

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING STORYTELLING IN IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS FOR B1 LEVEL STUDENTS (INTERMEDIATE)

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**Abstract:** This article discusses a variety of advantages of telling stories, such as genuine and enhanced language input, resulting in genuine language output by allowing them to structure the information from the stories in their own unique way based on their own experiences.

**Key words:** students, language, English, speaking, storytelling, activities, process

Nowadays, English has the status of international global and world language, which is learnt and spoken by millions of people around the world (Alsagoff et al, 2012). Accordingly, UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) expresses that learning a second language must be regarded as an essential part of total personality formation in the modern world, since it enables a person to live and move in more than one culture or linguistic community.

In the era of international communication and developing cross-cultural relationships, ability to speak and communicate in English is considered as requirement and useful skill in majority of circumstances and places. In the world of business, English becomes the main language and in applying for a job, English is absolutely required. When one individual decides to continue for further study abroad, English is absolutely necessary. In addition, most of scientific books are written in English. All these oblige us to master English.

Speaking is the second skill of language after listening that needs a kind of practice such as how to pronounce the word to make tone, pitch, intonation and so on. In other words, speaking is an ability to say or state something so that people can get the idea or message that we deliver to. This activity at least involves two persons in which they share any kind of information they have. It seems there must be a pause between the speaker and listener in exchanging the information. This activity will help them to get any kind of information they need. Since the starting teaching English, concern that students may not be capable of being fluency in speaking has troubled educators. Of greatest concern is whether students have mastered “speaking fluency” or “natural speech” and can apply them outside of school curricula. These concerns have given to rise to the working on students speaking skills through using any types of methods and one of them is using storytelling.

To demonstrate that the storytelling is successful, it must prove that its efforts not only increase the speaking fluency of students in school, but that students can transfer storytelling to novel situations, including those encountered in daily life. The primary purpose of this review is to ascertain if there is compelling evidence that efforts to improve speaking skills through storytelling have had this result.



What became apparent in the process of this review, however, was that several subsidiary problems must first be answered before the problem of evaluating the effectiveness of using storytelling for improving speaking skills transfer can be approached. The first of these problems is whether which genre will be appropriate and interesting for B1 level (intermediate) students. Second is the question, how analyzing characters and plot of the books which was read through making presentations can develop or increase students' critical thinking. The third problem might be formulated thus: how storytelling can improve learners' speaking fluency? Answering these prior questions is essential before inquiring whether there is compelling evidence that improving speaking skills through storytelling results in a transfer skills or dispositions that students can use in other arenas. This line of inquiry supplies the structure for this review of the relevant literature.

**The scope of this paper work is limited. Most improving speaking skills literature provides program and instructional technique description. This material is out of scope for this review except as it bears directly upon the question concerning subject-dependence in relation to improving speaking skills. Furthermore, although this review addresses the works of most seminal methodologist who worked on this theme and have more practice in improving students' speaking skill, constraints and limited access to information means that some major figures, such as Lado, have not been included. Finally, although methodological literature on this subject abounds, evaluative studies using either qualitative or quantitative methods to measure the effectiveness of whole programs are comparatively scare. I have included relevant examples of these studies, yet it can be said at the outset that the dearth such studies needs to be redressed by the research community.**

Language as a means of communication is no longer debateable. Language has an important role in human life because without language there is no communication and it will be difficult for people to understand what other people mean. Without communication, people will be left behind. Language is an instrument to share information and discuss something people need. Communication in foreign language is a bridge to get information, knowledge, and culture.

One of the languages which is widely spoken all over the world is English. English is one of foreign languages which is taught from elementary level to university level. In English learning there are four skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The four aspects are important but speaking is the most important to be mastered since it measures how good learner's in understanding the language. Speaking is the first way to interact with others in the social community. Furthermore, the success in learning a language at first can be seen from the ability of the learner's speaking. Richards and Rodgers (1986: 110) state, "Speech was regarded as the base of language, because language, in principle is sound". This mean that the product of learning a language is speaking. Therefore, the final goal of learning a language is able to communicate with that language.

Speaking is the second skill of language after listening that needs a kind of practice such as how to pronounce the word to make tone, pitch, intonation and so on. In other words, speaking is an ability to say or state something so that people can get the idea or message that we deliver to. This activity at least involves two persons in which they share any kind of information they have. It seems there must be a pause between the speaker and listener in



exchanging the information. This activity will help them to get any kind of information they need.

Speaking has acquired great importance along the history of English teaching since it is referred as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). English has become primordial worldwide for it has become a lingua franca. Therefore, it is the main source for communicating in many fields. Richards (1990) states that the mastery of speaking skill in English is seen as a priority for many EFL learners across the world. Moreover, he adds that learners consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course based on how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language skill. Brown (2007: 237) states that social contact in interactive language functions is a key in which it is not what you say that counts but how you say it, what you convey with body language, gestures, eye contact and other non- verbal message.

Lado (1961: 240) states that speaking as the ability to express oneself in life situation, or the ability to report acts or situations in precise words, or the ability to converse, or to express a sequence of idea fluently. This idea means that speaking emphasizes more on the ability of an individual to convey something whether it is in the form of expression, report with the language he has. Speaking must be practiced as often as possible in order to improve communicative skills. A conversation between two or more people is a blend of listening and speaking where the comprehension of what has been said is necessary for what each participant says next.

According to Fisher & Frey (2007: 16) speaking is the uniquely human act or process of sharing and exchanging information, ideas, and emotions using oral language. The goal of speaking is to achieve an interactive communication between the speaker and the listener. Teaching speaking is the activity where the teachers lead their students to improve their ability in expressing emotions, ideas or feelings orally.

Harmer (2007: 284) states speaking is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to. process the information and language “on the spot”.

When we talk of a person who knows a language, we usually tend to mean that that person is able to produce meaningful sentences in that language; in other words, (s)he can speak that language. Thus the claim that (S)he knows English usually includes the statement that (S)he can speak English. The teaching of a second or foreign language therefore, one way or other covers the teaching of speaking skills. It is safe to assume that many learners starting to learn a foreign language usually seek an improved competency in their productive skills; namely writing and speaking. These learners assess their progress in the target language in terms of their ability to speak fluently in communication.

From the explanation above it can be concluded that people should have the ability to convey the information, ideas, feeling to others in oral language. Therefore, the teaching of speaking should get more attention in the classroom.

Speaking skill is the productive skill in the oral mode. Like other skills, speaking is more complicated and involves more than just pronouncing words. Harris (1969: 81-82) states that there are five components of speaking skill that can be defined as follows: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. To be a good speaker the English learners have to master all of the components. However, besides those linguistic components above there are many factors that influence speaking ability. According to Turk (2003: 5) if we want



to improve speaking skills first we must be aware of ourselves, our motivations, behaviour patterns, and probable mistakes. From that statement it can be concluded that our own motivation and also our environment are the influential factors in improving speaking skill. If the learners have a high motivation to improve their speaking skill, they will study hard and find many sources and model about speaking skill. The environment is the next important factor that influences learners' speaking skill, because if people around the learners are able to speak well it will be easily for the learners to copy their way how to speak. Therefore, environment holds an important role to help learners develop their speaking skill. If the language is not available in the environment, it will take a long time to develop the speaking skill because the language is strictly used in the classroom.

Speaking skill becomes the important aspect of language when studying the language especially English without practicing to speak is useless. Speaking skill is important thing to be mastered when people learn English because speaking is a process of constructing meaning; it covers almost all of language components. Through speaking someone can express their minds, ideas, and thought freely and spontaneously. In addition, the purpose of teaching speaking is to guide both the teachers and students to use the target language as frequently as possible, especially during the learning process.

As common sense and research suggests, speaking is more than to form grammatically correct sentences and then to pronounce them. A well-known example of such a grammatically correct, however semantically ill-formed sentence "Colourless green ideas sleep furiously" was composed by Chomsky in 1957. Language teachers then need to recognize that speaking involves more than mechanics. The three areas of knowledge that composes speaking ability can be stated as follows:

1. Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary): Using the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation
2. Functions (transaction and interaction): Knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relationship building)
3. Pragmatics, Social and cultural rules and norms (turn-taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants): Understanding how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

Teaching speaking starts with pronouncing words clearly to be imitated by the students. Then, the words are developed into sentences to be drilled. The teacher should be aware of the sounds being pronounced. Then, it is continued to guide students to a point where they can begin to judge whether their sound productions are correct or not. At this point, teacher is no longer primarily to correct, but he or she is supposed to encourage students to practice the target language. Meanwhile, the teacher should be able to encourage students to pronounce some sounds which are absent in their mother tongue, repeating, and imitating him/her. Finally, the students are required to practice and drill the language. Additionally, Ur (1996: 120) says that the successful speaking activity has the characteristics as follows:

1. The language learners talk so much.
2. All the participants of speaking activity get the opportunity to.
3. The language learners are highly motivated and have interest in the speaking.
4. The language produced is at the acceptable level.



A diversity of approaches has been implemented in order to increase the performance of the speaking skill in EFL learners. Given the fact that many languages do not have a written form, speaking is considered as the only source for communicating. It was argued that language is “primarily what is spoken and only secondarily what is written” (Brooks 1964). On the other hand, teachers found that the practical results fell short of expectations; students were sometimes unable to produce outside the classroom, and considered the audio-lingual procedures to be boring and unpleasing (Richards 2001).

An approach that has had a great impact on oral production is the Communicative language teaching (CLT). Unlike the audio-lingual method, the CLT helps students to create meaningful phrases instead of repeating and memorizing grammar structures. The communicative function of the language is seen as the main objective rather than the perfect knowledge of the system. The CLT encourages the development of the speaking skill by promoting interaction as a mean for learning a language. It instigates learners to use the knowledge of the formal aspects of the language to communicate successfully in real-life situations. Nunan (1991) mentions that one of the principles of CLT is to emphasize on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language. On the other hand, (Harmer 1995, 16) adds that “the Communicative approach makes emphasis on a balance between fluency and accuracy and it is the most appropriate for those learners who want to improve and gain confidence with their speaking skills”

To support the teaching learning process of speaking skill, the teachers must know about the characteristics of students and also the characteristics of successful speaking activity. If the teacher knows about the characteristics of each student, he can easily make the approach to the students. In teaching speaking there are some techniques that is used. According to Harmer (2002: 271) many of classroom speaking activities are currently used:

1. Acting from script. This activity encourages students to act out scenes from plays or their course books, sometimes filming the result. Students will often act out dialogues they have written themselves. This frequently involves them in coming up to the front of the class, and speaking up their lines.
2. Communication games. Speaking activities based on games are often a useful way of giving students valuable practice, where younger learners are involved. Games based activities can involve practice of oral strategies such as describing, predicting, simplifying, and asking for feedback.
3. Discussion. One of the reasons that discussion fails is that students are reluctant to give an opinion in front of the whole class, particularly if they cannot think of anything to say and are not confident of the language they might use to say it. Many students feel extremely exposed in discussion situations. They might not have enough background about the topic being discussed so that they do not know what they say about it. This makes the discussion not work well.
4. Simulation and role-play. Many students derive great benefit from simulation and role-play. Students simulate a real life encountered as if they are doing so in the real world. A simulation and role-play can be used to encourage general oral fluency to train students for specific situation.
5. Debate. Debate is an activity in which opposite points of view are presented and argued. Debate can present opportunities for students to engage in using extended series of language for a purpose to convincingly defend one side of an issue.



All speaking activities above encourage students to practice speaking in classroom. Teacher should choose appropriate activities above based on the level of the students. Every teaching and learning process can be enjoyable if teacher gives the appropriate activity based on students' levels. The writer chooses one of the techniques in teaching speaking that is acting from script. Because when the teacher asks the students to speak in front of the class, with the script the students will easy to memorize and understand what they want to say appropriate with the script. Besides, the process of transferring knowledge can be easy done.

Students sometimes have some problems when they actually want to talk in front of public, or in this case is talk in front of the classroom. According to Ur (1996: 97-98) the problems in speaking activities are as follows:

1. Inhibition. Students are often inhibited about trying things in foreign language classroom, afraid to make mistakes or to be criticized, and shy to utter words.
2. Nothing to say. Students sometimes find fault that they do not have something to say. In other words, they cannot express themselves.
3. Low or uneven participation. Only one participant talks because of some learners dominate, while other speaks a little or not at all.
4. Mother tongue use. In the class, all students share the same mother tongue, so they feel unnatural to speak in the foreign language. They are also less exposed and less disciplined or motivated one.

Based on the problems above, it is suggested to the teacher to choose the suitable way or method in line with the problems that they found in their teaching. Teacher can also engage students in conversation or as an example of the lesson provided by the teacher to the students.

Story telling is one of interactive activities of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination. Story telling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners. It is to retell the story having read or heard by using the story tellers' own words based on their understanding about the story. According to Harmer (2007: 89) story telling is one of the ways in teaching speaking. Students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates. Thus, the students can share their ideas in storytelling. By implementing storytelling, there are many benefits for teacher and students, such as improving students' vocabulary, self-confidence, ability to pick up appropriate words and so on.

According to Taylor (2000: 6) storytelling is a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture in oral telling, in which things are repeated with more redundancy, especially if the students are having difficulty following. Furthermore, Ellis (2001) adds that presenting vocabulary in a clear context and using illustration help to convey meaning and make it easy to remember. In addition, Zaro and Saberry (2006) argue that storytelling requires a certain level of interaction between storyteller and audience and between individual and listener.

Besides, McKeough et al (2008) state that storytelling is the transmission of events in words and images, used in every culture as a means of entertainment, cultural preservation, education and inculcating moral values.

In addition to this, Flora (2011) added that storytelling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners and this emerges from the interaction and cooperative, coordinated efforts of teller and audience.

According to Peck (1989), using the storytelling method, learners are exposed to new vocabulary, expressions and pronunciation to be used in oral production. For that reason, we



intend to reflect upon how the storytelling method empowers and motivates learners to improve their speaking skill by presenting this tool. Difficulties presented during the learning process activities, especially speaking, can be avoided by designing interesting and contextualized activities for learners. Those activities should involve learner's interaction as much as possible in order to engage them to practice and to be exposed most of the time to the language (Ellis & Brewster, 1991).

Story telling has been used as a means of communication since earliest times. Stories create magic and a sense of wonder at the world. Stories teach us about life, about ourselves, and about others. Story telling is a unique way for students to develop an understanding, respect, and appreciation for other culture. According to Taylor (2000: 6) story telling is a tale to one or more listener through voice and gesture. In oral telling, we usually repeat things to make them clearer, especially if the students are having difficulty to follow it.

The storytelling method incorporates the four communicative skills along each session and it integrates almost two communicative skills in each activity. Storytelling as a learner centred method takes into account student's characteristics such as the age and conceptual level of learners, their needs and interest, their language level and previous language-learning experience (Dujmovic, 2009). In storytelling, it is crucial to catch learner's attention by presenting them some previous activities to increase vocabulary, practice pronunciation, body language techniques and vocalization (Peck, 1989). While the story is developed, some dramatic pauses take place in certain times accompanied with voice changes and body movements to act characters and especial situations of the story.

Moreover, Safdarian (2013: 208) states that story telling is the way of the students to retell stories in a different word construction after they are told by the teacher. Thus, it can be said that storytelling is a teaching method in which the students are asked to retell the content of the stories in different word constructions by involving a certain interaction between the storyteller and the listener through voice and gesture. As human being, people usually tell their story to others. They tell others about their feeling, opinion, ideas, or even anything happened in their lives. It is very simple to tell story to others, as simple as expressing what is on mind. Story telling makes the vocabulary easy to remember, and also makes the children easy to learn English and improve their speaking skill (Silaban & Limbong, 2017).

Blaine (1990) articulates storytelling approach focused on speaking skill. The storytelling guides teachers to tell personalized stories to the learners in their foreign language, in this case English, this language teaching method is implemented by teachers all over the world especially in the field of Teaching English as a foreign language. This powerful foreign language teaching method empowers teachers to find that they can teach the language holistically without having to teach grammar rules. According to Blaine (2004) in storytelling grammatical accuracy is taught but not in the traditional way through verb conjugations. Language is learned by understanding messages in the target language. That means language is achieved through comprehensible input. This input refers to listening and reading materials that are understood by the learner.

Richards & Rodgers (2001) stated that grammar is not explicitly taught, but is learned by induction. It means that students are expected to acquire subconsciously the grammatical structure of the language by being exposed to spoken language input.

Coconi (in Inayah, 2015: 31-32) states, there are some types and purposes of storytelling:

1. Cultural Story telling. Cultural story telling is defined by the transmitting and conveying of certain values, morals and beliefs. These stories are passed down from generation to generation in engaging memorable form. The stories that are given to children is an attempt to teach them the meaning of religion which might be understood as cultural stories.
2. Family Story telling. Family story telling is thought of as the spoken history of a family, maintaining and preserving a long line of various events and experiences, while keeping traditions and expectations alike. Story telling that concerns a family heritage allows for a family identity to emerge, often bringing with it the finest traits of an ancestral history as a reminder to live up to something. This type of story can provide those who hear it with the motivation to live up to past family achievements.
3. Personal Story telling. Through living, everyone is in the constant and ongoing process of composing a personal story. The stories are formed personally and concern individual lives. They are composed to remember, change and find meaning to life. Through personal story telling, the teller is able to share his experiences with others and possibly motivate and inspire. Personal story telling might also take the form of a biography or a biographical novel. From the explanations above it can be concluded that telling stories gives us a sense of culture, history of family, personal identity and a doubtful story. It makes sense out of our lives. Sharing stories allows us to understand the human experience and find ways to relate to and connect with one another.

The pedagogical basis of Storytelling methodology is in The Natural Approach. According to Krashen, S.D. (1994), the natural approach is based on the theory that language acquisition occurs only when students receive comprehensible input. The focus of this input is on reading and listening comprehension for beginning students. Based on Krashen, learners acquire parts of language in a predictable order and acquire early certain grammatical structures while others are acquired later in the process. This hypothesis suggests that this is natural order of acquisition and teachers cannot change the order of a grammatical teaching sequence.

In order to motivate students to produce orally, EFL teachers must implement learning strategies in the storytelling process, such as warm up activities, games, videos and images related to the story to engage learners to be aware of the main objective of a tale (Cry, 1998). Subsequently, this leads to more lively participation role in the teaching speaking ability. The relevance of previous activities is that learners are exposed to vocabulary, context, expressions and pronunciation used in the oral production; then learners are provided with body language techniques, vocalization and overstatement of pronunciation in order to increase students setting about what they produce when telling a story (Peck, 1989). Additionally, not only speaking skills are developed, also listening, reading and writing become an important part of the learning process using storytelling (Cameron, 2001).

In order to develop communicative skill during the learning process, the storytelling method provides different activities and tools that facilitate the development of learners' English language. As stated by Cameron (2004), the stories transmit a strong motivation that can be a perfect tool in the language experience for the language learner. For these reasons, stories should play a major role in learning English as foreign language. Moreover, the learning process becomes easier for learners in the sense that they integrate most of the communicative skills using the storytelling method in each activity, also teachers learn how to develop previous and later activities, how to design and implement it in a sequence according to the learning process and abilities of the learners (Cary, 1998)





To conclude, this project will have an impact on the learners' process since the content presented through storytelling will help them to develop and reinforce the interpersonal relationships because storytelling will benefit them to think more deeply about their social world. Besides, as stated by Mello (2001), telling stories in educational environments raises students' consciousness by engaging them in thinking critically and deeply about social issues. This process will have an influence on their discourse and reflections of the students, helping them to create relationships between themselves and their teachers while children develop individual perspectives. Therefore, these relationships will support and amplify the comprehension, listening, and interaction with others, especially in the Colombian classroom where classroom management is a relevant issue.

Finally, this project was reflected into three categories. The first one, the professional growth that was related to the aspects former into classroom management; the second one was student's responses, which means a reflection on the students' participation, interest, engagement and motivation in classes; and the third one, the linguistic outcomes, which was focused on students' responses towards the language.

According to Ellis & Brewster (1991: 1-2) there are some objectives in doing storytelling technique in speaking class.

The first objective is to motivate students to develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language and language learning. In every story, there will be a moral message that can be taken, whether it is negative or positive. If it is negative, teacher must tell the students not to copy, but if it is positive, teacher must tell the students to do so.

The second objective is to exercise students' imagination. Students can become personally involved in a story as they identified with the characters and try to interpret the narrative and illustration. They can also think fantasy and imagination to their real world. This imaginative experience helps to develop their own creative powers to make sense of their daily life.

The third objective is to increase students' ability to share social experience. Storytelling is not only enjoyable, but can help build up students' confidence and encourage social and emotional development. It provokes a shared response of laughter, sadness, excitement, and anticipation.

The fourth objective is to allow teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures. It can be done by exposing the students to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts. It will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech.

The fifth objective is to improve students' other skills in some aspects, such as listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentrate. In using story telling technique for speaking class, the teacher must be fair in choosing the storyteller. The story teller must be chosen in rotation, so every student will get their turn to be storyteller. There will be also listener who can improve listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentrate through the storyteller.

From those five objectives of storytelling, it can be concluded that storytelling gives many benefits besides improving speaking skills. Other skills that can be improved through storytelling are listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentration. Storytelling is also a convenient activity to improve speaking skills because students can express their experience, opinion, ideas, and hopes.

In implementing storytelling, it is important to look at the procedures. Samantaray (2014: 42) describes the procedures of implementing story telling in the classroom as follows:

1. the teacher hangs different written stories with colourful papers on the white board,

2. the teacher asks the students to make groups of five,
3. the teacher asks every group take a paper and choose the topic,
4. the teacher asks them to develop a story in 15 minutes,
5. the teacher asks them to retell their story based on the group discussion, and
6. the teacher gives award to the group considered as the best group.

It is important to look at the procedures of implementing story telling in classroom. By practising this procedures, the students will implement the story telling as well as possible. They will get the best result of this procedures. The teacher is supposed to prepare the stories with different message which is familiar to the students. The unfamiliar stories will be difficult to retell because the students have no background knowledge about them.

Storytelling method became a powerful tool for English teachers in order to provide a wide range of techniques and approaches during the learning process; this method incorporates the four communicative skills along each session and it integrates almost two communicative skills in each activity. Storytelling as a learner centred method takes into a count student's characteristics such as the age and conceptual level of learners, their needs and interest, their language level and previous language-learning experience, and the degree of difficulty of language and activities Dujmovic (2009). Before storytelling starts, it is crucial to catch learner's attention by presenting them some previous activities to increase vocabulary, practice pronunciation, body language techniques and vocalization, Peck (1989) states that to introduce a main tale line, stories and poetry are shared in the first part of the session, then learners socialize aspects of the tale in order to create a context around the tale. Body gestures, eye contact and overdone pronunciation are techniques provided by the teacher to the students, so they can use them during their oral production; these previous activities incite and encourage learners to keep paying attention to the all activity.

During the storytelling process, teachers act as a model of how a story must be told using previous mentioned techniques to empower and motivate learners to produce orally and to keep their attention all the time, peck (1989). The opening of the story is the most important aspect to start the activity because by presenting an appropriate opening, the audience is more opened and disposed to pay attention if they consider it is interesting or not, this part involves the line of the tale, the topic, characters and relevant issues; "You hook the listener in by presenting a problem that encourages them to keep listening" DeNeen (2012). While the story is developed, some dramatic pauses take place in certain times companied with voice changes and body movements to act characters and especial situations of the story. Interaction with questions between the learners and the storyteller during the story or at the end, make the story more interesting for listeners due to they can give their predictions about what is going to happen or how is the ending.

This same author suggests that after the end of the story learners should be asked to socialize in small groups relevant aspects of the story like main characters and their appearance, special moments and situations, their favourite parts and the principle idea of the story; after socialization learners retell the story in different ways into the subgroups to involve them in an active position, also writing down the main idea of the story or summarize it to the other learners. Peck (1989) states that the story should always be as simple as possible, trustable and creative, should have a problem and a solution or possible solutions and the most important thing is that should be easy to understand to continue the process of the storytelling it.

Hines (1995) found that using story theatre in which stories are dramatized was successful in her second language classroom as students acted out a piece of text and told a



story she claimed their affective filters were lowered so that language learning could more easily take place.

Instructional design. This section aims to provide a brief and clear explanation of how the teacher planned, designed and implemented different classes in order to find out if the use of storytelling might impact children's speaking development. The practitioners used materials such as big books, sequence of images, comic and oral reflections. The steps used in each class were pre-storytelling, while-storytelling and after-storytelling.

In order to introduce the first session, we were focus on find out what the students had learnt before. Then to start storytelling, teacher provides pre-speaking activities to introduce the story by presenting characters, context, vocabulary, actions and places as suggested by Brewster, Ellis, & Girard (2004), after that based on the information collected we used a big book named *The Hungry Lion*; its content was about daily routines, colours and animals. The activity started by presenting the big book and asking the students what they thought the book was going to be about according to the title and the illustrations from the cover. The practitioner tells the story aloud taking advantage of the use of body language, gestures, voice projection and eye contact. Giving enough input to the students, asking questions about each event in order to check comprehension and keeping the students focus on the story; at the same time the practitioner showed the pictures in the book to familiarize the students with the content.

At the end of the story, every student was asked to remind and then retell or mention short parts of the story so they could perform it and construct the story told by the entire classroom, learners were free to introduce new characters, situations and actions without losing. The practitioners were monitoring and modelling this process as well as giving feedback after students' performance.

The procedure for storytelling was roughly divided into three parts: pre-telling, while telling and post-telling (Wright, A. 1995). In the pre-telling part, guessing strategies were demonstrated and key words taught. The purpose was to guide the students into the new approach and ease anxiety about listening to English stories without any translation. The telling part focused on getting the message across; thus, visual aids and nonverbal cues were applied to facilitate comprehension. In the post-telling part, the interaction between the storyteller and the students was maintained continually in order to monitor the students' understanding.

Pre - storytelling activities. It is essential to introduce the topic and motivate students to listen, think and speak about a story. These activities allow teachers to anticipate problems related with the language and present and teach new vocabulary and phrases, gives the opportunity for recycling language previously introduced, helps to provide a context for the story and introducing the main characters before telling the story. It also permits to make a relation between the story and their own lives, in aspects such as famous places, animals they are familiar with, likes and dislikes, etc. involving students in predicting and participating in the story.

While story-telling activities. In this part teacher can see if students understand the language of the story by asking questions about what is going on or ask them to mime the situation that is going to happen. Besides, students are encouraged to participate in the storytelling by repeating key vocabulary and some relevant phrases.

Post - storytelling activities. After the storytelling takes place, teacher encourage students to create or retell the story in their own way, using techniques such as asking questions about specific situations of the story that can create controversy between students in order to increase participation and the opportunity to speak more.



Reflection stage. The purpose of the project was to verify and explored the effectiveness of storytelling, observing whether the performance of their speaking changed after storytelling intervened in the group.

In storytelling, the different tones of voice, gestures and the representation of the characters can make it more entertaining. However, using these strategies was challenging because their overuse led students to pay only attention to teacher's movements or gestures. That is, they seemed reluctant to teacher's lecturing without acting voices and movements, forcing us to play the role of storytellers all the time in order to capture their curiosity; otherwise, distracting behaviour was evident. We could notice that situation when we asked students questions like: "how do we say 'кушать' in English?", and they did not answer correctly despite the word had been used more than 6 times in the story. At the moment to say the word helped by gestures, most of them translated it immediately to Russian (without asking them to do it), using phrases like: "она кушает рыбу или же кушает много". In the second implementation, most of the students had fun with the story "The poor little old lady", but when checking language understanding, some students only remembered the teacher's gestures. Brown (2002) mentions that young learners have short attention span that must be considered, especially if words do not capture their curiosity. For these reasons, it is important to balance body language, tone of voice and other related aspects in order to present stories in an entertaining way. However, as we noticed that students tend to be focus on the most attractive way of using language (mime, gestures, body language, tone of voice...), we realized that a mixture of these techniques when telling stories accompanied by a balance between receptive and productive skills can make what is learned memorable through direct experience and keep interest for those learners with different learning styles.

When planning the lessons, we think about the materials for our classes, and nowadays we can find an extensive variety of materials to be used in the classroom, but teaching-learning through story-telling requires selecting and adapting the material carefully since the materials play a crucial role in the development of the lesson. Selecting the materials for the implementation of this project was essential since they needed to fit to both students' age and story in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the lesson.

Adapting the materials was necessary because we needed to engage students and activate their background knowledge while the stories were either read or told, this in order to connect their personal experiences with the content of the stories. In this case, sometimes we adapted or created materials, especially to support traditional stories, and we acquired knowledge about how to modify the materials available as well as the time required to select and adapt them. In that sense, during the first implementation we used books, flashcards and other printed material, which had to be appropriate to the story, for doing that, it was necessary to modify the content according to the story. Richards (2010) says that there are situations when commercial materials do not fit with learners' needs and teachers require either to adapt available materials or to design their own materials for a specific teaching-learning context.

Selecting and adapting materials was an important issue which showed us that materials mediate between the story and the learners because they influence the content and the process of learning. Besides, the conditions of this implementation taught us how to use appropriate and engaging materials that were fitting according to our budget because some materials could be reused in different classes.

Storytelling served as a tool to prompt learners to speak. It was presented with enough vocabulary that they demand in order to produce in English according to their level.



The stories presented during the sessions, were the grounds to start speaking due to these tells provided the students oral expressions and vocabulary they were familiar with in order to reinforce it or new vocabulary in order to extend their lexis. For instance, in the second session we found that when students acted out an event from the story using the vocabulary that was reinforced (for instance, the poor old little lady has nothing to eat, just fruits and meal), speaking in the foreign language become more natural and easier for learners.

During the implementation of this project we noticed that many students had learnt some words with unsuitable pronunciation, or in some cases they made emphasis in the inappropriate part of the word changing the stress of the words. To this effect, based on students' performance during this project the most common sources and types of errors regarding pronunciation were articulatory difficulties to produce particular English sounds or clusters of sounds (e.g., the [th] sound) and receptive difficulties because it was hard for students to recognize or perceive certain English sounds, therefore it was difficult for them to produce (e.g., the [ʃ] sound). During the learners' English production, the words with the [th] sound were pronounced with an Uzbek [t] sound. For instance, students did not say /θɪŋk/ for think, they said [ˈtɪŋ.k] instead; in some cases they just said [ˈtɪn]. Additionally, when uttering words with [ʃ] sound as in show [ʃou], students produced the Spanish sound of ch, saying chou [tʃou].

According to Bonaventura et al. (2000) to provide the most appropriate feedback it is important to gather information about the source of the mispronunciation in students' verbalization and also to identify the areas of an utterance likely to contain pronunciation errors.

In this connection, being perceptive teachers provides the base for correction because you can keep track of the most common and generalized errors in pronunciation, sometimes quickly pointing errors in order to achieve the target or model or pronunciation. However, there are some errors that are just evidence of a marked non-native accent, in that case, this aspect was not so relevant because they did not hinder communication; besides, providing feedback for every possible deviation may cause that the student quickly becomes discouraged from the learning process. In this regard, to overcome pronunciation issues and taking into account students' motivation, we decided to provide general feedback to the entire class because in that way any student was not address directly, and they could free to participate in the drilling or choral pronunciation activity.

Another aspect that was a challenge, was related to the few opportunities students had to use the English language in and out the classroom. In the classroom because due to the amount of students (38) and time (two hours per week); therefore, in some activities it was not possible to check each student production to keep track on individualized progress. It is explained by Al-Jarf (2006) "Over-crowded classes have a negative effect on assessment. [...] testing students individually and orally in the speaking course is also very time-consuming, no matter how short the questions are" (p. 24-25).

Additionally, students did not have any other opportunities or spaces to be in touch with the English language out of the classroom, the only moment and place to do it was in the classroom during the English class. Al-Jarf (2006) also contributes to this when saying that in non-English speaking countries an educational environment needs to be created where students can use English language communicatively outside the language classroom. In this case, during the class students try to use the L2 as much as possible, but once the left the classroom they started using their mother tongue. Al-Jarf also states that "Out-of-class activities contribute to

students' involvement and the development of a communicative use of English within the institution or in the wider social environment" (p.45). In that sense, we were aware that learners use L1 in real world, unless they are encouraging to communicate in English. For that reason, we talked to students outside the classroom in English as much as possible, doing this fosters students' communication while creates rapport among teacher and students.

To conclude, storytelling provides students an array of benefits which include authentic and enriched language input what finally end up in an authentic language output due to the possibility to organize the information received through the stories in their own way using their own experiences.

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