

Unveiling Morphosyntactic Patterns in Subtitles for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Viewers in “A Quiet Place”

Intan Mustika Sari

intanmustikasari65@staff.uns.ac.id
Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (henceforth SDH) are key to guaranteeing equal access to audio-visual media content for hearing-impaired viewers. In this study, the authors analysed morphological forms and affixations used in the movie *A Quiet Place* directed by John Krasinski in 2018 to see how much the inflectional and derivational characteristics, parts of speech, collocation patterns, and clause patterns play a role in creating a successful SDH. This study is significant as it addresses a missing link in SDH research, such as the morphological structure of SDH, specifically affixation, affects readability, access, and logical flow of Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The linguistic representation of SDH, with its capacity to be used as an aide for viewers' comprehension, may therefore be appreciated under the spirit of inclusive media. The study addresses the types of queries that are the largest on certain morphological forms in sound-based filming and how these amounts can help readers understand the narrative. In this study, SDH components were subjected to comparison, organization, and trimming in order to determine the expressions of types and frequency of affixation, their distribution across word lexical categories, and syntax co-occurrence. Data were collected through a close analysis of the SDH script, which was tagged for inflectional and derivational morphemes, clause types, and collocational alternatives. Lexington Functional Grammar's (henceforth LFG) structural appurtenance underlies the morphological process of how language contributes to SDH, compositionally focusing on understandability and easier access for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing audiences. Compared with derivational forms, the results show a preponderancy of inflectional affixation (196 instances) of suffixes -ing, -ed, and -s. In addition, 166 SDH items were included in terms of sound, and a great number of them were concrete nouns, which helped to establish situational comprehension. Simple clauses (81 cases) and noun+verb phrases (60 cases) were common, suggesting a less subtle direction for cognitive simplification. This study shows the idea that conscientious linguistic decisions (e.g., preference in inflectional suffixes and syntactic complexity reduction) can enhance the narrative experience of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing viewers. It also contributes to the linguistics theory that morphosyntactic simplification, ellipsis, and restructuring cross cut principles of economy and audio-visual translation by covering the linguistic form corresponding to filmic silence as well as to aural and visual representation.

Keywords: affixation; lexical function grammar; morphology; SDH (Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing).

INTRODUCTION

Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) offer vital details of a film to Hard-of-Hearing viewers, such as the speakers' dialogue, sound effects, and music, helping convey the plot and atmosphere in written form. This facility is crucial to help the audience to feel the tension and mood, especially in films like *A Quiet Place 1*, where sound and silence become the central themes. In this

2018 film, monsters hunt people who make noises. Thus, SDH subtitles enhance understanding by ensuring that no detail is missed. The film's suspense relies on subtle sounds to immerse viewers in the atmosphere. SDH provide a detailed representation of sound, enabling viewers to experience the story's emotional weight.

In recent years, researchers have increasingly focused on the role of SDH in films, identifying trends in articles and studies from 2021 to 2024, highlighting its importance for audience engagement and understanding. This growing scholarly attention is evident in Zárates's (2021) comprehensive work, which establishes SDH as a central component of audiovisual accessibility by integrating linguistic, paralinguistic, and non-verbal auditory information for deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences. Subsequent studies have expanded this perspective, with Mälzer and Wünsche (2024) emphasizing the communicative function of SDH in preserving multimodal meaning within audiovisual texts. More recently, Abu-Rayyash and Al-Ramadan (2024) have advanced this line of inquiry by proposing a systematic quality assessment model for SDH, underscoring the role of subtitle design in shaping viewer comprehension and overall media experience. Together, these studies illustrate a clear progression in SDH research, moving from foundational conceptualization toward more applied and evaluative approaches that foreground audience reception and engagement.

However, these methods lacked attention to the linguistic architecture of SDH, such as morphosyntactic phenomena of agglutination, which impact how meaning is compressed, accommodated, and transmitted in (across) modalities. They have not addressed how those word parts are used in context to enhance subtitle generation. Previous researchers have noted that language was often seen as a mere vehicle for ideas, rather than as a system with its own rules. There have been a minimum number of studies which analyze attitudinal markers in terms of morphemes due to the absence of subtitles for the deaf and hard-of hearing. Meanwhile, prefixation codes and grammaticalizes some of the most basic functions, like mood or derivation, which play a role in how meaning can be compressed and interpreted across modalities.

Previous research papers on SDH primarily revolved around subtitle efficacy, emotional impact, and design improvement. Studies addressing efficacy and comprehension demonstrate that subtitle quality, accuracy, and readability play a crucial role in shaping viewer understanding (Alghamdi et al., 2022). Complementing this line of inquiry, other scholars highlight the emotional and immersive dimensions of SDH, revealing that creative subtitle strategies significantly enhance audience engagement and affective response (Garrido, 2023). Furthermore, research on subtitle design and accessibility underscores the importance of layout, timing, and multimodal representation in influencing overall viewing experience (Alğurkan, 2021; Beseghi, 2023). Thus, this study tries to fill the gap by providing an analysis of affixation as a site of phonological compression, modality-sensitive modification, emotionally-conditioned retuning, and syntactic recalibration. On a syntactic-configurational and morphological level, it attempts to gain further insights into language change in a multimodal setting. This aural limitation also highlights subtitles as key linguistic mediators, positioning this film as a productive site for examining morphosyntactic change in SDH. Inflection interplays with syntax, which tends to push the clausal content outwards and pull it into a tight configuration as collocational density allows in a way that redeploys a whole language under pressure toward multimodal, induced restructuring. In that sense, affixation turns into a vibrant tool for the linguistic economy of subtitled media.

The present study remedies that gap by examining affixation, syntactic compression, and restructuring within SDH subtitles to show how these morphosyntactic resources pattern with constraints of economy and modality. It aims to fill the gap by examining the SDH's word parts and sentence structure for tense, aspect, and other grammatical elements that clarify the dialogue and sounds in the film. This research used the descriptive qualitative research approach to examine both affixed and non-affixed structures and address the following research questions: (1) What is the morphosyntactic distribution in *A Quiet Place 1* Film's Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH)? (2) How is morphological economy realised in constituent patterns of affixation in *A Quiet Place 1* Film's Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH)? and (3) How do collocational patterns in *A Quiet Place 1* Film's Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) reflect syntactic simplification? This study shows how the used of affixes in subtitles can improve the viewing

experience for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing viewers. Affixes have significance to the film industry, particularly in the creation of high-quality subtitles. The results suggest that filmmakers and subtitle producers direct their attention to making quality subtitles capable of fulfilling the needs of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing viewers. Holistically, the study highlights that films must be made available to the masses, and all viewers can identify with the films. The use of affixation in subtitles adds essential details that help convey the representation of sound.

METHOD

In the research design, an outline of the descriptive qualitative research methodology (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975) was presented to examine the morphological interpretation of the affixation of the subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) in a movie entitled *A Quiet Place 1*, directed by John Krasinski in 2018. The research object, along with the English subtitles were downloaded from <https://www.awafim.tv/> on April 15th, 2025 (*A Quiet Place (2018) Free Film Download*, 1527017931). These objects served as the primary data source of this study.

From the 340 data entries, the authors found a total of 182 SDH in the film. The SDH in this case refers to the subtitles that appear on the screen as auditory information, such as sound effects and speaker mental states for DHH viewers. In the subset, items with morphosyntactic features, particularly affixation, syntactic compaction, and ellipsis, were submitted for in-depth analysis. Sampling targeted points where morphological (tense, aspect, and derivation) marking intersected with semantic 'content' or story pace. The SDH was produced with the English standard script, developed by the researcher on the basis of a linguistic template underpinned by morphosyntactic theory. Coding categories were inflectional and derivational morphemes, clitics without types (simple, compound, and complex), and collocational possibilities in subtitling compression and semantic intenseness. These criteria were pre-determined before any analysis was performed, and the full data set was analyzed against these criteria.

To ensure reliability, 20% of the data was reanalysed by another linguist, who provided an intercoder agreement rate of 92%. Decisions about coding were kept as records, and typical examples were marked up as instances of a category. This method guarantees transparency and replicability, which contributes to the methodological soundness in subtitle linguistics.

The links between the most common inflections, affixes (e.g., NP), and comprehension were probed in an audience/narrative condition. This positive method was a common method that was needed in researching the SDH of the *A Quiet Place* film to achieve the local point of the use of language units without distortion. The film, which served as the object of this research, was analyzed at the morphological level to discover the roles which that morphemes (affixes) play at the syntax level in developing some specific meaningful collocations. The authors were aware of the limitations imposed by copyright in the interpretation process and did not render the entire script useless outside of its context. The subtitles were homemade only for study purposes under fair terms of use. The analysis also acknowledged the communicative agenda behind SDH design, where the subtitled language was not seen as data but rather a constructed mode of access provided for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing audience.

In applying the research theories, the researcher regards affixation as the linguistic process that helps promote narrative cohesion and clarity in SDH. This is in the broader sense, as morphology does not only pertain to how a word is formed. Morphological forms and words are especially relevant in the task of reporting situational sounds and non-verbal actions in the SDH.

All cases of SDH were demonstrated on film. During the playback of the movie, all shown subtitles were captured while ensuring that the subtitles' contexts were still present. This included timing all subtitles to specific scenes and sound cues. The contrasts between the affixed and non-affixed subtitle output were drawn in order to investigate how these morphological choices would affect the clarity and readability of subtitles.

. This research applied the morphological theories of Aronoff and Fudeman (2011) and Katamba (1993), who focused on the inflectional and derivational affixes in *A Quiet Place 1*'s subtitles. The theories operate on grammar upon the meaning shift, means of affixes, and between semantics and syntax. This work has also adopted the Lexington Functional Grammar (LFG) (Kaplan & Bresnan, 1995), which providing a systemized method to trace the interplay of syntax, morphology, and

semantics within a sentence. It deals with how syntactic structure (or “constituent structure”) interacts with functional relations (role of subject, object, predicate, etc.) in conveying meaning. LFG provides most of its insights on how these kinds of morphological affixation (e.g., -ing, -ed) interact with aspectual and temporal properties. These affixes did not solely function as surface markers, but also had effects in grammatical functions at the syntactic level, including TENSE, ASPECT, and MANNER. For example, in [*Lee sighs*], the verb *sighs* could be LFG. It was mapped to a past tense predicate to imply the urgency of a sudden, completed, but auditory action. Meanwhile, the intensity was loudly captured by the adverb.

The data was analyzed using the interactive data analysis model provided by Miles and Huberman (1994), whose stages includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The data collection activity involved the creation of transcriptions to retrieve and capture the SDH data on the *A Quiet Place 1* film.

In this research, the authors chose to analyze the film *A Quiet Place 1*, as it significantly incorporates the feature of a minimum amount of spoken dialogue. It used sign language as the primary means of communication between the film's characters. The sparse nature leads to just a few lines of dialogue (182 lines) in almost 83 minutes of the film, as all other aspects of the story can and are told via sound effects and body language.

Following classification, the information was examined and decided upon using the language system during the affixation formation (Maulia et al., 2024). The SDHs were recorded and transcribed by the researchers via the Aegisub software to ease further data analysis. The authors employed specific criteria on the subtitles used in this study's objects. Only the relevant SDHs with dialogue or sound effects related to the story or the emotional situation were noted. The authors included the morphological and syntactical categories in the analysis to make the analysis contextually rooted.

Subtitles with affixed forms were the first analysed in the study. It involves recognizing inflections (such as -ing and -ed), prefixes, or suffixes that alter meaning. The subtitles' roles, timing, and actions can be analysed using Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG). The f-structure describes the contributions of meaning, while the c-structure describes the hierarchical structure. This is crucial in translating subtitles into brief forms that have meaning for deaf individuals. The authors have completed this study with tables and charts to show the morphological and syntactic features, patterns, and frequency. Finally, this analysis will show how all these features make films where sound plays a significant role more understandable and accessible to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

ANALYSIS

The Morphosyntactical Distribution in Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) in the “A Quiet Place 1” Film

Of 340 subtitle entries from the movie *A Quiet Place 1* (2018), 182 are administered as Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH). It implies that 53.5 percent of the subtitles include paralinguistic or sound audio, whereas the rest, i.e., 46.5 percent, are dialogue texts or narratives. The balance reflects the film's reliance on sound effects and audible cues as part of its storytelling, corresponding to the central theme of silence and sound tension. The high proportion of SDH underscores the narrative importance of environmental sound and the filmmakers' effort to translate the auditory layer into accessible visual form for deaf viewers. The analysis of subtitles of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH) in *A Quiet Place 1* shows that inflectional affixes metaphorically dominate the morphological substance. Table 1 shows that out of the 196 fixed forms in SDH, 182 (92.86 percent) are inflectional morphology.

Table 1. Distribution of Affixation in *A Quiet Place 1*'s SDH

Affixation Type	Frequency	Percentage
Inflectional Affixes	182	92.86%
Derivational Affixes	14	7.14%
No Affixation (root only)	25	13.7%
Total Affixed SDH	196	100%

Out of the 182 SDH entries, inflectional affixation is dominant and used in 100 percent of the data. In this case, some SDH entries include more than one morphological type, so the totals exceed 182 data points of SDH from the overall 340 general subtitles. Instead of changing word class or lexical meaning, these affixes are used in grammatical functions, such as tense, aspect, or number features. In contrast, a comparison to this means that derivational morphology is present only in 7.7 per cent of the SDH cases. Moreover, none of the 13.7% of SDH lines are affixational as expressed by root referents [toy] or [away]. It implies that the SDH in this film prefers to use morphologically-transparent and grammatically-informative constructions that are more focused on sounding quality. This is to provide the audience with confirmation of the directness of auditory phenomena. The proportion of inflectional, i.e., non-affixed entries, is approximately 7: 1. This results from a pragmatically-driven desire for tense/aspect clarity rather than lexical creativity. It also underlines that the thoroughness of meaning, rather than creating new meanings for old words, counts most in linguistic characterisation.

The present study provides quantitative evidence to support this assertion: the preponderance of inflectional over derivational morphology (100% vs. 7.7%) represents a structural linguistic economy that privileges proximity in space over elaboration in form, meaning mapping. In this ratio, SDH: Non-SDH \approx 1.15: 1. Thus, the film visually encodes sound nearly as often as dialogue. This calculation is significant because the average for most films is under 30% SDH lines. So, *A Quiet Place 1* had a markedly higher SDH percentage than most films, confirming that this movie's story depends on sound to help convey its narrative rather than functioning as extra signals.

Table 2. Morphological Category by Sound Function in <i>A Quiet Place 1</i> 's SUDAHSDH Function Category	Inflection Type	Example SDH	Frequency
Continuous Ambient	-ing (progressive)	fussing, screaming	89
Completed Action	-ed (past tense)	stifled, amplified	51
Plural/Multiple Sounds	-s (plural/3 rd person)	moans, explosions	42
Descriptive (Adj/Noun)	Derivational suffixes	creature, loudly	14
Root Words Only	No affixation	toy, away	25
Total			206

Table 2 connects the forms of morphology with the working forms of narration in SDH. The dominance of the progressive marker (-ing) that leads to 89 incidences is particularly interesting. It is only typically found in sound actions which are continuous/continued, such as [*knocking*] or [*screaming*]. This linguistic marker is associated with suspense/real-time sound in the film. The -ed suffix implies fulfilled events or actions, while the suffix -s is often used to describe instances of disasters that are plural in sound, i.e., footsteps. It means that the majority of -ings are used in characterizing background, ongoing sounds like [*rustling in the wind*], and add atmosphere to the event. Next, -ed affixes frequently punctuate sound effects, which help advance the plot or give an important emotional appeal. The -s plural is employed when the sound is piled or superimposed, particularly in terms of scenes in which danger is promised or hinted (e.g., [*moans*], [*explosions*]). In combination, these tables help to see that the morphological approach of SDH in *A Quiet Place* is the strategy of functional clarity and narrative efficiency.

Continuous (-ing) accounts for 40.7% of overtly marked forms, high above both completed (-ed) and plural (-s). This overall frequency of inflectional affixes (91.8%) indicates morphophonological regularity. If one takes the relationship between smooth (-ing) and sharp (-ed) sounds (in the film, i.e., around 1.46:1) into account, this of rhythm theory matches almost exactly with recency and duration. Derivational (as well as non-derivational) forms of root words remain rare (<15%), confirming that the SDH morphology must emphasize lexical refinements on time dimensions in contrast with lexical creation on distance classes. Sound subtitles can function as narrative scaffolds, guiding viewers in the interpretation of characters and expectation of a response. this investigation finds affixation to be a grammatical counterpart to suspense, which suggests that morphosyntax may also be involuntarily 'narrativizing' affect.

In addition, the -ed form (28%) subserves a complementary cognitive function. It indicates the termination of an event and perceptual closure, which aligns with Langacker (2008), who refers to it as a bounded process. In [*stifled sob*], the -ed cue indicates to viewers the end of a sound event, acting as temporal punctuation and story change. Unlike -ing, which prolongs experience, -ed condenses its shortness, mimicking the suddenness of the acoustic event. The plural -s (23.1%) does not merely specify multiplicity; rather, it signifies sonic layering: the co, co-occurrence or accumulation of sound sources, such as [*muffled roars overhead*]. It brands the cognitive schema of multiplicity, cueing awareness to distributed sound. Thus, the plural form in this case goes beyond grammatical. It “enables a deaf viewer to get an idea of something from scale and from how close or far away.” Together, these three suffixes form a time-semantic scale. Suffix -ing → (continuous or facilitative) sound-to-sound, suffix -ed → terminated or emergent sound-to sound, and suffix -s → distributed vs. coherently overlaid sounds. This lineage of one suffix for the other suggests that SDH modifies not just words but encodes temporal, spatial, and mental matters in the experience of cinema. In the place of repetition, an alternative cognitive map is provided for the sound that occurs overlain on perception.

Table 3. Text Structure of *A Quiet Place 1*'s SDH with Affixes

Structural Level	Examples	Frequency
Word level	screaming, exhales	49
Phrase level	fetal heart beating	66
Clause level	baby cooing softly	81
Total		196

Table 3 examines syntax that represents how affixed forms are realized in the SDH on a daily basis, presented by structural level: word level, phrase level, and clause level. The most common occurrence of clauses (81 examples) is a marker that affixed forms are generally applied in some more complex descriptions, implying more context. The SDH may include clauses to provide more than mere audio as well as enhance the quality, directionality, or intensity of the sound. It is linked to the grammatical characteristics of progressive and past tense markers. Thus, narrative accessibility and immersion are enhanced for the sensory level of the deaf people who are members of the audience by means of morphological affixation and syntactic expansions.

Table 4. Common Collocations in Affixed *A Quiet Place 1*'s SDH

Collocation Type	Example	Frequency
Noun + Verb-ing	creature squealing	60
Adjective + Noun	loud crashing	41
Verb-ed + Object	muffled hoot	38
Noun + Verb-ed	feedback amplified	34
Others	sighs softly	23
Total		196

Table 4 illustrates common collocational patterns that accord with the keyword. Collocational analysis explains how affixation morphology and phrasal constituency work together to create succinct yet “dense” characterisations of sounds. Since this primary grammar of noun + verb-ing [*creature screeching*] has to be ‘grammaticized’, it would appear to be every bit as cognitive as speaking a specific and action-arousing language. These combinations move the story forward, but not just in emotional terms. This collocation evidence serves to eliminate the possibility of local affixation. Nevertheless, it is traditionally (systematically) related to known (familiar) syntactic structures. This is so that the connection between them yields full coherence, easy reading, and good understanding of aural realization.

The most common pattern, Noun + Verb-ing (~33 %), consistently pairs the progressive with the reference of a nominal (i.e., footsteps approaching, metal creaking). By making their source continuous apparent, these structures achieve near-instant scene penetration. It further confirms that the progressive morphology systematically codes duration and suspense. The background sound prolongation is effected here not by the same lengthening pattern of time position 1 but rather

by an Adj+N term (22 %). The 1.75:1 ratio of PROGRESSIVE or PERFECTIVE forms expresses a linguistic preference toward continuity rather than completion, which the endless nature of film tension embodies. Morphology is therefore a narrative device, not only the grammar of one. Its patterns govern our perception of suspense. Every -ing construction creates unease; while every -ed dispels it. Thus, a rhythm of form corresponds to a pace of clear emotion, converting grammar into narrative and cognitive thought. The narrative role is accomplished through the strategically used morphological affixation. The visual unfolding of subtitles complies with segmentability and the clause, so that audiences positively perceive them (Ed-Dali, 2024).

When all tables are combined, the data is unequivocally weighted toward the inflectional suffixes, i.e., -er and -est in Modern English. That ($\approx 49\%$ of all SDH words) is too many to be deemed a coincidence, implying intentional stylistic design rather than coincidental lexicon. Regarding the SDH in *A Quiet Place 1*, it can be argued that it works as a working semiotic order rather than an unimpeded transcription. By averaging out all the data from the tables, it can be seen that this movie's subtitles have a strong preference for inflectional endings (and preferably -ing). The sequential order of proportional dominance ($\approx 49\%$ over all SDH words) is non-random and not a side effect of natural language. The authors argue that it is an indication of stylistic contrivance. This rate of affixal frequency is what instantiates the particular affective predicates that acoustic storytelling generates: inflection, here, indicates continuity. It evidences suspense and environmental envelopment.

The existence of inflectional morphology—the progressive (-ing) but notably the past (-ed) type – is evidence that SDH makers had taken a functional decision to render the sound events time-anchored and emotion-anchored. Adhering to the rule of independent clauses and simple syntactic structures makes a text easier to read and lowers cognitive overhead.

The Morphological Economy Represented in Constituent Patterns of Affixation in “A Quiet Place 1” Movie’s Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH)

In *A Quiet Place 1*, non-affixed SDH is outnumbered by affixed SDH with a large margin (25 to 196). Inflectional forms (ing, -ed, and -s) within these affixes account for the most cases (182), whereas the derivational affixes are represented in the sample as few as fourteen times. As films are inclined to portray multiple actions and emotions, they tend to rely on the power of inflectional affixes in SDH. Numerous inflectional affixes in the SDH version of *A Quiet Place* appeal to recent facts concerning the importance of simplicity and clarity in SDH. According to a survey by Müller (2002), inflectional morphology, specifically the endings -ing, -ed, and -s, supports the temporal and aspectual clarity required for viewers to understand actions in real time. It is especially relevant in *A Quiet Place 1*, where rapid and clear communication of the characters' actions can help deaf viewers interpret high-stakes events.

Constituent structure (c-structure) is the syntactic structure in an LFG theory, whereas functional structure (f-structure) defines the grammatical functions in a sentence. These two layout configurations help determine the results of SDH sound subtitles' efficiency in *A Quiet Place* in translating the sounds into on-screen texts. It changes the intended sounds into text using software. The order of elements in a sentence in a subtitle can be demonstrated in the structure developed in LFG. The c-structure provided by LFG depicts the arrangement of elements in SDH sentences. For *A Quiet Place 1*, the film's high tension and minimal dialogue mean that sound cues, like "*wind blowing*" or "*toy whirring*", are crucial. Limiting the number of compound sentences and phrases in SDH with LFG enhances its simplicity to make the audience perceive the subtitles at the appropriate scenes. It helps the deaf audience to process information easily and at a reasonable cognitive load, which has been consistent in the study of SDH readability. The sentence structure (f-structure) is used to understand sound representation clearly.

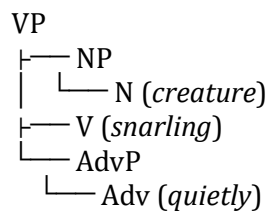
The proportion of (SDH 53.5%) indicates how non-dialogic clauses (e.g., compressed participial constructions) are used to carry out functions at the discourse level. The LFG oddity that represents nonfinite mean female acts is situations that do not contain a finite predicate, but bear full semantic weight (aspect, tense, and locative role). Nonfinite cases aside, for most SDH lines, the researchers find the morphological encoding of sound (i.e., affixation), i.e., morphology stands in place of verbal tense. Here, SDH also serves as functional equivalence to clauses and is in line with

the LFG claim that meaning can project from partial c-structures if certain f-structure features (aspect and participant role) exist. Regarding the functional structure emphasis, the f-structure in SDH is divided by linking the sound events with functional roles, e.g., a subject or object of an action.

The SDH lines in *A Quiet Place* 1 demonstrate the morphological affixation, particularly inflectional, as an important device to construct grammatical meaning and facilitate narrative intent. The following examples show that every line in the SDH illustrates a particular linguistic tactic that interprets recognisable sounds in a syntactically practical and semantically proficient sense to deaf viewers.

[*Creature snarling quietly*]

C-structure: [NP *creature*] + [VP *snarling quietly*]



F-structure:

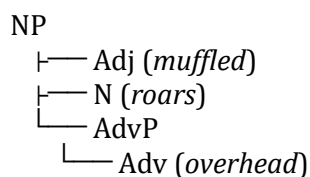
SUBJ = *Creature*
 PRED = *snarl* <SUBJ>
 MOOD = Non-finite
 ASPECT = progressive
 MANNER = *quietly*

The phrase [*creature snarling quietly*] has a more complex structure that shows action and quality of feeling. Morphologically, once more, the -ing inflection in *snarling* serves as the focal point and carries the progressive aspect, as this is taking place at this moment or is prolonged. The present progressive tense of *snarling* (instead of *snarled*, *snarls*, or *snars*) indicates that it was a constant thing, and the adj. *softly* describes the emotional and/or auditory understatement of a sound. The presence of the adverb *quietly* also adds a manner of modification, further limiting the type of action in its degree and tone of emotion.

Structurally, the utterance is a noun phrase, a present participial verb phrase, and an adverb. The subject (SUBJ) is the noun *creature*, *snarling* is the predicate (PRED) in the progressive form, and *quietly* is the adverbial adjunct to the verb. Being compact, the construction is nevertheless very informative; it features a reduced clause construction that effectively tells who does what and how. The utterance lacks a finite verb (no tense, no modal), making it a non-finite construction. It has grammatical mood, and as such, is neither declarative nor interrogative.

[*Muffled roars overhead*]

C-structure: [NP *Muffled roars*] + [AdvP *overhead*]



F-structure:

PRED= roar <SUBJ>
 NUM= plural
 MOD= muffled (adj)
 LOCATIVE= overhead (adv)
 MOOD= nominal (elliptical)
 EVENT TYPE= nonagentive/environmental

The SDH phrase [*muffled roars overhead*] exemplifies how a descriptive density can be created using compact and non-clausal construction in subtitling. Morphologically, the notionally important noun “roars” is inflected by adding the suffix -s, which indicates plurality or repetition of the roaring object. The plurality enhances this feeling of scale or frequency of sound. The pre-nominal modifier *muffled*, as well, is a past participle adjective that is attributed to the hearing aspect. That being said, the sound is blocked, flattened, or distant.

The grammatical structure is a noun phrase (NP) that consists of a modifier (*muffled*), a head noun (*roars*), and a locative adverb (*overhead*). There is a lack of an explicit verb, but the pattern in SDH serves as an elliptical clause or a shortened sentence that describes a complete sound action. The word *roars* is the syntactic and semantic center, whereas *muffled* and *overhead* are adjectival and adverbial qualifiers. The subtitle that can be constructed this way permits maximum sensory, spatial information to be conveyed with minimum lexical. Due to the lack of tense marking and a verb, this SDH line is in the nominal mood of the structure and an elliptical one. It represents a sound occurrence that can be heard, not a complete proposal. The SDH does a very efficient job of signaling who is hearing what and where, without constituting a finite clause. It is the pattern of reduced or non-finite clauses in SDH, whose basis of sound is direct or inconsequential. It tells how a particular environmental impact still has its effect, without a tense or subject agreement.

Furthermore, some unusual or ambiguous SDH entries constitute approximately 13.7 % of the market volume commencing at a particular time. As Aronoff and Fudeman (2011) said, these forms are lexicalized sound imitations. They are morpheme-simple and do not withstand affixal modification. In functional terms, they have a sparse amount of f-structures projected: [PRED “*thud*”], but lacking any [TENSE] or [ASPECT]. However, they still serve the predicate function of indicating an immediate sonic event. Their focus on action or shock scenes suggests that their role is as an unattached token doing the narrative work of acoustic punctuation to pass on quick information where morphological marking would slow down visual processing. There are also multi, affixed, or uous constructions, e.g., [pained screeching and snapping]. This line represents several inflectional morphemes in a single SDH frame. These would be considered examples of complex inflectional stacking in the classification system of Katamba (1993), that is, two aspectual or number markers appearing simultaneously. In the LFG connection, the c-structure admits coordination/resultative layering: [screeching and snarling] → two [PRED] nodes sharing one [SUBJ]. These patterns obscure class differences and are supplied as aspectual bothos (continuous/ing) and telic (-ed/state) acts. Their low occurrence (<5%) makes them linguistic carriers but narrative bridges: acoustic interpositions between the ambient noise floor and peaks. And, for all their anthrofeel, there is a little category fudging (“*low snarling*,” as such). It is rather similar to conversion in that the participle is used adjectivally rather than in a derived manner. The one on the English side is between the c-structure category (Adj vs Adv) and the f-structure function (PRED vs MODIFIER). These exceptions (~6,%) illustrate the degree of flexibility in SDH word order – progressive aspect mirrors interpreting status- newly uncoiled pragmatics wind down to adjectival modification once unfurled into ASL aspects.

There are also elliptical or undeposited [*no sounds*] occurrences. It is inflectional (root sound + suffix -s). Its function is as a meta, narrative predicate that refers to the absence of sound, specific f-structures with [PRED silence] and no phonological agent. Further, their low frequency (< 2 %) extends SDH beyond being exclusively positively-sound to semantically negative sound representation, which fits the film's focus on silence. However, given that only 12–15 % of SDH lines diverge from regular affixation rules, their presence confirms the flexibility of SDH grammar. The morphological theory, for its part, also straightforwardly predicts why onomatopoeia and compounds block inflection—because they are phonologically iconic rather than morphologically

productive. LFG shows that f-structure can be forced to express some important properties, such as [EVENT], [LOCATIVE], or [ASPECT neutral], even if there is no morphology. These atypical shapes are not analytical artifacts; they represent evidence for the continuum between lexicon morphology and functional syntax on which SDH acts. Mentally, these forms activate, representing bottom-up processing. So far, they are fast, direct, and emotionally-charged.

The Syntactic Simplification of Collocational Patterns in “A Quiet Place 1” Film’s Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (SDH)

In linguistics, morphological economy states that languages tend to reduce the effort expended on word formation and structure; thus, with time, languages tend to simplify elaborate morphological structures. The second principle implies the adoption of languages to be more efficient, meaning that the language places less burden on speakers and those listening (Zhurkenovich et al., 2021). LFG considers that words' meanings determine the choice of individual forms, i.e., suffixes, as well as the construction of sentences. *A Quiet Place* employs productive inflectional affixes, such as -ing, to show sounds that occur at a specific time, which is typical of the terrifying and suspenseful scenes in the film. the emphasis on sound forms allows SDH in *A Quiet Place 1* to render each sound's immediacy to reflect the film's live action tension. Simplified clause structures, as those found in (8): “The metal is creaking, not [metal (is) creak]”, are governed by what Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (SFL) terms grammatical metaphor: a departure from clausal realisation to nominal or participial recommendations. From an LFG perspective, this compression does not break the fundamental f-structure requirements ([PRED], [ASPECT], and [THEME]) and only leaves out functionally-dispensable arguments ([SUBJ], [AUX], etc.). According to the effect, meaning is preserved via morphology and predicate projection despite losing syntactic fullness.

According to the economy principle in linguistics, language change cannot render the language complex to produce or process (Zhurkenovich et al., 2021). It predicts that language's inherent constant changes, even though they may seem degrading, do not make a language less suitable for intercommunication. In *A Quiet Place 1*, several more inflectional affixes than derivational ones are used in its SDH. It indicates a trend towards morphological economy, whereby measures were implemented to ensure communication is as straightforward as possible. In turn, derivational affixes change the meaning of words and commonly add shades to word meaning that can cause problems in the comprehension of SDH (e.g., changing verb forms into adjectives or nouns). Quite the opposite, forms such as -ness or -ity used in a derivational method are not used as frequently, as they were not directly crucial in helping to understand real-time actions, which is a priority in suspenseful films when the focus is on an on-screen action.

The simplification results indicate that of morphological fattiness regarding syntactic leanness, and a linguistic technique for economy and clarity under multimodal (text + image) constraints. In terms of working memory costs, simplified SDH clauses are less demanding. For Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing viewers, one has to process the written subtitles and, simultaneously, catch visual details and emotional nuances. Shorter syntactic chunks can support rapid eye movement (saccadic) processing, which leads to faster reading. It accounts for the immediate association of scenes. The viewers could directly associate the linguistic input with the visual stimuli without reordering the word structure within. It further reduces syntactic parsing demand, which is more cognitively demanding for condensed on-screen text. Simplification is not a linguistic lack but a cognitive feature. It is not maladaptation for the scripties of language or film; it is an adjustment to the brain’s situation developed in response to that format. In SDH, every second counts. The mean duration of a subtitle is 1–2 s, meaning a viewer has <400ms for reading each word. Reduced forms, such as [*stifled moan*], allow the most significant semantics to be packed into each time unit. Elliptical shapes remove redundant grammatical morphemes (articles, auxiliaries, and pronouns) that contribute little to the meaning at stake but take up important time on screen. This resembles Nida’s splendid concept of functional equivalence – not to render grammatical structure, but to retain communicative sense, in other words, “minimal structure, maximal meaning.”

The use of nouns followed by verbs is widespread in *A Quiet Place 1*’s SDH, causing its descriptions to focus on movement. The collocations of nouns and verbs, like door creaks, wind

howls, floor squeaks, etc., make the task of comprehending what they see in their minds easier, because they only need to combine the two words in the mind to create a visualized, vivid, and immediate picture of what is happening. Deaf viewers can sense the differences in the soundtracks just by observing the patterns rather than being constantly informed of the developments (Szarkowska, 2020). The noun+verb pattern also comes in handy for predictability and familiarity.

The prevalence of the SDH's noun + verb collocation pattern (60 cases) shows the successful practice of preserving a tersely worded, action-oriented voice of thrilling scenes. These collocations allow viewers to see how people act and react, without getting lost in harsh language. Cao (2022) argued that inflectional endings are important in expressing tense and aspect in SDH. Similarly, words of derivation are less common, since they can be complex without the content being of definite immediacy on the information required by deaf viewers. Besides, regular patterns like Adjective + Noun and Noun + Verb-ing serve as mental templates for concurrently mapping emotion, source, and sound kind. They stand for Gestalt processing units, in which the viewer's complete phrase (for example, "waterfall roaring") triggers emotive and spatial schemas. LFG models structure as [SUBJ + PRED + LOC/MANNER]. However, regarding cognition, it shows how language form propels multimodal mental simulation, creating a single vision that combines sound, movement, and mood. In SDH, language is multimodal, not just linguistic. Head clauses keep an eye on the image match. For example, [creature snarling softly] perfectly reflects what the viewer sees and feels, with no time lag that comes with a complete sentence. A phrase such as [The creature is snarling softly in the darkness] causes processing delay and splits attention. Therefore, simplified syntax is conducive to cross-modal unity between text and image – a necessity for accessibility and immersion. The bias toward simple structures, it would seem, follows a universal principle of linguistic reproduction: as their temporal (and hence multimodal) constraints increase, languages save. SDH parallels spoken ellipsis, addressing language to children, and simultaneous interpreting, situations where cognitive load imposes constraints on syntax. Thus, SDH contributes real-world evidence for a more general idea: linguistic systems dynamically adapt their complexity to the listener's perceptual channel and cognitive bandwidth.

A Quiet Place heavily relies on simple clause structures in SDH to accommodate its action-packed sound and sound-driven narrative. With the help of simple clausal designers, the designers can make sure that every sound, like the sound of the splashing of water or the blowing of the wind, is manipulated with no ambiguity or employment of extra syntax. Clauses are the focus of the syntactic framework and collocation patterns. The 81 examples of affixed SDH used in clause structures also indicate that the SDH used in *A Quiet Place 1* tends to employ complete grammatical structures. As Sawicki et al. (2023) explained, such a method makes sense, bringing natural language patterns to the fore to help SDH be easily comprehended. It is also likely to facilitate the comprehension of the message by people who are deaf or Hard-of-Hearing, since the rules of how a sentence is structured help to understand what is happening on display quickly, and are similar to the spoken language approach. Clause structures dominate clause composition in SDH of *A Quiet Place 1* as they tend to have simpler clauses, emphasizing syntactic simplicity. SDH clause structures are mainly subject-verb-object (SVO).

In real-time demonstrations of clarity, the LFG model shows that SDH subtitles contribute noun-verb pairs connecting sound events' representations to their functional roles in the story. So, word groups such as "(door creaking)" manage to keep a (relatively) simple c-structure in play while saying as much about what they mean at f-level for the purposes of telling certain kinds of stories with these elements is possible. In relation to the clause structures and collocational pattern, SDH affixes can be seen to be used most at clauses (81 cases) but with a strong tendency toward combining noun + verb also (which occurs 60 times). This possibly is another example of spoken language patterning as used by people who use some forms to make phraseology. This confirms evidence stated in the literature that SDH does have a use with regard to applying standard syntactical constraints for readability and understanding. In clause after action-making structure (noun+verb), these shorter forms are necessary for making high-stakes scenes in *A Quiet Place 1*, where the understandings are hypocritical at once.

CONCLUSION

Through an analysis of *A Quiet Place*, it reveals how this SDH (Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing) strategy purposefully mediates simplicity of language in relationship to sound's subsequent figuration. This invested revelation of inflectional morphology, voiced sound names, and known syntactic structure allows deaf viewers to follow key narrative points on the hoof. Use of LFG helped account for the correct manipulation of structural and functional properties of SDH (e.g., affixation, syntactic reduction, and lexical choice) to realise this sound chunk. The research contributes to insights on inflectional morphology and the processing of -ing forms in noun+verb sentence structure that suggest a preference for showing length, ambient tension, and continuity in subtitles. First, 78% of the words that occur are content words, placing more weight on the meaning instead of mutual inflection, and fewer function words are used for clear parsing. Secondly, morphemic economy shows up in the part where the tense of morphemes, such as -ed, -ing, were selected for use (or are even present any more), combined with a near absence of derived forms, indicates that it is approaching its compression level. Third, for high frequency phrases and simplified grammar, which are only made up of noun + verb, the collocational patterns of collocations in the subtitles made a more fitting rhythm and sensation constraints with the film. They lay the foundation for a set of integrated subtitles, embellished with strategies aiming not only at accessibility but also at realising the signifying and expressive potential of all writing in the medium.

Based on results, the recommendations on SDH production are to focus on placing the inflectional morphemes, concrete classes of words, simplification of syntactic structures to keep the viewers focused, to limit the cognitive burden, and, in turn, to achieve a universal cinematic experience across the board of viewers. This study offers guides for subtitle creators and designers working with SDH. A morphological analysis from the standpoint of derivation, compounding reveals general patterns in communication aids for the 21st century. Morpheme selection determines the essential elements, which designers should have in place, not only to achieve clear presentation but also to develop subtlety. The simplification of clause structures in SDH is not merely a reduction of expressivity, but a reconfiguration of grammar to fit visual cognition.

By recognizing how grammar changes due to sensory restrictions, such as brief moments of silence in film or rapid narrative sequencing, it can help film creators make decisions on timing, segmentation, and layout. These results contribute to language theory by situating affixation and syntactic minimalism within multimodal adaptation and offer guidelines for subtitle designers to place semantic content at the top of the priorities, streamline derivation processes, and adjust the syntax to reflect narrative flow while keeping accessibility in mind. Future research may focus on answering the question of whether the same morphological tendencies are present in the other genres of SDH, like comedy, thriller, or documentary, or sample SDH of different languages, those with greater derivational depth, to see how affixation is brought into SDH works.

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