

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework on which this study is based. First, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory is introduced as the primary framework for explaining how learners develop vocabulary through meaningful exposure to the target language. The chapter then discusses contextual factors, such as watching English movies with English subtitles, before focusing on the study's main topic: perceptions of vocabulary knowledge. Each section examines the relevant definitions, theoretical foundations, and indicators.

1. Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is the study of how individuals learn languages other than their first language. According to Ellis (2008), it is a complex process involving both conscious learning and unconscious acquisition. Conscious learning involves deliberately studying language rules, while unconscious acquisition develops through meaningful exposure to the language in communicative contexts. Ellis also emphasizes that the quality and quantity of input, opportunities for meaningful interaction, and individual factors such as motivation and ability all influence language learning success.

The main SLA principle relevant to this study is that vocabulary develops gradually through repeated, meaningful exposure to authentic language input (Nation, 2001; Ellis, 2008). As learners encounter the language more frequently in natural contexts, such as by watching English movies, their vocabulary knowledge gradually increases. This gradual, exposure-driven expansion is referred to as vocabulary growth in this study. Furthermore, according to Hulstijn (2001), vocabulary can be acquired indirectly through meaningful activities, such as watching

movies, in which learners are exposed to words in natural contexts without having to memorize them directly.

SLA theory provides a framework for understanding why watching English movies with English subtitles serves as a source of meaningful vocabulary input and for including vocabulary growth and retention as key dimensions of perceived knowledge in this study.

2. Watching English Movies with English Subtitles

a) Definition

Watching English movies with English subtitles means watching them with written text in English displayed on the screen. In the context of learning a second language, this activity is widely regarded as incidental learning, whereby learners are naturally exposed to authentic vocabulary and language structures through an enjoyable medium (Nation, 2001). Unlike formal classroom instruction, it takes place in an informal setting and does not require deliberate study; yet it consistently exposes learners to real-life language use.

In this study, watching English movies with English subtitles was considered a contextual variable. This reflected the sample group's viewing patterns and provided a basis for examining students' perceptions of vocabulary knowledge. When watching such movies, students listen to spoken dialogue, read the subtitles, and observe the scenes simultaneously. This multimodal experience enables them to link spoken words with their written forms, thereby enhancing vocabulary comprehension and retention (Mayer, 2009).

b) Types of Subtitles

Subtitles are written texts that appear on a screen to display dialogue or other verbal information in movies and other audiovisual media. In language learning, they help learners associate sounds with written text, thereby supporting comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

Intralingual subtitles are written in the same language as the movie's audio. For instance, an English movie with English subtitles. They help learners to understand difficult accents and pronunciation, reinforce vocabulary by linking heard and written words, and develop listening and reading skills simultaneously within the same context (Kuppens, 2010). This study focuses on intralingual subtitles because they provide continuous exposure to authentic English, supporting comprehensible input and vocabulary Learning (Nation, 2001).

Interlingual subtitles are translations of a movie into a language other than its original language. For example, an English movie with Indonesian subtitles. While these can aid comprehension, they may also cause learners to become overly reliant on the translation. This reduces their exposure to the original language and limits their English vocabulary development (Kuppens, 2010).

c) Theoretical Basis

Three complementary theories support the effectiveness of using English movies with English subtitles as a context for vocabulary learning.

According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), language is acquired through comprehensible input that is slightly above the learner's current proficiency level ($i+1$). Watching movies with English subtitles provides this kind of input, as students can understand the meaning through visuals and the storyline while simultaneously developing their listening, reading, and vocabulary skills. The subtitles bridge the gap between students' current proficiency and the authentic language used in the movie.

According to Mayer's (2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, learning is more effective when information is presented through a combination of words and images rather than words alone. Learners process information through two channels: the auditory/verbal channel for spoken language and the visual channel for

processing images and written text. Watching English movies with English subtitles engages both channels, helping learners to connect spoken words with their written forms and visual context. This ultimately facilitates vocabulary comprehension and retention.

Paivio's Dual-Coding Theory (1986) proposes that information is processed by two cognitive systems: the verbal system, which processes language, and the visual system, which processes images and sensory experiences. Learning is more effective when both systems are activated simultaneously. For example, when learners hear a word, read it in a translation, and see it in a scene, they will have a deeper understanding and stronger memory of the word. This dual processing increases the likelihood that vocabulary will be stored in long-term memory (Paivio, 1986).

d) Incidental & Intentional Learning through Movies

Incidental learning occurs when learners passively encounter new words, such as when watching a movie, reading, or listening to a conversation without intending to learn them. However, they still absorb these words because they appear repeatedly in meaningful contexts (Webb, 2007). By contrast, intentional learning occurs when learners actively try to learn words by making lists, memorizing them, or looking up their meanings (Laufer, 2005).

Watching movies with subtitles is a classic example of incidental learning. Learners are exposed to new vocabulary in real-life situations, enabling them to absorb new words indirectly (Milton & Fitzpatrick, 2013). Incidental vocabulary learning is reinforced when words are encountered repeatedly in different contexts. This strengthens their storage in long-term memory, supporting vocabulary growth and retention (Nation, 2001).

However, incidental and intentional learning can occur simultaneously when watching a movie. Active watching strategies, such as noting down new words and looking them up in a dictionary or repeating dialogue, demonstrate that students can use movies to

intentionally engage with vocabulary (Schmitt, 2000). Context further enriches this process: watching movies with subtitles enables students to observe words in real-life conversations alongside facial expressions, intonation, and cultural cues, helping them to understand the nuances of word meanings (Schmitt, 2000).

e) Watching Patterns

Watching patterns refer to the pattern that people exhibit when watching movies or TV programs. In this study, these patterns provide a descriptive profile of the sample. These are measured through seven indicators: (1) watching frequency (how often students watch English movies with English subtitles); (2) watching duration (how long students watch for in a single session); (3) use of subtitles (how consistent use English subtitles); (4) genre preference (the types of movies watched); (5) platform (the streaming or video service used); (6) watching strategies (conscious behaviors such as rewinding scenes or noting down new words); and (7) motivation (the reasons for choosing to watch English movies with English subtitles).

These seven indicators were measured using descriptive, categorical questions, and analyzed using frequency distributions and percentages. They used to describe the characteristics of the sample population.

3. Perceptions of Vocabulary Knowledge

a) Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge is defined as a person's ability to recognize, understand, and use words in various contexts. It encompasses more than just memorizing word meanings; it also involves understanding word forms and meanings, as well as the ability to use words appropriately in context (Nation, 2001; Schmitt, 2000).

Nation (2001) proposed a comprehensive framework of what it means to know a word. This framework classifies vocabulary knowledge into three main dimensions: form, meaning, and use.

Each dimension captures different yet interrelated aspects of word knowledge. Together, they form the backbone of the vocabulary knowledge indicators in this study. Furthermore, SLA theory emphasizes vocabulary growth, or the gradual expansion of vocabulary through repeated and meaningful input (Ellis, 2008), while Schmitt (2000) highlights vocabulary retention, or the long-term consolidation of learned words in memory.

b) Definition of Perceptions of Vocabulary Knowledge

Perceptions of vocabulary knowledge are a learner's subjective assessment of their ability to recognize, understand, and use words for communication. This assessment reflects the learner's perception of their understanding of the meaning, form, and use of words in various contexts, as well as the number of words they know (Schmitt, 2000).

Unlike objective measures, such as tests that assess the number of correctly identified words, perceptions of vocabulary knowledge depend on learners' confidence and their subjective beliefs about their language abilities (Schmitt, 2000). Perceptions of vocabulary knowledge are crucial for language learning as they are closely linked to motivation and the willingness to communicate. According to Schmitt (2000), learners' confidence regarding vocabulary can influence their participation in speaking, writing, and listening activities in the target language.

In this study, perceptions of vocabulary knowledge are operationalized through the following five indicators: (1) form, (2) meaning, (3) use, (4) growth, and (5) retention. The first three are based on Nation's (2001) framework; growth is grounded in SLA theory (Ellis, 2008; Nation, 2001), and retention is based on Schmitt's (2000) framework. These indicators are measured using a Likert scale (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) (Sugiyono, 2019).

1) Form

According to Nation (2001), knowledge of form encompasses three sub-dimensions: (1) oral form, which is the ability to recognize and produce the correct pronunciation of words; (2) written form, which is the ability to recognize and write correct spellings; and (3) word parts, which is an understanding of prefixes, suffixes, and word roots that contribute to a word's meaning and function. Students can develop knowledge of form by watching English movies with subtitles and listening to and reading the spoken words simultaneously, which reinforces the connection between sound and spelling and draws attention to morphological patterns (Nation, 2001; Mayer, 2009).

2) Meaning

Meaning involves understanding what a word refers to and how it relates to other words (Nation, 2001). This includes: (1) form and meaning, linking word form to its referent, (2) concept and referent, understanding the concept behind a word and the real-world situations it describes, and (3) association, the mental network connecting a word to synonyms, antonyms, and related words. Watching movies provides learners with rich contextual cues such as visual scenes, intonation, and facial expressions that support the construction of word meaning beyond dictionary definitions (Schmitt, 2000).

3) Use

According to Nation (2001), use refers to the ability to use words appropriately in context. This includes three aspects: (1) grammatical function, or how a word behaves syntactically (e.g., noun, verb, or adjective); (2) collocation, or which words frequently appear with a particular word; and (3) usage restrictions, such as register (e.g., formal vs. informal) and situational appropriateness. Movies introduce learners to words used naturally in authentic contexts, allowing learners to observe how

words function in sentences and in different registers (Nation, 2001). This helps students to develop a better understanding of how grammar and pragmatics are used in everyday language.

4) Growth

Growth refers to the gradual increase in the number and depth of words a learner acquires over time through sustained exposure to the target language (Nation, 2001; Ellis, 2008). In SLA theory, vocabulary growth is a key indicator of language development. As input increases, the learner's lexical repertoire expands (Krashen, 1985; Ellis, 2008). Watching English movies with English subtitles provides continuous, high-quality, authentic input that can accelerate vocabulary growth through incidental exposure across various contexts (Webb, 2007).

5) Retention

Retention refers to a learner's ability to store new words in long-term memory and reuse them when needed. Schmitt (2000) argues that retention is influenced by the depth of processing; words encountered in meaningful, multimodal contexts, such as subtitled movies, are processed more deeply than through isolated memorization, resulting in stronger long-term storage. Nation (2001) also notes that repeated exposure to words in various contexts consolidates vocabulary in memory. Additionally, Paivio's Dual Coding Theory (1986) offers a cognitive explanation: simultaneous verbal and visual encoding of a word makes it easier to remember.

B. Previous Studies

In general, research shows that watching English movies with English subtitles can help English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners expand their vocabulary and develop a positive attitude towards learning vocabulary. For example, Rizkiani (2015) found that a group that watched authentic videos with subtitles showed significantly greater improvement in vocabulary mastery. Meanwhile, Habibah et al. (2025) reported that watching subtitled movies increased self-directed learning motivation and confidence in using new vocabulary.

Several studies have highlighted the benefits that students can gain from watching subtitled movies. For example, Wahyuningsih and Fitriah (2023) and Maulida and Warni (2024) found that English-subtitled movies improve vocabulary comprehension and contextual understanding. In contrast, Annisa et al. (2025) identified strategies such as noting new words, using subtitles as a guide, re-watching scenes, and practicing vocabulary in speaking and writing.

Other studies focus on attitudes and overall effectiveness. Pitac et al. (2024), Khasanah and Puspitasari (2023), and Oktapiani et al. (2023) demonstrated that subtitled texts support understanding of meaning and use, and confirmed the usefulness of subtitled movies for learning vocabulary. However, they did not systematically measure students' perception of their vocabulary knowledge.

There is a significant research gap in the absence of descriptive survey studies measuring perceptions of vocabulary knowledge based on the five dimensions of form, meaning, use, growth, and retention among English majors in Bandung. Previous studies have mostly employed experimental designs, used small qualitative samples or failed to systematically apply Nation's (2001) and Schmitt's (2000) frameworks to operationalize perceptions of vocabulary knowledge. This study aims to address this gap by examining how English majors in Bandung perceive their vocabulary knowledge in terms of these five dimensions, and their patterns when it comes to watching English movies with English subtitles.

C. Conceptual Framework

This descriptive study is based on Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), which states that learners acquire a language through exposure to comprehensible input slightly beyond their current level of proficiency. In this study, students' watching patterns, such as watching frequency, watching duration, subtitle usage, genre, platform, strategies, and motivation, are considered forms of input exposure. Through repeated exposure to English movies, students receive auditory, visual, and written input that can support vocabulary processing and help them to develop an understanding of their own vocabulary.

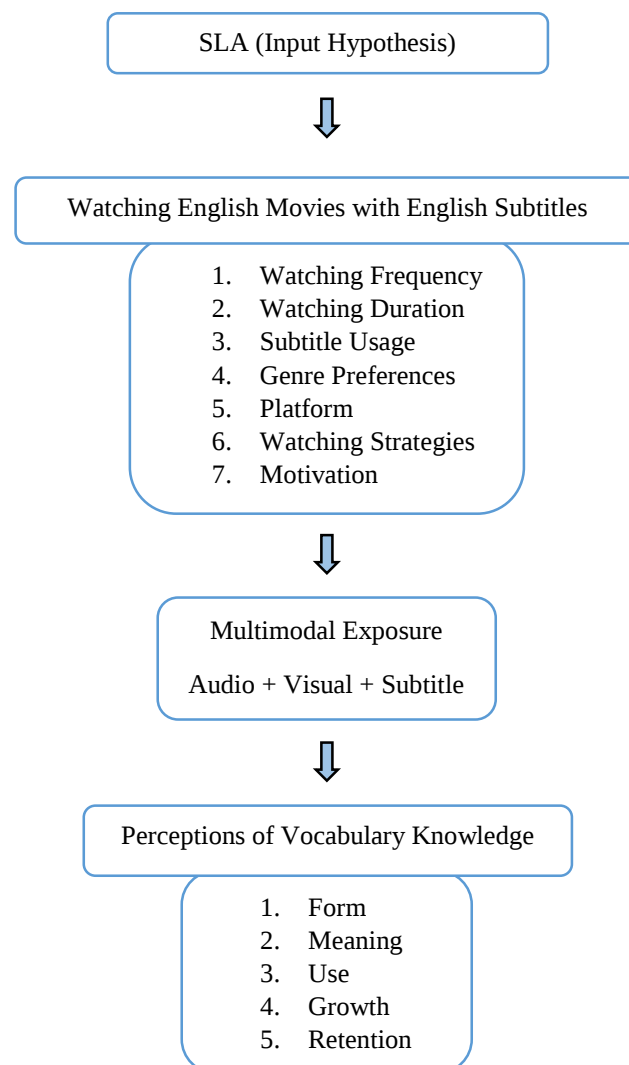


Figure 2.1 *Conceptual Framework*