

Influence of Storytelling on the Development of Oral Competence in English

Transition students from Chester Palmer School in Barrancabermeja

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Dedication

I dedicate this work with all my love and gratitude to God, source of strength and inspiration in every step of this journey. To my parents, for being my example of constancy and effort; to my brother, for his words that gave me encouragement and hope every day; and to Yenni, Kim, and Leo, who with affection and support always reminded me that dreams are achieved with perseverance. To my close friends, for being present in the most difficult moments and also in the happiest ones, sharing with me every stage of this process. This achievement is as much mine as it is yours.

Lesly Sainath Martínez Núñez

I dedicate this project to my family, for being my strength, my home, and my greatest source of motivation throughout this journey; to my parents and siblings, thank you for your love, patience, and for believing in me. To my project partners and friends, thank you for walking beside me with support, solidarity, and joy. And especially to my grandparents, whose lives, values, and love inspired me to choose this career and whose legacy I proudly honor with this achievement. This project is for you, with all my love and gratitude.

Maria Paula Camila Caceres Méndez

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Abstract

This research seeks to analyze the influence of storytelling on the development of oral English proficiency among transition students at the Chester Palmer School (CHP) in Barrancabermeja. The observed problem lies in the difficulties students face in communicating orally due to various emotional factors, including the fear of making mistakes, which affects their motivation and performance. To answer the research question, a Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology with a qualitative approach was designed.

To implement the proposed methodology, a teaching sequence focused on the use of storytelling was designed and applied, with the goal of improving students' fluency, pronunciation, and active participation.

After completing the ten sections of the sequence, a notable increase in the production of complete sentences was observed, as well as progress in pronunciation and fluency. Furthermore, a positive impact was evident on students' motivation, social interaction, and confidence when expressing themselves in English. This pedagogical approach facilitated the creation of a safe, dynamic, and collaborative learning environment, allowing children to overcome emotional and linguistic barriers.

The research provides evidence of the effectiveness of storytelling as a tool for teaching English in early childhood, contributing to educational innovation in bilingual and socially diverse contexts. It is recommended that the study be expanded with longitudinal follow-up and that the application of this methodology be explored at other educational levels.

Keywords: Storytelling, oral proficiency, English, bilingual education, early childhood education.

Resumen

En la presente investigación se busca analizar la influencia del *storytelling* en el desarrollo de la competencia oral en inglés, de los estudiantes de transición del Colegio Chester Palmer (CHP) en Barrancabermeja. La problemática observada reside en las dificultades que afrontan los estudiantes para comunicarse oralmente debido a diferentes factores emocionales entre ellos el miedo a equivocarse, lo que afecta su motivación y desempeño. Para dar respuesta a la pregunta de investigación se diseñó una metodología de Investigación Acción Participativa (IAP) con un enfoque cualitativo.

Para llevar a cabo la implementación de la metodología propuesta, se diseñó y aplicó una secuencia didáctica centrada en el uso del *storytelling*, con el objetivo de mejorar la fluidez, pronunciación y participación activa de los estudiantes. Tras la aplicación de la secuencia didáctica se observó un aumento notable en la producción de oraciones completas, así como avances en pronunciación y fluidez. Además, se evidenció un impacto positivo en la motivación, la interacción social y la confianza de los estudiantes al expresarse en inglés. Este enfoque pedagógico, facilitó la creación de un ambiente de aprendizaje seguro, dinámico y colaborativo, permitiendo que los niños superaran barreras emocionales y lingüísticas.

La investigación proporciona evidencia sobre la efectividad del *storytelling* como herramienta para la enseñanza del inglés en las etapas iniciales, lo que contribuye a la innovación educativa en contextos bilingües y socialmente diversos. Se recomienda ampliar el estudio con un seguimiento longitudinal y explorar la aplicación de esta metodología en otros niveles educativos.

Palabras clave: Storytelling, competencia oral, inglés, educación bilingüe, educación inicial.

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language in the early stages represents a significant challenge in the development of effective communicative competencies, especially in bilingual environments, such as the Chester Palmer School (CHP) in Barrancabermeja. Despite the institution having implemented innovative methodologies to strengthen English skills from the initial levels, students face notable difficulties in oral proficiency. This is due to emotional and pedagogical factors, such as insecurity and fear of making mistakes, which are common in younger children (Ayala, 2023; British Council, 2025). These barriers not only affect their fluency and pronunciation but also their motivation and active participation, which are essential for meaningful and positive learning.

Early bilingualism offers valuable cognitive and social benefits, promoting skills such as mental flexibility, better problem-solving abilities, and greater cultural expression (Ramírez Castillo & Torres Calles, 2011). However, these benefits can be limited if oral proficiency is not developed adequately, highlighting the need for effective and contextualized pedagogical strategies. In this sense, Story-Based Learning, or storytelling, emerges as a methodology that can create engaging and safe learning environments, favoring oral interaction and reducing anxiety, which facilitates spontaneous language production (Chávez-Suárez et al., 2020; Ooi Ze Xu & Hashim, 2023).

Although the CHP School has begun to incorporate this strategy, the lack of specialized training for teachers and the scarcity of appropriate resources have limited its real impact (Ayala, 2023). Additionally, the socioeconomic and cultural context of Barrancabermeja influences motivation and access to educational resources, requiring a pedagogical approach that is sensitive and adapted to these local needs (Becker, 2024).

Results from international tests show that, despite good performances in listening comprehension and writing, oral proficiency remains an area needing priority attention to achieve effective and functional communication in English (Ayala, 2023).

Therefore, this research seeks to analyze how the learning of storytelling influences the development of oral competence in English in transition students of the CHP School, with the purpose of providing practical evidence to guide pedagogical improvements in similar contexts. The study is framed within a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of sociocultural learning, neuroplasticity in child development, and active methodologies, in which storytelling configures as a key resource to foster motivation, participation, and the development of oral skills from early ages (Dehaene, 2019; Vygotsky, 1978; Sánchez, 2022).

The structure of the document is organized into chapters that address the problem statement, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, analysis and discussion of results, and conclusions. This path facilitates a comprehensive and rigorous understanding of the investigated phenomenon, contributing not only to academia but also to educational practice in bilingual training in Colombia.

1. Contextualization

The Chester Palmer School (CHP), a private institution located in Barrancabermeja that offers education from initial levels, including Initial (Pre-K), Junior (K), and Senior (Transition). The institution has focused on implementing innovative methodologies to strengthen English competencies from an early age, recognizing the importance of working on the integral development of the language from the first educational stages. However, young students often face difficulties in communicating orally in English, derived from

insecurity and fear of making mistakes, which can cause frustration and negatively affect their motivation and performance (Ayala, 2023).

Bilingualism in early childhood provides benefits in both cognitive and social realms. According to Ramírez Castillo and Torres Calles (2011), early learning of two languages promotes cognitive flexibility, improves problem-solving capabilities, and fosters metacognitive reflection. In bilingual educational contexts, students often acquire skills such as speaking, listening, and reading more easily than those who do not participate in such programs. Additionally, bilingual education extends the use of the language beyond the classroom to social and cultural contexts, favoring meaningful and functional learning.

The methodological approach used at CHP promotes an environment in which learning is active, collaborative, and centered on students' interests. The implementation of strategies such as Story-Based Learning (Storytelling) aims to stimulate imagination, curiosity, and cultural interest, using attractive resources such as images, songs, and symbols that facilitate the acquisition and practice of the language (Chávez-Suárez et al., 2020). These techniques favor active participation, strengthening oral skills and social interaction among students.

Oral proficiency is a fundamental skill that positively impacts the academic and personal development of children from early ages. Emphasis is placed on aspects such as pronunciation being easier to acquire during childhood and more difficult to correct in adulthood. Likewise, Llach (2007) highlights that oral interaction is a human necessity and an essential element for integral learning, not only of the language but for the overall development of the child. Therefore, developing oral proficiency in English from an early age is crucial for academic success and cultural integration.

The socioeconomic and cultural context of Barrancabermeja directly influences the educational process. The city, the epicenter of the petroleum industry in Colombia, presents particular social dynamics that affect families and the school environment (Becker, 2024). These conditions require a contextualized adaptation of the pedagogical strategies used to adequately respond to the needs and characteristics of its students.

At CHP, international tests such as IELTS are applied to evaluate students' English level, finding good results in listening comprehension and writing, but evidencing the need to strengthen oral proficiency. This diagnosis reflects a common situation in bilingual contexts where oral expression skills require special attention to achieve effective and functional mastery of the language (Ayala, 2023).

2. Research Statement

2.1 Problem Statement

Oral proficiency in English presents complex challenges for students transitioning to higher levels due to emotional, cognitive, and pedagogical factors. Insecurity and fear of making mistakes lead students to hold back from fully participating in communicative situations, thus limiting their development and fluency (British Council, 2025). This problem affects the construction of necessary skills for effective interaction and the consolidation of learning.

Storytelling is positioned as a didactic strategy with great potential to minimize these barriers, by providing an attractive and safe context for oral practice (Chávez-Suárez et al., 2020). Narratives allow students to engage emotionally, fostering motivation and facilitating spontaneous language acquisition through repetition and playful interaction. However, in the

practical realm of CHP School, the systematic and evaluated use of this strategy is still limited.

Likewise, teachers face challenges in integrating Storytelling into their classes due to the lack of specialized training and resources adapted to the age and level of the students, thus limiting potential results in oral proficiency (Ayala, 2023). It is therefore imperative to conduct research that grounds and guides the implementation of this methodology in specific contexts.

The sociocultural environment of Barrancabermeja, with its economic and cultural particularities, also conditions English learning and influences motivation and access to educational resources (Becker, 2024). Students come from diverse contexts that require sensitive and contextualized pedagogical interventions to achieve meaningful and effective learning.

The results of external evaluations such as IELTS indicate that oral expression continues to be a weak area for CHP students, despite good performance in other skills. This suggests the need to strengthen this essential competency that contributes to real, effective, and functional communication in the language (Ayala, 2023).

Oral proficiency in English involves the simultaneous development of multiple skills that can only be achieved through constant practices and strategies that promote social interaction and confidence (Sandoval & Bayas, 2020). Storytelling, by facilitating dynamic and meaningful learning environments, is a valid alternative to address this need.

Finally, it is essential to explore how the implementation of a didactic sequence based on Storytelling can influence the improvement of oral proficiency in transition students, thus establishing bases for future pedagogical improvements at CHP School. Based on the above, the following research question arises.

2.2 Research Question

How does Storytelling influence the development of oral proficiency in English among transition students at CHP School?

2.3 Objectives

2.3.1 General Objective

To analyze the influence of Storytelling on the development of oral English proficiency among Transition students at the Chester Palmer Bilingual School in Barrancabermeja.

2.3.2 Specific Objectives

To diagnose the main difficulties presented by transition students in oral proficiency in English before the intervention.

To implement a didactic sequence based on Storytelling to enhance students' oral skills.

To evaluate the impact of the didactic sequence based on Storytelling on the development of oral proficiency in English among Senior students at the Chester Palmer Bilingual School in Barrancabermeja.

2.4 Justification

The effective development of oral proficiency in English in initial stages is fundamental to expand students' academic and social opportunities in a globalized society. Various studies have shown that communicative skills not only improve language learning but also enhance other aspects of cognitive and emotional development (Chávez-Suárez et al., 2020). Therefore, investigating didactic strategies such as Story-Based Learning, which

provides an innovative approach centered on narration and interaction, is crucial to optimize teaching and learning processes.

This research will allow CHP School to obtain reliable and contextualized information on the effectiveness of a didactic sequence based on Storytelling, facilitating evidence-based pedagogical decision-making and continuous improvement in English teaching. Likewise, teachers will be able to incorporate more motivating and effective practices, reinforcing oral proficiency from early ages and contributing to the integral formation of their students.

The social relevance of this study lies in the fact that enhancing oral proficiency in English directly affects educational quality and prepares children to face multicultural and communicative contexts in an increasingly interconnected world. In this way, it contributes to the development of citizens with better tools to interact, integrate, and compete in national and international scenarios.

Additionally, this research responds to an identified need in the local context of Barrancabermeja, where social and economic conditions demand adapted pedagogical solutions that allow overcoming barriers to English learning. By having proven and systematized strategies, it will contribute significantly to educational innovation in the region.

From an academic perspective, the study contributes to the existing literature on active methodologies and English teaching in early education, showing practical results and evidence that can serve as a reference for future projects and research in similar contexts (Ayala, 2023). Finally, the development of this thesis facilitates the professional training of the researcher, strengthening competencies in applied research, curriculum design, and

evaluation of educational processes, fundamental aspects in improving teaching and academic quality in foreign languages.

3. Literature Review

Conducting an exhaustive literature review is fundamental to delimit and contextualize the proposed study, establishing the theoretical and empirical bases that support the research. In the field of teaching English as a foreign language, and particularly in the development of oral proficiency through Story-Based Learning (storytelling), this review allows recognizing scientific advances, effective pedagogical practices, and gaps in knowledge. Therefore, it not only contributes to generating a solid framework that justifies the study but also guides the methodological formulation, ensuring that the project provides relevant innovations for the educational field, especially in initial bilingual contexts like the Colombian one.

Oral proficiency represents a basic dimension for communicative mastery of English. Therefore, understanding how pedagogical interventions such as storytelling contribute to its development is key to improving the teaching and learning of the language in early educational levels. Reviewing international and national research also allows comparing contexts and adjusting strategies to local needs, aligning with current educational policies and responding to diverse socioeconomic realities.

3.1 International Background

Various international studies highlight the effectiveness of storytelling in strengthening oral proficiency in English as a second language. Ooi Ze Xu and Hashim (2023) conducted a systematic review of studies on digital storytelling and its effects on ESL

students. The analyzed studies are mainly characterized by using quasi-experimental designs, with control and experimental groups, applying pretest and posttest to measure fluency, vocabulary, and reduction in speaking anxiety. The interventions, lasting between six and twelve weeks, achieved statistically significant improvements in oral skills and communicative self-confidence. The authors emphasize that the multisensory and narrative nature of digital learning enhances motivation and spontaneous language production, crucial elements in oral proficiency.

Roza and Rustam (2023) conducted experimental research with primary school students in Indonesia, where the implementation of weekly storytelling sessions over ten weeks allowed integrating narrative with playful activities oriented to oral practice. The evaluation, based on oral expression rubrics and audio recordings, showed a notable increase in fluency and precise pronunciation. Similarly, an increase in willingness and motivation to communicate in English was documented, reflected in surveys and classroom observations. The effectiveness of this methodology is attributed to the contextualized and collaborative nature of the tasks, which promote genuine interaction and meaningful learning.

Yang, Liu, and Zhu (2020), through a meta-analysis, explore the effectiveness of digital storytelling in oral and written skills. They included studies with mixed methodologies and longitudinal follow-up, concluding that the approach promotes autonomy and collaboration among students. Their analysis emphasized the importance of teacher training and curriculum planning to ensure that activities are not routine but maintain reflective and creative components that drive learning. However, a common limitation identified is the lack of long-term follow-up to determine the permanence of the achieved advances.

3.2 National Background

In the Colombian context, storytelling has consolidated as an innovative strategy for English teaching, with multiple investigations supporting its contribution to the development of oral proficiency. Chávez-Suárez et al. (2020) implemented a program with primary school students in the Caribbean region, with a mixed pre-experimental design that included the application of oral pretest and posttest, in addition to semi-structured interviews to explore perceptions of students and teachers. The intervention comprised six sessions working on interactive narration. The results showed that 77% of the students increased their oral production level to intermediate and high levels, surpassing the predominant low levels at the beginning. Additionally, teachers reported greater motivation and active participation in class.

Ayala (2023) developed research with fifth-grade students in Bogotá, consisting of the implementation of a storytelling didactic sequence complemented with audiovisual resources and collaborative dynamics aimed at strengthening oral expression. Oral production tests and questionnaires were applied to measure motivation before and after the intervention, which extended over three sessions. The results showed significant increases in fluency and communicative confidence, highlighting that the choice of topics close and relevant to children fostered a more solid affective and cognitive learning.

A significant contribution comes from a study by the Corporación Universidad de la Costa (2021), which evaluated the influence of storytelling on students in Cartagena through a mixedmixed design and creative didactic activities. The implementation included workshops based on the creation and narration of stories, generating a reduction in the number of students with low oral mastery and improvements in contextualized vocabulary.

This study underscores the need to train teachers in the methodology and design coherent sequences to maximize its potential.

Additionally, although the Ministry of National Education (MEN, 2024) implements policies to promote bilingualism, national evaluation reports show persistent difficulties in oral proficiency, mainly in rural and socioeconomically vulnerable contexts, highlighting the relevance of innovative, contextualized, and sustainable pedagogical interventions.

3.3 Key Concepts: Oral Proficiency and Storytelling in Education

Oral proficiency in a foreign language is a multifaceted capacity that comprises clear pronunciation, fluency, pragmatic adequacy, interaction, and listening comprehension (Serrate Balaguer, 2021). Its development in initial educational contexts is essential to form competent language users who can integrate socially and academically. Teaching orality requires dynamic strategies that go beyond mere memorization, promoting real and meaningful communication.

Storytelling, understood as the pedagogical technique that uses the narration of authentic or created stories to promote learning, stands as a powerful tool to facilitate language acquisition and practice. Through this resource, learning is contextualized and visualized, allowing the development of cognitive, emotional, and social skills in the student (Ooi Ze Xu & Hashim, 2023). The narrative favors memory, empathy, and creativity, and offers a framework in which students can interact and communicate in English with greater confidence and relevance.

3.4 Identified Research Gaps

Although the literature reveals positive effects of storytelling on oral proficiency, there are significant gaps. A majority focus on primary and secondary school students is

observed, with a scarcity of studies centered on the transition stage and preschool education, a period in which the neuropsychological bases of oral language are established. Likewise, there is little longitudinal research that guarantees the permanence of the advances achieved after the intervention.

Additionally, the limited availability of official statistical data on oral proficiency in Colombia makes it difficult to dimension the problem and design specific policies. The study of socioemotional, motivational, and cultural factors that influence oral learning and the adoption of innovative methodologies is also insufficient.

The processes of teacher training and support in storytelling and integration with other active methodologies deserve greater attention, as well as the inclusion of students with functional diversity, to promote a more equitable and quality education.

In conclusion, the literature review identified that storytelling represents an effective pedagogical tool supported by scientific studies to enhance oral competence in English, both in international and national scenarios. However, there are still significant obstacles related to their adaptation to early educational stages, varied pedagogical environments and long-term monitoring of their effects. The lack of national statistical information and the scarce exploration of socio-emotional elements create opportunities for practical studies that go beyond the merely technical approach, incorporating human and contextual dimensions in a comprehensive way.

The present research seeks to contribute to overcoming these limitations through a contextualized study, with rigorous methodology and integral approach, that provides concrete solutions to strengthen oral proficiency in transition students at CHP School and, by extension, for bilingual education in Colombia.

4. Theoretical-Conceptual Framework

4.1 English as a Foreign Language: The Importance of Oral Skills

Oral proficiency is a fundamental component in learning English as a foreign language. According to the Ministry of National Education (2006), communicative skills are divided into comprehension (listening and reading) and production (writing and oral language), with the latter being crucial for complete communicative development (p. 7). In particular, the development of oral skills allows students to express themselves clearly, interact in different contexts, and use vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriately. Teaching oral expression promotes confidence and fluency, essential for students to communicate spontaneously, without being limited to strict grammatical precision.

From a neuroscientific perspective, Dehaene (2019) indicates that brain plasticity in the early years of life allows children's brains to build neural connections to learn effectively through relevant environmental stimuli (p. 28). This phenomenon highlights the importance of strengthening oral proficiency from childhood, as the nervous system is in optimal conditions to assimilate communicative skills.

According to the MEN (2006), one of the objectives in basic and secondary education is the acquisition of conversation and oral expression skills in foreign languages, demonstrating the relevance of developing communicative competencies in the educational curriculum (p. 7). This approach is also aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which values the ability to communicate effectively in real situations.

Additionally, a study by UNAD (2024) highlights that incorporating content linked to students' interests and environment, especially in rural contexts, significantly favors

motivation and the effectiveness of oral learning (p. 30). This suggests the need to contextualize teaching to make it more relevant and attractive for children.

Finally, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, highlighted by Sanz (2003), affirms that language learning develops in social interaction, so environments that promote active communication better foster the acquisition of oral skills (p. 15). This implies that pedagogical strategies must promote participatory, collaborative, and meaningful environments for the development of oral proficiency.

4.2 Story-Based Learning (Storytelling)

Story-Based Learning (storytelling) is a didactic strategy that uses narration to create a meaningful and motivating educational context. Sánchez (2022) highlights that storytelling allows students to connect emotionally with the plot, increasing their engagement and facilitating the active construction of knowledge (p. 45). This methodology integrates intellectual analysis with narrative experiences, contributing to the development of cognitive and creative skills.

The teacher's role in storytelling is that of facilitator and mediator, providing guides so that students collaboratively build their learning. Josep (2003) indicates that the creation and sharing of narrative texts fosters critical thinking and active participation in the educational process (p. 50). The teacher must adapt the stories to the context and level of the students to maximize learning.

According to Harmer and Puchta (2018), the use of stories in the classroom not only motivates students but also generates an affective environment conducive to the development of oral comprehension and expression (p. 75). Thus, students build their linguistic repertoire

through listening and recreating narratives, like the natural process of acquiring their mother tongue.

Storytelling is structured in three phases: relate, investigate, and create. This organization promotes progressive learning, from vocabulary and context exploration to the elaboration and presentation of stories by students, strengthening oral and written expression. Finally, this methodology contributes to developing fundamental 21st-century competencies, such as creativity, critical thinking, and communication, in an environment that favors motivation and contextualizes learning for children.

4.3 Active Methodologies in Early Education

Active methodologies transform the traditional educational process into a participatory and dynamic one. Vergara et al. (2020) define these methodologies as approaches that promote direct student participation and collaborative learning, facilitating the student to assume an active role in the construction of their knowledge (p. 22). In early education, these methodologies are especially effective in stimulating curiosity and motivation, achieving more meaningful learning.

Moya (2017) emphasizes that the teacher must act as a facilitator, promoting autonomy and critical thinking among students (p. 34). Active methodology must include activities that involve play, dramatization, and teamwork to make the educational process more attractive and relevant.

Susan (1998) points out that methods that foster dialogue, attentive listening, and reflection contribute to more solid and lasting learning (p. 18). In contrast, traditional models based on passive information transfer have limitations in promoting critical thinking and autonomy.

Silverman (1998) proposes strategies to involve students from the beginning and maintain their attention, such as group formation and continuous evaluation, which help reinforce commitment to learning (p. 40). These techniques enhance active participation throughout the entire educational session.

Finally, López (2011) considers that the mediating teacher must identify individual needs and adapt their pedagogical strategies to create inclusive and collaborative environments, essential for the integral development of students (p. 65).

4.4 Sociocultural Theory of Learning

Vygotsky (1978) established that learning occurs in a social context, through interaction with other people and cultural mediation. The development of linguistic skills begins in the interpsychological dimension, that is, social, to later be internalized and consolidated individually (p. 88). This concept is fundamental for teaching foreign languages, where dialogue and authentic interaction facilitate language acquisition.

The Zone of Proximal Development proposed by Vygotsky indicates the space between what the student can do alone and what they can achieve with help, underscoring the importance of teacher and peer support to advance in learning (p. 90). Active methodology and storytelling fit perfectly into this theory, as they promote collaboration and mediation in the educational process.

Recent research expands this view, noting that the affective and motivational dimension is also part of sociocultural learning (Lantolf, 2018, p. 120). Environments that favor confidence and a sense of belonging lead to better results in oral language development.

In initial bilingual contexts, the sociocultural approach requires that pedagogical practices consider the cultural and social background of students to design meaningful

teaching processes (Becker, 2024, p. 50). This adaptability allows responding to specific needs and promoting contextualized learning.

Finally, educational technology is incorporated as a mediating tool that expands the possibilities of interaction and knowledge construction, reinforcing the sociocultural principles of learning (Ooi Ze Xu & Hashim, 2023, p. 930).

4.5 Neuroplasticity and Child Development Related to Early Learning

Neuroplasticity is the capacity of the nervous system to modify its structures and functions in response to learning and experience (Dehaene, 2019, p. 28). During childhood, this plasticity is maximum, offering an optimal window of opportunity for second language learning, where the brain can reorganize to facilitate language acquisition and retention.

This brain development favors integration between cognitive, emotional, and social areas, aspects that influence the ability to communicate orally (Kuhl, 2021, p. 45). Active and meaningful learning, such as that offered by storytelling, stimulates these connections, promoting more complete and efficient development.

Recent studies indicate that early English teaching programs that incorporate playful and contextualized methodology better leverage this neuroplasticity, consolidating lasting learnings and functional oral skills (Fernández & Soto, 2024, p. 109).

Additionally, the development of metacognitive skills and self-regulation, linked to developing brain processes, are enhanced through activities that combine sensory stimuli, emotions, and action, as in Story-Based Learning (Lopez et al., 2021, p. 82). Finally, promoting rich and varied linguistic experiences during the early years is decisive for fostering natural and effective English acquisition, contributing to overcoming cognitive and emotional difficulties and barriers that may arise at later ages.

5. Research Design

5.1 Type and Approach of the Research

This study adopted a Participatory Action Research (PAR) design, defined as a systematic and collaborative process where participants act as co-researchers to transform their educational reality through reflection and joint action. As Rendón & Benavides (2024) argue, PAR facilitates the active integration of students and teachers at all stages of the research process, seeking not only to understand the situation but also to generate significant and contextualized changes, especially in environments where collective participation reveals deep needs and fosters community empowerment.

In this framework, pedagogical intervention is viewed as a planned and reflective process, where educational actions are designed, implemented and continuously evaluated by the educational actors themselves to improve oral competence in English. According to Rico (2023), this participatory approach fosters teacher and student empowerment, favoring contextualized and meaningful learning, particularly in cases where classroom dynamics expose emotional and linguistic barriers that demand sensitive and human adaptation.

The qualitative approach complements the research by allowing a deep understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and meanings attributed by the participants during the intervention. As Ibarra and González (2023) invite us to reflect, this approach allows us to interpret the natural dynamics and processes of the classroom, valuing both the observable and subjective aspects that influence the development of communicative competence, which adds a human dimension to pedagogical analysis in educational contexts.

In a way, the combination of PAR, pedagogical intervention and qualitative approach configures a comprehensive methodology that articulates research, action and reflection in

continuous cycles. According to Pérez (2020), this design enables constant educational improvement, adapting practice and strategies to the specific needs and contexts of the participating group, which strengthens the relevance and effectiveness of the intervention, especially in bilingual early education settings where equity and collaboration emerge as transformative pillars.

5.2 Population and Sample

The population corresponds to the 10 students in the transition (senior) classroom at CHP School during the 2025 academic year, with census sampling since all ten students that make up the group are included, aged between 5 and 6 years. Informed consent from their guardians is obtained, it can be seen in *Appendix A*.

The school's coordinators and teachers will act as experts to validate instruments and support in the interpretation of results.

5.3 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Table 1

Techniques and Instruments Related to Specific Objectives

<i>Specific Objective</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Function</i>
<i>Diagnose the main difficulties that transition students present in oral proficiency in English before the intervention.</i>	Diagnostic test (structured oral evaluation)	Oral proficiency diagnostic test format (recordings and observation rubric)	Identify the initial level of fluency, pronunciation, and oral participation of the students.
<i>Implement a didactic sequence based on Storytelling to enhance the oral skills of the students.</i>	Didactic sequence (participant observation)	Lesson plans (designed didactic sequence) and teacher's field diaries	Record progress, interactions, motivation, and participation of students during implementation.

<i>Evaluate the impact of the didactic sequence on the development of oral proficiency in English.</i>	Exit test (post-test)	Final oral proficiency test format and performance rubric	Compare the achieved level with the initial diagnosis and assess the effectiveness of the intervention.
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According to the table above for the collection of initial data, it is worth highlighting the use of the diagnostic test technique (*see format in Appendix B*), which facilitates a systematic assessment of the level of students' oral proficiency in English through well-planned oral activities. As proposed by Ayala (2023) and the British Council (2022), this approach allows not only to measure key aspects such as fluency and pronunciation, but also to record and compare the starting levels with those obtained at the end, which invites reflection on real progress in an inclusive pedagogical context.

During the implementation of the didactic sequence (*see format in Appendix C*), it is worth noting the application of the participant observation technique, which captures the interactions and behaviors of students in the real classroom, fostering a deeper understanding of group dynamics. As Flick (2021) and Kemmis and McTaggart (2020) argue, associated instruments, such as teacher field diaries and structured lesson planning (*see format in Appendix D*), allow these observations to be documented in detail and to reflect on the process, especially in cases where linguistic inclusion reveals unexpected challenges.

Finally, to evaluate progress, the use of the final test or post-test technique (*see format in Appendix E*), similar to the diagnostic one but applied after the intervention, is evident in order to measure concrete improvements in oral expression. According to Ayala (2023) and the British Council (2022), the corresponding instrument, a standardized format together with

a performance rubric, not only assesses the quality of communication, but also underscores the importance of recognizing individual growth in diverse educational settings.

5.4 Validation of Instruments and Ethical Aspects

The instruments will be reviewed and validated by the school's coordinators, who will provide suggestions to ensure their adequacy. Ethical principles of confidentiality, voluntariness, and anonymity will be respected. Informed consent will be obtained from both the institution and the students' legal guardians.

5.5 Research Phases

For the development of the present research, a scheme was established to ensure the systematic fulfillment of the objectives through specific techniques and instruments, guaranteeing coherence and methodological clarity in each phase.

Table 2

Research Phases, Objectives, Techniques, and Instruments

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Associated Specific Objective</i>	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Instrument</i>
<i>Phase 1: Diagnosis</i>	Diagnose difficulties in oral proficiency	Diagnostic test	Diagnostic test format (rubric)
<i>Phase 2: Implementation</i>	Implement the Storytelling didactic sequence	Didactic sequence + Participant observation	Lesson plans and field diaries
<i>Phase 3: Evaluation</i>	Evaluate the impact of the sequence on oral development	Exit test	Final test format (comparative rubric)

5.6 Analysis Categories

By establishing categories, the aim is to organize the information in such a way that allows identifying significant results, facilitating their analysis and contributing to the

validity and richness of this. To provide systematicity to the interpretation of the collected data, the following analysis categories were established:

Table 3

Analysis Categories

<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Relation to Objectives</i>
<i>Oral Fluency and Pronunciation</i>	Continuity, rhythm, and clarity in oral expression in English.	Objectives 1 and 3 (diagnosis and evaluation of impact).
<i>Participation and Motivation</i>	Degree of engagement, initiative, and willingness of students to speak in English.	Objectives 2 and 3 (implementation and evaluation).
<i>Social Interaction</i>	Ability to communicate and interact with peers and teachers in storytelling dynamics.	Objective 2 (implementation of the didactic sequence).
<i>Teacher-Student Perception</i>	Opinions, experiences, and assessments regarding the storytelling strategy and the learning process.	Objective 3 (evaluation of impact).

6. Data Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Analysis

6.1.1 Methodology for Analysis

The data analysis is based on the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR), which conceives the research process as a reflective and collaborative cycle, where students, teachers, and the researcher act together in the construction of knowledge (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2020). This approach allowed adjusting the intervention in real time, enriching the educational experience and the analysis of information.

A categorical and descriptive qualitative analysis was employed, focused on interpreting the experiences and perceptions of participants during the didactic sequence. Field diaries, systematic observations, and testimonies from students and teachers provide

deep data that reveal motivational and emotional dynamics, such as overcoming the fear of speaking in English. For example, a record highlighted how a student who initially avoided participating began to integrate actively, reflecting the effectiveness of storytelling in fostering confidence.

Complementarily, quantitative data from diagnostic and final oral evaluations were incorporated, measured with a rubric adapted from current international standards (British Council, 2022), which evaluates fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary precision. These quantifiable indicators allowed evidencing advances in oral production, although always interpreted from a qualitative context that recognizes the complexity of the process in young children.

To ensure an integral view, modern methodological triangulation was applied (Flick, 2021), which combined results from tests, observations, and perceptions, guaranteeing a balance between objective and subjective evidence. The analysis is organized into key categories defined in the methodology: fluency and oral pronunciation, participation and motivation, social interaction, and teacher-student perception. Each category guided the coding and organization of data, facilitating contrast between different sources.

To guarantee validity and reliability, rigorous strategies were implemented: data and evaluator triangulation, comparative analysis between diagnostic and final moments, periodic review with collaborating teachers, and detailed recording of decisions through a field diary throughout the process.

6.1.2 Organization and Preparation of Data

The organization and preparation of data constituted a systematic process that allowed structuring the collected information rigorously, preserving the qualitative richness of the

observed phenomena while maintaining the analytical objectivity characteristic of Participatory Action Research (PAR). This methodological procedure was fundamental to capture not only the quantifiable aspects of learning but also the human transformations evidenced by the transition students during the implementation of the didactic sequence based on storytelling centered on “domestic and wild animals.”

The systematization of information was structured following three differentiated phases. In the first instance, the records obtained through the various applied instruments were organized: diagnostic and exit oral tests, researcher's field diaries, observations made by collaborating teachers, and perceptions collected from participating students. The categorization of these data was developed according to the previously defined analytical dimensions: oral fluency and pronunciation, participation and motivation, social interaction, and teacher-student perception.

To guarantee traceability and confidentiality of the information, anonymous identification codes were assigned (S1 to S10 for students and Teacher 1, 2, and 3 for researchers), protecting participants' privacy while facilitating individual follow-up of the process. In the second instance, the quantitative systematization of the results obtained in the oral tests was carried out. Each evaluation consisted of the narration of short stories in English related to “Domestic animals such as dogs, cats, and birds, as well as wild animals such as lions, elephants, and tigers,” valued according to three fundamental criteria adapted from Cameron's methodological proposals (2001):

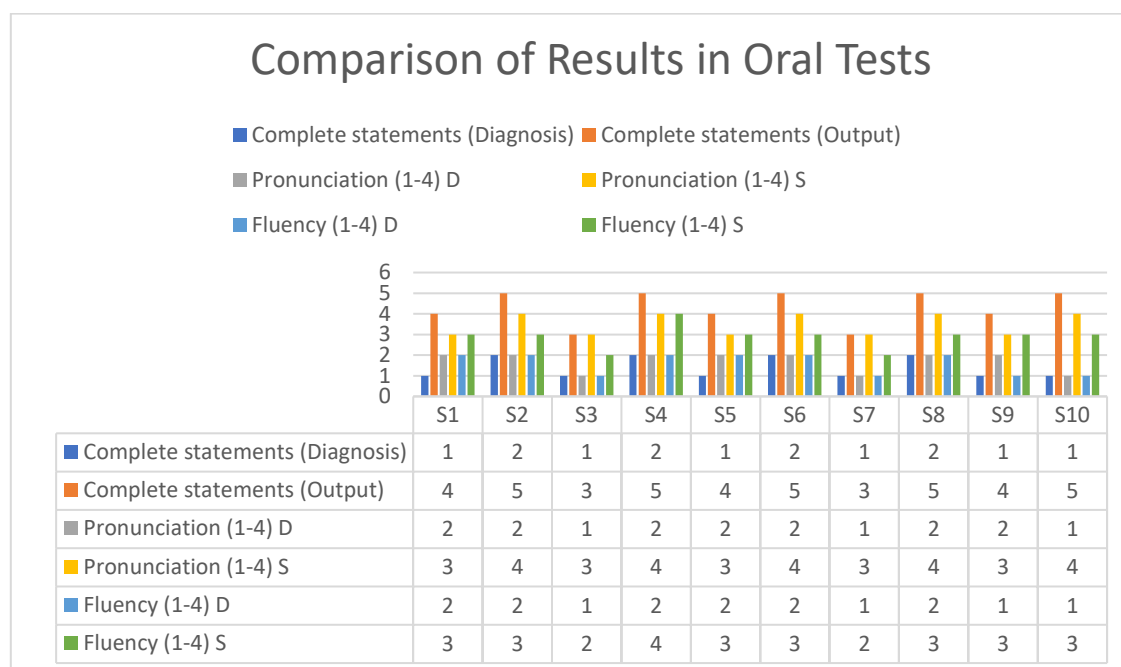
Complete utterances produced: Grammatically correct constructions in English that include subject, verb, and optional complements, demonstrating the student's ability to structure ideas orally coherently using specific animal vocabulary.

Pronunciation: Degree of clarity in sound articulation and level of intelligibility, evaluated on a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 represents unintelligible and 4 indicates natural clarity), especially considering phonemes that present greater difficulty for native Spanish speakers when pronouncing animal names in English such as "sheep," "tiger," "elephant."

Fluency: Continuity of discourse without excessive pauses or communicative blocks, measured on a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1 indicates frequent interruptions and 4 represents natural flow), evaluating the ability to maintain an appropriate narrative rhythm when telling stories about animals.

Graph 1

Comparison of Results in Oral Tests



Looking at the graph above, it can be analyzed that, in the initial diagnostic test (represented in blue), students produced an average of 1.4 complete sentences each, that is, on average each student formulated between one and two complete sentences during the initial evaluation. At the end of the intervention, this average increased to 4.3 complete

statements per student (represented in orange), evidencing significant progress in the ability to structure and express ideas orally. Similarly, average pronunciation scores improved from 1.8 to 3.5, and fluency scores increased from 1.6 to 3.0, both measured on a scale of 1 to 4, reflecting a clear evolution in speech clarity, intelligibility, and continuity. These averages demonstrate concrete and measurable advances in students' oral skills throughout the storytelling-based teaching process.

In the third instance, qualitative records were integrated that provided contextual depth to the quantitative data. The researcher's field diaries documented detailed observations such as the one recorded in session 4:

"Students S3 and S7, who initially limited themselves to producing isolated words like cat or lion, managed to use narrative images of domestic and wild animals as visual support to express complete utterances like The big cat sleeps in the house and The wild lion runs in the forest, demonstrating how storytelling about animals provides concrete tools that strengthen communicative confidence in the foreign language."

The observations made by the researcher teachers complement this perspective. Teacher 2 recorded during session 5: *"A notable change in students' attitude toward error is observed; when S4 produced the complete phrase The wild elephant walks slow in the jungle, the group reaction was immediate support manifested in spontaneous applause and comments like very good, creating a collaborative environment that fosters communicative persistence and significantly reduces linguistic anxiety typical in this age group when working with new animal vocabulary."*

For their part, Teacher 1 wrote: *"The transformation in participation is evident, especially in students like S10, who went from maintaining a passive and withdrawn attitude to repeatedly raising their hand during animal dramatizations, imitating movements of*

elephants walking slowly or dogs running quickly, behavior that was unthinkable during the initial diagnostic sessions."

Student perceptions gathered through reflective closing circles at the end of selected sessions in the storytelling-based didactic sequence, documented by the researcher as part of the qualitative data collection instruments described in the methodology chapter (see Appendix D), provide additional evidence of the changes observed during the intervention. In this context, student S5 shared the following comment, expressed in language typical for their age: *"I really like telling stories about little animals with my friends in English, because we can act like we're the little dog that runs or the lion that roars."*

This statement reflects a reduction in communicative anxiety and a strengthening of intrinsic motivation toward language learning through the animal theme, which is naturally appealing to children. This interpretation is grounded in qualitative data collected through reflective closing circles at the end of selected sessions in the storytelling-based didactic sequence, documented by the researcher as part of the data collection instruments described in the methodology chapter (see Appendix D). Similarly, student S9 expressed during one of these reflective moments: *"I learned new animal words, teacher. I want the zoo and farm story,"* demonstrating emerging automaticity in the oral production of the target vocabulary addressed throughout the didactic sequence.

Teacher 3 valued the process observing: *"The implementation of narratives about domestic and wild animals completely transformed the classroom dynamics, generating a space where communicative interaction flows naturally around a theme that naturally fascinates children of this age, allowing them to incorporate vocabulary like 'dog', 'cat', 'lion', 'elephant' in a playful and meaningful way, which greatly reduces anxiety levels and enhances authentic expression in the foreign language."*

This evidence is based on qualitative data obtained through participant observation and systematically documented in the researcher-teachers' field diaries during the implementation of the storytelling-based didactic sequence, as outlined in the methodology chapter (see Appendix D). In this context, Teacher 1 commented: *"The children not only learned new words but also contextualized them within coherent stories; S6 went from saying only 'cat' to producing 'The little cat plays with the big dog in the garden,' illustrating how the animal theme supported the development of more complex and structured utterances."*

This observation corroborates the theoretical principles of the Zone of Proximal Development proposed by Vygotsky, where social mediation through meaningful and attractive contents like animals facilitates significant advances in learning. Additionally, the increase in animal vocabulary was notable: students went from handling approximately 3 basic words (cat, dog, bird) in the initial diagnosis to mastering more than 10 terms at the end of the sequence (cat, dog, bird, lion, elephant, tiger, rabbit, frog, sheep, horse), representing a 3.33% increase in the specific vocabulary of the theme.

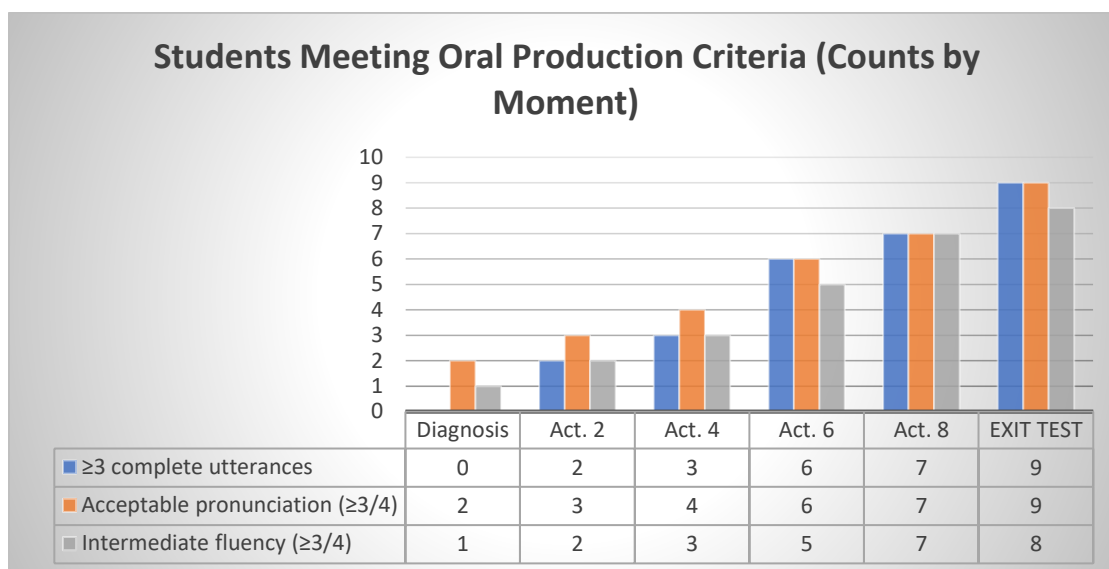
The triangulation of these qualitative and quantitative sources allowed building an integral understanding of the studied phenomenon, revealing that the implementation of storytelling centered on domestic and wild animals not only generated measurable improvements in terms of oral proficiency but also promoted profound transformations in attitudes, motivations, and social dynamics of the participating group, confirming the effectiveness of this thematic pedagogical strategy in the specific context of initial bilingual education, where contents related to the child world significantly enhance foreign language learning.

6.1.3 Results by Categories

The results are presented organized by categories, allowing the teacher to reflect deeply on the different dimensions of learning in children aged 5 and 6 years. This analysis not only evaluates technical aspects of the language but also captures emotional and social development in the classroom, showing the transformation of students from initial insecurity to more fluent and confident oral expression.

a) Oral Fluency and Pronunciation

Regarding oral fluency and pronunciation, the criteria of production of complete utterances, precision in pronunciation, and continuity of discourse are considered, following Cameron's guidelines (2001). At the beginning of the intervention, no child produced three or more complete utterances, a reflection of the common insecurity at this age, manifested in prolonged pauses and visual avoidance. From the fourth activity, during which collective retelling dynamics with visual support and objects were integrated, a significant advance was noted: several children exceeded initial expectations, achieving more complete utterances and clearer and more understandable pronunciation. The previous analysis can be evidenced in the following graph.

Graph 2**Students Achieving Oral Production Criteria**

By analyzing the previous graph, it can be observed that, regarding oral fluency and pronunciation, at the beginning of the intervention no child managed to produce three or more complete utterances, a common reality linked to the natural insecurity of this age, manifested in prolonged pauses and evasive behavior. However, from the fourth activity, in which collective retelling dynamics supported by images and objects were introduced, a significant advance is evident. The children exceeded initial expectations, managing to build more complete phrases with increasingly clear and understandable pronunciation.

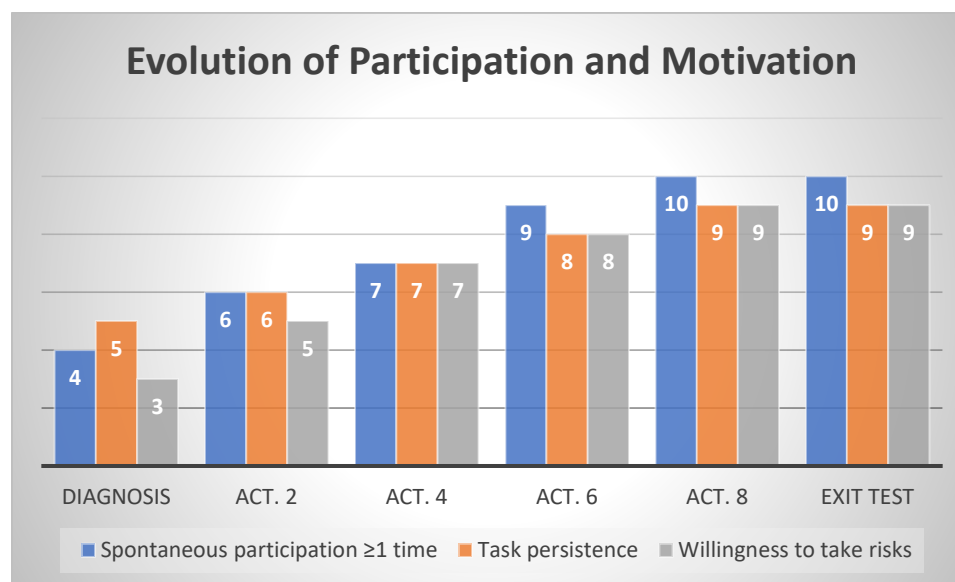
This progress was particularly noticeable between the fourth and sixth sessions, when group dramatizations that favored acting out parts of the story were incorporated. This playful practice promoted natural language repetition, allowing children to improve the continuity of their discourses and polish precision in complex sounds, such as short and long vowels. Far from being frustrated by mistakes, the children showed laughter and enthusiasm, generating a safe and motivating environment that strengthened their confidence. Additionally, the social interaction that these activities fostered helped internalize and

reinforce pronunciation and fluency progressively, in line with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights learning through social mediation.

The teachers, observing these sessions, noted how many students who initially only expressed themselves with isolated words managed to form coherent phrases and sustain oral interventions of up to 20 or 25 seconds. They also highlighted advances in phonetic precision, such as the case of a student who began to distinguish specific sounds, for example, the contrast between /ʃ/ in “ship” and “sheep.” The process was perceived as a shared game, where learning was fun and collaborative. Fluency improved in several students, who also complemented their interventions with gestures and movements, encouraging active participation from the entire group.

However, the advance was not homogeneous; some children, especially those with initial difficulties in articulation, showed slower but consistent improvements. This evidences the need for pedagogical accompaniment adapted to the individual rhythm, with patience and constant motivation. Therefore, storytelling transcended its technical function, humanizing the process and turning oral learning into an enriching and collective experience for the children.

b) Participation and Motivation

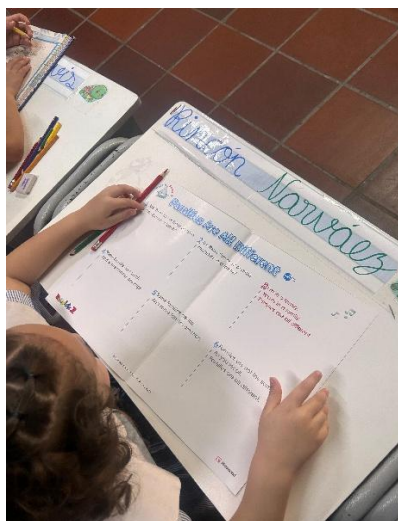
Graph 3**Evolution of Participation and Motivation**

Spontaneous participation, persistence in tasks, and willingness to take risks constitute key indicators to evaluate motivation in young children, criteria adapted from Wright (2004). In the previous graph, it can be observed that, at the beginning of the intervention, only four students showed voluntary participation in oral activities, reflecting a common reality in classrooms where fear of making mistakes limits self-esteem and communicative initiative, especially in five-year-old children. In the first sessions, children were frequently observed avoiding eye contact and remaining silent.

“At the beginning, many children hid behind their peers or lowered their gaze when it was their turn to speak, evidencing their insecurity,” commented Teacher 2 during the diagnostic phase. This initial resistance reflected a palpable emotional barrier that hindered oral expression.

Figure 1

Application of Diagnostic Test



However, as the storytelling-based didactic sequence advanced, there was a growing transformation in the classroom dynamics. Spontaneous participation reached all students in activity eight, remaining so in the exit test. This evolution is mainly attributed to the environment of trust and security generated by narratives, which legitimize error as an essential part of learning and turn the class into a space for free and creative exploration.

Teachers remarked how this security fostered children to go from a passive attitude to active protagonists of their learning. *“I saw with joy how S3 stopped avoiding eye contact to raise their hand enthusiastically and ask for the word to tell their part of the story; even if they made a mistake, they laughed and kept trying, encouraging their peers,”* recounted Teacher 3 in session five.

The willingness to risk speaking in English increased from three to nine students. This intrinsic motivation made children not perceive English as an obligation but as a narrative game where they could invent and make mistakes without fear. *“At first, S10 was very quiet, but in session seven they persisted in repeating the cat loud meow until*

pronouncing it correctly; the applause from their peers created an encouraging atmosphere that infected the whole group,” noted Teacher 2, evidencing the positive effect of cooperation and social recognition.

Figure 2

Application of the Second Activity of the Sequence



Likewise, persistence in completing tasks showed constant advance, reaching nine students at the end. The moments when children were encouraged to participate in group dramatizations were crucial to maintain this persistence. *“I remember repeating a funny phrase to encourage a child who hesitated, and that made them persevere until saying it right,”* shared a teacher, noting how teacher flexibility and the use of playful stimuli become tools to maintain child commitment.

Students expressed spontaneously their experience and motivation with phrases like: *“Before I didn't speak, but now I want to say my part. It's my turn!”* (S7, 5 years); *“I like telling with friends. No shame!”* (S5, 6 years); and *“I want to speak more. Fun story!”* (S2, 5 years). These expressions reflect the internalization of learning as a joyful and collaborative process.

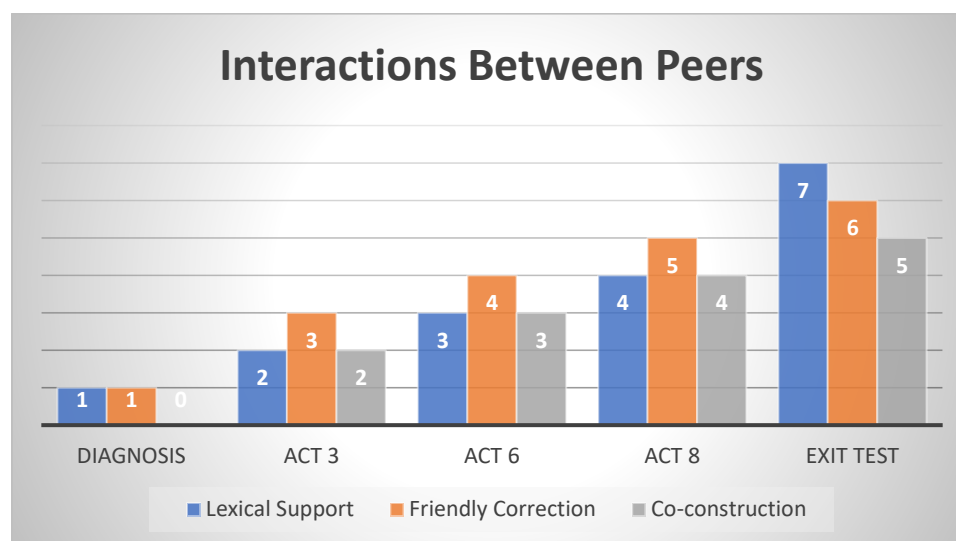
Finally, Teacher 3 highlighted: *“At the beginning motivation was low, but when stories took center stage, I saw S8 raise their hand alone for the first time, saying ‘I want to say the end’; their smile at the end showed us that storytelling ignites an inner spark capable of transforming the classroom.”*

This evolution manifests how storytelling, by emotionally connecting with children and fostering social interaction, becomes a powerful engine to awaken authentic participation and motivation that endure beyond the classroom.

c) Social Interaction

Graph 4

Interactions Between Peers



Social interaction was a key dimension evaluated in the research, considering lexical support, friendly correction, and co-construction of ideas, based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978). The previous graph clearly illustrates a progressive and significant evolution in these forms of interaction throughout the activities.

At the beginning, during the diagnosis, interaction between peers was minimal, with only 1 lexical support, 1 friendly correction, and no significant case of co-construction (total

of 3 interactions). This denotes a classroom where communication was reduced and little collaborative.

As the activities advanced, a constant and parallel increase in the three types of interaction is observed. By activity 3, lexical support and friendly corrections tripled, and co-construction had a level of increase, reaching a total of 8 interactions. This increase reflects how students began to feel safer and more willing to collaborate.

The point of greatest growth is evident in activity 6, where interactions quadrupled compared to the diagnosis, with 4 supports, 5 corrections, and 3 co-constructions. Storytelling, with its playful dynamics, favored students not only to speak more but to support and correct each other more naturally, vital aspects for language learning.

In activity 8, collaboration reached its maximum with 16 interactions, highlighting a relatively balanced equilibrium between lexical support (6), friendly correction (6), and co-construction (4). This reveals a classroom where children not only used English to express themselves but to build meanings together and facilitate collective learning.

Finally, in the exit test, the total number remained high, with only slight variations, indicating the consolidation of these collaborative behaviors.

In the words of Teacher 1: *"I saw how S2 gently helped S1 complete the phrase without interrupting the flow, and the group responded with laughter and applause. Friendly correction became a tool for learning without generating anxiety."* Another teacher added: *"I found myself seeing S7 suggesting words like 'happy' to their peers, encouraging them to participate and creating a friendly and supportive climate."*

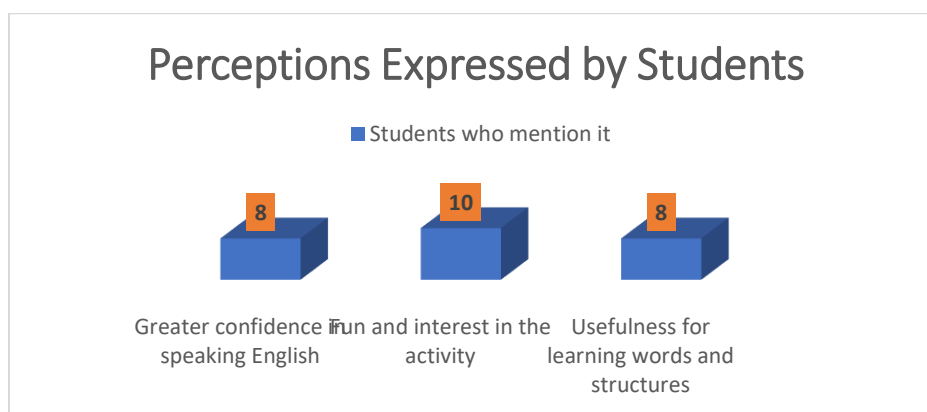
Additionally, child testimonies also reflect this social experience: "With my friends we learn better. If I forget, they help without bothering," said S8 (6 years), and "We play and correct with my friends" expressed S10 (5 years).

This increase in social interaction reaffirms that storytelling not only drives individual linguistic skills but also strengthens the sense of community and cooperation, essential elements for integral and meaningful learning in childhood.

d) Teacher-Student Perception

Graph 5

Perceptions Expressed by Students



In this section, the perceptions expressed by students regarding the impact of the storytelling-based didactic sequence on the development of their oral proficiency in English are presented. The collection of testimonies and observations allowed identifying three main themes mentioned by most participants, which can be analyzed from the previous graph:

Greater confidence to speak in English: 8 students expressed a significant increase in their confidence to express themselves orally in the language. This reflects a reduction in initial anxiety and greater willingness to participate actively, overcoming emotional obstacles that limit their expression.

Fun and interest in the activity: 9 students highlighted that the activities were fun and attractive, a factor that awakened and maintained their motivation to learn. The playful and collaborative dynamics of storytelling generated a positive learning environment that encouraged spontaneous participation.

Usefulness for learning words and structures: 8 students recognized the usefulness of the methodology to expand their vocabulary and improve the use of grammatical structures in meaningful contexts, facilitating the natural and contextualized internalization of the language.

These results are aligned with the findings of Ellis and Brewster (2014), who point out that the use of narratives reduces anxiety when speaking and fosters a positive attitude toward English learning. Likewise, teacher observations reinforce these perceptions, highlighting how storytelling transformed the classroom into a space of mutual trust, generating a visible increase in participation, collaboration, and enjoyment of the communicative process.

Student testimonies illustrate this affective and motivational transformation: for example, a 6-year-old student expressed, "*Fun stories*," while another commented, "*Play with stories*." Teachers also observed substantial changes, noting that story-based activities lowered anxiety and facilitated genuine expression in children, even in those more shy or reticent at the beginning.

Figure 3

Application of the Third Activity of the Sequence



To conclude, storytelling generated integral advances in linguistic, social, and emotional realms, consolidating as a powerful tool to strengthen oral proficiency in English from early ages. This change in attitude and perception toward the language is fundamental to guarantee lasting and meaningful learnings, promoting a genuine love for English that transcends the classroom and projects toward their future academic and social development.

6.2 Discussion of Data

6.2.1 Relationship of Findings to Specific Objectives

The discussion of data evidence a clear alignment between the obtained results and the specific objectives set in the research.

Objective 1, aimed at diagnosing initial difficulties in oral proficiency in English, identified an incipient competency characterized by the production of isolated phrases, confusing pronunciation, and low fluency. Eight of the ten students produced one or two complete utterances in the diagnostic test, with an average score of 1.8 in pronunciation and 1.6 in fluency, indicators that reflect common limitations in bilingual children in contexts where English is not predominant (Cameron, 2001). Qualitative records also highlighted the affective component, evidencing fear of error and reluctance to participate, reaffirming the need for a holistic approach focused on creating a safe and motivating environment for learning (Dehaene, 2019).

Objective 2, focused on the implementation of a storytelling-based didactic sequence, the findings showed that this methodology favored more complex oral production and greater motivation. During the activities, students advanced from passive roles to active constructors of narratives, integrating new vocabulary in playful and emotional contexts, corroborating that storytelling stimulates imagination and facilitates natural language repetition (Ellis &

Brewster, 2014). Spontaneous participation increased notably, going from four to ten students, evidencing a change in classroom dynamics that promoted collaborative interaction and sociocultural learning, in line with Vygotsky's principles (1978). These observations evidence that the teacher acted as a facilitator, adapting activities based on students' responses and reinforcing meaningful contextualized learning.

Objective 3, which evaluated the impact of the intervention, the post-test results reflected substantial improvements: nine out of ten students produced clear and fluent phrases, with average increases of 2.8 complete utterances, and improvements in pronunciation and fluency. These figures are complemented by qualitative evidence that showed an increase in confidence and interaction among students, confirming that storytelling not only favors linguistic development but also strengthens the social and emotional dimension of learning (Wright, 2004). The playful environment reduced shyness and facilitated active participation, crucial aspects in initial bilingual formation.

6.2.2 Relationship of Findings to the Research Question

The central question of this research, which explores how storytelling influences the development of oral proficiency in English in transition children at CHP School, is answered from a qualitative and reflective perspective that evidences a significant and transformative impact. Storytelling allowed creating authentic communication spaces, where students-built meaning and security in language use through shared narratives. Observations and testimonies collected reveal that error ceased to be perceived as a threat, becoming a natural step within the learning process, which enhances motivation, spontaneity, and confidence to express orally.

From the qualitative analysis, it stands out how the relationship favored the progressive articulation of more coherent oral discourses and the strengthening of social interaction, elements manifested in enthusiasm and willingness to participate actively in activities. Affectively, storytelling reduced anxiety and promoted a safe affective environment, facilitating children to overcome fears and assume an active role in their learning. Socially, collaboration between peers intensified notably, aligning with the sociocultural perspective that understands learning as a process mediated socially and in constant interaction.

The pedagogical component showed that narration adapted significantly to the cultural and socioeconomic context of Barrancabermeja, incorporating familiar and meaningful elements that connect with students' experiences. Testimonies like that of an initially shy child who managed to narrate a complete story exemplify how this strategy not only drives linguistic skills but also empowerment and communicative identity. In summary, storytelling, understood as an experiential and contextualized tool, acts as a motor for sustainable and meaningful learning in the first educational stages.

6.2.3 Relationship of Findings to the Reviewed Literature

The findings of this research establish a solid and enriching dialogue with current scientific literature, strengthening and expanding its contributions from a contextualized perspective sensitive to local reality. Firstly, the relevance of using imaginative and narrative contexts to foster oral exploration in young children is confirmed, as Cameron (2001) points out. This premise was clearly observed in the study's educational practice, where students used images, dramatizations, and collective relationships to build meanings coherently and spontaneously, facilitating natural and meaningful English learning.

Additionally, language co-construction, along with intrinsic motivation mentioned by Ellis and Brewster (2014) and Wright (2004), was palpably evidenced in the classroom environment. The participatory and collaborative process enhances not only oral production but also children's emotional commitment and confidence in learning, creating an active and stimulating climate that favors language internalization.

This study provides notable innovations by focusing on the transition stage within a Colombian bilingual environment, an area little explored in previous research. Beyond purely linguistic aspects, the qualitative analysis revealed that emotional and relational factors, such as anxiety reduction and strengthening of peer collaboration, played a central role in oral proficiency development. These elements point to the importance of working on language learning from an integral dimension, as reflected in local research like that of Ayala (2023).

Likewise, this research distances itself from contemporary trends that privilege digital storytelling by adopting an analog and community approach, demonstrating that traditional practices based on direct interaction and in-person narration are equally effective in improving fluency and motivation, especially in contexts with difficulties in technological access like Barrancabermeja. This highlights the pertinence of adapting methodologies to students' real conditions, valuing the richness of the human and cultural in education.

Finally, the study invites future research to deepen the integration of affective, cultural, and contextual dimensions, recognized as key pieces for the effectiveness of English teaching in early childhood. Thus, it contributes to a theoretical and practical enrichment that promotes inclusive, pertinent, and humanized pedagogy, capable of responding to the diverse needs of current educational environments.

6.2.4 Critical Reflection from Participatory Action Research (PAR)

From the methodological perspective of Participatory Action Research, the findings represent much more than descriptive data; they constitute a living and dynamic transformation in educational practice and relationships within the classroom. This reflective vision drove the researcher-teacher to question and evolve their role, moving from a traditional transmission model to one of facilitation and co-construction, where students became active protagonists, narrating, co-creating, and adjusting their learnings in a continuous and collective process.

The pedagogical impact goes beyond linguistic acquisition to transform the school climate, configuring a space for dialogue, empathy, and equitable participation. The strengthening of social interaction and confidence was manifested especially in initially shy students who, thanks to the created trust, assumed more active and expressive roles. This experience reflects how PAR allows addressing the socioeconomic and cultural particularities of the context, favoring education that responds to participants' social reality and fosters inclusion.

Despite some limitations, such as the reduced number of participants, PAR allowed deep analysis and the generation of concrete proposals for the institutional integration of storytelling in the CHP School curriculum. The active and reflective participation of teachers and students ensured the validity and pertinence of the interventions. In conclusion, this experience reaffirms that educational research must seek not only to understand phenomena but also to transform practices, prioritizing human and social impact as a fundamental axis.

Conclusions

The results of this research evidence that storytelling constitutes an effective pedagogical strategy to strengthen oral proficiency in English during the transition stage. Quantitative data reveal significant improvements in all evaluated indicators: the production of complete utterances increased by 207% (from 1.4 to 4.3 average per student), pronunciation improved by 94% (from 1.8 to 3.5 points), and fluency increased by 87% (from 1.6 to 3.0 points). These findings confirm that, even in a brief implementation period, narratives provide an authentic and motivating context that facilitates observable improvements in English acquisition and practice in children aged 5 and 6 years.

Beyond purely linguistic aspects, narration generated notable changes in the social and emotional dynamics of the classroom during the ten implemented sessions. Spontaneous participation increased, reaching all students, as did social interactions between peers. These improvements evidence that narrative methodology not only develops oral skills but reconfigures the educational space as a collaborative environment.

The research provides specific evidence on the improvements that narration can generate in Colombian bilingual contexts, particularly in socioeconomic environments like Barrancabermeja, where cultural adaptation and contextual sensitivity were fundamental for the observed advances during pedagogical interventions.

The study recognizes important limitations that frame the interpretation of the observed improvements: the sample of 10 students restricts generalization to larger populations, the duration of 10 sessions allows observing immediate improvements but does not evaluate the long-term sustainability of learnings, and the dual role of teacher-researcher required triangulation strategies to minimize biases. Despite these limitations, the observed

improvements are significant and open opportunities for future research that includes longitudinal follow-ups, larger samples, and comparative studies with other active methodologies.

One of the limitations faced by this research was the geographical distance that separated two of the researchers, who were not in the country and had to make part of the observations through video calls. This modality, while allowing the process to continue, made it difficult to interact directly with students and capture important details, such as certain nonverbal behaviors. Despite this challenge, the results obtained offer valuable information to understand the development of oral competence in English during early childhood.

For those who will be teaching at this level, this research underscores the relevance of using storytelling as a fundamental tool to foster confidence, creativity, and enjoyment when expressing oneself in a second language. It is recommended to complement this strategy with recreational activities, visual and technological supports that make learning more attractive and meaningful. In addition, it is important to create a classroom environment that motivates children, valuing their progress and promoting positive and pressure-free learning. A key aspect is to involve families in the educational process, so that children can continue to practice and strengthen what they have learned outside the classroom.

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Appendix A *Informed consent*

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA PADRES O TUTORES

Estudio: Influencia del Storytelling en el Desarrollo del Inglés Oral en Estudiantes de Transición del Colegio Bilingüe Chester Palmer, Barrancabermeja

Estimados padres o tutores,

Invitamos a su hijo/a a participar en un estudio realizado por estudiantes de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras de la UNAD para evaluar cómo contar cuentos mejora el inglés oral en niños de transición.

¿De qué trata?

En 10 clases, los niños practicarán inglés con cuentos, juegos y actividades grupales, diseñadas para ser divertidas y adecuadas para su edad (5-6 años). Evaluaremos su progreso con observaciones, grabaciones de audio (solo para el estudio) y pruebas orales, dentro de las clases regulares.

Confidencialidad

La información de su hijo/a estará protegida con códigos (ej. Estudiante 1) para garantizar su privacidad y se usará solo para fines académicos.

Participación voluntaria

La participación es voluntaria y no afecta las notas ni la relación con el colegio. Puede retirar a su hijo/a en cualquier momento, notificándonos por escrito.

Riesgos y beneficios

No hay riesgos; las actividades son seguras y parte del currículo. Su hijo/a mejorará su inglés, confianza y disfrutará de un aprendizaje creativo.

Autorización

Yo, _____, padre/madre o tutor legal de _____, he leído y entendido la información. Acepto que mi hijo/a participe voluntariamente, sabiendo que puedo retirarlo/a cuando quiera.

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Agradecemos su apoyo en este proyecto para mejorar el aprendizaje de su hijo/a.

Atentamente,

María Paula Camila Cáceres Méndez

Lesly Sainath Martínez Núñez

Valeria Barajas Solano

Estudiantes de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras, UNAD

Director de Proyecto: Andrés Felipe Dussan Pérez

Appendix B Oral Expression Diagnostic Test Format in English

Oral Expression Diagnostic Test Format in English

Level: Transition (5–6 years)

Purpose: To identify the initial level of oral competence in English (fluency, pronunciation, sentence production and motivation) before the implementation of the storytelling-based didactic sequence.

Student data

Name: _____ Age: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Test Activities

Greeting and introduction

Instruction: "Say: Hello, my name is _____. I am five (six) years old."

Assesses: Security when initiating communication, pronunciation of basic structures.

Colors

Instruction: (Show colored flashcards) "What color is this?"

Colors included: red, blue, green, yellow.

Assesses: Initial vocabulary, pronunciation, willingness to respond.

Domestic and wild animals

Instruction: (Show images) "What animal is this?" / "What is the dog doing?"

Animals included: dog, cat, bird, lion, elephant, tiger.

Assesses: Vocabulary identification, production of short sentences related to actions.

Simple personal question

Instruction: "What's your favorite animal?"

Assesses: Comprehension of simple questions and production of a spontaneous oral response.

Guided mini-story with images

Instruction: (Show three images in sequence: a dog running, a cat sleeping, a lion roaring.)

The teacher says: "tell me the story. What is happening?"

Evaluates: Production of complete statements, fluency, coherence in narration.

Evaluation Rubric (scale 1–4)

Criterion	1 = Low	2 = Basic	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Advanced
Fluidity	Doesn't respond/speak very little.	Says single words with long pauses.	Short sentences with some pauses.	Complete and continuous sentences with natural rhythm.
Pronunciation	Unintelligible, incorrect sounds.	Many errors are partially understood.	It is almost always understood, errors do not affect understanding.	Clear pronunciation, imitates English sounds.
Utterance Production	It only names isolated words.	1–2 simple sentences with errors.	2–3 complete sentences, with basic vocabulary.	3 or more coherent sentences, including mini-stories.
Motivation/Participation	He does not want to talk or refuses.	He speaks only when he insists.	Respond willingly and follow directions.	Speak enthusiastically, take turns, and actively collaborate.

Recording results

Fluency: ____ /4

Pronunciation: ____ /4

Utterance production: ____ /4

Motivation/Participation: ____ /4

Evaluator's comments:

Methodological note: The test is based on images and vocabulary close to the world of children (colours, animals, personal presentation), which facilitates spontaneity and security in oral production.

Appendix C Didactic Sequence

SESSION	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	DETAILED ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES & MATERIALS	METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES	EVALUATION METHOD	ANALYSIS CATEGORIES	ESTIMATED TIME
1. Initial Diagnosis	Identify initial vocabulary and oral skills in English.	- Greeting song in English. - Puppet game: each child says their name and a favorite animal. - Flashcards: children name or imitate animal sounds. - Teacher records pronunciation and participation.	Puppets, flashcards, whiteboard, audio.	Symbolic play, guided storytelling.	Observation checklist and anecdotal notes.	Fluency, pronunciation, participation, teacher perception.	40 min
2. Domestic Animals I	Introduce basic vocabulary of domestic animals.	- Storytelling: <i>At the Farm</i> . - Guided questions: "What's this?". - Animal imitation game. - Song "Old MacDonald" with gestures.	Illustrated book, flashcards, audio, stuffed animals.	Storytelling with visuals, imitation, singing.	Vocabulary items named correctly.	Pronunciation, fluency, participation.	40 min
3. Domestic Animals II	Practice oral production through dramatization.	- Dramatization of the previous story with masks. - "Who am I?" game: children imitate animals, peers guess. - Repetition of simple sentences: "I am a ...".	Masks, costumes, animal sounds.	Role-play, group dramatization, cooperative work.	Observation of phrases and pronunciation.	Fluency, participation, interaction.	40 min
4. Wild Animals I	Introduce vocabulary of wild animals.	- Storytelling: <i>In the Jungle</i> . - Song "Walking through the Jungle". - Sound game: identify the animal.	Illustrated book, images, audio, flashcards.	Multimedia storytelling, TPR, music.	Vocabulary recall and comprehension.	Comprehension, pronunciation, motivation.	40 min
5. Domestic vs. Wild	Compare and classify animals.	- Classification game with flashcards. - Drawing favorite animal + oral presentation: "My animal is a ...".	Flashcards, paper, crayons, chart.	Collaborative game, drawing, oral practice.	Rubric: correct classification + oral phrase.	Pronunciation, participation, interaction.	40 min

6. Story Creation	Create a story mixing animal.	- Teacher starts a farm + jungle story. - Children continue collectively. - Group dramatization with roles.	Story cards, puppets, props.	Shared storytelling, dramatization, group work.	Observation of improvised sentences.	Fluency, interaction, creativity.	45 min
7. Pair Storytelling	Encourage creative narration in pairs.	- Pairs invent a short story. - Practice with puppets. - Present to the class.	Puppets, worksheets with pictures, visual guides.	Pair work, role-play, guided narration.	Rubric: vocabulary, participation, clarity.	Fluency, interaction, pronunciation.	45 min
8. Songs & Charades	Reinforce vocabulary in a playful way.	- Sing animal songs. - Charades game (mime animals). - Group repetition.	Audio, flashcards, open space.	Music & movement, imitation game.	Observation of vocabulary use and participation.	Fluency, motivation, interaction.	40 min
9. Review Session	Consolidate learning before evaluation.	- Quiz game with flashcards. - Guided conversation: "My favorite animal is...". - Practice of short narrations.	Flashcards, images, recorder.	Q&A game, guided conversation.	Checklist of phrases and vocabulary.	Fluency, pronunciation, confidence.	40 min
10. Final Evaluation	Assess oral competence achieved.	- Individual storytelling with picture support. - Teacher asks guided questions. - Record final performance to compare with Session 1.	Picture cards, recorder, rubric.	Oral presentation, guided interview.	Rubric: fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, interaction.	Fluency, pronunciation, participation, teacher perception.	45 min

Appendix D *Field Diary*

FIELD DIARY	
<u>Researcher's Name:</u>	<u>Date and place</u>
<u>Applied activity</u>	<u>Objective:</u>
<u>Description of the activity:</u>	
<u>Observations of student behavior:</u>	
<u>Positive aspects of the session:</u>	
<u>Difficulties observed:</u>	
<u>Reflection of the teacher-researcher:</u>	

Appendix E Exit Test Format – English Speaking

Exit Test Format – English Speaking (Children 5–6 years old)

Purpose: To evaluate the progress of students in fluency, pronunciation, sentence production and motivation, after the implementation of the didactic sequence with *storytelling*.

Child data

Name: _____ Age: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Test Activities

1. **Greeting and extended presentation**
 - o **Instruction:** "Say: *Hello, my name is* ____ *. I am six years old. I like* ____ *."*
 - o **Assess:** Use of complete sentences and expanded vocabulary (personal taste).
2. **Colors and Objects in Sentences**
 - o **Instruction:** (Show flashcards) "What color is the ball? What color is the cat?"
 - o **Assesses:** Vocabulary applied in short sentences, basic agreement.
3. **Animals and Stocks**
 - o **Instruction:** (Show images) "What is the dog doing? What is the lion doing?"
 - o **Evaluate:** Production of phrases in the present continuous tense (*The dog is running*).
4. **Personal question**
 - o **Instrucción:** "What's your favorite story we learned? Why?"
 - o **Assesses:** Comprehension, production of more spontaneous responses.
5. **Telling a mini-story with visual support**
 - o **Instruction:** The teacher shows 3–4 images of a sequence (e.g., a cat climbs a tree, a bird flies, a dog barks).
 - o **Question:** "Tell me the story."
 - o **Assesses:** Fluency, coherence, creativity in oral narration.

Evaluation Rubric (scale 1–4)

Criterion	1 = Low	2 = Basic	3 = Satisfactory	4 = Advanced
Fluidity	Doesn't respond/speak very little.	Single words with long pauses.	Short sentences with some pauses.	Complete and continuous sentences with natural rhythm.
Pronunciation	Unintelligible, incorrect sounds.	It is partially understood, frequent errors.	It is almost always understood, minor errors.	Clear pronunciation, imitates English sounds.
Utterance Production	Isolated words.	1–2 simple sentences with errors.	2–3 complete sentences with varied vocabulary.	3 or more coherent sentences, including structured mini-stories.
Motivation/Participation	He doesn't want to talk.	He speaks only when insisted.	Respond willingly and follow directions.	Speak enthusiastically, participate, and show initiative.

Recording results

- **Fluency:** ____ /4
- **Pronunciation:** ____ /4
- **Utterance production:** ____ /4
- **Motivation/Participation:** ____ /4
- **Evaluator's comments:**
