

Exploring Students' Perceptions and Challenges in Learning Listening Through Animated Movies

Anggia Yolanda¹, Iwan Kurniawan^{2*}, Muhamad Nawawi³

Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UIN Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
Corresponding e-mail: iwankurniawan@radenintan.ac.id

Received: August 30, 2026 | Revised: September 30, 2026 | Accepted: October 11, 2026

Abstract

This study explores students' perceptions and challenges in learning listening through animated movies as a form of independent learning. It aims to investigate students' perceptions of animated movies in improving listening skills, identify the challenges they encounter during listening practice, and examine the strategies they use to overcome them. A qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 eleventh-grade students of MA Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung who regularly used animated movies to practice English listening outside the classroom. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that students generally held positive perceptions of using animated movies for learning listening. They found the movies enjoyable, engaging, and motivating, while also reporting improvements in understanding spoken English in context. Visual elements such as character expressions, gestures, and storylines supported listening comprehension by helping students interpret meaning despite unfamiliar vocabulary. However, students experienced challenges related to intrinsic and extraneous cognitive load. Intrinsic cognitive load mainly resulted from limited vocabulary, while extraneous cognitive load was caused by the fast speech rate of native speakers, connected speech, and rapidly disappearing subtitles. To overcome these challenges, students employed cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies, including using subtitles, translating unfamiliar words, taking notes, replaying and pausing scenes, adjusting playback speed, and seeking assistance from peers or family members. Overall, the findings suggest that animated movies support learning listening by enhancing learner engagement, facilitating listening comprehension, and encouraging self-regulated learning.

Keywords : *listening comprehension, animated movies, students' perception, animated movies*



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) international license.

1. INTRODUCTION

Listening is an active process in which listeners do not merely focus on the words being spoken, but actively interpret the messages conveyed by drawing on their prior knowledge and the surrounding context, allowing them to understand the meaning more deeply and comprehensively (Vy & Vinh, 2025). Listening constitutes the initial language competency that an individual develops and continues to utilize most extensively across the lifespan, serving as a fundamental basis for all later

communicative and cognitive abilities. In other words, the skill that underlies effective communication, the information obtained, and language learning is listening. In addition to encourage students' conversational abilities, this skill also affects the development of other language skills (Mukhtorova, 2024). Listening plays an essential role in developing language proficiency and effective communication. It is also viewed as a fundamental aspect of language learning, forming the basis upon which other language skills are established (Thi et al., 2024). Listening is important in English learning because it occupies a crucial position among the four major language skills. As the first receptive skill to develop in humans, it raises learners' awareness of the target language and enhances their ability to respond meaningfully. Furthermore, listening is vital for communicative purposes since it helps learners acquire accurate pronunciation, stress, vocabulary, and syntax. Comprehension can also rely on tone, pitch, and accent, which further emphasize its importance (Gultom et al., 2023). Listening functions as a key component in language acquisition, providing learners with the foundation necessary for understanding and expressing themselves effectively in any language (Zulfizar, 2025).

However, many EFL students demonstrate low motivation to develop their listening comprehension. They often show minimal engagement or effort during listening activities. This lack of enthusiasm can hinder their active participation and slow down the improvement of their listening comprehension. This is in line with the statement of Anwar et al. (2025) state that many EFL students still struggle with low motivation when it comes to listening activities. This often happens because the materials lack authenticity or the spoken language feels too difficult to grasp. As a result, students may become less engaged and reluctant to put effort to improve their listening comprehension. One approach to address these challenges is the integration of engaging and interactive media, such as audiovisual materials, into students' independent listening practice. Audiovisual media combine both auditory and visual input, allowing learners to interpret information through multiple channels simultaneously, which can enhance both comprehension and engagement. Unlike audio-only materials, audiovisual media provide contextual cues through gestures, facial expressions, and environmental information, supporting understanding, particularly for learners encountering such as complex sentences. Thus, the use of this media has the potential to attract students' interest and get them more involved in independent learning activities. In addition, learning through this medium may feel more varied so that students do not get bored quickly during their independent learning activities, which in turn can increase their enthusiasm for learning listening on their own.

According to Simatupang et al. (2024), movies are examples of audiovisual that can be used in listening activity, movies can be defined as audiovisual works that combine a sequence of moving images with sound to represent stories, events, or experiences. Movies are a highly appealing type of mass media that have the power to communicate messages in unique ways. They can function as tools for community education and for promoting certain values. Watching English movies allows students to listen to real life dialogues, varied accents, and authentic intonation patterns. Additionally, it exposes students to idiomatic language and new idioms in a lighthearted and enjoyable setting. Whether in English or Indonesian, the inclusion of subtitles aids in their comprehension of the material and helps them relate sounds to meaning. Movies, as an audiovisual media, provide authentic input and real-life conversations while also making the learning process

more engaging, it makes learning activity more interesting and contextual (Putri, 2025). Movies comprise a broad spectrum of genres, such as drama, documentary, and animation, each characterized by distinct narrative methods and stylistic approaches that enable them to address varied audience interests and preferences.

However, this study specifically focuses on animated movies as a resource that students use in their independent listening practice outside the classroom. Animated movies convey language by combining visual and auditory components, which helps learners better follow dialogues and spoken content. The depiction of movement, character expressions, and environmental settings provides visual cues that support understanding and make the narrative easier to comprehend. By merging sound and imagery, animated movies offer a dynamic and engaging experience, allowing learners to perceive language within meaningful contexts. This integration of audio and visuals enhances attention and comprehension, making animated movies an effective and attractive medium for listening activities in students' independent listening practice. This is in line with Yunita et al. (2023) explain that animated movies are films that give movement to inanimate objects, combining action, sound, and visual aids. They are considered effective educational media because they do not only show engaging visuals but also provide contextual language input and make them useful for listening activities.

For this reason, animated movies are relevant to the present research, which involves the eleventh-grade students of MA Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung who have prior experience in independently using animated movies for listening learning. A preliminary research was conducted through interviews with three students who were purposively selected because they had experience using animated movies for English listening practice. This number was considered sufficient to obtain initial insights into students' learning experiences and to identify the main issues that would be explored further in the present study. Based on the preliminary research that conducted through interviews with several students showed that animated movies were generally viewed positively because they were more interesting, enjoyable, and easier to understand through visuals and natural conversations. However, students faced challenges such as unfamiliar vocabulary and fast speech in animated movies when using animated movies in their independent listening activities. These findings indicate that although animated movies make independent listening activities more enjoyable and engaging, students still encounter several obstacles that influence their comprehension. Therefore, it is necessary to explore their real experiences such as challenges and perceptions toward the use of animated movies in their independent listening practice in a more in-depth manner.

Several previous studies have discussed the application of movies and animations in English learning. Rahayu and Rahayu (2023), for instance, discovered that using animated movies significantly enhanced students' motivation and listening performance, yet their research was limited to quantitative findings and did not cover how students felt during the process. Their study used pre- and post-tests to measure listening achievement but did not include any interviews to capture students' emotional responses and learning experiences. In a similar way, Mukazhanova et al. (2022) investigated animation among young learners in Kazakhstan and found that it supported

vocabulary and focus development. However, their study centered on elementary students, leaving questions about how older students might respond.

Simatupang et al. (2024) reported that animated movies had a positive effect on students' listening achievement at the junior high school level in Medan. Nevertheless, the study did not explore learners' perspectives or the challenges they encountered. Kristiani et al. (2025) examined the use of short animated clips in classroom settings and found improvements in students' enjoyment and comprehension. However, their emphasis was mainly on test scores, without analyzing how students actually perceived the learning experience independently. Moreover, Fidelia and Rohmah (2023) observed that students found difficulty dealing with different accents and vocabulary in English movies despite the visual support that aided comprehension. Their focus, however, was not on animated movies. Similarly, Yunita et al. (2023) confirmed that animated movies help improve listening comprehension among junior high students. Still, this research focuses on the use of animated movies rather than students' experiences in independent learning processes.

From the explanations of the previous studies above, it can be inferred that although animated movies have been proven effective in improving listening outcomes and motivation, the majority of existing research relies heavily on quantitative data and provides limited exploration of how students personally experience learning through this medium, particularly in terms of their perceptions and challenges. These limitations highlight the need for further investigation, especially through a qualitative phenomenological approach that can reveal students' authentic experiences and the challenges they encounter in independent listening activities contexts. In addition, there is a lack of studies focusing on the strategies used by students to overcome the challenges they face during their independent use of animated movies. To fill these gaps, this study aims to explore students' perceptions and the challenges they face in learning listening through animated movies. It also seeks to examine the strategies used by students during their independent use of animated movies. By employing a qualitative phenomenological design, this research intends to describe students' learning experiences independent listening activities using animated movies and provide a comprehensive understanding of their perceptions, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they use when animated movies are utilized as a listening medium.

In conclusion, this study is intended to investigate students' experiences through the use of animated movies as a medium for learning listening independently at MA Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung. The research focuses on exploring students' perceptions of learning listening in independent through animated movies, find out the challenges they experience during the process, and to know what strategies students made to overcome these challenges. Through this study, the researcher seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how animated movies can be used in in students' independent listening activities to support students' listening comprehension and motivation. This study focuses on exploring students' perceptions of learning listening through animated movies, the challenges they encounter during independent learning practice and the strategies they made to overcome those challenges. The findings are expected to provide meaningful insights into students' real learning listening experiences and how they actively cope with listening difficulties. These insights may help students better understand and improve their own learning strategies and serve as a reference for future research on the use of animated movies in English language learning,

particularly in improving students' listening comprehension. Referring to the previously stated background and research problems, this study outlines several objectives to direct the investigation. These objectives are intended to examine students' views on learning listening in independent through animated movies, find out students' challenges and their strategies. The objectives are presented as follows.

1. To find out students' perceptions of using animated movies as a medium for learning listening in English.
2. To find out the main challenges faced by students when learning listening through animated movies independently..
3. To identify the strategies used by students to overcome the challenges in using animated movies as a medium for listening learning.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researcher employed qualitative research to collect and analyze the data. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. The choice of this method because it is in line with the purposes of this study to know the students' perceptions, challenges and strategies in learning listening.

The type of qualitative research design used in this research is phenomenology. John W. Creswell (2014) stated that phenomenology is a qualitative research design that originates from philosophy and psychology. It aims to explore and describe how individuals experience and make sense of a particular phenomenon in their everyday lives. The researcher aims to explore and understand students' experiences in learning listening independently through animated movies, focusing on their perceptions, the challenges they encounter, and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges. In this qualitative phenomenological research, the goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences during independent listening practice using animated movies. This research design is closely aligned with the research questions, which focus on students' perceptions, the challenges they face when learning listening through animated movies independently, and the strategies they use to overcome those challenges. In line with the flexible nature of qualitative inquiry, the main themes are expected to emerge from the data itself rather than being predetermined by existing theories.

In this study, the researcher involved 10 eleventh-grade students of MA Muhammadiyah Bandar Lampung as the participants. The number of participants was determined based on the nature of qualitative research, which typically uses a relatively small number of participants in order to gain deeper information. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), qualitative research does not require a specific formula to decide the sample size. Instead, the number of participants depends on the research design and the depth of information needed. Therefore, selecting 10 students from a total population of 20 students was considered adequate to obtain meaningful and detailed information about students' perceptions, challenges, and strategies in independent listening learning through animated movies. They are chosen because they have experience in learning listening

through animated movies independently. They are considered suitable for the study, as their familiarity with the use of animated movies as a learning medium is expected to provide valuable insights into their perceptions, the challenges and strategies to overcome these difficulties through the use of animated movies in listening learning independently. Besides that, purposive sampling is the technique that the researcher used to select the participants. Purposive sampling, which is referred to as judgment sampling, is a non-probability sampling method where the researcher intentionally selects participants who are considered most relevant to the objectives of the study (Dubey & Kothari, 2022). In this study, the researcher applies purposive sampling by considering several criteria to ensure that the selected participants are truly relevant to the research objectives.

Data collecting technique refers to the methods and procedures employed by researchers to gather the information required to address the research questions. These techniques may vary depending on the research approach, ranging from interviews and observations in qualitative research, surveys and experiments in quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2013), data collection techniques can be understood as the various methods or procedures employed by researchers to obtain rich and credible data, the data collection technique that will use in this research is Interview

Interview is a method of data collection carried out through a direct conversation between a researcher and a participant. According to Li & Zhang (2022), interview is among the most frequently applied technique for collecting qualitative data. They are especially effective for obtaining opinions and behavioral information, particularly when the topic is complex, sensitive, or requires in-depth detail. Ideally, interviews are carried out in a setting that is comfortable, safe, and easily accessible. The place should ensure privacy, allow the use of recording devices, and create an environment that encourages participation and interaction without disturbances. The main aim of a qualitative interview is to draw out participants' experiences, perceptions, and emotions through a conversational or dialogic approach. While questions are the most common tool used, researchers may also employ various textual, visual, or creative techniques to encourage participants' engagement and discussion, helping to uncover how they construct meaning (Edwards and Holland, 2023).

In addition, the researcher will conduct the interview in Bahasa Indonesia to minimize the risk of misunderstanding and to make participants feel more comfortable using their native language. The collected data will be transcribed in Indonesian for analysis and then translated into English for presentation. Based on the objective of this research, which seeks to explore students' perceptions, the researcher chose semi-structured interviews. As Edwards and Holland (2023) explain, a semi-structured interview is a method in which the researcher follows an interview guide consisting of predetermined questions or topics, while still allowing flexibility in the order, wording, and depth of probing. This approach provides consistency across participants for comparability, yet gives them sufficient freedom to express their views in detail and in their own terms. In practice, this means the researcher will follow the interview guidelines for structure, but can also take the chance to dig deeper whenever the students' answer brings up something interesting or unexpected, leading to richer and more meaningful insights.

One essential principle in qualitative research is that the researcher acts as the key instrument. The researcher is deeply and personally involved in every stage of the study. They effectively become the main tool for gathering, interpreting, and analyzing the data, making their personal role absolutely crucial for the study's success. The Researcher's job does not stop at just collecting information, they are also responsible for making sense of that data and connecting the findings to relevant theories, which ensures the results have a clear and meaningful scholarly contribution (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher functions as the primary instrument, supported by an interview guideline. The interview guideline is designed to explore students' perceptions, challenges and also strategies in their learning listening through animated movies independently. It provides structure and direction for the interviews, while still allowing flexibility so that students can express their opinion openly in depth.

In qualitative research, data analysis usually happens alongside data collection and writing. Therefore, while interviews are still being done, researchers might already be reviewing earlier conversations, making notes that later help shape the story, and even planning how the report will be organized. The process of data analysis in qualitative research occurs continuously throughout the implementation of the study. At this stage, researchers actively examine and interpret the information obtained from participants, while applying general analytical steps as well as specific procedures that align with the chosen research design or approach (Creswell and Creswell, 2023).

Therefore, the data in this research were analyzed using Thematic Analysis based on the framework of Braun and Clarke. Thematic analysis is a commonly employed technique in qualitative research aimed at uncovering the meanings and recurring themes within collected data. This method involves researchers methodically identifying, analyzing, and interpreting thematic patterns that emerge from interviews, observations, or other types of data sources (Abdussamad et al., 2025). This method is considered suitable because the aim of the study is to explore students' perceptions and challenges in independent listening practice through animated movies, also students' strategies to overcome the challenges.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Students' Perceptions Toward Learning Listening Through Animated Movies

Based on the interview results, the researcher found that most students had positive feelings toward the use of animated movies in listening activities. The students described animated movies as enjoyable, interesting, and more engaging compared to conventional listening exercises commonly used in English learning activities. Several students explained that learning listening through animated movies made them feel more relaxed and motivated.

Student 1 stated: *"Seneng sih kak", "Termotivasi kak, karna ngebantu banget, lebih enjoy."*, Similarly, Student 2 expressed: *"Jujur aku suka", "Lebih menarik dan tidak ngebosenin dibandingkan harus baca buku."* Another participant also shared similar feelings: *"Lebih seru sih dibanding kalau nggak ada animasinya", "Lebih enjoy juga dan juga lebih semangat buat belajar lagi bahasa Inggris."*. Furthermore, S10 added, *"Senang sih, karena kan nggak biasa gitu. Biasanya kan pas belajarnya di kelas, dengerin guru ngomong, atau nggak cuma pakai audio. Tapi karena pakai animasi, jadi tambah menarik aja, seru metodenya"*. In addition, Student 7 mentioned: *"Lebih mudah ngerti aja daripada kalau belajar bahasa Inggris di sekolah", "Kalau belajar di sekolah tuh kayak rasanya boring aja gitu."*

The interview excerpts above indicate that animated movies created a more enjoyable learning atmosphere for the students. The combination of visual effects, storylines, sounds, and character expressions helped students become more interested and emotionally involved during independent listening activities. This suggests that students were not only passively listening to English conversations, but were also emotionally engaged with the content, which may support sustained attention during listening practice.

Some students also felt that animated movies reduced the pressure experienced during independent listening activities. Student 9 stated: *"Seneng sih, karena pakai animasi jadi lebih seru dan nggak kerasa lagi belajar"*, *"Kalau pakai buku atau audio aja tuh membosankan."* This finding suggests that animated movies were able to increase students' enthusiasm and motivation in learning listening independently because the activities felt more entertaining and less monotonous.

The findings also showed that students perceived improvements in their listening comprehension after frequently watching animated movies independently. Most participants stated that animated movies helped them improve vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation, and understanding of spoken English. Student 1 explained: *"Kosakatanya nambah"*, *"Jadi makin paham sama bahasa yang dia pake"*, *"Karena bisa sambil nonton animasi sambil dapet banyak pelajaran kayak kosakata baru terus lebih memahami waktu-waktu past tense segala macam gitu kak."* Similarly, Student 2 stated: *"Saya itu bisa ngomong bahasa Inggrisnya jadi lebih pasih"*, *"Saya jadi lebih memahami bahasa Inggris."* Another participant also mentioned: *"Yang paling meningkat itu kosa kata sama ngerti kalimat bahasa Inggris"*, *"Mulai lebih paham kosa kata bahasa Inggris jadi mulai terbiasa juga."* Meanwhile, Student 9 explained: *"Lebih ke cara ngucapinnya gitu"*, *"Ternyata cara ngomongnya kayak gini setelah nonton itu."* From these statements, it can be understood that animated movies exposed students to authentic English conversations and expressions. Continuous exposure to spoken English helped students become more familiar with vocabulary usage, and sentence structures used in everyday communication.

Furthermore, several students explained that animated movies helped them understand the context of conversations more easily. Student 5 stated: *"Kadang jadi ngerti konteks ceritanya gitu"*, *"Jadi lebih ngerti karena ya itu sering nonton kan."* This finding indicates that animated movies not only functioned as entertainment but also contributed positively to students' listening development.

The interview results revealed several factors that made animated movies attractive for listening learning. Most students mentioned that the storyline, characters, visual appearance, and emotional elements in animated movies made the learning process more enjoyable. Student 1 stated: *"Alurnya sih kak, ceritanya."*, *"Dari karakter sama alurnya sih kak, karna ada alur yang dibikin kesel gitu sama karakternya juga "*, *"Ga jauh beda dari kehidupan sehari-hari."* Similarly, Student 4 explained: *"Yang biikin menarik itu ini sih jalan ceritanya terus karna emang suka juga terus lebih gampang dipahami gitu"*, *"Bahasa Inggris yang digunakan juga lebih nggak terlalu berat."* Another student also mentioned: *"Kalau animasi tuh nggak boring"*, *"Dari alur cerita sama gambar-gambarnya itu menarik."* Meanwhile, Student 8 stated: *"Karena gabungan semuanya sih dari cerita, suara, dan visualnya."*

These findings show that students were attracted to animated movies because they presented relatable stories, entertaining characters, and appealing visuals. Such elements helped maintain

students' attention and encouraged them to stay focused during listening activities. In addition, some students felt that the language used in animated movies was easier to understand compared to other English media. As a result, students felt more confident and comfortable while practicing listening independently.

Based on the interview results, visual elements played an important role in helping students understand spoken English. Several students stated that facial expressions, gestures, movements, and situations shown in the animated movies helped them interpret the meaning of conversations even when they did not fully understand the vocabulary. Student 1 stated: *"Visual senter sama teks yang di bawahnya tu jadi nyambung jadi tau kalo senter tu kosakatanya ini gitu kak."* Student 1 also explained: *"Dari ekspresi sama adegannya aku jadi paham maksud kata yang dia ucapin walaupun awalnya aku belum tau artinya."*

Similarly, Student 5 explained: *"Visualnya ngebantu misalnya gerakannya kalo engga ekspresi karakter gitu."* When asked whether visual elements helped him understand something despite not knowing the words, Student 5 stated: *"Pernah karna gerak-gerak ya mimik wajah mereka."* Student 8 further explained: *"Visual itu kan kayak contekan gitu sih kak. Jadi itu kalau aku lihat ekspresinya, jadi aku bisa memahami dialognya gitu"*. She also stated: *"Kalau lihat ekspresi mukanya, misal marah. Jadi aku tahu, oh dia itu lagi marah atau lagi ngomong kasar gitu"*. Student 4 added: *"Lebih cepet paham kalo misalkan dia tu audio sama visual, karna kalo misalkan kayak cuma nulis atau dengerin doang itu kayak kurang ini kurang nyantol diotak gitu"*

These findings indicate that visual support made it easier for students to predict meanings and understand contexts while watching animated movies. Students relied on scenes, character expressions, gestures, and actions to connect spoken language with meaning. The visual information helped them understand the storyline and interpret dialogues even when they encountered unfamiliar vocabulary. The findings also suggest that visual and audio elements complemented each other in supporting listening comprehension, allowing students to follow the story more effectively.

3.2. Students' Challenges in Learning Listening Through Animated Movies

Although students generally had positive perceptions toward learning listening through animated movies, the findings showed that they still experienced several challenges during independent listening activities. Based on Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller et al., 2011), these challenges can be categorized into intrinsic cognitive load, extraneous cognitive load, and

2.1 Intrinsic Cognitive Load

The findings revealed that students experienced intrinsic cognitive load, particularly due to unfamiliar vocabulary encountered while watching animated movies. Limited vocabulary knowledge increased the inherent complexity of listening tasks and made it difficult for students to understand spoken English. As a result, students often struggled to comprehend dialogues and follow the storyline. Student 4 stated, *"Kosakatanya asing terus sama kadang nggak jelas suaranya"* Similarly, Student 7 explained, *"Pas nonton kadang aku ga paham sama beberapa adegannya karna kosakata baru apalagi kalo nontonnya gak pake subtitle."* Student 6 also admitted, *"Aku gak tau semua kosakata di film itu jadi bikin kesulitan sih."*

These findings indicate that unfamiliar vocabulary increased the complexity of the listening materials and required students to devote greater cognitive effort to understanding spoken messages before they could comprehend the overall context of the conversations.

Besides vocabulary difficulty, students also experienced extraneous cognitive load, which resulted from the way spoken information was delivered in animated movies. Most participants reported that native speakers often spoke too quickly, making it difficult to process spoken language at a natural speed. Fast pronunciation and connected speech caused students to miss important information before they had sufficient time to understand the previous utterances.

Student 1 stated, *"Ngomongnya terlalu cepet, jadi susah buat diikutin."* Similarly, Student 6 explained, *"Yang paling susah itu kalau misalnya ngomongnya cepat banget gitu,"* and further added, *"Soalnya kan kata katanya itu jadi kayak nyambung semua ya jadi susah buat dipisahin satu satu."* Student 7 also identified fast speech as a major difficulty, stating, *"Yang tokohnya ngomong cepat sih."* In addition, Student 10 mentioned, *"Kayak yang cepet gitu terus subtitlenya juga tuh kayak cepet ilangnya gitu loh, dari kita tuh belum baca gitu belum selesai baca dia udah ilang gitu jadi kadang kan kayak alur ceritanya itu kita udah gimana sih gitu kan kayak oh udah gak tau gitu selain gitu ngomongnya cepet, sama kayak yang ya tadi sih kayak subtitlenya tuh cepet ilang tadi gitu,"* she added *"Pengaruhnya jadi kadang aku ketinggalan alur ceritanya, Kak. Karena pas satu dialog belum paham, eh dialog berikutnya udah lanjut lagi."*

This finding indicates that students experienced additional difficulty due to the way listening materials were presented. The combination of fast speech and subtitles that disappeared too quickly often prevented students from understanding dialogues effectively and caused them to lose track of the storyline during independent listening activities.

The interview findings also indicated that students allocated cognitive effort to construct meaning while learning listening through animated movies. Although they encountered unfamiliar vocabulary and fast speech, several participants actively attempted to understand spoken English by connecting dialogues with visual cues and contextual information presented in the movies.

Student 5 explained, *"Visualnya ngebantu misalnya gerakannya kalau enggak ekspresi karakter gitu."* Similarly, Student 8 stated, *"Kalau lihat ekspresi mukanya, misal marah. Jadi aku tahu, oh dia itu lagi marah atau lagi ngomong kasar gitu."* In addition, Student 9 reported, *"Kalau yang misalkan ngomongnya cepat tuh ya saya slow tadi juga, biar terbiasa dikit-dikit lah."*

These findings suggest that students did not merely receive listening input passively. Instead, they actively constructed meaning by integrating spoken language with visual information and gradually adapting to the natural speed of English conversations. Such cognitive efforts reflect germane cognitive load, which supports schema construction and facilitates listening comprehension

3.3. Students' Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

The findings revealed that students employed various learning strategies to overcome the difficulties they encountered during independent listening practice through animated movies. Based on Learning Strategies Theory (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), these strategies can be categorized into cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and socio-affective strategies.

3.1 Cognitive Strategies

The interview findings showed that students frequently employed cognitive strategies to facilitate listening comprehension. These strategies included using subtitles, translating unfamiliar vocabulary, taking notes, searching for word meanings through Google, and using screenshots to record new vocabulary.

Student 6 stated, *"Pakai bahasa Indonesia atau bahasa Inggris."* Similarly, Student 4 explained, *"Kadang aku ini bisa tanya ketemen atau apa cari tau di Google atau pake subtitle bahasa Inggris gitu."* Another participant also stated, *"Pake, bahasa Indo."*

In addition, several students actively recorded unfamiliar vocabulary while watching animated movies. Student 1 stated, *"Searching kak, terus dicatet dibuku,"* and further explained, *"Discreenshoot terus nanti translate di Google."* Similarly, Student 6 explained, *"Biasanya dicatat terus cari di Google."* Another participant also stated, *"Biasanya saya pas nonton itu, kayak saya nemu kosakata yang asing, saya catat sih kak. Abis itu selesai film saya cari artinya apa."*

These findings indicate that students actively processed listening input by using subtitles, translating unfamiliar vocabulary, and taking notes. Such strategies helped them understand dialogues more effectively while simultaneously expanding their vocabulary knowledge.

3.2 Metacognitive Strategies

The findings also revealed that students employed metacognitive strategies by monitoring and regulating their own listening process. Most students replayed movie scenes, paused difficult dialogues, and adjusted the playback speed whenever they encountered comprehension difficulties.

Student 1 stated, *"Iya puter ulang kak."* Similarly, Student 6 explained, *"Diulang lagi filmnya,"* and added, *"Pause ya aku berhentiin dulu."* Student 2 added, *"jadi aku pause dulu, aku ulangin lagi sambil liat subtitle bahasa inggris".* Furthermore, Student 10 said, *"Yang pertama tuh aku mundurin gitu, mundurin misalnya 20 detik ke belakang, atau 10 detik ke belakang, terus aku pause gitu. Aku pause, misalnya dia ngomong, ternyata kata-katanya itu ini".* Another participant also stated, *"Biasanya aku ulang lagi adegannya kak, terus baca subtitlenya lagi biar lebih paham mereka ngomong apa."*

Student 9 also reported slowing down the playback speed when facing fast speech. The participant stated, *"Mungkin saya kalau lagi nggak paham banget, saya ini sih kak, kecepatannya saya kurangi kayak lebih slow-mo gitu."* The participant further explained, *"Kalau yang misalkan ngomongnya cepat tuh ya saya slow tadi juga, biar terbiasa dikit-dikit lah."*

These findings indicate that students consciously monitored their comprehension and adjusted their listening strategies according to the level of difficulty they experienced. By replaying scenes, pausing dialogues, and slowing the playback speed, students regulated their own learning process to improve listening comprehension.

3.3 Socio-affective Strategies

Although less frequently reported, several students also employed socio-affective strategies by seeking assistance from others when encountering listening difficulties. Student 4 explained, *"Kadang aku ini bisa tanya ketemen atau apa cari tau di Google atau pake subtitle bahasa Inggris gitu."*, *"Kayak waktu itu aku kan nonton toy story itu terus ada adegan ga aku ngerti dia ngomong apa jadi aku nanya temen atau kayak cari tau digoogle"*, S2 also stated *"Iya, kadang susah makanya itu butuh apa namanya, kalo ga nanya sama orang tuaku yang disampingku lagi nonton"*

This finding suggests that, in addition to relying on individual learning strategies, some students also sought support from peers to clarify unfamiliar vocabulary and improve their understanding during independent listening activities.

Discussion

The findings indicate that students generally hold positive perceptions toward independent listening practice using animated movies. Most students described the activity as enjoyable, engaging, and relatively comfortable compared to conventional classroom-based listening exercises. The independent nature of this learning activity also allowed students to control their own pace, which contributed to a more relaxed learning experience. This perception can be understood through Robbins and Judge (2021), who explain that perception is shaped by individuals' interpretations of experiences. In this context, students interpreted animated movies as a supportive medium because they combine audio, visual, and narrative elements that facilitate easier engagement during independent learning.

In addition, this finding aligns with SDT by Ryan & Deci (2000), which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation develops when learners perceive learning activities as enjoyable and self-directed. The autonomy in choosing when and how to watch animated movies appears to contribute to students' willingness to engage in listening practice independently. Furthermore, CTML by Mayer (2001) supports this result, as combining visual and auditory input helps learners process information more effectively. The multimodal nature of animated movies reduces monotony and supports sustained attention during independent learning sessions. This result is consistent with Rahayu and Rahayu (2023), who found that students showed positive perceptions and higher motivation when learning listening through animated movies.

The findings indicate that students perceived improvements in their listening comprehension after regularly engaging with animated movies independently. According to Robbins and Judge (2021), perception is formed through individuals' interpretation of their experiences. In this study, students interpreted their repeated exposure to animated movies as contributing positively to their listening development, particularly in vocabulary recognition, pronunciation, and contextual understanding. This perceived development can be explained through Goh and Vandergrift (2022), who state that consistent exposure to authentic spoken language supports vocabulary growth and comprehension development. Through independent viewing, students repeatedly encountered natural expressions used in meaningful contexts, which helped strengthen their understanding over time.

Moreover, listening is a complex process involving interpretation and meaning construction (Richards, 2008). In this study, students did not only identify individual words but also attempted to understand meaning through context, indicating active cognitive processing. This process is further

supported by Rost (2011), who highlights that listening comprehension involves both bottom-up processing (decoding linguistic input) and top-down processing (using contextual knowledge). The combination of these processes appears to be strengthened through repeated independent exposure to animated movie dialogues. Similar findings were reported by Simatupang et al. (2024) and Kristiani et al. (2025), who found that animated movies significantly improve students' listening comprehension performance. In addition, Fidelia and Rohmah (2023) also reported that frequent exposure to English movies helps students enrich vocabulary and improve listening ability.

The findings reveal that several elements of animated movies contribute to students' engagement in independent listening practice, including storyline, characters, visual design, and emotional expression within scenes. These elements make the learning process more meaningful and reduce monotony during self-directed study. From the perspective of Robbins and Judge (2021), students' perceptions were shaped by their learning experiences while watching animated movies. Their positive perceptions toward the storyline, characters, and visual design indicate that these features were interpreted as making independent listening activities more engaging and enjoyable.

This is consistent with CTML by Mayer (2001), which explains that learners process information more effectively when verbal and visual materials are integrated. Animated movies provide synchronized audio-visual input that supports comprehension and maintains learner attention. Similarly, DCT by Paivio (1986) suggests that information processed through both verbal and visual channels enhances understanding. In independent learning situations, this dual processing helps students connect spoken language with visual context more effectively. In addition, this finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory by Ryan & Deci (2000), as the enjoyable nature of animated movies encourages learners to sustain independent listening practice without external pressure. These findings are in line with Mukazhanova et al. (2022), who found that animated films make students more attentive and actively involved due to their engaging and accessible nature.

The findings indicate that visual elements in animated movies play an important role in helping students understand spoken language during independent learning. Students reported that gestures, facial expressions, and situational context assisted them in interpreting meaning when they were unable to fully understand vocabulary. Students' perceptions also reflect how they interpreted the contribution of visual elements to listening comprehension. According to Robbins and Judge (2021), perception results from individuals' interpretation of sensory experiences. In this study, students perceived visual cues as meaningful support that helped them construct the meaning of spoken language. This supports Dual Coding Theory by Paivio (1986), which states that combining verbal and visual information improves comprehension and memory retention. In this study, visual cues served as supportive input that complemented auditory information.

Furthermore, Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning by Mayer (2001) emphasizes that learners benefit from integrated multimodal input, especially when processing complex language input independently. This also reflects top-down processing in listening comprehension (Richards, 2008; Rost, 2011), where learners rely on contextual clues to construct meaning. In independent learning, visual context becomes particularly important because students do not receive immediate clarification from teachers. This finding is supported by Mukazhanova et al. (2022) and Rahayu and

Rahayu (2023), who highlighted that visual support in animated movies helps learners understand language more effectively.

4. CONCLUSION

This study explored students' perceptions, challenges, and strategies in learning listening independently through animated movies. Based on the findings obtained from semi-structured interviews, it can be concluded that students generally perceived animated movies positively as a medium for independent listening practice. Compared with conventional listening activities, animated movies were considered more enjoyable, engaging, and less monotonous because they combined spoken language with visual elements such as character expressions, gestures, and storyline. These features created a more interesting learning experience and encouraged students to practice listening independently. The findings also indicate that students perceived animated movies as beneficial for improving their listening comprehension. Repeated exposure to English conversations helped students become more familiar with vocabulary and commonly used expressions, while visual context supported them in understanding dialogues and following the storyline even when they did not recognize every word. This suggests that the combination of audio and visual input facilitated students' comprehension during independent listening activities.

Despite these positive perceptions, students encountered several challenges while learning independently through animated movies. The major difficulties involved unfamiliar vocabulary and fast speech delivery. Limited vocabulary knowledge increased the complexity of listening tasks, while the rapid delivery of spoken language and connected speech made it difficult for students to process information and keep up with the conversations. These challenges sometimes prevented students from fully understanding dialogues and following the storyline.

To overcome these difficulties, students employed various learning strategies. They applied cognitive strategies by using subtitles, translating unfamiliar vocabulary, taking notes, and searching for word meanings. They also employed metacognitive strategies by replaying scenes, pausing difficult dialogues, and reducing the playback speed to monitor and regulate their own comprehension. In addition, some students used socio-affective strategies by asking friends or family members for clarification when they encountered listening difficulties. These findings demonstrate that students actively managed their own learning process while practicing listening independently through animated movies. Overall, this study suggests that animated movies can serve as an effective and engaging medium for independent listening practice. Although students encountered challenges during listening activities, they were able to employ various learning strategies to overcome these difficulties. Therefore, animated movies not only provide authentic listening input and meaningful visual support but also encourage students to become more strategic and autonomous learners in developing their listening skills.

REFERENCES

- Abdussamad, J., Sopingi, I., Setiawan, B., & Sibua, N. (2025). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan Mixed Methode* (Cetakan 1). PT Media Penerbit Indonesia.
- Al Anwar, S. F., Arjulayana, & Nargis. (2025). Barriers in Using English Movies: Enhancing Students' Listening Skills. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 13(1), 2436–2447. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v13i1.6765>

- Dubey, U. K. B., & Kothari, D. P. (2022). *Research Methodology Techniques and Trends* (1th editio). CRC Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315167138>
- Fidelia, V. D., & Rohmah, Z. (2023). Using English Movies to Improve Students' Listening Skills. *NOBEL: Journal of Literature and Language Teaching*, 14(2), 206–225. <https://doi.org/10.15642/nobel.2023.14.2.206-225>
- Goh, C. C. M. and, & Vandergrift, L. (2022). *Teaching and Learning Second Language Listening* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429287749>
- Gultom, Q. Z., Alwashliyah, Utari, P., Alwashliyah, Rahmawati, W. T., & Alwashliyah. (2023). *THE IMPORTANCE AND DIFFICULTIES OF LISTENING SKILL* : 3(1), 28–3 <https://doi.org/10.47662/ejee.v3i1.584>
- John W. Creswell. (2014). *Research design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods Approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell. (2018). Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. In *European University Institute* (5th ed., Issue 2). SAGE.
- John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell. (2023). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed). SAGE.
- Kristiani, T. N., Manalu, D. B., & Purba, R. (2025). *The Effect of Using Short Animation Movie on Listening Comprehension Ability of 8 th Grade Students at SMPN 2 Pematangsiantar*. 5, 4236–4250. doi: 10.31004/innovative.v5i3.19184.
- Li, Y., & Zhang, S. (2022). *Applied Research Methods in Urban and Regional Planning*. Springer Nature Switzerland AG. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93574-0>
- Mayer, R. E. (2001). *MULTIMEDIA LEARNING*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mukazhanova, A., Rybalkina, Y., & Gavrilova, Y. (2022). *Using Cartoons And Animated Films To Teach Listening Skills To Young Learners*. 1258–1263. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2022.03.149>
- Mukhtorova, M. (2024). HOW TO IMPROVE LISTENING SKILLS OF BOTH ESL AND EFL STUDENTS. *Herald Scientific Journal*, 11(26), 84–86. <https://doi.org/10.54613/ku.v11i11.964>
- Paivio, A. (1986). *Mental Representations A Dual Coding Approach*. Oxford University Press.
- Rahayu, M. S. J., & Rahayu, E. M. (2023). The Using of English Animation Movie to Improve Students' Listening Achievement in the New Normal Era. *Seltics Journal: Scope of English Language Teaching Literature and Linguistics*, 6(1), 48–59. <https://doi.org/10.46918/seltics.v6i1.1744>
- Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching Listening and Speaking From Theory to Practice* (1th ed). Cambridge University Press.
- Rosalind Edwards and Janet Holland. (2023). *Qualitative Interviewing* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Rost, M. (2011). *Teaching and Researching Listening* (2nd editio). Pearson Education Limited.
- Rost, M. (2025). *Teaching and Researching Listening* (4th ed., Vol. 17). Routledge.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations : Classic Definitions and New Directions*. 67, 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Simatupang, S. U. M., Simarmata, R. O., & Sitorus, N. (2024). The Effect of Using Animation Movies as Learning Media on Students' Listening Skills in Eighth Grade at SMP Negeri 37 Medan. *ALACRITY : Journal of Education*, 4(3), 239–253. <https://doi.org/10.52121/alacrity.v4i3.453>
- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R&D*. Alfabeta, Cv.
- Thi, T., Loan, T., Thi, H., Hoa, M., City, B. H., Technology, I., & City, T. D. (2024). *Significance of Listening Skills in Enhancing the Communication Skills*. 194–196. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijels>
- Vy, L. T. M., & Vinh, D. Q. (2025). ChatGPT's Impact on Listening Comprehension: Perspectives from Vietnamese EFL University Learners. *Call-Ej*, 26(3), 43–63. <https://doi.org/10.54855/callej.252633>

Yunita, P., Arafiq, A., Azis, A. D., & Sahuddin, S. (2023). The Use of English Short Animation Movies to Improve Students' Listening Skill: A Study at The First Grade of SMPN 1 Lingsar Academic Year 2022/2023. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 8(3), 1282–1286.
<https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v8i3.1483>.