

## Non-Native Speakers' Perception and Motivation for Learning English Language through Movies

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### ABSTRACT

The global dominance of the English language has motivated individuals whose first language is not English to actively pursue fluency in English. For non-native speakers of English, acquiring the language is an intricate journey that demands substantial time and effort, accompanied by a range of challenges. In recent years, English movies have emerged as captivating tools for language learning, effectively aiding in enhancing vocabulary and essential language skills. These insights stem from past research that studied how non-native speakers learn English through movies. However, despite the valuable findings from these studies, there remains a discernible gap in our understanding of this field. In addressing this gap, the current study intended to investigate the perception and motivation of non-native speakers in learning English through movies. The study collected data by conducting surveys among non-native English speakers who were undergraduate students at a local public university. The findings revealed that these non-native speakers favour using movies as a method for learning English as a second language, and this medium enhances their motivation to learn. Building upon the existing foundation of research, this study significantly contributes to the body of knowledge by addressing the substantial research gap that exists in comprehending non-native speakers' perspectives on learning the English language through the medium of movies.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study contributes to the existing literature by addressing the substantial research gap in understanding non-native speakers' perspectives on learning the English language through movies. It reveals that non-native speakers, particularly undergraduate students, favour using movies for language learning and report enhanced motivation. This research advances our knowledge of the role of English movies in second language learning for non-native speakers.

## 1. Introduction

The English language has achieved global dominance (Albiladi et al., 2018), encouraging many non-native speakers to strive for mastery (Rao, 2019). The process of learning a new language, especially for non-native speakers, is intricate and demands considerable time and effort (Roslim et al., 2021). Numerous challenges are reported by non-native English speakers during their second language acquisition experience. The first significant challenge revolves around the limited exposure to English vocabulary. This lack of exposure hampers vocabulary acquisition, thereby affecting various language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Yaacob et al., 2021). Additionally, this challenge extends to mastering the lexicon, which entails understanding shifts in meaning prompted by contextual variables (Afzal, 2019). The second critical challenge is the phenomenon of negative transfer encountered by non-native speakers when learning English as a second language (Mohammed, 2018). Negative transfer involves the application of native language structures, pronunciation, and vocabulary to English, leading to errors and challenges in language production and comprehension. For instance, distinctions between the structures of Arabic and English languages are notable (Mohammed, 2018). Overcoming negative transfer necessitates recognizing the precise linguistic disparities between one's native language and English. Non-native speakers can gradually enhance their English proficiency through exposure to authentic English input, consistent practice, and effective teaching. Moreover, non-native learners frequently encounter difficulties in comprehending expressions and sentence context due to underlying cultural disparities (Abdullah, 2015). Mastery of English constitutes a multifaceted process, demanding proficiency in language structures, abilities, and cultural nuances (Mohammed, 2018).

The next challenge involves the intricate nature of pronunciation for non-native speakers learning English as a second language (Gaipova, 2023). This difficulty emerges from variations in the pronunciation of specific words based on their tenses or parts of speech. For example, consider the word 'read,' which maintains uniform spelling but diverges in pronunciation between its past and present tenses (Gaipova, 2023). Gaipova (2023) also underscores the challenging aspects of learning English due to its rules and complex phonetic combinations. Lastly, learners' attitudes, particularly a lack of willingness and motivation to engage in language learning, have a significant influence over their language learning success (Zulkefly & Razali, 2019). When learners perceive the language as relevant and coherent, the process of language learning becomes more manageable. In simpler terms, the language should hold meaning and practicality for the student, thereby retaining their focus throughout the process of learning the English language (Zulkefly & Razali, 2019). Initial negative reactions during the early stages of learning English can lead to reduced motivation, decreased self-confidence, heightened stress, increased anxiety, and a fear of making mistakes (Mohammed, 2018).

Over the years, second language educators have explored various methods that effectively contribute to improving English language acquisition, including reading, flashcards, group work, and assessments. Reading is a cognitive activity crucial for literacy (Semtin et al., 2015), nurturing skills, gauging proficiency, and facilitating effective communication (Amini et al., 2020). Extensive reading is recommended for ESL/EFL learners, enhancing language application (Amini et al., 2020). Beyond textbooks, reading enriches vocabulary from diverse sources like newspapers and magazines (Razokovna et al., 2022). Flashcards have also emerged as valuable tools for improving word context understanding and writing skills (Sartika, 2020; Skarr et al., 2012). By combining images

and words, flashcards foster spelling and writing proficiency (Adas & Bakir, 2013; Mathura & B. Zulu, 2021). Repeated exposure to flashcards enhances memory retention, benefiting ESL learners (Miles & Ehri, 2017). The use of flashcards in English learning, particularly, has proven beneficial and engaging in classroom settings, especially among students new to studying English as a second language (Mathura & Zulu, 2021). Another effective method involves group collaboration, particularly advantageous for non-native English speakers seeking enhanced learning outcomes (Altherr, 2022). Alghamdi's (2018) study with advanced ESL reading students unveiled group work as their favoured activity, with 90% reporting new word acquisition through collaborative tasks. Active engagement in group settings enhances information retention by fostering meaningful content connections. This hands-on approach deepens understanding and extends information retention (Altherr, 2022), rendering it a valuable strategy for learning English as a second language among school and university students. Furthermore, Altherr (2022) found that assessments were an effective method for understanding the competency levels of non-native English-speaking students in their English language mastery. According to Alghamdi et al. (2018), teachers can employ surveys to probe into students' language learning behaviours. Analysing the data generated from these questionnaires empowers teachers to craft impactful vocabulary classes and enhance the efficiency of their students' English language studies (Altherr, 2022).

In recent years, a particularly engaging method for learning English has emerged: the use of English movies (Cook, 2016). Research by Uzzaman and Roy (2019) highlights that watching English movies significantly enhances listening and speaking skills for non-native English speakers. Regular movie-watching builds vocabulary progressively (Uzzaman & Roy, 2019). Regular engagement with movies aids correct and appropriate word usage in daily life. This emphasises the role of English movies in bolstering language acquisition and proficiency. Furthermore, Rao (2019) emphasises movies as vital tools for comprehension-based learning, creating a language-rich environment with connections between words, facial expressions, and context. Observing native speakers speak in their native language aids speaking abilities (Halawa, Sihombing, & Nasution, 2022). Xu (2018) shows how sound-picture connections in movies improve understanding and oral proficiency. Exposure to native speakers in movies enhances listening and speaking skills (Yaacob et al., 2021). Real-life situations in films aid vocabulary recall (Roslim et al., 2021). Moreover, subtitled English movies offer advantages (Birules Muntane & Soto-Faraco, 2016). Yaacob et al. (2021) note that subtitled movies improve listening comprehension more effectively. Subtitles bridge visual to reading activity, aiding struggling readers (Yaacob et al., 2021). Captioned authentic videos enhance listening comprehension (Gilakjani, 2016). Subtitles consistently improve listening comprehension (Gilakjani, 2016). Scholars endorse movies for teaching English as a second language due to their language skill benefits (Kusumawardhani & Nurhayati, 2019; Yazici, 2020; Roslim et al., 2018). Movies enrich teaching resources and foster engagement (Yaacob et al., 2021). Technology, including movies, supports language learning (Yaacob et al., 2021). Tafani (2009) urges educators to adopt movies, recognizing their pedagogical value. Movies engage, motivating learners and enriching discussions (Roslim et al., 2021). English movies reveal language context, culture, and usage, sparking participation (Roslim et al., 2021). Discussions on themes, characters, and plots foster speaking and listening skills. Movies motivate and stimulate imagination (Rao, 2019). Ismaili's study (2013), cited in Yaacob et al. (2021), reports enhanced motivation and skills after three months of using movies. Authentic learning materials heighten motivation and cultural awareness (Yaacob et al., 2021). Uzzaman and

Roy's (2021) study echoes movie-based learning's motivating and enjoyable aspects (Uzzaman & Roy, 2021).

When it comes to exploring learners' perception of learning English as a second language through movies, it is worth noting that this area has been relatively underexplored with limited studies conducted. However, the existing studies that have delved into this subject consistently highlight students' favourable perception of movies as a tool for language acquisition and vocabulary enrichment (Goctu, 2017; Kabooha, 2016; Kalra, 2017). Furthermore, research conducted by Albiladi et al. (2018) reinforces the positive viewpoint students have towards incorporating English movies into their learning experiences. In particular, regarding the aspect of learners' motivation, a noteworthy study by Kalra (2017) provides valuable insights. This study examined the learning of English in a Foreign Language classrooms, and observed the affirmative perception that movies can enhance learners' motivation. It suggests that movies contribute to creating an engaging learning environment, thereby enhancing motivation and potentially resulting in improved language learning. Motivation is a crucial factor in attaining advanced levels of English proficiency; learners with self-confidence excel in language acquisition (Mohammed, 2018). Nduwimana (2019) suggests that low motivation hampers the English language potential of many university students. The numerous challenges that learners encounter in learning English as a second language, as explained earlier, may further affect their motivation levels.

The available literature highlights the dynamic and engaging potential of movies for language acquisition, evident through their authentic language usage, cultural insights, and visual context. The audio-visual nature of movies captivates students' attention, enhancing comprehension and enriching the learning process. Further, Albiladi et al. (2018) emphasises that learners derive motivation from learning English through movies. However, a significant research gap exists in exploring non-native speakers' perceptions of learning English through movies. Thus, this present study aimed to address this gap and contribute to a deeper understanding of this aspect.

The broad aim of the present study was to examine the perception and motivation of the non-native speakers in learning English through movies. Specifically, this study intended to 1) examine the perception of non-native speakers in learning English through movies, 2) to examine the motivation of non-native speakers in learning English through movies, and 3) to examine the relationship between non-native speakers' perceptions of learning English through movies and their motivation.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Participants and Research Design

A quantitative research approach, particularly an online survey was employed for this study, specifically employing an online survey technique. The rationale to utilise a quantitative method was made to encourage a larger number of students to participate and comprehensively capture the patterns in terms of non-native speakers' perceptions of and motivation for learning the English language through movies. This method facilitated the rapid collection and analysis of a substantial amount of data, enabling us to better understand the participants' perceptions and motivation.

The study included 120 undergraduate participants (84 females and 36 males) with age ranging from 22 to 24 years old, all from a local public university. These participants had achieved Band 4 in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET), which qualified them to take part in the present study. Convenience sampling was utilised in this research to maximise the sample size and capture a comprehensive representation of the population. It is important to emphasise that diversity across various factors, such as gender, age, and background, was not a specific focus of this study. While diversity was not a consideration, the use of convenience sampling allowed for the inclusion of participants from various backgrounds and characteristics, albeit in an uncontrolled manner. Nevertheless, the results are expected to provide valuable insights into the perceptions and motivations of the broader population within the scope of this research.

## 2.2. Instruments

The survey items for the present study, which focused on the specific context of non-native speakers' perceptions and motivations in learning English through movies, were adapted from [Roman et al. \(2020\)](#), [Mergler et al. \(2015\)](#), [Aloraini et al. \(2020\)](#), and [Bolliger et al. \(2015\)](#). [Roman et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Mergler et al. \(2015\)](#) investigated motivational factors in English language learning for foreign language learners, while [Aloraini et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Bolliger et al. \(2015\)](#) explored students' perceptions of learning languages through social media and digital games. None of these studies specifically addressed the use of movies as a tool for learning English. Therefore, the questionnaire was modified to fit the present study's focus on non-native speakers' perceptions and motivations in learning English through movies.

The survey questionnaire was divided into three sections: demographic information, non-native speakers' perceptions about learning English through movies, and non-native speakers' motivations for learning English via movies. The questionnaire included a total of 22 items, with 2 items in the demographic section addressing age and gender, and 10 items each in the subsequent sections addressing non-native speakers' perceptions and motivations for learning English via movies, respectively. Prior to conducting the actual data collection, the questionnaire items were validated by an expert, and the feedback obtained from the validation process was carefully analysed and used to refine and improve the questionnaire. The pilot test was conducted with a group of participants who were similar to the actual study participants to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the questionnaire's internal reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was greater than 0.7 for the items measuring non-native speakers' perception of learning English through movies, showing strong internal consistency ( $\alpha = .932$ ). Similarly, the measures used to assess speakers' motivations for learning English through movies had good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 ( $\alpha = .904$ ). Both results indicate a strong internal consistency among the items in the respective scales ([Taber, 2018](#)).

## 2.3. Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study was collected online using Google Forms, and the survey link was distributed to the recruited participants. Before participating in the study, participants were required to read and comprehend the study's background information, which was provided at the beginning of the form and included all relevant important details. In compliance with ethical requirements, the data of the participants was kept anonymous throughout the study, and the participants were given the option to withdraw from the

study at any time. The participants' willingness to participate in the present study was indicated by their submitted responses.

### 3. Result

The data were analysed using SPSS for descriptive and Pearson's correlation analyses. Concerning the analysis of non-native speakers' perceptions of learning the English language through movies, participants were asked to rate 10 questions on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 1 provides an overview of the survey items along with their respective mean and standard deviation values, while Figure 1 illustrates the corresponding percentage of responses for each item. Notably, the mean scores for each statement were consistently above 4 (Table 1), indicating that a substantial number of participants hold positive perceptions regarding learning English through movies.

Table 1: Non-Native Speakers' Perception for Learning English Through Movies (Survey Items, Means, and Standard Deviations)

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. English movies are a good platform for learning the English language.	4.54	.685
2. English movies are helpful in learning the English language.	4.46	.709
3. Using English movies to learn the English language would improve my performance.	4.41	.728
4. Learning English through movies would increase my productivity.	4.08	.885
5. Learning English through movies would effectively enhance my language learning.	4.37	.755
6. Watching English movies for language learning would offer opportunities to think critically.	4.07	.796
7. English movies used for learning the language would help me achieve better grades.	4.04	.893
8. I learn the English language by watching English movies	4.11	.994
9. I feel comfortable using English movies to learn the English language.	4.23	.772
10. I enjoy using English movies as a tool for learning the English language	4.37	.768

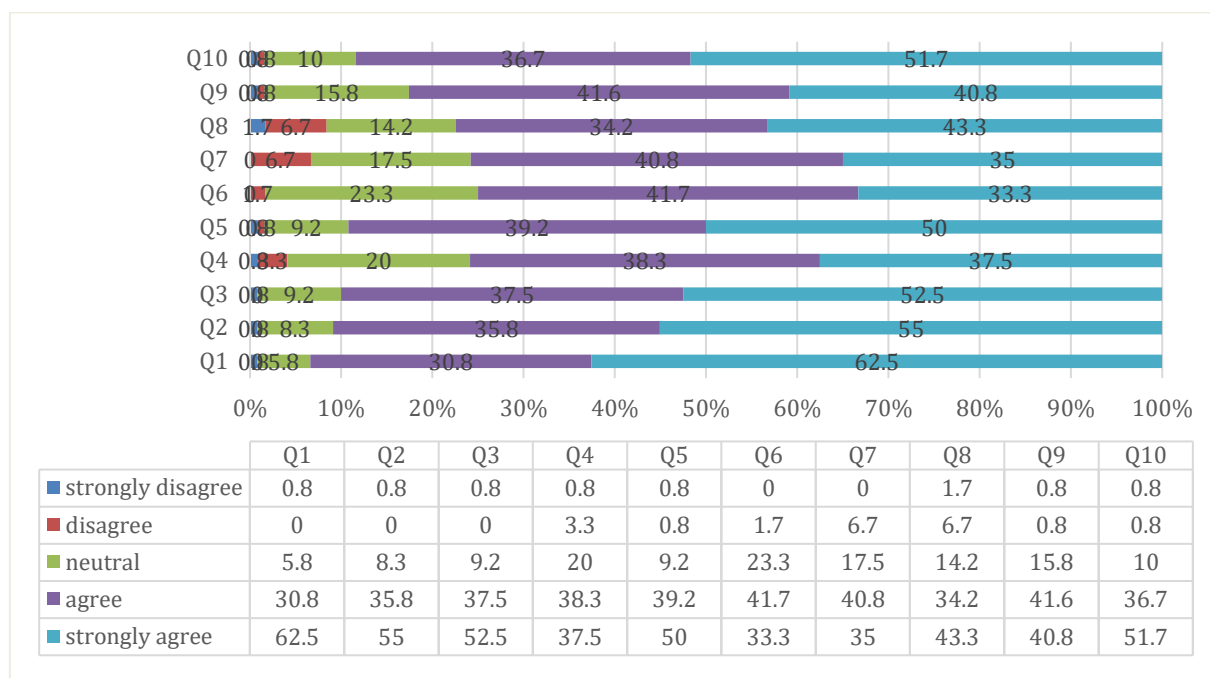
Concerning item 4 ("Learning English through movies would increase my productivity"), a total of 75.8% (91) non-native speakers strongly agreed and agreed with the item, 20% (24) were neutral, 4.1% (5) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, for item 5 ("Learning English through movies would effectively enhance my language learning"), 89.2% (107) non-native speaker participants strongly agreed and agreed with the item, 1.6% (2) strongly disagreed and disagreed and 9.2% (11) were natural. As for item 6 ("Watching English movies for language learning would offer opportunities to think critically"), 75% (90) non-native speaker participants strongly agreed and agreed with the item, 1.7% (2) non-native speakers disagreed and 28 (23.3%) were neutral. Lastly, item 7 ("English movies used for learning the language would help me achieve better

grades") indicates that 75.8% (63) non-native speaker participants strongly agreed and agreed with the item 6.7% (8) disagreed and 17.5% (21) were neutral.

Moving on to item 8 ("I learn the English language by watching English movies"), the responses were as follows: 77.6% (93) non-native speakers strongly agreed and agreed, 8.3% (10) strongly disagreed and disagreed while 14.2% (17) were neutral on this item. Regarding item 9 ("I feel comfortable using English movies to learn the English language"), there were 82.4% (102) non-native speakers who strongly agreed and agreed to this item, 0.8% (1) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, 17 (15.8%) were neutral. For item 10 ("I enjoy using English movies as a tool for learning the English language") in the section of Non-Native Speakers' Perception on Learning English Language through Movies, there were 88.4% (106) who strongly agreed and agreed, 1.6% (2) who strongly disagreed and disagreed, 10% (19) were neutral.

In summary, as depicted in Figure 1, most participants selected 'agree' and 'strongly agree' for all 10 items. This illustrates that non-native speakers largely perceive learning the English language through movies as efficient and effective for their language learning and mastery of the English language.

Figure 1: Non-Native Speakers' Perception for Learning English Language Through Movies (Percentage of Responses to Each Survey Item)



Next, regarding non-native speakers' motivation for learning the English language through movies, Table 2 outlines the survey items, and Figure 2 presents the corresponding percentage of responses for each item. All of the items received a mean score above 4, indicating that the majority of participants were motivated for learning English through movies

Table 2: Non-Native Speakers' Motivation for Learning English Through Movies  
(Survey Items, Means, and Standard Deviations)

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I am interested in English movies to learn English through movies.	4.24	.870
2. I find English language learning through English movies to be exciting.	4.33	.748
3. I learn English language through English movies to understand the English lifestyle and culture.	4.30	.826
4. I learn English language through English movies to understand and appreciate English art better.	4.11	.887
5. I learn English language through English movies to be better educated and feel confident.	4.33	.712
6. I learn English language through English movies so that I can seek for better job opportunities abroad.	3.98	.957
7. I learn English language through English movies for the satisfied feeling I get in learning new language.	4.32	.832
8. I learn English language through English movies for the pleasure I get from hearing English language spoken by English native speakers.	4.43	.775
9. I learn English language through English movies because I think it is good for my personal development.	4.41	.728
10. I learn English language through English movies because I want to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language	4.47	.788

Out of 120 participants, for item 1 ("I am interested in English movies to learn English through movies"), 80% (96) strongly agreed and agreed, 3.3% (4) strongly disagreed and disagreed, and 15.8% (19) were neutral towards the item. In relation to item 2 ("I find English language learning through English movies to be exciting"), 87.5% (105) strongly agreed and agreed with this statement, 0.8% (1) strongly disagreed, and 11.7% (14) remained neutral. In response to item 3 ("I learn English language through English movies to understand the English lifestyle and culture"), a total of 84.5% (101) strongly agreed, 2.5% (3) strongly disagreed and disagreed, and 13.3% (16) were neutral.

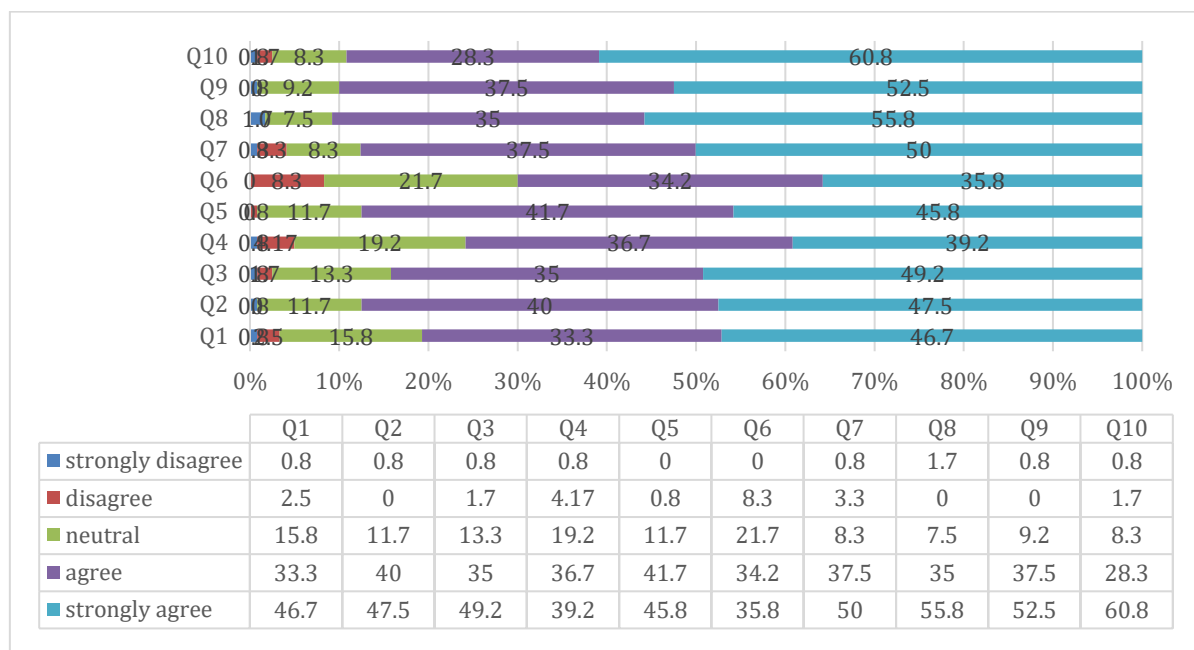
Moving on to item 4 ("I learn English language through English movies to understand and appreciate English art better"), 75.9% (91) of non-native speakers strongly agreed and agreed, 4.97% (6) strongly disagreed and disagreed, and 19.2% (23) remained neutral. Concerning item 5 ("I learn English language through English movies to be better educated and feel confident"), 87.5% (105) strongly agreed, 0.8% (1) disagreed, and 11.7% (14) were neutral. As for item 6 ("I learn English language through English movies so that I can seek better job opportunities abroad"), 70% (84) strongly agreed and agreed, 8.3% (10) disagreed, and 21.7% (26) remained neutral.

Regarding item 7 ("I learn English language through English movies for the satisfied feeling I get in learning a new language"), 87.5% (105) strongly agreed and agreed, 4.1% (5) strongly disagreed and disagreed, and 8.3% (10) remained neutral. The subsequent item, item 8 ("I learn English language through English movies for the pleasure I get from hearing English spoken by native speakers"), saw 90.8% (109) strongly agreeing and agreeing, 7.5% (9) remaining neutral, and 1.7% (2) strongly disagreeing.

In relation to item 9 ("I learn English language through English movies because I think it is good for my personal development"), 90% (108) strongly agreed, 9.2% (11) remained neutral, and 0.8% (1) strongly disagreed. Finally, for item 10 ("I learn English language through English movies because I want to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language"), 89.1% (107) strongly agreed and agreed, 8.3% (10) remained neutral, and 2.5% (3) strongly disagreed and disagreed.

In summary, the majority of participants leaned towards the options of "strongly agree" and "agree" for all 10 items regarding non-native speakers' motivation to learn English through movies. This indicates that non-native speakers are predominantly motivated to learn English through movies due to the factors mentioned in the survey items.

Figure 2: Non-Native Speakers' Motivation for Learning English Language Through Movies (Percentage of Responses to Each Survey Item)



Further examination of the link between Non-Native Speakers' Perception and Motivation in Learning English through Movies reveals a positive linear connection between motivation and perception ( $r = 0.875$ ). This suggests that as motivation levels rise, perceptions of the learning process also tend to grow positively

#### 4. Discussion

This study examined the perceptions and motivations of non-native speakers when learning English through movies. Overall, the results indicate that the majority of participants viewed learning the English language through movies as effective and beneficial for enhancing their language skills. This finding aligns with a prior study by Roslim et al. (2021), which highlighted movies as a valuable resource for language learners, contributing to their language proficiency.

For instance, one of the items that achieved the highest mean ( $M = 4.54$ ) is item 1 (English movies are a good platform for learning the English language) in the perception section. This illustrates that a majority of participants have concurred that movies serve as

effective platforms for English language learning. To elaborate, in terms of mastering English language vocabulary, a study by [Alharthi \(2020\)](#) discovered that participants who extensively watched subtitled English-language movies incidentally acquired a more substantial amount of English vocabulary compared to those who watched a smaller number of such movies. Moreover, the data suggests that watching movies exerted a favourable influence on the English language learning journey of non-native speakers. To be specific, according to item 5 (Learning English through movies would effectively enhance my language learning.) in the perception section, half of the participants strongly concurred with the notion that learning English through movies notably enhance their language learning. This finding was consistent with the research conducted by [Aliyev and Albay \(2016\)](#), who posited that movies can assist learners in enhancing their vocabulary acquisition—a fundamental aspect of English language learning.

Among the items in the perception section of the survey, item 7, (English movies used for learning the language would help me achieve better grades) received the lowest mean score of 4.04. This indicates that a small number of participants do not believe that watching English movies can have a positive impact on their academic performance. Interestingly, this finding contrasts with the findings of [Yaacob et al. \(2021\)](#), where a majority of students expressed their belief that incorporating movies into their English language classes can significantly enhance their language skills. This suggests that students perceive movies as valuable resources for improving their language proficiency, which, in turn, can positively affect their grades.

Furthermore, participants displayed a notable motivation for engaging in English language learning through movies. For instance, item 10, "I learn the English language through English movies because I want to be the kind of person who can speak more than one language," received the highest mean in the motivation section of the survey, achieving a score of 4.47. This finding demonstrates that the majority of participants were motivated to become multilingual by learning English as a second language through movies. The current finding was consistent with [Ilyosovna's \(2020\)](#) argument that mastering the English language opens up several employment prospects. There is an increasing demand for those skilled in English communication in today's global employment landscape, and having a solid command of the language also allows access to many cultures globally, given its broad and global usage ([Ilyosovna, 2020](#)).

Item 6 (I learn English language through English movies so that I can seek for better job opportunities abroad.) in motivation section receives a mean score of 3.98. This item is in line with a study by ([Ilyosovna, 2020](#)).that highlights the importance of possessing a strong command of the English language, as it greatly facilitates travel and enhances ease of communication ([Ilyosovna, 2020](#)). With proficient English language skills, individuals can effectively navigate and communicate in various countries, leading to increased confidence while traveling worldwide. Additionally, a solid grasp of the English language provides access to a wide array of literature, movies, and music from numerous countries). This exposure to diverse cultural resources enhances one's education and knowledge, enabling a broader understanding of different perspectives and ideas.

The present study also establishes a strong positive linear relationship between the motivation and perception of non-native speakers when learning the English language through movies. This finding suggests that as individuals' motivation increases, their perception of learning the English language through movies similarly tends to experience an elevation. This finding aligns with the research conducted by [Albiladi et al. \(2018\)](#),

which reinforced the idea that considering English movies as suitable tools for language learning can aid learners in developing their language skills in engaging and appealing ways, thus amplifying motivation.

In summary, the non-native speakers in this study perceive the use of movies as an effective and beneficial method for enhancing their English language learning. Furthermore, the majority of these non-native speakers exhibit a motivation to learn the English language through movies. It is important to recognise the educational value of English movies alongside their entertainment aspect. Further research is essential to comprehensively investigate the perceptions and motivations of non-native speakers in the context of acquiring the English language through movies. Future research could delve into the influence of movies from diverse cultural backgrounds on non-native speakers' perceptions and motivations. Additionally, exploring the specific learning strategies that non-native speakers employ while utilising movies for language learning warrants examination. Moreover, potential gender disparities in how non-native speakers perceive and find motivation in learning English through movies could be explored.

### **Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

The research adhered to the ethical research guidelines outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA). Participation in this study was voluntary, and participants' consent was indicated by their submission of completed online survey answers.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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