aligned with students’ media habits, could serve as an effective alternative to more traditional reading-based input. In doing so, the study also aimed to offer a clear and replicable framework that teachers and researchers could adapt to their own classroom contexts. The research was situated within a familiar and relevant setting: 11th-grade learners in Estonia preparing for Cambridge English examinations, for whom vocabulary development is a critical component of success.

The findings of the intervention suggest that both groups—those exposed to the video with subtitles and those who read the adapted transcript—showed some improvement in vocabulary knowledge. However, the gains were modest and not statistically significant. A closer look at individual vocabulary item performance revealed variation in how well specific words were retained, but no clear patterns emerged that could be attributed to input modality alone. Learner feedback gathered after the lesson was generally positive, with both groups expressing interest in the lesson content and tasks, and a willingness to engage in similar learning experiences in the future.

These results indicate that input modality, while relevant, may not be the sole or even the primary factor influencing short-term vocabulary acquisition. The identical post-input tasks shared by both groups likely contributed to balancing the effect of the input differences, making it more difficult to isolate modality as a decisive variable. Furthermore, reading continues to be an effective tool for vocabulary development—one that should not be dismissed in favor of digital media without careful consideration. At the same time, video input, especially when enhanced with subtitles, remains a promising and engaging modality, particularly when paired with well-designed instructional activities. Learner familiarity with subtitles as a cultural and cognitive aid may also influence how effectively this modality supports vocabulary retention.

Despite its limited scope, this study provides a replicable model for comparing input modalities in classroom-based vocabulary instruction. The structure—a pre-test, an input session using video or text, followed by shared post-input tasks and a post-test—can be adapted to different learner levels, topics, or materials. In this sense, the contribution of the study extends beyond

its immediate results; it offers a practical tool for exploring vocabulary learning through diverse input types in real instructional settings.

Pedagogically, the study suggests that both traditional and digital input formats have value, and that the most effective approach may involve a balance of both. Reading remains a robust and versatile source of lexical input, especially when learners are already accustomed to working with texts. Subtitled video can be highly engaging, but may require additional scaffolding—particularly when abstract or low-frequency vocabulary is involved. Teachers are encouraged to consider their learners’ preferences, prior exposure to subtitles, and the nature of the target vocabulary when choosing between or combining input modalities.

Like any classroom-based study, this project has its limitations. The small sample size, short duration of the intervention, and relatively ambitious vocabulary load all constrain the generalizability of the findings. Reducing the number of target vocabulary items and extending the time available for input and post-task engagement could produce clearer results in future iterations. Additionally, the cultural and linguistic background of the learners—Russian-speaking students in Estonia—may have shaped how they interacted with subtitles and reading materials, suggesting a need for further studies in other learner populations.

Ultimately, while the results of this study were not dramatic, they reflect the reality of vocabulary acquisition in authentic learning environments: progress is often incremental and shaped by multiple, interacting factors. What this study demonstrates is that even modest, well-structured interventions can generate valuable insight and offer usable models for research-informed teaching. As language instruction continues to adapt to the media habits of today’s learners, further exploration of how input modality affects vocabulary learning remains both relevant and necessary.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

KOKUVÕTE.

KEELESISENDI MODAALSUSE ROLL SÕNAVARA OMANDAMISEL EDASIJÕUDNUD INGLISE KEELE ÕPPIJATE SEAS: SUBTIITRITEGA VIDEO VAATAMINE VÕRRELDES LUGEMISEGA

Käesolev magistritöö uurib sisendmodaliteedi mõju sõnavara omandamisele inglise keele kui võõrkeele (EFL) klassiruumis. Täpsemalt keskendutakse kahele levinud sisenditüübile – subtiitritega video ja kohandatud lugemistekst – ning nende võrdlusele 11. klassi õpilaste seas, kes valmistuvad Cambridge First (FCE) ja Advanced (CAE) eksamiteks. Sõnavara on kõrgemal keeleoskustasemel (B2–C1) eduka keekekasutuse eeltingimus, kuid selle süsteemne õpetamine jääb tihti tahaplaanile.

Uuringu eesmärk oli selgitada, kas subtiitritega video vaatamine toetab sõnavara omandamist samaväärselt või paremini kui sama sisu lugemine. Lisaks sooviti välja selgitada õppijate hinnangud nendele sisendmodaliteetidele ning pakkuda õpetajatele selget ja korduvkasutatavat mudelit sarnaste klassiruumiuuringute läbiviimiseks.

Uuring viidi läbi kvasi-eksperimentaalse disainiga. Katsegrupp vaatas TED Talk'i koos ingliskeelsete subtiitritega, kontrollgrupp luges sama esitluse kohandatud transkriptsiooni. Mõlemad grupid sooritasid eel- ja järeltesti ning osalesid ühistel järeltöödel. Interventsioon kestis ühe 45-minutilise inglise keele tunni jooksul ning keskendus 21 sihtsõnale.

Tulemused näitasid, et mõlema rühma sõnavarateadmised paranesid mõõdukalt, kuid statistiliselt olulist erinevust modaliteetide vahel ei ilmnenud. Õpilaste tagasiside tunnile ja selle ülesehitusele oli valdavalt positiivne. Video sisendit hinnati kaasahaaravamaks, kuid lugemine jäi sõnavara omandamise seisukohalt väga tõhusaks ja harjumuspäraseks vahendiks.

Kuigi uuringu maht oli piiratud, pakub töö praktilist väärtust klassiruumis kasutatava uurimismudeli näol. Tulemused kinnitavad, et erinevad sisendmodaliteedid võivad toetada sõnavara arengut, eeldusel et neid toetavad läbimõeldud õpitegevused. Töö panustab arutelusse, kuidas kohandada keeleõpet kaasaegsete õppijate meediatarbimisharjumuste järgi.

REFERENCES

Aloqaili, G. S. (2014). *Learning vocabulary from subtitled videos: An investigation into the effectiveness of using subtitled videos for intentional vocabulary learning in Saudi Arabia with an exploration of learners' perspectives* [Master's thesis, University of Southampton]. ePrints Soton.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/learning_vocabulary_from_subtitled_videos_v2.pdf

Barcroft, J. (2012). *Input-based incremental vocabulary instruction*. TESOL International Association.

Bernard, A. V. (2021). Expanding ESL Students' Vocabulary Through TikTok Videos. *LENSA: Linguistik, Literatur, dan Bahasa*, 12(2), 171–184. <https://doi.org/10.26714/lensa.11.2.2021.171-184>

Brooks, G., Clenton, J., & Fraser, S. (2021). Exploring the importance of vocabulary for English as an additional language learners' reading comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 11(3), 351–376. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2021.11.3.3>

Cambridge English. (2019a). *Estonia adopts Cambridge English qualification for high school students*. Cambridge University Press & Assessment. <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/news/view/estonia-adopts-cambridge-english-qualification-for-high-school-students/>

Cambridge English. (2019b). *Research notes: Vocabulary learning and teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Cambridge University Press. (2020). *B2 First handbook for teachers* [Online handbook]. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/first/preparation/>

Cambridge University Press. (2020). *C1 Advanced handbook for teachers* [Online handbook]. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/advanced/preparation/>

Chen, S. (2024). Effects of subtitles on vocabulary learning through videos. *Journal of Specialised Translation*, (31), 123–145. <https://www.jostrans.org/article/view/5992>

Collins, L., & White, J. (2011). An intensive look at intensity and second language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(1), 106–133. <https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2011.240858>

- Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume*. Council of Europe Publishing. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>
- Danan, M. (2004). Captioning and subtitling: Undervalued language learning strategies. *Meta: Journal des Traducteurs/Translators' Journal*, 49(1), 67–77. <https://doi.org/10.7202/009021ar>
- Ellis, N. C. (2002). Frequency effects in language processing: A review with implications for theories of implicit and explicit language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24(2), 143–188. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263102002024>
- Etemadi, A. (2012). Effects of bimodal subtitling of English movies on content comprehension and vocabulary recognition. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(1), 239–247. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v2n1p239>
- Helsing, A., & Gunnarsson, F. (2021). Effect of videos on EFL/ESL learners' writing proficiency and vocabulary acquisition: A literature review. *GUPEA*. <https://gupea.ub.gu.se/handle/2077/69518>
- Horst, M. (2005). Learning L2 vocabulary through extensive reading: A measurement study. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 61(3), 355–382. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.61.3.355>
- Hulstijn, J. H. (2001). Intentional and incidental second-language vocabulary learning: A reappraisal of elaboration, rehearsal, and automaticity. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 258–286). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524780.011>
- Kabooha, R., & Elyas, T. (2018). The effects of YouTube in multimedia instruction for vocabulary learning: Perceptions of EFL students and teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 11(2), 72–84. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n2p72>
- Klinjuy, R. (2025). Effects of Utilizing Mobile-Assisted Language Learning through YouTube and TikTok Applications on Enhancing English Communication Skills for Higher Education Students as Generation Z Learners. *Journal of Multidisciplinary in Social Sciences*, 21(1). retrieved from <https://so03.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/sduhs/article/view/272587>
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. Longman.

- Laufer, B., & Hulstijn, J. H. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: The construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics*, 22(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/22.1.1>
- Lenhart, J., Lenhard, W., Vaahtoranta, E., & Suggate, S. (2017). Incidental vocabulary acquisition from listening to stories: a comparison between read-aloud and free storytelling approaches. *Educational Psychology*, 38(5), 596–616. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2017.1363377>
- Lo S. (2024). Vocabulary learning through viewing dual-subtitled videos: Immediate repetition versus spaced repetition as an enhancement strategy. *ReCALL*, 36(2), 152-167. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344024000053>
- Mayer, R. E. (2005). *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Miestamo, M. (2008). Grammatical complexity in a cross-linguistic perspective. In M. Miestamo, K. Sinnemäki, & F. Karlsson (Eds.), *Language complexity: Typology, contact, change* (pp. 23–41). Benjamins.
- Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring second language vocabulary acquisition*. Multilingual Matters.
- Mohammed, R. F. (2013). *The effectiveness of using subtitled video to teach grammar* (Master's thesis, Iowa State University). Iowa State University Digital Repository. <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/handle/20.500.12876/27246>
- Montero Pérez, M., Peters, E., Clarebout, G., & Desmet, P. (2014). Effects of captioning on video comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 18(1), 118–141. <http://dx.doi.org/10125/44357>
- Montero Pérez, M., Peters, E. & Desmet, P. (2017). Vocabulary learning through viewing video: The effect of two enhancement techniques. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 31(1-2), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2017.1375960>
- Muñoz, C., & Miralpeix, I. (Eds.). (2024). *Audiovisual input and second language learning*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/llt.61>
- Muñoz, C., Pujadas, G., & Pattemore, A. (2021). Audio-visual input for learning L2 vocabulary and grammatical constructions. *Second Language Research*, 39(1), 13–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02676583211015797>

- Nation, P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Nguyen, C. D., & Boers, F. (2018). The effect of content retelling on vocabulary uptake from a TED Talk. *TESOL Quarterly*, 53(1), 5–29. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.441>
- Opsahl, M. K., & Levin, H. (2022). *Trending: A new way of language learning: Students' language acquisition through TikTok* [Master's thesis, University of South-Eastern Norway]. USN Open Archive. <https://openarchive.usn.no/usn-xmlui/handle/11250/3013901>
- Paivio, A. (1991). Dual coding theory: Retrospect and current status. *Canadian Journal of Psychology / Revue canadienne de psychologie*, 45(3), 255–287. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0084295>
- Peters, E., Heynen, E., & Puimège, E. (2016). Learning vocabulary through audiovisual input: The differential effect of L1 subtitles and captions. *System*, 63, 134–148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.10.002>
- Peters, E., & Webb, S. (2018). Incidental vocabulary acquisition through viewing L2 television and factors that affect learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 40(3), 551–577. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263117000407>
- Pigada, M., & Schmitt, N. (2006). Vocabulary acquisition from extensive reading: A case study. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 18(1), 1–28.
- Poeppl, D., & Embick, D. (2005). Defining the relation between linguistics and neuroscience. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 17(9), 1357–1373.
- Rodgers, M. P. H., & Webb, S. (2020). Incidental vocabulary learning through viewing television. *ITL - International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 171(2), 191–220. <https://doi.org/10.1075/itl.18034.rod>
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(3), 329–363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168808089921>
- Serrano, R. (2011). The time factor in EFL classroom practice. *Language Learning*, 61(1), 117–145. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00591.x>

- Shaojie, T., Samad, A. A., & Ismail, L. (2022). Audiovisual input for second language acquisition: A systematic literature review. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.980133>
- Shcherbakova, O., Michaelis, S., Haynie, H., Passmore, S., Gast, V., Gray, R., Greenhill, S., Blasi, D., & Skirgard, H. (2023). Societies of strangers do not speak less complex languages. *Science Advances, 9*(33), eadf7704. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.adf7704>
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 125–144). Oxford University Press.
- Talaván Zanón, N. (2006). Using subtitles to enhance foreign language learning. *Porta Linguarum, 6*, 41–52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30827/Digibug.30659>
- Van Zeeland, H., & Schmitt, N. (2013). Lexical coverage in L1 and L2 listening comprehension: The same or different from reading comprehension? *Applied Linguistics, 34*(4), 457–479. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams074>
- Vanderplank, R. (2010). Déjà vu? A decade of research on language laboratories, television, and video in language learning. *Language Teaching, 43*(1), 1–37. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444809990267>
- Vanderplank, R. (2016). *Captioned media in foreign language learning and teaching: Subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing as tools for language learning*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Verhoeven, L., van Leeuwe, J., & Vermeer, A. (2011). Vocabulary growth and reading development across the elementary school years. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 15*(1), 8–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2011.536125>
- Webb, S. (2007). The effects of repetition on vocabulary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics, 28*(1), 46–65. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/aml048>
- Webb, S. (2008). The effects of context on incidental vocabulary learning. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 20*(2), 232–245.
- Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*. Oxford University Press.
- Webb, S., & Rodgers, M. P. H. (2009). The lexical coverage of movies. *Applied Linguistics, 30*(3), 407–427. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amp010>

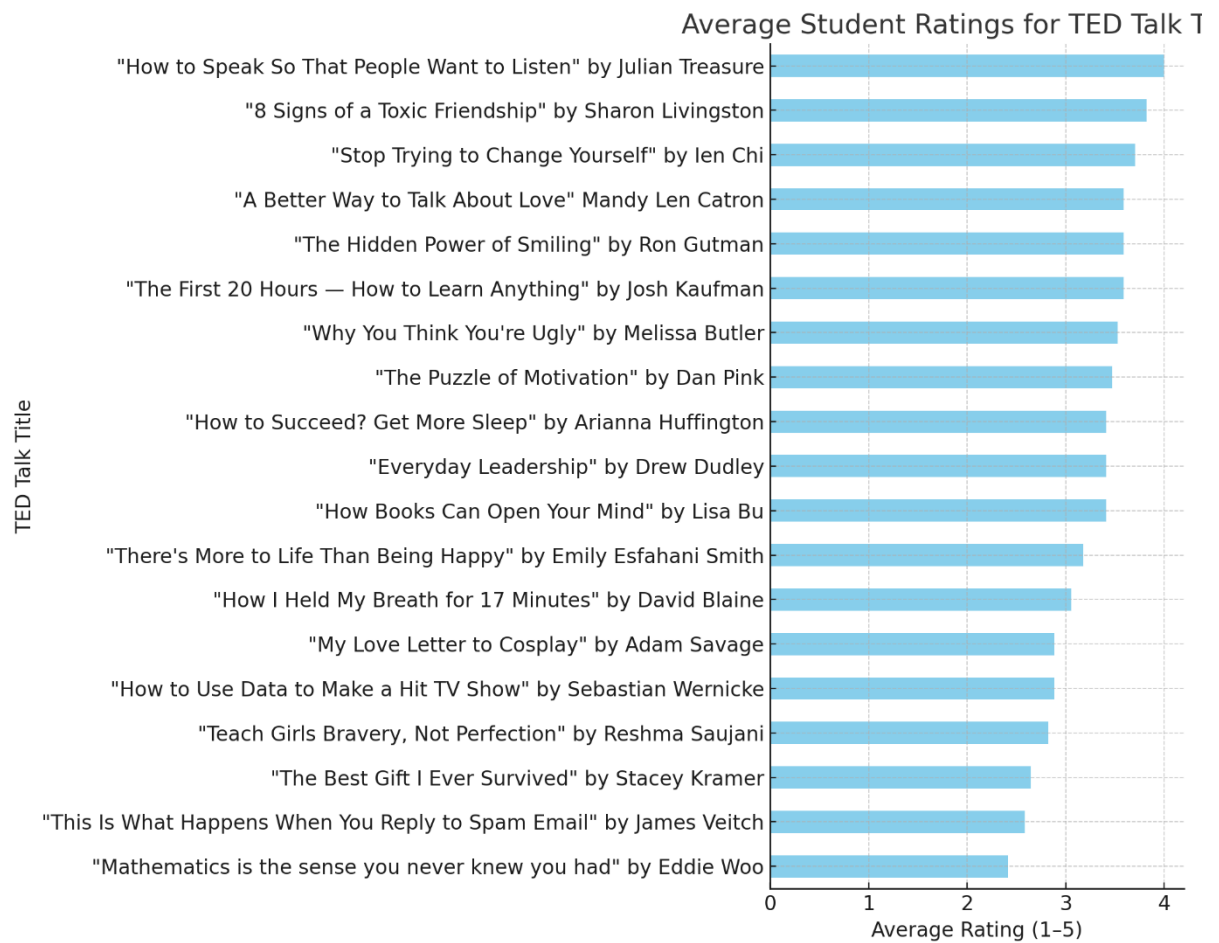
Winke, P., Gass, S., & Sydorenko, T. (2010). The effects of captioning videos used for foreign language listening activities. *Language Learning & Technology*, 14(1), 65–86. <http://dx.doi.org/10125/44203>

Yawiloeng, R. (2020). Second language vocabulary learning from viewing video in an EFL classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 13(7), 76–89. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n7p76>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS FOR TED TALK SELECTION

The figure below presents the average interest ratings given by students to 19 TED Talks, based on a 1–5 scale. The talk *“How to Speak So That People Want to Listen”* received one of the highest average scores and was selected for the intervention.



APPENDIX B. MODIFIED SCRIPT USED WITH THE CONTROL GROUP

The following is the modified transcript of Julian Treasure's TED Talk "*How to Speak So That People Want to Listen.*" Minor edits were made to enhance clarity and structure, while preserving the original content and target vocabulary. The final segment of the talk, in which the speaker engages the live audience in vocalization exercises, was omitted from this version as it was not suitable for reading-based input. To maintain consistency across conditions, the video shown to the target group was also paused at the same point. This version was used with the control group during the reading phase of the intervention.

The human voice - it's the instrument we all play. It's the most powerful sound in the world, probably. It's the only one that can start a war or say "I love you." And yet, many people have the experience that when they speak, people don't listen to them. And why is that? How can we speak powerfully to make change in the world?

What I'd like to suggest is that there are a number of habits that we need to move away from. I've assembled for your pleasure here seven deadly sins of speaking. I'm not pretending this is an exhaustive list, but these seven, I think, are pretty large habits that we can all fall into.

First, gossip—speaking ill of somebody who is not present. Not a nice habit, and we know perfectly well that the person gossiping will be gossiping about us five minutes later.

Second, judging. We know people who are like this in conversation, and it's very hard to listen to somebody if you know that you're being judged and found wanting at the same time.

Third, negativity. You can fall into this. My mother, in the last years of her life, became very negative, and it's hard to listen. I remember one day, I said to her, "It's October 1 today," and she said, "I know, isn't it dreadful?" It's hard to listen when somebody's that negative.

Fourth is another form of negativity, complaining. Well, this is the national art of the UK. It's our national sport. We complain about the weather, sport, about politics, about everything, but actually, complaining is viral misery. It's not spreading sunshine and lightness in the world.

Fifth, excuses. We've all met this guy. Maybe we've all been this guy. Some people have a blamethrower. They just pass it on to everybody else and don't take responsibility for their actions, and again, hard to listen to somebody who is being like that.

Penultimate, the sixth of the seven, exaggeration. It demeans our language, actually, sometimes. For example, if I see something that really is awesome, what do I call it? And then, of course, this exaggeration becomes lying, and we don't want to listen to people we know are lying to us.

And finally, dogmatism—the confusion of facts with opinions. When those two things get conflated, you're listening into the wind. You know, somebody is bombarding you with their opinions as if they were true. It's difficult to listen to that.

So here they are, seven deadly sins of speaking. These are things I think we need to avoid. But is there a positive way to think about this? Yes, there is. I'd like to suggest that there are four really powerful cornerstones, foundations, that we can stand on if we want our speech to be powerful and to make change in the world.

Fortunately, these things spell a word. The word is "HAIL," and it has a great definition as well. I'm not talking about the stuff that falls from the sky and hits you on the head. I'm talking about this definition: "to greet or acclaim enthusiastically" - which is how I think our words will be received if we stand on these four things.

So what does "HAIL" stand for? See if you can guess.

The "H" is honesty, of course, being true in what you say, being straight and clear. The "A" is authenticity, just being yourself. A friend of mine described it as standing in your own truth, which I think is a lovely way to put it. The "I" is integrity, being your word, actually doing what you say, and being somebody people can trust.

And the "L" is love. I don't mean romantic love, but I do mean wishing people well, for two reasons. First of all, I think absolute honesty may not be what we want. I mean, "My goodness, you look ugly this morning!" Perhaps that's not necessary. Tempered with love, of course, honesty is a great thing. But also, if you're really wishing somebody well, it's very hard to judge them at the same time. I'm not even sure you can do those two things simultaneously. So, "HAIL."

That is what you say, but it's also the way that you say it. You have an amazing toolbox. This instrument is incredible, and yet this is a toolbox that very few people have ever opened. I'd like to have a little rummage in there with you now and just pull a few tools out that you might like to take away and play with, which will increase the power of your speaking.

Register, for example. Falsetto register may not be very useful most of the time, but there's a register in between. I'm not going to get very technical about this for any of you who are voice

coaches. You can locate your voice, however. So if I talk up here in my nose, you can hear the difference. If I go down here in my throat, which is where most of us speak from most of the time. But if you want weight, you need to go down here to the chest. We vote for politicians with lower voices, it's true, because we associate depth with power and with authority. That's register.

Then, timbre is the way your voice feels. Again, the research shows that we prefer voices which are rich, smooth, warm, like hot chocolate. If that's not you, that's not the end of the world, because you can train. Go and get a voice coach. And there are amazing things you can do with breathing, with posture, and with exercises to improve the timbre of your voice.

Then prosody. This is the sing-song, the meta-language that we use in order to impart meaning. It's root one for meaning in conversation. People who speak all on one note are really quite hard to listen to if they don't have any prosody at all. That's where the word "monotonic" comes from, or monotonous, monotone. Also, we have repetitive prosody now coming in, where every sentence ends as if it were a question when it's actually not a question, it's a statement?

And if you repeat that, it's actually restricting your ability to communicate through prosody, which I think is a shame, so let's try and break that habit.

Pace. I can get very excited by saying something really quickly, or I can slow right down to emphasize, and at the end of that, of course, is our old friend silence. There's nothing wrong with a bit of silence in a talk, is there? We don't have to fill it with ums and ahs. It can be very powerful.

Of course, pitch often goes along with pace to indicate arousal, but you can do it just with pitch. Changing pitch affects meaning and emotional impact.

And finally, volume. (Loud) I can get really excited by using volume. Sorry about that, if I startled anybody. Or, I can have you really pay attention by getting very quiet. Some people broadcast the whole time. Try not to do that. That's called sodcasting - imposing your sound on people around you carelessly and inconsiderately. Not nice.

Of course, where this all comes into play most of all is when you've got something really important to do. It might be standing on a stage like this and giving a talk to people. It might be proposing marriage, asking for a raise, a wedding speech. Whatever it is, if it's really important, you owe it to yourself to look at this toolbox and the engine that it's going to work on, and no engine works well without being warmed up. Warm up your voice.

APPENDIX C. TARGET VOCABULARY LIST WITH CEFR LEVELS AND FREQUENCY IN SCRIPT

The table below presents the final list of 21 target vocabulary items selected for the intervention. Each word is accompanied by its CEFR level (based on Cambridge and Oxford learner dictionaries, where available) and the number of times it occurs in the TED Talk script. This list served as the basis for the vocabulary test and post-input classroom activities.

Word	CEFR Level	Occurrences in Script
assemble	C2	1
authenticity	C1 (authentic)	1
cornerstone	B2	1
demean	-	1
dreadful	B2	1
emphasize	B2	1
exaggeration	C1	2–3
exhaustive	C1	1
hail	C2	3
impart	-	1
indicate	B2	1
integrity	C2	1
lightness	A2 (light)	1
misery	B2	1
posture	C1	1
restrict	C1	1
rummage	-	1
simultaneously	B2	1
sin	C2	2
tempered	-	1
toolbox	-	3

APPENDIX D. VOCABULARY PRE- AND POST-TEST

This test was used as both the pre-test and post-test in the intervention. It consisted of 21 sentences, each requiring the insertion of a target vocabulary word from the word bank. Four additional distractor words were included in the word bank to increase task difficulty. The order of sentences was randomized between the pre- and post-test, but the content remained identical.

Complete the sentences with the words in the box. There are four words you do not need to use.

assemble authenticity cornerstone demean dreadful emphasize
exaggeration exhaustive falsetto hail impart indicate integrity
lightness misery penultimate posture prosody restrict
rummage simultaneously sin tempered timbre toolbox

1. The speaker tried to _____ the importance of clarity when communicating effectively with an audience.
2. He was known for his _____ and honesty, always staying true to his values.
3. The way she adjusted her _____ while speaking made her voice sound more confident.
4. The journalist was accused of _____, making the story more dramatic than it was.
5. After months of unemployment and financial struggles, he felt trapped in _____.
6. The weather was _____, making it hard to enjoy the outdoor event.
7. The new law will _____ the use of plastic bags to reduce waste.
8. Her voice had a natural _____ that made her sound cheerful.
9. The crowd began to _____ the speaker as he walked onto the stage.
10. His criticism was _____ with kindness, making it easier to accept.
11. Honesty is the _____ of a good relationship.
12. The volunteers worked hard to _____ emergency kits for the victims.

13. A good teacher strives to _____ knowledge to students in a meaningful way.
14. Making fun of others can _____ both the speaker and the listener.
15. Many cultures consider lying to be a serious _____.
16. The twins answered the question _____, surprising the class.
17. A great public speaker has a _____ of techniques to engage the audience effectively.
18. The researchers conducted an _____ study before publishing their results.
19. Red lights on the dashboard _____ a potential problem with the car.
20. I had a quick _____ through the drawer, hoping to find my missing pen.
21. Her _____ made people feel comfortable opening up to her.

Answer key:

- 1) emphasize
- 2) integrity
- 3) posture
- 4) exaggeration
- 5) misery
- 6) dreadful
- 7) restrict
- 8) lightness
- 9) hail
- 10) tempered
- 11) cornerstone
- 12) assemble
- 13) impart
- 14) demean
- 15) sin
- 16) simultaneously
- 17) toolbox
- 18) exhaustive

19) indicate

20) rummage

21) authenticity

APPENDIX E. INTERVENTION LESSON PLAN

The table below outlines the structure of the intervention lesson, including the objectives, timing, and interaction format for each stage.

Stage	Description	Timing	Interaction Format
Warm-up	Students recall and discuss past experiences of public speaking and common challenges. The TED Talk topic is introduced.	5 min	Whole class
Input phase	Target group watches an 8-minute TED Talk video while the control group reads a modified transcript in a separate room.	8 min	Individually, in separate rooms
Match definitions with sentences	Pairs receive printed sentences with target vocabulary highlighted and match each to the correct definition.	8 min	Pair work
Comprehension questions	Students briefly discuss answers in pairs, then volunteers respond in whole-class discussion.	7 min	Pairs → Whole class
Discussion prompts	Pairs receive prompts and rotate them every 45–60 seconds, discussing new topics each time.	10 min	Pair work
Word formation task	Students complete a Use of English style activity individually, transforming target vocabulary into correct forms.	5 min	Individual

APPENDIX F. MATCHING DEFINITIONS WITH CONTEXT SENTENCES

This post-input activity was designed to help students infer word meanings from context. Each sentence is taken or adapted from the TED Talk script, with a target vocabulary item highlighted in bold. Students were asked to match each highlighted word with the correct definition from the list provided.

ASSEMBLE (v)

"I've **assembled** for your pleasure here seven deadly sins of speaking."

AUTHENTICITY (n)

"The 'A' is **authenticity**, just being yourself."

CORNERSTONE (n)

"I'd like to suggest that there are four really powerful **cornerstones**, foundations, that we can stand on if we want our speech to be powerful and to make change in the world."

DEMEAN (v)

"Exaggeration **demeans** our language, actually, sometimes."

DREADFUL (adj)

"I remember one day, I said to her, 'It's October 1 today,' and she said, 'I know, isn't it **dreadful**?'"

EMPHASIZE (v)

"I can slow right down to **emphasize**, and at the end of that, of course, is our old friend silence."

EXAGGERATION (n)

"**Exaggeration** becomes lying, and we don't want to listen to people we know are lying to us."

EXHAUSTIVE (adj)

"I'm not pretending this is an **exhaustive** list, but these seven, I think, are pretty large habits that we can all fall into."

HAIL (v)

"I'm not talking about the stuff that falls from the sky and hits you on the head. I'm talking about this definition: 'to **hail** or acclaim enthusiastically'—which is how I think our words will be received if we stand on these four things."

IMPART (v)

"Then prosody. This is the sing-song, the meta-language that we use in order to **impart** meaning."

INDICATE (v)

"Of course, pitch often goes along with pace to **indicate** arousal, but you can do it just with pitch."

INTEGRITY (n)

"The 'I' is **integrity**, being your word, actually doing what you say, and being somebody people can trust."

LIGHTNESS (n)

"Complaining is viral misery. It's not spreading sunshine and **lightness** in the world."

MISERY (n)

"Complaining is viral **misery**."

POSTURE (n)

"And there are amazing things you can do with breathing, with **posture**, and with exercises to improve the timbre of your voice."

RESTRICT (v)

"And if you repeat that, it's actually **restricting** your ability to communicate through prosody, which I think is a shame."

RUMMAGE (n)

"I'd like to have a little **rummage** in there with you now and just pull a few tools out that you might like to take away and play with."

SIMULTANEOUSLY (adv)

"If you're really wishing somebody well, it's very hard to judge them at the same time. I'm not even sure you can do those two things **simultaneously**."

SIN (n)

"So here they are, seven deadly **sins** of speaking. These are things I think we need to avoid."

TEMPERED (adj)

"Perhaps that's not necessary. **Tempered** with love, of course, honesty is a great thing."

TOOLBOX (n)

"That is what you say, but it's also the way that you say it. You have an amazing **toolbox**."

Definitions:

- A. To show that something is true or exists.
- B. To pass information, knowledge, etc., to other people.
- C. Including everything possible; very thorough or complete.
- D. The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.
- E. The quality of being cheerful or amusing.
- F. To make people have less respect for somebody/something.
- G. At the same time.

- H. To describe somebody/something as being very good or special.
- I. The quality of being genuine or real.
- J. To bring people or things together as a group.
- K. An action that is against moral or religious law.
- L. The most important part of something that the rest depends on.
- M. A set of skills, techniques, or resources that a person can use to deal with a particular situation or perform a task effectively.
- N. Made less extreme or severe.
- O. Great suffering or unhappiness.
- P. Very bad or unpleasant.
- Q. The position in which you hold your body when standing or sitting.
- R. A statement or description that makes something seem larger, better, worse, etc., than it really is.
- S. To give special importance to something in speaking or writing.
- T. A thorough search through a collection of things, especially when done in a hurried or untidy way.
- U. To limit the size, amount, or range of something.

Answer key:

ASSEMBLE – (J) To bring people or things together as a group.

AUTHENTICITY – (I) The quality of being genuine or real.

CORNERSTONE – (L) The most important part of something that the rest depends on.

DEMEAN – (F) To make people have less respect for somebody/something.

DREADFUL – (P) Very bad or unpleasant.

EMPHASIZE – (S) To give special importance to something in speaking or writing.

EXAGGERATION – (R) A statement or description that makes something seem larger, better, worse, etc., than it really is.

EXHAUSTIVE – (C) Including everything possible; very thorough or complete.

HAIL – (H) To describe somebody/something as being very good or special.

IMPART – (B) To pass information, knowledge, etc., to other people.

INDICATE – (A) To show that something is true or exists.

INTEGRITY – (D) The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.

LIGHTNESS – (E) The quality of being cheerful or amusing.

MISERY – (O) Great suffering or unhappiness.

POSTURE – (Q) The position in which you hold your body when standing or sitting.

RESTRICT – (U) To limit the size, amount, or range of something.

RUMMAGE – (T) A thorough search through a collection of things, especially when done in a hurried or untidy way.

SIMULTANEOUSLY – (G) At the same time.

SIN – (K) An action that is against moral or religious law.

TEMPERED – (N) Made less extreme or severe.

TOOLBOX – (M) A set of skills, techniques, or resources that a person can use to deal with a particular situation or perform a task effectively.

APPENDIX G. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

This post-input activity focused on comprehension and recall. Students were asked to discuss each question briefly in pairs before sharing their responses with the whole class. All questions were designed to encourage the use of target vocabulary in context.

- 1) Julian Treasure assembles a list of the “seven deadly sins of speaking.” What are they?
- 2) Treasure describes four cornerstones of good communication that spell HAIL. What are they?
- 3) The speaker mentions authenticity as one of the four cornerstones of powerful speaking. What does he mean by this, and how can someone demonstrate authenticity in their speech?
- 4) Why does Julian Treasure believe that exaggeration can be harmful to communication?
- 5) Treasure tells a story about his mother responding to the date by saying, “I know, isn’t it dreadful?” What does this example illustrate about the effect of negativity on communication?
- 6) The speaker refers to a toolbox of vocal techniques that can make someone a more effective communicator. What are some tools in this toolbox?

APPENDIX H. DISCUSSION PROMPTS

This activity aimed to encourage the productive use of target vocabulary in a personalized context. Students worked in pairs and responded to printed discussion prompts, each containing one target vocabulary item. Prompts were rotated between pairs every 45–60 seconds, giving students repeated opportunities to engage with different words and ideas.

Assemble → Assembled

The last time I assembled a group of people was when _____. I brought them together because _____.

Authenticity → Authentic

A person I know who is authentic is _____. He/she is authentic because _____.

Cornerstone

One cornerstone of good communication is _____ because _____.

Demean → Demeaning

A time when someone spoke to me in a demeaning way was _____. I felt _____ because _____.

Dreadful → Dread

Something I used to dread but don't anymore is _____. I overcame my dread by _____.

Exhaustive → Exhausted

A time when I felt exhausted after doing something in an exhaustive way was when _____.

Hail → Hailed

A public figure or celebrity who has been hailed as a great speaker is _____. People admire them because _____.

Impart → Imparted

A person who has imparted important advice to me is _____. Their advice was _____, and it helped me because _____.

Integrity

A leader I respect because they have integrity is _____. One example of their integrity is _____.

Misery → Miserable

A time I felt miserable about my communication skills was _____. I improved by _____.

Posture

A time when I had to be very aware of my posture was _____. It was important because _____.

Restrict

A rule that I think restricts people's ability to communicate freely is _____. I think this because _____.

Rummage → Rummaged

The last time I rummaged through something to find what I needed was when _____.

Simultaneously

A situation where I had to do two things simultaneously was when _____.

Sin → Sinful

A habit that I think is almost sinful in communication is _____ because _____.

APPENDIX I. WORD FORMATION TASK

This individual activity was based on the Use of English format from the Cambridge First (FCE) exam. Students were required to transform a given base word into the correct grammatical form to complete each sentence. The exercise targeted a subset of the lesson's vocabulary items. The answer key is provided on the final page of this appendix.

Complete the sentences with words formed from the words in capitals.

- 1) The students _____ in the auditorium to listen to the guest speaker's presentation on environmental sustainability. ASSEMBLY
- 2) The teacher encouraged students to practice their language skills by engaging with _____ materials, such as newspapers and podcasts. AUTHENTICITY
- 3) The weather was so _____ that we had to cancel our hiking trip and stay indoors all day. DREAD
- 4) The teacher placed a strong _____ on critical thinking, encouraging students to analyze arguments rather than simply memorizing facts. EMPHASIZE
- 5) He tends to _____ his achievements, making his stories sound more impressive than they actually are. EXAGGERATION
- 6) The research team conducted an _____ study on the effects of climate change, analyzing data from multiple sources. EXHAUSTED
- 7) A sudden drop in temperature can be an _____ that a storm is approaching. INDICATE
- 8) Her jokes added a sense of _____ to the conversation, making everyone feel more relaxed. LIGHT
- 9) After spending hours in the cold rain without an umbrella, she felt absolutely _____ and couldn't wait to get home. MISERY
- 10) Due to safety concerns, the government has introduced new _____ on travel to certain regions. RESTRICT
- 11) The conference provided _____ translation, allowing participants from different countries to understand the speeches in real time. SIMULTANEOUSLY

12) He felt guilty after realizing how _____ his actions had been,
knowing they hurt others. SIN

Answer key:

- 1) ASSEMBLED
- 2) AUTHENTIC
- 3) DREADFUL
- 4) EMPHASIS
- 5) EXAGGERATE
- 6) EXHAUSTIVE
- 7) INDICATION
- 8) LIGHTNESS
- 9) MISERABLE
- 10) RESTRICTIONS
- 11) SIMULTANEOUS
- 12) SINFUL

APPENDIX J. STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was administered after the intervention lesson to gather students' reflections on their experience. The questions focused on student engagement, perceived effectiveness, input modality, and preferences for future lessons.

Post-Intervention Student Survey

Closed Questions (Likert scale: 1 = Strongly disagree → 5 = Strongly agree)

1. The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.
2. I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.
3. The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.
4. I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.
5. The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.
6. I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).
7. I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.

Open-Ended Questions

8. What did you enjoy most about this lesson?
9. Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.
10. Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?

Demographic/Context Questions

11. Have you ever watched TED Talks before? (Yes/No/Not sure)
12. How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class? (Never / Rarely / Sometimes / Often / Very often)

Target/Control group

13. In this lesson, I watched the TED Talk video / read the TED Talk script.

APPENDIX K. FULL STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

This appendix presents the complete anonymized responses to the feedback questionnaire administered after the intervention lesson. Responses are grouped by control and target group assignment.

Student 1 (Control Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 3

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 4

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 2

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 2

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 2

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 2

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Reading

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: No

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 3

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: When you are reading, it's easier to remember the words

In this lesson, I: read the TED Talk script

Student 2 (Control Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 5

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 4

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 3

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 2

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 4

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: I enjoyed doing tasks with a partner

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Less time to read the script

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: I'm not sure

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I prefer learning new vocabulary through reading because I can see words spelling

In this lesson, I: read the TED Talk script

Student 3 (Control Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 3

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 5

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 2

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 2

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Working in pair

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Script was confusing, and not good as video.

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 5

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: Through video, because I learn something better through watching, then people speaking in front of camera.

In this lesson, I: read the TED Talk script

Student 4 (Control Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 3

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 3

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 5

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 4

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Working with partner and doing that exercise with meanings. We needed to find out what the word means. This was cool!

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Probably nothing, but maaaaaaaybe confusing was the fact that I was reading stuff instead of watching. Like WHY ME?

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: Through reading, because this way I remember words better, how they are spelling.

In this lesson, I: read the TED Talk script

Student 5 (Control Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 5

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 5

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 4

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 3

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 5

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: I really liked the format of the lesson. It was unusual that we were divided into two different groups to complete the same task but in different formats. I also liked the vocabulary—the words were interesting. What stood out to me the most was “falsetto.”

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: No, everything was good and well-structured.

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I think I prefer learning words through reading because that way I can see the words, highlight them with a bright marker, and draw pictures or associations next to them.

In this lesson, I: read the TED Talk script

Student 6 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 4

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 3

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 4

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 2

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 3

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: watching the video

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: no, everything is okay

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: because I watch videos in 89emoriz and I want everything what people in this video say

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 7 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 3

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 1

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 4

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Watching video

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: nothing

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 2

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: video, more exciting

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 8 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 3

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 2

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 3

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 2

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 3

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 4

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: The fact that is not an ordinary lesson

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: The TED talk, too much information in one video, that is not interesting.

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: Reading, more chance to see a new word

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 9 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 3

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 2

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 1

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 2

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 1

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: I found out more useful and interesting vocabulary.

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: The fact that I was learning vocabulary through a video made it harder.

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 5

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I prefer learning new vocabulary through reading because by seeing things I memorise them much better and easier than by listening.

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 10 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 5

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 5

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 4

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 3

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Unconventional lesson delivery and variety from 'regular' lessons.

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Everything was clear

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 4

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: Video, because it takes less time and 91emorizing by the same.

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 11 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 3

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 2

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 5

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: I enjoy I think that I learn something new and some new English words

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Of course no Comrade Nosov

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 3

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I think both because reading is more helpful for learning English to me in general and video in English are I think interesting and useful for me so a watch them too

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 12 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 5

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 2

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 3

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 3

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 4

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: The topic of video

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: The task with finding the right pair was not really organized cuz answers weren't mixed and we just found a закономерность and put a letter without reading. Also for me it wasn't enough time for completing this task that's I think why my results got worse. Maybe you should do 2 tasks instead of 1, divide all words into two groups for better remembering

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 5

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: It depends. I think I prefer videos, but if it is monotonous and long I will choose reading instead.

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 13 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 5

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 5

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 3

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 2

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 5

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 2

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: Working with my partner

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: Nothing

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: No

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 2

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I prefer learning through reading. Because I can highlight a new words.

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

Student 14 (Target Group):

The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.: 4

I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.: 5

The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.: 4

I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.: 4

The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.: 5

I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).: 4

I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.: 5

What did you enjoy most about this lesson?: I enjoyed the chance to test my vocabulary as well as to learn something really useful in my future life

Was there anything you found confusing or less helpful? Please explain.: I would say that filling in the gaps in pairs is less useful, because usually one person is smarter than the other, so he is doing all the work, hence you can't estimate the knowledge of both students

Had you ever watched TED Talks before?: Yes

How often do you watch or read content in English outside of class?: 5

Do you prefer learning new vocabulary through video or through reading? Why?: I try to combine these two options from time to time. The books have more advanced vocabulary, but it is usually too niche. Videos have easier vocabulary, but I manage to quickly remember them.

In this lesson, I: watched the TED Talk video

APPENDIX K.1. DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES BY QUESTION

The charts below display the distribution of student responses to each of the seven Likert-scale items included in the post-intervention questionnaire. Responses are reported on a 5-point scale, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 5 indicating strong agreement.

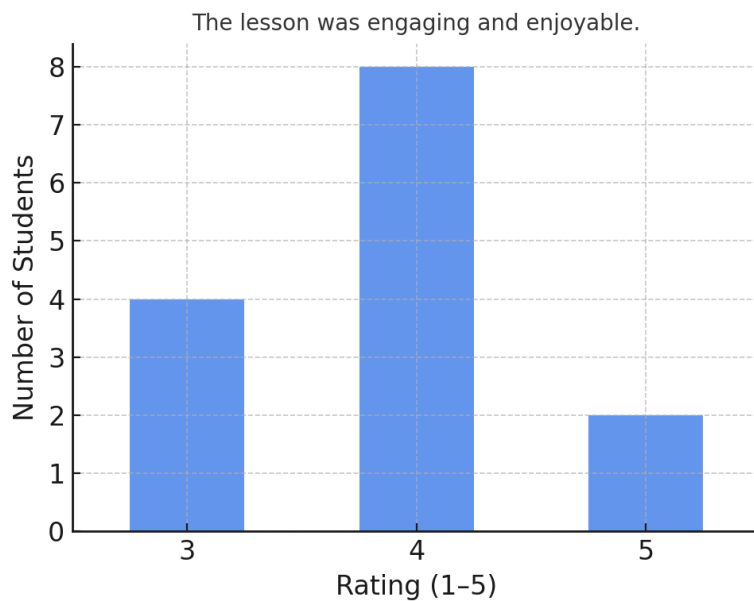


Figure K1. *Distribution of responses to Q1: “The lesson was engaging and enjoyable.”*

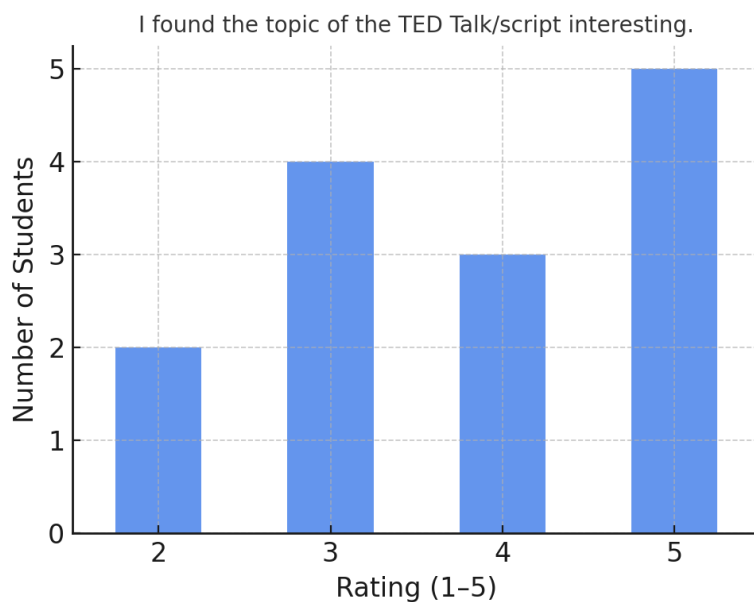


Figure K2. *Distribution of responses to Q2: “I found the topic of the TED Talk/script interesting.”*

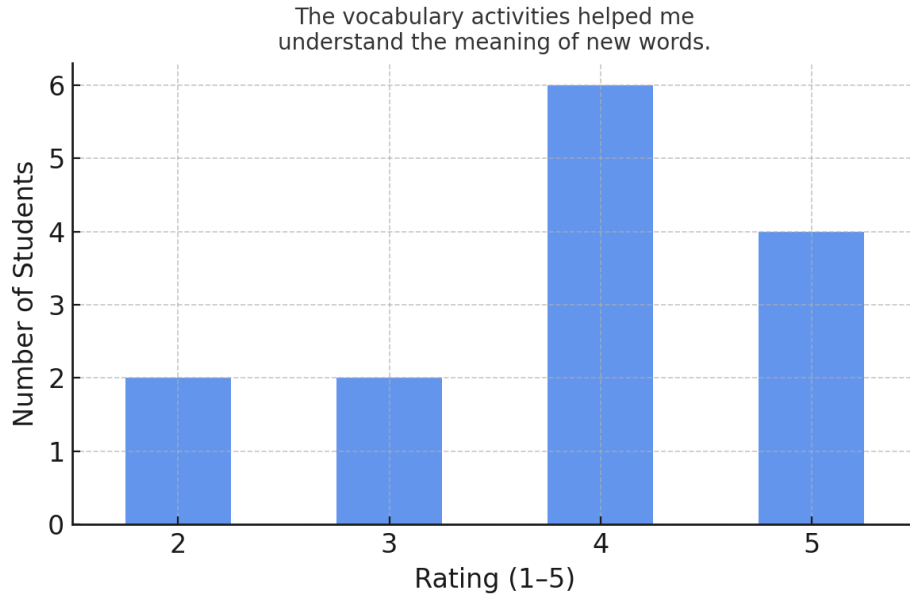


Figure K3. *Distribution of responses to Q3: “The vocabulary activities helped me understand the meaning of new words.”*

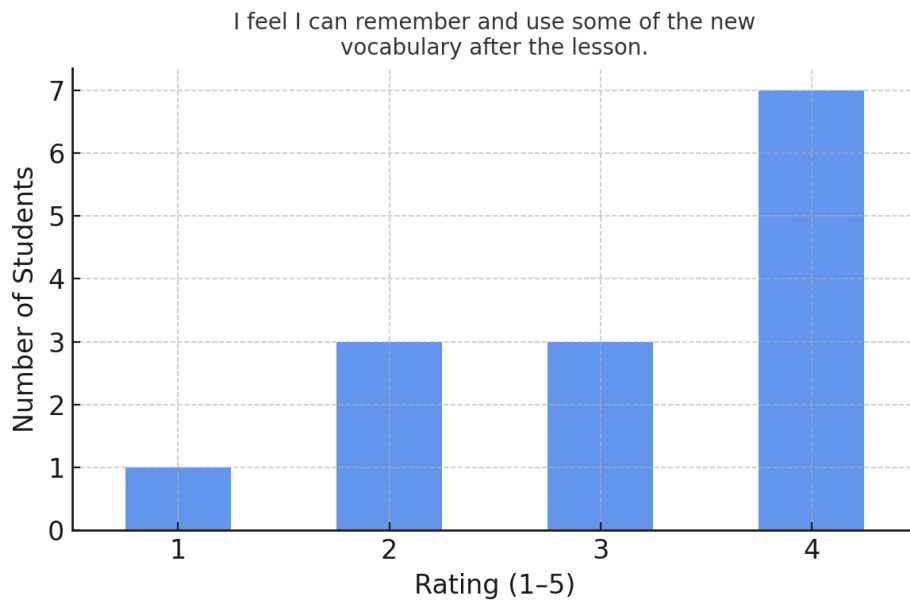


Figure K4. *Distribution of responses to Q4: “I feel I can remember and use some of the new vocabulary after the lesson.”*

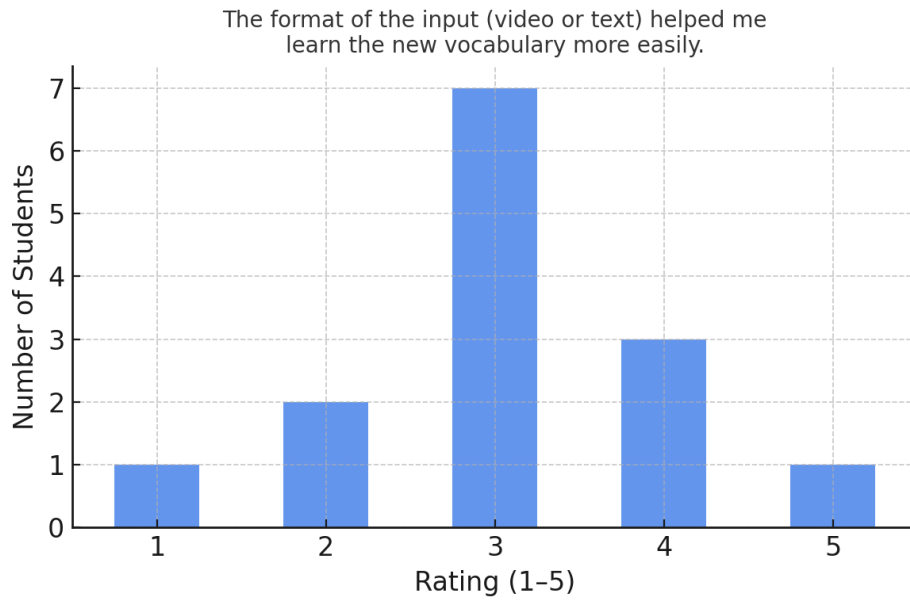


Figure K5. *Distribution of responses to Q5: “The format of the input (video or text) helped me learn the new vocabulary more easily.”*

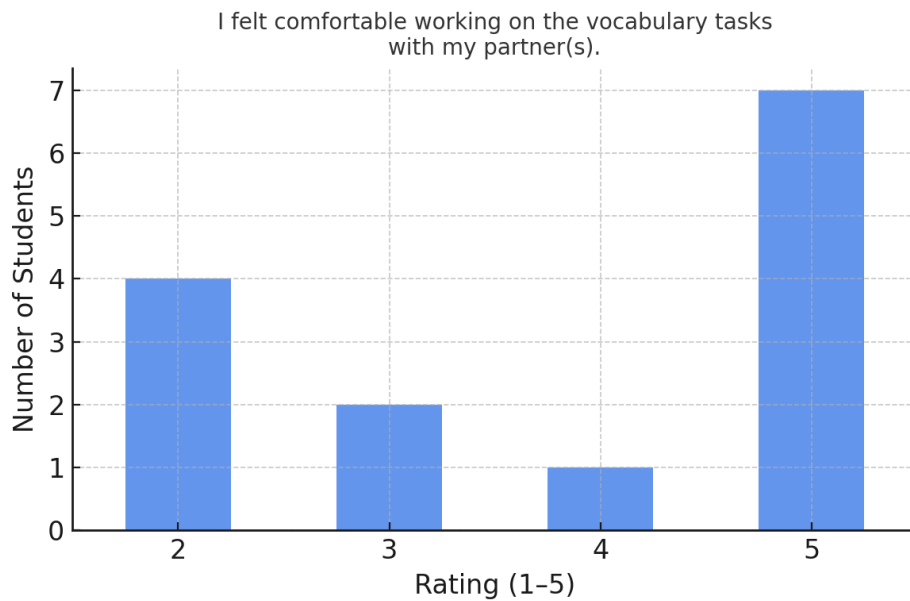


Figure K6. *Distribution of responses to Q6: “I felt comfortable working on the vocabulary tasks with my partner(s).”*

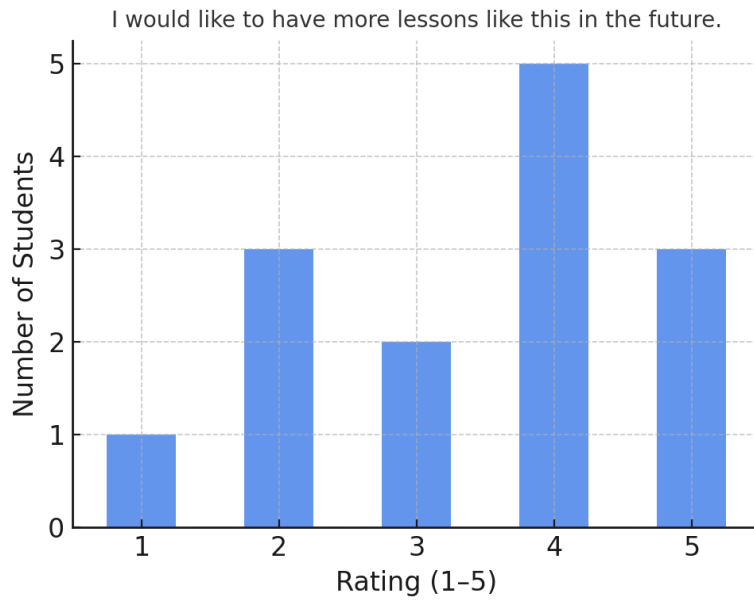


Figure K7. *Distribution of responses to Q7: “I would like to have more lessons like this in the future.”*

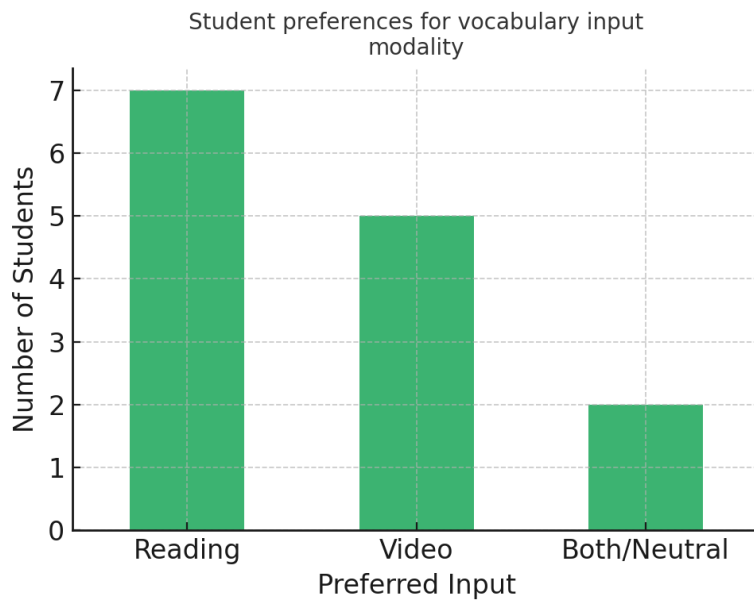


Figure K8. *Distribution of student preferences for input modality (video vs reading).*

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina, Vasily Nosov

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) minu loodud teose THE ROLE OF INPUT MODALITY IN VOCABULARY ACQUISITION: SUBTITLED VIDEO VS. READING FOR UPPER-INTERMEDIATE EFL STUDENTS, mille juhendaja on Anna Golubeva, reprodutseerimiseks eesmärgiga seda säilitada, sealhulgas lisada digitaalarhiivi DSpace kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
2. Annan Tartu Ülikoolile loa teha punktis 1 nimetatud teos üldsusele kättesaadavaks Tartu Ülikooli veebikeskkonna, sealhulgas digitaalarhiivi DSpace kaudu Creative Commons'i litsentsiga CC BY NC ND 4.0, mis lubab autorile viidates teost reprodutseerida, levitada ja üldsusele suunata ning keelab luua tuletatud teost ja kasutada teost ärieesmärgil, kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
3. Olen teadlik, et punktides 1 ja 2 nimetatud õigused jäävad alles ka autorile.
4. Kinnitan, et lihtlitsentsi andmisega ei riku ma teiste isikute intellektuaalomandi ega isikuandmete kaitse õigusaktidest tulenevaid õigusi.

Vasily Nosov

Narva 19.05.2025