The Use of English Movie for Enhancing Students' Listening Skills: Teacher's and Students' Challenges at Junior High School

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the process of teaching and learning English listening using English movies, identify the challenges encountered by both teachers and students, and determine whether movies can enhance students' listening skills. This mixed-method research was conducted at Junior High School Tasikmalaya and involved 25 ninth-grade students and one English teacher. Data were collected through document analysis, classroom observations, questionnaires, interviews, and pretest-posttest assessments. The intervention was implemented over four weeks and consisted of three instructional meetings. The findings revealed that the teacher followed the Merdeka Curriculum format and delivered listening instruction in three structured stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. Students faced several challenges, including unfamiliar vocabulary, rapid speech, listening anxiety, limited contextual understanding, passive viewing, and minimal exposure to authentic English outside the classroom. The teacher also experienced difficulties related to students' varying proficiency levels, technical and equipment issues, material selection, classroom management, and institutional constraints. The quantitative results indicated a significant improvement in students' listening skills, with the mean pretest score increasing from 74.24 to 85.00 in the posttest. A paired sample t-test confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), demonstrating the effectiveness of English movies in enhancing listening comprehension in the EFL classroom.

Keywords: *listening skills, movie, challenges*

Introduction

Language acquisition begins in early childhood as individuals naturally learn their mother tongue to communicate within their social environment (Budiyono et al., 2021). As a symbolic system of sounds, language enables the expression of thoughts, ideas, and emotions. In today's globalized world, English functions as a lingua franca, making it an essential subject in various educational settings, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language from elementary through university levels (Pratiwi et al., 2022). English instruction typically focuses on four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Brown, 2014). Among these, listening plays a crucial role, as it facilitates rapid exposure to authentic language use and supports the development of other language skills (Richards, 2008). Listening comprehension involves the ability to recognize vocabulary, understand grammar, interpret meaning, and process pronunciation.

According to Troike (2012), language acquisition can occur formally—through structured instruction—or informally—through natural exposure to spoken language. In both cases, listening is a foundational component. However, for many Indonesian students, listening remains one of the most difficult skills to master. Learners at schools such as Junior High School often encounter barriers such as fast-paced speech, unfamiliar accents, limited vocabulary, poor audio quality, and lack of sustained focus (Diora & Rosa, 2020; Bakhtiyarovna, 2023; Permatasari et al., 2023).

Teachers also face significant challenges in delivering effective listening instruction, including limited classroom time, difficulty managing diverse proficiency levels, and lack of engaging instructional media (Utomo, 2019). These obstacles often prevent teachers from following lesson plans as intended and hinder students' listening development. As a result, educators are increasingly exploring alternative strategies, including the integration of multimedia resources.

One promising method is the use of English movies in listening instruction. Films offer authentic linguistic input, real-life conversational flow, emotional engagement, and cultural context-factors that can significantly enhance listening comprehension (Harmer, 2001; Nouthaphone & Purbani, 2020). Research shows that movies not only increase student motivation but also support the acquisition of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in an enjoyable manner (Haghverdi & Abdpur, 2013). However, overdependence on Indonesian subtitles may reduce students' exposure to authentic English audio and limit listening skill development (Sari & Aminatun, 2021).

Recent studies further support the benefits of movie-based instruction. Sirrul Bari and Tazul (2024) found that high school students significantly improved their listening scores after repeated exposure to English films. Karim et al. (2022) reported that 100% of EFL students perceived English movies as engaging and helpful in improving listening skills. In a Saudi context, Alqahtani and Alhamami

(2023) also confirmed positive outcomes of movie integration, though they highlighted the need for careful selection and instructional support. In Indonesia, Fidelia and Rohmah (2023) demonstrated that students could better identify and overcome listening difficulties when supported by audiovisual media. Furthermore, a systematic review by Liang et al. (2024) concluded that movies enhance not only listening comprehension but also vocabulary acquisition, pragmatic understanding, and cultural awareness—though the lack of structured implementation in many studies remains a limitation.

At Junior High School, many students already enjoy watching movies, making this strategy potentially effective in fostering engagement and improving listening proficiency. Despite its promise, empirical research on the classroom use of movies in Indonesian EFL contexts, especially regarding implementation processes, outcomes, and challenges, remains scarce.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the following research questions:

1. How is the process of implementing teaching English listening through a movie?
2. What are the challenges faced by the students in learning English listening through a movie?
3. What are the challenges faced by the teacher in teaching English listening through a movie?
4. How does the use of movies enhance students' listening skills?

This study hypothesizes that the integration of English movies into listening instruction significantly improves students' listening comprehension skills.

Method

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to comprehensively address the research objectives. The combination of approaches enabled a deeper understanding of the use of English movies in listening instruction, particularly regarding their effectiveness and the challenges encountered by teachers and students. The quantitative component adopted a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design (Creswell, 2014). This design was selected to measure students' improvement in listening skills after the use of English movies, without involving a control group. The intervention was conducted over four weeks, with English movies implemented in classroom instruction once per week.

The sample consisted of 25 students from class 9E at Junior High School, Tasikmalaya, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The sample size was considered appropriate for an exploratory classroom-based study involving both statistical testing and qualitative exploration. This decision aligns with Creswell's (2012) guidance on small-group intervention research and allows for both feasibility and depth of analysis. While the findings are not intended for broad

generalization, the sample size supports the identification of meaningful patterns and changes within the instructional context.

The movie used during the intervention was selected by the teacher based on pedagogical relevance and linguistic suitability. Selection criteria included clear enunciation, moderate speech pacing, age-appropriate content, and thematic alignment with the junior high school English curriculum. The absence of excessive slang or culturally inaccessible content was also considered. After preview and evaluation, *Finding Nemo* was chosen for its alignment with curriculum themes such as family, friendship, and environmental awareness. The movie was segmented to fit four sessions of listening instruction.

To collect quantitative data, a pretest and a posttest were administered to assess students' listening comprehension. Both tests consisted of three types of tasks: vocabulary matching, story sequencing, and true/false items. The items were adapted from standardized materials developed by British Council Learning English Kids, which ensured appropriate language level and content validity. For qualitative data, multiple instruments were used. Classroom observations were conducted using a structured observation checklist focused on teacher strategies, student engagement, and classroom interaction.

The checklist was developed based on relevant literature and reviewed by an expert in language teaching for content validity. After the intervention, students completed a questionnaire designed to capture their perceptions, learning experiences, and perceived challenges during the movie-based instruction. The questionnaire underwent expert validation for content, and a pilot test was conducted to assess reliability. The resulting Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.82, indicating strong internal consistency.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five students and one English teacher to explore deeper insights into learning challenges, student responses, and teaching strategies. Finally, document analysis was conducted on lesson plans and student worksheets to evaluate the coherence between instructional planning and actual implementation. Quantitative data were analyzed using paired sample t-tests with SPSS version 25. Prior to analysis, the assumptions of normality were tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test.

In addition to statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's d to interpret the magnitude of observed changes. Qualitative data were analyzed following Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation across instruments and data sources was used to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. This study adhered to ethical research principles involving minors. Ethical approval was obtained from the school administration. Informed consent was secured from the participating teacher and from the students' guardians. Anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were ensured throughout the research process. The researcher is a qualified English

teacher with prior training in educational research methods and classroom-based qualitative inquiry.

Results

In this research, the researcher used a document analysis checklist, an observation checklist, interview questions, a questionnaire, a pretest, and a post-test to gain the data. The researcher used the document analysis checklist to see the completeness component of the lesson plan written by the teacher as preparation to teach the English subject.

Table 1. Document Analysis Checklist

No	Component of the lesson plan	Completeness	
		Yes	No
1	Identity	√	
2	Initial Competency		√
3	Pancasila Students Profile	√	
4	Teaching Media	√	
5	Learning Method	√	
6	Learning Objectives	√	
7	Assessment	√	
8	Meaningful Understanding	√	
9	Trigger Question	√	
10	Teaching Process	√	
11	Reflection	√	
12	Student Worksheet	√	
13	Glossary/Bibliography	√	

Based on the table above, the researcher found that the lesson plan made by the teacher is in accordance with the format specified in the Merdeka Curriculum. Next, based on the observation conducted by the researcher, the teaching process followed the three-phase listening framework (Field, 2009): pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. In the pre-listening phase, students activated prior knowledge and reviewed vocabulary such as *clownfish*, *coral reef*, and *hope*. In the while-listening phase, students watched *Finding Nemo*, completed gap-filling worksheets, and engaged in discussions. In the post-listening phase, students created a retelling video and shared moral values from the story.

The teacher employed diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Diagnostic activities involved pre-lesson questioning; formative assessments included vocabulary tasks, group discussions, and peer interaction; and summative assessments were based on the final group video retelling project. These activities supported both receptive and productive skills development.

Next, this research aimed to find out the challenges faced by the students, too.

Based on the questionnaire shared by the researcher, there are several challenges faced by the students.

Table 2. The questionnaire on students' challenges

No	Statement	SA	A	DA	SDA
1	I have difficulty understanding the conversations in the movie because of different accents.			23 92%	2 8%
2.	I often find vocabulary or expressions that I have never learned before.	7 28%	6 24%	12 48%	
3	I often do not understand the dialogue because the characters speak too fast.		4 16%	21 84%	
4	I feel anxious when watching English-language movies without subtitles.		11 44%	9. 36%	5 20%
5	I am afraid that I won't be able to answer questions after watching the movie.		6 24%	16 64%	3 12%
6	I find it difficult to understand the movie because I don't know the cultural context.			23 92%	2 8%
7	I understand the movie better if the teacher explains it first.	2 8%	23 92%		
8	I just watched the movie without really trying to understand the language.	1 4%	5 20%	14 56%	5 20%
9	I rarely listen to English outside the classroom.		13 52%	9 36%	3 12%
10	I find it hard to understand movies because I am not used to hearing English directly.		15 60%	6 24%	4 16%

Based on the table above, the questionnaire data revealed several key challenges faced by students when learning English listening through movies. These findings are grouped into five main themes: linguistic difficulties, listening anxiety, contextual understanding, passive engagement, and lack of exposure. While most students did not struggle with accent variation, as 92% disagreed with the statement "I have difficulty understanding the conversations in the movie because of different accents," many reported lexical challenges. Specifically, 52% of students (28% strongly agree, 24% agree) stated that they often encountered unfamiliar vocabulary or expressions.

In addition, 16% agreed that fast speech made comprehension difficult. Next, A substantial number of students expressed emotional discomfort when watching movies in English without subtitles. About 44% agreed that they felt anxious under these conditions, and 24% reported fear of being unable to answer follow-up questions after the viewing. This suggests the presence of affective barriers to comprehension, as also observed in the interviews. Next, A major barrier identified was the lack of cultural context.

About 92% of students disagreed with the statement that they had difficulty due to cultural unfamiliarity, indicating that the teacher's explanation and pre-teaching were effective. In fact, 92% agreed that they understood the movie better when the teacher provided context before viewing. Next, while most students showed active engagement, a small portion (24%) admitted to watching the movie without actively trying to understand the language. This suggests that without structured follow-up activities, some students may treat movie-viewing as passive entertainment rather than as a learning opportunity.

Last, over half of the students (52%) acknowledged that they rarely listened to English outside of class, and 60% stated that they had difficulty understanding spoken English due to unfamiliarity with natural spoken input. This highlights the importance of increasing students' exposure to authentic English through movies, songs, or other multimedia.

Then, the research findings of this study also present the teacher's challenges in teaching listening through a movie. The data were obtained from an interview with an English teacher. From the interview, there are several challenges faced by the teacher when teaching English listening. Based on the interview, the teacher said that the diversity of students listening abilities is the first challenge that she faced. The teacher stated that many students struggle to follow the native speaker speed speech, accents, slang and cultural nuances presented in the movies. "Students struggle with native accent, fast conversation, new vocabulary, and unfamiliar cultural aspects."

Next, technical issues also become the challenges for the teacher, including malfunctioning projectors and poor audio quality. "Sometimes the projector doesn't work or the audio is poor." Next, selecting a suitable movie is really hard for the teacher. The teacher had to ensure that the movies were age-appropriate, interesting, culturally relevant, and linguistically accessible. "I usually look for movies that are age-appropriate, interesting, and not too long." Next, the teacher mention that some students tend to treat movie vivities activities as entertainment rather than learning. "Some students treat it like entertainment and become noisy. Therefore, I reprimanded them."

Last, the teacher stated that the school was generally supportive by providing audiovisual equipment and internet access. Thus, she did not face the challenges related to institutional support. "The school is quite supportive. They provide a projector, speaker, and internet access. They allow me to use movies as long as the content is appropriate." Based on interview results, the teacher faced several challenges in teaching English listening through a movie. The last data in this research is about the effect of using English movies to enhance students' listening skills. It can be seen in tabel 4 that shows the result of students listening comprehension pre-test and post-test scores.

Table 4. The result of students' listening comprehension

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	74.24	25	6.930	1.386
	posttest	85.00	25	4.153	.831

Based on the paired samples statistic table, it showed that pretest mean score was 74.24 and posttest mean 85.00, N reffered to the total of the student that is 25 students. Therefore, it can be conclude that using movie as a media in teaching listening has a significant improvement to students listening comprehension skills.

Table 5. Paired sample test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	-10.760	6.527	1.305	-13.454	-8.066	-8.242	24	<.001

Based on the calculation of the t-test, the table above showed a significant result. It can be seen from the result of the mean was 10.760. The standard deviation was 6.527 The standard error mean was 1.305. The lower interval was 13.454 and the upper was 8.066. Meanwhile, the result of the t-test was 8.242. The degree of freedom was 24, and significance (2-tailed) was <.001 < ∝ (0.05). This research declares the significance score is lower than ∝= 0.05, it can be concluded that the difference were significant.

From the result above, it can be conclude that the use of movie for enhancing students listening skills at Junior High School Tasikmalaya has a significant impact. This also shows that movie can be good media to teach English listening. Through the movie, the students not only listen to the audio but also see the body language or gesture of the speaker.

Discussion

This study explored the use of movies as a medium to improve English listening comprehension in the EFL classroom. The findings confirm that integrating audiovisual materials into instructional design can significantly enhance student engagement, motivation, and comprehension. The improvement in students' listening scores, as revealed by the paired sample t-test, reinforces the potential of movies not only as entertaining tools but also as pedagogically rich resources. These results are consistent with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which asserts that language acquisition is most effective when learners receive comprehensible input slightly beyond their current level (i+1). In this context, the movie provided abundant input that was both meaningful and contextualized through visual and

auditory support.

The listening instruction followed Field's (2009) three-phase model—pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening—which contributed to a structured and scaffolded learning experience. Students benefited from pre-teaching vocabulary, brainstorming, and the activation of prior knowledge, which helped reduce the cognitive load before engaging with authentic spoken English. While watching the movie, students took notes, identified key vocabulary, and interacted with peers—activities that aligned with Brown's (2001) view of learning as a cognitive and social process. Following the film, tasks such as retelling, reflecting on moral values, and completing dialogues encouraged students to process the content more deeply and to use language productively.

These instructional strategies are also well-supported by Mayer's (2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning and Paivio's (1990) Dual Coding Theory, both of which argue that learning is enhanced when verbal input is accompanied by visual cues. The multimodal nature of the movie helped students construct meaning from gestures, facial expressions, and intonation—even when they did not fully understand every word. This was confirmed in student interviews, where learners reported that such cues helped them grasp the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. Their responses also indicated an increase in affective engagement, aligning with Gardner's (1985) motivation theory, which highlights the role of enjoyment and interest in sustaining language learning.

Nonetheless, the study also uncovered various challenges faced by students. The most prominent was linguistic difficulty, particularly with unfamiliar vocabulary and fast-paced speech. These findings mirror those of Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), who noted that rapid delivery and unknown words are common obstacles in movie-based listening. Interestingly, unlike previous studies, students did not report difficulties with accents, possibly due to the consistency of the standard accent used in the selected movie. This nuance adds a valuable perspective to Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) work, suggesting that accent familiarity may ease comprehension.

Another notable challenge was listening anxiety, especially when subtitles were removed. Over half of the students expressed fear of misunderstanding the storyline or failing to answer questions, confirming Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Emotional barriers such as anxiety can interfere with input processing and learning outcomes. Although pre-listening support and teacher feedback helped, this finding underlines the importance of designing instruction that not only challenges students cognitively but also support them affectively.

Additionally, students' comprehension was found to improve significantly when given background knowledge about characters, plot, and cultural context. This supports the idea that activating prior knowledge or schema can enhance the effectiveness of authentic materials. Without such contextual scaffolding,

students—especially those with limited exposure to English outside school—may experience cognitive overload. In fact, over half of the students admitted to rarely engaging with English content in their daily lives, highlighting the importance of encouraging out-of-class exposure to build listening fluency.

From the teacher's perspective, the study revealed important instructional and institutional challenges. One major issue was the diverse proficiency levels in the classroom. Differentiating instruction to accommodate both high and low achievers required additional preparation and flexibility. The teacher addressed this by pre-teaching key vocabulary, replaying scenes, and giving tiered tasks. While this mitigated some difficulties, it emphasizes the need for more training and resources to implement differentiation effectively, especially when using dense materials like movies.

Material selection was also a considerable challenge. The teacher needed to ensure that movies were not only age-appropriate but also culturally and morally suitable. This reinforces Mishan's (2005) argument that authentic materials must align with learners' cognitive and emotional readiness. Classroom management during movie-based activities was another concern. Some students perceived the activity as entertainment and lost focus, especially in the absence of clearly defined tasks. The teacher attempted to counteract this through guided discussions and comprehension checks, though fluctuating interest and time constraints sometimes limited their effectiveness.

Interestingly, contrary to prior research (Saleem & Bakr, 2023; Utomo, 2019), time management did not emerge as a major issue in this study. The teacher was able to complete all phases of instruction by creating a clear lesson plan with structured time allocation. This suggests that time constraints, often cited as a barrier to implementing innovative methods, may be addressed through effective planning. Although the school provided basic audiovisual infrastructure, occasional technical issues, such as poor audio quality, disrupted lessons. These supports findings by Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) and Miao and Mao (2018), who emphasize that reliable technology is crucial for successful multimedia learning. Institutional support should extend beyond equipment provision to include maintenance and technical assistance.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by highlighting the interplay between cognitive, affective, and contextual factors in multimedia-based listening instruction. It not only reinforces the value of comprehensible input and dual coding but also reveals how student motivation, anxiety, and prior exposure shape outcomes. It further suggests that Mayer's and Krashen's theories, while robust, must be applied alongside pedagogical sensitivity and emotional awareness. Practically, the findings have several implications. Teachers should be trained not only in multimedia use but also in designing scaffolded, engaging, and differentiated tasks. Structured pre- and post-listening activities are essential to transform passive viewing into active learning. At the curriculum level, frameworks

like the Merdeka Curriculum should promote the use of authentic media and multimodal input while supporting teachers with curated resources, time flexibility, and collaborative planning opportunities.

Despite its promising results, the study has limitations. It involved a small number of participants in a single school and was conducted over a limited timeframe, restricting the generalizability of the findings. Data from interviews may also be affected by self-reporting bias. Future research could adopt longitudinal designs to examine the long-term impact of movie-based instruction, explore its effectiveness across different educational levels and cultural contexts, and test differentiated strategies in mixed-ability classrooms. Moreover, further investigation is needed into the role of student affect and how emotional responses mediate listening comprehension in media-based environments.

Finally, cultural context must not be overlooked. While movies can transcend linguistic barriers, unfamiliar cultural references may confuse learners or reduce engagement. In collectivist contexts like Indonesia, the integration of moral and value-based narratives may enhance receptivity. Therefore, materials should not only be linguistically accessible but also culturally resonant to optimize student learning and motivation.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that when movies are used thoughtfully—with adequate scaffolding, appropriate content, and affective support—they can be powerful tools for improving listening comprehension, fostering engagement, and encouraging language production. Their effectiveness, however, depends on careful instructional planning, institutional support, and responsiveness to learners' cognitive and emotional needs.

Conclusion

The aim of this research is to explain the use of movies in teaching and learning English listening, and to find out the challenges faced by teachers and students when teaching and learning English listening through movies. The results of this research were taken using several instruments: a document checklist, an observation checklist, interview questions, a questionnaire, a pretest, and a post-test.

This research finds that the teacher makes a suitable lesson plan for teaching English subjects. The teacher also did all the stages of teaching English listening: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. Moreover, a formative and summative assessment in the classroom should be implemented. Next, there are several challenges faced by the students in learning English by listening to movies, which are related to linguistic challenges, listening anxiety, passive engagement, and lack of exposure to authentic English language. However, the teacher also faces challenges in teaching English listening, which is related to students' varied listening proficiency, technical issues and equipment limitations,

difficulty in selecting appropriate movie materials, classroom management and student engagement, student anxiety and motivation, and institutional support and limitations. Lastly, based on the finding that using an English movie significantly improves students' listening skills.

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