

# A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO WATCHING ENGLISH MOVIES TO SUPPORT AUTONOMOUS LEARNING OF EFL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** Learning with autonomy is one of the many processes to mastering and gaining knowledge. Focus on an EFL student who has the fortune to master English through their autonomous journey in a movie. This study aimed to present some stories about the English movie to support student autonomous learning across specific strategies in a private senior high school in Java, Indonesia. For research design, this study used a narrative inquiry with a qualitative research approach. The researcher took 2 students selected from the third-grade students, based on the observation, and asked for their permission to be engaged in this study as participants. The procedure of this research involved two steps; validating the interview guidelines and taking the participants into the deep interview section. To analyze the data, the researcher used a thematic review by Braun and Clarke. The finding informs us that English movies can construct autonomous learning for EFL students effectively. However, there are multiple aspects to autonomous learning, including self-planning, self-monitoring, and self-reflection. Based on these categories, participants were fortunate in the first phase (self-planning); as seen by the interview portion, they used to simply observe without any other explicit strategy for learning.

**Key Words:** Autonomous Learning, English Movies, EFL Students.

## INTRODUCTION

Acquiring proficiency in the English language through independent learning presents a various journey, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, who must independently engage with new material outside of classroom hours to master some of their English skills. English movies serve as valuable learning media for EFL learners, providing specific English content. According to Bahrani et al. (2014) implied that movies can be a valuable resource for EFL students to improve their language skills. English movies offer a wide range of language material, including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar structure, and idioms. Therefore, movies have the potential to serve as sources for language input. On the other hand, the learning itself extends beyond the understanding level but also comes with the feeling, it arrives to demonstrate autonomous learning for EFL outside of the classroom. Several EFLs are conducting this kind of method, some of them believe in the interest in English as it is involved in the modern era for learning or acquired by automaticity learning system in which they receive all the vocabulary over and over that is commonly used in daily basis of a native speaker (Zakian et al., 2022). By then, students' memories have already been aroused with those terms, and they can practice using them. However, in order for the audience to fully comprehend the movie, a meaningful understanding is necessary, which takes time and attentiveness on the part of the student.

Incidentally, many studies about learning through movies have been conducted, the researcher's goal is to complete the diversity of autonomous learning strategies that the EFL students conventionally use movies as the learning media outside of the classroom by employing the narrative design to deepen the information it needs. Therefore, this study pursues the main criteria of learning by watching English movies through autonomous learning, as the need of EFL to master the English skills for a higher communication range

and how it is exactly the strategy for EFL to incidentally acquire many skills from watching movies. Here the research question of this study is: “How do EFL students autonomously learn to improve their English skills by watching movies?”.

## **METHOD**

This study employs the narrative inquiry design by a qualitative research approach. To pursue the experiences of the human story for the detailed result. based on Clandinin and Connelly (2006), for the narrative inquiry design in order to explore more stories by experiences. In this context, the researcher gathered the data from the Senior High School in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The study took place in a private senior high school in Malang, East Java, Indonesia, which focuses on two students’ ability to improve their English language skills by watching movies in an autonomous way.

The participants were two students, both were from the same class the researcher conducted in a private senior high school, in Malang. AY and JV are students in the same class. AY was originally from Kalimantan, and JV was from Malang, near the school. These students have been studying in the Senior High School for three years. The students as the participants were selected based on their higher English skills compared to their classmate and their interesting stories of attaining a high degree of English proficiency.

To gather more information about the experiences and stories of EFL students during the autonomous learning process through the viewing of films, in-depth interviews have been conducted in Indonesian, a language that they are native speakers of. Face-to-face or indirect person interviews were conducted in one section, and the interview section took 10-15 mins for each participant. The interview questions were based on the theory of the researcher stand out, it directed into some autonomous learning aspects in order to receive the data. Based on the autonomous learning aspect by Wulansari et al. (2014), with three main aspects of autonomous learning which include: 1) self-planning, 2) self-monitoring, and, 3) self-evaluating. After the data was collected, those data were analyzed by thematical analysis from Braun and Clarke (2006).

The validity number of the data was supported by member checking of participants, which the researcher presents in terms of acknowledging the validity transcript of the data from the in-depth interviews section. By then, the researcher sent the transcript of interviews to the participants’ WhatsApp group, in order to ask and verified from the participants whether there is some related information that need to be revised to ensure the interview transcripts.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Findings**

1. The participants’ data showed the light of self-planning, but on the other side, they were good at self-monitoring and self-evaluating. Despite engaging in unstructured learning without something in particular, participants often approach watching English films without prior preparation, mostly for the purpose of self-entertainment.
2. The activity in order to monitor the learning process, participant tends to have great similar activities, such as turning off the subtitles in in watching their favorite movies to expand their learning progress and calculate their understanding of the movies’ content. Another activity, it was emerging the word, in order to figure out how to pronounce it and how to use in a context.

3. The last phase of the autonomous learning process is what the participant could reflect and evaluate after the movie ends, there is another point to establish more in daily basis routine, as input from English movies aims to be reflected in several skills was found positive.

## Discussions

Participants confirmed to have a great engagement with English movies, as an objected purpose of this study, such a long good exposure has given EFL students to support their activity autonomously in learning English was particularly found effective in language acquisition (Alhadad et al., 2021). The same result of the study that has been conducted by Ashcroft et al. (2018) elaborated as the main element in English structure, vocabulary might be mastered of somehow the way to achieving language proficiency, in this area the role of English movies as a tool for EFL students to learn through habituation. As one of the audio-visual types, English movies provide authentic material which includes pronunciation, diction, context, idioms, phrases, etc. As it is stated in the participants' frequency of watching English movies, some of them actually have the most time to spend watching English movies for around every day, and the other has the standard frequency of around three - four times a week. With this type of learning EFL students should get the learning more sufficient, besides it depends on their activity in their autonomous phase.

The educational potential of movies was found to operate around cinema as a means of conveying information, artistic expression, and communication. The primary objective was to establish collaborative methods of expression and communication through various audio-visual projects, while also enhancing vocal and gesture abilities for effective collaboration.

Additionally, the idea of independent learning, where students should encourage their learning by themselves was truly appropriate, regarding of the result in students' confidence in taking any decision to learn and study habits, based on one of the research theories by Yurdakul (2017), in supporting the goal of independent learning and its significance of lifelong learning were predicted positively. However, despite the type of material and input used while watching English movies, the participants still had a strong desire to learn. Additionally, they frequently watched their favorite films without subtitles, which promoted self-motivation and the willingness to face challenges.

By the end of the English movie, material that provides any substantial skills for EFL students is meant to encourage them to grow and courage with any possibility for learning English autonomously as the importance of EFL students for how they emerge as native speakers in a movie for speaking and pronunciation knowledge (Nurwati et al., 2016). Some other diversity of vocabulary used by a specific context, also the phrase and idiom for authentic knowledge in learning English, in the other case, the participants also take a screen shoot where they find a new good word, sentence, and good wisdom, instead of taking the notes of it. Therefore, when EFL students spend an amount of time focusing on listening carefully for their awareness in multiple understandings through the vocabulary in conversation. Those points stand out with Irvan and Sugeng (2020) who discovered the type of learning students tend to use to improve their skills, especially in listening skills which has the main role of communication in English. Understanding communication requires an intention to listen, which is crucial for EFL students for how it is to pronounce the vocabulary to place in some context.

Moreover, in the context of English films, the technique employed by students to handle their learning while watching was objectively identical. Both participants have similar strategies to enhance their English skills in an autonomous way, which led to discovering the answer for RQ1. Participants have some strategies they use to acknowledge material in

English movies, as mentioned before, there are various continuing skills such as listening, speaking, and vocabulary. The result is similar to Tareen et al. (2024) who stated that EFL students are able to effectively control their learning capabilities and establish their main objectives through individual activities, therefore engaging on an autonomous journey towards personal and educational enhancement.

Prior to that, as the sub-dimension of autonomous learning in the last case of how EFL students interact and reflect their material in media conduction, as stated above, participants could use the specific application for movies worldwide communication. After the conclusion of the movie, participants provided an objective analysis and evaluation of the film, discussing their thoughts and opinions. This review and rating process has the potential to engage a global audience of international community users. There goes by for self-evaluating, applying for oneself, self-talking, and interacting with others who are interested in similar movie genres on any platform—online or in-person—to progress the self-evaluation process with a highly advantageous result. Based on the self-evaluating finding, the objectiveness of the learning process was discovered by participants, there were some developments in several skills that participants could receive easily for any homework and classroom task. Lastly, participants added more to the English communication component of the learning process for EFL students in carrying out daily routines such as school activities by integrating the English movie resources.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

This narrative inquiry study underlined the research subject based on the participants as EFL students on watching English movies to support their autonomous learning. Innovation in learning presents the courage to discover the new design of several EFL students, the main role of autonomous learning is to strengthen the self-capability to force linguistic learning. It is expected of EFL students to become independent and confident in any situation, especially when it comes to the English learning journey. This paper proposes an innovative media to be used for EFL students and English movies as the learning media composed by native people are expected to give a good exposure as the terms to mastering the English language.

To conclude, it is evident that there are various English-language resources that must be recognized through the process of independent study. This study implements the EFL students' autonomous journey by watching English movies and it arrives with positive results in receiving several materials in English based on three components idea of autonomous learning. Lastly, English movies and their effectiveness provide for EFL students to carry their entertainment habits into the learning process, as English movies have authentic content such as a good script, emotional playing, and plot. By all those criteria in movies, EFL students come into an exciting learning process that has been exposed well enough by English material as input and entertainment.

The research implied that English movies can also be a powerful tool for EFL instruction, and English movies could offer significant input for EFL in the future. However, English movies' existence goes beyond simple entertainment, as they offer a wealth of authentic material and a diverse range of topics related to the English language.

## Suggestions

### For the Students

To encourage the learning process without any further instructions based on the school, to apply independent learning properly, and those who like to watch English movies are expected to be more aware of their habits and change into the learning process.

### For the teachers

The teacher should be more creative in the class because the academic process is constructed by several themes, such as using English movies as media in learning with more purpose of the material.

### For Future Researchers

The future researcher who choose the same topic about English movies should analyze the application in a movie platform called Letterbox for how the student could apply their skills through rating, commenting, and reflecting.

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