

THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS ON USING CARTOONS IN GRADE TEN CLASSROOMS OF O.R. TAMBO INLAND DISTRICT, SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

This study explored the perceptions of Grade Ten teachers and learners regarding the use of cartoons in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms in South Africa's O.R. Tambo Inland District. The main aim was to investigate how cartoons function as multimodal teaching aids to enhance language development and learner engagement. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with four purposively selected EFAL teachers and twenty learners from two secondary schools, and the findings were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that cartoons significantly improve listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills by providing visual and contextual support that enhances comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and learner confidence. Cartoons also fostered motivation, critical thinking, and active participation while reducing language anxiety. However, challenges such as curriculum pressure, time constraints, and perceptions of cartoons as non-academic resources hindered consistent use. This study contributes to the literature by offering empirical insights from under-resourced rural South African classrooms, an underrepresented context in multimodal language learning research. It recommends the intentional integration of cartoons through structured, curriculum-aligned activities supported by teacher training and adequate resources, thereby advocating for innovative, learner-centered pedagogical approaches in EFAL instruction.

Keywords: Cartoons, Learner Engagement, Multimodal Learning, Language Development, Teaching Strategies

INTRODUCTION

To improve language acquisition and learner engagement, this study investigated how teachers and learners perceived the use of cartoons in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms for Grade ten learners. Sholihah and Kholis (2025) investigated cartoons as multimodal teaching resources that enhance the development of speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills while adding fun and significance to the learning process. This study revealed that cartoons can draw learners in with humor, sarcasm, and visual representation. This study revealed that cartoons help learners become more motivated and approachable.

However, Önal (2023) contends that factors such as learners' ages, cultural relevance, and the teacher's ability to lead class discussions and provide clear explanations affect the effectiveness of cartoons. The researcher argues that in the O.R. Tambo Inland District, where many learners are IsiXhosa speakers, and English is not frequently used in everyday interaction, this study examined the effects of acquiring English as a First Additional Language. Since English remains the primary language of instruction in South African schools, proficiency in the language is critical for academic success (Mpanda, 2025). Therefore, cartoons may offer easily accessible and captivating learning environments that enhance participation and understanding while fostering the development of critical language skills. Thus, this study examined how teachers and learners see the use of cartoons in EFAL classes and how these views affect English instruction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Diana (2023) notes the paucity of thorough studies examining the effects of instructional cartoons on learners' vocabulary development in Oyo Town, Nigeria. Education has focused on how learners and teachers perceive the use of cartoons to enhance English language development. According to Akram et al. (2025), cartoons foster an active learning environment in the classroom where learners feel more comfortable participating. Cartoons encourage learners to participate and discuss, which, according to teachers' observations, aids language practice. Both teachers and learners in this study view cartoons as helpful tools for understanding context and culture in language learning. The research gap in this study lies in the limited research on cartoons, especially in rural schools, where teaching tools are fewer than in urban schools.

Cartoons often depict everyday scenarios, allowing learners to connect terms and expressions to real-world contexts (Setiyadi, 2025). Rizkiyana and Hiarulla (2025) assert that cartoons provide visual and auditory stimulation, which appeals to various learning styles. Teachers know that cartoons can support individualized instruction, which helps a range of learners better understand linguistic issues.

Theoretical framework

This study draws on one theoretical framework to interpret the impact of cartoons on learners' language development: Multimodal Learning Theory (MMLT), as formulated in 1997. Richard Mayer is credited with creating Multimodal Learning Theory (MMLT) in 1997. This theory, which draws on ideas from information processing theory, explains why learners comprehend information better when it is delivered through both visual and auditory channels. The term "multimodal learning" refers to educational settings in which information is presented through multiple senses, including visual, aural, textual, and kinaesthetic (Mayer, 2014). This approach is pertinent to the current study, as it examines how learners interact with and comprehend multimodal narratives, particularly when cartoons are used. Cartoons offer a dynamic learning experience that facilitates meaning-making and communication in a variety of ways by fusing conversation, sound, and pictures.

By using contextualized language, cartoons further enhance learning by fostering motivation, engagement, and deeper comprehension. While Mezei and Boglárka (2024) emphasize the importance of cartoons in helping learners interpret slang and cultural references through situational clues, cartoons also attract learners' attention and make the learning process more pleasurable. Additionally, as learners analyze characters' motivations and forecast narrative developments from visual information, cartoons promote critical thinking and interpretive skills. Additionally, Firdaus (2024) noted that incorporating reading, writing, speaking, and listening supports diverse learning styles and is inclusive across a range of school settings. Role-playing and cartoon-based creative writing are examples of activities that promote active language use, boosting learners' confidence and fluency. Additionally, the use of verbal and visual components improves the four fundamental language skills required for successful communication, facilitates contextual learning, and strengthens understanding.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a qualitative method to support the suggestions on the impact of cartoons on teaching and learning. Thorne (2025) noted that qualitative research aims to answer research questions through a methodically predetermined series of procedures. It is concerned with comprehending people's experiences in a straightforward, easy, and analytical manner. As a result, qualitative approaches are beneficial for understanding a specific community's attitudes, behaviors, and social settings. Additionally, because qualitative research uses an interpretive approach to analyze its subject, it has multiple dimensions.

The qualitative research approach was suitable for this study, as it emphasizes the quality and comprehensiveness of the data provided. Qualitative research is a method in which the researcher seeks to gather detailed information to understand the complexities of human experience better. By engaging with participants in school environments, the researcher gained rich insights that quantitative tools may not capture.

Furthermore, Acharya (2025) states that interpretivism emphasizes meaning comprehension, which is best achieved through qualitative research. Furthermore, Tanlaka and Aryal (2025) explain that, because interpretivism focuses on understanding human experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and social interactions within their natural contexts, it emphasizes meaning comprehension, which is best accomplished through qualitative research. Instead of depending just on numerical data, this paradigm enables researchers to investigate how individuals understand and make meaning of their own reality (Pretorius, 2024).

Interpretivism further encourages the use of qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews. This tool is important for getting information firsthand. This method provides the researcher with access to detailed, descriptive data that capture participants' real-life experiences (Coronella & Aiken-Wisniewski, 2023). In this study, this method was important for gaining firsthand experience. By interacting directly with learners and teachers, the researcher explored the use of cartoons as a teaching tool in the O.R. Tambo Inland District in the Eastern Cape.

The researcher used a case study research design in this investigation. According to Rule (2018), a case study is a systematic, thorough analysis of a particular occurrence in its context. Using the case study research design, researchers can examine complex phenomena to obtain a detailed, concrete, and contextual understanding of a specific real-world topic (Yin, 2018). A case study ensures that the research problem is examined from multiple perspectives, enabling thorough, diverse evaluations of intricate situations in their real-world contexts (Takahashi & Araujo, 2020). To better understand the use of cartoons as a tool for teaching and learning English as a first additional language in O.R. Tambo inland district, this study employed a case study research design, which enabled the researcher to use a variety of data collection techniques and sources, including semi-structured interviews.

This study used purposeful sampling because it enables researchers to select participants who can provide comprehensive, in-depth information about the topic (Campbell et al., 2020). Two secondary schools were part of this paper. Four teachers (two from each school) and 20 learners (10 from each school) also participated in this study. The researcher found participants who could provide information on how cartoons aid language development, given the large number of learners and teachers present. Additionally, the participants helped the researcher understand how cartoons operate in real classroom settings, especially in schools where English is taught as a First Additional Language. Consequently, the participants helped generate rich, pertinent data that enabled the researcher to investigate the efficacy of cartoons as a teaching and learning aid. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews because they promote participant engagement. This approach works well for gathering qualitative data since it thoroughly examines participants' viewpoints, attitudes, and experiences (Chand, 2025).

Thematic data analysis was used in this study. Following the widely used approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2023), the interview transcripts were analyzed in six phases as part of a rigorous, systematic process. The steps involved (1) data familiarization, (2) initial code generation, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing potential themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) reporting. This data analysis approach was selected because it provides a rigorous method for structuring and systematizing the researcher's analysis of large amounts of qualitative data and is a common approach in educational research (Bhattarai & Belbase, 2025).

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to the commencement of data collection. This process involved explaining the study details to the participants and then obtaining their informed consent by having them agree to and sign the consent form. The participants were made aware of and consented to the following: the purpose of the study and how the information will be used, their right to refuse participation, that their participation is voluntary, that they can stop participating at any time without penalty or prejudice, and that their privacy and anonymity will be maintained throughout the research process and that no information will be shared outside the research team. The participants are anonymized and referred to by pseudonyms throughout this report as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, and Teacher D. Learner participants are also anonymized and referred to by pseudonyms as Learner 1 to Learner 20. All electronic data is stored on password-protected computers and devices,

and any paper-based documents are kept in a locked cabinet accessible only to the research team.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Data collected from teachers

Theme 1: Perceptions regarding cartoon use in EFAL education

Teachers' and learners' perceptions of cartoons as a teaching and learning tool in English FAL classrooms indicate that cartoons encourage learners to use English words more creatively, which improves their basic language skills.

Teacher A clarified that learners are more engaged when humor and visual aids are used in the classroom, especially those who have trouble reading or comprehending English FAL.

I have seen that cartoons draw learners in and add interest to lessons. When humor and images are used, learners are more inclined to participate, especially those who often have trouble understanding English FAL or reading.

Teacher B also mentioned that learners have a deeper, more self-sufficient understanding of the English language.

My cartoon-based lessons help my learners understand complex grammatical rules, idioms, and vocabulary. Learners can better grasp meaning without relying heavily on translation thanks to visual context.

Despite cartoons' effectiveness, I have found it challenging to incorporate them frequently due to time constraints and syllabus coverage. In our schools, cartoons are not regarded as scholarly resources.

Additionally, Teacher D said that learners closely examine themes, tone, and expression when analyzing or producing their own cartoons.

My learners consider themes, tone, and expression closely when they analyze or make their own cartoons. It inspires my learners to use English in novel ways, which enhances their speaking and writing skills.

This study has found that cartoons affect learners' engagement, understanding, and language development in EFAL classrooms, despite certain difficulties with their consistent use. Cartoons draw learners' attention and make classes more engaging, especially for those who have trouble reading or comprehending English. The use of humor and visual aids increases engagement and fosters a laid-back, encouraging classroom environment where learners feel at ease participating in the course. This implies that cartoons can increase the accessibility and enjoyment of language learning. To boost learner engagement and foster a positive learning environment, teachers should use visually stimulating resources, such as cartoons, as teaching aids.

Cartoons help learners comprehend difficult vocabulary, idioms, and grammar structures. Cartoons' visual context aids learners in understanding concepts without heavily depending on

translation. As they interpret meaning from context and pictures, learners can gain a deeper, more autonomous comprehension of English. Cartoons can aid comprehension and make difficult language concepts easier to grasp. To improve learners' comprehension of complex terminology and linguistic structures, teachers are encouraged to use cartoons as a teaching tool.

Cartoons are useful, but time constraints and the need to complete the curriculum make it difficult to use them consistently. Additionally, cartoons are occasionally not regarded as official educational resources in the educational system. These elements might prevent the consistent use of these elements in English FAL instruction. Cartoons are used to depict real-world challenges that teachers face when implementing cutting-edge teaching strategies. Teachers are therefore encouraged to integrate cartoons in a balanced way, using short clips or brief activities that align with curriculum goals while still maintaining lesson objectives.

Analyzing or making cartoons inspires learners to use English creatively while examining themes, tone, and expression. Using cartoons encourages learners to articulate their thoughts creatively, improving their writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills. Additionally, the use of cartoons fosters critical thinking and boosts learners' self-esteem, which enables them to speak more freely in classroom lessons. This implies that cartoons can serve as both creative and analytical teaching methods. To foster creativity, critical thinking, and language confidence, teachers should have learners analyze and create their own cartoons.

Theme 2: Cartoons' educational advantages

Cartoons, according to one participant, help draw learners in and foster a laid-back learning atmosphere that promotes engagement in English classes. Additionally, every participant stated that cartoons use visual and contextual signals to help learners understand vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structures. Teacher A mentioned that cartoons grab learners' attention:

I have noticed that lessons on cartoons capture learners' interest and enhance the enjoyment of class. They foster a laid-back environment where learners participate and use English without worrying about making mistakes.

Teacher B said that learners gain new words from cartoon pictures. Teacher B added:

Some of my learners readily comprehend new English words, idioms, and sentence patterns when given visual context. Compared with text alone, pictures aid word retention and comprehension.

Teacher C remarked that cartoons use both pictures and subtitles. Teacher B went on to explain:

I have observed that cartoons use a combination of text and graphics to appeal to visual learners. This multimodal strategy strengthens comprehension and language retention by helping learners make connections among spoken and written English and visual cues.

Additionally, Teacher D suggested that cartoons can boost all four English language skills. Teacher D added that:

In my cartoons, I frequently include humor, conversation, and social issues that learners can debate about. By analyzing these, they can enhance their English language speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills.

Cartoons significantly increase learners' interest and comprehension in English First Additional Language (EFAL), according to participants' responses. Cartoons draw learners' attention because they are engaging and visually appealing. This suggests that using cartoons in the classroom boosts learners' engagement and helps them focus for longer periods. Cartoons have been shown to foster a calm, encouraging classroom environment in which learners feel less nervous when speaking English. As a result, learners have the confidence to engage in conversations and are prepared to take chances when speaking, which helps them improve their fluency and basic English language skills. Additionally, cartoons frequently depict real-life scenarios, which enhances the significance and relatability of language acquisition. Cartoons help learners improve comprehension and use English more effectively by prompting them to make connections between the material covered in class and their personal experiences.

Cartoons improve visual context and assist in language learning. According to this study, vocabulary, idioms, and sentence structures are supported by pictures; learners pick them up more quickly. Cartoons' visual components help learners derive meaning without relying solely on translation, thereby promoting autonomous thought and deeper comprehension.

Learners link language to particular circumstances or scenes. The combination of words and images improves learner memory recall. Visual aids help learners comprehend abstract ideas that may be challenging to understand through text alone. Cartoons make difficult linguistic input easier to understand and more approachable for learners of all skill levels, especially those who have trouble with reading comprehension.

Cartoons' multimodal qualities improve language acquisition. Cartoons integrate spoken conversation, written text, and visual pictures into a single medium. This integration enhances learners' comprehension of pronunciation, meaning, and sentence structure by enabling them to process information through multiple channels at once. The use of cartoons as a teaching tool improves learners' spelling and grammatical skills when they read material while listening to spoken speech. Additionally, learners' ability to connect words they read with those they hear improves their overall language awareness. Cartoons' captivating quality also helps learners stay motivated and engaged in classroom lessons. These results infer that cartoons' multimodal qualities facilitate various learning methods and enhance long-term language retention and deeper comprehension.

Cartoons offer thematic depth and an engaging quality in language lessons. Cartoons frequently feature humor, interesting dialogue, and societal themes that encourage learner debate. This improves learners' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, and that encourages them to share their thoughts and opinions in English without fear of judgment from their peers. Reading scripts or subtitles improves learners' reading skills, and listening to cartoon dialogue improves their listening, writing, reading, and speaking skills. Additionally, cartoon-based writing exercises help improve learners' writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills. Learners can

see the value of language acquisition in everyday situations by making connections between classroom discussions and real-world societal challenges. This suggests that cartoons offer a comprehensive method of language acquisition by fostering meaningful conversation and the simultaneous development of reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills.

Theme 3: Using cartoons to motivate and engage learners

When the participants were asked about the use of cartoons to motivate and engage learners, they responded that they break the boredom during lessons and make learners more interested in the lesson. Cartoons are more relatable, making learners more eager to participate in the lesson. Teacher A said that cartoons grab learners' interests:

During my lesson, cartoons grab learners' attention right away because they are relatable, funny, and colourful. They increase learners' motivation to participate and break up the monotony of standard classes.

Teacher B noted that cartoons keep learners engaged and boost their language skills. Teacher B explained:

My learners naturally want to discuss the characters, actions, and messages when they watch or read cartoons during our lesson. This exchange keeps Learners interested while fostering speaking and listening abilities.

Moreover, Teacher C added that cartoons offer relevant real-world knowledge. Teacher C mentioned:

I have observed that cartoons make learning more relevant because they frequently address everyday issues and familiar subjects. Because they can relate to the material, learners are more likely to understand and use English.

Furthermore, Teacher D said cartoons capture learners' interest, making lessons more enjoyable. Teacher D explained:

A lesson I had on cartoons provided a calm environment for learners who were anxious when speaking English. Cartoons are more informal and enjoyable, which encourages learners to express themselves more freely in the classroom.

Data collected in this study revealed that cartoons have a big impact on drawing learners in and igniting their enthusiasm. Cartoons draw learners in the right way because they are vibrant, funny, and relatable to real-world situations. According to the study, this implies that cartoons' eye-catching and entertaining qualities serve as a motivational tool that disrupts the routine of conventional teaching techniques. Cartoons encourage learners to become more focused and eager to engage in class activities. The participant's comment about reduced boredom suggests that cartoons make the classroom more engaging and motivate learners to stay attentive during the lesson. Learners are more likely to sustain attention and actively participate in language-learning activities when instructional tactics incorporate visually stimulating content.

Moreover, it seems that cartoons promote meaningful classroom interaction and the growth of communication skills. According to this study, during lessons, learners instinctively start

talking about cartoon characters, plots, and messages. Cartoons offer conversational cues that encourage learner debate. These conversations give learners the chance to listen to their peers' perspectives and try communicating their own. This exchange suggests that cartoons serve as a stimulus for group learning, which improves learners' speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills. Consequently, the classroom becomes more learner-centered and engaging, encouraging the development of critical language skills in English FAL instruction.

The way cartoons make learning more applicable to learners' real-life situations is another significant result. Cartoons frequently depict relatable scenarios and prevalent social themes, which facilitates learners' ability to connect with the material. According to the study, learners' comprehension improves with this familiarity, as they can relate the cartoons' vocabulary to situations they already know. Learners are more likely to understand meanings and use newly acquired language or expressions in real-world contexts when they can identify scenarios that are comparable to their own. Cartoons, therefore, support contextualized learning, in which language is taught in relation to real-world situations, thereby enhancing comprehension and memory.

Cartoons also help create a less scary, more encouraging learning environment for learners. While many learners feel nervous when speaking English in formal classroom settings, cartoons help create a fun and laid-back environment. Cartoons' light-hearted and casual style helps learners feel less afraid of making mistakes. When learners are at ease, they are more inclined to share their thoughts and take part in speaking exercises. Cartoons enhance language comprehension while boosting learners' confidence when speaking English. As a result, the classroom setting becomes more welcoming and supportive, enabling learners to talk more confidently and openly during classroom lessons.

Data Collected From Learners

Theme 1: Perceptions regarding cartoon use in EFAL education

The responses from the data collected in this study indicate that learners held favorable views on the use of cartoons in EFAL instruction. Cartoons are seen as valuable teaching resources that improve language comprehension and reduce learning anxiety, rather than merely being amusing. Cartoons are viewed by learners as interesting tools that enhance classroom activities and reduce stress, fostering a positive learning atmosphere.

Furthermore, incorporating conversational and visual features in cartoons seems to promote the development of a range of language abilities, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading. The feedback also indicates that boosting learner confidence and participation is significantly influenced by fun and interest. These opinions demonstrate how cartoons can serve as useful, learner-centered resources to raise interest and general EFAL competency.

Learner 10 explained: *Cartoons, in my opinion, are a great teaching tool for English. Cartoons are more than just fun for me; they improve my English comprehension. Learning becomes less stressful and more engaging when cartoons are used in the classroom.*

Learner 7 added: *My vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and listening skills all increase when I watch cartoons. I can better grasp new terms thanks to the illustrations and activities. By listening to the characters, I also learn how to pronounce words correctly.*

Moreover, Learner 14 stated: *"Cartoons make learning enjoyable, interesting, and simpler; hence, I believe they should be used more frequently in EFAL instruction." I am more self-assured and eager to participate in class activities when I find the instruction enjoyable.*

Cartoons can be useful teaching tools for learning English because they make the process more interesting and less stressful for learners during lessons. Cartoons are more than just fun because they help learners understand English while fostering a laid-back learning environment. This emphasizes how cartoons can create a supportive learning environment in which language acquisition occurs organically. Cartoons' entertaining and engaging qualities seem to boost motivation and reduce learning pressure, which may increase learners' willingness to engage with English-language material in class.

Cartoons are widely regarded as effective teaching aids in EFAL learning. Cartoons are seen as useful tools that go beyond amusement to promote purposeful language learning. Learners report that watching cartoons leads to better understanding and less classroom tension, suggesting that cartoons help create a more laid-back and encouraging learning environment.

Combining dialogue, visual imagery, and contextualized language improves the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills at once. Cartoons enhance engagement and enjoyment, boost learners' self-esteem, and encourage active participation during classroom lessons. Cartoons could serve as effective, learner-centered teaching resources that foster language competency and favorable attitudes toward EFAL teaching and learning.

Theme 2: Cartoons' educational advantages

The data in this study reveal that cartoons have the added benefit of using images and actions, which help learners learn new words more effectively. Watching cartoons makes learning English more engaging, which leads to greater participation during lessons.

Learner 6 stated, "I think there are a lot of educational benefits to cartoons." *They make learning English enjoyable and easy for me. I pick up new vocabulary and learn how to put words together in phrases when I watch cartoons.*

The learner emphasizes how cartoons promote vocabulary and phrase development while making learning fun. According to research, cartoons provide contextualized language input that aids in acquiring new vocabulary and understanding how it is used in coherent sentences. Additionally, the enjoyment element suggests that learning results might be improved by participation.

Additionally, Learner 17: *Because I can hear the characters talk and pronounce the words correctly, cartoons also help me with my hearing and pronunciation. I attempt to mimic their facial expressions and tone, which gives me more self-assurance when I speak in front of the class.*

This response emphasizes the importance of cartoons in enhancing oral confidence, pronunciation, and listening skills. Research shows that learners can improve their speaking accuracy and fluency by practicing pronunciation, tone, and expression through exposure to real spoken language. The learner's use of imitation indicates active language practice, which is crucial for developing oral skills.

Furthermore, Learner 8: *Cartoons have the added benefit of using images and actions, which help me learn new words more effectively. All things considered, watching cartoons makes learning English more engaging, and I participate more and learn more effectively when I enjoy the session.*

Cartoons' visual and multimodal elements indicate that pictures and actions enhance vocabulary acquisition and overall engagement. This shows that connecting visual clues with spoken input can improve comprehension. Furthermore, cartoons bring enjoyment and boost learners' involvement during a lesson, highlighting the link between engagement, motivation, and successful learning.

Theme 3: Using cartoons to motivate and engage learners

The learners' replies demonstrate how effective cartoons are at encouraging participation and motivation in EFAL classes. According to these findings, using cartoons in the classroom makes learning more engaging and participatory, boosting learners' interest, motivation, and desire to practice their language skills. Cartoons' visual storyline, dialogue, and action combine to provide contextualized, relevant language input that facilitates learners' comprehension of new vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structure.

Additionally, learners' enjoyment and interest in cartoons seems to lower anxiety and boost confidence, enabling them to participate more actively in reading, speaking, listening, and writing assignments. Overall, these results highlight how cartoons may foster a learner-centered, inspiring, and encouraging environment for EFAL development.

Learner 5 explained: *Cartoons, in my opinion, are incredibly inspiring since they make learning English enjoyable. I focus better and enjoy the lesson more when we watch them, which improves my memory of new words and phrases.*

Learner 16 noted: *The stories, images, and actions in cartoons help me comprehend what is occurring, which keeps me interested. The fact that it does not feel like a typical lesson gives me more confidence to practice speaking and listening.*

Moreover, Learner 7: *Learning becomes easier and more engaging when cartoons are used in the classroom. I appreciate that I can engage in conversations, pick up new terminology, and work on my pronunciation without getting anxious or disinterested.*

Cartoons are widely regarded as highly engaging and motivating teaching resources in EFAL classes. Cartoons make learning fun, less stressful, and more engaging. Additionally, cartoons help learners build vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structure while providing a relaxed setting for practicing speaking and listening. This demonstrates how learners relate enjoyment to the four basic English language skills and to active learning.

Cartoons serve as a learner-centered, multimodal resource that tackles the emotive and cognitive facets of language acquisition. While the motivating component promotes long-term engagement and confidence, the combination of visual, aural, and contextual linguistic information helps learners acquire writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills more effectively. This confirms that cartoons can improve EFAL teaching methods by enhancing interactive, relevant, and holistic lessons that promote language development.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results in this study showed that the usage of cartoons in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms was viewed favorably by both teachers and learners. Participants viewed cartoons as useful teaching and learning tools that enhance language development, understanding, and learner engagement. Teachers clarified that cartoons draw learners in with their humor, vibrant imagery, and relevant scenarios, making learning less stressful and more pleasurable. When cartoons were utilized in the classroom, learners who had trouble reading and comprehending English were found to participate more actively. The findings further showed that cartoons contribute significantly to the development of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and the four basic language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In a similar vein, Zawia and Al-Darraj (2024) contend that learners can comprehend complex ideas without relying heavily on translation, thanks to visual context, dialogue, subtitles, and activities. These results corroborate the ideas of Multimodal Learning Theory, which holds that combining visual and aural components during learning improves learners' comprehension and retention of the material (Mayer, 2014). Additionally, the study found that cartoons foster creativity, critical thinking, and self-assurance, as learners are more inclined to express themselves and participate in class discussions when learning takes place in a laid-back, encouraging setting.

Cartoons have significant educational and motivating benefits in EFAL teaching, according to this study. Cartoons, according to participants in this study, make learning more interesting, pleasurable, and relevant to learners' everyday experiences, thereby reducing boredom and promoting active engagement throughout the class. Learners instinctively talk about cartoon characters, themes, and messages, which enhances their teamwork and communication skills. Cartoons' multimodal qualities, spoken language, written text, and visual images have been shown to improve language awareness, comprehension, and memory retention in learners with varying learning styles and skill levels. This aligns with a thorough analysis by Panigrahi et al. (2026), which found that cartoons also make the classroom less scary, allowing learners to practice English without worrying about making mistakes, thereby boosting their self-esteem and drive to study. Teachers highlighted difficulties such as time constraints, pressure to complete the curriculum, and the belief that cartoons are not official instructional resources, despite their educational advantages. Cartoons cannot be consistently used in EFAL lessons due to these obstacles. However, the results indicate that when properly incorporated into classroom teaching, cartoons remain excellent learner-centered teaching aids that can improve language acquisition, learner participation, and holistic language development.

These results also emphasize the importance of using creative, multimodal teaching tools such as cartoons in EFAL classrooms. In addition, Zhang (2025) emphasized that using cartoons to enhance learners' language skills fosters a supportive and inspiring learning atmosphere that promotes engagement, self-assurance, and meaningful English conversation. This is consistent with Yusuf's (2024) claim that cartoons encourage a comprehensive approach to language learning rather than focusing on a specific ability. Therefore, the results indicate that cartoons not only add interest to the learning process but also play a major role in the overall development of learners' language ability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study's recommendations on the use of cartoons in teaching English as a First Additional Language should not be used solely for amusement; teachers should intentionally incorporate them into their lesson plans as structured teaching aids. This entails choosing cartoons with rich vocabulary, understandable dialogue, and significant circumstances that are both age-appropriate and culturally relevant. To help learners connect spoken and written language and improve their comprehension and literacy skills, teachers should also use supporting strategies such as transcripts, subtitles, and guided conversations.

For the Department of Basic Education and Provincial Authorities: Create explicit curriculum guidelines to facilitate the deliberate, organized incorporation of cartoons and other multimodal resources into EFAL instruction, ensuring alignment with language development objectives and learning outcomes. To equip teachers with the tools they need to employ cartoon-based strategies such as interactive exercises, guided conversations, and subtitles, the Department should also prioritize ongoing teacher training and professional development. To facilitate the regular use of audiovisual materials, provincial authorities must also ensure fair access to technology resources, especially in remote and underfunded institutions. To improve learner engagement and comprehension, it is also important to encourage the creation and dissemination of cartoon content that is both culturally and contextually appropriate. Lastly, to determine the efficacy of these strategies and to guide ongoing enhancements to instructional strategies and learner performance, frequent monitoring and assessment should be implemented.

To help teachers successfully use cartoon-based techniques, SMTs should organize frequent professional development opportunities, including workshops and peer collaboration sessions. Additionally, they should ensure that all required resources are available and used effectively in classrooms, including audiovisual equipment and relevant educational materials. SMTs should also encourage a welcoming school climate that emphasizes innovation, learner participation, and inclusive teaching methods. To determine how these tactics affect learners' language development, monitoring and assessment procedures should be improved. This will allow SMTs to give teachers ongoing assistance and well-informed advice.

For Teacher Training and Development: It is advised that pre-service and in-service programs place greater emphasis on the pedagogical application of multimodal materials, especially cartoons, in EFAL education. Teachers should receive practical training to select appropriate, culturally relevant cartoon content and create structured activities that improve

speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, such as role-plays, guided conversations, and vocabulary exercises. To assist learners with varying levels of language proficiency, teachers should also receive training in scaffolding strategies, such as using transcripts, subtitles, and visual analysis. Ongoing professional development should promote reflective practice and the exchange of best practices among teachers. In general, increasing teachers' ability to employ creative and captivating teaching techniques can enhance learner engagement, comprehension, and language proficiency.

For Future Research and Policy Monitoring: It is advised that additional research be conducted across a range of educational settings to investigate the long-term effects of cartoons on the language development of EFAL learners, particularly comparing rural and urban schools. Future studies should also examine how well certain cartoon-based techniques, such as role-playing, subtitles, and learner-generated content, enhance specific language skills. Longitudinal studies are also required to evaluate the long-term effects of continuous exposure to multimodal resources on language skills. From a policy standpoint, mechanisms for ongoing observation and assessment should be put in place to evaluate the application and results of cartoon-integrated teaching methods in classrooms. Policymakers will be able to make evidence-based decisions, strengthen curricular requirements, and ensure that creative teaching methods improve learner performance and engagement.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to find out how well cartoons work as a teaching technique to help Grade Ten learners in the O.R. Tambo Inland District acquire English as a First Additional Language (EFAL). The results showed that cartoons greatly aid language development when used as multimodal tools, as they include visual and aural components that make learning more approachable and interesting. Through contextualized language exposure, learners expanded their vocabulary, enhanced their understanding, and improved their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. This study demonstrates that cartoons are useful educational tools that, when incorporated into structured teaching methods aligned with curricular objectives, can promote meaningful learning.

The study also emphasized the crucial role of teacher facilitation in optimizing the instructional impact of cartoons. Intentional pedagogy, including selecting suitable content, applying scaffolding techniques such as guided conversations and subtitles, and integrating interactive activities like role-playing and storytelling, is necessary for effective use of cartoons. For learners to actively participate in the learning process, link new information to what they already know, and decipher language and visual clues, teachers are essential. The results also show that, especially in multilingual and under-resourced educational settings, cartoons foster a friendly and inclusive classroom climate by reducing learner anxiety, boosting motivation, and promoting involvement.

This study shows that when cartoons are carefully and intentionally incorporated into classroom instruction, they can significantly enhance EFAL teaching and learning. They support the development of the four basic language skills while offering chances for active learning, creativity, and teamwork. However, sufficient teacher preparation, adequate

resources, and supportive institutional frameworks are necessary for their effectiveness. As a result, the study emphasizes that educational stakeholders, including legislators, administrators, and teachers, should adopt cutting-edge teaching techniques that cater to learners' diverse needs. By doing this, cartoons can enhance learning outcomes, advance language competence, and create more inclusive and stimulating learning environments.

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