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Preface

Considering the linguistic and cultural significance of Woody Allen's cinema, and its unique value for ESL learning and teaching, this book intends to offer an introduction of Woody Allen's cinema to ESL learners and teachers—highlighting its linguistic and cultural influence, discussing its significance and relevance for ESL learning and teaching, and introducing a list of twelve movies selected from Woody Allen's cinema (of over fifty films), as most fitted for the purpose of ESL learning and teaching.

It is also part of the view underlying this text that movies selected for language study need to be best fitted for this purpose: worthy of and suitable for language learning, and appropriate for language learners. Movies, written by the best contemporary writers and spoken by the best contemporary artists, are the greatest evidence of Language. For many unique benefits of movies in language acquisition and their low cost, movies can be great language tutor and tool in language learning and teaching. The best language tutor in today's digital era may as

well be a collection of movies¹ that are suitable for language acquisition and appropriate for language learners.

However, one practical challenge facing those who wish to use movies in ESL learning and teaching is that professionals (teachers, instructional system designers, curriculum builders, etc.) and students have little time to research movies to determine which would be suitable for the purpose of language acquisition and proper for language learners.² This is the case even when the value of movies as one form of popular culture and as an instructional technology (or medium) is generally acknowledged in related fields. Although existing movie reviews and ratings provide a good starting point as to the general quality of the movie, movie selection for ESL learning and teaching has its particular concerns and decisions. It is thus useful identify good films that are best fitted for the purpose of ESL learning and teaching.

Chapter 1, as a background, provides a brief overview of Woody Allen and his filmmaking career. Chapter 2 discusses its linguistic and cultural significance, historical importance, psychological/motivational value for language learning, and fitness for ESL learning and teaching. Chapter 3 introduces a list of twelve movies selected from Woody Allen's cinema.

¹ Thomas Carlye (1795-1881) wrote: "The true University of these days is a Collection of Books." (Carlye 1840: 94). While there must still be some truth in this statement about 170 years ago, technology has changed, or at least greatly enlarged, the concept of book, which might have to include certain movies.

² O'Bannon & Goldenberg 2008: xv (noting that how busy professionals in the field can be, and that many faculty members rely on peers' recommendations on movies they have used successfully with students).

The series in which this book appears is *Introductions to M-ELT: movie-assisted ESL learning and teaching*. Movie-assisted ESL learning and teaching (M-ELT),³ as distinguished from movie-assisted language learning or other educational purposes, has its particular concerns and decisions, for the global status of the English language and unique challenges of many ESL learners to define themselves and negotiate identities in the English language and culture. In recognition of the unique advantages, implications, and challenges in movie-assisted ESL learning and teaching (M-ELT), Tomato's English is publishing a series of books providing studies of M-ELT in interdisciplinary context, and practical guidance in movie selection.

³ M-ELT is a terminology created by this introductory series.