



The Influence of Animation Film Viewing Intensity on The Speaking Ability Of Children Aged 4–5 Years

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of the intensity of watching animated films on the speaking ability of children aged 4-5 years. Theoretically, audiovisual media can provide language stimulation that supports the development of children's speaking skills. Previous studies have generally discussed the effect of television viewing on children's language abilities in general, but have not specifically explained the influence of the intensity of watching animated films on early childhood speaking skills. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on screen time based on animated films and its relationship with the speaking ability of children aged 4–5 years. **This study employed a quantitative approach** using an ex-post facto method. The sampling technique used was cluster random sampling, involving 75 parents as respondents. Data were collected using questionnaires to obtain information regarding the intensity of watching animated films and children's speaking ability. **The results** showed that the intensity of watching animated films had a significant effect on children's speaking ability, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. These findings indicate that exposure to animated films can support the development of children's verbal skills, particularly in sentence structure formation.

KEYWORDS

Early childhood, speaking ability, viewing intensity

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking ability is a fundamental component of early childhood language development and plays a crucial role in children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Early childhood language development between the ages of 0–6 years is a crucial phase that influences their future growth (Putri & Kamali, 2023). Children aged 4–5 years are in a critical period of language acquisition, during which they are highly sensitive to environmental stimulation (Dewi et al., 2025). Adequate language stimulation at this stage supports children's ability to express ideas, communicate needs, and participate actively in social interactions. Conversely, insufficient or inappropriate stimulation may lead to difficulties in expressive language development that persist into later stages of education. This is in line with the opinion of Brown (1981), cited in (Ekarini et al., 2023), who stated that speaking ability is one of the fundamental skills used as a measure to determine whether a language learner is successful in learning a language or not. According to the theory proposed by (Owens, 2012), the stages of speaking development in children aged 4–5 years include the ability



to distinguish word meanings based on context; the ability to use conjunctions to form more complex grammatical structures; the ability to tell stories involving time elements; the ability to make requests; and the ability to retell stories or fairy tales they have previously heard.

This study is also grounded in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which explains that children learn language through observation, imitation, and interaction with models in their environment (Trismayanti et al., 2026). Animated films provide children with verbal expressions, sentence structures, pronunciation, and social communication patterns that can be imitated during daily interactions. In addition, Mayer's Multimedia Learning Theory explains that children learn more effectively through the combination of visual and auditory information (Mayer, 2024). Animated films integrate moving images, sounds, dialogues, and contextual situations that can support children's comprehension and language acquisition processes. This theory explains that human process information through two main channels—visual and verbal—both of which have limited capacity. When these two channels are utilized effectively through the combination of text, images, and audio, learning can occur more effectively because learners are able to construct more comprehensive mental representations (Putri, 2025). Furthermore, language acquisition theory emphasizes that language development occurs through continuous exposure to meaningful linguistic stimuli from the surrounding environment. Simple activities such as listening to stories, singing, role-playing, and imitating adults' speech are concrete forms of the language acquisition process (Babo & Liusti, 2025). This means that the quality and quantity of social environmental interactions will determine how children's language abilities develop. Therefore, animated films may function as a source of language stimulation that contributes to the development of children's speaking ability.

In recent years, children's daily environments have increasingly been shaped by digital media exposure, particularly animated films accessed through television and mobile devices. Animated films present audio-visual stimuli that combine dialogue, visual cues, intonation, and body language, making them attractive and easily understood by young children (Siregar & Listia, 2026). Previous research conducted by (Marguri & Pransiska, 2021) have indicated that animated media can contribute positively to children's language development by enriching vocabulary, improving sentence structure, and enhancing comprehension through repetition and contextual visualization. Early childhood is in the concrete thinking stage, meaning that children learn from tangible and real experiences. Therefore, media are needed as a means of delivering educational messages to young children so that information can be received effectively (Kurniawati, 2023). The combination of visual and auditory elements aligns with early childhood learning characteristics, which rely heavily on concrete and sensory-based experiences.

However, empirical findings regarding media exposure and language development remain inconsistent. While several studies report positive effects of animated films on children's language skills, others emphasize potential negative impacts when media exposure is excessive or lacks adult supervision. Most existing research focuses on the use of animated films as learning media or examines language development in general, without specifically addressing speaking ability as a distinct component of expressive language. Furthermore, previous studies often emphasize the type of media content rather than the intensity of exposure, such as duration, frequency, children's interest, and their level of engagement or comprehension while watching (Hamzah et al., 2021). In addition, many previous studies employ qualitative approaches, limiting the ability to measure the strength of relationships between variables quantitatively.



This study differs from previous research in several important aspects. First, this study specifically focuses on speaking ability as a core component of expressive language development among children aged 4–5 years, whereas prior studies generally discuss language development broadly. Second, this study examines the intensity of watching animated films through several indicators, including duration, frequency, interest, engagement, and comprehension, rather than merely investigating the use of animated media. Third, this research applies a quantitative ex-post facto approach to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between animated film viewing intensity and children’s speaking ability in the context of early childhood education in Indonesia, which remains underexplored in previous studies.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of animated film viewing intensity and its relationship with children’s speaking ability using a quantitative approach grounded in social learning, multimedia learning, and language acquisition theories. This study positions itself as a complementary and strengthening contribution to previous research by providing more specific and measurable evidence regarding the influence of animated film exposure on expressive language development in early childhood. Based on these considerations, the purpose of this study is to determine the effect of the intensity of watching animated films on the speaking ability of children aged 4–5 years. The findings are expected to provide empirical insights for educators and parents in managing children’s media exposure to support optimal language development.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using an ex-post facto design. The ex-post facto method was selected because the independent variable had already occurred naturally and was not manipulated by the researcher (Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023). In this study, the independent variable was the intensity of watching animated films, while the dependent variable was children’s speaking ability. The researcher only observed and analyzed the existing conditions without providing experimental treatment or intervention. Therefore, this design was considered appropriate for examining relationships between variables in a natural setting.

Although this design allows the researcher to identify statistical relationships between variables, it does not provide strong evidence of direct causality because the variables are not experimentally controlled. Consequently, the findings of this study should be interpreted as indicating an association or predictive relationship rather than a definitive cause-and-effect relationship. Nevertheless, the ex-post facto design was considered suitable because manipulating children’s exposure to animated films in a controlled experimental situation may raise practical and ethical limitations.

The research aimed to examine the effect of viewing intensity on speaking ability among children aged 4-5 years. The intensity variable was measured through indicators including duration, frequency, children’s interest, and engagement while watching animated films. Speaking ability was measured as part of expressive language development, including children’s ability to answer questions, express ideas, and construct simple sentences.

The participants of this study totaled 75 children aged 4-5 years enrolled in an early childhood education institution. The sample was selected using a cluster random sampling technique, which is commonly used when the population or data source is large and geographically distributed, such as across districts or regions (Wahab & Junaedi 2022). In this study, Rajabasa District, Bandar Lampung City, was selected as the research



location. Six sub-districts were used as clusters, and one kindergarten from each sub-district was selected to represent the sample. Respondents were then randomly selected to obtain parents who had children aged 4–5 years. The following table presents the sample data of parents with children aged 4–5 years in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Table 1. Distribution of Kindergartens in Rajabasa District

No.	Sub-District	Kindergartens	Number of Respondens
1.	Rajabasa	Al Insan Kindergarten	8
2.	Rajabasa Pramuka	Roudotunnur Kindergarten	16
3.	Rajabasa Nunyai	Istiqlal Kindergarten	14
4.	Rajabasa Raya	Al Ikhsan 2 Kindergarten	13
5.	Gedong Meneng	Darma Bangsa Kindergarten	16
6.	Rajabasa Jaya	Harapan Muda Kindergarten	8
		Total	75

Table 1 shows that the data collection technique used in this study was a questionnaire employing a Likert scale format. According to (Sugiyono, 2015 as cited in Sa'diyah et al., 2023), in the Likert scale, “The variables to be measured are elaborated into variable indicators. These indicators are then used as the starting point for developing instrument items in the form of statements or questions.” The questionnaire employed a Likert scale format. The questionnaire consisted of four response options: (1) Never (N), (2) Sometimes (S), (3) Often (O), and (4) Always (A). The research instrument was completed by parents to assist in collecting the data regarding children’s viewing habits and speaking ability. The questionnaire measuring the intensity of watching animated films included structured items related to duration (time spent watching), frequency (how often children watch), level of interest, and engagement during viewing. The instrument was developed based on media exposure theory and indicators of behavioral intensity. Meanwhile, children’s speaking ability, was assessed through indicators such as the ability to answer questions appropriately, express ideas or opinions, construct simple sentences, and participate in verbal interactions. The data analysis technique involved conducting a normality test using SPSS. After the data were confirmed to be normally distributed, hypothesis testing was carried out using a simple linear regression analysis to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the intensity of watching animated films and the speaking ability of children aged 4–5 years.

Table 2. Speaking Ability Assessment Instrument

No.	Dimention	Indicators
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- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Vocabulary development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. My child is able to name objects around them without being promptedb. My child is able to answer questions appropriatelyc. My child uses words that I have never explicitly introducedd. My child understands my instructionse. My child expresses their feelings using adjectives (e.g., good, happy, naughty, selfish, kind, brave, bad, etc.)f. My child is able to name various colors according to the objects around themg. My child asks about the meaning of new vocabulary that I useh. My child asks about the meaning of new vocabulary in animated films while watching them together |
| 2. | Clear sentence pronunciation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. My child speaks with clear and audible articulation when expressing sentences verballyb. I am able to understand what my child saysc. My child speaks with a volume that can be heard by othersd. My child does not repeat the same words excessively when speakinge. My child asks questions using clear sentencesf. My child is able to express their wishes with clear articulationg. My child is able to express refusal with clear articulationh. My child is able to state reasons for something they want with clear articulationi. My child is able to state reasons for something they do not want with clear articulationj. My child participates in conversations, resulting in two-way communication |
| 3. | Sentence structure development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. My child uses complete sentences when answering questions, rather than single wordsb. My child uses more than two sentences during conversationsc. My child uses the conjunction “and” when speakingd. My child uses the conjunction “then” when speakinge. My child uses the conjunction “because” when speakingf. My child retells stories or narratives they have previously heard and demonstrates understanding of the sequenceg. My child speaks using time-related expressions |
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Table 3. Instrument for Assessing Animated Film Viewing Intensity

No.	Dimension	Indicators
1.	Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My child watches animated films until the end in one sitting b. My child watches animated films for more than one hour in one sitting c. My child watches short-duration animated films until the end d. My child watches long-duration animated films until the end e. My child continues watching another animated film after one film has finished
2.	Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My child watches animated films every day b. My child watches animated films more than five days a week c. My child watches animated films after returning home from school d. My child watches animated films before going to school
3.	Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My child re-watches animated films that they have previously watched b. My child watches animated films on both television and streaming platforms c. My child prefers watching animated films over other digital media content d. My child watches animated films while traveling e. My child complains and becomes upset when they miss the schedule of their favorite animated film f. My child watches animated films more often than playing outside g. Watching animated films is part of my child's daily routine h. My child memorizes the schedule of their favorite animated films i. My child cries when their animated film viewing activity is stopped j. My child follows newly released animated films k. My child does not sleep unless they watch animated films first.
4.	Engagement and comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. My child remembers and retells specific parts of animated films using expressions and gestures b. My child does not respond when called while watching animated films c. My child shows emotional expressions while watching animated films (e.g., laughing, crying, feeling tense, etc.) d. My child stops all other activities while watching animated films



- e. My child reenacts animated films they have watched using toys

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the study conducted on 75 children aged 4–5 years in six kindergartens in Rajabasa District, data were obtained regarding the variables of animated film viewing intensity (X) and children's speaking ability (Y). Based on the results of the questionnaire data analysis, the intensity of watching animated films was categorized into three levels: low, moderate, and high, according to the class interval calculation. In general, the findings showed that the intensity of watching animated films among children aged 4–5 years was in the high category. When analyzed based on each dimension of variable X, the dimension with the highest percentage was viewing frequency, at 98.67%. This indicates that most children have the habit of watching animated films quite frequently. Meanwhile, the dimensions of duration, interest, as well as engagement and comprehension also showed a high tendency, indicating that children not only watch frequently but also demonstrate interest and involvement while watching animated films. These findings suggest that animated films are a medium closely associated with children's daily lives and have become one of their routine activities.

The high intensity of viewing may contribute to children's language stimulation because animated films provide continuous exposure to vocabulary, sentence patterns, and verbal interactions. Children tend to imitate words, expressions, and dialogues they hear from animated characters, which may support the development of their expressive language skills. In addition, the audiovisual elements in animated films can help children understand the meaning of conversations more easily through visual context, gestures, and repeated language exposure (Rukmana et al., 2025). As a result, children may become more confident in expressing ideas and responding verbally in daily communication. In the children's speaking ability variable, the results of the analysis showed that children's speaking ability was in the high category, with the highest percentage being 96% in the sentence structure development dimension. This indicates that most children were able to use a variety of vocabulary and construct simple sentences with an appropriate structure. In addition, the dimension of clear sentence pronunciation also showed good results, indicating that children were able to convey information, ideas, or experiences verbally.

These findings indicate that children who are frequently exposed to animated films may receive additional opportunities to hear and practice language expressions. Repeated exposure to conversations and storytelling in animated films may enrich children's vocabulary and improve their ability to arrange sentences. Children experienced improvements in their language abilities. Their ability to understand and answer questions, as well as retell stories they had just watched, indicates that their communication skills developed well and were on track to meet or even exceed expectations (Ernita & Mayar, 2023). Furthermore, children's active engagement while watching may strengthen their comprehension and encourage verbal responses, which ultimately supports speaking ability development.

Based on the normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, the significance value obtained was $0.079 > 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed and met the assumptions required for regression analysis.

**Table 4. Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

	Kolmogorov Smirnov	Shapiro-Wilk
Sig.	.079	.081

Based on Table 4 the homogeneity test showed a significance value of 0.275 > 0.05, indicating that the data met the criteria to proceed to the next stage of analysis.

Table 5. Homogeneity Test Results

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
XY <i>Based on Mean</i>	1.201	1	148	.275
<i>Based on Median</i>	.956	1	148	.330
<i>Based on Median and with adjusted df</i>	.956	1	135.676	.330
<i>Based on trimmed mean</i>	1.073	1	148	.302

Based on Table 5 the results of the simple linear regression analysis showed that the constant value (α) was 55.510 and the regression coefficient (β) was 0.405, indicating a positive direction. This means that every increase in the intensity of watching animated films is followed by an increase in children's speaking ability.

The results of the t-test showed a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05 and a t-value (5.009) greater than the t-table value (1.665). Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted, indicating that there is a positive effect of the intensity of watching animated films on the speaking ability of children aged 4–5 years.

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	55.510	6.992		7.939	.000
	INTENSITAS MENONTON	.405	.081	.506	5.009	.000

a. *Dependent Variable: SPEAKING ABILITY*



Based on Table 6 the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.256 indicates that the intensity of watching animated films contributes 25.6% to children’s speaking ability. Meanwhile, Based on Table 7 the remaining 74.4% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as the family environment, teacher stimulation, social interaction, and individual developmental factors of the child.

Tabel 7. Coefficient of Determination Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.506 ^a	.256	.246	5.237

a. Predictors: (Constant), VIEWING INTENSITY

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and data analysis, it can be concluded that the intensity of watching animated films has a significant effect on the speaking ability of children aged 4–5 years in six kindergartens in Rajabasa District, Bandar Lampung. This finding was supported by the significance value (Sig.) was less than 0.05, indicating that H_a was accepted and H_o was rejected. Therefore, the intensity of watching animated films significantly influences children’s speaking ability.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) analysis revealed that the intensity of watching animated films contributed 25.6% to children’s speaking ability, while the remaining 74.4% was influenced by other factors outside the variables examined in this study, such as the family environment, social interaction, learning methods at school, and language stimulation from teachers and parents. In addition, the descriptive analysis indicated that children with higher viewing intensity, accompanied by strong interest and engagement, tended to demonstrate better abilities in answering questions, expressing ideas, and constructing simple sentences. This findings are relevant to research Ahmad et al. (2021) which shows that the multimedia animation of Nusa and Rara is effective in improving listening and speaking skills in children.

Theoretically, this study contributes to early childhood language development research by supporting the view that audio-visual media exposure can influence children’s speaking ability through observation, imitation, and language stimulation (Dewi et al., 2021). The findings are also in line with theories of social learning and multimedia learning, which emphasize the role of visual and auditory stimuli in children’s learning processes. Practically, the results of this study provide implications for parents, teachers, and early childhood education practitioners to use animated films wisely and appropriately as educational media that can stimulate children’s language development. This is in line with the research conducted by (Nawaz et al., 2024), which states that home, school, and community environments influence children’s language development. Selecting age-appropriate animated films and providing guidance during viewing activities may help optimize children’s speaking ability.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the study only involved children from six kindergartens in one district, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the data were collected through questionnaires completed by parents, which may contain subjective bias. Third, this study



only examined one independent variable, whereas many other factors may influence children's speaking ability. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve broader samples, apply different research methods, and examine additional variables related to children's language development.

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