The Effects of Film Subtitles on English Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary

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ABSTRACT

An attempt of this study was to find out which type of subtitles is likely to be more effective in developing EFL tenth-grade students' listening comprehension and vocabulary of a feature film: bimodal subtitling (English subtitles with English dialogues), standard subtitling (Thai subtitles with English dialogues), and English dialogues without subtitles. The data of this study was elicited from three groups of students in tenth-grade, 21 students per group, with similar English learning achievement level. Students in each group were assigned to watch an English dialogue movie with assigned subtitles, one type of subtitles per one group. They were tested on listening comprehension, content and vocabulary after they finished watching the movie. After all the students had finished taking the test, four persons from each group were randomly selected to be interviewed. The findings showed that Thai subtitles affect tenth-grade students' listening comprehension more than English subtitles and not having any subtitles at all. The average scores for content and vocabulary showed that Thai subtitles affect students' listening comprehension of content and vocabulary more than English subtitles and having no subtitles whatsoever.

Key words: Listening Comprehension, Subtitles, Movie

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learning can be considered from the four aspects of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these aspects, listening is an important capability of social interactions. It has been found that people receive new messages more efficiently via listening than reading (Luo, 2004). Unlike other skills, listening is transitory in the process and the speed and content are typically controlled by the speaker (Brown, 2001; Graham, 2006; Vogely, 1998). To elaborate a little more, Torut (1981) elaborates on this when he mentions that listening skills are complex for learners. There needs not only proper materials and teaching to support learners but also vocabulary learning. Moreover, Sawangwarorose (1986) claims that the right way to improve listening skills is knowing the meaning of vocabulary words. Therefore, knowing only a limited number of vocabulary words can cause failure in listening. Nowadays, second language learning attaches less importance to listening skills due to instructors' having low listening skills themselves; as a result, they do not give much attention to the preparation of materials for the skill compared to other skills (Jadejumlong, 1987). Hence, instructors should provide the proper materials to support learners' listening performance.

One of the ways to gain better listening performance is to provide the written form of the spoken language (i.e. subtitles). It is widely accepted that listening while reading at the same time can help reinforce the connection between the sound and written form of the language (Danan, 1992, p. 521). As a consequence, students find it easier to understand the message by listening while reading. In addition, it can also support students' vocabulary mastery development. Such integration of listening and reading can be realized through the use of subtitles in listening materials.

Subtitled film is a kind of audiovisual media of storytelling which provides narrative models organized in emotions and images with captions. Welles (2004) claims that subtitled films are increasingly used in foreign language classes; film helps students to understand and recognize the context by observing the behaviors of the characters along with the conversations. According to Ogasawara (1994), watching subtitled video in English might be one of the richest ways of presenting authentic input since it is the combination of three mediums: aural, visual and textual. Yang, Huang, Tsai, Chung, & Wu (2009) state that using videos or films as a learning resource has received a great deal of attention from researchers and has been successfully applied to various educational applications. Many schools are incorporating more online and automated content, which often includes subtitled films.

Meanwhile, the Input Hypothesis by Krashen (1985) attempts to explain how learners acquire a second language or how language acquisition takes place. This hypothesis mainly focuses on the acquisition. According to this hypothesis,

L2 learners will acquire and improve a second language when they receive the comprehensible input that is one step above their proficiency level (i+1). For example, learners' proficiency level is at "i", therefore, the comprehensible input for them should be at level i + 1. Moreover, Krashen (1985) states that the input should not be too difficult or too easy for learners. Therefore, the use of subtitles accommodates this theory.

According to Bloom's Taxonomy, Bloom, Mesia, and Krathwohl (1964) state that taxonomy is a classification of educational objectives used for developing higher-level thinking skills. It is a process-oriented model that allows teachers to present ideas and concepts as many different levels to meet the needs of a variety of learners. Further, it provides an important framework for teachers to use to focus on higher order thinking. By providing a hierarchy of levels, this taxonomy can assist teachers in designing performance tasks, designing questions for conferring with students, and providing feedback on students' work. In addition, Bloom's taxonomy increases the ability to learn and it helps students develop higher order thinking skills. There are six levels of cognitive domain: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

The knowledge level exhibits memory of previously learned material by recalling fundamental facts, terms, basic concepts and answers about the selection.

The comprehension level is the ability to understand or comprehend the material.

The application level lets students practice or apply the knowledge to others situations.

The analysis level requires examining specific parts of information to meet the underlying ideas.

The synthesis level requires new ideas of doing something.

The evaluation level requires the estimation of information using some criteria or standard.

Bloom's Taxonomy was later revised to add relevance for 21st century students and teachers (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001). The original number of categories, six, were retained. Knowledge level was renamed "Remember." Comprehension level was renamed "Understand." Application, Analysis, and Evaluation were renamed "Apply," "Analysis," and "Evaluate," respectively. In addition, Synthesis was renamed "Create" and changed place with the Evaluate level.

Adding subtitles to video appears to have distinct advantages in that learners perceive subtitles as being helpful (Chung & Hsin, 1999; Taylor, 2005). The study by Vanderplank (1988) reported that high-intermediate adult European learners of English felt they could relax while listening to the auditory track of a film because the subtitles provided assurance that they could check what they heard through subtitles. Moreover, Koskinen et al. (1996) established that L1 subtitled-video substantially improved the reading vocabulary knowledge of learners. Hence, the current study aimed to find out which type of subtitles is likely to be more effective in developing EFL tenth-grade students' listening comprehension and vocabulary of a feature film: bimodal subtitling (English subtitles with English dialogues), standard

subtitling (Thai subtitles with English dialogues), and English dialogues without subtitles. Data was measured by a multiple-choice comprehension test based on the following research questions:

1. To what extent do tenth-grade student participants gain the knowledge of content and vocabulary, based on the listening comprehension and vocabulary test after watching an English dialogue film with English subtitles, Thai subtitles and without subtitles?
2. Are there any significant differences among the listening comprehension and vocabulary test scores of the students who watch the film with English subtitles, the students who watch the film with Thai subtitles and the students who watch the film without any subtitles?
3. What are students' perceptions on how English subtitles, Thai subtitles and no subtitles on film affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous studies, Markham (1989) investigated the effects of subtitled TV upon the listening comprehension of beginner, intermediate and advanced learners of English. He used two subtitled videos on topics which were not known to the learners. He divided learners into three groups, and each group viewed both films with and without subtitles. He measured the participants' comprehension through multiple choice questions based on the language of the video. Results revealed that all three groups using the L1 subtitles performed significantly better. Markham speculated that ESL (English as a Second Language) students might be able to improve their listening and reading comprehension simultaneously. However, the limitation of the study was that the teaching material should be more diversified in order to match EFL learners of differently levels. Moreover, films used must be chosen carefully in terms of the learning efficiency and regarding length and content of the film.

A similar result was found in the study by Markham, Peter, and McCarthy (2001). These researchers investigated the effects of using Spanish subtitles, English subtitles, and no subtitles on 169 intermediate university students who were Spanish as a Foreign Language students and their first language was English. The participants were divided into three groups and each group was assigned to watch the DVD episode with the assigned subtitles of either Spanish, English, or no subtitles. Researchers asked the participants to watch the Spanish-language DVD episode about Apollo 13. Data was gathered by using English-language-dependent measures consisting of a written summary generated by the students and a 10-item multiple choice test. Results of the written summary and the multiple-choice test showed that the absence of subtitles significantly hindered the Spanish as a Foreign Language students' ability to comprehend the DVD passage material. Students who watched the DVD with Spanish subtitles performed better than students in the no subtitles group. However, students in the English subtitles group outperformed students in the Spanish subtitles group and the no subtitles group. The researchers mentioned that

when subtitles were not available, the participants did not comprehend intended ideas.

In another previous studies, Koostra, Jonannes and Beentjes (1999) focused on 246 Dutch children in the fourth and sixth grade. These researchers asked the children to watch a 15-minute English soundtrack American documentary with, one Dutch subtitles and one without and allowed the participants to write down what they saw on the screen. The study demonstrated that children acquired more English vocabulary from watching subtitled television. Children in the subtitled condition also performed significantly better on a word recognition test, consisting of words heard in the soundtrack and words that could have been used in the context of the particular programs.The limitation of this study is that the teaching material used, an American documentary, can be boring for fourth and sixth graders at beginner language levels and the pace of the subtitles may possibly be too fast for beginners in elementary school.

The study by Saensang (2003) focused on seventh-grade students' listening comprehension and vocabulary after being taught by cartoon films with subtitles. The result showed that the subtitles reduced students' distress on learning vocabulary words. Subtitles were also shown to increase students' ability to remember and learn new vocabulary words.However, one limitation present in the research was that many of the students had low language proficiency. In addition, Unkaew, Wansungnoen and Sornkaew (2007) investigated the achievement of English listening skills of Mattayom-suksa two students studying the Animation movie, Tarzan II both with and without subtitles. The study focused on 60 students divided into two groups.The first group was taught using the movie with L1 subtitles, the other group was used the same animation but without subtitles. The result showed that the L1 subtitles improved students' learning skill.The subtitles helped students to remember and understand the story. Therefore, this shows a correlation in the development of their listening skills.

The research findings of previous studies in Thailand showed less difference in English listening comprehension because the participants of previous studies had low English proficiency. Therefore, this current study aimed to solve this problem by using English O-NET (Ordinary National Educational Test) scores to classify students to gain the similar English language efficiency.

METHOD

Participants

The participants of this research included 63 students in tenth-grade at Samakkhiwitthayakhom School in Chiang Rai. They were assigned into three groups as follows:

    English Subtitles Group (ESG)
    Thai Subtitles Group (TSG)
    Without Subtitles Group (WSG)

Each group consisted of 21 students who were selected from 613 tenth-grade students based on their English O-NET (Ordinary National Educational Test) scores with similar O-NET scores ranging from 98 to 16. They were firstly

divided into three groups: H group, M group, and L group. H group consisted of 50 students who have the highest O-NET scores. M group consisted of 50 students who have scores in the middle level of the population group. L group consisted of 50 students who have the lowest scores. To gain similar levels of English language efficiency, students were divided again and organized into three groups; seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to English Subtitles Group (ESG), seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to Thai Subtitles Group (TSG), and seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to Without Subtitles Group (WSG).

Research Instruments

Research instruments were as follows:

The DVD film Toy Story of Terror

The duration of the film was 20 minutes. It was validated by three experts for the appropriateness in terms of language level, content and the duration of film for the participants.

Listening comprehension test

The test consisted of 24 items: 12 items of content and 12 items of vocabulary from the film. The listening comprehension test was designed to reach its objective by utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy, a hierarchical structure of thinking skills, as a tool for gauging the cognitive depth of students learning based on knowledge and comprehension levels. The language level of the test was assessed by three experts.

The Interview

Semi-structured interview was employed in this study. The objective of this interview was to collect qualitative data to find out the effects of subtitles on listening comprehension. Four participants from each group, ESG, TSG and WSG, were selected randomly after they finished the comprehension test on the same day. Thus, there were twelve participants who were interviewed in this study. The interview was conducted by the researcher and consisted of four questions that pointed back to the main research question: "What are students' perceptions on how English subtitles, Thai subtitles and no subtitles on film affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary?" In order to make it stress-free, the questions were translated into Thai and the participants were allowed to express their thoughts in Thai which is their first language. Participant answers were voice recorded and followed-up questions were presented on answers given.

Procedures

The data was conducted at Samakkhiwitthayakhom School in Chiang Rai. Before conducting the data, the researcher contacted the tenth-grade teachers to obtain English O-NET scores of all 613 tenth-grade students at the school. Then,

students were divided into three groups as explained above. The following steps were taken in this study.

Step 1: Students were divided and mixed into three groups to help ensure similar English language efficiency among the three groups; seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to English Subtitles Group (ESG), seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to Thai Subtitles Group (TSG), and seven students from each group (H Group, M Group and L Group) were assigned to Without Subtitles Group (WSG). Each group consisted of 21 students with similar O-NET scores ranging from 98 to 16. The mean scores of the three groups are 53.76, 53.81, and 53.90 respectively.

Step 2: The students from each group were taken to a different media room to watch the film *Toy Story of Terror.*

Step 3: Once students finished watching the film, a listening comprehension test of content and vocabulary was given to them.

Step 4: After all students had finished the test, four students from each group were selected randomly for an interview about their perspective on the effects of subtitles used in the film. In order to create a stress-free environment, the interview was in Thai.

Data Analysis

The score for the listening comprehension test was 1 point for each correct answer. All scores were recorded and data was put into a table to demonstrate the extent of students' understanding of content and vocabulary from the listening comprehension test. The data were analyzed by using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and paired samples T test in order to determine whether the differences among mean scores of ESG, TSG, and WSG were statistically significant. The data from the interviews were analyzed to find out how English subtitles, Thai subtitles and no subtitles affected students' listening comprehension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Scores

In response to the first research question, "To what extent do the tenth-grade student participant gain the knowledge of content and vocabulary, based on the listening comprehension and vocabulary test after watching an English-dialogue film with English subtitles, Thai subtitles and without subtitles?" Student scores from the listening comprehension and vocabulary test are presented in Figure 1 below.

According to Figure 1, the content score of the Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) is higher than the English Subtitles Group (ESG) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG). The average TSG score is 9.33, ESG is 7.42, and WSG is 6.47, respectively. The students in TSG who received a full score (12) were those who had also high English O-NET scores (92 and 88). In addition, there were seven students with low English O-NET scores in TSG and one of them scored 10 while three of them had the lowest score of 7. For the content scores of ESG, one student who had high English O-NET score received the full content score (12). However, there was one student with high English O-NET score who scored 6. From the content scores of WSG, students in this group seemed not to comprehend the content presented, bringing about the lowest average score of the three groups. Moreover, two of the students with high English O-NET scores scored 5 while one of the students with low English O-NET score scored 8; the lowest score was recorded at 4. Therefore, findings indicate that students might not have comprehended the content when they watched the movie without subtitles.

According to Figure 2, the vocabulary score of the Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) is higher than the English Subtitles Group (ESG) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG). The complied average scores are: TSG is 8.76, ESG is 7.95, and WSG is 7.04, respectively. There was only one student from TSG who managed to gain a full score, and this was a student who had high English O-NET score. In addition, all students in TSG who had high English O-NET scores scored above 8 on the vocabulary portion. For ESG, the student who had the highest score (11) also had high English O-NET score. However, there was one student who had an English O-NET score in the middle level of the population group who scored 10. The students who gained the lowest score for each group were those who likewise had low English O-NET scores.

To conclude, the average scores for content and vocabulary show that Thai subtitles affect students' listening comprehension of content and vocabulary higher than English subtitles and no subtitles. Therefore, it is determined that Thai subtitles are an effective tool to help students comprehend the content and vocabulary of a film.
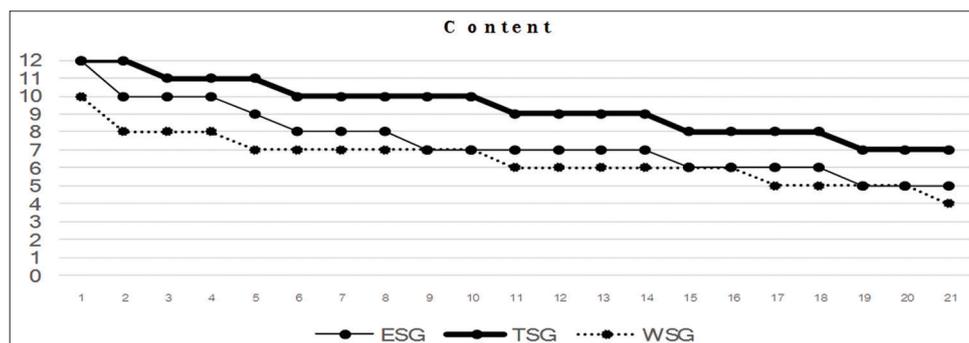

Figure 1. Content scores of three groups

The Differences among the Listening Comprehension test Scores of Content and Vocabulary

This section demonstrates results of the listening comprehension test content and vocabulary. Research findings are in relation to the second research question, "Are there any significant differences among the listening comprehension and vocabulary test scores of the students who watch the film with English subtitles, the students who watch the film with Thai subtitles and the students who watch the film without any subtitles?"

From Table 1, the full score a student could earn was 12. The students in Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) had the highest score at 12, the lowest at 7. When comparing the average content scores of each group, the students in TSG showed the highest mean score at 8.76. Therefore, it is concluded that Thai subtitles helped students to understand the content more than English subtitles and no subtitles. In addition, English subtitles could generally help students receive a higher score than if there were no subtitles.

From Tables 2 and 3, the statistical results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) show that there was a statistically significant difference between English Subtitles Group (ESG), Thai Subtitles Group (TSG), and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) (F = 9.759, p <.05). When comparing the difference of mean scores in pairs, it shows that the average score of Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) is significantly different from English Subtitles Group (ESG) (t = 2.428, p <.05) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) (t = 3.771, p <.05). However, there is no statistical difference between the mean values of English Subtitles Group (ESG) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) students (p >.05).

From Table 4, the full score a student could earn was 12. The students in Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) had the highest score at 12, the lowest at 5. When comparing the average vocabulary scores of each group, it showed that the students in Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) had the highest mean score at 9.33. Therefore, it is concluded Thai subtitles helped students to understand the vocabulary more than having English subtitles or no subtitles.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of content

	N	Mean
Without subtitles	21	6.48
Thai subtitles	21	8.76
English subtitles	21	7.43
Total	63	7.56

Table 2. ANOVA of the Listening comprehension test score of content

ANOVA					
Content score					
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	55.365	2	27.683	9.759	0.000*
Within groups	170.190	60	2.837		
Total	225.556	62			

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 3. Multiple comparisons

Content score					
Bonferroni					
(I) Three groups	(J) Three groups	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Without subtitles	Thai subtitles	-2.286*	0.606	-3.771	0.001*
	English subtitles	-0.952	0.500	-1.905	0.071
Thai subtitles	Without subtitles	2.286*	0.606	3.771	0.001*
	English subtitles	1.333*	0.549	2.428	0.025*
English subtitles	Without subtitles	0.952	0.500	1.905	0.071
	Thai subtitles	-1.333*	0.549	-2.428	0.025*

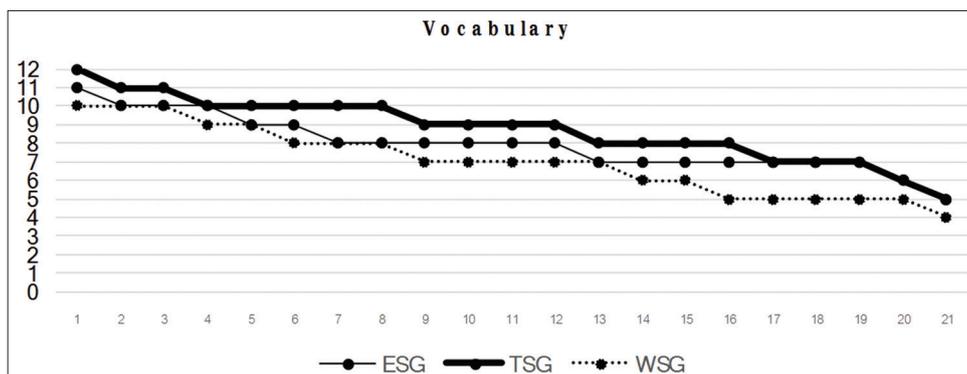*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Figure 2. Vocabulary scores of three groups

From Tables 5 and 6, the statistical results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) show that there was a statistically significant difference between English Subtitles Group (ESG), Thai Subtitles Group (TSG), and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) (F = 10.397, p <.05). When comparing the difference in mean scores in pairs, it shows that the average score of Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) is significantly different from English Subtitles Group (ESG) (t = 2.595, p <.05) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) (t = 4.013, p <.05). However, there is no statistical difference between the mean values of English Subtitles Group (ESG) and Without Subtitles Group (WSG) students (p >.05).

Interview Results

In response to the question "What are students' perceptions on how English subtitles, Thai subtitles and without subtitles on film affect their listening comprehension and vocabulary?" There were four students from each group who participated in the semi-structured interview who acted as representatives for all student participants. In addition, the interview was in Thai and it was translated into English. The interview ques-

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of vocabulary

	N	Mean
Without subtitles	21	7.05
Thai subtitles	21	9.33
English subtitles	21	7.95
Total	63	8.11

Table 5. ANOVA of the Listening comprehension test score of vocabulary

ANOVA					
Vocabulary scores					
	Sum of squares	**df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between groups	55.651	2	27.825	10.397	0.000
Within groups	160.571	60	2.676		
Total	216.222	62			

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

tions for each participant are reported below based on their assigned group. To avoid confusion, students who participated in the interview were named based on their group.

Four students from English Subtitles Group (ESG) were named E1, E2, E3, and E4, respectively.

Four students from Thai Subtitles Group (TSG) were named T1, T2, T3, and T4, respectively.

Four students from Without Subtitles Group (WSG) were named W1, W2, W3, and W4, respectively.

The question for the English Subtitles Group was, "Do English subtitles help you to acquire the content of the film?" Student E1 responded, "Yes, English subtitles helped me a lot in that it showed the words which I heard, then, I could guess the meaning by reading subtitles and watching the movie at the same time." Student E2, who comprehended the content said, "English subtitles provided me the smoothness of watching the movie as it reduced my confusion that I did not have to translate in Thai while I was listening to English dialogues." However, student E3, who did not grasp the content said "Some vocabularies were new to me and I could not guess the meaning." Moreover, student E4, who also did not comprehend the content said "I had never watched movies with English dialogues before. So, I tried to guess the meaning by observing the gestures and body language of the characters but I still could not understand. I think I need to watch this movie more than three times to get the ideas."

The question for the Thai Subtitles Group was, "Do Thai subtitles help you to acquire the content of the film?" All students grasped the content because all vocabulary was translated into their first language. Students T1, T2, T3, and T4 made comments that they felt more comfortable watching the movie with Thai subtitles because they didn't need to do any translation. However, student T2 said "I preferred English subtitles to Thai subtitles although I liked Thai subtitles because it could provide the right spelling of new words as there were many new words for me. I thought I could learn the use of some words in various sentences."

The question for the Without Subtitles Group was, "Does having no subtitles help you to acquire the content of the film?" Student W1, who understood most of the content in the movie, said, "Watching an English dialogue movie without subtitles provided a new experience for me. However, I preferred to watch it more than three times to acquire all the content." Nevertheless, three students (W2, W3, and W4) did not comprehend the content because they did not have much

Table 6. Multiple comparisons

Vocabulary scores					
Bonferroni					
(I) Three groups	**(J) Three groups**	**Mean difference (I-J)**	**Std. error**	**t**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Without subtitles	Thai subtitles	-2.286*	0.570	-4.013	0.001*
	English subtitles	-0.905	0.564	-1.603	0.125
Thai subtitles	Without subtitles	2.286*	0.570	4.013	0.001*
	English subtitles	1.381*	0.532	2.595	0.017*
English subtitles	Without subtitles	0.905	0.564	1.603	0.125
	Thai subtitles	-1.381*	0.532	-2.595	0.017*

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

experience in English. Student W2 said "I tried to practice English, it might take some time." Moreover, student W3 said, "I did not have much experience about English. So, I felt uncomfortable watching an English dialogue movie without subtitles." However, student W4 said "Watching an English dialogue movie provided me a good experience that it was like listening to someone in real life that there were no subtitles."

Lastly, the question for every student who participated in the interview was "If you have a chance to watch a movie with subtitles, which type of subtitles would you prefer?" Six students preferred watching movies with English subtitles. Students E1, E2, W1, W2, and W4 made comments that they wanted to practice English listening skills and learn the correct pronunciation and spelling. Moreover, there were many words that had various meanings as student T2 said "I found many words that I know the meaning, but it had different meanings in the movie. This provided me some new knowledge about vocabulary." Nonetheless, six students preferred Thai subtitles because they had less experience in English and they thought Thai subtitles could help them understand more about English vocabularies. Students T1, T3, and E3 made comments that they might feel strange when they watched any English dialogues movie without subtitles or English subtitles. Moreover, students T4, E4, and W3 made comments that there were many new words that they did not know the meanings. It would be great if they could immediately know the meanings from reading Thai subtitles.

DISCUSSION

The findings in this study are discussed below.

The results of this study comply with the research hypothesis that L1 subtitles helped students acquire the content more than L2 subtitles and no subtitles. Thai subtitles seem to be an effective tool to help students learn English through English dialogue movies. Several studies support this finding, such as, Unkaew, Wansungnoen, and Sornkaew (2007), Koskinen et al. (1996), Markham (1989), Markham, Peter, and McCarthy (2001), and Saensang (2003) who found that L1 subtitles helped students to remember and understand the story. Moreover, interviewees commented that listening to and reading English at the same time could help them learn new words and improve English listening and reading skills. This comment complies with the studies by Danan (1992) that listening to and reading the text at the same time could at least help students distinguish known from unknown words; further, it complies with the study by Garza (1991) whose findings show that subtitles help students to remember some difficult vocabulary. In addition, the interviewees' opinion that English subtitles may not be a serious problem for some students corresponds with Richard's and Gordon's (2004) statement that if students find a problem in translation, they can guess the meanings by observing gestures, some expressions and body language that accompany the dialogues through the movie. However, students with less English experience may be faced with the problem that they cannot grasp a word at the first time they hear it, as some participants have mentioned during the interviews. Some may need

more time to watch and listen. Moreover, students with less English experience tend to prefer to watch English dialogue movies without subtitles more than twice because they do not have any additional support from subtitles. For students who have some experience in English, they prefer either Thai or English subtitles. These students said that they might need more practice in listening to English because school teachers do not often teach or train them in the area of listening skills. Insufficient teaching and training complies with Saensang's (2003) study that without practicing listening skills, students were shown to have low English proficiency.

Therefore, it can be said that learning English through subtitles can help students know more about English. They can translate by reading Thai subtitles while listening to English dialogues. Hence, it helps students to remember the meaning(s) of a variety of vocabulary words. Moreover, it may increase their ability to translate efficiently. Students gained more knowledge after watching an English dialogue movie with subtitles. Specifically, subtitles that students prefer are Thai and English as these give them greater support in learning English. Most of the interviewees preferred English subtitles because they wanted to practice English listening skills as well as learning correct pronunciation and spelling. Moreover, two of the interviewees gave the reason that there were many words that have various meanings and they could find these new meanings with the help of English subtitles.

In addition, three of the interviewees pointed out that it would be useful for them if they watched the movie with Thai subtitles before watching it again with English subtitles. They believed that this method would help them to comprehend the content. This method may comply with the study by Koskinen et al. (1996) that there was a developmental sequence that could be followed using multilingual subtitles to improve comprehension. These researchers presented that second-language students typically have better reading comprehension than listening comprehension skills. It would therefore be beneficial for such students to watch a difficult second-language video with their L1 subtitles first. Then, they suggested convincing the students to watch the same video with the target-language subtitles, and eventually students would be able to comprehend it without the aid of any subtitles.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study reveal that subtitles affect students' listening comprehension. It provides some new vocabulary that students have never seen before. Moreover, subtitles support the method of translation. For example, students may guess the meaning of some new vocabulary by observing characters' body language or gestures and they can see the subtitles at the bottom of the screen, then, they can guess the meaning effectively. In addition, subtitles bring convenience to students in that they can easily understand the movie content and vocabularies. Thus, they can learn better if they feel comfortable (Danan, 1992). Nonetheless, the study demonstrates significant difference in the effect of subtitles. Thai subtitles are significantly different from English subtitles and no subtitle usage because it helps

students acquire content and vocabulary. However, English subtitles appear to be the most preferred subtitles because students require more English listening skills since they are deficient in this area due to not having enough teaching or training in school.

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