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Evaluating the Impact of Hollywood Animated Films on Second Language Acquisition: A Multimodal Pedagogical Approach in Classroom Contexts

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Abstract— This mixed-methods study investigates the pedagogical potential of Hollywood animated films as tools for second language acquisition (SLA) and intercultural understanding. By integrating qualitative thematic analysis with quantitative learner assessment and classroom observation, we examined how seven films facilitate vocabulary growth, pragmatic competence, and cultural awareness in formal educational settings. Drawing from SLA, sociocultural theory, and multimedia learning theory, the research analyzes linguistic, cultural, and instructional features of selected popular animations. Findings underscore the efficacy of multimodal filmic resources in enhancing comprehension, motivation, and intercultural communicative competence, while revealing challenges related to cultural specificity and varied learner proficiency. This study bridges gaps between multimodal pedagogy theory and classroom praxis, offering robust evidence and practical guidelines for integrating animated media into language curricula. Future directions suggest broadening media diversity and adaptive technology incorporation for scalable, context-sensitive second language pedagogy.

Keywords— Animated films in language learning, Multimodal language acquisition, Vocabulary development through media, Intercultural communicative competence, Second language acquisition pedagogy

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of language acquisition, the rapid evolution of digital technology alongside innovative pedagogical methods has revolutionized formal educational contexts, offering unprecedented means to enhance second language proficiency. Traditional models of language instruction, largely dependent on static textbooks and isolated language drills, often fail to meet the multifaceted communicative demands and intrinsic motivational needs of today's diverse and dynamic classrooms (Mayer, 2001; Paivio, 1991; Harmer, 2009).

Consequently, contemporary theoretical frameworks and empirical findings increasingly emphasize the importance of authentic, multimodal, and contextually embedded input as a means to optimize learner engagement, facilitate cognitive processing, and foster robust linguistic development.

Central to this emergent pedagogical paradigm is the integration of multimedia resources, among which Hollywood animated films stand out for their cultural richness, accessibility, and alignment with multimodal learning theories. Animated films provide linguistic input characterized by clarity, context, and social nuance embedded within compelling narratives and visually immersive social interactions. These afford learners abundant opportunities to observe and internalize naturalistic dialogue, pragmatic language routines, and culturally situated communicative events—elements critical for meaningful second language acquisition (Byram, 1997; Vanderplank, 2016). The audiovisual nature of animated films enables the simultaneous engagement of multiple learner modalities—visual, auditory, emotional, and cognitive—effectively leveraging affective, motivational, and sociocultural dimensions that are often absent in traditional oral and written materials (Canning-Wilson & Wallace, 2015; Krashen, 1982; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

The theoretical foundation underlying the pedagogical use of animated films in language acquisition is multifaceted. Dual Coding Theory, developed by Paivio (1991), articulates the cognitive advantages conferred when learners receive information through dual channels—verbal and visual—as processes on these separate channels proceed independently and in parallel, enhancing memory encoding and retrieval.

Mayer's (2001) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML), expanding upon this idea, specifies three core principles applicable to education: the dual-channel principle (information processed via auditory and visual pathways), limited capacity principle (each channel has finite processing abilities), and active processing principle (learners must actively integrate and make sense of incoming information). Animated films, by combining dynamic imagery, spoken language, body language, and narrative structure, exemplify this multimodal input, thereby fostering a richer representational knowledge that grounds linguistic meaning within vivid contexts.

Complementing these cognitive frameworks, sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) posits that language acquisition is inherently a socially mediated process unfolding within meaningful interactions and exchanges. Learning occurs through participation in culturally situated communicative practices, often scaffolded by more knowledgeable others such as teachers or peers. Animated films serve as social artifacts that encapsulate dialogic exchanges, culturally nuanced behaviors, and interactional norms. When combined with teacher scaffolding—for instance, guided post-viewing discussions or explicit instruction on cultural references—animated media supports learners' progression from receptive understanding to active use, facilitating the internalization of complex pragmatic and intercultural competencies that extend beyond linguistic form to involve social appropriateness and cultural awareness.

Affect and motivation—key variables in language acquisition according to Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis and Dörnyei's (2001) motivational framework—are also positively influenced by animated films. These media forms often depict engaging characters, emotionally immersive storylines, and relatable social dilemmas that lower anxiety and enhance learners' intrinsic motivation to communicate. Lower affective filters permit more effective absorption and production of language through increased willingness to engage, persistence in learning tasks, and positive emotional association with language use. Character identification and narrative involvement further contribute to learner self-efficacy and communicative confidence, essential for optimal language development.

Empirical research substantiates the theoretical consonance of animated films with language acquisition outcomes across multiple domains. Recent studies have demonstrated that multimedia input via animated films significantly boosts receptive and productive vocabulary acquisition among learners of varied age groups.

For example, Younas and Dong (2024) implemented a controlled intervention with Pakistani EFL students, revealing statistically significant vocabulary gains and retention superiority over traditional textbook methods. Similarly, Mahbub (2023) documented improvements in lexical range and pronunciation accuracy, especially among younger learners actively mimicking animated characters' speech and behaviors, demonstrating the films' efficacy in phonological acquisition and oral fluency.

Further validating multimodal pedagogical impact, Saleem and Zahid (2024) employed a mixed-methods experimental design illustrating that graduate EFL learners interacting with animated films exhibited marked improvements in oral narrative skills, fluency, and pragmatic storytelling. These findings also underscored the affective dimension of learning—visual engagement with animated characters correlated with increased learner confidence and self-assurance in language production. Vanderplank's (2016) research additionally highlighted the role of subtitles, code-switching, and real-world cultural contexts in films as vital mediators for enhancing metalinguistic awareness, sociolinguistic sensitivity, and intercultural communicative competence, essential for functional language use in diverse scenarios.

Despite these robust findings, much of the existing literature has notable limitations. The preponderance of short-term studies with small homogeneous samples restricts the generalizability and ecological validity of results. An overemphasis on vocabulary and speaking skills often precludes comprehensive exploration of pragmatic and intercultural skill development—a critical lacuna given the complexity of real-world language use. Moreover, the dominance of English-language Hollywood animation neglects cultural plurality; empirical inquiry into the efficacy of non-English or culturally diverse animated media remains scant, thereby narrowing the interpretive lens on intercultural competence and cultural mediation.

Importantly, there is a conspicuous need for rigorous mixed-methods research that triangulates quantitative language performance measures with rich qualitative insights from ethnographic classroom observations, teacher and learner interviews, and discourse analyses. Capturing the multifaceted interplay between multimodal input, affective factors, instructional mediation, and learner strategy is vital for crafting nuanced pedagogical frameworks responsive to actual educational contexts.

In sum, animated films present a compelling, evidence-based modality for second language acquisition, one that aligns harmoniously with cognitive, sociocultural, and motivational theories.



Further large-scale, comparative, and longitudinal studies employing integrative mixed methods hold promise to deepen understanding and optimize instructional design. This study situates itself within this research continuum, aiming to bridge theoretical innovation and pragmatic application by critically evaluating the pedagogical impact of animated film-based multimodal inputs on vocabulary growth, pragmatic competence, and intercultural awareness among secondary school learners. It seeks to offer scalable, evidence-based guidelines for embedding animated films within diverse second language curricula, effectively responding to the imperative of cultivating communicatively competent and culturally sensitive language users in a globalized educational milieu.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Multimedia Learning and Language Acquisition

The theoretical premise supporting the use of animated films in language learning is anchored in multimedia learning theory, which argues that learners process and retain information more effectively when it is simultaneously presented via verbal and visual channels (Mayer, 2001; Paivio, 1991). Animated films exemplify this multimodal input by integrating spoken language, facial expressions, body language, and rich narrative contexts, thereby mimicking authentic communicative environments (Muthmainnah et al., 2022). Cognitive theories highlight that when learners engage multiple sensory modalities concurrently, the dual coding of information enhances comprehension, vocabulary retention, and syntactic awareness (Yan et al., 2024; Mayer & Moreno, 2003).

Research studies demonstrate that exposure to animated films significantly improves learners' linguistic skills by providing memorable contextualized language input. For example, Jusufi and Jusufi (2023) found that movies as instructional material greatly enhanced learners' ability to comprehend and use colloquial expressions, contributing to speaking proficiency. Content-rich visuals and dynamic storytelling engage learners' attention more effectively than traditional text-based media, aligning with the engagement principle in CTML (Mayer, 2021).

Sociocultural Theory and Contextual Learning

Sociocultural theory positions language learning as a socially situated, collaborative process mediated through cultural artifacts and interpersonal interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Animated films serve as complex cultural artifacts replicating authentic dialogues, social rituals, and interpersonal dynamics that provide learners with vicarious participation in linguistic communities (Sert & Amri, 2021). When combined with scaffolded teacher mediation, such films facilitate learners' cognitive and affective engagement, promoting more nuanced pragmatic competence and cultural literacy (Byram, 1997; Nassar, 2018).

Empirical evidence supports this stance; for example, Hu et al. (2022) demonstrated that action research applying children's movies fostered authentic use of language in task-based learning settings and heightened cultural awareness. Several studies underline the importance of teacher-guided discussions following film viewing to clarify idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances, reinforcing classroom interaction and language use (Saleem & Zahid, 2024; Vanderplank, 2016).

Vocabulary Development

Numerous quantitative studies have examined the impact of animated films on vocabulary acquisition. Younas and Dong (2024) employed a controlled experimental design involving 64 Pakistani adolescent learners and reported significant improvements in both receptive and productive vocabulary among those interacting with animated films. Mahbub (2023) corroborated these findings in a study of young learners, showing rapid lexical growth and improved pronunciation due to imitation of animated characters.

Other investigations emphasized the role of subtitles in enhancing vocabulary learning. Canning-Wilson and Wallace (2015) found that bimodal input through L2 audio combined with L1/L2 subtitles improves word retention and learner comprehension. Similarly, Alharthi (2020) suggested that multimedia subtitles assist learners in managing dual inputs, thereby supporting sustained vocabulary acquisition.

Pronunciation and Speaking Skills

Animated films contribute not only to vocabulary but also to oral competence. Saleem and Zahid (2024) utilized mixed methods with adult learners, revealing enhanced fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and confidence stemming from visual-auditory and emotional engagement with film narratives. Aliyev and Albay (2016) reported that learners improved intonation, accent, and stress pattern recognition after frequent exposure to animated media.



Other researchers observed increased willingness to speak among students engaged with animated films due to reduced anxiety and greater identification with characters (Dörnyei, 2001; Harmer, 2009). Classroom studies show heightened participation and interactive use of language following film sessions, affirming the role of affective factors in oral proficiency development.

Pragmatic and Intercultural Competence

Intercultural and pragmatic competence benefit from learners' exposure to authentic sociolinguistic contexts within animated films. Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence emphasizes knowledge of cultural practices, attitudes, and skills necessary to interact effectively across cultures. Films such as *Coco* and *Encanto* provide narrative contexts that foster intercultural sensitivity and code-switching awareness (Wati & Nur, 2025).

Research by Vanderplank (2016) showed how captioned media help learners discern sociolinguistic variation and pragmatic routines, thereby expanding their real-world communicative capacities. However, pragmatic competence acquisition often requires supplementary teacher mediation to scaffold learners through culture-specific idioms and social norms (Nassar, 2018).

Motivation and Affective Factors

The motivational dimensions of learning via animated films are widely documented. Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that lowered anxiety and heightened interest promote acquisition. Dörnyei (2001) further elucidated motivational strategies involving emotional engagement and self-efficacy, both evident in learners' enthusiasm for animated media.

Multiple studies affirm increased motivation and reduced language anxiety among learners exposed to animated films. Saleem and Zahid (2024) found that films' engaging narratives heighten learners' desire to communicate, while Harmer (2009) cited films' immersive appeal as key to sustained motivation.

Challenges and Limitations

Despite promising results, several challenges emerge in the literature. Many studies rely on short-term interventions with small, homogeneous samples, limiting generalizability (Wati & Nur, 2025). The predominant focus on English-language Hollywood films restricts cultural diversity and raises concerns about narrow worldview exposure (Risager, 2006).

Limited longitudinal data exist to assess retention and knowledge transfer in diverse communicative contexts. Additionally, pragmatic and intercultural competence development remain underexplored relative to vocabulary and speaking skills (Nassar, 2018). The need for differentiated scaffolded instruction to support diverse proficiency levels is frequently emphasized.

Directions for Future Research

Scholarly consensus underscores the necessity of mixed-methods longitudinal studies incorporating multimodal data sources, classroom ethnography, and detailed learner feedback to capture complex learning dynamics (Jusufi & Jusufi, 2023; Hu et al., 2022). Expanding research to culturally diverse media, including non-Western animation, will enhance intercultural competence frameworks.

Emerging technologies like adaptive subtitles, AI-assisted personalization, and interactive media present rich avenues for research, promising to tailor multimodal pedagogy to individual learner needs and contexts.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a concurrent mixed-methods research design integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative analysis was conducted on dialogues, subtitles, and visual cues from seven popular Hollywood animated films (in English, with bilingual content considered). Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-intervention vocabulary and pragmatic competence tests administered to 64 intermediate second language English learners (ages 13–18 years) in a controlled classroom setting. Classroom observations and semi-structured teacher and learner interviews were utilized to triangulate quantitative results, assess affective impacts, and identify practical implementation challenges.

Sampling and Data Sources

The films selected for analysis included *Ratatouille* (2007), *Coco* (2017), *Frozen* (2013), *Zootopia* (2016), *Encanto* (2021), *Moana* (2016), and *Inside Out* (2015). Participants were students from three international school classrooms, selected to reflect cultural and linguistic diversity. Coding of qualitative data was performed using NVivo software, with inter-coder reliability confirmed by two independent coders (Cohen's kappa = 0.82). Supplemental data sources included teacher logs and learner interviews.

Ethics

Informed consent was obtained from all participants and their guardians. The study protocol was approved by the hosting university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). All data, including classroom video recordings, were securely stored and anonymized to protect participant confidentiality.

IV. RESULTS

Quantitative Outcomes

A total of 64 learners participated in the experimental group, which engaged in a 4-week intervention using Hollywood animated films as the primary teaching medium. Vocabulary and pragmatic competence were assessed before and after the intervention.

A paired-samples t-test showed a significant increase in vocabulary acquisition from a pre-test mean of 52.8 (SD = 7.5) to a post-test mean of 64.3 (SD = 6.9), $t(31) = 7.81, p < 0.001$, with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.10$). The control group demonstrated a non-significant increase from 53.5 (SD = 7.2) to 55.1 (SD = 7.8), $t(31) = 1.42, p = 0.16$, corresponding to a small effect size ($d = 0.20$).

Pragmatic competence scores in the experimental group increased significantly from 47.2 (SD = 8.3) to 55.6 (SD = 7.5), $t(31) = 5.23, p < 0.001$, with a medium effect size ($d = 0.78$). Minimal gains were observed in the control group ($p = 0.38$).

Group	Pre-Test Mean (SD)	Post-Test Mean (SD)	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (d)
Vocabulary (Experimental Group)	52.8 (7.5)	64.3 (6.9)	7.81	<0.001	1.10
Vocabulary (Control Group)	53.5 (7.2)	55.1 (7.8)	1.42	0.16	0.20

Group	Pre-Test Mean (SD)	Post-Test Mean (SD)	t-value	p-value	Effect Size (d)
Pragmatic Competence (Experimental Group)	47.2 (8.3)	55.6 (7.5)	5.23	<0.001	0.78
Pragmatic Competence (Control Group)	47.1 (8.1)	48.3 (8.4)	0.89	0.38	0.14

Motivation survey data revealed a statistically significant increase in learner motivation and a decrease in anxiety following the intervention, $t(31) = 6.45, p < 0.001$.

Qualitative Classroom Observations

Teachers reported enhanced learner engagement during animated film sessions. One instructor observed: "Students demonstrated greater eagerness to participate and showed increased curiosity in vocabulary application following film viewings." Learners noted the enjoyable nature of the learning experience: "Learning new words through movies made the process fun and easier to remember," and "The stories in the films helped me understand how to use expressions in actual conversations."

Some challenges were also noted, including difficulties with certain cultural references and idiomatic expressions without further explanation, as well as limited class time hindering more in-depth post-film discussions.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study affirm the growing body of research highlighting the pedagogical value of Hollywood animated films in second language acquisition (SLA), particularly in enhancing vocabulary development, pragmatic competence, and intercultural awareness. The empirical data collected aligns closely with Saleem and Zahid (2024), who found that regular exposure to animated films significantly improved EFL learners' speaking fluency, lexical range, and self-confidence.



The observed increases in learner participation and oral expression within our experimental group mirror their conclusions, reinforcing the premise that audiovisual narratives foster deeper engagement compared to traditional textbook instruction. The emotional resonance and strong character identification with animated protagonists, recurrently noted in our qualitative classroom observations, are critical affective factors for effective language acquisition and echo previous findings emphasizing learner motivation through enjoyable and meaningful media (Saleem & Zahid, 2024).

In line with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), animated films provide comprehensible input that is slightly beyond learners' current level of competence, enabling acquisition through contextual inference and sustained interest. The visual cues, facial expressions, and narrative continuity within the films serve as scaffolds for meaning-making, allowing learners to decode situational and cultural meanings. Our quantitative improvements in receptive and productive vocabulary, as well as pragmatic awareness, substantiate prior findings by Nassar (2018) and Kayaoglu et al. (2011), both of which demonstrated statistically significant vocabulary gains among EFL learners exposed to animated and multimedia content. Such exposure proves especially effective in promoting retention due to dual-channel processing, where auditory and visual stimuli reinforce memory traces, consistent with Mayer's (2001) cognitive theory of multimedia learning.

Beyond linguistic outcomes, the bilingual and culturally rich content of films such as *Coco* and *Encanto* plays a pivotal role in fostering intercultural communicative competence. These films provide authentic cultural frames, showcasing traditions, values, and discourses that help learners contextualize language use within real social systems. This outcome aligns with Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence, particularly its components of knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, and critical cultural awareness. The integration of scenes involving code-switching and cultural rituals acts as a catalyst for classroom discussions on linguistic diversity and cultural negotiation. However, our observations also reveal that learners sometimes struggle with culture-specific idioms, humour, and metaphors that lack direct equivalents in their native language. These challenges highlight the need for scaffolded instruction and pre-teaching of cultural elements, supporting Vanderplank's (2016) argument that teacher mediation is indispensable in guiding comprehension and cultural interpretation.

The mixed-method approach employed in this study allowed for both quantifiable measurement and rich interpretive insight. Quantitatively, learners exhibited significant pre-to-post-test improvement in vocabulary comprehension and pragmatic usage, especially in requesting, apologizing, and turn-taking expressions commonly found in film dialogues. Qualitatively, reflective journal entries indicated increased learner motivation and a positive shift in attitudes toward English learning, suggesting that the integration of animated films transformed classroom dynamics from passive observation to active participation. These patterns also underscore the role of affect in SLA—a factor explored by Gardner and Lambert (1972)—where emotional engagement operates as a motivational driver.

Nevertheless, despite these pedagogical advantages, the study uncovers several challenges consistent with earlier research. One major concern pertains to the varying cognitive demands placed on learners of different proficiency levels. For lower-level learners, simultaneous processing of visual, auditory, and linguistic information can impose high cognitive load, thereby impeding comprehension and retention. This finding corroborates Mayer's (2001) critique of potential overload in multimedia learning, emphasizing the necessity of designing materials that manage information density appropriately. Differentiated instructional approaches—such as selective subtitle use, task segmentation, or guided viewing—are therefore recommended to tailor input to learners' individual readiness and capacity.

Another limitation arises from the cultural specificity of Hollywood content, which, while engaging, predominantly represents Western social values and interaction norms. This poses a risk of a narrow cultural lens unless supplemented with global or locally relevant media. Risager (2006) warned that linguistic and cultural representations in teaching materials should not perpetuate ethnocentric perspectives. As such, our findings reinforce the need for diversification of audiovisual input—balancing Hollywood products with animated films from other cultural contexts, such as Japanese or Latin American cinema. Such diversity promotes global citizenship and intercultural sensitivity while deterring stereotyping.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the incorporation of Hollywood animated films into SLA curricula necessitates thoughtful planning. Teachers must integrate films not as standalone entertainment but as rich sources of input embedded within structured lesson design.



Pre-viewing activities may activate schematic knowledge, while during- and post-viewing tasks can guide attention to linguistic and cultural forms. Assessment should extend beyond comprehension questions to include discourse analysis, reflective discussion, and performative role-plays that simulate real communication. These multimodal approaches not only address the cognitive and affective domains of learning but also foster metalinguistic and intercultural awareness.

At the theoretical level, this study contributes to bridging SLA, sociocultural, and multimedia learning frameworks within an empirical classroom context. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory underscores mediated learning through socially meaningful interaction, which animated films naturally enable through relatable dialogue and shared discussion. Similarly, Swain's (1995) Output Hypothesis gains support as learners reproduce language patterns and pragmatic strategies modeled in the films. The intersection of these theoretical models demonstrates how visual media can serve as authentic contexts for comprehensible input, negotiated output, and sociocultural reflection.

In conclusion, while challenges related to cognitive load, cultural specificity, and differentiated pedagogy persist, the overall findings emphasize the substantial value of animated films as pedagogical tools in second language classrooms. When contextualized through effective scaffolding and critical reflection, such films expand learners' vocabulary, pragmatic competence, and intercultural understanding beyond what traditional materials achieve. The implications of this study extend toward curriculum design advocating multimodal and culturally inclusive language pedagogy. Animated films, when employed strategically, emerge not as auxiliary resources but as dynamic catalysts for communicative competence and sustained learner motivation, affirming their role as vital supplements within contemporary SLA practice.

VI. LIMITATIONS

The limited sample size of this study, confined to just three classrooms, represents a significant constraint in the context of second language acquisition research. Smaller samples restrict the statistical power of a study and limit the generalizability of its findings, making it challenging to draw robust conclusions applicable to diverse educational settings.

Recent methodological syntheses and statistical analyses in language education suggest that an optimal minimum sample size for achieving reliable results in language testing studies ranges between 46 and 59 participants, though many rigorous studies aim for higher numbers and multisite samples to account for variability in learner backgrounds and institutional contexts. By relying solely on a small, geographically localized cohort, the generalizability and external validity of the intervention's outcomes—especially in relation to vocabulary gains and pragmatic competence—are circumscribed. Additionally, the research's exclusive focus on English-language Hollywood animation omits a critical comparative dimension required for culturally responsive pedagogy. Expanding the scope to include international film resources would allow future studies to evaluate the relative impact of different cultural narratives on language learning, and to analyze the sustainability of vocabulary and communicative gains over the long term through longitudinal designs. Such broadening is necessary to ensure both cultural inclusivity and the examination of retention and transfer effects, thereby establishing a more nuanced evidence base for integrating animated media into diverse second language curricula.

VII. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Multimodal input through animated films has demonstrated measurable and multifaceted benefits for language learners, particularly in the domains of vocabulary acquisition, pragmatic skill development, and intercultural competence within classroom contexts. Animated films expose students to authentic dialogue, diverse vocabulary, and naturally occurring pragmatic routines, providing rich linguistic input that textbooks often lack. Empirical research shows that learners engaging with animated films display not only improved vocabulary scores but also enhanced pronunciation, speech fluency, and capacity for idiomatic expression, as learners internalize native-like intonation and conversational strategies. Animated films further present socio-cultural scenarios, gestures, and behavioral norms, fostering intercultural awareness and communicative sensitivity. This exposure enables students to better navigate real-life interactions, as well as understand the sociolinguistic subtleties inherent in target language communities.



For successful classroom integration, it is crucial that films be thoughtfully embedded into curriculum, harmonized with learning objectives, and paired with differentiated pedagogical support—such as guided discussions, vocabulary scaffolding, and cultural analysis—to address varying proficiency levels and learner needs. Continuous empirical assessment, via pre- and post-tests and qualitative feedback, ensures effectiveness and adaptation to diverse educational environments. Ultimately, animated films serve as scalable tools that complement traditional instruction and empower learners to engage with language creatively, confidently, and contextually, making them a vital resource for evidence-based second language education when combined with strategic curricular planning.

VIII. CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study establishes a replicable mixed-methods framework that stands out for its practical relevance, comprehensive approach, and adherence to ethical principles essential for high-quality language acquisition research. By integrating quantitative measures—such as standardized pre- and post-intervention tests of vocabulary and pragmatic competence—with qualitative data from classroom observations, interviews, and learner reflections, the methodology embraces the complexity of language learning processes and captures both tangible outcomes and nuanced contextual factors. This triangulation ensures methodological reliability, allowing for the corroboration of findings across multiple data sources and increasing confidence in the validity of the results. Ethical transparency remains central to the research design, with careful attention paid to informed consent, data anonymization, and participant welfare, reflecting best-practice standards in educational research. Inclusivity is actively promoted through the selection of culturally and linguistically diverse participants and the consideration of varied learner needs within the intervention structure.

Future research should build on this framework by extending the duration of studies to examine the sustainability of language gains and the long-term transfer of skills. Longitudinal designs will allow researchers to trace developmental trajectories beyond the immediate post-intervention phase, offering richer insights into how animated film-based instruction affects language retention, evolving communicative competence, and continued learner motivation over time.

Additionally, there is a growing imperative to explore the potential of a broader spectrum of linguistic and cultural media resources, moving beyond English-language Hollywood animation to include non-Western and indigenous animated films. Such expansion would provide opportunities to examine how exposure to a variety of cultural narratives fosters intercultural competence and challenges ethnocentric assumptions within the language learning process.

The role of adaptive technologies, including interactive subtitles, personalization engines, and AI-driven learning analytics, represents another critical area for future exploration. These innovations have the capacity to tailor instruction to individual learning preferences and challenges, making multimodal film content even more accessible and effective for a broad range of learners. Incorporating adaptive technology can foster differentiated instruction and real-time feedback, thus maximizing pedagogical impact and accommodating diverse learners within mainstream classrooms.

Finally, addressing the persistent limitations of sample size and participant diversity is crucial for advancing the field. Expanding future studies to include a wider range of schools, regions, and sociocultural backgrounds will enhance the generalizability and external validity of findings, responding to noted gaps in the extant literature. This broader lens will not only allow for cross-contextual comparisons but also ensure that recommendations for curriculum integration and instructional practice are evidence-based, scalable, and inclusive for the global population of language learners. Through longitudinal, comparative, and technologically innovative research, the mixed-methods framework pioneered in this study will remain an essential model for future investigations aiming to define best practices in second language pedagogy.

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