

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains a literature review of Autonomous Learning, Vocabulary learning, and English subtitles. It covers the definition of Autonomous Learning, Vocabulary Learning, English subtitles, and Studies of relevant research.

2.1 Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning refers to a learner's ability where students are fully responsible for their own learning process from starting goals, and setting learning strategies to evaluating. Holec (1981) introduced autonomous learning first and defined it as the ability to take responsibility for their own learning. The responsibility in point of view under discussion here is one that includes the ability to set learning objectives, select learning materials and methods, monitor progress, and evaluate learning outcomes. In the domain of language learning, the development of autonomy frequently entails the utilization of learning strategies, such as time management, identifying pertinent learning resources, and self-reflection.

There are several principles that underlie autonomous learning. According to Little (1991), key principles include learner responsibility, self-direction, and reflection. Learners are expected to take initiative, set their own learning objectives, and regularly reflect on their progress. In addition, autonomy does not mean learning alone, but rather having the capacity to manage one's learning, whether individually or collaboratively.

In the context of autonomous learning, individuals are empowered to select materials that align with their proficiency level. This could entail reading books, watching subtitled films, or listening to podcasts, enabling them to customize their input and optimize their learning experience. As Omaggio (1978) states, there seem to be seven main attributes characterizing autonomous learners:

1. Autonomous learners have insights into their learning style and strategies. They know the most effective way to learn for themselves, for example, prefer to learn through audiovisual aids, practicing directly, or taking notes.
2. Take an active approach to the learning task at hand. They do not wait to be taught, but actively seek knowledge, ask questions, or try to complete learning tasks on their own.
3. Are willing to take risks, i.e., to communicate in the target language at all costs. They are not afraid of making mistakes when speaking or writing in English; the important thing is that they try.
4. Are good guessers. When they don't know the meaning of a word or sentence, they try to guess based on context or prior knowledge, rather than giving up immediately.
5. Attend to form as well as to content, that is, place importance on accuracy as well as appropriacy. They care about grammar and meaning; they want their sentences to be correct and appropriate for the context in which they are used.
6. Develop the target language into a separate reference system and be willing to revise and reject hypotheses and rules that do not apply. They begin to be able to distinguish and correct their own mistakes or knowledge if it is incorrect.
7. Have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language. They do not reject cultural differences or ways of speaking in the target language. On the contrary, they are open and even enjoy the learning process.

In the context of autonomous learning based on Holec's theory (1981), non-English education students who choose to watch films with English subtitles as a way to enrich their vocabulary have indirectly demonstrated the characteristics of autonomous learners. They actively choose learning media based on personal interests (choosing preferred genres), determine strategies for understanding vocabulary (such as

taking notes or repeating certain scenes), and evaluate their own progress. Thus, this process reflects the direct application of autonomous learning theory in the realm of informal vocabulary learning.

2.1.2 Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning is the process of acquiring and mastering vocabulary as a fundamental part of language acquisition. Graham (1997) stated vocabulary learning is a skill that needs to be taught and nurtured like any other skill. Vocabulary is an important part of language acquisition, providing the building blocks for effective communication and comprehension Schmitt & Schmitt (2014). The possession of a large vocabulary has been shown to enhance learners' ability to comprehend both spoken and written texts, as well as to articulate their own ideas with clarity (Schmitt, 2022). According to Nation (2001), vocabulary knowledge is closely tied to language proficiency, with a direct correlation between the number of words a learner knows and their ability to use language effectively. Learners who do not possess a sufficient vocabulary find themselves unable to comprehend texts and communicate in a variety of contexts, underscoring the critical role of vocabulary acquisition in the language learning process. As Chen & Chen (2021) explains, a good command of vocabulary is a major foundation in successful language skills, especially in active communication. The more words one has, the broader one's ability to express ideas, understand speech, and interact in social and professional situations.

According to Hornby on Siti et al. (2016), the meaning of the vocabulary is:

- a. All the words that a person knows or uses
- b. All the words in a particular language
- c. The words that people use when they are talking about particular subject
- d. A list of words with their meaning

This definition highlight that vocabulary is not only about the number of words a learner knows, but also about how those words are used meaningfully in various context.

Moreover, according to Ridha et al (2022), effective vocabulary learning helps students to not only recognize words, but also understand how they are used in different contexts. This is very important, especially for non-native speakers, as they have to learn to relate the meaning of words to the appropriate social and cultural context. An understanding of vocabulary also allows them to respond to conversations in a more natural and appropriate way.

Nation (2001) Classifying vocabulary into four main types: high-frequency vocabulary, which are the words most commonly used in everyday communication; academic vocabulary, which frequently appears in educational and academic contexts; technical vocabulary, which is related to specific fields of expertise; and low-frequency vocabulary, which is rarely used and typically appears in specialized contexts. This classification is relevant in autonomous vocabulary learning through subtitled films, as this medium often presents a combination of various types of vocabulary, depending on the film's content. Oxford (1996) categorizes language learning strategies into two types:

1. Direct strategies, which are learning methods directly related to the active acquisition, storage, and use of new vocabulary.
2. Indirect strategies, which are strategies that support the learning process in general, often focus on self-management, feelings, and social interactions in the vocabulary learning process.

Vocabulary learning is one of the fundamental components of language learning. In the context of this study, the main focus is on how non-English education majors learn vocabulary independently through subtitled films. In other words, vocabulary learning is a key element that is studied by participants in the context of autonomous and informal learning. Students actively choose appropriate strategies, including the use of subtitled films as an informal learning resource.

Audiovisual media, such as movies and videos, also have a significant impact on vocabulary learning. Watching English movies with subtitles allows students to learn new vocabulary in a more real and dynamic context. Research by Timilsina (2022) shows that the use of subtitled movies and videos can improve students' understanding of new vocabulary, as they can see and hear words used in everyday conversation. It also allows them to learn the correct pronunciation as well as understand the word in various social contexts.

2.1.3 English Subtitles

English Subtitles is frequently used in language learning as a medium to improve comprehension and raise student proficiency. The subtitle provides text that matches the audio, enabling students to see the written form of the spoken language. This literary work explores the impact of using subtitles in English on language proficiency, understanding, and student motivation.

As Stephen Krashen (1982) stated, understandable input is a fundamental prerequisite for effective language learning. English subtitles can provide a more formal representation of the original language, assisting students in understanding sentence structure and context. These subtitles serve as a type of input that clarifies the language presented in a clear and concise manner.

Students acquire language when they are exposed to input that is slightly above their current level of understanding ($i+1$). Films, in particular, offer a rich and authentic context, wherein language is presented in real-world situations, affording learners the opportunity to engage with language in a more natural manner.

Krashen (2012) Input Hypothesis, which posits that language learners require comprehensible input to facilitate the development of their language skills. Krashen's argument asserts that learning is optimized when learners are presented with language input that exceeds their current level of competence ($i+1$). In this theory, “ I ” refers to the learner’s current language ability, while

“+1” represents language input that is just beyond that level challenging, but still understandable with the help of context.

Watching films can help learn language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Watching films allows students to see language use in natural situations, understand various accents, and increase their vocabulary. In addition, films provide students with the opportunity to learn about sentence structure and idiomatic expressions in a more tangible environment than written texts. According to Stephen Krashen (1982), understandable input is a prerequisite for effective language learning. English subtitles can provide a more formal form of the original language, assisting students in understanding sentence structure and context. These subtitles serve as a type of input that clarifies the language presented in a clear and concise manner. Films also often use the target language to illustrate the culture and customs of society. This helps learners understand the social and cultural context underlying language use, which is an important component of effective language learning. Cultural understanding is an important component of language learning that is often overlooked, according to research conducted by Kramsch (2013).

As a medium for language learning, films offer various benefits, such as improving students' comprehension of daily life, boosting their motivation, and more.

2.2 Studies of relevant research

Based on the previous research of Tasya (2021), a quantitative study was conducted to investigate whether watching English movies with English subtitles supports students' autonomous learning in vocabulary. Using a questionnaire based on the self-directed Learning Readiness (SDLR) framework, the study involved 147 English education students. The finding revealed that students showed a high level of readiness for autonomous learning and perceived English subtitled films as a helpful tool to enhance vocabulary. However, the study focused solely on English major students and relied only on qualitative data.

Another study by Khoirunnisa (2023) investigated the reasons the students use the English subtitled show and how the use of English subtitles contributes to their interest to learn English. The findings of this study showed that the majority of learners put more effort into understanding the meaning of the English subtitles when they were watching their favorite videos. Gaining and practicing language skills while watching videos was one of the reasons why they enjoy using English subtitles. They claimed that learning English by watching shows they enjoy would be more enjoyable than learning the language in a class or course because it is simpler than learning from a book. The participants of her study were 108 respondents on the questionnaire and 7 participants on the interview. In the study, the researcher asked the students some questions that were prepared based on the literature, and also asked a few additional questions during the interview. Therefore, this research will focus on the students' experience of Indonesian EFL learners who are part of a fan community that watches any kind of shows using English subtitles on their favorite shows to learn English.