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The Impact of Cooperative Storytelling Strategy on the Learner's Speaking Proficiency

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ABSTRACT

Acquiring speaking abilities has consistently been a significant challenge for language learners. The cooperative storytelling approach is a novel pedagogical method to enhance learners' speaking skills by fostering improved learning experiences. Hence, the primary objective of this research is to examine the influence of the cooperative storytelling approach on enhancing the speaking skills of learners. A study was conducted at Bagong Nayon II National High School, involving 15 Grade 9 students, to determine the effects of a cooperative storytelling technique on reading skills. Researchers acquired the data included in this study from both the pretest and post-test. The findings indicated a discernible enhancement in students' oral ability after integrating the cooperative storytelling approach. Cooperative storytelling enhanced comprehension, expanded vocabulary, improved grammar, and refined speech skills among the participants. Therefore, a suitable storytelling technique can improve students' oral communication abilities. Conversely, cooperative storytelling might enhance learners' speaking skills by fostering self-regulated learning, interaction, motivation, and achievement. Therefore, this research report offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and students regarding effectively implementing a cooperative storytelling technique to enhance speaking proficiency across different educational levels. Hence, it is imperative to consider the significance of verbal communication in the context of learning and growth. It necessitates carefully examining its application in educational settings to foster increased chances for oral language practice. Such endeavors are crucial in promoting students' cognitive development and should be actively promoted and pursued.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential component of human life as a means of communication. One of the most frequently spoken languages in the world is English. English is utilized internationally as a communication medium for a wide range of objectives, including academic, social, cultural, economic, religious, and many more (Lumettu & Runtuwene, 2018). As a result, we communicate constantly in almost all settings, especially at school. Communication is essential when developing connections, exchanging ideas, assigning duties, leading a team, and many others, whether you nod your head in agreement or deliver information to a vast group.

The four primary forms of communication we employ regularly in teaching English as a subject are speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Speaking ability receives the highest priority when teaching the four skills in English. Speaking is the most difficult of the four fundamental English skills, requiring much effort and practice (Mogea, 2023). Danielson and Hayden (1963) assert that the "scientifically valid procedure in language learning involves listening first, followed by speaking, then comes reading, and finally comes the writing of the language" in connection to this. Early English instruction should emphasize the improvement of speaking and listening abilities. Here, the author intends to emphasize speaking instruction, which is inextricably linked to listening. Speaking abilities are an event that takes place when we speak vocally, according to Tatham and Morton (2011).

The process takes place over time and entails using the vocal tract to create the right sounds to convey the speaker's ideas to the audience. As a result, speaking refers to conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings verbally. Speaking is a vital language skill that enables speakers and listeners to interact orally to communicate, share information, and establish long-term connections, claim Kashinathan and Aziz (2021). However, talking or conversing is another manner of speaking, as indicated in the study by Clark *et al.* (2019), as exchanging ideas and viewpoints via communication. While speaking to others in a planned and intentional manner to inform, influence, or entertain the audience is distinct from talking in that it allows us to express ourselves. It is also recognized as formal, face-to-face communication given to audiences by a single speaker.

On the other hand, if correct etiquette is followed, the conversation takes the shape of interactive, spontaneous communication between two or more suggestions. It may be a less formal face-to-face interaction where speakers are expected to communicate ideas. According to Tiyas, Nurhidayah, and Herdiawan (2019), public speaking is a method of communicating with one or more listeners to share ideas and influence them directly or indirectly through electronic communication to accomplish a particular objective. Confucius once said that good speech affects one's life, meaning our words and deeds can impact those around us and the world (Lee, 2020). The art of public speaking has been practiced for

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various purposes. However, as technology has advanced, it has been adapted to new mediums, including video conferencing, multimedia presentations, and other unconventional forms, while retaining its core elements. Given the importance of speaking in public or engaging in conversation in daily life, it is crucial to address speech issues that may impede successful speaking as early in school as possible. According to the study, the children had issues with pronunciation, grammar, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary in five areas of speaking ability. Pronunciation, grammar, and fluency issues predominate. The interview revealed that many students struggled with inhibition, lack of words, poor involvement, and using their mother language (Amelia & Komariah, 2017). Other issues included fear of making mistakes and a lack of vocabulary, both of which were found to prevent students from speaking (Heriansyah, 2012). We could identify the techniques and treatments required to enhance speaking abilities if we understood the value of public speaking and its issues. Some of the interventions that have already been looked at include the five efforts made by students to learn English in class—taking English courses, reading English books, memorizing vocabulary, speaking English, and learning English—as well as the teacher's efforts to expand students' vocabulary (Nabila *et al.*, 2017). The researchers would like to see how employing a cooperative storytelling method might help learners with their speaking difficulties, which will be given priority details in this research, given that these strategies are already being used.

Students need speaking practice in class activities in a competitive, globalized environment. Students who do not practice speaking little develop low self-esteem, a small vocabulary, and poor knowledge of the elements of speech. The students were reluctant to speak English as a result. These issues arise because teachers use conventional methods and supplies in classroom activities. As a result, this study aimed to enhance students' speaking abilities through a cooperative storytelling technique. Language teachers worldwide have employed the cooperative storytelling technique, notably in teaching English as a foreign language, to present unique stories to their students in their native tongue. Teachers can use this efficient method of teaching a foreign language to assist students in improving their speaking abilities.

Due to this, the researchers want to find out how well the cooperative storytelling technique can improve learners' speaking abilities. This study hopes to inspire English teachers to include cooperative storytelling as a genuine method in their speaking sessions as an alternative to PowerPoint presentations and films. As a result, the purpose of this study is to look into the effectiveness of the cooperative storytelling technique in improving students' speaking skills in class.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Definition of Speaking Skills
Speaking abilities encompass the aptitude to communicate verbally, competently, and efficiently, employing suitable language, tone, non-verbal signals, ideas, viewpoints, and data to a given audience. These practical communication skills are pivotal in the human experience, holding significant importance in various aspects of our lives. Communication serves as a means via which individuals convey messages, receive and exchange information, and provide accounts of ongoing events in their lives. The act of speaking encompasses two primary functions: a transactional function, wherein individuals engage in communication to convey and exchange relevant information, and an interpersonal purpose, wherein individuals establish and foster ties with one another. It is a well-established fact that human beings possess the innate capacity for communication before acquiring reading and writing skills. At any one time, humans allocate a significantly more significant amount of time to engage in verbal communication using language compared to using written language. The talent of speaking holds paramount importance as it constitutes one of the fundamental competencies required for engaging in a meaningful conversation. The acquisition of English language proficiency poses challenges due to the multifaceted nature of the skill set needed. Proficiency in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension is essential for effective English communication. According to Mei and Masoumeh (2017), those with strong English proficiency should be capable of engaging in seamless and efficient communication with their peers.

The Significance of the English Language
Language has a crucial role in defining our humanity. Communication is a fundamental process through which individuals exchange information and develop mutual comprehension. Effective interpersonal communication is essential for individuals to establish meaningful connections and comprehensively understand one another. Language is an inherent and crucial facet of human behavior, serving as the bedrock for all forms of interpersonal interaction. The Philippines is widely acknowledged internationally as one of the most significant nations in terms of English proficiency, with a substantial portion of its populace possessing varying levels of fluency in the language. English has consistently held the status of an official language in the Philippines and is utilized by a population exceeding 14 million Filipino individuals. English is widely used in trade and law and serves as the predominant language of instruction in educational settings. During a recent roundtable discussion facilitated by the British Council, prominent representatives from the government, academia, private sector, and non-governmental organizations recognized that while the Philippines has achieved commendable proficiency in English, there are apprehensions regarding the extent to which this proficiency continues to confer a competitive edge for the nation (Cabigon, 2015). According to Cabigon (2015), there was a consensus

among the stakeholders that the government must enhance its endeavors to improve the instruction and acquisition of the English language, positioning it as a crucial competency for the labor force. To maintain a competitive edge, Filipino students must possess a robust educational foundation and comprehensive training, encompassing proficient communication skills in the English language.

The English language is utilized in various manners in Philippine education. Within the academic domain, English is the predominant language of education, functioning as a means of communication, instruction, and interaction. However, particular youngsters persist in regarding English as a non-native language, impeding their ability to achieve fluency after their academic tenure. Moreover, because English is not a compulsory subject, specific individuals perceive it as lacking significance. Notwithstanding this, English remains a prominent global language in commerce and research, ensuring its continued prevalence among professionals (Darmi *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, it is extensively utilized across many industries, such as healthcare, engineering, legal, and commercial. Consequently, Filipino students must possess a proficient mastery of the English language to communicate effectively within academic and professional contexts. The ability to communicate proficiently in English is one of the essential soft talents. Undoubtedly, contemporary job interviews are conducted exclusively in the English language. The importance of graduates' confidence in verbal communication lies in their ability to prove their qualifications for a given employment. English has become a significant language for students, playing a crucial role in their academic endeavors and equipping them with the necessary skills to thrive in a fiercely competitive job market.

The Significance of English Proficiency in Oral Communication

English language learners may encounter difficulties speaking English, particularly if they need a proficient grasp of it (Tom *et al.*, 2013). Oral communication is a crucial linguistic ability that enables individuals to interact and establish social connections with individuals within their local social sphere. Lucanus (2017) posits that proficient oral communication abilities have the potential to facilitate the process of socializing. Socialization occurs when an individual constructs a message, effectively communicates the news, and interacts with others. According to Paneerselvam and Mohamad (2019), the concept of "social skills" is advantageous due to its ability to facilitate connections between individuals. Regarding 21st-century talents, it has been expounded upon that acquiring social skills will enable individuals to engage in collaborative work, problem-solving, critical thinking, and proficient communication. The following is a selection of attributes that are anticipated to be had by employees in the contemporary globalized landscape.

Oral communication is a fundamental element of the English curriculum within the Philippine Education System, which encompasses the skills of listening, reading, writing, and grammar. English is extensively utilized in the Philippines for academic and professional endeavors. Examples of verbal communication include participating in meetings, attending training sessions or conferences, engaging in discussions about daily tasks or responsibilities, delivering oral presentations, and conversing about ordinary life circumstances that involve the use of spoken language. English was used to facilitate efficient communication due to the extensive range of native languages (Saleh & Murtaza, 2018). Proficiency in the English language has emerged as a fundamental requirement for Filipino graduates in their pursuit of employment opportunities. Verbal communication is the fundamental basis for interpersonal interaction and is often regarded as a crucial linguistic skill (Yunus & Kaur, 2014).

Challenges Faced by English Language Learners in Oral Communication

The acquisition of speaking abilities is paramount as it serves as a universal medium of communication across the globe. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of individuals learning English as a second language (ESL) continue to encounter challenges in developing their oral communication abilities in the English language. The primary challenge faced by language learners is a need for more confidence in the English language (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019; Kashinathan & Aziz, 2021; and Ghafar, 2022). The active participation of learners in English-speaking activities necessitates a requisite level of excitement on their behalf.

The study undertaken by Rusdin and Purwati (2023) yielded findings that identified four distinct categories of challenges students face in developing their speaking skills. These categories include language-related difficulties, mental obstacles, personal hindrances, and educational barriers. The language difficulties encompassed several issues, such as interference from the individual's native language, inadequate pronunciation, deficient grammar, awkward spoken English, sluggish speaking, and a restricted vocabulary. Mental difficulties encompassed anxiety, humiliation, diminished self-assurance, and cognitive stagnation. The personal challenges encompassed issues related to one's mindset, lack of motivation, external influences, and disparities in cultural backgrounds. Education challenges encompassed various aspects, such as the pedagogical approaches and methodologies employed, the adequacy of teaching and learning facilities, and the restricted utilization of instructional media.

Moreover, the research conducted by Ganesh, Charyulu, and Hussain (2019) unveiled that the factors contributing to learners' inability to communicate effectively in English are primarily attributed to limited instructional time dedicated to English language acquisition within the classroom setting, as well as insufficient support and motivation from educators, family members, and peers.

According to Trinh and Pham (2021), this led to a sense of fear among the students towards making errors while communicating in English. Consequently, individuals tend to opt for refraining from utilizing the target language and instead opt to articulate their thoughts in their native language when faced with challenges in effectively conveying their perspectives in English. The learners' restricted lexicon poses a challenge to their English communication abilities.

One further obstacle language learner's encounter in their efforts to communicate in English is the phenomenon of mother tongue interference (Halahan *et al.*, 2022; Hauzel *et al.*, 2022). In non-academic environments, the conditions could have been more conducive to using English. During the designated break time, the students engaged in social interactions utilizing their primary language. It is widely believed that incorporating more interactive activities within the classroom can facilitate enhanced English communication among students. Based on the findings of Suliman's (2014) study, it is evident that learners persist in utilizing their native language for verbal expression. The influence of the student's native language is apparent, as indicated by their lack of proficiency in English communication, among other factors.

Moreover, it was noted that learners, in addition to generating verbal expressions, employed strategies of mother tongue translation to comprehend specific directives. The findings of this survey indicate that the skill of speaking is perceived as the most challenging by the participants. Furthermore, there is a unanimous consensus among them on the significance of English, namely in terms of its role as a medium for communication. This study additionally discovered that extended exposure to the English language does not inherently ensure or confer competence and fluency among learners. The environment is perceived as contributing to learners' need for more proficiency due to their membership in a non-English speaking group. Implementing educational reforms is necessary to facilitate the enhancement of English language proficiency among learners, particularly those hailing from rural regions. The realization of the objective to achieve comprehensibility among English speakers worldwide will only occur under these circumstances.

Cooperative Storytelling Strategy

Verbal communication is the initial means of engaging with individuals within a social collective. Moreover, teachers can observe the initial measure of proficiency in language acquisition through the learner's oral communication skills. Nevertheless, second language learners encounter significant challenges while attempting to communicate in a foreign language, particularly in the case of English. Numerous factors contribute to individuals experiencing challenges in verbal communication. These include a dearth of ideas to articulate, a limited vocabulary to convey thoughts effectively, insufficient opportunities for speaking practice, and a need for more engaging pedagogical approaches that foster motivation to engage in verbal expression.

In pedagogy, the utilization of strategies is a fundamental endeavor that necessitates the active participation of both the educator and the student to optimize the efficacy and efficiency of the educational encounter. In summary, teaching strategies are vital in determining the effectiveness of the instructional process. Teachers should employ engaging designs that are capable of capturing students' attention. One of the tactics used in oral communication pedagogy is the cooperative storytelling strategy. In Kamilaki's (2017) study, the fundamental aspect of storytelling is identified as the dynamic interplay between the "author" and the "audience," wherein the story is collaboratively and verbally reconstructed. This e-poster investigates the potential of employing diverse narrative forms as a pedagogical strategy to enhance emotional connections within the classroom setting. The integration of this particular approach within the educational environment has the potential to facilitate the cultivation of a dynamic and stimulating learning community.

Moreover, as indicated in Sharma's (2018) research, there is a discernible enhancement in students' oral communication skills after adopting the cooperative storytelling approach. The speaking test results in cycle two indicated that the students made significant progress in their speaking abilities. The act of storytelling resulted in enhanced comprehension, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, grammar proficiency, and pronunciation skills. Therefore, using a storytelling approach can improve students' oral communication abilities. According to Robert and Pane (2020), this particular approach facilitates students' acquisition of vocabulary in a more efficient, expeditious, and enjoyable manner.

Consequently, it significantly contributes to the enhancement of students' oral proficiency. Conversely, this narrative approach allows students to engage in individualized interactions pertaining to academic activities, enabling them to utilize the target language in communicative contexts effectively. Collaborative endeavors have been found to enhance interpersonal dynamics within a group, bolster individuals' self-perception, and contribute to the expansion of one's lexicon.

The act of speaking holds significant importance as it is intricately intertwined with the nature of human beings. Numerous individuals over the globe prioritize the acquisition of proficient English speaking abilities, as they frequently gauge their progress in language acquisition based on the extent of improvement in their oral communication skills. As a result, several strategies have been implemented to enhance the speaking proficiency of all learners, with a particular focus on young learners. The primary objective of this research investigation was to enhance students' oral communication abilities through a cooperative narrative approach. Language educators worldwide have widely employed cooperative storytelling strategies, with a particular focus on teaching English as a foreign language. These techniques involve the utilization

of personalized narratives to engage students in the target language. Educators can employ this efficacious pedagogical approach in foreign language instruction, thereby facilitating the development of students' oral proficiency.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Research Design
The primary objective of this study was to investigate the challenges encountered by Grade 9 students in the English language. The study focused on utilizing a cooperative storytelling method to enhance English language proficiency. Incorporating narrative techniques within educational settings fosters an optimal pedagogical atmosphere, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge and promoting the assimilation of information in a meaningful and easily understood manner. Therefore, the researchers employed a comparative study methodology to determine the relative efficiency of using narrative and story-reading techniques to teach speaking abilities. The researchers implemented an experimental design comprising two groups, the storytelling group and the tale-reading group, across the pretest, treatment, and posttest phases. Šipetić (2008) defines experimental research as a method of doing comparative analysis, wherein many variables are studied, and a group is observed under certain conditions or groups are exposed to varying situations. This research study incorporated two distinct variables: the independent variable and the dependent variable. The efficiency of story reading and storytelling was considered the independent variable, whereas the students' speaking skill was measured as the dependent variable.

Population and Sampling
The researchers carried out the present investigation during the academic year 2022-2023 to examine the efficacy of the cooperative storytelling method in fostering the development of speaking abilities among students enrolled at Bagong Nayon II National High School, situated in Antipolo City. The study encompasses a cohort of 15 students in the ninth grade at Bagong Nayon II National High School. The participants responded to the pretest and posttest questionnaires, which were constructed using a Google form. Subsequently, the researchers procured the requisite data for analysis.

Research Instrument
The researchers used a systematic approach to collect the appropriate and necessary data in order to produce valid and accurate results. The researchers sought authorization from the school's principal to carry out the current research project. The researchers drafted the proposal and action plan right after permission had been granted. Then, the researchers informed the participants and their parents about the student's speaking proficiency. After that, the researchers administered the action pre-speaking test to elicit the students' reading and speaking

skills through a storytelling strategy. And analyzed the result of the pretest through:
  a. Comprehension
  b. Vocabulary
  c. Grammar
  d. Pronunciation
The administration of the post-test occurred after the execution of the reading and speaking intervention

Data Analysis
The researchers utilized statistical tools to examine and interpret the data. Statistics play a crucial role in research by aiding researchers in making accurate interpretations, results, and generalizations (Wild, Utts, & Horton, 2018). The researchers analyzed the gathered data to address the problem statement, including scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test.

The researchers employed descriptive statistics to assess the data. Descriptive statistics, as posited by Rendón-Macías, Villasís-Keever, and Miranda-Novales (2016), pertains to the domain of statistics that offers guidance on effectively and succinctly summarizing research data through the utilization of tables, figures, charts, or graphs. Before conducting a descriptive analysis, it is crucial to briefly outline its objective(s) and ascertain the measurement scales of the many variables documented in the study. Tables and charts serve the purpose of offering up-to-date information regarding the outcomes of an inquiry. The visual representations in the graphs exhibit various patterns, including histograms, pie charts, box and whisker plots, line graphs, and scatter plots. The researchers employed tables and pie charts for the study objectives

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Reading proficiency is regarded as one of the fundamental aptitudes that learners of second languages must attain to acquire linguistic competence effectively. Reading is an essential activity that occupies a significant portion of our daily lives. Whether perusing a newspaper article, glancing at the main headlines, delving into a book, or examining the label on a bottle of medicine, each individual is involved in some form of reading. In addition to this, reading is widely recognized as a very effective method for acquiring knowledge. Engaging in successful reading enhances the depth and breadth of our expertise. It optimizes our time utilization, whether employed within diverse educational settings or for the mastery of numerous academic disciplines. Given the growing significance of reading in all facets of our daily existence, exploring strategies or approaches that can enhance our reading abilities is imperative. With this, significant importance is placed on implementing a cooperative storytelling approach as the most effective method thus far for enhancing our reading abilities.
The data presented in Table 1 indicates that there was an improvement in the reading skills of the learners across four indicators: comprehension (83%), grammar (82%), pronunciation (81%), and vocabulary (81%). The findings

of the storytelling intervention indicate a significant improvement in the academic performance of Grade 9 students at Bagong Nayon II National High School following the implementation of the intervention, as seen by a notable increase in their grades post-intervention compared to their rates before the intervention. In the research conducted by Alkaaf and Lu (2017), researchers saw that a significant majority of participants, precisely 93.4%, perceived the storytelling method as beneficial. Additionally, a high percentage of participants, namely 92%, expressed a positive attitude towards this technique. Furthermore, 92.4% of participants acknowledged that while they were engaged in preparing to write their stories, they were concurrently involved in other cognitive activities, such as organizing their thoughts and constructing conceptual maps.

Table 1: Comparative results of storytelling intervention between pre-test and post-test.

Criteria	Grades	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Comprehension	80%	83%
Grammar	79%	82%
Pronunciation	78.5%	81%
Vocabulary	79%	81%

Moreover, the viewpoints of educators revealed a consensus among the majority of teachers, who acknowledged the advantages derived from the implementation of the technique above. Hence, storytelling as a pedagogical approach is highly successful in augmenting learners' academic performance. Therefore, it is recommended that educators employ narrative techniques in their instructional practices to improve academic performance, irrespective of the student's age or gender (Abimbade et al., 2023). According to the results obtained from the present investigation, it is posited by the researchers that the implementation of the cooperative storytelling approach accentuates a favorable, collaborative, and encouraging environment inside the classroom, hence facilitating the acquisition of progressively advanced speaking, reading, and writing abilities in the target language by the learners.

The act of reading and storytelling has had a resurgence in the field of education, playing a significant role in enhancing social, educational, and emotional connections. The implementation of treatments, such as using a cooperative storytelling technique, is associated with more excellent comprehension outcomes among

Table 2: Comparative results of story-reading intervention between pre-test and post-test.

Criteria	Grades	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Comprehension	80%	83%
Grammar	77%	82%
Pronunciation	78%	81%
Vocabulary	80%	81%

learners who experience challenges in reading. The data presented in Table 2 reveals that the students achieved a comprehension score of 83%, a grammar score of 82%, a pronunciation score of 81%, and a vocabulary score of 81%.

The study's findings on the effects of story reading intervention indicate a significant improvement in the academic performance of the 15 ninth-grade students from Bagong Nayon II National High School following the implementation of the intervention. This improvement is observed when comparing the students' grades before and after participating in the story-reading activities. The researchers posited that the use of the cooperative storytelling technique enhanced the students' oral communication skills.

Using a cooperative storytelling technique in the context of reading and storytelling has yielded noteworthy advantages in learners' education and development. This approach enables learners to identify with the characters in the stories, facilitating their comprehension of both themselves and others (Hibbin, 2016). Integrating a cooperative storytelling approach within a story-reading intervention holds promise for encompassing diverse perspectives, recognizing emotional experiences, establishing links between theoretical concepts and practical applications, cultivating critical thinking skills, and illuminating the complexities of different situations by presenting multiple viewpoints. This approach also encourages self-reflection and facilitates the construction of novel knowledge.

The findings of Korat et al.'s (2022) study indicate that those who engaged in reading an e-book accompanied by a dictionary with a dynamic display of target words and repeated vocalization of such terms demonstrated enhanced comprehension of the meanings of the target words, as well as improved ability to recount the story. Individuals with a lower baseline knowledge or skill level significantly improved their learning journey. The research conducted by Kim et al. (2018) showed that the implementation of a shared reading intervention resulted in notable improvements in reading comprehension for all participants. Despite the extended duration of intervention sessions compared to baseline sessions, the participants demonstrated comparable or enhanced levels of task engagement during the intervention. Sustained enhancements in reading performance were observed during the follow-up period for all individuals involved in the study.

However, as indicated by Moghadam et al. (2016) and Soleymani et al. (2017), storytelling is efficacious in enhancing happiness and resilience while also serving as a mechanism for fostering learners' growth and progress. Therefore, it is crucial to allocate resources towards treatments that promote learners' empathy through using storybooks and incorporating the cooperative storytelling technique. Hence, using narrative techniques can serve as a practical approach to circumvent the challenges associated with vocabulary education. It is primarily due

to its ability to allow learners to employ newly acquired words in communicative settings, thereby facilitating the production of target forms within meaningful real-world situations (Gashti, 2021).

In literacy acquisition, acquiring reading and writing skills commences well before learners' formal entry into educational institutions. Proficiency in symbolic representation and effective communication is essential for reading and writing. These abilities enable individuals to express their thoughts and ideas in a linguistic form that an audience with diverse backgrounds and perspectives can comprehend. Learners acquire and develop significant language skills within the informal context of everyday storytelling, facilitated by their peers and available adults in their immediate environment. Storytelling within the framework of peer collaboration offers an ideal setting where learners can acquire linguistic skills crucial for literacy while simultaneously cultivating the ability to engage with narratives shared by their peers critically.

The graph below illustrates that the four main speaking characteristics hold equal worth and significance in shaping and enhancing a student's speaking proficiency. Language serves as a means of communication, with the primary objective of facilitating effective conversation. This objective necessitates the involvement of various factors. The process of language acquisition encompasses the acquisition of four fundamental proficiencies, namely
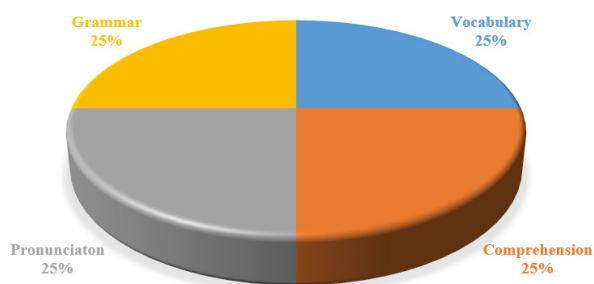

Figure 1: The relative importance of the four fundamental components of language as comprehended by learners.

hearing, speaking, reading, and writing, in addition to the acquisition of language components such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and understanding. Learners can effectively acquire these foundational elements of language learning by implementing a cooperative storytelling strategy.

The ability to communicate effectively in oral and written forms is contingent upon mastering the four fundamental language components. Consequently, English educators must possess strong qualifications to effectively instruct the English language and enhance the engagement and appeal of their instructional sessions. Furthermore, integrating cooperative storytelling strategies into language learning is crucial to mitigate any communication challenges that may arise from the loss of learned fundamental components by students.

CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary era, specifically the 21st century, communication plays a pivotal role across several domains of human existence. Language is utilized as a medium of communication. The principal objective of language is to enable efficient communication and foster social engagement. The education of children has consistently posed a difficulty due to communication difficulties. Consequently, it is imperative to consider various teaching and learning strategies to effectively handle language barriers and utilize instructional input to mitigate learning deficits. Cooperative storytelling has been empirically demonstrated as an effective method within educational contexts for facilitating teaching and learning processes (Aristizábal *et al.*, 2017) that allows group discussion and open interactions in the classroom (Ocampo, 2023). Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy characterized by the collaborative sharing of information and collective efforts of learners within structured groups to attain a common objective. Group work is a significant pedagogical approach in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Furthermore, EFL teachers who use a cooperative storytelling technique demonstrate a wide range of qualities in terms of personal quality, attitude, pedagogical ability, subject matter understanding, and classroom practice (Altheyab, 2023). It serves as a central component in task-based and cooperative language learning, effectively utilizing collaborative activities. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that group work entails potential benefits and challenges. These challenges include inattentiveness, disruptions, off-topic discussions, and instances of free riding. Recognizing and addressing these potential problems can optimize group work as a valuable strategy in EFL instruction.

Implementing a storytelling and story-reading intervention has yielded noteworthy academic performance among Grade 9 students at Bagong Nayon II National High School. The findings indicate that the academic performance of Grade 9 students exhibits a progressive improvement. Consequently, allocating additional time to this particular activity is an efficacious approach to augmenting learners' language proficiency, including vocabulary acquisition, grammatical competence, comprehension abilities, and narrative aptitude. Furthermore, the participation of students in the storytelling and story-reading intervention resulted in enhanced communication abilities, as they acquired the skills to articulate their thoughts effectively, pose significant inquiries, convey their viewpoints, and construct narratives. Consequently, these activities contributed to refining students' oral communication proficiencies.

Furthermore, students can share their work with their peers, so they acquire invaluable experience in constructive critique. This practice fosters improved oral communication skills and facilitates student emotional intelligence development, leading to enhanced levels of collaboration and a more productive engagement in the social learning process. This finding suggests that using cooperative storytelling strategies significantly improves comprehension and notably enhances the reading process and the learning experience.

Hence, sustaining the intervention to monitor systematic alterations or advancements in the learners' speaking proficiency is advisable. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies undertake additional studies to investigate the various factors that impact students' difficulties in speaking English throughout a wider geographic area and within diverse educational settings. Hence, it is recommended that future investigations employ a qualitative research methodology. Teachers can explore elements and reasons contributing to the challenges faced by students in speaking English through a semi-structured student interview, as well as observational and document analysis. This approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the subject matter, facilitating a deeper understanding of the issues encountered by students in their English language proficiency.

In the educational setting, it is imperative for teachers to employ actively this method inside their classrooms, viewing it as a mechanism to enhance the agency of their students' voices and allow them to engage in a stimulating and constructive learning environment. Engaging students and fostering their motivation is fundamental to creating meaningful learning experiences. Utilizing cooperative storytelling as a pedagogical approach can effectively facilitate student involvement in their learning journey.

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