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Storytelling through Picture Description to Enhance Young EFL Learners' Oral Production

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Abstract

This study aimed at improving oral development in the primary school of Ecuador, where teaching English at an early age focuses mainly on expanding reading and writing as productive skills. The purpose of this action research was to individually examine how the use of storytelling through picture description as visual support could benefit communicative skills among a group of second-grade students from a private school in Guayaquil. The study considered vocabulary, organization, and fluency as the basis of oral development using quantitative and qualitative instruments. A pre and post-A1 level speaking assessment measured the improvement of vocabulary and fluency. Results showed that there was an improvement of four points in the descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum and mean). The paired T-samples test revealed the study was highly reliable with a score of $p = 0.000$. There are few studies related to teaching English as a foreign language in early education worldwide and South America. In Ecuador, no studies were found. Therefore, the implications of this study are addressed to school authorities and other EFL teachers to upgrade the proficiency of their students from early grades.

Keywords: young learners; storytelling; picture description; oral development

Introduction

Teaching English to young learners is increasing around the world as schools are introducing English as a subject in formal education from early ages (Ghosn, 2002). In Ecuador, the English Language Standards (ELLS) are designed and developed based on the Common European Framework of Languages (CEFR) as a way to identify and establish specific language descriptors (Ministerio de Educación, 2012).

In 2012, based on the ELLS standards, the Ecuadorian government decided to implement the English Teacher and Learning Standards as a way to organize and define language domains and skills to improve teaching methodologies and language learning processes (Ministerio de Educación, 2012). In 2016, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education updated its primary and secondary subject curricula, including English as a subject into the primary school section (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

Teaching English to young learners (TEYL) is a challenging task for educators. There is an increasing number of children learning English as a foreign or second language (Pinter, 2017). This early exposure for children learning a foreign language demands more prepared professionals

(Cameron, 2001). Building a variety of language learning experiences allow children to develop early literacy skills as the basis to support their oral language competence. As a result, teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) requires educators to plan and design activities bearing in mind that students do not have enough opportunities to interact in the target language outside the classroom (Nunan, 2011).

Therefore, the designing and planning of EFL primary classroom activities imply adapting different resources as a way of producing authentic communicative tasks towards specific objectives. Most studies have focused on researching how storytelling activities can improve language skills at secondary and college-level EFL learners (Chou, 2014; Marzuki, Prayogo, & Wahyudi, 2016). In Marzuki, Prayogo, and Wahyudi (2016), interactive storytelling was used as a strategy to enhance speaking skills in Junior High Indonesian EFL learners, while in Chou (2014), games, songs, and stories were applied to increase vocabulary in middle school of Taiwanese learners. It has created a gap where research needs to be conducted in younger primary school contexts. The present study has explored how storytelling through picture descriptions can build the basis for oral production in young learners.

Participants of this study were Spanish speaking primary school learners who have been studying English as a school subject for the past two years. Teachers in this private school have addressed their teaching efforts to improve EFL learning mostly on literacy skills (reading and writing) rather than oral competence. Even though they are pre-A1 level learners, they struggle when understanding and trying to communicate using simple vocabulary in English due to limited exposure inside and outside the classroom. Thus, this study reports the effect of storytelling by describing pictures to improve vocabulary, organization, and fluency as the basis of oral production in young primary school students. As the researcher is also the teacher, this study provided the steps of action research.

Literature Review

This study focuses on the use of storytelling through picture descriptions to improve very young learners' oral production. The independent variable is observed as using storytelling through picture description, whereas the dependent variable is oral production development. These variables are explored as well as the terms and concepts involved with

participant's age, teaching approaches, and study focus to evaluate pedagogical knowledge to implement the use of storytelling in the young EFL class.

Teaching English to Young Learners

"Young learners" are defined as children within the chronological age period from birth to puberty years (Nunan, 2018). For educators, it is essential to be aware of planning and designing activities based on the physical, emotional, and cognitive stages children undergo throughout this process (Duckworth, 1964). According to the findings, children's logical reasoning is still not fully developed at seven years old, but as they grow, their brains start to rearrange thoughts to classify and build operational mental structures. As a result, stories can, therefore, improve children's literacy skills in early educational stages (Yazici & Bolay, 2017). This step allows learners to imagine and understand story sequencing stages, making connections to their environment.

Seven-year-old learners present particular characteristics, such as short attention span, a need for attention and approval from their teacher, an inner motivation, curiosity, and eagerness to talk about themselves. These peculiar aspects represent essential components that should be carefully considered for educators to

improve classroom methodologies aimed at engaging children in either individual or group activities (Harmer, 2003). Storytelling, vocabulary games, and picture description activities enhance their creativity as they develop vocabulary, reading, and speaking skills. As Tomlinson (2013) affirmed, children learn from what surrounds them, what they can see, hear, and touch, as well as from experiences.

The age, as mentioned above, developmental limitations define and delimit the appropriate tasks within the instructional learning process (Nunan, 2011). The method of speaking or oral communicative activities in the classroom has been limited to repetitions of short conversation and the use of formulaic sequences (Becker & Roos, 2016). It is mainly due to teachers' assumptions that authentic activities are complex for young learners. Mackey, Kanganas, and Oliver (as cited in Becker & Ross, 2016) sustained that children like to interact in oral communicative activities. However, those types of practices are not frequent in young learners' EFL classes.

Storytelling in Young Learners Oral Production

Storytelling is defined as "a process, where a person (the teller), using

vocalization, narrative structure, and mental imagery communicate with other humans (the audience), who also use mental imagery, and in turn, communicate back to the teller" (Craig, 1996, p. 2). Therefore, stories can promote a natural interaction by exchanging real information between the teller and the audience. As Richards (2006) described in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) core assumptions, learners need to be engaged in interaction and meaningful communication for language competency to be increased. In another discussion in a study conducted in China, storytelling demonstrated an enhanced ability to self-evaluate student's oral performance (Kim, 2014).

On the other hand, according to Cameron (2001), oral production tasks for young learners rely on classroom language because of EFL learners' limited foreign language practice outside the classroom. Individual or pair work speaking activities must be prompted by the teacher's repetition and modeling, resulting in a scaffolding process, conducting learners to their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and therefore, achieving an autonomous role in their learning process (Vygotsky, 2012).

As reported by Lisenbee and Ford (2017), storytelling is considered a tool to create a reliable connection between

academic content and real-world experiences. This analysis supports the evidence that designing speaking tasks for small children involves a careful application of teaching and learning principles, learners' characteristics, needs, and objectives outcomes (Lindahl, 2018). These researchers support storytelling as a guided activity not only to challenge learners to talk about themselves, but they require learners to express ideas by using words to convey meaning (Gower, Phillips, & Walters, 1995). Stories have to be carefully selected according to the teacher's objectives to achieve the best results (Thornbury, 2005). Finally, in a study conducted in Colombia, other factors were also mentioned when applying storytelling as a resource to increase oral production goals, where storytelling class activities could foster speaking development, leading-learners towards learning process awareness (Bocanegra & Ramirez, 2018).

Storytelling Narrative Elements

The review of the literature shows that it is essential to mention narrative story elements as a way small learners organize their ideas and sequence events when orally producing a story to achieve better results in young learners' language development. As stated by Morrow (1985), story structures

include a setting (time, place, and characters), as well as a plot: beginning, middle, and the end or resolution of the events. By making children aware of the narrative elements, telling stories can increase language, ensuring learners' engagement, and comprehension by making sense of the world around them (Fog, 2010). Other findings concluded that storytelling also enabled and increased critical thinking, cognitive engagement, and visualization as a way to understand written texts (Agosto, 2016).

Picture Description in Young Learners Oral Production

"Picture" is defined as "a design or representation made by various means such as painting, drawing, or photography" (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Images can allow young learners to breakdown a short story sequence, process ideas, and use simple, familiar words to convey meaning. Moreover, the potential of visuals aids was explored as the most common and effective strategy to help students associate meaning to words while keeping engagement and motivation (Macwan, 2015).

Szpotowicz (2012) stated that speech elicitation tasks for young learners require authentic and meaningful language where visual aids such as pictures serve as a useful

resource to structure the activity, set objectives and analyze outcomes. In an article published by the Sage Journals related to Language Teaching Research (Boers, 2018), a summary of three research studies focused on the use of pictures description related task activities as a way to elicit language input for data collection such as grammar feature samples, oral proficiency samples, and a picture story as a prompt for a writing task. For educators and classroom researchers, picture description facilitates assessing children's language skills acquisition progress.

For instructional speaking practice, storytelling is used as a way to elicit personal anecdotes by asking learners to produce orally using pictures as visual aids (Thornbury, 2005). For Afraz, Taghizade, and Taghinezhad (2018), the use of pictorial aids in developing speaking proficiency can facilitate the interaction while enhancing speech and motivation, while in Lavallo and Briesmaster's research (2017), picture descriptions were analyzed to determine a positive effect on communicative skills.

Vocabulary in Young Learners Oral Production

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines the word "vocabulary" as "all the words known and used by a particular

person, and all the words that exist in a particular language or subject" (2019). Understanding these "words" involves knowing its form and meaning, as they allow learners to recognize its grammatical functions and word associations in context (Thornbury, 2005). In this line, storytelling has been explored as a technique to increase young EFL students' motivation and vocabulary, showing positive effects in language production performance. As Chou (2014) affirmed in his study, the relationship between young learners and their cognitive processes were shown to be positively influenced by games, stories, and songs. They encouraged and increased vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, explicit vocabulary instruction during storytelling sessions encourages children to actively participate while providing opportunities to relate word meaning to their lives.

Fluency in Young Learners Oral Production

According to Nunan (2018), in young learners speaking instruction, fluency should be understood as "the ability to maintain a stream of speech without lengthy pauses or hesitation" (p. 3). Then fluency refers to the ability to speak without interruptions. At beginner levels, fluency can be achieved by engaging students in fun

learning by doing activities that involve interaction, and the use of recycled or new vocabulary (Nunan, 2018). The use of storytelling through picture description empowers primary school learners with a boost in oral production by stimulating real authentic communication with their peers and teachers.

Being aware of the different challenges students face when speaking, this section explored the benefits of storytelling in young learners' oral production. Therefore, to improve students' fluency in spoken production through storytelling, the following research questions are posited: To what extent does storytelling through picture description increase young learners' fluency in their oral language production? To what extent can picture descriptions increase vocabulary in second-grade students?

Methodology

The present study is based on action research with qualitative and quantitative analysis. The concept of action research in the educational field refers to a classroom intervention performed by teachers to improve and reflect on their practice. The researcher-teachers administer a strategy to improve their teaching approach, thus promoting students' learning objectives (Anwar, 2016). Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited in Burns, 2014) affirm that action research involves planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Table 1 summarizes the process conducted in this action research.

Table 1. Action Research Phases

Phase	Action
Plan	The researcher identified a problematic situation that students had difficulties in expressing themselves. There was little oral participation in English classes, and research-based strategies were searched.
Act	Story-telling was chosen. See the classroom procedures described below.
Observe	The teacher took notes during the process. A pre and post-test were given to students to measure improvement.
Reflect	Two other English teachers from the school were asked to observe some classes, take notes, and take the post-test to raise the reliability of the tests. Data were collected and analyzed. The results were compared and contrasted with the theory included in the literature review.

Description of Participants

A group of 26 seven-year-old students represented the participant sample group for this action research study consisting of thirteen (13) boys and thirteen (13) second-grade girls. They came from a private primary section school located in the north of the city of Guayaquil. The majority came from a medium socioeconomic status, where both parents worked or managed their businesses.

Most learners were Catholics, and a minority belonged to other religious groups. They have been attending English classes since Pre-K. At the moment of this study, they were attending English classes four

times a week for a period of seven months (May - November).

Classroom Procedures

Activities were aimed at telling a short story by describing pictures to increase vocabulary and fluency as the main components for oral development in young EFL learners addressing the study objectives. This innovation started at the end of the school academic year, at a private school, with 26-second primary students as participants for the study. In line with the student's pre-A1 spoken production level, they should be able to retell a simple short story using basic sentences to describe to

adapt it to their environment (Council of Europe, 2018).

Using picture descriptions to elicit vocabulary in second grade EFL learners were applied as the innovation for this research study. The activities were conducted three hours per week for six weeks to build up confidence when making simple sentences to create and report a short story orally.

By describing a picture, the researcher measured the effects of storytelling through picture descriptions to increase oral language competency. A six-week lesson plan based on the backward design model was used to implement this strategy. At the beginning of the innovation process, the teacher-researcher used a speaking pre-test. Subsequently, the researcher used songs, audio stories, videos, jigsaw storytelling sequencing, role plays, and a picture book class project as a strategy to develop oral proficiency through picture descriptions. A final oral speaking task activity was carried out as a Show and Tell where students created a short story about their beach vacations using a picture book as visual support to produce a narrative.

Variables of the Study

Independent. Storytelling through picture description to improve oral development

- Vocabulary
- Organization
- Fluency

Dependent. Young learners' oral production

Sampling Procedures

A sample of 26 students who represented the one-second grade class was randomly selected among six other second grade classrooms from the primary school section. Classes were held at the school. The researcher had a role as the leading teacher using the textbook provided by the institution.

Instruments

For the study, the researcher applied a speaking test at the beginning and the end, field notes, and a rubric to answer the research questions:

To address the first research question: *To what extent does storytelling through picture description increase young learners' fluency in oral language production?* The instrument applied was an A1 Cambridge Starters speaking pre-test to measure the participants' performance regarding vocabulary,

organization, and fluency as the oral components considered to enhance language-speaking achievement.

The test was adapted from "Super Minds 1," which is a Cambridge University Press Book series used by the institution throughout the primary school section. Nevertheless, two other English teachers were asked to collaborate in the test adaptation, observation, and rubric designing. The pre and post-test consisted of a three-section speaking evaluation. In the first section, personal questions were asked to demonstrate understanding and facilitate interaction. In the second part, the examiner explained the activity: First, using a game, then the researcher asked some questions about a picture to elicit learners' description abilities. In the third part, participants were shown sequence cards to promote storytelling ideas organization to create a short story from the picture shown using basic story narrative elements.

After the six week intervention period, the same evaluation was applied as a post-test, following the same pattern as the pre-test. It provided a clear perspective about the effect generated in the students' oral production components addressed after the intervention sessions.

To answer the second research question: *To what extent can picture description*

increase vocabulary in second-grade students? The instrument used was an oral performance rubric. It measured if there was an increase in the number of words used by children when describing a picture. The vocabulary grading criteria were organized according to the number of words: 0 - 1 (needs improvement), 3 - 4 (fair), 5 - 7 (good), and 8 - 10 (excellent).

The rubric also included speaking criteria components such as organization, vocabulary, and fluency. They were used to assess overall speaking achievements in oral production. The researcher contemplated that each part would be graded from one to four, being 1 the lowest score and 4 being the highest score on the speaking test. A total of 16 points was considered as the highest score on the whole speaking assessment. This procedure existed during the speaking evaluation to estimate the oral production increase if participants improved in any or all the components included in the rubric.

Additionally, teacher field notes were weekly recorded to analyze students' oral development progress throughout the intervention period. Field notes were used to observe the oral components for storytelling descriptions: vocabulary, fluency, and sequence of ideas. According to Orellana, Johnson, Rodriguez-Minkoff,

Rodriguez, and Franco (2017), field notes integrate theory and practice as they allow teachers to observe children's interactions and student-teacher interactions in diverse situations and contexts.

Therefore, field notes were taken by the researcher as a qualitative instrument to record young learners' progress. They were observed during class activities where storytelling through picture description was applied as the method to increase EFL spoken production. Comments from learners' reactions, perceptions, behavior, and feelings contributed to monitoring their progress throughout the research process. Keeping weekly records allowed the teacher-researcher to analyze to what extent the innovation managed to accomplish the goal. Field notes served as a supplement for the other two instruments analysis. It was also used as a self-reflection for the researcher to understand the studied phenomena.

Data Analysis

The results obtained from the pre and post-test, along with the oral performance rubric final results, established the quantitative data collected from the first and last evaluation during the innovation process. The teacher field notes complemented the qualitative data on participants' oral interactions, narrative

sequence, vocabulary, and fluency advancement on oral development using picture description. Data from the quantitative and qualitative instruments were triangulated for a more in-depth analysis.

The contribution of the Statistical Package for the Social Science program (SPSS) in academic research has become an essential tool as it enables investigators to store, analyze, and interpret descriptive and inferential statistics (Bala, 2016). Thus, pre and post-test results were recorded into an Excel spreadsheet document. Then the file was exported to the (SPSS) program to get descriptive statistics, like mean, minimum, maximum, frequency, and standard deviation.

Grades were obtained from rubric components observed from each participant speaking evaluation. These statistics were entered into an online calculator to achieve the effect size of the innovation. According to Cohen (1988), a 0.2 is considered a small effect size, 0.5 is a medium effect size, and 0.8 or higher is large effect size. A t-test helped to determine if the results were statistically significant and due to the application of Storytelling.

Results

**Quantitative Data from Pre and Posttests
Using Oral Performance Rubric**

This section summarizes how using storytelling through picture descriptions benefited EFL young learners' oral performance. The research findings are based on the study research questions. The innovation-focused on to what extent implementing storytelling through picture description increased young EFL learners speaking production, contemplating three main components: organization, vocabulary, and fluency. Differences between prior knowledge (pre-test) and outcome oral performance (post-test) in a randomly selected experimental second-grade class were calculated. Evidence validates that by describing a picture, participants were able to tell a short story demonstrating an advance in their language speaking skills.

RQ#1. To what extent does storytelling through picture description increase young learners' fluency in their oral language production?

The results are shown in Table 1. From a group of 26 participants, the pre and post variables illustrate a minimum score of one as the lowest score and a maximum of three in the pre-test. A minimum of two and a maximum of four happened in the post scores. The grading average in the pre-test shows 1.92 while in the post speaking test, an average of 2.73, which means students enhanced their fluency when orally creating a short story. A standard deviation of 0.74 in the pre-test shows students' achievements were more spread from the mean average score than 0.67 in the post-test average scores, which indicates that after the intervention, most learners reached grades closer to the average of 2.73.

Table 2. Results of pre and post-test: Fluency

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	26	1.00	3.00	1.92	0.74
Post-test	26	2.00	4.00	2.73	0.67

RQ#2: To what extent can picture description increase vocabulary in second-grade students? In accordance to what extent

storytelling through picture description can expand vocabulary knowledge, the study concluded that students acquired new words

by providing details about the story. A standard deviation of 0.69 in the pre-test compared to 0.75 in the post-test shows participants' scores were closer to the average total grades when assessed on using a new

vocabulary to create a story from a picture description about their last holiday vacations. Table 2 displays descriptive statistics of the pre and post-test for vocabulary.

Table 3 Results of pre and post-test: Vocabulary

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre test	26	1.00	3.00	2.077	0.69
Post test	26	2.00	4.00	3.35	0.75

In line with the total scores from the pre and post-tests, a minimum total score of 7 was considered as the lowest total score from the test administered to the 26 students. A maximum of 11 was observed as the overall highest score. This result explains that students enhanced their oral

production performance as a result of applying storytelling activities in their English classes, after a variety of formative assessments where storytelling was used as the mechanism to engage and produce authentic and meaningful interactions inside the classroom.

Table 4. Pre and Post total overall results

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	26	3.00	7.00	5.23	1.11
Post-test	26	7.00	11.00	9.15	1.15

The paired T-samples test revealed the study is highly reliable with a score of $p = 0.000$. This result implies that the application of a speaking assessment test where children had the opportunity to

describe a picture and tell a short story with simple words can be remarkably useful. Thus, this supports that storytelling through picture descriptions can boost students' speaking production at an early age, and

consequently, their overall oral development performance.

A Cohen's *d* of 3.48 shows that applying storytelling through describing a picture in a sample of 26 young learners has a significant impact on learning and that the study proved to improve their oral skills positively.

Qualitative Data from Field Notes on Picture Description

Data were gathered in field notes by the researcher and two other teacher participants' before, during, and after the intervention. In the beginning, the researcher realized most of the students struggled with oral interactions, as they showed insecurity and anxiety when trying to use vocabulary words to organize ideas to describe a picture.

During the intervention, as they explored storytelling activities using songs, audio stories, role plays, and a picture book, they progressively displayed oral production advancement, which was ultimately demonstrated through a show and tell storytelling performance. The teacher-researcher contrasted how innovation positively influenced participants' ability to communicate orally in a foreign language.

After the intervention, notes recorded how participants acquired confidence by

interacting and using vocabulary words. The different activities planned like songs, games, jigsaw, role-playing, and creating a picture book; assisted learners in demonstrating positive results towards their capability to organize ideas into a simple story sequence on their own, guided by a picture book.

Discussion

Findings from Pre and Post-test

In regards to the findings, this action research revealed that the impact of storytelling through picture descriptions could boost oral production in young children. The utilization of images or drawings to provide details and construct a short story facilitates speaking production, considering students' characteristics and limitations. Similar positive results were reported by previous studies such as Lindahl (2018) and Gower et al. (1995). Their studies agreed that planning for small children speaking activities involves careful consideration of learners and teaching objectives to help students organize, connect, and eventually transfer language into their real lives.

Findings from the Oral Performance Rubric

As for the importance of organizing ideas from using narrative story components, Morrow (1985) affirmed that it was useful for kids to understand and structure spoken language. As children practice through guided oral performance tasks, they were able to enhance their creativity and imagination, which in turn helped improve their emerging critical and reasoning (Agosto, 2016). In agreement with the study results, using pictures as a visual resource to support participants' word-meaning associations can enhance language competency (Macwan, 2015). It was also affirmed by Afraz, Taghizade, and Taghinezhad (2018), who declared visual description could enhance learners' interaction facilitating meaning communication.

Study results certainly support those research projects as the innovation aimed to promote real interactions between participants while generating curiosity, engagement, and discovering ways to simplify speaking opportunities. Characters and story familiar topics proved to be an effective strategy to benefit not only language oral development but language competence in all the skills. This result aligns with Mackey, Kanganas, and Oliver (as cited in Becker & Ross, 2016), who sustained that children like to interact. It

may be a complicated activity, but one that certainly boosts their motivation to speak.

Findings from Field Notes

Finally, in a study conducted in Colombia, other factors were also mentioned when applying storytelling as a resource to increase oral production goals, where storytelling class activities can foster speaking development, leading-learners towards learning process awareness (Bocanegra & Ramirez, 2018). During the intervention process, learners increased their confidence level by showing an ability to make sense of the words needed to create a story providing details about what they saw and connecting ideas to develop a story beginning, middle, and ending.

On the other hand, according to Cameron (2001), oral production tasks for young learners rely on classroom language because of EFL learners' limited foreign language practice outside the classroom. Individual or pair work speaking activities must be prompted by the teacher's repetition and modeling, resulting in a scaffolding process, conducting learners to their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and therefore, achieving an autonomous role in their learning process (Vygostsky, 2012).

Conclusion

This study presents some critical contributions in terms of unveiling different ways of improving learners' foreign language skills. Storytelling is just one way to promote authentic student's communication inside and outside the classroom. There are endless opportunities to facilitate young learners' language acquisition.

Due to limited EFL learners' interaction outside the school setting, students showed anxiety and lack of confidence when trying to express themselves. This situation decreased as they were able to communicate and transfer the meaning of their ideas into a coherent anecdote.

Seven-year-old learners presented particular characteristics such as short attention span, a need for attention and approval from their teacher, an inner motivation, curiosity, and eagerness to talk about themselves. These peculiar aspects represent essential components that should be considered for educators to improve classroom methodologies aimed at engaging children in either individual or group activities (Harmer, 2003).

Results from the statistical tests acknowledge a compelling increase within the pre and post speaking tests. Referring to the first research question on to what extent can storytelling through picture description can improve young learners' oral development. In line with results, using the strategy of picture description allowed participants to use images as visual support to connect ideas to create a story from a real-life experience. Besides using visual resources, playful collaborative activities involving other senses and movement promoted a nurturing learning environment.

According to the second research question about to what extent vocabulary enhances young learners' oral development through storytelling and picture description, results showed a significant increase in the number of words participants used to provide simple details about an image. It enabled students to construct a meaningful short story related to their background.

The outcomes from the study indeed illustrate that stories can be used as a practical approach to improving young learners' language competence, filling the gap in research studies about how storytelling can actively support language development in earlier CEFR levels. It is then highly recommended to examine other

language skills like reading or writing skills to enhance overall performance.

Limitations

Among some of the limitations encountered in this action research study, participants' age (7 years old), Pre- A1 Spoken Language overall production level, class size, short attention span, mixed ability group, long class schedules, a minimal access to technology due to the high amount of students, and other school curricular activities which affected the time allowed to develop class activities required for the study. The innovation was carried out at the end of the school year when students were not as motivated and eager to perform as the first months of the school year.

Recommendations

Even though the present study proposes mostly traditional storytelling approaches, it is recommended that digital storytelling practices be explored to measure if results can overcome actual findings. A more extended intervention period is also suggested to provide a more formative assessment towards outcomes. It is also advised to apply this research to older students with a higher level either in primary or high school levels so that a more sophisticated vocabulary and methods could

be investigated. Other language skills and subskills could also be examined as a way to test if storytelling has the same results if applied to other skills such as listening, reading, or writing.

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