

Improving Speaking Skills through Animated Films Containing Character Values among Students of SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted at SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu to address the low interest of students in storytelling activities. Many students showed reluctance to participate actively, often engaging in off-topic conversations or joking with peers during class. This behavior reflected a lack of enthusiasm and motivation toward storytelling lessons. The purpose of this research was to improve the storytelling skills of fourth-grade students (Class IV A) through the use of animated films containing character values. The research method used was Classroom Action Research (CAR). The results demonstrated that the use of character-based animated films effectively enhanced students' storytelling abilities. Improvements were observed in the learning process, including increased student engagement, focus, enthusiasm, and confidence in speaking in front of the class. In terms of outcomes, the average storytelling score improved from 55 in the pre-action stage to 68 in Cycle I, and further increased to 76 in Cycle II, reaching a good category. These findings indicate that both the process and product of students' storytelling skills significantly improved through the use of animated films with character values.

Keywords: Storytelling Skills; Animated Films; Character Values

INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a crucial tool for communication, collaboration, and self-identification. It plays a significant role in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of learners, supporting their overall success across various subjects. Language learning is expected to help students understand themselves, their culture, and the cultures of others. Among the four language skills, speaking particularly storytelling is essential as it enables learners to express thoughts and emotions appropriately in context and situation.

In daily life, most of our communication is verbal. Speaking and listening dominate interpersonal interactions, making speaking skills critical to effective communication. Storytelling, as a form of spoken communication, allows individuals to share ideas, experiences, and emotions with others. Since it involves both expressing and listening, storytelling becomes a dynamic two-way interaction that fosters deeper understanding and connection.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2013), storytelling is a pragmatic speaking activity intended to convey ideas clearly and effectively. It is generally favored by students, especially when presented in an engaging manner. Through storytelling, students are exposed to new vocabulary and develop fluency in expressing their thoughts. This activity also enables learners to articulate their experiences, feelings, and aspirations in meaningful ways. To ensure that the information conveyed through storytelling is well-received and effective, the use of appropriate learning media is essential. Learning media can serve as both a stimulus and motivation for students, helping to create an enjoyable and engaging classroom environment. When applied effectively, it also fosters student creativity and participation.

The Indonesian national education system emphasizes the development of not only academic competencies but also character. As stated in the National Education Law (Republic of Indonesia Law No. 20 of 2003), education aims to develop students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, pious, moral, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens. In line with this mandate, character education must be embedded in all learning activities, including language learning. Character education, according to Mulyasa (2013), must involve the cultivation of good knowledge, feelings, and behaviors. When integrated into storytelling, it helps form students' moral attitudes and positive life values. One effective way to integrate character values into learning is through animated films. These films not only present moral messages in an engaging way but also support students' speaking development by offering visual and auditory learning stimuli.

Based on interviews and classroom observations at SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu, it was found that students showed low interest in storytelling activities. Many students were disengaged, preferring to talk off-topic or joke with their peers. When storytelling lessons were conducted, most students expressed reluctance and viewed

them as unimportant. Consequently, students' storytelling performance remained below the minimum competency standard of 75. The ineffectiveness of the teaching methods and the absence of engaging media were identified as contributing factors. To address this issue, the use of appropriate techniques and media—such as audiovisual resources has been proposed. Animated films, as a form of audiovisual media, present dynamic, visually appealing content that can be projected and accompanied by sound and motion (Arsyad, 2011). When such media are infused with character values, they not only enhance students' speaking skills but also encourage positive behavioral changes.

Grounded in the challenges observed in the storytelling learning process, this study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of integrating animated films containing character values into classroom instruction. The research focuses on improving storytelling skills among elementary students by utilizing engaging and value-rich media as a pedagogical tool. The primary aim is to examine how character-based animated films can enhance students' storytelling abilities while also fostering greater classroom engagement and promoting positive behavioral development. To address this objective, the study adopts a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted at SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu, targeting fourth-grade students as participants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Storytelling Skills

The act of storytelling has existed since ancient times, functioning as a means to orally convey messages or tales that engage and delight listeners. According to Bachir (2010), storytelling involves narrating events or actions orally with the purpose of sharing personal experiences and knowledge with others. Mustakim (2011) further explains that storytelling serves as a method to develop children's language potential through listening and retelling activities, ultimately enhancing their speaking skills and ability to express ideas orally. Linguistically, the term "storytelling" is derived from "karangan," meaning a composition. Nurgiyantoro (2013) views storytelling as a language activity that follows listening, where humans learn to speak based on the sounds they hear, which later translates into storytelling abilities. Mulyati (2009) highlights that storytelling is a productive language skill, requiring the ability to generate ideas, thoughts, and concepts.

From these perspectives, storytelling can be defined as the oral narration of actions or events aimed at developing language proficiency. Mudini and Purba (2017) identify essential elements in storytelling learning, including the presence of listeners, mastery of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, a clear theme or topic, a message to be conveyed or questioned, and contextual awareness. Proficient storytelling demands not only linguistic knowledge and experience but also cognitive ability. It involves fluency in sentence delivery, expressive gestures,

appropriate voice volume, word choice, logical coherence, and sequential presentation of ideas to maintain the audience's interest.

Animated Film as Media

The advancement of science and technology has encouraged educators to utilize technological tools in the learning process, especially as teaching media. Media play a crucial role in learning, serving as channels through which messages and information are delivered. Arsyad (2011) defines media as intermediaries that convey messages from sender to receiver, facilitating understanding. Educational media, particularly engaging ones, can stimulate joy and motivation among students, making classroom instruction more dynamic. Sadiman (2012) emphasizes that instructional media help clarify abstract content, overcome limitations of time and space, and address students' passive attitudes through varied stimuli and shared experiences. Similarly, Sujana and Rifai (2015) highlight the benefits of media, including increased student motivation, clearer instructional materials, diversified teaching techniques, and enhanced student engagement through active learning.

Film, as an instructional medium, offers visual and auditory stimuli that create a lively learning atmosphere. Darojah (2011) defines film as a series of images that, when projected, simulate motion and can be both seen and heard. Raimukti (2013) notes that films are used to communicate ideas, messages, or realities, while Sobandi (2008) asserts that films can depict past events, places, characters, and settings vividly in the classroom. Films are classified into live-action and non-live-action, with the latter including animations and cartoons (Herdiannanda, 2010). Animated films, as described by Darojah (2011), are audiovisual media composed of sequenced images that appear animated when displayed on a screen. Rahayu and Kristiyantoro (2011) argue that animated films are effective in enhancing learning quality and outcomes due to their engaging nature, which stimulates multiple senses—particularly hearing and sight—thereby facilitating information retention. Thus, developing engaging animated films as learning media is essential to boost student motivation, especially for complex topics.

Character Education

Character education is equally essential in shaping students' moral and ethical understanding. Schein (1997) describes character as a pattern of shared assumptions developed by a community to solve life challenges, passed down through generations to guide behavior, thinking, and social unity. According to Indonesia's National Education System Law, character education must reflect the values of democracy, decentralization, justice, and cultural respect. Samani (2012) defines character education as a process aimed at fostering individuals' moral, emotional, and cognitive development. It is seen as an effort to cultivate values, ethics, and virtues that guide students in making responsible decisions and embodying positive behavior in daily life.

Dharma (2011) presents a school-based view of character education as a holistic behavioral development guided by specific school-endorsed values. This approach involves integrating character education across all subjects, promoting students' potential, and reinforcing values in behavior. Based on the perspectives above, character education can be defined as a structured effort to instill life values that enable students to make wise decisions and practice these values in everyday life. Sulistyowati (2012) further outlines four key sources for character values in education: religion, Pancasila, culture, and national education goals. In Indonesia's religious society, these sources serve as foundational pillars guiding individual and communal conduct.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design aimed at examining the improvement in students' learning outcomes after the implementation of specific instructional actions. As defined by Arikunto et al. (2008), CAR is an in-depth examination of learning activities that involves planned actions taking place collaboratively in a classroom setting. The study was conducted at SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu, focusing on students who demonstrated low interest in storytelling activities during Indonesian language lessons. Observations prior to the intervention revealed that many students were disengaged, often opting to talk off-topic or joke with peers rather than participate in the lesson. This lack of motivation and enthusiasm suggested the need for an engaging and interactive instructional approach to improve storytelling skills.

Instrument and Procedures

The instruments used in this study included an observation guideline sheet specifically designed to assess the teaching of storytelling skills in the context of Indonesian language learning. The observation focused on various aspects such as delivering the lesson content, guiding and directing students, motivating learners, managing the classroom, and demonstrating key teaching competencies. The instructional intervention utilized audiovisual media, particularly animated films, to enhance students' storytelling abilities. The implementation involved introducing character-based animated films during lessons to capture students' attention and foster their narrative skills through visual and auditory engagement.

Data Analysis

Data collected from classroom observations were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques. This approach allowed the researcher to interpret students' behavioral changes, levels of engagement, and storytelling performance after the integration of animated films into the learning process. The qualitative method was chosen to provide a detailed and contextual understanding of how the use of

audiovisual media impacted students' motivation and participation in storytelling activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study began with an initial observation phase aimed at understanding students' speaking skill performance prior to implementing classroom action research. The observation was conducted in Grade IV A of SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu. Based on field observations and interviews with the class teacher, it was found that the learning process relied heavily on lecture and discussion methods. These methods were chosen for their perceived efficiency in delivering learning material.

However, speaking activities in Indonesian language lessons were still considered challenging by many students. During the learning process, a lack of student participation was observed. Many students remained silent when asked questions, while others ignored them altogether. Some students relied on their high-achieving peers to answer on their behalf, further reinforcing passivity among the less confident students.

The sequence of the learning activities typically began with the teacher greeting the students, followed by a collective prayer led by the student on duty. The teacher then performed a roll call and conditioned the class for learning. Students were asked to sit calmly and focus on the learning objectives, which centered around discussing factual problems. The teacher delivered the material, divided students into five groups (each consisting of 5–6 members), and facilitated group discussions. Students were tasked with responding to or offering suggestions regarding the topic. Each group presented their results, followed by feedback from other groups. The session concluded with a joint summary and reflection led by the teacher and ended with a formal closing.

Speaking Performance Assessment

The students' speaking performance during the preliminary observation was assessed based on five indicators: voice volume, pronunciation, idea development, expressive attitude, and word choice. The results are as follows:

a. Voice Volume

The aspect of voice volume was evaluated based on the clarity and audibility of students' voices when presenting. During the pre-action phase, this aspect was categorized as adequate, with an average score of 55. Field notes indicated that some students, such as NS1, exhibited low volume and signs of nervousness, while others, such as NS15, demonstrated stronger vocal projection, allowing the entire class to hear clearly.

b. Pronunciation

This aspect focused on the clarity of phoneme articulation and intonation appropriateness. The average score for pronunciation was 48, indicating that students had difficulty articulating words clearly. Most still used informal or everyday language, and while some voices were moderately clear, they lacked fluency and confidence, as reflected in their trembling speech and inconsistent intonation.

c. Idea Development

Students' ability to develop ideas in their compositions was still lacking. The average score for this aspect was 61. Many students were unable to structure their narratives logically, resulting in unengaging content with unclear plotlines and settings. Creativity and originality were minimal, and the delivery lacked coherence. The messages conveyed were often irrelevant or mismatched with the narrative content.

d. Expressiveness and Character Interpretation

Expressiveness was measured through students' ability to convey emotion, use appropriate gestures, and modulate voice in accordance with character roles. The average score in this aspect was 59. Many students appeared anxious and hesitant, with minimal use of facial expressions or body language. Their voice often did not match the intended character, and improvisation was absent. Some students even covered their faces with scripts, indicating a lack of confidence and preparation.

e. Word Choice

This indicator assessed the appropriateness and variety of vocabulary used. The pre-action average score for word choice was 50, placing it in the adequate category. Students frequently used monotonous and repetitive vocabulary, making their storytelling unappealing. There was a lack of precise terms or character-appropriate expressions, which weakened the overall impact of the narrative.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate a significant improvement in students' writing skills following the implementation of animated films embedded with character values as a learning medium. The use of this media enhanced the process of teaching composition skills among Grade IV A students at SD Negeri 112320 Aek Kota Batu. Positive behavioral changes were observed, as evidenced by increased student engagement during lessons, greater attention and concentration when listening to the teacher, heightened interest and enthusiasm, improved confidence in presenting compositions orally, and effective group collaboration that fostered a more enjoyable, active, and creative learning environment. Furthermore, the use of character-based animated films also led to a noticeable improvement in the product

or outcomes of students' composition work. This was reflected in the rising average scores across the research cycles. Specifically, the average score increased from 55 in the pre-action stage, to 68 in Cycle I, and finally to 76 in Cycle II. These improvements were marked by enhanced mastery of key aspects of composition skills, including voice volume, pronunciation, idea development, expressive delivery, and word choice. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of animated films containing character values effectively improved both the learning process and the quality of students' written products in narrative composition.

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