

Original Research Article

## The Impact of Subtitled Videos on Vocabulary Development Among Junior Secondary School Students in Argungu Local Government, Kebbi State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This study examined the effectiveness of subtitled videos in enhancing vocabulary development among Junior Secondary School (JSS II) students in Argungu Local Government, Kebbi State, Nigeria. Using a quasi-experimental design, the research involved 312 students divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received vocabulary instruction through researcher-developed subtitled videos focusing on agriculture and health topics, while the control group was taught using traditional methods. Validated and reliable instruments were employed for data collection, with analysis conducted through mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-tests at a 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed statistically significant improvements in vocabulary achievement among students exposed to subtitled videos compared to those taught through conventional methods ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, no significant differences were found based on gender ( $p = 0.902$ ) or school location ( $p = 0.090$ ), indicating the universal effectiveness of this approach across demographic variables. These results suggest that subtitled videos serve as an equitable and impactful pedagogical tool for vocabulary instruction in diverse educational settings. The study recommends the integration of subtitled videos into English language curricula at the junior secondary level, particularly for vocabulary instruction. Additionally, it advocates for government provision of audiovisual resources to both urban and rural schools to support technology-enhanced learning. These findings contribute to ongoing discourse about innovative language teaching methodologies in resource-constrained environments.

**Keywords:** subtitled videos, vocabulary development, junior secondary schools, multimedia learning, English language instruction.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language involves significant conceptual demands, yet the limited instructional time available to both teachers and students often restricts vocabulary acquisition to a degree that may impair comprehension. Without adequate vocabulary, learners struggle to decode verbal information, hindering their ability to grasp communicated messages effectively. To address this challenge, integrating technology into language instruction has emerged as a promising solution, particularly in teaching vocabulary, which is a foundational component of language proficiency.

As teachers in Kebbi State, the researchers observed that subtitled videos are rarely utilized as pedagogical tools in vocabulary instruction. This gap may stem from limited awareness of their potential impact on students' lexical development. Against this backdrop, this study examines the effect of subtitled videos on vocabulary development among junior secondary school (JSS II) students in Argungu Local Government, Kebbi State, Nigeria. Additionally, it explores whether these effects vary by gender or school location (urban vs. rural).

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The study specifically aims to: (i) compare the mean achievement scores of students taught vocabulary with subtitled videos against those taught through traditional methods; (ii) assess gender-based differences in vocabulary achievement when subtitled videos are employed; and (iii) evaluate the influence of school location (urban or rural) on vocabulary outcomes facilitated by subtitled videos. Therefore, the research seeks to provide empirical insights into the efficacy of multimedia-enhanced vocabulary instruction in understudied contexts.

## 2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section synthesizes existing research on subtitled videos and vocabulary development, emphasizing their role in second language acquisition. It examines the efficacy of multimedia tools in language learning, the theoretical foundations of vocabulary instruction, and the influence of gender and school location on academic performance. The review is geared towards establishing a framework to explore the impact of subtitled videos on junior secondary students in Argungu, Kebbi State, Nigeria; a gap identified in current literature.

### 2.1.1 The Role of Subtitled Videos in Vocabulary Development

Numerous studies have explored the impact of subtitled animation, cartoons, and videos on vocabulary learning and retention among junior secondary school students. Research by Arda (2010) compared traditional grammar and vocabulary instruction with methods incorporating authentic animated cartoons, demonstrating the latter's effectiveness in teaching English to young learners. Similarly, Sydrenko (2010) investigated how input modalities (such as video, audio, and captions) affect vocabulary acquisition, attention, and learning strategies among beginner L2 learners. Other studies, like those by Karakas and Saricoban (2012) and Najah (2013), examined incidental vocabulary learning through subtitled cartoons and animated programs, respectively. Meanwhile, Ingrid (2013) explored subtitles in second language acquisition for Norwegian learners, and Bahman (2014) analyzed movie subtitling's effect on EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

Further contributions include Sofowora's (2014) study on adaptive interactive cartoons in primary schools and Ghadah's (2014) investigation into intentional vocabulary learning via subtitled videos in Saudi Arabia. Collectively, these studies highlight the growing recognition of multimedia tools in language education. However, despite their contributions, none specifically address the effect of subtitled videos on vocabulary development among junior secondary students in Argungu Local Government, Kebbi State, which is the gap this study aims to fill.

### 2.1.2 The Importance of Vocabulary in Second Language Acquisition

Vocabulary development is a cornerstone of second language (L2) learning, directly influencing proficiency in speaking, reading, and comprehension. While there is no universally accepted definition of vocabulary, Lehr, Osborn, and Hiester (cited in Nnenna, 2012) describe it as the "knowledge of words and their meanings." In language education, vocabulary bridges the four core skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) making it indispensable for effective communication.

Limited vocabulary hinders L2 learners' ability to engage meaningfully with the language, as noted by Alqahtani (2015). As highlighted by Sani, *et al* (2017 p. 77), "failure to understand words" is a critical aspect of the *taxonomy of reading difficulties*. This challenge is evident in academic settings; for instance, WAEC Chief Examiners' reports (2010) identified poor vocabulary as a key reason for students' low performance in English. Beyond academics, vocabulary mastery enhances daily communication, enabling learners to interact confidently in real-world contexts, whether in conversation, media consumption, or writing.

Teachers, however, often struggle with vocabulary instruction due to time constraints and the need for creative methodologies among others (Sani, *et al* 2017; Liando, *et al* 2018). To address this, educators increasingly turn to technology-driven approaches, which foster motivation and engagement (Gardner, cited in Hermagustiana & Rusmawaty, 2017). Fortunately, multimedia tools, such as subtitled videos, offer dynamic, context-rich input that aligns with theories emphasizing comprehensible input in language acquisition as emphasized by Talaván (2010).

### 2.1.2 Multimedia and Vocabulary Learning

Advancements in technology have revolutionized language teaching, with multimedia tools like TV, computers, and interactive software providing authentic, engaging materials. As indicated by Sama *et al* (2019 p. 30), "ICT increases the flexibility of delivery of education so that learners can access knowledge anytime and from anywhere. It can influence the way students are taught and how they learn." Videos, in particular, are widely used in classrooms to enhance lexical and grammatical understanding (Gorjian, 2014). Research supports the effectiveness of combining audio and visual inputs, as this dual-channel processing deepens comprehension and aids memory retention (Underwood, cited in Gorjian, 2014).

Movies and subtitled content are especially valuable for vocabulary acquisition. Nasab and Motlagh (2017) argue that films provide rich contextual clues, motivating learners to infer meanings. Subtitles, as a form of audiovisual translation, synchronize written text with spoken dialogue, aiding comprehension for non-native speakers (Khalaf, 2016).

According to Gerzymisch-Arbogast (cited in Gorjian, 2014), subtitling involves translating speech into condensed written text, a process that reinforces word recognition and retention.

Paivio’s (1971) dual-coding theory further explains why subtitled videos are effective: “they engage both verbal and visual cognitive systems, creating stronger memory associations.” It should be noted that cognition is vital in communication as Sama & Sani (2018 p. 23) emphasize that “without cognition, communication is indeed next to impossibility.” Empirical studies support this, showing that multi-sensory input (audio, video, and text) enhances vocabulary learning by presenting words in meaningful contexts (Yuksel & Tanriverdi, 2009).

### 2.1.3 Gender, School Location, and Academic Performance

Academic performance is influenced by multiple factors, including gender, interest, and school location. For instance, Sani & Usman (2018 p. 13) emphasizes that “Learner’s pride on particular discipline of study could positively influence his learning achievements.” Further, studies such as Nuhu & Sani (2017) and Sani & Abdullahi (2020) highlight how students’ attitudes and interest can influence their academic performance.

On the other hand, gender differences in language learning have been widely studied, with socio-cultural stereotypes often shaping expectations. For instance, boys are frequently assigned complex tasks, while girls are directed toward simpler activities, reinforcing perceptions of male dominance in certain fields (Adigun et al., 2015). Research on L2 vocabulary acquisition reveals mixed findings, with some studies indicating gender-based disparities in receptive and productive vocabulary skills.

School location (whether urban or rural) also impacts performance. Urban schools typically benefit from better infrastructure, resources, and teacher quality, whereas rural schools face challenges like limited access to English-language input and educational materials (Joseph & Emmanuel, 2017). Studies, such as Igboegwu and Okonkwo’s (2012), confirm that urban students often outperform rural peers due to these disparities.

## 2.2 Rationale for the Study

Despite extensive research on multimedia-assisted vocabulary learning, no prior study has examined the effect of subtitled videos on junior secondary students in Argungu, Kebbi State. This study addresses that gap by assessing vocabulary development through subtitled content on Agriculture and Health that are, of course, two key curriculum areas. Additionally, it investigates potential differences based on gender and school location, contributing to the broader discourse on equitable language education in diverse settings.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental design to examine the effects of subtitled videos on vocabulary development among junior secondary school students. Following Asika's (2012) framework, this approach allowed for estimating causal impacts of the intervention without random assignment while maintaining control groups to establish cause-and-effect relationships between variables. The design featured two distinct groups: an experimental group receiving instruction through subtitled videos and a control group taught via traditional oral presentation methods. See table 1 below:

**Table 1: List of Groups and the Strategies**

Groups	Pretest	Treatment	Post-Test	Strategies
Experimental Group	√	X	√	English Subtitled Videos
Control Group	√	0	√	Oral Presentation + Vocabulary

Both groups underwent pretesting and posttesting to measure vocabulary gains, with the control group serving to validate that observed effects in the experimental group resulted from the intervention rather than chance.

The study population included all 7,000 Junior Secondary School II students across twenty schools in Argungu Local Government, Kebbi State. Through purposive sampling, 312 students were selected from six schools chosen for their demographic representation and enrollment size. The sample distribution across schools, treatments, and locations is presented in the Table 2 below:

**Table 2: List of Schools with Population and Samples**

S/N	Schools	Samples	Treatment
1.	Government Girl’s Science College, Argungu, (Urban) (F)	50	Experimental
2.	Government Secondary School, Lailaba, Argungu, (Rural) (M)	50	Experimental
3.	Junior Secondary School, Argungu, (Urban) (Mixed)	55	Experimental
4.	Kanta Unity College, Argungu, (Urban) (Male)	50	Control

S/N	Schools	Samples	Treatment
5.	Government Girl’s Secondary School, Alwasw, (Rural) (F)	52	Control
6.	Government Day Secondary School, Natsini, (Rural) (Mixed)	55	Control
	<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>	

Table 2 shows the distribution of sampled students across six schools, with three schools (Government Girl's Science College, Government Secondary School Lailaba, and Junior Secondary School Argungu) serving as experimental groups totaling 155 students, and three schools (Kanta Unity College, Government Girl's Secondary School Alwasw, and Government Day Secondary School Natsini) as control groups with 157 students. The table further breaks down the sample by school type, location, and gender composition.

The demographic characteristics of participants are detailed in Table 3, which presents the distribution of students by gender and school location. The urban schools contributed 155 students (79 male and 76 female), while rural schools accounted for 157 students (86 male and 71 female), providing balanced representation for comparative analysis. The table below:

**Table 3: Distribution of the Students Based on Gender and School Location**

S/N	Urban	Rural	Total
Male	79	86	165
Female	76	71	147
Total	155	157	312

### 3.1 Instrumentation and Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

For data collection, the Researchers’ Developed Vocabulary Learning Test (RDVLT) was specifically created to assess vocabulary knowledge in agriculture and health domains from the JSS II English curriculum. The instrument's development involved rigorous validation processes with experts from the departments of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology in Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, who provided recommendations to ensure age-appropriate language and content validity. Reliability testing through test-retest methodology with a two-week interval yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.68, establishing acceptable consistency for the study's purposes.

The intervention spanned six weeks, with researchers and trained assistants conducting forty-five minute sessions twice weekly. The experimental group received vocabulary instruction through specially designed subtitled videos, while the control group was taught using conventional oral presentation methods. Data collection occurred in three phases: initial pretesting during the first week, followed by the six-week instructional intervention, and concluding with posttesting one week after treatment completion to measure vocabulary acquisition.

Analysis of collected data employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated to determine achievement levels across groups, while independent samples t-tests were applied to examine the statistical significance of observed differences at the 0.05 alpha level. This analytical approach enabled robust evaluation of the intervention's effectiveness while accounting for variables such as gender and school location.

## 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Research Question 1: Effectiveness of Subtitled Videos Versus Traditional Methods in Vocabulary Instruction

The analysis of collected data employed t-tests to examine the three null hypotheses. For Research Question 1, comparing achievement scores between students taught with subtitled videos versus traditional methods, Table 4 presents the pre-test and post-test results. Initial pre-test scores showed the control group (traditional method) slightly outperforming the experimental group with mean scores of 8.339 and 8.073 respectively, representing a marginal achievement gain of 0.266 for the control group. However, post-test results revealed a notable reversal, with the experimental group (subtitled videos) achieving a mean score of 15.703 compared to the control group's 14.382, demonstrating a 1.321 point advantage for the video-based intervention. The standard deviations of 3.325 for the experimental group and 3.025 for the control group indicated comparable score distributions within each group. See Table 4:

**Table 4: Mean Achievement Scores of Students Taught Vocabulary with Subtitled Videos (Experimental Group) and those Taught Using Traditional Method (Control Group)**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Pre-test	Std	Achievement Gain	Mean Score Post-test	Std	Achievem. Gain
<b>Experimental</b>	150	8.073	1.7764	.266	15.703	3.325	1.321
<b>Control</b>	162	8.339	1.5610		14.382	3.025	
<b>Total</b>	312						

To determine the statistical significance of these differences, an independent samples t-test was conducted, as shown in Table 5. The analysis yielded a t-value of 3.672 with 310 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.000, which falls below the 0.05 alpha level. This result led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H01), confirming a statistically significant difference in achievement scores favoring the subtitled video approach over traditional vocabulary instruction methods. The substantial effect size, evidenced by both the mean difference and statistical significance, suggests that subtitled videos represent a more effective instructional strategy for vocabulary development among junior secondary students in this context. See Table 5:

**Table 5: t-test Score of Post-Test Results for Experimental and Control Groups**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Post-tests	Std	Df	t-cal	P-value	Decision at p < 0.05
Experimental	150	15.703	3.325	310	3.672	0.000	Significant
Control	162	14.382	3.025				
Total	210						

**p > 0.05 (Significant)**

The findings demonstrate that while both groups showed improvement from pre-test to post-test, the experimental group's greater gains indicate the enhanced efficacy of subtitled videos for vocabulary instruction. The significant t-test result ( $p < 0.05$ ) provides strong evidence that the observed differences in achievement were not due to chance, but rather reflect the intervention's positive impact on vocabulary learning outcomes. These results align with existing literature on multimedia learning and support the integration of subtitled video materials in English language classrooms.

**4.2 Research Question 2: Gender-Based Analysis of Vocabulary Achievement**

The examination of gender differences in vocabulary achievement through subtitled video instruction revealed interesting patterns, as presented in Table 6. Initial pre-test scores showed male students slightly outperforming female counterparts with mean scores of 8.241 and 7.947 respectively, representing a 0.293 point advantage for male students. However, post-test results demonstrated a reversal of this trend, with female students achieving a marginally higher mean score of 15.736 compared to male students' 15.671, resulting in a 0.065 point difference favoring female learners. The standard deviations of 3.415 for female students and 3.257 for male students indicated similar variability in scores within each gender group.

To assess the statistical significance of these gender-based differences, an independent samples t-test was conducted, with results displayed in Table 7. The analysis produced a t-value of 0.123 with 153 degrees of freedom, accompanied by a p-value of 0.902. As this probability value substantially exceeds the 0.05 alpha threshold, the null hypothesis (H02) cannot be rejected. This statistical outcome confirms that while minor performance variations existed between genders, these differences lack statistical significance and likely occurred by chance.

**Table 6: Mean Achievement Scores by Gender in Experimental Group**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Pre-test	Std	Achievem. Gain	Mean Score Post-test	Std	Achievem. Gain
Female Students	76	7.947	1.719	.293	15.736	3.415	0.659
Male Students	79	8.241	1.806		15.671	3.257	
Total	155						

**Table 7: t-test Results for Gender Differences in Experimental Group**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Post-tests	Std	Df	t-cal	P-value	Decision at p > 0.05
Female	76	15.736	3.415	153	.123	.902	
Male	79	15.671	3.257				Not Significant
Total	155						

**p > 0.05 (Not Significant)**

The findings suggest that subtitled videos demonstrate comparable effectiveness for both male and female students in vocabulary development. The absence of significant gender-based differences implies that this instructional approach serves as an equitable learning tool across genders, with both male and female students benefiting similarly from the video-based vocabulary instruction. These results align with contemporary educational perspectives advocating for gender-neutral pedagogical approaches in language education, particularly when incorporating multimedia resources. The consistency in outcomes across genders supports the broader applicability of subtitled video interventions in diverse classroom settings.

### 4.3 Research Question 3: Analysis of Vocabulary Achievement by School Location

The investigation of school location effects on vocabulary achievement through subtitled video instruction yielded noteworthy findings, as presented in Table 8. Initial pre-test performance revealed rural students (mean = 8.360) slightly outperforming their urban counterparts (mean = 8.171), with a marginal difference of 0.189 points. This pattern persisted in post-test results, where rural students demonstrated stronger vocabulary gains, achieving a mean score of 16.360 compared to urban students' 15.390 - a more substantial 0.969 point difference. The standard deviations of 3.254 for urban students and 3.409 for rural students indicated comparable score distributions within each group, suggesting the rural advantage was consistent across participants.

**Table 8: Mean Achievement Scores by School Location in Experimental Group**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Pre-test	Std	Achievem. Gain	Mean Score Post-test	Std	Achievem. Gain
Urban School Students	105	8.171	1.723	.189	15.390	3.254	.969
Rural School Students	50	8.360	1.522		16.360	3.409	
Total	155						

To determine the statistical significance of these location-based differences, a t-test analysis was conducted (Table 9). The results showed a t-value of -1.708 with 153 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.090. While the mean differences favored rural students at both testing intervals, the p-value exceeded the 0.05 significance threshold, leading to acceptance of the null hypothesis (H03). This indicates that the observed performance gap, though educationally meaningful, does not reach statistical significance at conventional levels.

**Table 9: t-test Results for Location Differences in Experimental Group**

Treatment	N	Mean Score Post-tests	Std	Df	t-cal	P-value	Decision at p < 0.05
Urban School Students	76	15.390	3.254	153	-1.708	.090	Significant
Rural School Students	79	16.360	3.409				
Total	155						

**p < 0.05 (Significant)**

The findings suggest that while rural students showed slightly better vocabulary acquisition through subtitled videos, this advantage was not statistically robust enough to confirm a genuine location-based effect. Several factors may explain these patterns, including potential differences in prior exposure to English media, classroom dynamics, or socioeconomic factors not accounted for in this study. The results imply that subtitled video instruction can be effectively implemented across both urban and rural school settings, with students in both locations demonstrating substantial vocabulary gains from pre-test to post-test.

These outcomes contribute to ongoing discussions about educational equity between urban and rural schools, suggesting that well-designed multimedia interventions may help bridge traditional achievement gaps. However, the borderline significance ( $p = 0.090$ ) warrants cautious interpretation and suggests the need for further research with larger samples to better understand potential location effects in technology-enhanced language learning.

## 5.1 FINDINGS

The study yielded three key findings regarding the effectiveness of subtitled videos in vocabulary development among junior secondary school students in Argungu. First, subtitled videos significantly enhanced students' vocabulary acquisition compared to traditional teaching methods. Both descriptive and inferential statistics demonstrated measurable gains in the experimental group, aligning with prior research by Koolstra and Beentjes (1999), Yuksel and Tanrivedi (2009), and Sofowora (2014), which highlighted the efficacy of multimedia tools in language learning.

Second, gender did not influence the effectiveness of subtitled videos, as both male and female students exhibited comparable vocabulary gains. This finding contrasts with studies by Konstantina Baldoumi (2016) and Sema Uster (2008), suggesting that attentiveness and motivation may play a more critical role than gender in this context.

Third, school location (urban vs. rural) did not produce significant differences in vocabulary outcomes, contrary to research by Idoli and Ummanah (2010), Nana and Slow (2015), and Rizwan *et al.* (2016), which associated urban settings with academic advantages. The consistency in results across locations implies that subtitled videos can bridge traditional disparities in educational access.

## 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that subtitled videos are a highly effective tool for vocabulary instruction, irrespective of gender or school location. The significant improvement in the experimental group's achievement scores highlights the pedagogical value of multimedia resources over traditional methods. Furthermore, the absence of gender- or location-based disparities suggests that this approach is universally applicable, offering equitable learning opportunities for diverse student populations. These outcomes advocate for the broader integration of technology in language education, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

## 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

To maximize the benefits of this research, three actionable recommendations are proposed. First, English language teachers should incorporate subtitled videos into vocabulary lessons across all junior secondary schools, leveraging contextualized examples to reinforce word meanings and usage. This method enhances retention as well as fosters student engagement.

Second, government and educational stakeholders should prioritize the provision of audiovisual resources to both urban and rural schools, ensuring equitable access to technology-driven learning tools. Such investments would support Nigeria's broader goals of improving English proficiency as a second language.

Finally, teacher training programs should emphasize the use of subtitled videos as a core instructional strategy, equipping educators with the skills to effectively integrate multimedia into their pedagogy. When these measures are adopted, schools can create more dynamic and inclusive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of students.

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