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THE IMPACT OF FILM-BASED INPUT ON EFL STUDENTS' CONVERSATIONAL FLUENCY AND METAPRAGMATIC AWARENESS

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Abstract: This quasi-experimental study investigated the impact of film-based authentic input on EFL university students' conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, as well as the relationship between these two competencies. A total of 60 Indonesian undergraduate EFL students were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group received eight weeks of film-based instruction with structured activities including dialogue analysis, role-playing, shadowing, and pragmatic reflection, while the control group received traditional instruction. Data were collected through speaking tests and metapragmatic awareness questionnaires administered as pretest and posttest measures. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including paired and independent samples t-tests and Pearson correlation, were used for analysis. The experimental group demonstrated significant improvements in conversational fluency (from 52.40 to 68.90, d = 1.80) and metapragmatic awareness (from 49.75 to 66.40, d = 1.90), significantly outperforming the control group. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.72$, $p < .001$) was found between the two variables. The findings confirm that film-based authentic input effectively enhances both conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, with gains in these competencies being mutually reinforcing. This study contributes empirical evidence for integrating film-based instruction in EFL pedagogy, particularly in contexts with limited authentic English exposure, and offers practical implications for teachers in designing active, multimodal learning activities.

Keywords: *film-based instruction; conversational fluency; metapragmatic awareness; authentic input; EFL learners; quasi-experimental study; multimodal learning; Indonesian EFL context.*

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of authentic input has gained considerable attention in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, as learners can acquire linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural knowledge that is difficult to obtain through traditional pedagogical materials. Among various types of authentic input, films have emerged as valuable educational resources because they provide language input through spoken discourse accompanied by visual, contextual, and sociocultural information (Mandart & Rinne, 2026; Babayev, 2026). Unlike many pedagogical texts that are simplified for instructional purposes, films contain language in real social contexts, allowing learners to observe how linguistic choices relate to interpersonal relationships and communicative intentions (Juan & Flor, 2021). This combination of linguistic and contextual information becomes particularly valuable for developing conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, which are essential components of communicative competence that extend beyond grammatical knowledge (Akram et al., 2025; Ho & Le, 2025). In the Indonesian EFL context, where learners have limited opportunities for sustained English communication outside the classroom, films can help bridge this gap by providing contextualized communicative situations and exposing learners to authentic interaction patterns (Pamuji et al., 2025).

Research on film-based language instruction has documented its effectiveness in enhancing various aspects of language proficiency. A

systematic review by Sánchez-Auñón et al. (2023) concluded that films significantly contribute to language development while fostering motivation, engagement, and cognitive involvement among learners. Similarly, Sanjaya and Saraswati (2025) confirmed that movies effectively support adult learners' speaking skills development. The benefits of film-based instruction extend beyond linguistic gains to include affective dimensions, as Romero and Bobkina (2023) demonstrated that cinema-based affective literacy practices promote diversity awareness and emotional engagement in EFL/ESL teacher education. Furthermore, das Neves Pereira (2025) highlighted that films can introduce social and cultural themes, enriching the overall learning experience. These studies collectively establish that film-based instruction offers multifaceted benefits for language learners.

Regarding speaking proficiency, recent studies have provided compelling evidence for the efficacy of video-enhanced learning. Zhong, Ismail, and Zheng (2025) proved the positive impact of video-enhanced project-based learning on Chinese EFL learners' oral development in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF). Their findings demonstrated that structured video-based interventions lead to measurable improvements in oral production. In a similar vein, Mohammadi and Hassaskhah (2025) found that gamified formative assessment significantly enhanced speaking complexity, accuracy, fluency, and organization among EFL learners. Akram et al. (2025) specifically confirmed that movies significantly improve language fluency among ESL learners at the college level, while Ho and Le (2025) discovered that film instruction helps learners gain confidence in participating in conversations. These studies collectively underscore the potential of audiovisual materials for developing oral communicative competence.

The development of metapragmatic awareness through film analysis has also received scholarly attention. Juan and Flor (2021) found that film analysis effectively enhanced learners' metapragmatic knowledge, as learners could observe and critically reflect on language use in authentic communicative contexts. Their study demonstrated that analyzing social interactions in films enables learners to understand speech acts, politeness strategies, and contextual language use. Xiao et al. (2021) emphasized that exposure to authentic discourse helps learners develop a better understanding of pragmatic markers and social interaction. More recently, Chen, Pashmforoosh, and Chen (2026) conducted a systematic literature review confirming the role of situation comedy in EFL pragmatic instruction. Li, Kasim, and Ang (2026) further contributed to this area by scoping interlanguage pragmatic development among EFL learners, highlighting the importance of contextualized input for pragmatic competence.

With the advancement of technology, film-based learning has become more interactive and personalized. Ibrahim et al. (2025) found that integrating artificial intelligence with film-based media improves teaching efficiency and learner engagement. Bobkina, Baluyan, and Dominguez Romero (2025) explored student-created video learning materials in flipped EFL classrooms, demonstrating that technology-enhanced film-based approaches foster vocabulary acquisition. Thaqi-Jashari and Sefiu (2025) confirmed that combining films with other multimedia resources enhances listening comprehension and overall language proficiency. Staneviciene and Žekienė (2025) systematically reviewed multimedia use in higher education, supporting the integration of audiovisual materials in instructional contexts. Wang and Zhan (2022) contributed assessment models for multimodal speaking tasks, providing frameworks for evaluating film-based speaking performance. Cabalbag (2025) further emphasized that technology integration expands the potential of film-based learning by making it more accessible, flexible, and learner-centered. These developments suggest that film-based instruction, when combined with appropriate pedagogical strategies and technological tools, can create powerful learning environments for EFL students.

Despite the growing body of research on film and video-mediated instruction, several gaps remain unaddressed. First, existing studies have predominantly focused on either speaking skills, motivation, or confidence in isolation, without simultaneously examining conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness as integrated components of EFL communicative competence. Second, while the effectiveness of video-mediated instruction has been demonstrated through CAF frameworks (Zhong et al., 2025) and interactive methodologies such as gamified formative assessment (Mohammadi & Hassaskhah, 2025), the specific role of authentic input through films in promoting conversational fluency has not been sufficiently substantiated. Third, there is limited empirical evidence establishing whether enhanced metapragmatic awareness contributes to improved conversational fluency, as most studies have treated these constructs independently. Fourth, these aspects have not been thoroughly

investigated in the context of Indonesian university EFL instruction (Rafiq & Yavuz, 2024). To address these gaps, the current study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What is the impact of authentic input via film on the conversational fluency of university EFL students? (2) What is the impact of authentic input via film on the metapragmatic awareness of university EFL students? (3) Is there a significant correlation between metapragmatic awareness and conversational fluency? (4) Do students exposed to film-based authentic input perform better than those receiving traditional instruction in terms of conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness?

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated examination of both conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness within a single film-based instructional intervention. Unlike previous research that has treated these dimensions separately, this study investigates how authentic input through films can simultaneously enhance both performance and awareness aspects of communicative competence, while also exploring the potential relationship between them. The study is distinctive in its conceptualization of films not merely as engaging audiovisual materials but as pedagogical tools through which learners observe language in use and learn to perform conversations meaningfully. This research is particularly significant for Indonesian EFL pedagogy, where learners have limited access to authentic English communication outside the classroom (Kulachai et al., 2026; Muttaqin et al., 2025). The findings will provide practical guidance for developing audiovisual activities aimed not just at passive viewing but at active conversation practice and pragmatic analysis, thereby contributing to more effective EFL instruction in contexts where authentic English interaction is scarce.

METHOD

This study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design to investigate the impact of film-based authentic input on EFL students' conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness. This design was selected as it enables evaluation of changes in learner performance before and after intervention while allowing comparison between experimental and control groups (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The experimental group received film-based instruction with activities focused on observing conversational language, identifying communicative purposes, analyzing pragmatic features, and engaging in speaking practice. The control group received conventional English instruction. Both groups completed identical pretests and posttests, enabling establishment of causal relationships between film-based instruction and observed improvements.

The study was conducted at an Indonesian university where English is taught as a foreign language. Participants were 60 undergraduate EFL students enrolled in an English communication course, selected through convenience sampling and randomly assigned to experimental (n = 30) and control (n = 30) groups. All participants demonstrated similar intermediate proficiency levels, confirmed through a placement test. The experimental group received film-based instruction while the control group received traditional methods. All participants volunteered with informed consent, and ethical standards including anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants. The gender distribution was relatively balanced across groups, with the experimental group consisting of 14 males (46.7%) and 16 females (53.3%), and the control group consisting of 13 males (43.3%) and 17 females (56.7%). In terms of age range, 12 participants (40%) in the experimental group and 11 participants (36.7%) in the control group were aged 18–20 years, while 18 participants (60%) in the experimental group and 19 participants (63.3%) in the control group were aged 21–24 years. All participants were classified as intermediate-level undergraduate students based on the placement test results.

Table 1. *Demographic characteristics of the participants*

Variable	Category	Experimental Group (n=30)	Control Group (n=30)	Total (n=60)
Gender	Male	14	13	27
	Female	16	17	33
Age Range	18–20	12	11	23
	21–24	18	19	37
English Proficiency	Intermediate	30	30	60
Academic Level	Undergraduate	30	30	60

Three instruments were employed for data collection. First, a speaking test assessed conversational fluency focusing on coherence, accuracy, and speech rate, following established oral proficiency frameworks (Wang & Zhan, 2022). Performances were recorded and evaluated using a standardized fluency rubric. Second, a metapragmatic awareness questionnaire measured students' ability to recognize pragmatic features, interpret communicative intentions, and evaluate language appropriateness in social contexts (Juan & Flor, 2021; Li et al., 2026). Third, a placement test ensured homogeneity of English proficiency among participants, confirming all were at intermediate level.

The procedure followed systematic stages. First, a placement test confirmed similar proficiency levels. Both groups then completed a pretest (speaking and metapragmatic tests). An eight-week intervention followed, where the experimental group received film-based instruction using movie clips with activities including dialogue analysis, role-playing, shadowing, and discussions. The control group received traditional textbook-based instruction. Both groups had two 90-minute sessions weekly. Posttests were administered upon completion, and all data were recorded for statistical analysis.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Means, standard deviations, and ranges were calculated for both variables. Data were screened for missing values, outliers, normality (Shapiro-Wilk test), and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test) to meet parametric assumptions.

Paired samples t-tests examined within-group changes from pretest to posttest. Independent samples t-tests compared posttest scores between groups. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation examined the relationship between fluency and metapragmatic awareness (r), with assumptions of linearity and normality verified. Significance level was set at $p < .05$. All analyses used SPSS version 26.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of film-based authentic input on EFL university students' conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, as well as to examine the relationship between these two language competencies. The empirical findings confirmed all four research hypotheses (H1 through H4), demonstrating clear statistical superiority for the film-based instructional intervention over conventional teaching methods. This section presents the results systematically, followed by a comprehensive discussion of the findings in relation to previous research and theoretical frameworks.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize participants' performance on the pretest and posttest measures for both groups. Table 2 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and score ranges for conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness across both groups and testing phases.

Table 2. *Descriptive statistics of pretest and posttest scores*

Group	Test Phase	N	Mean (Fluency)	SD (Fluency)	Mean (Metapragmatic)	SD (Metapragmatic)
Experimental	Pretest	30	52.40	6.85	49.75	7.10
Experimental	Posttest	30	68.90	5.92	66.40	6.25
Control	Pretest	30	51.80	7.02	50.10	6.95
Control	Posttest	30	56.30	6.88	54.20	7.05

As shown in Table 2, there was minimal disparity between the two groups at the pretest phase. The experimental group recorded a mean score of 52.40 (SD = 6.85) for conversational fluency and 49.75 (SD = 7.10) for metapragmatic awareness, while the control group's respective scores were 51.80 (SD = 7.02) and 50.10 (SD = 6.95). This indicates that both groups exhibited similar performance levels at the beginning of the experiment, confirming the effectiveness of the randomization procedure.

Upon completion of the intervention, the two groups recorded markedly different results. The experimental group's mean conversational fluency score rose to 68.90 (SD = 5.92) from a pretest mean of 52.40, representing an increase of 16.50 points. Similarly, the mean metapragmatic awareness score increased by 16.65 points from 49.75 to 66.40. In contrast, the control group's conversational fluency improved from 51.80 to 56.30 (an increase of 4.50 points), while metapragmatic awareness rose from 50.10 to 54.20

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(an increase of 4.10 points). While both groups showed improvement, the extent of gain was substantially higher in the experimental group.

Visual representation of score improvements

Figure 1 illustrates the pretest and posttest score comparisons for both groups across both dependent variables, providing a clear visual representation of the differential gains between the experimental and control conditions.

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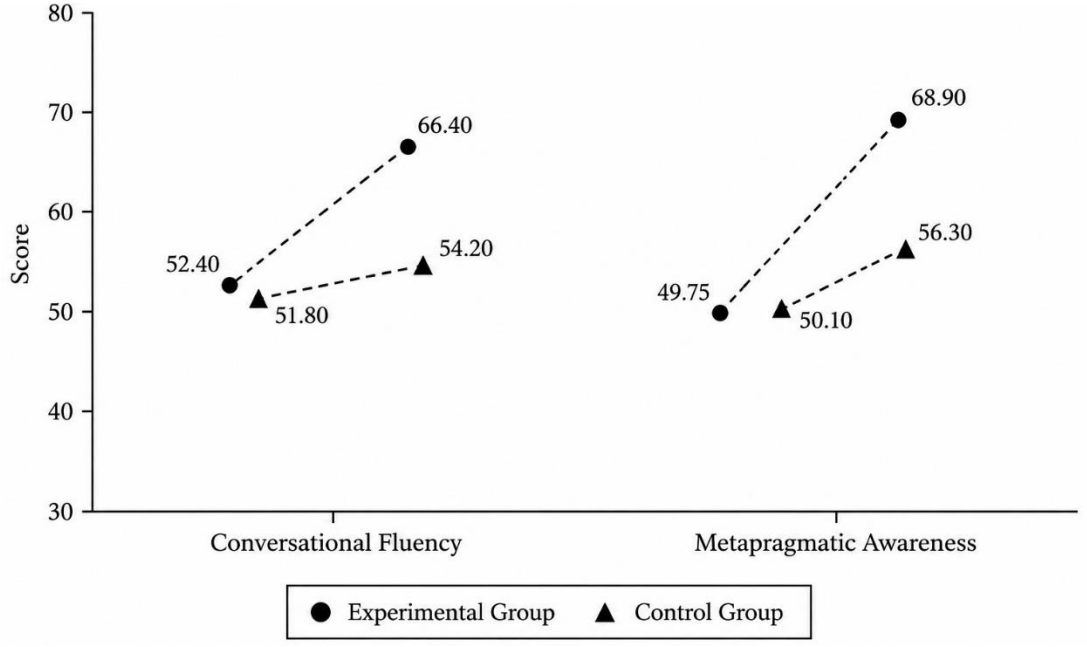


Figure 1. *Pretest and posttest scores for experimental and control groups*

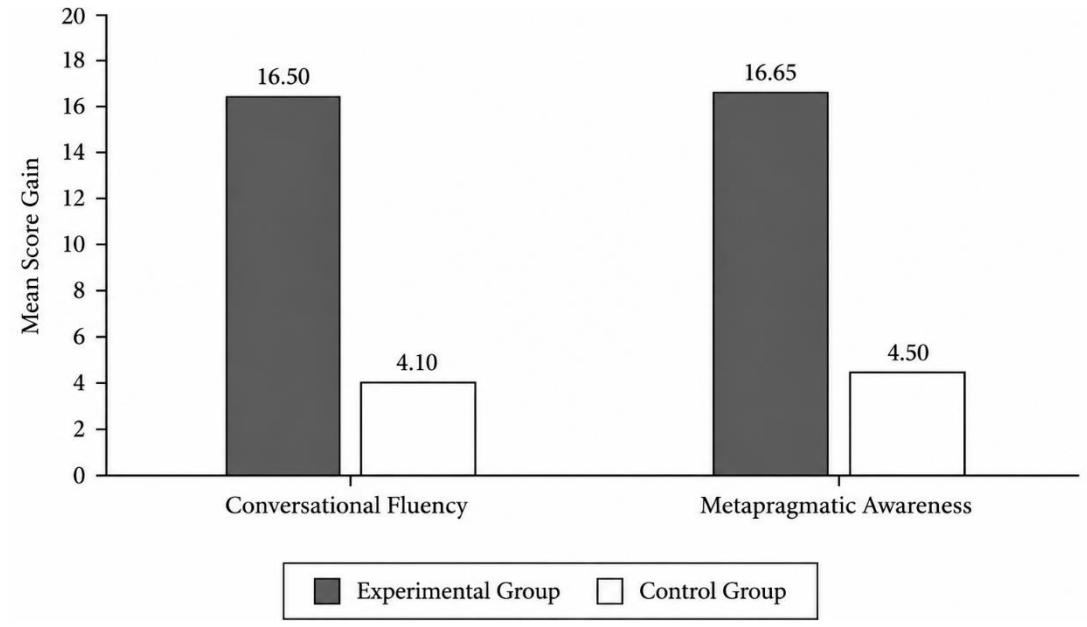


Figure 2. *Mean score gains from pretest and posttest*

Inferential statistics: Within-group comparisons

Paired samples t-tests were conducted to determine whether the observed improvements within each group were statistically significant. Table 3 summarizes the results of these analyses.

Table 3. *Paired samples t-test results for within-group comparisons*

Variable	Group	Mean Difference	t-value	df	p-value	Effect Size (Cohen's d)
Conversational Fluency	Experimental	16.50	-9.85	29	< .001	1.80
Conversational Fluency	Control	4.50	-3.12	29	.004	0.57
Metapragmatic Awareness	Experimental	16.65	-10.42	29	< .001	1.90
Metapragmatic Awareness	Control	4.10	-2.45	29	.020	0.45

For conversational fluency, the experimental group demonstrated a statistically significant improvement from pretest to posttest, $t(29) = -9.85$, $p < .001$, with a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.80$). The control group also showed significant improvement, $t(29) = -3.12$, $p = .004$, but with a moderate effect size ($d = 0.57$). Similarly, for metapragmatic awareness, the experimental group showed significant gains, $t(29) = -10.42$, $p < .001$, with a very large effect size ($d = 1.90$), while the control group showed modest yet significant improvement, $t(29) = -2.45$, $p = .020$, with a small to moderate effect size ($d = 0.45$).

Inferential statistics: Between-group comparisons

Independent samples t-tests were conducted on posttest scores to determine whether the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group. Table 4 presents the results of these comparisons.

Table 4. *Independent samples t-test results for between-group comparisons*

Variable	Group	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Effect Size (Cohen's d)
Conversational Fluency	Experimental	68.90	5.92	5.67	58	< .001	1.46
Conversational Fluency	Control	56.30	6.88				
Metapragmatic Awareness	Experimental	66.40	6.25	6.12	58	< .001	1.58
Metapragmatic Awareness	Control	54.20	7.05				

The experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on posttest conversational fluency scores, $t(58) = 5.67$, $p < .001$, with a very large effect size ($d = 1.46$). Similarly, the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on posttest metapragmatic awareness scores, $t(58) = 6.12$, $p < .001$, with a very large effect size ($d = 1.58$). These results confirm that film-based authentic input was substantially more effective than traditional instruction for developing both conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness.

Correlation analysis

To investigate the relationship between conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted on posttest scores from all participants ($N = 60$). Table 5 presents the correlation results.

Table 5. *Correlation between conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness*

Variables Compared	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Conversational Fluency & Metapragmatic Awareness (Posttest)	60	0.72	< .001	Strong positive significant relationship

The analysis revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation between conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, $r = 0.72$, $p < .001$. This indicates that participants with higher levels of metapragmatic awareness tended to demonstrate greater conversational fluency. The positive sign of the coefficient suggests that as metapragmatic awareness increases, conversational fluency also increases, and vice versa.

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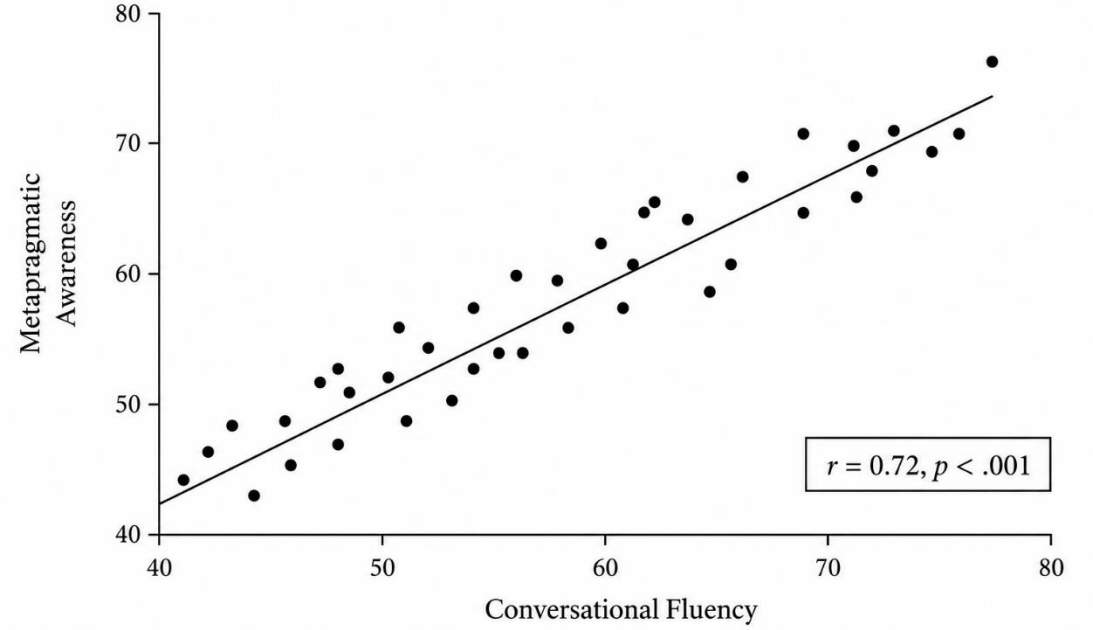


Figure 3. *Scatterplot of conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness*

Hypothesis testing summary

Table 6 provides a summary of the hypothesis testing results for all four research hypotheses.

Table 6. *Summary of hypothesis testing results*

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Decision
H1	Film-based authentic input has a statistically significant positive effect on EFL university students' conversational fluency	t(29) = -9.85, p < .001, d = 1.80	Accepted
H2	Film-based authentic input has a statistically significant positive effect on EFL university students' metapragmatic awareness	t(29) = -10.42, p < .001, d = 1.90	Accepted
H3	There is a significant relationship between students' metapragmatic awareness and their conversational fluency	r = 0.72, p < .001	Accepted
H4	Students exposed to film-based authentic input outperform those receiving traditional instruction in both conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness	t(58) = 5.67 (fluency), t(58) = 6.12 (metapragmatic), p < .001	Accepted

Impact of film-based input on conversational fluency (H1)

The findings confirm that film-based authentic input significantly enhances conversational fluency. The experimental group's substantial improvement from 52.40 to 68.90 (gain of 16.50 points, d = 1.80) demonstrates the powerful impact of film-based instruction on speaking abilities. This improvement can be attributed to several factors: exposure to connected speech, natural turn-taking patterns, and discourse markers rarely found in textbooks (Babayev, 2026); the multimodal nature of films enhancing comprehension and retention (Mandart & Rinne, 2026); and structured activities transforming passive viewing into active language practice (Boulahnane et al., 2025).

These findings align with previous research. Akram, Qureshi, and Shahzad (2025) found movies significantly improve fluency among ESL learners. Ho and Le (2025) confirmed film exposure enhances speaking performance and confidence. Zhong, Ismail, and Zheng (2025) demonstrated video-enhanced project-based learning improves oral proficiency in complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Mohammadi and Hassaskhah (2025) showed interactive instructional approaches enhance speaking skills. The large effect size (d = 1.80) indicates substantial practical significance. However, Ryan and

Granville (2020) caution that scripted film dialogue differs from natural discourse, so teachers should select segments carefully and supplement with authentic materials.

Impact of film-based input on metapragmatic awareness (H2)

The findings confirm film-based instruction significantly enhances metapragmatic awareness. The experimental group showed a dramatic increase from 49.75 to 66.40 (gain of 16.65 points, d = 1.90), far exceeding the control group's modest improvement. Films provide unique affordances for pragmatic learning by allowing observation of linguistic forms in sociocultural contexts (Juan & Flor, 2021). Through analyzing speech acts, politeness strategies, and turn-taking, learners develop explicit pragmatic knowledge (Li et al., 2026).

These findings align with Juan and Flor (2021), who found film analysis enhances metapragmatic knowledge. Xiao et al. (2021) emphasized authentic discourse importance for pragmatic development. Chen, Pashmforoosh, and Chen (2026) confirmed contextualized audiovisual materials promote pragmatic development. The very large effect size (d = 1.90) indicates exceptional practical impact. However, teachers should guide learners to critically analyze film dialogue rather than accepting it as natural communication models (Ryan & Granville, 2020; Bursa, 2026).

Relationship between conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness (H3)

The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.72$, $p < .001$) supports the integrated view of communicative competence. Fluent conversation involves understanding interlocutors' intentions, making appropriate choices, and managing turn-taking (Patamia et al., 2025). Metapragmatic awareness enables reflection on language choices for more effective communication. The correlation suggests pragmatic awareness and speaking performance develop in tandem (Dekoninck et al., 2026). However, correlation does not imply causation; other variables including proficiency, motivation, and classroom participation may contribute (Kentmen et al., 2023). This finding extends previous research by establishing a significant link between these competencies within a single instructional context.

Comparative efficacy: film-based vs. traditional instruction (H4)

The experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in both fluency (d = 1.46) and metapragmatic awareness (d = 1.58). Superiority of film-based instruction lies in its multimodal nature providing richer learning experiences (Li, 2025; Rahmanu & Molnár, 2024), emotional and motivational benefits enhancing engagement (Alamri, 2025; Sofiana & Saraswati, 2025; Romero & Bobkina, 2023), and structured activities promoting active language use. These findings are consistent with systematic reviews (Sánchez-Auñón et al., 2023) and empirical studies (Zhong et al., 2025; Mohammadi & Hassaskhah, 2025).

Pedagogical implications

Films provide access to authentic interactional discourse (Kulachai et al., 2026). Teachers should implement film-based instruction actively through structured activities (Staneviciene & Žekienė, 2025; Altıntuğ & Güneyli, 2025). Instruction should integrate fluency and pragmatic awareness development. A critical attitude toward authenticity is essential (Gallego et al., 2025; Beaumont, 2025). Technology integration can further enhance film-based instruction (Cabalbag, 2025; Anantrasirichai et al., 2026).

Theoretical contributions

This study provides empirical support for multimodal learning theory, demonstrates interdependence of pragmatic awareness and fluency, confirms effectiveness of authentic input for intermediate learners, and provides quantitative evidence for film-based pedagogy.

Research limitations and future directions

Limitations include small sample size (n=60), convenience sampling, single-institution context, potential self-report bias, and short intervention period. Future research should employ larger and more diverse samples, utilize longitudinal designs, compare films with other authentic materials, examine individual differences, conduct qualitative studies, and explore technology integration in film-based instruction.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the impact of film-based authentic input on EFL university students' conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness. The findings provide robust empirical

evidence that film-based instruction significantly enhances both competencies among Indonesian EFL learners. The experimental group demonstrated substantial and statistically significant improvements across both variables with very large effect sizes, significantly outperforming the control group. A strong positive correlation was found between conversational fluency and metapragmatic awareness, indicating these competencies are closely interrelated. These findings confirm all four research hypotheses and establish film-based authentic input as a highly effective pedagogical approach for developing communicative competence in EFL contexts with limited authentic English exposure.

The theoretical and practical implications are significant. The findings support multimodal learning theory and the integrated view of communicative competence, demonstrating that audiovisual input promotes both performance-based and awareness-based skills. Practically, the results provide compelling evidence for incorporating film-based instruction into EFL curricula, particularly in Indonesia where learners have limited authentic English communication opportunities. Teachers are encouraged to implement film-based instruction as an active pedagogical approach involving structured activities such as dialogue analysis, role-playing, shadowing, and pragmatic reflection, rather than passive viewing.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The small sample size, convenience sampling, and single-institution context limit generalizability, and the eight-week intervention provides limited evidence for sustainability. Future research should employ larger and more diverse samples, utilize longitudinal designs, and compare films with other authentic materials. Studies exploring individual differences—including proficiency, motivation, and speaking anxiety—would help identify which learners benefit most from film-based instruction. The integration of emerging technologies with film-based instruction also represents a promising direction for future research.

AUTHOR STATEMENT

The author declares this research was conducted independently with full academic integrity. All stages were carried out solely by the author. There are no conflicts of interest. The study adheres to ethical standards; informed consent was obtained, and anonymity was maintained. The data are original and have not been published elsewhere.

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AI USE DISCLOSURE

The author used ChatGPT (OpenAI) solely for language editing, grammar correction, and proofreading to improve clarity and readability. All substantive work—including research design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions—was conducted entirely by the author. The author reviewed all AI suggestions and takes full responsibility for the final manuscript. No AI tools were used for data analysis, statistical computation, or research decisions.

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