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Developing the Speaking Fluency of Tenth-Grade Students Through Cartoon Films at SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan, Banggai Kepulauan

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ABSTRACT

Students at SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan experienced difficulties in speaking English fluently due to limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, and insufficient opportunities to practice speaking. This research aims to examine whether the use of cartoon films can improve students' English speaking fluency. The research employed a pre-experimental design using a one-group pretest and posttest approach. The sample consisted of 19 tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Bulagi Selatan. Data were collected through speaking tests administered before and after the treatment. The treatment involved the use of cartoon films in interactive speaking activities such as discussions, role plays, and storytelling. The results showed a significant improvement in students' speaking fluency, as indicated by the increase in the mean score from 40.79 in the pretest to 69.74 in the posttest. Statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test revealed a significance value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. These findings suggest that cartoon films can be used as an instructional medium to improve students' speaking fluency. The use of cartoon films may also support students' confidence and participation during speaking activities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the essential language skills that students need to master in learning English, alongside listening, reading, and writing. Speaking differs from other language skills because it requires learners to produce language orally and interact directly with others. As one of the primary means of communication, speaking enables learners to express ideas, share information, and participate in social interactions effectively [1].

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Therefore, the development of speaking skills should not only emphasize language production but also prioritize fluency as a fundamental component of successful communication [2]. Regular speaking activities may help learners build self-confidence and encourage more active participation in classroom interaction [3].

Fluency refers to the ability to communicate ideas naturally, smoothly, and spontaneously, even though occasional grammatical errors may occur [4]. Fluency also involves the ability to sustain speech with minimal pauses and interruptions during communication [5]. In addition, fluent speakers are able to maintain the flow of conversation and convey meaning effectively without excessive hesitation [6]. Although accuracy and appropriacy are important aspects of speaking, excessive attention to linguistic correctness may hinder the natural flow of speech and reduce learners' confidence [4]. Therefore, instructional activities that support fluency development are necessary to help students communicate more naturally and effectively [7].

Various communicative activities such as discussions, role-plays, and storytelling have been widely recommended to improve learners' speaking fluency and communicative competence [8]. This emphasis on communicative language use is also reflected in the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages students to actively use English in both formal and informal situations and engage in meaningful interaction [9]. Furthermore, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires teachers to design learning activities that are student-centered, interactive, and relevant to students' needs and interests [10]. Consequently, the selection of appropriate instructional media plays an important role in supporting the development of students' speaking fluency.

A preliminary observation was conducted in June 2025 at SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan. The observation revealed that the majority of students experienced difficulties in speaking English fluently. The major problems identified were limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, and insufficient opportunities to practice speaking English. In addition, classroom activities tended to focus on rote memorization, which provided limited opportunities for meaningful communication practice. As a result, students often hesitated when expressing their ideas and found it difficult to participate actively in discussions or presentations. These findings indicate the need for more engaging instructional media that can encourage students to practice speaking more actively and naturally.

One instructional medium that has the potential to support speaking fluency development is cartoon film. Cartoon films are a form of audiovisual media that combine animated visuals, dialogue, music, and sound effects to create meaningful learning experiences [11]. The use of cartoon videos has been shown to encourage students' participation and support the development of oral language skills [12], [13]. Cartoon-based learning can also create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere and foster positive attitudes toward English learning [14]. Furthermore, audiovisual materials help attract students' attention, improve focus, and facilitate comprehension through visual and contextual support [15]. The use of films in English language teaching has also been recognized as an effective and enjoyable way to make learning more engaging while providing opportunities for learners to practice speaking through discussions, storytelling, and role-play activities [16]. In addition, animated videos and cartoon-based instruction have been reported to contribute

positively to the development of learners' speaking skills and classroom interaction [17], [18]. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of cartoon films depends on learners' motivation, frequency of exposure, and willingness to use the target language in authentic communication situations [19].

Several previous studies have reported positive effects of cartoon films on students' speaking ability. Alphariyadi and Dewi [20] found that the incorporation of cartoons positively influenced students' speaking performance and classroom confidence. Similarly, Sartika [21] reported that animated films created a more enjoyable learning atmosphere and encouraged students' active participation in speaking activities. Zahroh et al. [22] also found that the use of cartoon movies contributed to improvements in students' speaking performance. Although these studies demonstrated positive outcomes, most of them focused on speaking ability, speaking achievement, or pronunciation rather than specifically examining speaking fluency. Furthermore, previous studies employed different research designs, such as classroom action research and descriptive approaches.

In contrast, limited studies have investigated the use of cartoon films to improve students' speaking fluency using a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design at the senior high school level. In addition, no previous study has been conducted in the context of SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan. This situation indicates a research gap that needs further investigation. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical insights for English teachers regarding the use of cartoon films as an alternative instructional medium to support students' speaking fluency development. In addition, the study may contribute to the growing body of research on the integration of audiovisual media in English language learning. Therefore, this study aims to determine whether the use of cartoon films improves the speaking fluency of tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. A pre-experimental design involves a single group receiving an intervention without a control group for comparison [23]. In this design, students were administered a pretest to measure their initial English speaking fluency, followed by treatment using cartoon films and a posttest to examine changes in their speaking fluency after the intervention. The quantitative approach was employed to analyze numerical data obtained from the pretest and posttest scores [24]. Students were given a pretest, then the treatment, and then a posttest to measure their English fluency after using the cartoon film media.

Population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects possessing particular characteristics relevant to a study [25]. The population of this research consisted of all tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan, Banggai Kepulauan, totaling 37 students distributed across two classes. The sample consisted of one class, namely class XA, comprising 19 students who served as the experimental group. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the sample. Since there were two tenth-grade classes, each class was given an equal opportunity to be selected, and one class was randomly chosen as the experimental group.

The variables in this study consisted of an independent variable and a dependent variable. The independent variable was the use of cartoon films as instructional media, while the dependent variable was students' English speaking fluency. The research procedure consisted of three stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. The pretest was conducted before the treatment to assess students' initial English speaking fluency through individual oral tasks. Students were required to perform speaking activities such as retelling a story, describing characters, and expressing opinions related to a given topic. The assessment focused on students' speaking fluency performance.

The treatment was conducted in six meetings, with each meeting lasting approximately 90 minutes. During the treatment sessions, students watched selected scenes from the animated films *Frozen* and *Finding Nemo*. After watching the films, students participated in various speaking activities designed to develop speaking fluency, including answering comprehension questions, discussing the storyline, retelling events, role-playing dialogues, describing characters, and expressing opinions about the films. Throughout the treatment, the researcher acted as the instructor and facilitator by guiding discussions, encouraging students to communicate in English, and providing opportunities for continuous speaking practice. These activities were intended to increase students' exposure to spoken English and promote more fluent oral communication.

Following the treatment, a posttest was administered using procedures similar to those used in the pretest. The posttest was conducted to measure students' English speaking fluency after the treatment and to determine whether any improvement occurred following the use of cartoon films.

Students' speaking performances were assessed solely by the researcher using an analytical scoring rubric adapted from Brown [2]. The rubric consisted of four performance levels used to assess students' English speaking fluency, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Speaking Fluency Scoring Rubric

Score	Fluency Descriptor	Category
4	Speaks fluently with very few pauses or hesitations	Very Good
3	Speaks with some pauses, but the meaning remains clear	Good
2	Frequent pauses, limited fluency, and meaning partly clear	Fair
1	Many pauses, very limited fluency, and difficult to understand	Poor

The speaking scores were subsequently converted into a scale of 0–100 based on the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). Scores ranging from 91–100 were categorized as Very Good, 75–90 as Good, 61–74 as Fair, 51–60 as Poor, and 0–50 as Very Poor. Prior to conducting the study, permission was obtained from the principal of SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan. Students participated in the research as part of classroom learning activities, and all collected data were used solely for academic purposes.

The collected data were analyzed using both manual calculations and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Manual calculations were used to determine the mean scores and percentage of improvement, while SPSS was used to perform statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics were employed to describe students' English speaking fluency scores in the pretest and posttest. A normality test was conducted using the Shapiro–Wilk test to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Because the normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was employed to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between students' English speaking fluency scores before and after the treatment.

The hypotheses of this study were formulated to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in students' English speaking fluency before and after the implementation of cartoon films as instructional media. The alternative hypothesis (H_1) stated that there was a statistically significant difference in students' English speaking fluency before and after being taught using cartoon films. In contrast, the null hypothesis (H_0) stated that there was no statistically significant difference in students' English speaking fluency before and after being taught using cartoon films.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the research indicate an development in students' speaking fluency after the use of cartoon films. In this section, the results and discussion are presented comprehensively, supported by data presented in tables to facilitate understanding.

3.1. Results

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to provide an overview of students' English speaking fluency scores obtained from the pretest and posttest. Based on the descriptive statistics presented in Table 2, the mean score increased from 40.79 in the pretest to 69.74 in the posttest. This increase indicates an improvement in students' English speaking fluency after the use of cartoon films. The percentage of improvement was approximately 70.97%, calculated from the difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores. The standard deviation increased from 17.10 in the pretest to 22.94 in the posttest, indicating greater variation in students' speaking fluency performance after the treatment.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	19	25.00	75.00	40.7895	17.09964
Posttest	19	25.00	100.00	69.7368	22.94157
Valid N (listwise)	19				

After the descriptive statistical analysis, a normality test was conducted to determine whether the pretest and posttest data were normally distributed. The Shapiro–Wilk test was used because the sample size in this study was fewer than 50 participants. The results are presented in Table 3.

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Table 3. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.296	19	.000	.770	19	.000
Posttest	.226	19	.012	.866	19	.012

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

6

28

16

The normality test results showed that the significance values of both the pretest and posttest were below 0.05. The pretest obtained a significance value of 0.000, while the posttest obtained a significance value of 0.012. These findings indicate that the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, a non-parametric statistical test, namely the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, was employed for further analysis.

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Table 4. Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Posttest – Pretest	Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	17 ^b	9.00	153.00
	Ties	2 ^c		
	Total	19		

a. Posttest < pretest

b. Posttest > Pretest

c. Post-test = Pre-test

Referring to the Ranks table above, the findings indicate that the majority of students obtained positive ranks, meaning that their posttest scores were higher than their pretest scores. A limited number of students showed negative ranks, while several students achieved identical scores in both tests, as indicated by ties. Overall, these results indicate that students' speaking fluency developed following the treatment using cartoon films. After the Ranks test is test Statistics are included to present the outcomes of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test applied in this study.

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Table 5. Test Statistics^a

	Posttest – Pretest
Z	-3.787 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

2

Referring to Table 5, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test produced a Z value of -3.787 and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, there was a statistically significant difference between students' English speaking fluency scores before and after the treatment.

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To determine the magnitude of the improvement, the effect size was calculated using the formula $r = Z / \sqrt{N}$. Based on the obtained Z value (-3.787) and the sample size (N = 19), the effect size was 0.87. According to common effect size interpretation guidelines, this

value represents a large effect. This finding suggests that the improvement in students' English speaking fluency after the use of cartoon films was substantial.

The hypothesis testing criteria were established as follows: if the significance value (p-value) was lower than 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) would be rejected, indicating a statistically significant difference in students' English speaking fluency before and after the use of cartoon films. Conversely, if the significance value exceeded 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) would be accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) would be rejected.

Based on the results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, the obtained significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which was lower than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. These findings indicate a statistically significant improvement in students' English speaking fluency after the use of cartoon films.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that students' English speaking fluency improved after the implementation of cartoon films as instructional media. The descriptive statistics showed an increase in the mean score from 40.79 in the pretest to 69.74 in the posttest, while the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test revealed a statistically significant difference between students' scores before and after the treatment. These findings suggest that the use of cartoon films may be associated with improvements in students' English speaking fluency.

One possible explanation for this improvement is that cartoon films provide meaningful and contextualized language input. Through animated stories, students are exposed to authentic dialogues, vocabulary, pronunciation models, and communicative expressions that can support language acquisition. The visual cues presented in cartoon films also help students understand the storyline and the meaning of conversations more easily. As a result, students may experience fewer difficulties when expressing ideas orally because they have a clearer understanding of the context being discussed. Animated cartoon films can support the development of students' speaking skills through engaging audiovisual presentation [11].

Another factor that may have contributed to the improvement is the variety of speaking activities conducted after watching the films. During the treatment sessions, students participated in activities such as story retelling, character description, role play, dialogue practice, monologue practice, and expressing opinions related to the film content. These activities provided students with opportunities to use English actively and repeatedly in meaningful communication. Regular communicative speaking activities can help learners develop speaking fluency by increasing opportunities for language production and interaction [8]. Therefore, the improvement observed in this study may be associated not only with the cartoon films themselves but also with the speaking practice opportunities integrated into the learning activities.

The enjoyable nature of cartoon films may also have supported students' learning process. Animated films generally present attractive characters, interesting storylines, and entertaining situations that can increase students' motivation and engagement during

classroom activities. When students enjoy the learning process, they may feel more comfortable participating in discussions and speaking activities. This condition may help reduce anxiety and encourage greater willingness to communicate in English. Similar findings [14], who found that cartoon-based learning media could create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere and promote students' participation in speaking activities.

The present findings are in line with previous studies investigating the use of cartoon films in language learning. Alphariyadi and Dewi [20] found that cartoons contributed positively to students' speaking performance and classroom confidence. Similarly, Sartika [21] reported that animated films encouraged students' active participation and created a more enjoyable learning environment, while Zahroh et al. [22] found that cartoon movies supported improvements in students' speaking achievement. The results of the present study extend these findings by focusing specifically on English-speaking fluency among tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Bulagi Selatan using a pre-experimental research design.

Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Since this study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group, the observed improvement cannot be attributed solely to the use of cartoon films. Other factors, such as repeated speaking practice, increased familiarity with the test format, teacher guidance during the learning process, and students' growing confidence over time, may also have contributed to the improvement. Therefore, the improvement may be associated with the use of cartoon films as the instructional strategy, although other contributing factors cannot be completely excluded.

Several limitations should also be acknowledged. First, the study involved a relatively small sample consisting of only 19 students from a single school, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the absence of a control group restricts the ability to establish a causal relationship between the treatment and the observed improvement. Third, speaking performance was assessed by a single rater, which may introduce a degree of subjectivity in scoring. Future studies are therefore recommended to involve larger samples, include comparison groups, and employ multiple raters to enhance the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide useful pedagogical implications for English language teachers. Cartoon films may be used as an alternative instructional medium to support speaking activities in the classroom. Teachers can integrate cartoon films into warm-up activities, guided discussions, role plays, story retelling, dialogue practice, and pronunciation exercises to create a more engaging learning environment and provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice speaking English. Such activities may help learners develop greater fluency and confidence in oral communication.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that students' English speaking fluency improved after the implementation of cartoon film-based instruction. This improvement was reflected in the increase in the mean score from 40.79 in the pretest to 69.74 in the posttest. The result of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant difference between students' speaking fluency scores

before and after the treatment. These findings suggest that the use of cartoon films may support the improvement of students' English speaking fluency by providing meaningful contexts, visual support, and opportunities for speaking practice. The findings also imply that English teachers may consider integrating cartoon films into speaking activities such as discussions, role plays, and storytelling to create more engaging learning experiences. For students, the use of cartoon films may provide additional opportunities to practice speaking in meaningful and enjoyable contexts.

However, this study was conducted with a relatively small sample and employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and cannot be generalized to broader populations. Future studies are recommended to involve larger samples, include control groups, and investigate additional factors related to speaking development in order to provide stronger evidence regarding the use of cartoon films in English language learning.

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