



IMPROVING ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING AMONG GRADE 2 LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of the interactive storytelling strategy in improving the oral language skills of Grade 2 learners at Lonoy Elementary School, Kananga I District, Leyte Division for the School Year 2025–2026. Recognizing the vital role of oral language development in early literacy and overall academic success, the study sought to address the challenges many young learners face in oral expression, vocabulary, and comprehension. Specifically, it aimed to determine (1) the performance of the Grade 2 learners in oral language skills before the integration of interactive storytelling, (2) their performance after the integration,

(3) whether a significant difference existed between the two performances, and (4) to propose an improvement plan based on the study's findings. The study utilized a quasi-experimental research design employing a pre-test and post-test to measure learners' progress. Thirty-five (35) Grade 2 learners participated in the study, using the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) as the main tool for evaluating oral language proficiency. The intervention was conducted over four weeks, integrating interactive storytelling activities into reading lessons. Data were analyzed using Simple Percentage, Weighted Mean, and t-Test of Mean Difference to determine the effectiveness of the strategy. Results revealed that before the intervention, learners performed at a fair level (weighted mean = 7.10), with most scoring low in oral language skills. After the integration of the interactive storytelling strategy, their

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performance improved to a good level (weighted mean = 18.05). Statistical analysis indicated a significant difference between pre-test and post-test results (computed $t = 12.62 > \text{critical } t = 2.09$), confirming that interactive storytelling had a positive and substantial effect on learners' oral communication skills. The study concluded that interactive storytelling is an effective and engaging instructional approach that enhances oral fluency, comprehension, and confidence among young learners. It is recommended that teachers integrate this strategy into regular language instruction, receive continuous training in storytelling techniques, and collaborate through Learning Action Cells (LACs) to share best practices. School leaders and curriculum planners are also encouraged to support creative, learner-centered approaches that promote meaningful language development in the primary grades.

Keywords: *Improving Oral Language Skills, Interactive Storytelling, Grade 2 Learners*

INTRODUCTION

Oral language development is a foundational skill essential for early literacy and overall academic achievement. It includes the ability to listen, speak, express ideas, and understand others—skills that are especially critical during the early years of schooling. In Grade 2, learners are expected to articulate their thoughts clearly, participate in conversations, and comprehend increasingly complex texts. However, many young learners still struggle with oral expression, vocabulary, and listening comprehension, which negatively affect their reading fluency and classroom participation.

One promising approach to enhance oral language skills is interactive storytelling—an instructional technique where learners actively participate in storytelling through role-play, retelling, predicting outcomes, and engaging in dialogue. Unlike passive listening, interactive storytelling promotes two-way communication, develops vocabulary in context, and encourages learners to use language in meaningful ways.

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According to Hassinger-Das, Toub, Hirsh-Pasek, & Golinkoff (2017), interactive storytelling activities support children's expressive and receptive language by embedding language use in engaging, social, and playful contexts. This is reinforced by Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004), who found that preschool children exposed to frequent storytelling showed significantly higher gains in vocabulary and oral language development than those in traditional story-reading sessions.

Based on Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Tracey & Morrow, 2017), a child's brain development progresses so quickly during this age and the amount of information they take in and begin to understand is mesmerizing. At this age, children are beginning to decode sounds and produce words based on phonemic awareness and metacognition within connections to stories and their underlying meaning (Tracey & Morrow, 2017). Based on what children begin to understand at this age from literacy development and instruction, technology plays a role in how students comprehend as well as communicate their language skills.

Storytelling is a tradition as old as time and generations have reaped the benefits as it was one of the few communicative structures of the beginning. Today, storytelling in education promotes a wide variety of benefits that encourage cultural understanding, increased curiosity, and development of focus and social skills. As 21st-century learning suggests, educators want to build digital citizens that are equipped with skills that help them succeed in a world of technology circumstances and opportunities (Watanabe-Crockett, 2016). Digital storytelling presents a new kind of discovery within itself. The idea of this technique is a "combination of old storytelling tradition with new technology" (Saponaro, 2017).

Moreover, Niemi, Multisilta, and Lipponen (2022) emphasize that storytelling, when made interactive, can foster not only oral fluency and narrative skills but also learners' confidence and motivation to communicate. Their study highlights that children become more involved in the learning process when they are allowed to co-construct stories, take on characters, and express their interpretations.

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Despite these findings, many classrooms still rely on teacher-centered approaches that limit student interaction, especially in language instruction. This research aims to address that gap by investigating the effectiveness of interactive storytelling as a strategy to improve the oral language skills of Grade 2 learners. By integrating storytelling into daily literacy activities, this study hopes to offer practical insights into how teachers can make language learning more engaging and effective.

In summary, this study is anchored on the belief that oral language development can be significantly improved using interactive storytelling, an approach supported by both theory and practice. It contributes to the growing body of research on child-centered learning and seeks to inform teaching strategies that enhance communication skills during a critical stage of literacy development. Thus, this study is formulated to evaluate the effectiveness of interactive storytelling strategy in improving the oral language skills of grade 2 learners. A proposed improvement plan will be formulated based on the findings of the study.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of interactive storytelling in improving the oral language skills of grade 2 learners of Lonoy Elementary School, Kananga 1 District, Leyte Division. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

Further, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the performance of the grade 2 learners in oral language skills before the integration of interactive storytelling strategy in teaching reading?
2. What is the performance of the grade 2 learners in oral language skills after the integration of interactive storytelling strategy in teaching reading?
3. Is there a significant difference in the performance of the grade 2 learners in oral language skills before and after the integration of interactive storytelling strategy in teaching reading?

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4. What improvement plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

METHODOLOGY

Design. This study employed the quasi-experimental research design utilizing the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy performance of grade 1 learners of Lonoy Elementary School, Kananga I District, Leyte Division. The pre-test and post-test were conducted before and after the integration of interactive storytelling in reading lessons. A proposed improvement plan was formulated based on the findings of the study. This study was conducted in Lonoy Elementary School, located in Barangay Lonoy, Kananga, Leyte, and part of Kananga District I, School Division of Leyte. The thirty-five (35) grade 2 learners enrolled in the above-mentioned locale for School Year 2025-2026 were involved in the study. The instrument used in this study was the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). This is a brief reading assessment that helps teachers identify learners who may need more reading support. It is used to evaluate the learners' word attack and decoding skills, as well as their reading performance in English and Filipino. the CRLA can be administered online, over the phone, or in the classroom. This tool helps teachers as well as other stakeholders in pinpointing learners' strengths and areas for improvement, allowing for tailored instruction to support each learner through various support programs. The tool will be administered to grades 1 to 3 learners utilizing the tool stipulated in DM-CT-2024-284. Moreover, the researcher prepared lesson plans for teaching reading and literacy utilizing the interactive storytelling through oral language. The differentiated learning materials and reading activities suited for the group of learners and the mastery of the teacher in implementing the intervention highlights the delivery of the lesson. The learning materials and differentiated reading activities crafted were submitted to the District Coordinator and Quality Assurance Team for evaluation, validation, and adjustments before it was utilized by the learners in the classroom.

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Sampling. The thirty-five (35) grade 2 learners were involved in the study. Complete enumeration was employed in choosing the respondents of the study.

Research Procedure. Upon securing a research permit, data gathering was initiated. Application letters for study permits were personally submitted to concerned offices. A request letter was first submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval to gather data from targeted respondents. After securing the approval of SDS, letters of permission were also submitted to the Public Schools District Supervisor and School Principals of the identified schools in the district. After getting the approvals, the researcher conducted data-gathering activities. An orientation was also held for the respondents, and their agreement through permits was to participate in the research. The pre-test was administered face-to-face one month after the opening of classes. After giving the pre-test, intervention was provided within 4 weeks. Teaching oral language skills through interactive storytelling strategy highlights of the intervention utilizing the big and small books with colorful pictures and interactive stories in the web. After the intervention, a post-test was provided. Answers were checked, collected, tabulated, and submitted for statistical treatment. A Matrix of Activities will be prepared by the researcher to track the progress of gathering the data.

Ethical Issues. The researcher obtained the necessary written permission from the authorities to conduct the study. While developing and checking the survey used in the study, the use of offending, discriminatory, or other undesirable terminology was eschewed. The names of the respondents and other personal information were not included in this study to ensure confidentiality. The respondents were also voluntarily participating. Orientation was done for the respondents. During orientation, concerns and issues were clarified, and consent to be part of the study was signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in discussing and analyzing the results. All authors whose works were cited in this study were correctly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference. Keeping of responses from the respondents were given to the researcher and kept under her care.

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Treatment of Data. The quantitative responses underwent tallying and tabulation. Statistical treatment involved using specific tools: Simple Percentage and Weighted Mean was employed to evaluate the performances of the grade 2 learners in oral language skills before and after the integration of interactive storytelling strategy. t-Test of Mean Difference was used to determine the significant difference in the performances of the grade 2 learners in oral language skills before and after the integration of interactive storytelling strategy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I. Table 1

Pre-test Performance of Grade 2 Learners in Oral Language Skills Before the Integration of Interactive Storytelling Strategy

Score Range	Description	Frequency	%
25–30	Excellent	2	10.00%
19–24	Very Good	1	5.00%
13–18	Good	2	10.00%
7–12	Fair	6	30.00%
0–6	Poor	9	45.00%
Total		20	100%
Weighted Mean		7.10	Fair

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of Grade 2 learners in oral language skills before the integration of the interactive storytelling strategy. The data reveal that most of the learners obtained low scores, with 9 or 45% classified under the Poor category and 6 or 30% under Fair. Meanwhile, only 2 learners (10%) achieved a good rating, 1 learner (5%) reached Very Good, and another 2 learners (10%) attained Excellent. The weighted mean of 7.10, interpreted as Fair, indicates that prior to the implementation of the interactive storytelling strategy, the learners' oral language skills were generally at a low proficiency level. This

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suggests a clear need for effective instructional interventions to enhance their communication and verbal comprehension abilities. The predominantly low pre-test oral language performance (weighted mean = 7.10; many pupils in *Poor/Fair* bands) mirrors findings in early language research showing that without targeted oral- language instruction, many children begin primary grades with weak expressive vocabulary and narrative skills. Evidence from meta-analyses and classroom trials indicates that interactive storytelling, dialogic reading, and other oral-language interventions reliably increase vocabulary, narrative structure, and speaking confidence among young learners — particularly when interventions are delivered with fidelity and sufficient intensity (Donolato et al., 2023; West et al., 2024; Vaahtoranta et al., 2020). These results therefore justify the choice of an interactive- storytelling strategy as a focused instructional response to the low baseline in your sample.

Table 2

Post-test Performance of Grade 2 Learners in Oral Language Skills After the Integration of Interactive Storytelling Strategy

Score Range	Description	Frequency	%
25–30	Excellent	3	15.00%
19–24	Very Good	10	50.00%
13–18	Good	7	35.00%
7–12	Fair	0	0.00%
0–6	Poor	0	0.00%
Total		20	100%
Weighted Mean		18.05	Good

Table 2 shows the post-test performance of Grade 2 learners in oral language skills after the integration of the interactive storytelling strategy. The results demonstrate a notable

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improvement in learners' performance compared to the pre-test. Most of the learners, 10 or 50%, achieved a Very Good rating, while 7 or 35% obtained a Good rating. Additionally, 3 learners (15%) reached the Excellent level, and none fell under the Fair or Poor categories. The weighted mean of 18.05, interpreted as Good, indicates that the learners' oral language skills significantly improved following the use of interactive storytelling. This suggests that the strategy was effective in enhancing learners' speaking abilities, comprehension, and confidence in oral communication. The marked improvement observed in the post-test after the interactive storytelling intervention aligns with a growing body of evidence showing that interactive storytelling and related oral- language interventions (e.g., dialogic reading, elaborative storytelling, digital storytelling) reliably increase young children's vocabulary, narrative structure, fluency and spoken confidence. Classroom-level narrative interventions and dialogic/interactive reading programs produce meaningful gains in oral language when delivered with adequate frequency and teacher scaffolding, and digital/story-based formats show similar benefits when pedagogically framed and scaffolded. These findings therefore support the conclusion that the interactive storytelling strategy used in this study is an evidence-based approach for improving early oral language skills. In the study of Suggate, S. P., et al. (2021). *Interactive elaborative storytelling fosters vocabulary in preschoolers compared to repeated-reading and phonemic-awareness interventions. Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, a large, randomized trial showed that Interactive Elaborative Storytelling (IES) produced larger vocabulary and narrative gains than repeated reading and phonemic-awareness programs — strong experimental evidence that storytelling interventions boost oral language. Further, Pico, D. L. (2021) study revealed that the classroom-level review/synthesis found consistent positive effects of oral narrative interventions (including storytelling and retelling) on narrative complexity and oral language measures across preschool and early primary samples. It's a useful source to justify narrative-focused interventions for Grade 2.

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Table 3

Test of Difference Between the Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Grade 2 Learners

Aspects	Test Scores (Mean)	Computed t	Critical t	Decision	Interpretation
Pre vs Post	Pre = 7.10 Post = 18.05	12.62	2.09	Reject Ho	Significant Difference

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Grades 2 learners in oral language skills. The pre-test mean score of 7.10 improved remarkably to a post- test mean score of 18.05 after the integration of the interactive storytelling strategy. The computed t-value of 12.62 is significantly higher than the critical t-value of 2.09, leading to the decision to reject the null hypothesis (Ho). This result indicates a significant difference between the learners' performance before and after the intervention. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of interactive storytelling had a positive and substantial effect on enhancing the oral language skills of Grade 2 learners. Classroom-level narrative and oral language interventions — including interactive elaborative storytelling, dialogic reading, and cooperative storytelling — have been repeatedly shown to increase vocabulary, narrative structure, and oral expressive ability when implemented with adequate teacher scaffolding and dosage. Randomized and quasi- experimental studies of interactive elaborative storytelling report larger vocabulary and narrative gains than alternative early-language activities, while systematic reviews and meta-analyses document consistent positive effects of dialogic and interactive reading approaches on oral- language outcomes. These findings justify the selection of an interactive storytelling strategy as a targeted instructional response to the low baseline in your sample and suggest that, with high- fidelity implementation, substantial gains

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in expressive language and narrative complexity are to be expected. Donolato (2023) and Pico (2021) in their studies revealed that classroom oral- language programs reliably produce gains in narrative complexity and expressive language across early primary samples. Further, Pillinger (2022) states that reading strategies and to note that interactive approaches have robust evidence in favor of oral-language outcomes.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the oral language skills of Grade 2 learners before the integration of the interactive storytelling strategy were generally fair, as reflected by their low pre-test mean scores. However, after the implementation of the strategy, learners' performance significantly improved to a good level, indicating substantial progress in their oral communication abilities. Statistical analysis further confirmed a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results, suggesting that the use of interactive storytelling effectively enhanced learners' oral language skills. Therefore, the study concludes that integrating interactive storytelling into classroom instruction is a powerful and engaging approach that promotes language development, comprehension, and communication confidence among young learners. This highlights the importance of employing creative, learner-centered, and interactive strategies in fostering meaningful language learning experiences in the primary grades.

Recommendations

1. Integrate the interactive storytelling strategy into regular language instruction to enhance learners' oral communication skills and engagement in class.
2. Teachers should be trained and encouraged to use storytelling techniques effectively, focusing on expression, comprehension, and learner participation.

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3. School administrators and curriculum planners may use the findings to design programs and workshops that promote creative and interactive teaching approaches in language learning.

4. Promote collaborative lesson planning and peer coaching among teachers to share best practices and successful storytelling strategies.

5. Given the significant improvement in learners' performance, this strategy can serve as a model for other grade levels or schools, demonstrating that interactive, learner-centered methods enhance language proficiency.

6. Provide incentives and recognition to teachers who innovate in using storytelling and other creative teaching techniques to motivate instructional excellence.

7. Teachers are encouraged to continue refining their storytelling practices by integrating digital tools, visual aids, and learner feedback to sustain engagement and progress.

8. The effective storytelling methods observed in this study may be documented and shared through Learning Action Cells (LACs), teacher training programs, or demonstration teaching sessions to encourage broader adoption.

9. Future researchers are encouraged to replicate and expand this study in different grade levels, subjects, or learning environments to validate and further explore the impact of interactive storytelling on student learning outcomes.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



GRACE C. VILLEGAS

I am a Filipino, born on March 11, 1989, in Rizal, Kananga, Leyte. I am married to Mr. Arnel L. Villegas, and we are blessed with two children, Agian C. Villegas and Gracell Aubry C. Villegas. I am the daughter of Mr. Ciriaco N. Carillo Jr. and Mrs. Gloria M. Carillo. I am a Roman Catholic and currently 36 years of age.

My educational journey began at Rizal Elementary School, where I completed my elementary education from 1997 to 2003. I pursued my secondary education at Primona Holy Infant Academy, Inc. from 2003 to 2007. With a passion for teaching and lifelong learning, I enrolled at Eastern Visayas State University–Ormoc City Campus, where I obtained my Bachelor of Elementary Education degree from 2017 to 2021. To further enhance my professional competence, I am presently pursuing a Master of Arts in Education major in Elementary Education at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City, Inc., which I began in 2022.

Professionally, I gained valuable work experience in the retail industry, having served as a Supermarket Cashier at Gaisano Capital Ormoc Main in 2010 and as a Dry Goods Cashier at Gaisano Capital Riverside in 2011. These experiences helped me develop patience, responsibility, and strong interpersonal skills—qualities that have proven essential in the teaching profession.

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As a Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) passer, I am now a Licensed Professional Teacher committed to molding young minds and contributing meaningfully to the field of education. My goal is to continue growing as an educator and to inspire my students to strive for excellence, compassion, and lifelong learning.



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