

THE USE OF YOUTUBE-BASED LEARNING ANIMATION STORYTELLING VIDEOS TO IMPROVE SPEAKING OF SEVENTH GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Developing oral communication in EFL contexts is frequently challenged by students' low speaking proficiency. This pre-experimental quantitative study investigated the extent to which YouTube-based learning animation storytelling videos improve the speaking skills of 30 seventh-grade students (Class VII A) at SMPN 1 Suralaga. Data were collected through oral assessments administered during pre-test and post-test phases, utilizing a rubric that evaluated pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Results revealed a highly significant improvement in speaking performance, with the mean score surging from 5.83 in the pre-test to 10.33 in the post-test. A paired samples t-test confirmed this structural shift ($t = 11.77, p < .001$) with a massive effect size (*Cohen's dz* = 2.15). While all assessed aspects improved, pronunciation and vocabulary exhibited the largest gains. Conclusively, integrating authentic multimodal storytelling media successfully elevates the overall classroom performance standard, bridges linguistic gaps, and cultivates students' speaking confidence.

Keywords: Speaking Skills, Storytelling Videos, YouTube-Based Learning

ABSTRAK

Pengembangan komunikasi lisan dalam konteks EFL sering kali terhambat oleh rendahnya kemampuan berbicara siswa. Penelitian kuantitatif pra-eksperimental ini menginvestigasi sejauh mana video *storytelling* animasi pembelajaran berbasis YouTube dapat meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara pada 30 siswa kelas tujuh (Kelas VII A) di SMPN 1 Suralaga. Data dikumpulkan melalui asesmen lisan yang diberikan pada tahap *pre-test* dan *post-test*, menggunakan rubrik yang mengevaluasi pelafalan, kosakata, tata bahasa, dan kelancaran. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan peningkatan yang sangat signifikan dalam performa berbicara, dengan nilai rata-rata melonjak dari 5,83 pada *pre-test* menjadi 10,33 pada *post-test*. Uji-t sampel berpasangan mengonfirmasi perubahan terstruktur ini ($t = 11,77, p < 0,001$) dengan ukuran efek masif (*Cohen's dz* = 2,15). Meskipun seluruh aspek yang dinilai meningkat, pelafalan dan kosakata menunjukkan

perolehan terbesar. Kesimpulannya, pengintegrasian media *storytelling* multimodal autentik berhasil meningkatkan standar performa kelas secara keseluruhan, menjembatani kesenjangan linguistik, serta menumbuhkan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan Berbicara, Video *Storytelling*, Pembelajaran Berbasis YouTube

A. INTRODUCTION

English serves as a pivotal international language for global communication, education, and interaction, making its mastery essential for learners worldwide (Mahapatra & Pradhan, 2022). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, speaking is widely recognized as the most critical yet challenging skill to acquire. Speaking is not merely about producing isolated words; it requires learners to simultaneously process cognitive elements like vocabulary and grammar while physically articulating sounds for direct social interaction. Consequently, students must be trained from an early age to communicate effectively. Despite its importance, many EFL learners struggle to achieve oral proficiency, necessitating the development of innovative and engaging instructional materials to foster their communicative competence.

In Indonesia, particularly at the junior high school level, mastering speaking skills remains a formidable challenge (Rusdin & Purwati, 2023). Students frequently encounter a complex interplay of linguistic difficulties, such as poor fluency, inaccurate grammar, limited vocabulary, and flawed pronunciation. Beyond these linguistic barriers, learners are severely hindered by psychological factors, including high speaking anxiety and a lack of self-confidence, which are often exacerbated by negative feedback from peers and an environment lacking in authentic English exposure. Furthermore, conventional textbook-reliant teaching methods fail to provide the dynamic interaction needed to stimulate oral production. In semi-urban or developing regions, such as West Nusa Tenggara, this gap is widening due to limited access to high-quality, authentic educational resources.

Addressing these profound educational challenges requires a paradigm shift from traditional text-based models toward dynamic, technology-driven instruction. The integration of digital multimodal platforms, specifically YouTube, has emerged as a highly relevant, cost-effective, and urgent solution to bridge this gap. As the world's most popular learning platform, YouTube offers an extensive repository of authentic audiovisual content that provides crucial visual and auditory scaffolding for learners. The use of YouTube videos in EFL classrooms has been empirically shown to significantly enhance students' pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and listening skills while simultaneously encouraging active participation (Yuyun & Simamora, 2021). By offering authentic exposure to native-like language use, YouTube transforms the learning environment into a more engaging and accessible space.

While YouTube provides the digital medium, the pedagogical strategy of combining animated videos with storytelling significantly amplifies the learning impact. Storytelling harnesses the power of narrative

contexts to make language acquisition far more meaningful and natural for young learners. When integrated with engaging animations, storytelling acts as a powerful psychological tool that effectively lowers students' affective filters, reducing feelings of intimidation and speaking anxiety during the learning process. The combination of YouTube's accessibility, animated visual formats, and story-based narratives represents a highly promising pedagogical innovation. Previous studies have demonstrated that such multimodal approaches effectively improve students' speaking skills by creating a structured yet entertaining environment that motivates junior high school students to communicate (Saed et al., 2021).

Despite the recognized potential of digital multimodal learning, there is a distinct need for targeted empirical research measuring its specific impact on the holistic components of speaking within semi-urban educational settings. Therefore, this study systematically investigates the extent to which YouTube-based learning animation storytelling videos improve the holistic components of speaking skills namely pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency

among seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Suralaga. Additionally, it explores the practical effects of this media in reducing speaking anxiety and fostering active classroom participation. By addressing this specific research gap, this article contributes vital empirical evidence to the field of EFL pedagogy regarding the integration of multimodal multimedia, offering a structured, creative, and theoretically grounded instructional strategy for educators in developing regions.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach utilizing a pre-experimental design, specifically the one-group pre-test and post-test framework. The primary objective of quantitative associational research is to determine the relationship and effect between integrated variables using objective measurements and statistical analysis (Ghanad, 2023; Leavy, 2022; Lim, 2025). A pre-experimental design was intentionally selected because the study aimed to evaluate the impact of a specific intervention YouTube-based animation storytelling videos on a single intact group without the

utilization of random assignment or a separate control group to manage extraneous variables. The research was systematically conducted at SMPN 1 Suralaga, located in Gerung Village, Suralaga District, East Lombok Regency. The implementation and data collection phases were carried out over a predetermined period, specifically from June 9, 2026, to July 24, 2026, aligning with the school's established academic schedule.

The target population for this study consisted of the entire seventh-grade student cohort at SMPN 1 Suralaga, totaling 120 individuals. A population serves as the complete set of elements possessing specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Obilor, 2023). To select a representative subset from this population, the researcher utilized a purposive sampling technique, which involves consciously selecting subjects that meet predefined characteristics necessary for the study (Beck, 2024; Giri, 2024; Stratton, 2021). Consequently, Class VII A, comprising exactly 30 students, was selected as the research sample because this

specific group fit the necessary pedagogical criteria and logistical requirements for the intended treatment implementation.

Data were systematically collected through standardized oral speaking assessments administered during two distinct phases: a pre-test prior to the intervention and a post-test following the treatment period. The pre-test established the students' baseline speaking comprehension, while the post-test measured the effectiveness of the treatment and the subsequent competence differences (Hermansyah et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2022). The students' oral performances were evaluated using a structured speaking rubric designed to measure four specific aspects: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Each of these components was scored on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, allowing for a maximum possible total score of 20 points per student.

The collected data were processed using univariate and descriptive statistical analysis techniques. Initially, raw scores were converted into percentages, and descriptive statistics including the Mean, Mode, Median, and Standard

Deviation were calculated to portray the central tendency and dispersion of the data without generalizing (Abu-Bader, 2021; Mardia et al., 2024; Ravid, 2024). Prior to inferential testing, a Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted as a prerequisite for parametric analysis to determine whether the data distribution was normal (Uysal & Kılıç, 2022). Finally, to test the hypothesis and ascertain the statistical significance of the improvement between the pre-test and post-test scores, a paired samples t-test was executed, alongside the calculation of Cohen's *d* to determine the effect size of the treatment.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The quantitative data obtained from the speaking assessments evaluated the oral proficiency of 30 seventh-grade students before and after the application of YouTube-based animation storytelling videos. The students were assessed using a standardized rubric measuring pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency, with a maximum possible score of 20.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test Speaking Scores (N = 30)

Measurement	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	5.83	10.33
Mode	5.00	10.00
Median	6.00	10.00
Standard Deviation	1.06	2.32
Minimum Score	4.00	4.00
Maximum Score	8.00	15.00

Table 1 highlights a profound structural shift in the students' speaking capabilities. The initial mean score of 5.83 indicates a severe lack of foundational vocabulary and extreme difficulty in basic English pronunciation across the classroom prior to the intervention. However, the post-test mean surged to 10.33, signifying that the class transitioned from a level of poor communication to a functioning level of oral production.

Furthermore, the drastic upward shift in both the mode and median scores (from 5.00 and 6.00 to a solid 10.00) proves that this improvement was a class-wide phenomenon, not merely an isolated spike among a few high-achieving individuals. The widening of the standard deviation from 1.06 to 2.32

indicates that while the entire class improved, the multimedia intervention allowed students to absorb the material at varying cognitive rates, enabling those with higher potential to reach maximum scores up to 15.00. After confirming the normal distribution of the data (*Shapiro – Wilk sig.* = .112), inferential statistics were calculated to determine the absolute effectiveness of the treatment.

Table 2. Paired Samples t-test Results

Statistic	Value
Mean difference	4.43
Standard deviation of difference	2.06
T-value	11.77
Df (Degree of Freedom)	29
Sig. (2-tailed)	< .001

Table 2 demonstrates the unequivocal success of the pedagogical intervention. The paired samples t-test generated a highly substantial *t – value* of 11.77. With a *significance value (p – value)* of < .001, the probability that these improvements occurred by chance is effectively zero, leading to the firm rejection of the null hypothesis.

Beyond mere statistical significance, the practical magnitude of this intervention is immense; the treatment yielded an effect size of Cohen's $d_z = 2.15$. This exceptionally large effect size proves that YouTube-based storytelling is an extremely potent instructional tool capable of drastically accelerating students' speaking trajectories within a short timeframe.

Overall, the quantitative findings strictly confirm that the integration of YouTube-based animation storytelling videos caused a massive, statistically significant elevation in the students' speaking competence. The intervention successfully eradicated the uniformly low baseline, triggering a class-wide cognitive and performative improvement characterized by higher accuracy, better vocabulary retrieval, and a broader score distribution.

Discussion

The structural shift observed in the students' speaking proficiency provides robust empirical validation for the multimodal learning theory proposed by Rahmatika et al. (2021) and Sosas (2021). The audio-visual scaffolding provided by the YouTube platform operates as a crucial cognitive bridge, allowing learners to

directly map native-like pronunciation and intonation onto their own speech patterns. Instead of passively memorizing grammatical formulas from textbooks, the students actively decoded language through rich, contextualized sensory input, which structurally elevated their phonetic and grammatical accuracy.

When critically compared to previous literature, this study presents a significant advancement in EFL pedagogy. While Riswandi (2016) discovered that general YouTube videos improved basic speaking components, the current research highlights that when digital videos are specifically combined with animation and storytelling, the acquisition of vocabulary and pronunciation accelerates even faster. This addresses the exact gaps identified by Pertiwi (2022), whose study on traditional storytelling faced severe hurdles such as students' low self-confidence and poor vocabulary retention. By utilizing animated visual cues, the current intervention actively bypassed the need for direct first-language (L1) translation, forcing direct meaning-making in English and entirely mitigating the vocabulary

barriers previously observed in conventional methods.

In the context of real classroom phenomena, this intervention effectively dismantled the psychological barriers that typically hinder EFL learners. This aligns perfectly with Ghafar's (2024) storytelling theory and Wijaya's (2015) findings on animation. The core mechanism driving the students' success was the eradication of the affective filter (anxiety). By immersing students in a narrative rather than mechanical language drills, the classroom atmosphere transformed into a psychologically safe environment. The animation eliminated boredom, while the clear narrative structure gave students a mental roadmap for what to say next, empowering them with the confidence necessary to engage in spontaneous oral production.

Theoretically, this research contributes definitive empirical evidence that combining digital storytelling with multimodal animations successfully resolves chronic speaking reluctance in developing EFL contexts. Practically, it equips educators with a highly

engaging, cost-effective strategy to instantly elevate classroom communication standards and mitigate linguistic anxiety.

Despite these highly positive implications, this study acknowledges the methodological limitations of utilizing a pre-experimental single-group design, which prevents the absolute isolation of the treatment's impact from natural maturation variables. Furthermore, the reliance on a single rater introduces potential subjectivity. Therefore, future studies should employ quasi-experimental frameworks with control groups and utilize inter-rater reliability measures. Additionally, future research must investigate whether pairing these video viewing sessions with interactive, spontaneous oral production activities such as role-playing or guided debates yields even larger gains, specifically in the domain of speaking fluency.

D. CONCLUSION

This study definitively concludes that the integration of YouTube-based animation storytelling videos significantly improves the speaking skills of junior high school EFL learners. Quantitative analysis

revealed a massive surge in students' overall speaking competence from an initial pre-test mean of 5.83 to a post-test mean of 10.33 ($p < .001$) supported by an exceptionally large effect size (Cohen's $d_z = 2.15$). While all evaluated components exhibited statistical growth, pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition demonstrated the most substantial improvements. This indicates that the audiovisual scaffolding provided by the videos highly effectively aids learners in internalizing words, sounds, and sequences within a meaningful narrative context.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the multimodal learning paradigm, affirming that combining digital visual cues with narrative storytelling structures effectively lowers learners' affective filters (anxiety) and bridges the gap between passive listening and active oral production. Practically, the results imply that English educators can successfully utilize curated YouTube animations as a cost-effective, highly engaging pedagogical tool to transform an intimidating speaking classroom into a psychologically safe and motivating environment.

This research contributes robust empirical evidence to the field of EFL pedagogy, particularly for semi-urban or developing educational settings where authentic language exposure is severely limited. It validates that digital storytelling via globally accessible platforms is not merely supplementary entertainment, but a vital, scientifically proven structural mechanism for overcoming chronic speaking reluctance and elevating classroom communication standards.

Despite the significant overall gains, speaking fluency exhibited the smallest improvement relative to the other linguistic components, and the pre-experimental single-group design limits absolute causal claims against natural maturation. Therefore, future research should employ quasi-experimental designs with control groups, larger sample sizes, and multiple raters to establish strong inter-rater reliability. Furthermore, subsequent studies must explore whether strategically pairing these video viewing sessions with spontaneous, interactive oral production activities such as guided debates or role-playing can

exponentially maximize students' speaking fluency.

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