

Improving Oral Language Skills Through Storytelling in Group B of Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood education contributes significantly to building the foundation of children's development, including language, which is the foundation of communication, early literacy, and social-emotional skills. However, observations show that most children aged 5–6 years still experience difficulties in oral language, such as difficulty telling stories, difficulty answering questions, and limited vocabulary. The purpose of this study was to improve children's oral language skills through the application of interactive storytelling methods. The study used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) design model of Kemmis & Mc Taggart, which was implemented in two cycles on 10 children in Group B of Kindergarten. Data collection was carried out through observation, performance assessment, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed qualitatively with triangulation of techniques and sources. The results showed an increase in oral language skills in three main aspects, namely fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary. In the first cycle, the majority of children were in the "Beginning to Develop" and "Developing as Expected" categories, while in the second cycle there was a significant increase with most children reaching the "Developing Very Well" category. The application of interactive storytelling with a variety of media, teacher reflection, and active child involvement has proven successful in creating more interactive and meaningful learning. This study concludes that storytelling is an effective strategy for stimulating early childhood oral language skills while strengthening self-confidence, creativity, and social interaction. The practical contribution of this research is that it provides a reflective storytelling model that early childhood education teachers can adapt in their daily learning.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is an educational program that focuses on providing a foundation for children's growth and development, in accordance with their unique characteristics and developmental stages. Children continually experience development and change in a number of aspects, including physical, motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development (Wahidah & Latipah, 2021). Among the main aspects in PAUD, the one that needs attention to be developed is the social aspect, because in essence humans are created as individual beings who also play a role as social beings (Salsabila, Astuti, Hafidah, Nurjanah, & Jumiatmoko, 2021). Each stage of child development has its own unique characteristics, making it crucial for parents to continually monitor and ensure their child's development is progressing at the appropriate pace. Among the aspects of child development in kindergarten, language skills are crucial to foster (Kholilullah, Hamdan, & Heryani, 2020). Language skills not only serve as a means for children to express their thoughts and feelings

and interact with their environment, but also serve as an important foundation for mastering social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Through language, a person can convey their thoughts, attitudes, and feelings (Yanti et al., 2023). Language learning in early childhood aims to guide children in expressing their desires, thoughts, and feelings through clear, polite, and easily understood language. Language skills need to be instilled from an early age, as at this stage, children respond more easily and quickly to everything they see, hear, and feel (Azhari, 2021).

In the age range of 5-6 years, children are in a crucial stage of oral language development, where they are starting to be able to construct more complex sentences, express opinions, and express ideas and feelings through spoken words (Syariat et al., 2023). Oral language skills are not only the foundation for successful everyday communication, but also play a crucial role as a foundation for early literacy development and a child's readiness for formal education. Communication itself plays a vital role in life, so every individual is required to possess good communication skills to convey ideas, build social relationships, and understand others more effectively.

Research Tamba, Purba, Meiliana, & Anggraini (2024) Studies have even shown that communication skills in early childhood have a long-term influence on a child's academic success at later levels of education. However, observations in several early childhood education centers (PAUDs) still show that many children experience difficulties in understanding spoken language, such as lack of focus when teachers explain, confusion when answering questions, or inability to retell stories. To address these issues, one approach considered effective in stimulating children's spoken language skills is through storytelling activities. This is in line with research Aziz, Sahputra Napitupulu, & SURIANTY (2024) which shows that the storytelling method is proven to be able to improve children's language skills, motivation, participation, and learning activity through a more enjoyable learning atmosphere compared to conventional methods.

Study Khotimah, Kustiono, & Ahmadi (2021) explains that the use of a storytelling approach through audio media has been shown to have a significant impact on children's spoken language skills. Thus, this study proves that the use of audio-assisted storytelling methods contributes positively to improving children's spoken language skills. These findings confirm that storytelling not only supports cognitive development but also has a positive influence on children's socio-emotional aspects, such as empathy, self-confidence, and social skills. Furthermore, storytelling also creates meaningful interactions between teachers and children, as well as between children, thereby strengthening their social and emotional abilities. This is in accordance with the results of research conducted Khadijah Khadijah et al. (2024) The application of storytelling methods has been proven to improve children's concentration, language, cognitive and social-emotional skills.

These findings are in line with the study by (Novitasari, 2024), who emphasized that the success of implementing learning methods in early childhood education including in stimulating speaking skills is strongly determined by reflective, contextual, and experience-based instructional design. In her analysis, Novitasari concluded that in every practice of moral or religious education for young children, a method is not merely a technique, but an instrument of value internalization which must be presented in the form of enjoyable

activities, close to the child’s real-life context, and carried out repeatedly. Therefore, interactive and collaborative storytelling can function not only as a strategy to strengthen language skills, but also as a medium for internalizing values and character in early childhood.

Although numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of storytelling, empirical findings indicate that this method has not been fully implemented effectively by early childhood education (ECE) teachers. Most teachers still tend to use lecture or repetition methods that do not connect learning to children's direct experiences, thus under-stimulating oral language development. This indicates a gap between the empirically proven potential of storytelling and ongoing classroom learning practices.

Addressing this gap, the novelty of this study lies in the application of cycle-based interactive storytelling in Group B of Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten. This approach not only resulted in improved oral language skills in terms of fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary, but also demonstrated that storytelling success is strongly influenced by collaborative and reflective instructional design. Thus, this study not only confirms the effectiveness of storytelling but also broadens the pedagogical perspective that teacher reflection and active child interaction are key factors in early childhood oral language development.

Therefore, Classroom Action Research (CAR) is needed to implement storytelling as a learning strategy to improve children's oral language skills. Through this research, teachers are expected to find a more enjoyable, meaningful, and child-centered approach that can stimulate language skills while supporting the development of early literacy, social skills, and self-confidence. Thus, the aim of this research is to improve children's oral language skills through the application of interactive storytelling methods.

METHOD

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design conducted in two cycles. The research flow is shown in Figure 1.

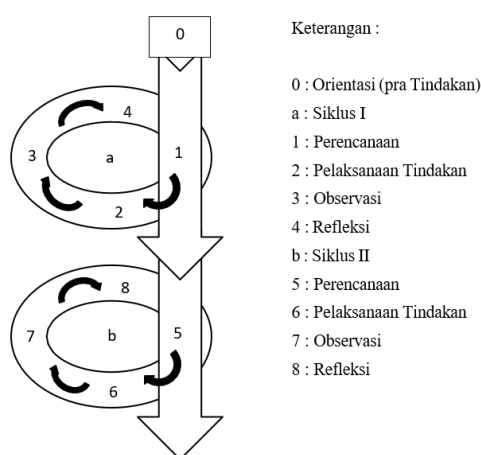


Figure 1. Action Research Model

This research took place at Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten, specifically in group B during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, from July 14 to August 1, 2025. The subjects were 10 students, consisting of 3 boys and 7 girls. The researcher's presence was

participatory, namely directly involved in planning, implementation, observation, and reflection with the class teacher.

The interventions included the application of storytelling methods to improve children's oral language skills. Cycle I focused on storytelling using simple media such as storybooks, pictures, and props. Children were involved in discussions and retelling practices to assess vocabulary, fluency, and self-confidence. Based on reflections on the results of Cycle I, interventions in Cycle II were developed with story variations, the addition of concrete media, and interactive activities such as role-playing or turn-based storytelling, to optimize children's engagement.

Data collection was conducted through observation, performance assessments, interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation of child development. The research instruments included observation sheets, assessment rubrics, and interview guidelines. Data analysis employed a qualitative approach through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Child development outcomes were categorized into four levels (BSB, BSH, MB, and BB). Data validity was achieved through triangulation of techniques and sources, while reliability was maintained through repeated reflection at each cycle.

RESULTS

The research activities were conducted through four meetings grouped into two cycles, each consisting of two actions. This classroom action research aimed to improve children's oral language skills through storytelling. The researcher acted as the teacher, while the collaborator acted as an observer. Prior to the action, learning materials such as lesson plans (RPPH), observation sheets, assessment rubrics, and media were prepared to be applied during the learning process according to the predetermined theme.

1.1 Pre-Action

Before conducting the classroom action research, the researcher first observed the oral language skills of children in Group B of Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten. The results of the observations during the pre-action stage are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Pre-Action Observation Results

Category	Observed activities						%
	A		B		C		
	F	%	f	%	F	%	
Very Well Developed (BSB)	2	20	1	10	0	0	10
Developing as Expected (BSH)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Starting to Grow (MB)	3	30	4	40	5	50	40
Not Yet Developed (BB)	5	50	5	50	5	50	50
Amount	10	100	10	100	10	100	100

Information :

A: Aspect of Storytelling Fluency

B: Aspect of Accuracy of Storytelling

C: Vocabulary Aspect

The table above shows that of the 10 children who were the subjects of the study, their oral language skills through storytelling were still lacking. This was evident in the children's achievements in the BSB and BSH categories. Therefore, the researchers conducted Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve and enhance the children's assignments, leading to the implementation of Cycle I.

1.2 Cycle I

Cycle I was conducted in four meetings using the storytelling method. The researcher acted as the teacher, while the collaborator acted as the observer. The results showed an improvement in the children's spoken language skills, although it did not meet the expected target.

Table 2. Results of Observation of Cycle I Actions

Category	Observed activities						%
	A		B		C		Average
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Very Well Developed (BSB)	4	40	3	30	3	30	33.33
Developing as Expected (BSH)	3	30	3	30	4	40	33.33
Starting to Grow (MB)	2	20	2	20	2	20	20
Not Yet Developed (BB)	1	10	2	20	1	10	13.33
Amount	10	100	10	100	10	100	100

Information :

A: Aspect of Storytelling Fluency

B: Aspect of Accuracy of Storytelling

C: Vocabulary Aspect

The data in the table shows that of the 10 children who were research subjects, the storytelling fluency aspect consisted of 4 children (40%) at the BSB level, 3 children (30%) at the BSH level, 2 children (20%) at the MB level, and 1 child (10%) at the BB level. The storytelling accuracy aspect recorded 3 children (30%) at the BSB level, 3 children (30%) at the BSH level, 2 children (20%) at the MB level, and 2 children (20%) at the BB level. As for the vocabulary aspect, there were 3 children (30%) at the BSB level, 4 children (40%) at the BSH level, 2 children (20%) at the MB level, and 1 child (10%) at the BB level.

Referring to the recapitulation of actions in cycle I, the researcher carried out a reflection on the things that were obstacles to achieving the research target to improve oral language skills through storytelling.

Table 3. Results of Cycle I Action Reflection

No	Findings	Reason	Recommendation
1.	Two children are less focused on listening to the story	The child is not yet focused on the story	The teacher makes the story more interesting and relaxed.

2.	Two children are busy playing with friends	Children's participation is starting to improve	Teachers provide guidance and motivation
3.	Less interesting media	Researchers still don't have the courage	Need media that encourages imagination
4.	Children hesitate to tell stories based on their imagination.	The child is not yet confident	Give a chance to keep trying

In general, cycle I showed improvement, but children's oral language skills were not yet stable so the research process continued to cycle II.

1.3 Cycle II

Cycle II actions were carried out with the researcher as the teacher and fellow teachers as observers. The observation results are presented in the following table:

Table 4. Results of Observation of Cycle I ActionsI

Category	Observed activities						%
	A		B		C		Average
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Very Well Developed (BSB)	5	50	6	60	7	70	33.33
Developing as Expected (BSH)	3	30	2	20	1	10	33.33
Starting to Grow (MB)	1	10	1	10	1	10	20
Not Yet Developed (BB)	1	10	1	10	1	10	13.33
Amount	10	100	10	100	10	100	100

Information :

A: Aspect of Storytelling Fluency

B: Aspect of Accuracy of Storytelling

C: Vocabulary Aspect

Based on the table above, cycle II shows an increase in children's oral language skills in the three observed aspects. In the aspect of storytelling fluency, 5 children (50%) reached the BSB category, 3 children (30%) BSH, 1 child (10%) MB, and 1 child (10%) BB. In the aspect of storytelling accuracy, 6 children (60%) were in the BSB category, 2 children (20%) BSH, 1 child (10%) MB, and 1 child (10%) BB. Meanwhile, in the vocabulary aspect, 7 children (70%) were included in the BSB category, 1 child (10%) BSH, 1 child (10%) MB, and 1 child (10%) BB. These findings show that the majority of children experienced significant development, especially in the vocabulary aspect which showed the highest percentage in the BSB category.

In cycle II, the researchers found that children's oral language skills through storytelling had improved. This was because the researchers had packaged the storytelling activities in a very interesting way, making the children more enthusiastic in listening to the

stories. The results of the reflection on the implementation of cycle II are presented in the table below.

Table 5. Results of Cycle II Action Reflection

No	Findings	Reason	Recommendation
1.	Of the 10 children, 8 are focused and 2 are not yet focused.	2 children are not yet focused on the learning material	The story is made easier to understand so that children can focus better.
2.	Of the 10 children, 8 met the BSH criteria	Children in the BSH category are able to concentrate due to the application of basic teaching skills.	Researchers need to continue to improve basic teaching skills.
3.	Children can explain the storyline	Stories attract children's interest so they are more confident in speaking.	Researchers continue to provide motivation and support
4.	The story was successfully understood by the child	There are no obstacles when telling stories	Researchers pay attention to the selection of story material

Based on the results of observations and reflections in cycle II, all aspects observed have met the success indicators, so the research ended in cycle II without needing to continue to the next cycle.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of storytelling in two cycles in Group B of Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten resulted in consistent improvements in children's fluency, accuracy, and oral vocabulary. These findings align with research. Surya & Aprilia (2024) which proves that storytelling, both traditional and digital, can significantly improve children's vocabulary, comprehension, and narrative skills through a mixed-methods approach. This fact is supported by experimental findings. Maulani et al. (2025) which shows a significant increase in speaking skills after children received storytelling treatment, proven through T-test analysis ($p < 0.05$).

In addition, research Sukmakarti (2024) revealed that two-way storytelling, that is, when children are given the opportunity to retell, has a big impact on receptive language development. Handayani et al., (2024) also confirmed the effectiveness of this method in strengthening preschoolers' speaking skills. Similar findings support this finding. Mulyono et al. (2023) which shows that storytelling activities at night not only improve fluency and vocabulary, but also foster self-confidence and creativity. Utami et al. (2025) added that digital storytelling contributed significantly to improving vocabulary, pronunciation, and critical thinking skills, with cycle II achievements reaching 80%.

In line with this, recent studies also highlight the effectiveness of multimedia-based storytelling. Hanipah & Siagian (2023) shows that multimedia-based interactive storytelling can enrich vocabulary and improve children's narrative skills. Purnama et al. (2022), through

a literature review, concluded that instructionally designed digital storytelling can foster interest in reading and strengthen early language skills. Furthermore, qualitative research by Prastyo et al. (2025) emphasizes that digital storytelling encourages children to build more complex narrative structures while expressing richer language.

However, several studies have also revealed the limitations of this method. For example, research that has been conducted Cordes et al. (2023) Studies have shown that the application of audio-visual media without teacher guidance has only a limited impact on children's language development. This indicates that the teacher's presence as an active facilitator in storytelling activities remains a key factor in determining the intervention's effectiveness. This means that the success of storytelling is not solely determined by the media, but also by the quality of the teacher-child interaction during the learning process.

The practical contribution of this research lies in the storytelling design, developed through peer observation and cyclical reflection. This design demonstrates that preparation, familiarization, and active interaction between teachers and students can improve language outcomes more effectively than passive storytelling. However, this study has limitations in terms of its narrow scope, involving only one class without a comparison group. Therefore, generalization of the results requires caution.

The implication of this study is that storytelling not only supports receptive and expressive language development but also fosters self-confidence and creativity in young children. Practically, the results recommend that early childhood educators consistently integrate storytelling activities with engaging and relevant media to optimize children's language development. For further research, it is recommended to use an experimental design with a wider sample size and explore interactive digital storytelling forms, such as integrating audio and visual technology, to ensure this strategy has a more sustainable impact.

Overall, this study confirms that storytelling is a valid and effective method for improving early childhood oral language skills. Instructional storytelling, implemented interactively, has proven to be an effective empirical and pedagogical strategy, enriching the theoretical framework of language development through a contextual and creative narrative approach.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of instructional and interactive storytelling effectively improves the oral language skills of group B children at Dasa Wisma Ketong Kindergarten, particularly in terms of fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary. Scientifically, these results confirm that storytelling can be used as a pedagogical strategy to strengthen early literacy, social skills, and self-confidence in early childhood. However, this study is still limited to a single class without a comparison group, so generalization of the results requires caution. Further research is recommended involving a wider sample and exploring digital-based storytelling.

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