

# Subtitles and Captions: An Instrument for Intentional or Incidental Learning?

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## Abstract

Audio-visual materials such as TV series and films offer multiple semiotic modes and authentic language input for language learning. This case study sought to depict English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' habits of utilising subtitles and captions for incidental and intentional learning of grammar and vocabulary through on-screen texts, subtitles and captions. The target group was determined through criterion sampling because they were expected to watch English TV series or films to be eligible to take part in the study. A survey and interview were employed to gather data from 113 Turkish EFL learners studying at the tertiary level. The quantitative data were analysed descriptively, while the qualitative data were analysed using a constant comparative method (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The findings revealed that, by watching captioned TV series and films, most of the participants performed intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar, whereas some are engaged in incidental learning. The strategies used by EFL learners for intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar were also provided.

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## 1 Introduction

Since the 1970s, audio-visual inputs, particularly films and TV series, have been exploited as a great resource for exposing English language learners (ELL) to authentic and diverse use of the target language (Faqe, 2017). Given the amount of time spent watching television, English TV series and films provide essential input for any ELL, as Webb (2015) argued, “television might be the greatest source of first language input” (p. 159). Nowadays, the omnipresence of streaming services, such as Netflix and Hulu provide learners with “a plethora of opportunities to engage with authentic audio-visual L2 input” (Sinyashina, 2020a; Fievez et al., 2020, p. 2). This trend prompted English Language Teaching (ELT) scholars to investigate the potential impact of audio-visual input via TV series and films on incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar (Matielo et al., 2015; Fievez et al., 2020; Pattermore & Muñoz, 2020). The bulk of research has focused on the effect

of subtitles and captions on incidental and intentional vocabulary learning (Montero Perez, 2022; Peters & Webb, 2018; Rodgers & Webb, 2019). However, there is a dearth of studies on the influence of captions and subtitles on intentional or incidental learning of grammar (Cintrón-Valentín et al., 2019; Montero Perez, 2022; Pattermore & Muñoz, 2020; Plotnikova, 2017; Van Lommel et al., 2006). As the videos integrate multimodal input (text, sound, and picture), acquiring grammar is feasible while watching captioned TV series and films (Plotnikova, 2017). Overall, audio-visual input such as TV series is useful for both intentional language learning and incidental language acquisition (Kuppens, 2010). Recently, Bektaş Çetinkaya (2021) revealed that Turkish learners' exposure to English through extramural activities, such as watching TV series, plays an important role in determining their vocabulary size. Kaderoğlu and Esquerré (2021) documented that EFL teachers use captions to aid learners in learning vocabulary and grammar. Although EFL teachers often utilise captions in the classroom, there are also quite a few studies on learners' using subtitles or captions for learning vocabulary and grammar outside the classroom which have been undertaken. Considering the multimedia input provided by English TV series and the niche in the literature, the significance of this case study is twofold. First, to what extent EFL learners exploit TV series for learning grammar and vocabulary is revealed. Second, whether they benefit from subtitles and captions as an instrument for intentional or incidental learning of vocabulary and grammar is explored. If it is intentional, the learning strategies are revealed.

## 2 Review of literature

### 2.1 Theoretical background

Two major frameworks underpinning this study are Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2009) and Learning Preferences Hypothesis. The former explicates “how people learn from multimedia presentation” (Kanellopoulou et al., 2019, p. 5). Three core principles posit that “people have separate visual and auditory channels [dual-coding theory], that the channels are limited in capacity [cognitive load theory], and that meaningful learning involves actively selecting, organizing, and integrating incoming visual and auditory information [meaningful learning]” (Mayer, 2009, p. 275). It is postulated that better learning outcomes can be accomplished through the simultaneous display of words and pictures (Mayer, 2014), because learners can establish connections between the two and transfer them actively into their long-term memory (Mayer & Mayer, 2005). As an example of audio-visual input, TV series and films provide learners with a great amount of vocabulary, which must be first recognised and then processed through subtitles. In line with the multimedia learning principle, subtitled or captioned videos allow for two ways of learning English: “narration and on-screen text” (Moon, 2021, p. 25). The subtitles and captions encourage learners to detect unfamiliar vocabulary items, which is the first step in the learning process (Montero Perez et al., 2014). Thus, bi-modal input, simultaneous display of sound and text, was found to result in better learning outcomes than the use of one modality (Charles & Trenkic, 2015). Subtitled media allows for the integration of multiple semiotic modes on the screen, such as subtitles, audio, and movie images, which can aid in the understanding of new words (Borges & da Conceição Silva, 2017). Moreover, the use of captioned or subtitled media is also closely related to the Learning Preferences Hypothesis which puts forward that each student learns in various ways. Hence, it is better to provide the input in a variety of formats (Moon, 2021). To cater for each student's learning style and needs, it is wise to present the input in multiple formats since multiple modalities are considered to foster language learning (Vulchanova et al., 2015). The notion is that learners should be given opportunities to decide on the mode of subtitle that best suits their learning preferences to promote their learning.

### 2.2 Incidental and intentional learning

In incidental learning, learners engage with the content more than the form while “picking up

features of the target language” (Boers, 2018, p. 2). Incidental learning is “a by-product of other cognitive exercises involving comprehension” (Gass, 1999, p. 319) because it “can occur whenever a learner is exposed to L2 input and gains vocabulary or grammar knowledge without explicit instructions or deliberate intention to learn” (Leow & Zamora, 2017, p. 33). As opposed to incidental learning, intentional learning “occurs as a result of a deliberate focus on the language code.” (Boers, 2018, p. 2) because learners have a specific goal to accomplish as an outcome of the learning process. Hulstijn (2013) describes intentional learning as “a deliberate attempt to commit factual information to memory, often including the use of rehearsal techniques, like preparing for a test in school” (p. 1). It is specifically defined as “the deliberate committing to memory of thousands of words (their meaning, sound, and spelling) and dozens of grammar rules” (Hulstijn, 2003, p. 349).

### ***2.3 Defining subtitles and captions***

For the current study, there is a need to distinguish subtitles and captions. While a subtitle refers to “interlingual, translation subtitles in the native language” (Danan, 2004, p.67), a caption is used for “bimodal, the same language, unilingual, or intralingual subtitles.” (Danan, 2004, p. 68; Pelletier, 2012, p.2). In other words, captions are the transcription of a dialogue in the same language, while subtitles are translated speech/dialogues from one language to the other. Although captions were originally employed by the hearing-impaired population, recently, they have been exploited by almost everyone (Addala & Abbas, 2020). Dual subtitle is the simultaneous occurrence of subtitles and captions on the screen (Dizon & Thanyawatpokin, 2021). In addition, the affordances and drawbacks of subtitles and captions have been proposed. To start with the benefits, they provide appealing samples of authentic language, reinforce learners’ confidence, and enhance their language proficiency (Vanderplank, 1988). Plotnikova lists the benefits as “facilitating classroom interaction, providing a better knowledge of grammar structures and incidental acquisition of grammar structures which are not explained in class” (2017, p. 4). As for the drawbacks, subtitles can be “a source of laziness and distraction” because learners may entirely depend on them (Addala & Abbas, 2020).

### ***2.4 Incidental and intentional vocabulary learning through subtitles and captions***

There has been a plethora of research on using subtitles and captions for incidental vocabulary learning. On the other hand, there continues to be a paucity of literature on intentional learning of English vocabulary (Aloqaili, 2018; Garnier, 2014), apart from studies comparing incidental with intentional vocabulary learning.

First, studies on acquiring incidental vocabulary through subtitles and captions were reviewed. In the case of Japanese learners of English, Ashcroft et al. (2018) determined that watching captioned English films can boost incidental vocabulary learning at a recall level, whereas Dizon and Thanyawatpokin (2021) concluded that L1 subtitles, either alone or along with captions, are important to foster vocabulary learning and listening comprehension. In the case of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, Sirmandi and Sardareh (2018) found that captioned films resulted in improved incidental vocabulary gains. Similarly, Baranowska (2020) claimed that captions are more successful than L1 subtitles for incidental vocabulary learning. According to corpus-driven analysis, Dang (2020) advocated employing discipline-related TV episodes as a resource for incidental learning of specialized vocabulary. Medona (2021) examined the on-screen texts under three modes, subtitles, captions, and no subtitles and revealed that Indian ESL learners benefitted the most from captions. According to Peters (2019), captioned videos were valuable for incidental vocabulary gains among Dutch EFL learners, and the simultaneous occurrence of images and words enhances the likelihood of learning target words. In the case of Chinese learners, Teng (2019) concluded that incidental learning can occur if learners encounter the target word three times through captioned videos. According to Hsieh (2020), a full caption with highlighted target word and L1 glosses was effective for learning form and meaning, whereas only captions or audio was ineffective to learn the written

form. Nevertheless, two studies conducted with Dutch EFL learners reported that watching TV programs without subtitles or captions contributes to incidental vocabulary learning “at the level of meaning recall and meaning recognition” (Peters & Webb, 2018, p. 1) and incidental learning of single words and formulaic sequences (Puimège & Peters, 2019). In Türkiye, the impact of subtitled cartoons and closed-captioned films on incidental vocabulary learning was examined at the tertiary level (Karakaş & Sarıçoban, 2012; Yüksel & Tanrıverdi, 2009). They concluded that both control and experimental groups significantly improved their vocabulary knowledge, whereas no significant difference in their vocabulary uptake was identified between the two groups. Karakaş and Sarıçoban (2012) attributed this to the contextualised target words in the cartoons.

As for the studies on intentional learning of vocabulary, in a case study, Milton (2008) revealed that when learners were exposed to subtitled films for four weeks, the rate of vocabulary uptake was substantial. In 2014, Aloqaili carried out a study on intentional vocabulary learning by comparing three conditions, subtitle, caption, and dual subtitles, with 48 Arabic learners of English at the tertiary level. Three experimental groups were exposed to English captions, Arabic subtitles, and dual subtitles (English and Arabic). The learners’ vocabulary gains were significantly better across the groups, but the experimental groups’ vocabulary uptake was significantly better regardless of the subtitle. To continue with the research on both incidental and intentional learning, Pujadas and Muñoz (2019) revealed that the groups exposed to pre-teaching vocabulary showed better performance independent of the subtitle or caption. However, Sinyashina (2020a) found that the “incidental + intentional” group watching captioned video performed better at the recognition and recall level, and written use. While Sinyashina (2020b) reported that the intentional learning group demonstrated better performance at the recognition and retention levels and in written use, Alharthi (2020) concluded that combining incidental and intentional learning through captioned films had a positive impact on vocabulary learning at the recognition and recall level. Recently, Muñoz et al. (2021) revealed that the impact of captions and subtitles is equal regarding vocabulary gains at the elementary level. Overall, although subtitles and captions contribute to lexical knowledge more than on-screen texts (Peters et al., 2016), so far, “the differential effects of various types of subtitles are still inconclusive” (Chan, 2021, p. 9).

## ***2.5 Incidental and intentional grammar learning through subtitles and captions***

There are a handful of studies on the use of subtitles and captions for incidental and intentional learning of grammar. Plotnikova (2017) reported that captioned media significantly contributed to incidental and intentional learning of conditional sentences. Alsadoon (2021) observed similar results in an experimental investigation in which thirty EFL students' data suggested that captions were significantly effective for incidental learning of indefinite subject-verb agreement structure. In experimental studies, Pattermore and Muñoz (2020) found that a Spanish/Catalan group of learners exposed to captioned TV series outperformed the non-caption one in terms of learning gains in grammatical constructions. Lee and Révész (2018, 2020) investigated the impact of textual enhancement in captions on grammar learning, concluding that captions and textual enhancement were beneficial for learning anaphora antecedents and personal pronouns, as well as the use of present perfect and past simple, respectively. Recently, Muñoz et al. (2021) concluded that captions are more efficient for learning language constructions than no-caption at the intermediate level. By comparing incidental and intentional learning of grammar through subtitled films, Van Lommel et al. (2006) revealed that no incidental learning occurred, a single film viewing is insufficient for grammar learning, and better learning can be ensured with explicit grammar teaching integrated with subtitled films. Likewise, Mohammed (2013) recommended that using an eclectic approach along with the subtitled videos was beneficial for explicating a language structure.

We see that EFL teachers use captions in the classroom to support learners’ vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Kaderoğlu & Esquerré, 2021) and EFL learners utilise TV series as an extramural activity to boost their vocabulary (Bektaş Çetinkaya, 2021). As it can be concluded from this brief overview, the number of studies in Türkiye is limited. Therefore, there is a need for further

research on the use of subtitled and captioned TV series and films for incidental and intentional vocabulary and grammar learning in Türkiye. Within the scope of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

RQ 1) How do EFL learners exploit subtitles and captions for improving their grammar and vocabulary?

RQ2) Do EFL learners use subtitles and captions for intentional learning of English vocabulary? If so, what are the strategies employed?

RQ3) Do EFL learners use subtitles and captions for incidental learning of English vocabulary?

RQ4) Do EFL learners use subtitles and captions for intentional learning of English grammar?

If so, what are the strategies employed?

RQ5) Do EFL learners use subtitles and captions for incidental learning of English grammar?

### **3 Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research design**

A case study approach was adopted to depict Turkish EFL learners' habits of exploiting subtitles and captions for incidental or intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar. This case study is descriptive in that it seeks "to document an event, situation, or circumstance of interest" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p.459) and focuses on "real-life cases that are in progress" to "gather accurate information not lost by time" (Creswell, 2013, p. 130). Another aim of adopting a case study was to collect and organize data "to maximise our understanding of the unitary character of the social being or object studies" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 152). The case in focus was the incidental or intentional use of subtitles and captions by EFL learners to improve English grammar and vocabulary because the case can be "a concrete entity, such as an individual, a small group" (Creswell, 2013, p. 130).

#### **3.2 Setting**

In Türkiye, programmes in foreign languages are dubbed on mainstream TV channels, and nowadays, viewers can pay for either web-based platforms such as Netflix and Hulu or the channels that are broadcast via satellite to watch TV series or films with subtitles or captions. (Yüksel & Tanrıverdi, 2009). Although the language proficiency level of the EFL learners who watch these programs varies according to the education they receive, everyone knows English at various levels according to their self-report in the survey. In terms of language policy, students start learning English at the second-grade level, and they have two hours of English each week at the primary school level and four hours at the secondary and high school levels. Some high schools offer English preparatory schools at the ninth-grade level. At private schools, learners would have at least ten hours of English starting from the kindergarten level. At the tertiary level, some programmes require learners to attend preparatory schools that provide 25-hour English classes on average.

#### **3.3 Participants**

The research cohort was recruited from EFL learners at the tertiary level in Türkiye (n= 8.240.997), (HEC, n.d.) through criterion sampling. Participants had to be Turkish tertiary-level students who watched English TV series and films. The survey was shared on social media platforms and forwarded to our colleagues to share it with their students. Voluntary participants who fit the aforementioned criteria filled in the survey. Initially, 116 learners joined the study, but three were eliminated due to nationality and graduation. Table 1 demonstrates demographic data on 113 Turkish EFL learners.

**Table 1. Demographic information on EFL learners**

<i>Gender</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Female	84	74.3
Male	28	24.8
Prefer Not to say	1	1
<i>Age</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Survey	21.26	3.44
Interview	22.6	2.5
<i>The Universities EFL Learners Studying</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
State University	36	31.9
Foundation University	77	68.1
<i>How long have EFL learners been watching English TV series and films?</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1-3 years	12	10.6
4-6 years	33	29.2
7-9 years	44	39
More than 10 years	24	21.2
<i>Use of subtitles or captions while watching English TV series/ films</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	68	60.2
No	8	7.1
Sometimes	37	32.7
<i>Frequency of using subtitles/captions to practice English outside the classroom</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Always	16	14.2
Often	36	31.9
Sometimes	33	29.2
Rarely	21	18.6
Never	7	6.2
<i>English Language Proficiency Level</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Beginner	1	0.9
Elementary	4	3.5
Pre-Intermediate	1	0.9
Intermediate	16	14.2
Upper-Intermediate	34	30.1
Advanced	30	26.5
Not Stated	27	23.9

According to survey data, e-mails for interviews were sent to all participants who filled in the survey. Based on their responses to the survey, twelve voluntary interviewees, ranging in age from 20 to 30, with a mean age of 21.26 (SD=2.5), were categorised into intentional and incidental groups (Table 2). The semi-structured interviews were carried out online via Zoom meetings in Turkish or English, depending on their preference. The interviews lasted between six to fourteen minutes.

**Table 2. EFL Learners' Age, Major, Incidental & Intentional Learning Behaviour, & Interview Durations**

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Grammar</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Interview Duration</b>
<b>Jane</b>	20	Psychology	Incidental	Incidental	06:21
<b>Eva</b>	22	Chemistry	Incidental	Incidental	09:21
<b>Rosa</b>	30	Psychology	Incidental	Incidental	11:04
<b>Emma</b>	21	English Language Teaching	Incidental	Incidental	07:50
<b>Michael</b>	21	English Language Teaching	Incidental	Intentional	12:04
<b>Jennifer</b>	25	Computer Engineering	Incidental	Intentional	12:27
<b>Betty</b>	22	English Language Teaching	Incidental	Intentional	14:28

**Table 2. EFL Learners' Age, Major, Incidental & Intentional Learning Behaviour, & Interview Durations (Continued)**

Interviewee	Age	Major	Grammar	Vocabulary	Interview Duration
Sam	23	English Language Teaching	Incidental	Intentional	13:35
Jessica	21	Medicine	Intentional	Intentional	08:25
Bella	21	English Language Teaching	Intentional	Intentional	08:26
Arthur	23	English Language Teaching	Intentional	Intentional	09:13
Mona	23	English Language Teaching	Intentional	Intentional	08:16

### 3.4 Data collection

Two data collection tools, a survey, and semi-structured interviews, were employed. The survey “provides descriptive, inferential, and explanatory information” (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 334), while interviews “cast further explanatory insight into survey data” (p. 506).

The items for the survey and interview were formulated by the first author according to the previous research (Addala & Abbas, 2020; Jahanyfard, 2015; Sadiku, 2019; Wang, 2016). Expert opinion on the instruments was obtained from four scholars to ensure content and construct validity, and the instruments were updated. The piloting of the survey was conducted with 30 senior students at the English Teaching Programme in Türkiye representing the target population, as suggested in the relevant body of literature (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). The unclear items were then revised based on their feedback. The survey was shared on a public Facebook group of which many university students are members, and with the students studying at the faculty of education where the first author is working as a research assistant. Our colleagues were also asked to share the survey with the target cohort with whom they are familiar. The survey aimed at gathering demographic data, data on EFL learners' preferences for subtitles and captions, and data on learners' preferred mode of subtitle and caption for incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar (Appendix A). To evaluate the reliability of the scale in parts B and C including seven items each, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated and found to be .909 and .945 respectively for parts B and C, indicating that the instrument was reliable. The semi-structured interview contained ten items for gaining in-depth insights into EFL learners' habits of using subtitles and captions for incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar in English (Appendix B).

Having obtained ethical approval from the Social and Humanities Scientific Research Ethics Committee, the participants were first sent the consent form because participation was on a voluntary basis. Based on the survey administered through Google Forms to 113 EFL learners at the tertiary level in Türkiye, the first author conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 students in a one-on-one style. The first author categorised the interviewees according to their learning behaviour, incidental and intentional, for grammar and vocabulary. The semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded via Zoom meetings. To eliminate any ethical concerns, pseudonyms were assigned to participants to address them.

### 3.4 Data analysis

The quantitative data were descriptively analysed through SPSS version 25, and the frequencies and percentages were computed. After the verbatim transcription of the qualitative data, the transcripts were translated into English by the first author. The constant comparative method was used to analyse the interview data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this method, each code taken from the data collection is compared to the other codes emerging. Next, emerging codes were put into themes by analysing the data in depth (Creswell, 2009). In addition, a colleague holding a B.A. in ELT and an M.A. in Educational Technologies, and the first author, coded the data independently, and intercoder reliability was calculated to ensure the reliability of the data analysis procedure and was found to be .089, which is sufficient for agreement among multiple coders (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## 4 Findings

This study examined the use of subtitles and captions by Turkish EFL learners to improve vocabulary and grammar, either intentionally or incidentally. The quantitative and qualitative findings are presented in the following two parts.

### 4.1 *Incidental and intentional vocabulary learning through subtitles and captions*

This part contains the findings on whether EFL learners perform incidental or intentional learning of vocabulary in their choice of subtitles and captions. If the latter is the case, their learning strategies are provided. The learners were categorised into two, incidental and intentional. When they have trouble understanding the words or expressions, learners who keep watching TV series/films ( $n=36$ , 31.9%) perform incidental learning, whereas learners who use some strategies to understand these words ( $n=77$ , 68.1%) engage in intentional learning.

#### 4.2.1 *Quantitative data*

Table 3 shows that to learn vocabulary, the incidental group preferred subtitles/captions always ( $n=17$ , 47.2%) and sometimes ( $n=13$ , 36.1%) while six did not use either (16.7%). Subtitles or captions were favoured by the intentional group always ( $n=51$ , 66.2%) and sometimes ( $n=22$ , 28.6%), whereas four did not turn on them (5.2%).

**Table 3. Do you use subtitles or captions to learn vocabulary?**

Learning Behaviour		<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Incidental Learning (N=36)	Yes	17	47.2
	No	6	16.7
	Sometimes	13	36.1
Intentional Learning (N=77)	Yes	51	66.2
	No	4	5.2
	Sometimes	22	28.6

The incidental group tried to match subtitles/captions with what is said always ( $n=26$ , 72.2%) and sometimes ( $n=5$ , 13.9%), while five learners (13.9%) did not attempt to associate the subtitle with the speech (Table 4). They found it difficult to grasp the words in the TV series or films all the time ( $n=7$ , 19.4%) and sometimes ( $n=20$ , 55.6%), whereas nine learners (25%) had no problems. In the intentional group, most of the learners strived to link subtitles/captions to what is said all the time ( $n=59$ , 76.6%) and sometimes ( $n=14$ , 18.2%), while only four learners (5.2%) did not correlate the subtitle with the speech. Some have trouble understanding vocabulary while viewing English TV series and films without subtitles or captions all the time ( $n=11$ , 14.3%) and sometimes ( $n=48$ , 62.3%), whereas eighteen (23.4%) do not face any challenges.

**Table 4. Comparison of Learning Behaviour in different scenarios**

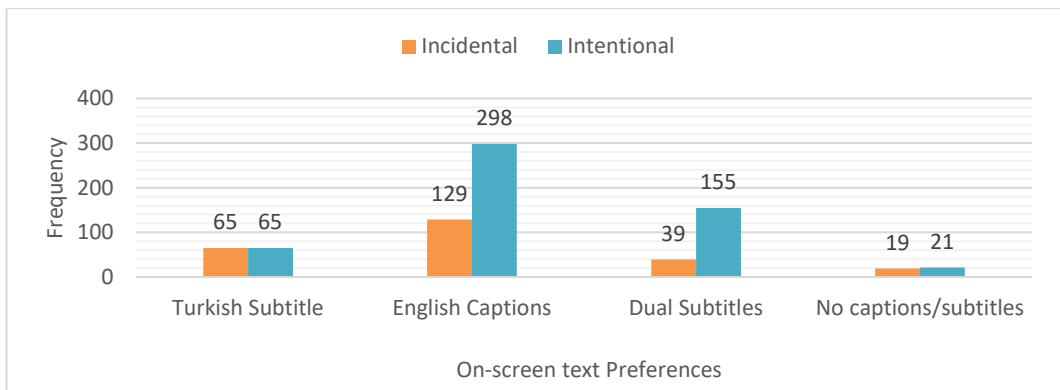
Survey Item	Learning Behaviour	<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
Do you try to find a match between what is said and what is in subtitles or captions?	Incidental Learning	Yes	26	72.2
		No	5	13.9
		Sometimes	5	13.9
	Intentional Learning	Yes	59	76.6
		No	4	5.2
		Sometimes	14	18.2



*Table 4. Comparison of Learning Behaviour in different scenarios (Continued)*

Survey Item	Learning Behaviour		n	Percentage
Do you find difficulties in grasping English vocabulary while watching English TV series and films without subtitles/captions?	Incidental Learning	Yes	7	19.4
		No	9	25
		Sometimes	20	55.6
	Intentional Learning	Yes	11	14.3
		No	18	23.4
		Sometimes	48	62.3

As presented in Figure 1, while watching English TV series/films to learn vocabulary, the most preferred on-screen text of the incidental group is captions (n=129), Turkish subtitle (n=65), dual subtitle (n=39), and no subtitle/caption (n=19), respectively. To learn vocabulary, the intentional group favoured watching English TV series/films with captions (n=298), followed by dual subtitles (n=155), Turkish subtitles (n=65), and no subtitle/caption (n=21).

**Fig. 1. EFL learners' subtitle and caption preferences for learning vocabulary**

#### 4.2.2 Qualitative data

As Table 5 above shows, EFL learners have been using English captions because they can see the spelling of the word (n=6) and there is no direct equivalent of some English words in Turkish (n=4). They use it to learn terminology (n=3), comprehend spoken language (n=2), and expand their vocabulary (n=2). They wanted to challenge themselves (n=2) because Turkish subtitles make them read the subtitles and move on with the film. One learner chose English captions intending to feel part of the target culture. A learner with a higher level of proficiency in English chose English captions over Turkish subtitles. One learner believed that English captions made vocabulary learning memorable. Four learners believed that Turkish subtitles were useful for comprehension. One learner preferred Turkish subtitles for learning terminology, while another used them for comparing English speech with Turkish translation. A learner with a lower level of proficiency in English chooses Turkish subtitles, and one believes that if the translation is of quality, Turkish subtitles can be effective for learning vocabulary. Two interviewees who were engaged in intentional learning stated that they chose dual subtitles to compare the English equivalent of the word with the Turkish one and to promote their understanding. Two learners, one from the incidental group and the other from the intentional group, stated that they did not use captions or subtitles because they could understand the words only by listening and did not intend to learn words through them.

**Table 5. The EFL learners' subtitle and caption preferences in learning vocabulary**

<b>English captions (n)</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Seeing the spelling (n=6)	"..when someone is speaking in a TV series or movie, I see it because I follow the subtitles at the same time" [Emma, I]
No direct equivalent in Turkish (n=4)	"I easily recognise words with English subtitles because sometimes translators use very different words to translate these words into Turkish, sometimes they don't give the right meaning." [Bella, I]
Learning terminology (n=3)	"..maybe if it's like a science fiction movie where a spaceship is involved, I can learn some scientific terminology etc. So yes, I believe that it helps learning vocabulary a lot" [Michael, I]
Understanding spoken language (n=2)	"I think I do without noticing because for example, I watch something without the captions and then I watch it again with captions and I realise like some jokes that I've missed, like some puns. So I think it contributes." [Eva, I]
Learning more words (n=2)	"I would definitely keep watching them with captions because, uhm, watching them with captions, uh. It has helped me more when learning vocabulary as I told you, I used to watch series with Turkish subtitles and back then. I couldn't improve my vocabulary this effectively. So, I would keep on watching with captions." [Michael, I]
Challenge oneself (n=2)	"but when there are English subtitles, I will inevitably force myself to understand it more. The more I challenge my mind, the more it will become open to learning." [Jessica, I]
Feeling part of the target culture (n=1)	"In other words, they are translated according to our culture, some words and sentences, you know, I don't want it, how would I answer it in English as if I was a member of that culture too, you know how I would answer it in English without thinking in Turkish, so I will continue to watch it with English subtitles from now on." [Arthur, I]
Higher level of proficiency in English (n=1)	"I think after, uh, like intermediate levels, it is better to watch with captions because, uh you already can figure out the meaning of a word from the context..." [Eva, I]
Make vocabulary learning memorable (n=1)	"Yes, because I can hear the words and see the spelling. It was good in terms of its spelling and in terms of keeping it in mind." [Emma, I]
<b>Turkish subtitles</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Useful for comprehension (n=4)	"I can't understand it in English, frankly, I don't know. Maybe it may sound silly, but I can learn very well in Turkish subtitles...After all, I think I understand Turkish better because it is my mother tongue." [Rosa, I]
Learning terminology (n=1)	"when it comes to a higher level, for example, if I am watching a documentary, maybe I will use Turkish subtitles there because there are terminological things." [Emma, I]
Comparing English speech with Turkish translation (n=1)	"At least when it is Turkish, I try to find a match between Turkish subtitles and the speech. It helps in that way." [Jane, I]
Lower level of proficiency (n=1)	"uh, I mean in I don't know in different levels maybe for a beginner person, Turkish subtitles would be more helpful." [Eva, I]
Quality translation (n=1)	"Of course, if it's a very good translation, Turkish can also help with this." [Jessica, I]
<b>Dual subtitles</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Comparing English and Turkish equivalent (n=1)	"Actually, I prefer dual subtitles because when I see the Turkish subtitle of the word I don't know its English." [Mona, I]
To understand better (n=1)	"I prefer dual subtitles .....to understand the subject clearly" [Mona, I]

**Table 5. The EFL learners' subtitle and caption preferences in learning vocabulary (continued)**

No subtitle/caption	Sample Quote
No intention of learning English words through subtitle/caption ( <i>n</i> =1)	"I think that I will be ready enough to watch it to watch the series films Uh, without captions or subtitles to expand my vocabulary knowledge because I'm mostly familiar with the active words used in the daily conversations, but as for the passive words that are used in the like series fins, I'm also I can also say that I have a good decent word knowledge yeah." [Sam, I]
Interview: I; Survey: S; Participant: P	

As a learning strategy to learn vocabulary through on-screen texts (See Table 6), EFL learners mostly looked up the definition in a dictionary (*n*=49). Some kept a vocabulary notebook (*n*=27) and included sample sentences in their notebook (*n*=16). While some (*n*=12) attempted to deduce the meaning from the context, others (*n*=10) relied on translation to discover the meaning. To learn vocabulary, nine learners solely relied on subtitles and captions, while eight others rewinded the parts, including the words in the TV series. Six of them sought to review their notes or wordbooks regularly, while five others used Quizlet to memorize the words. Five other learners were checking the pronunciation again, and three learners were looking for the synonyms. Another three learners tried to code the word with their abbreviations to keep the word in their minds. There is one learner who used flashcards, another who benefitted from story-based learning, and one who used the Cambridge Dictionary to keep an online word list.

**Table 6. The strategies used by EFL learners to learn vocabulary from TV series and films**

Strategies ( <i>n</i> )	Sample Quotes
Checking dictionary ( <i>n</i> =49)	"I just I generally pause the video or film or series and then I just look it up in the dictionary. I try to look it up in the dictionary with the English equivalent, not the Turkish one." [Sam, I]
Keeping a notebook ( <i>n</i> =27)	"I take notes in my vocabulary notebook and rehearse them once every week if I have the time." [Michael, I]
Sample sentences ( <i>n</i> =16)	"If the sentence is a meaningful sentence, I write it directly in response to that sentence in the TV show or movie, to see how it is used. ... and when I read that sentence, a line from that TV series or movie comes to my mind and I remember the word more quickly." [Bella, I]
Guess from the context ( <i>n</i> =12)	"If I noticed a word or didn't turn on the Turkish subtitles, I first think about what it might be. I try to figure out the meaning based on the previous and the next sentence." [Betty, I]
Translation ( <i>n</i> =10)	"if I still don't get it, I turn on the English subs and translate the word to my native language..." [P98, S]
Using subtitles/captions ( <i>n</i> =9)	"Watching the series with English subtitles" [P51, S]
Rewinding the part in the TV series ( <i>n</i> =8)	"First of all, I look at the sentence structure and if I see words I've never heard of, I stop. If I don't understand, I watch that part again" [Bella, I]
Revision ( <i>n</i> =6)	"I take notes in my vocabulary notebook and rehearse them once every week if I have the time.." [Michael, I]
Memorization ( <i>n</i> =5)	"I note them on my phone with their meanings then prepare a Quizlet list to memorize them." [P33, S]
Checking the pronunciation ( <i>n</i> =5)	"Other than that, I practice the pronunciation of that word as if I was using it myself, I think, then create a sentence and this sentence does not go out of my mind easily." [Jessica, I]
Synonyms ( <i>n</i> =3)	"Then, if I don't understand again or sometimes there are words with a very high level, I look at its synonyms" [Bella, I]

**Table 6. The strategies used by EFL learners to learn vocabulary from TV series and films (continued)**

Strategies (n)	Sample Quotes
Coding the words with abbreviations (n=3)	“Assuming I understand, I try to find ways I can abbreviate the word myself, let's say, here is the abbreviation of the word brother as bro, and I try to find the popular culture abbreviation of that word.” [Jessica, I]
Flashcards (n=1)	“Flashcards” [P110, S]
Story-based learning (n=1)	“Story based learning.” [P110, S]
Keeping online wordlist on Cambridge Dictionary (n=1)	“I am trying to use the collocations there by using the words directly in the Cambridge dictionary or I ... write the meaning from the English-English dictionary.” [Mona, I]

### 4.3 Incidental and intentional grammar learning through subtitles and captions

This part contains the quantitative and qualitative findings on whether EFL learners engage in intentional or incidental learning behaviour when selecting subtitles and captions in learning grammar. Their learning strategies were provided if they intended to learn grammar through subtitles and captions. The learners were categorised according to their learning behaviour, incidental and intentional learning. Based on what they did when they had trouble understanding the language structures, learners who kept watching TV series/films (n= 46, 40,7%) were put into the incidental group, whereas learners who used some strategies to grasp the meaning better (n= 67, 59,3%) were categorised in the intentional group.

#### 4.3.1 Quantitative data

The incidental group mostly did not favour subtitles/captions for learning grammar (n=23, 50%), however, some preferred subtitles/captions always (n=13, 28.3%) and sometimes (n=10, 21.7%) (Table 7). In the intentional group, the number of students (n=26, 38.9%) who always preferred subtitles or captions to learn grammar was nearly comparable to the number of students who sometimes preferred subtitles and captions (n=25, 37.3%). Sixteen of them did not have the subtitles or captions turned on (23.9%).

**Table 7. Do you use subtitles or captions to learn grammar?**

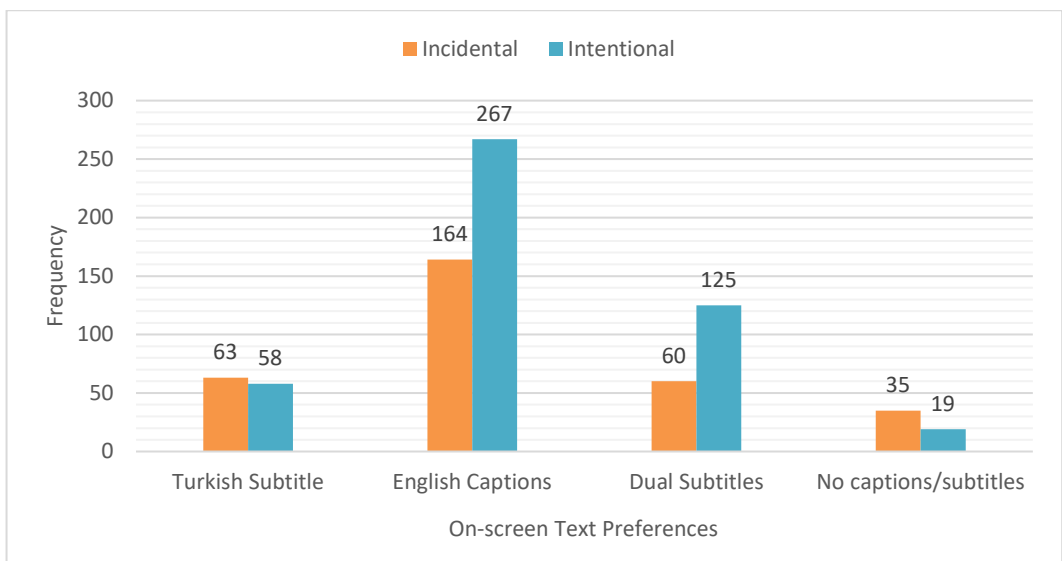
Learning Behaviour	Response	n	Percentage
Incidental Learning (N=46)	Yes	13	28.3
	No	23	50
	Sometimes	10	21.7
Intentional Learning (N=67)	Yes	26	38.8
	No	16	23.9
	Sometimes	25	37.3

The incidental group sought to match subtitles/captions with what was said always (n=34, 73.9%), while five learners attempted to associate the subtitle with the speech either sometimes (13.9%) or never (13.9%) (Table 8). Eighteen learners (39.1%) had no trouble grasping language structures without on-screen texts in TV series/films, whereas some found it difficult to grasp the language structure in the TV series or films sometimes (n=20, 43.5%) and all the time (n=8, 17.4%). Most of the intentional group attempted to link subtitles/captions to what is said all the time (n=46, 68.7%) and sometimes (n=15, 22.4%), while only six learners (9%) did not attempt to associate the subtitle with the speech. While viewing English TV series and films without subtitles or captions, some had difficulties understanding grammar sometimes (n=39, 58.2%) and always (n=13, 19.4%) whereas fifteen (22.4%) had no trouble.

**Table 8. Comparison of Learning Behaviour in different scenarios**

Survey Item	Learning Behaviour		<i>n</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Do you try to find a match between what is said and what is in subtitles or captions?	Incidental Learning	Yes	34	73,9
		No	6	13
		Sometimes	6	13
	Intentional Learning	Yes	46	68,7
		No	6	9
		Sometimes	15	22,4
Do you find difficulties in grasping English vocabulary while watching English TV series and films without subtitles/captions?	Incidental Learning	Yes	8	17,4
		No	18	39,1
		Sometimes	20	43,5
	Intentional Learning	Yes	13	19,4
		No	15	22,4
		Sometimes	39	58,2

As presented in Figure 2, while watching English TV series/films to learn grammar, the incidental group mostly preferred captions ( $n=164$ ), followed by subtitles ( $n=63$ ), dual subtitles ( $N=60$ ), and no subtitle/caption ( $n=35$ ). For learning language constructions, respectively, captions ( $n=267$ ), dual subtitles ( $n=125$ ), subtitle ( $n=58$ ), and no subtitle/caption (19) were favoured by the intentional group.

**Fig. 2. EFL learners' subtitle and caption preferences for learning grammar**

#### 4.3.2 Qualitative data

Table 9 presents EFL learners' reasons for their choice of viewing mode for learning grammar in English. EFL learners preferred English captions because they could see the language structure in written form ( $n=11$ ) and there were syntactical differences between English and Turkish languages ( $n=11$ ). One learner believed English captions made the language structure more memorable, while another used them to learn daily language and fixed expressions. Three learners utilised Turkish subtitles because they struggled with understanding English grammar, whereas two learners wanted to see the equivalent of English sentences in their mother tongue. There was only one learner who preferred dual subtitles because comparing English and Turkish equivalents would be efficient.

The incidental group noted that neither the subtitles nor the captions were beneficial because the actors are using daily language and abbreviations too much ( $n=4$ ), and the thick accent also prevented them from capturing the language structure ( $n=1$ ). Three had no intention of using either captions or subtitles to learn English grammar.

**Table 9. The EFL learners' subtitle and caption preferences in learning grammar**

<b>English captions (<i>n</i>)</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Seeing the language structure in written form ( $n=11$ )	"I usually prefer English subtitles because it makes it easier for me to see sentence structures." [Bella, I]
Structural difference between English and English ( $n=11$ )	"I think the English subtitles are even more helpful because there are huge differences between Turkish grammar and English grammar, and when translating, they usually translate to capture the meaning. Therefore, it is not possible to see the grammar when I watch it with Turkish subtitles." [Bella, I]
Make the form more memorable ( $n=1$ )	"I remember sentence structures better, so I think English subtitles are helpful" [Betty, I]
Learning daily language ( $n=1$ )	"I'm not very good at daily language. I learned the daily spoken language there. It has been very useful for me." [Rosa, I]
Learning fixed expressions ( $n=1$ )	"You know, when a question like this is answered with a pattern like this, or when it is asked in a certain structure, you answer that way, you know" [Arthur, I]
<b>Turkish subtitle (<i>n</i>)</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Difficulty in comprehending English grammar ( $n=3$ )	"If it is at a more advanced level to improve grammar, I may prefer Turkish because as I said, I will hear it again, but at least I will see the meaning of Turkish there, because grammar is a bit confusing subject especially, I mix it up and I had to sit down and study to learn it. I need to do something like rote-learning. If I will learn from the series, I prefer Turkish subtitles." [Emma, I]
Want to see Turkish equivalent for language structures ( $n=2$ )	"but when it comes to grammar, I think I may take a look at the Turkish subtitle for a moment and then go back to English in order to learn the pattern in a comparative manner." [Arthur, I]
<b>Dual subtitle</b>	<b>Sample Quotes</b>
Comparing English and Turkish equivalent ( $n=1$ )	"English subtitles are more grammatically efficient because the Turkish translation may not be complete. So, I can understand better when both are equally present." [Mona, I]
No caption/subtitle	Sample Quotes
Not helpful because it is daily language ( $n=4$ )	"But I think you can't learn grammar directly from a series, it seems to me that they use abbreviations a lot anyway. In other words, since it is a daily spoken language, I think it is not enough to teach grammar" [Rosa, I]
Not helpful because of accent ( $n=1$ )	"..sometimes people, or if you are watching a movie or drama with heavy accent so like for example it's in Ireland or it's in Scotland, or it's some country that they have a really heavy accent and like they are using the shortened versions of its abbreviations, a bit like the pronunciation is different, so then it's not that reliable source to learn the grammar" [Jennifer, I]
No intention of using captions for learning grammar ( $n=3$ )	"Yeah, I don't think I will use captions for that, but to just listening to it will be helpful, I think." [Eva, I]

The strategies used by EFL learners to learn English grammar through captions or subtitles are listed in Table 10 below. Mostly, they checked the language structure using various methods ( $n=12$ ). Some took notes of unfamiliar language structures ( $n=8$ ) while some watched videos about the language structure ( $n=5$ ). Five learners studied the grammar point, whereas four learners replayed the part, including the structure, to figure out the form. There were three learners who used translation

and three learners who used subtitles or captions to learn the grammar. Three learners looked for sample sentences including the target structure, whereas one learner was making a deliberate attempt to use the structure on different platforms, such as Discord.

**Table 10. The strategies used by EFL learners to learn grammar from TV series and films**

Strategies ( <i>n</i> )	Sample Quotes
Checking the grammar structure ( <i>n</i> =12)	"I just google it basically." [P83, S]
Taking notes of unfamiliar language structures ( <i>n</i> =8)	"When I look at it from a grammatical point of view, I take notes in the same way the sentences are used there. If I see a new style, for example, if I saw noun close being used in a different way, I note it that way." [Mona, I]
Watching a video about the structure ( <i>n</i> =5)	"It is more beneficial to read a few articles or watch a few videos about it" [Jessica, I]
Studying the grammar structure ( <i>n</i> =5)	"...because grammar is a bit confusing subject especially, I mix it up and I had to sit down and study to learn it. I need to do something like rote-learning. If I will learn from the series, I prefer Turkish subtitles." [Emma, I]
Replaying the part including the grammar ( <i>n</i> =4)	"..Then if I don't understand at all, I'll research later, or I keep saying ok I understand, but I usually prefer to watch it again in the same way." [Bella, I]
Translation ( <i>n</i> =3)	"Translation" [P89, S]
Using subtitle/caption ( <i>n</i> =3)	"Using English subtitles while watching Tv/series/movies." [P110, S]
Looking for sample sentences ( <i>n</i> =3)	"It is more useful to look at examples related to this.." [Jessica, I]
Using the language structures in different platforms like Discord ( <i>n</i> =1)	"..there are English-speaking channels as a place where I put it into practice. I am trying to use an application called Discord there, or even if it is not spoken, I am trying to use it there, or I am trying to ask a question on a different web page using that pattern." [Arthur, I]
Interview: I; Survey: S; Participant: P	

## 5 Discussion

This case study aimed to discover Turkish EFL learners' habits of using subtitles and captions for incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar. The findings are discussed in the context of earlier research.

The data showed that the minority performed incidental learning of vocabulary while the majority were engaged in intentional learning. The fact that the majority in the incidental group preferred subtitles and captions and tried to find a match between subtitles/captions and what is said implies that they are using subtitles/captions for incidental learning of vocabulary. Participants stated that most of the time, they faced challenges in grasping English vocabulary while watching films without subtitles or captions. Similarly, the majority of the intentional group preferred to benefit from subtitles and captions to learn vocabulary, whereas four of them preferred no subtitles/captions. They also tried to find a match between what was said and what was in subtitles/captions. As a viewing mode, both incidental and intentional groups preferred English captions the most when it came to vocabulary learning, which is supported by earlier studies claiming that it is possible to learn vocabulary through English captions (Ashcroft et al., 2018; Baranowska, 2020; Medona, 2021; Peters, 2019; Sirmandi & Sardareh, 2018). This outcome is contrary to that of Hsieh (2020), who found that a full caption with highlighted target words and L1 glosses was effective for learning the form and meaning, whereas only caption or audio was not beneficial for learning the written form. A note of caution is also due here since Teng (2019) concluded that incidental learning could occur if learners encounter the target word three times through captioned videos. In the current study, there are sev-

eral explanations provided by EFL learners for their preference for English captions. English captions provide the spelling, which addresses their visual memory, making vocabulary learning more memorable and facilitating their comprehension of spoken language. This is in line with the study of Peters (2019), who revealed that the simultaneous occurrence of the image and words in captioned videos enhances the likelihood of learning target words. Ultimately, captions would lead to learning more words, as stated by the interviewees. Another reason is that some words do not have direct equivalents in Turkish. They also prefer English captions if their proficiency level is high, or they want to challenge themselves despite their low proficiency. Additionally, if they want to feel part of the target culture, their choice would be English captions. A few learners involved in intentional learning stated that they use English captions (n=3) or Turkish subtitles (n=1) for learning field-specific vocabulary, which is partially supported by Dang (2020), who proposed using discipline-related TV programs as a resource for incidental learning of specialised vocabulary. In addition, as the second and third options, respectively, the incidental group selected Turkish subtitles and dual subtitles, whereas the intentional ones chose dual subtitles and Turkish subtitles, which is in accord with the earlier studies claiming that it is feasible to learn English vocabulary through subtitles (Dizon & Thanyawatpokin, 2021; Milton, 2008), dual subtitles (Aloqaili, 2014). Their choice of subtitled TV series is also shared by Borges and da Conceição Silva (2017), as they asserted that the integration of multiple semiotic modes on the screen, such as subtitles, audio, and movie images, can aid in the understanding of new words. These differences can be explicated with various motives. Learners with a lower level of proficiency in English may choose Turkish subtitles. However, despite the high level of proficiency, if the translation is of quality, Turkish subtitles can be effective for learning vocabulary as well. A possible rationale could be that Turkish subtitles enable learners to compare English speech with Turkish subtitles. This finding can be related to the fact that they can compare the English equivalent of the word with the Turkish one and thus promote their comprehension through dual subtitles. Additionally, both incidental and intentional groups preferred no subtitle/caption the least, which corroborates the earlier studies claiming that it is possible to learn English vocabulary without subtitles and captions (Peters & Webb, 2018; Puimège & Peters, 2019) and that watching TV programs without subtitles or captions contributes to incidental vocabulary learning (Peters & Webb, 2018; Puimège & Peters, 2019). Taken together, these imply that whether they perform incidental or intentional learning, both parties believe that English captions can improve their English vocabulary, which confirms the studies (Karakaş & Sariçoban, 2012; Yüksel & Tanrıverdi, 2009) claiming that gains from incidental and intentional learning are equal in terms of vocabulary uptake. Finally, to learn vocabulary from English TV series and films, EFL students use a myriad of strategies from keeping a vocabulary notebook or online word list to story-based learning. It can be concluded that these vocabulary learning strategies can be exploited to enhance vocabulary uptake while watching English TV series. As earlier studies indicated, an eclectic approach, combining incidental and intentional learning, fosters learners' performance in learning vocabulary (Alharthi, 2020; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019). Nevertheless, whether we should implement incidental or intentional learning first depends on the learner profile and learning styles. This is due to contradictory findings in the literature indicating that the intentional learning group Sinyashina (2020b) and the "incidental + intentional" group Sinyashina (2020a) performed better at recognition and recall levels, as well as in written use.

The second goal was to explore whether EFL learners use subtitles and captions for incidental or intentional learning of English grammar, and if the latter is the case, the strategies employed were presented. The finding was that the majority were engaged in intentional learning of grammar, while there were also some learners demonstrating incidental learning behaviour. The results indicated that learners who prefer subtitles and captions for learning grammar are equal to those who do not. The fact that most of them try to find a match between subtitles/captions and what is said implies that they are using subtitles/captions for incidental learning of grammar. Most of the time, they face challenges in grasping language structures while watching films without subtitles or captions. Most of the intentional group preferred to benefit from subtitles and captions to learn grammar, whereas



sixteen of them preferred no subtitles/captions at all. The fact that most of them try to link subtitles/captions to what is said implies that they are using subtitles/captions intentionally. Many learners face challenges in understanding English grammar while watching films without subtitles or captions, and fifteen learners had no problem. It can be concluded that the majority perform intentional learning behaviour, while some perform incidental learning behaviour when it comes to grammar learning through subtitles or captions. In addition, as a viewing mode, both the incidental and intentional learning groups preferred English captions the most when it comes to learning grammar, which can be supported by earlier studies claiming that incidental and intentional learning of grammar is feasible through English captions (Alsadoon, 2021; Muñoz et al., 2021; Plotnikova, 2017). This outcome is partially consistent with that of Lee and Révész (2018, 2020), who found that captions along with textual enhancement were beneficial for learning grammar. Several reasons were provided by EFL learners for this finding. English captions allow them to see the language structure in written form along with the audio and visual input, which is in agreement with the finding that better learning outcomes are accomplished through bi-modal input (Charles & Trenkic, 2015; Mayer, 2009). Therefore, the participants believed that English captions helped them learn daily language and fixed expressions, and thus made grammar more memorable. As there are syntactical differences between the English and Turkish languages, they choose English captions over Turkish subtitles. Additionally, although there was no pattern, the learners in the incidental group preferred Turkish subtitles and dual subtitles interchangeably as their second and third options, which is not supported by Van Lommel et al. (2006), who revealed that no incidental learning occurred through subtitled films. However, the intentional group chose dual subtitles and Turkish subtitles as their second and third options, which can be corroborated by Van Lommel et al. (2006) and Mohammed (2013), who asserted that better learning can be ensured with explicit grammar teaching integrated with subtitled films. Their choice of Turkish subtitles can be related to the fact that they have difficulty understanding English grammar and want to see the equivalence of English sentences in their mother tongue. Their choice of dual subtitles can be explained by the fact that they want to compare English and Turkish grammar. Lastly, both the incidental and intentional groups chose no subtitles/captions as their last resort to learn grammar, which supports evidence from a previous study by Pattermore and Muñoz (2020), who claimed that learners exposed to captioned TV series outperformed those not captioned in terms of learning gains in grammatical structures. The rationale behind their choice of no subtitle/caption option is offered by EFL learners who believe that neither subtitles nor captions are beneficial for learning grammar because the actors are using daily language and abbreviations too much, and the heavy accent also prevents them from capturing the language structure. Additionally, they did not have any intention of using captions for learning vocabulary or grammar. Finally, to learn grammar from English TV series and films, EFL students employ a variety of strategies from watching videos about the language structure to using the language structure on different platforms like Discord.

## 6 Conclusion

This study set out to unveil Turkish EFL learners' habits of using subtitles and captions for incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar. The findings indicated that while the majority performed intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar through English captions, there were also learners engaged in incidental learning. Although not much, there were some learners in both incidental and intentional learning groups who preferred Turkish subtitles, dual subtitles, and no subtitles/captions. Regarding these findings, the implications, limitations, and future research are discussed respectively.

First, the insights gained from this study may be of assistance to not only ELL, but also English teachers who value TV series and films as language input. As Türkiye is categorised as an expanding circle country (Kachru, 1992), TV series and films are great sources of input for learning English inside and outside the classroom. We see that English teachers make use of captions in the classroom (Kaderoğlu & Esquerré, 2021), but they can also guide their learners to use captions outside the

classroom as an extensive viewing activity (Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019; Webb, 2015) for language learning purposes. Learners can benefit from English captions from the beginning in order to learn vocabulary and grammar because captions along with audio address learners' audio-visual memory, which would make learning more memorable (Charles & Trenkic, 2015; Vulchanova et al., 2015). Adopting an eclectic approach, combining incidental and intentional learning, would reveal better results in learning vocabulary and grammar through watching captioned TV series and films (Alharthi, 2020; Mohammed, 2013; Pujadas & Muñoz, 2019). Constant exposure is also of significance for learning grammar and vocabulary through captioned and subtitled TV series (Van Lommel et al., 2006; Teng, 2019). Depending on EFL learners' strategies, a template for learning vocabulary and grammar was designed as an outcome of this descriptive case study for learners who perform intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar (Appendix C). Alternatively, they can also keep an online wordlist through the Cambridge Dictionary or use Quizlet to create study sets including the target words.

As for limitations, despite the large target population, data were only gathered from 113 learners, due to time constraints. To compensate for this limitation, qualitative data were gathered through interviews. Additionally, the number of students in the incidental group was not equal to the number of learners in the intentional group. Further data can be gathered from more EFL learners from incidental and intentional groups to ensure the generalisability of the findings. As there is a niche in the body of literature carried out in Türkiye despite the increasing amount of exposure to English TV series and films, experimental studies can be conducted comparing incidental and intentional learning of vocabulary and grammar as further study to triangulate the data.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

Part A: Please answer the demographic questions below.

Subtitle: on-screen texts in L1 (Turkish); Caption: on-screen texts in L2 (English).

Dual Subtitles: Both Turkish and English subtitles

1	Gender	
2	Age	
3	Nationality	
4	University	
5	Department	
6	Language Proficiency (Specify the name of the proficiency test if you have taken any recently like IELTS, TOEFL, EPE):	
7	How long have you been learning English?	a. 5-10 years b. 11-15 years c. More than 15 years
8	How long have you been watching English TV series/films?	a. 1-3 years b. 4-6 years c. 7-9 years

		d. More than 10 years
9	How often do you watch English TV series/films?	a. More than one episode a day b. At least once a day c. At least twice a week d. At least once a month e. Other (please specify)
10	Have you noticed any improvements in your English since you started watching these English TV series/films?	a. Yes b. No c. Partly
11	What is your reason for watching English TV series/films? (You may select more than one option.)	a. Entertainment b. Expanding my vocabulary knowledge c. Learning grammatical structures d. Others (please specify):
12	Do you use subtitles or captions while watching English TV series/films?	a. Yes b. No c. Partly
13	Which one do you prefer while watching English films/TV series for enjoyment?	a. Subtitle -L1 b. Caption – L2 c. Dual subtitles d. No caption/subtitle
14	Which one do you prefer while watching English films/TV series for improving your language?	a. Subtitle -L1 b. Caption – L2 c. Dual subtitles d. No caption/subtitle
15	How often do you use subtitles/captions to practice the English language outside the classroom?	a. Always b. Often c. Sometimes d. Rarely e. Never

PART B: Please read the following statements and fill in the survey with the information that most reflects you.

Subtitle: on-screen texts in L1 (Turkish); Caption: on-screen texts in L2 (English);

Dual Subtitles: Both Turkish and English subtitles

1	Do you use subtitles or captions to learn vocabulary?	a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
2	How often do you watch English TV series/ films to learn English language vocabulary?	a. 1-3 hours per week b. 4-6 hours per week c. More than 6 hours per week d. Others (Please specify):
3	Do you find difficulties in grasping English vocabulary while watching English TV series/films without subtitles/captions?	a) Yes b) No c) Sometimes
4	When you watch a subtitled/captioned TV series/ films with words or expressions that are difficult to grasp, what do you do?	a. I just continue watching TV series/films b. I usually continue watching TV series/ films but occasionally I try some strategies

		<p>c. I sometimes continue watching TV series/ films but other times I use strategies</p> <p>d. I usually use strategies but occasionally continue watching TV series/ films</p> <p>e. I always use strategies.</p>
4.1	<b>If you choose options b, c, d, e for question 4, please list the strategies you use to help you through words or expressions that are difficult to grasp.</b>	
5	Do you try to find a match between what is said and what is in subtitles or captions?	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. Sometimes</p>

**Please fill in the parts below by selecting one of the options.**

		Subtitle	Caption	Dual subtitles	No subtitle/caption
6.	I think watching English TV series/films with .... is an effective way to learn vocabulary.				
7.	I prefer .... while watching English TV series/films for improving my vocabulary knowledge.				
8.	English TV series/films with ... make vocabulary learning easier.				
9.	English TV series/films with... helps me understand the vocabulary, unfamiliar idioms, proverbs, slang and phrases better.				
10.	Watching English TV series/films with ... helps me improve my vocabulary and learn authentic expressions.				
11.	English TV series/films with ... make vocabulary learning more memorable.				
12.	I will learn more vocabulary items in English if I use....				

PART C: Please read the following statements and fill in the survey with the information that most reflects you.

Subtitle: on-screen texts in L1 (Turkish); Caption: on-screen texts in L2 (English);

Dual Subtitles: Both Turkish and English subtitles

1	Do you use subtitles or captions to learn grammar?	<p>a. Yes</p> <p>b. No</p> <p>c. Sometimes</p>
2	How often do you watch English TV series/films to learn English grammar?	<p>a. 1-3 hours per week</p> <p>b. 4-6 hours per week</p> <p>c. More than 6 hours per week</p> <p>d. Others (Please specify):</p>

3	Do you find difficulties in grasping English grammar while watching English TV series/films without subtitles/captions?	a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
4	When you watch a subtitled/captioned TV series/films with language structures that are difficult to grasp, what do you do?	a. I just continue watching TV series/films b. I usually continue watching TV series/films but occasionally I try some strategies c. I sometimes continue watching TV series/films but other times I use strategies d. I usually use strategies but occasionally continue watching TV series/films e. I always use strategies.
4.1.	<b>If you choose options b, c, d, e for question 4, please list the strategies you use to help you through language structures that are difficult to grasp.</b>	
5	Do you try to find a match between what is said and what is in subtitles or captions?	a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes

**Please fill in the parts below by selecting one of the options.**

		Subti- tle	Cap- tion	Dual Subti- tles	No subti- tle/ cap- tion
6.	I prefer .... while watching English TV series/films series for learning grammar.				
7.	English TV series/films with ... make learning grammar easier.				
8.	English TV series/films with ... helps me understand the language structures better.				
9.	I think watching English TV series/films with .... is an effective way to learn grammar.				
10.	Watching English TV series/films with ... helps me to improve my understanding of the grammar used in the movies.				
11.	Watching English TV series/films with ... helps me to improve my knowledge of how the authentic language is used in various contexts and settings.				
12.	I prefer .... while watching English TV series/films for improving my grammar.				



## Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Questions

### Interview Protocol Project:

**Time of interview:**

**Date:**

**Place:**

**Interviewer:**

**Interviewee:**

**Position of interviewee:**

(The interviews aim to depict EFL students' habit of using subtitles and captions for intentional and incidental learning of vocabulary and grammar. In this way, the researcher seeks to develop an understanding about the contribution of subtitles or captions to intentional and incidental learning of vocabulary and grammar.)

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions

\*The questions with the asterisks will be posed to the interviewee according to their responses in the survey on their learning behaviour (incidental vs. intentional) they perform while watching English TV series/films.

1. Why do you like to watch TV series/films in English?
2. Do you think the subtitles/captions help you learn new vocabulary? Why or why not?
3. Do you think the subtitles/captions help you learn grammar? Why or why not?
4. (Intentional) Can you elaborate on the strategies you used for learning vocabulary while watching subtitled/captioned TV series/films? \*
5. (Intentional) Can you elaborate on the strategies you used for learning grammar while watching subtitled/captioned TV series/films? \*
6. (Incidental) Do you believe that while watching English TV series/films for enjoyment, your viewing mode preference (subtitle, caption, no caption/subtitle) contributes to your vocabulary knowledge? Why or why not? \*
7. (Incidental) Do you believe that while watching English TV series/films for enjoyment, your viewing mode preference (subtitle, caption, no caption/subtitle) contributes to your grammar knowledge? Why or why not? \*
8. In the future, do you think you will watch English TV series/films with captions or subtitles for expanding your vocabulary knowledge? Why or why not?
9. In the future, do you think you will watch English TV series/films with captions or subtitles for improving your grammar?
10. Are there any questions that you would like to ask to the researcher or any comments that you would like to make?

(Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses.)

**Appendix C: Template for wordbook and grammar Template for wordbook and grammar**

<i>Target word:</i>	
<i>My guess:</i>	
<i>Pronunciation:</i>	
<i>English Meaning:</i>	
<i>Turkish Meaning:</i>	
<i>Synonyms:</i>	
<i>Collocations:</i>	
<i>Sentence in the TV series/film:</i>	
<i>My sentence:</i>	
<i>Notes:</i>	

<i>Target language structure:</i>	
<i>Formation of structure:</i>	
<i>When to use:</i>	
<i>Sentence in the TV series/film:</i>	
<i>Translation into mother tongue:</i>	
<i>My sentence (affirmative):</i>	
<i>My sentence (negative):</i>	
<i>My sentence (question &amp; answer):</i>	
<i>Notes:</i>	