

## **Students' Perceptions on the Use of English Movies to Enhance English Language Competency**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Learning English vocabulary is crucial since the ability to speak English enables individuals to discover more knowledge throughout the world and use it in the appropriate context. Few studies, however, have explored the perspectives of adult language learners who use movies to independently study languages, especially vocabulary, and improve their English language skills. This study investigated the perceptions of Malaysian students who use English movies as part of their learning strategies to improve their English competency. This quantitative study involved the distribution of an online survey to 92 students in semesters 5 and 6 of LG241: "Bahasa Melayu Untuk Komunikasi Profesional" at UiTM Shah Alam who had completed the semester's English course and utilised English movies to improve their English competency. The study indicated that 88.4% of students needed subtitles to understand the meaning of the movie, while 73.4% needed Google Translate, a dictionary, or assistance from another person to interpret uncommon vocabulary used in English movies. Despite being insignificant, the results showed that there is a positive correlation between watching English movies and enhancing language competency. The more English movies were used to improve students' English competency, the greater the chances were that their English competency would improve because they were able to acquire language skills from watching the movies.

**Keywords:** English movies; English competency; learning strategy; vocabulary

## **INTRODUCTION**

Without language, daily conversation and the expression of thoughts are impossible. In a world where numerous languages are spoken, English is used as a second language in many countries, including Malaysia, Singapore, India, and the Netherlands (Bayuonng et al., 2019), allowing citizens from different nations to communicate without needing to know their native tongues. Furthermore, English serves as a fundamental subject in primary education as well as a medium of instruction (Chiew & Ismail, 2021). However, mastering the language is challenging, especially in the multilingual nation of Malaysia. This is due to the fact that there are numerous spoken languages in Malaysia and limited opportunities to use English. This was echoed by Kashinathan and Abdul Aziz (2021), who stated that it has never been easier to acquire English, as evidenced by the fact that many Malaysian students who have studied English as a second language for 11 years spoke the language poorly. According to Mandasari and Oktaviani (2018), pupils would have difficulty expressing their comprehension if their vocabulary was insufficient; hence, a lack of vocabulary is a basic concern. The extent to which language learners can talk, listen, read, and write competently is heavily dependent on their vocabulary (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). In this instance, vocabulary acquisition necessitates that students adjust their learning styles (Wahyudin & Rido, 2020), tactics (Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020), and media use (Sari & Wahyudin, 2019; Sasalia & Sari, 2020) in order to increase their vocabulary mastery.

In order to become competent English language learners, it is essential that language learners utilise a variety of language learning strategies to acquire the language, with a particular emphasis on vocabulary expansion (Ramli & Rivaldin, 2021). This entails the capacity to participate in self-directed learning in order to attain higher levels of skill (Ramli & Rivaldin, 2021; Mandasari and Oktaviani, 2018). The increased use of technology in education improves teaching, learning, and research (Aminatun & Oktaviani, 2019; Mandasari and Wahyudin, 2021), all of which ultimately aid in language learning. Despite research on the use and effectiveness of introducing media into language classroom teaching and learning (Albiladi et al., 2018), minimal emphasis has been placed on the educational value of watching movies outside of the classroom. According to Hasram et al. (2021), one problem is that many English language learners in Malaysia are unable to develop a passion for improving their language abilities since they find it uninteresting and subsequently lose interest in doing so. Thus, it is deemed vital to investigate Malaysian students' perceptions of using English movies to enhance their English language competency.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Lavasani and Faryadres (2011), effective second language learners have a strong desire to communicate and are willing to make mistakes, practise when given the opportunity, monitor their speech, and focus on meaning. Additional features of competent language learners include the ability to recognise repeated patterns in language learning problems and the capacity to use patterns to solve language learning problems (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, as cited in Panahandeh & Asl, 2014). However, some second language learners' poor performance can be attributed to the teaching practises and the learners' attitudes towards learning English. Some of the approaches adopted by the teachers had negative consequences for the students. According to Sa'ad et al. (2014), inadequate language teaching instructions by teachers contribute to students'

poor English language performance. The teachers' attitude toward innovation and instructional media also influenced the students' approach to language learning (Subekti & Kurniawati, 2022). In addition, a lack of motivation and opportunity to practise the language prohibits these second language learners from adopting diverse strategies for learning, thereby preventing them from becoming competent language users. Sukying (2021) asserted that language learning strategies entail deliberate, purposeful behaviours used to recall, process, store, retrieve, and apply new information in authentic situations. Thus, it is essential for learners to be able to adopt a variety of learning strategies that they deem appropriate for their needs in order to better their language learning journey and become competent English language users.

Consequently, it is imperative that students establish their own learning strategies. Utilising technology to learn a language is critical, especially in this day and age when technology is so prevalent. Movies are among the media technologies that can be used to improve students' linguistic competence. Albiladi et al. (2018) concurred that using English movie in enhancing students' language competency could add creativity to language learning, hence making it more entertaining and engaging, which has benefited both teachers and students. Fauzi et al. (2021) contend that expanding students' vocabulary and communication skills by having them acquire more words and phrases from English movies will help them advance in language learning and communication skills. In addition to being able to watch and listen to the language used in the movies, students can also relate to the setting, which benefits language acquisition. Thus, the usage of English movies during the language learning process aids comprehension because they allow viewers to both hear and read. Kusumawati (2018) indicated that watching English-language movies with English subtitles improves vocabulary and speaking skills, as well as reading comprehension, word comprehension, decoding skills, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition.

According to a study conducted by Ismaili (2013), exposing students to English movies enhanced their motivation and communication skills, and was proven to be effective and interactive in boosting students' language competency. Moreover, Kusumaningrum (2015) explored the benefits of employing English movies as instructional aids to improve academic literacy in Indonesia. Since it was observed that some students disliked learning in a substandard environment and using poor learning methodologies, English movies were used as course materials. The results indicate that English movies help students enhance their writing, speaking, and listening skills in a more engaging manner. This research reinforced the findings of other studies that demonstrated the academic and social benefits of using English movies for teaching and learning. It can be concluded that watching movies in English during language class can be an effective exposure for language acquisition. Thus, it is critical to investigate students' perceptions about using English movies outside of the classroom to improve their language competency.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted utilising a quantitative research technique, namely the quantitative

research survey method. Quantitative research relies on the collection and analysis of numerical data in order to explain, predict, describe, and control the variables of interest (Gay et al., 2014). For the purpose of determining relative incidence, distribution, and interrelationships, Creswell (2014) described survey research as an assessment of both large and small populations utilising samples chosen from the target community. This strategy was chosen because it is appropriate to employ a quantitative approach to quantify the opinions of LG241 students regarding the use of English movies to enhance English language competence. This can be achieved by generating numerical data that can be turned into meaningful statistics to explain the phenomenon being studied in the present investigation.

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of non-English majors regarding the employment of movies to improve their English language skills. Due to online teaching and learning, WhatsApp was used to disseminate online questionnaires to 92 students enrolled in Bahasa Gunaan (Kepujian) Bahasa Melayu for Professional Communication (LG241) at UiTM Shah Alam. Respondents were in the fifth and sixth semesters of their studies and had completed the Open Distance Learning English (ODL) course. Google Forms was used to develop 25 survey items for data collection in this study. The first component of the questionnaire inquired about the respondents' demographic information, including their age, gender, current semester, and motivation to study English. The part that follows comprises questions aimed at determining the relationship between the skills acquired by watching English movies and enhanced English language competency. The final section covers the challenges students confront when using English movies to increase their English competency. Respondents' responses were collected using multiple-choice questions (MCQ) and a variant of the Likert scale ranging from 1 = "Almost never true of me," 2 = "Usually not true of me," 3 = "Neutral," 4 = "Usually true of me," and 5 = "Almost always true of me." The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential techniques in IBM SPSS Statistics. For descriptive statistics, means were used, while T-tests and one-way ANOVA tests were employed for inferential statistics. The significance value has been established at 0.05.

## **FINDINGS**

The results of this study present the data collected and analysed during the investigation into the research objectives. The IBM SPSS Statistics software was used to analyse and calculate the data to determine the answers to the research questions. The demographic information for this study revealed that 56.7% of the questionnaire respondents were female and 45% were male. Across the age range, 61.7% were between the ages of 22 and 24, 23.3% were between the ages of 18 and 21, and 16.7% were between the ages of 25 and 28. It can be seen that 55% of the 92 respondents were in their sixth semester, while the other 45% were in their fifth.

An independent t-test was used to calculate the significance value of the benefits for the first objective, which was to find the significant benefits of using English movies to improve English language competency. The results suggest that the only substantial benefits are that English movies help students enhance their pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. For the second objective of this study, Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between the usage of English movies and the development of language abilities. And finally, the percentage of data was collected

and calculated to compare the highest and lowest percentages of students who agree that using English movies to enhance their English language competency.

The first analysis is conducted to determine the benefits of using English movies to improve students' English language competency. In accordance with the objective, the obtained data were analysed using SPSS for each communication element, including the students' pronunciation and fluency, vocabulary, non-verbal communication abilities, and overall speaking confidence. The significant value of the benefits was calculated and tabulated, as shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1**

Benefits of using English movies to enhance students' English language competency

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Significance</b>
English movies help improve students' pronunciation and fluency.	.001
English movies with subtitles help students improve their vocabulary.	.040
English movies help students improve their non-verbal communication skills.	.706
English movies help improve students' confidence in speaking.	.105

According to Table 1, the only significant benefits are that "English movies help improve students' pronunciation and fluency" and "English movies with subtitles help students improve vocabulary," with significance values of .001 and .040, respectively. The results indicate that the only significant advantage is that English movies help students enhance their pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary.

The following analysis examined the relationship between the English language skills acquired by watching English movies and the improvement of English language competency. Pearson Correlation was used to calculate the correlations between variables, and the findings are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

The relationship between skills developed in the use of English movies and students' English

language competency

Skills	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)
Speaking Skills	.264	.041
Reading Skills	.411	.001
Listening Skills	.404	.001
Expressions	.112	.396

Pearson's *r* ranges between +1 and -1, with +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation and -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, and 0 indicating no linear correlation. Each correlation for each communication ability is shown in the table above. The first skill, speaking skills, has a correlation coefficient of .264. Reading skills have a correlation of .411, listening skills have a correlation of .404, and expressions have a correlation of .112. All of the skills have a very slight positive association. This study concludes that the more English movies used to increase students' English competency, the more they are likely to improve their English competency; however, the effect is insignificant.

The final analysis identified the challenges experienced when using English movies to improve English language competency. The percentage of respondents that agree with the challenges they confront when using English movies to improve their English language competency is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Challenges that students face in the use of English movies to enhance students' English language competency

Items	Percentage
I feel anxious when speaking in front of people that I am unfamiliar with.	55
I rarely use slang from English movies in my conversations, as I am afraid that people will have a bad impression of me.	38.4
I use Google Translate or a dictionary, or I ask someone to translate unfamiliar words in English movies.	73.4
English movies with subtitles help me understand the context of the movie compared to non-subtitled ones.	88.4
I tend to misunderstand certain plots in English movies because I misinterpret certain words in the movies.	33.3
I feel more confident when I imitate certain expressions from English movies.	15
I need assistance to act out the expressions from English movies.	31.7
I feel anxious to perform in a presentation by using certain slangs from English movies, as I am afraid of making mistakes.	38.4

Table 3 shows the challenges students face when using English movies to improve their English

language competency. The highest percentage (88.4%) suggests that students will require subtitles to better comprehend the meaning of the movie, which is the greatest obstacle to using English movies to develop students' English language skills. This is followed by 73.4% of them requiring the aid of Google Translate, a dictionary, or asking someone to help them grasp uncommon words used in English movies. It is also worth noting that 38.4% of students reported feeling anxious when using slang from English movies in a presentation because they feared making mistakes, as well as when using slang from English movies in their conversations because they feared people would have a negative impression of them. Last but not least, 15% of these students demonstrated a lack of confidence when replicating particular expressions from English movies due to a fear of criticism.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the study are not the ultimatum of overall results concerning the challenges, benefits, and relationship; nonetheless, they do shed light on LG241 students' utilisation of English movies to enhance their English language competency. With significant values of .001 and .040, respectively, the study discovered that watching English movies would be helpful in enhancing students' pronunciation and fluency as well as their vocabulary. This finding reinforces the claim stated by Fauzi et al. (2021) that students can increase their vocabulary and communication abilities by acquiring new words and phrases from English movies. Moreover, this study indicated that the greater the use of English movies to improve students' English competency, the greater the likelihood that students will improve their English competency. Despite the insignificance of the effect, there is a positive correlation between watching English movies and English language competence. This was consistent with the findings of Ismaili (2013) and Kusumaningrum (2016), which indicated that using English movies as instructional aids can increase academic literacy by increasing students' enthusiasm to learn the English language, thereby resulting in their competence with the language. Finally, the study found that 88.4% of the students required subtitles to better comprehend the meaning of the movie, with 73.4% of them requiring the aid of Google Translate, a dictionary, or asking someone to help them grasp uncommon words used in English movies. Despite being among the most significant challenges that students have while using English movies to increase their English language competency, students can improve their English language skills by learning new phrases and words through subtitles and seeking up the definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary. As language learners become immersed in the storyline, they will be able to adopt the use of the new vocabulary in their daily communication as well as improve their speaking abilities Kusumawati (2018), as they will have a better understanding of the context to apply the terms effectively.

These findings give insights on the perception of the usage of English movies to enhance English language competency among students, particularly those in tertiary education. As there has been little emphasis in Malaysia on the use of English movies outside of the classroom to improve students' language skills, it is worthwhile to study the adoption of English movies as a means of enhancing students' English language competency as opposed to merely acting as a source of entertainment. This could assist students in employing better and more efficient methods to enhance their English competence. Based on the findings, further studies focusing on a wider audience or population sample must be undertaken to determine the definitive results that may serve as the general standard for employing English movies to improve students' English

competency. Aside from that, future research might investigate the acceptance of using English movies to improve English language skills at various levels of education, from preschool to tertiary, as well as at various levels of proficiency.

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