Promoting EFL Elementary Students’ Speaking Skills through the use of Storytelling

ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

QUE PARA OPTAR POR EL GRADO DE MAESTRÍA EN ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

PRESENTA

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Contents

ABSTRACT ................................................................................................................................. 3

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................... 4
  1. Context ................................................................................................................................ 4
  1.1 Participants .......................................................................................................................... 5
  2. Description of the problem ..................................................................................................... 5
  3. Objectives ............................................................................................................................ 6
  4. Research questions ............................................................................................................... 6
  5. Map of the research report ................................................................................................... 7

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .................................................................................. 7
  2.1 Teaching ESL ..................................................................................................................... 8
  2.2 The concept of speaking ..................................................................................................... 8
  2.3 Teaching speaking .............................................................................................................. 9
  2.4 Speaking skill in young learners ......................................................................................... 10
  2.5 The concept of storytelling .............................................................................................. 10
  2.6 Storytelling and its advantages ......................................................................................... 11
  2.7 Advantages of using storytelling with young learners ....................................................... 12
  2.8 Previous research ............................................................................................................. 14

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY ..................................................................................................... 15
  1. Research design .................................................................................................................. 15
    1.1 Type of action research .................................................................................................... 18
  2. Identifying & understanding the problem ........................................................................... 18
    2.1 Data collection techniques & verification of data .............................................................. 19
    2.2 Outcome of initial research .............................................................................................. 22
  3. Action Plan .......................................................................................................................... 24
    3.1 Rationale .......................................................................................................................... 25
    3.2 Implementation ............................................................................................................... 26

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS ............................................................................................................... 30
  4.1 Oral pre-test ....................................................................................................................... 30
  4.2 Teacher’s journal ................................................................................................................ 31
4.3 First students’ learning log .......................................................................................... 32
4.4 Second students’ learning log .................................................................................. 32
4.5 Oral post-test .............................................................................................................. 33

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS .................................................................. 35

2. Implications .................................................................................................................. 35
3. Limitations of this study ............................................................................................... 36
4. Changes next time around ............................................................................................ 36
5. Conclusions .................................................................................................................. 36
6. Ways forward ............................................................................................................... 37

References ....................................................................................................................... 38

Appendix 1 ....................................................................................................................... 41
Appendix 2 ....................................................................................................................... 42
Appendix 3 ....................................................................................................................... 43
Appendix 4 ....................................................................................................................... 44
Appendix 5 ....................................................................................................................... 46
Appendix 5 ....................................................................................................................... 47
ABSTRACT
This research work is the result of action research project developed in a group of fifth grade students in a public primary school in Xalapa, Veracruz where English is not official; namely the grade is not included in the report card. One of these learners' weakest skills is speaking, due to the fact that they have had few classes in previous academic years. This action research project was developed over five weeks. Different data collection methods were applied with the purpose of gathering information before, during, and after the implementation of the action plan and as a way of evaluation as well. The activities and tasks were selected according to the initial research outcomes which shed light on the interests of the students. Storytelling was implemented since this produced positive effects on pupils from this grade. The main objective of that technique was to develop the participants' speaking skills and vocabulary repertoire. Findings report a remarkable improvement in students' speaking skill as well as the use of more words.

Key words: storytelling technique, speaking
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this present study is to analyze and show how the use of storytelling may help develop the speaking skills in elementary students who study English as a foreign language. To help students develop the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) is a complicated task. Some of my colleagues and I have struggled with speaking more than with any of the others skills. Producing utterances to communicate a message is a natural process which is acquired throughout time. However; with a foreign language this is not that simple; people set a specific goal, for instance, to express a wish or desire, to negotiate or solve a particular problem, to establish social relationships and so forth. Thus, speaking skills are essential to support oral communication in English, but it is the most difficult skill to develop. (Febriyanti, 2011).

Storytelling may be a useful teaching strategy to help elementary students to develop their oral production level given that “the best thing for adults helping young learners acquire language would be to expose them to a variety of language input in the form of interesting and stimulating stories. This indicates that learners can try to learn and understand language from stories.” (Chomsky, 1972, in Hsu, 2015, p. 2). In other words, stories may be useful to enhance children’s speaking skill. Furthermore, storytelling may be complemented with activities or tasks to make the learning more meaningful.

1. Context

The institution in which this research was carried out is a public elementary school. This school is located in Xalapa, Veracruz. There are 14 classrooms plus the principal’s office. In each classroom there are 27 to 35 students. There are around 500 students in total. The group chosen to implement this action research project is in the morning shift. This group have two-hour classes per week.

In that institution English is not considered an official subject, this is the reason why students have to pay to have English classes. Moreover, in that school not all the groups take this class, just fourth, fifth and sixth grade are selected to be prepared in this subject to enter the junior high school.

The students have textbooks for their other subjects; these are provided by the SEV (Secretaria de Educación de Veracruz). Every two months the students take the
standardized exams of each subject. Regarding the English course, there is no textbook. Therefore, I had to supply the students with some materials and photocopies to work on the topics of my choice. Hence, there is freedom regarding the design of the classes and the syllabus.

In this elementary school, there are many students per class, and there is not enough space to organize activities in which they can move freely. In each classroom there is a whiteboard, chairs and a closet where children can keep the books and materials they use in class. In some classrooms, there are not enough windows to let the air flow on hot days. Moreover, there is not equipment available such as laptops, projectors, tape recorders and the like. Hence, each teacher must bring his/her laptop or tape recorder in order to have listening activities. As there is no projector, it is difficult to include tasks in which pupils watch a movie or a video.

1.1 Participants
The group that was chosen to implement the research is fifth grade. There are 24 students, 12 girls and 12 boys. Their ages range from 10 to 12 years old. They are beginners who have a basic knowledge of English. As they have had few English classes since the beginning of the academic year. Every last Friday of the month teachers have their TGA (Taller General de Actualización); therefore, the children miss one English class per month.

The majority like English and are motivated to learn, speak and pronounce it. Thus, they are zealous and eager to participate most of the time even if they make mistakes. On the other hand, there are some pupils who are very shy and do not like to speak in front of the others. There are also two children who refuse to work in class and seem to be bored and uninterested for the subject.

2. Description of the problem
The previous teacher who was in charge of the fifth grade reported that since the beginning of the classes she focused on writing skills. She thinks that children will use this skill more than the others in secondary school. Dujmovic (2006, p. 76) affirms that “... as children acquiring their first language begin developing it orally, young children learning a second language need to develop their oral language to some extent before
they can be expected to function in writing”. Therefore, it is necessary that pupils develop the speaking skills first and then, complement them with the other skills.

These children do not have a wide repertoire of vocabulary. Besides, they do not have enough knowledge of this language to be able to establish a conversation. They use some phrases as “how are you?” “What is your name?” and the like. Therefore, it was necessary to use a technique to help them develop the speaking skill in order for them to be more prepared and acquire a basic knowledge of English to get them ready for middle school.

Furthermore, due to the fact that in the primary school where this research project was developed there is no equipment, storytelling is a suitable strategy as it does not need any gadgets but the teachers’ and students’ voices.

3. Objectives
The purpose of this action research intervention was:
To help students to develop speaking skills. It could be observed that students from the fifth grade had not had enough training in the four skills and this is the reason why they were not able to establish a fluent conversation in English. They just used fragmented phrases which they learned in an isolated way. The main objective was to engage the participants in tasks and activities to practice and generate language through funny and interesting stories.

An additional goal was to increase the participants’ vocabulary repertoire. Young learners may remember new words if they see them in context. Stories offer an endless number of new terms and if learners use them to tell a story by themselves they may retrieve and recall them better.

4. Research questions
In alignment with my objectives the following main research questions were:

To what extent can storytelling help to develop speaking skills in fifth grade elementary students?

Are stories helpful to develop vocabulary repertoire in elementary students?
5. Map of the research report
This research paper is structured in the following way:

The first chapter provides an overview of the area of practice investigated and its importance. In addition, this chapter provides a brief description of the context and participants of the study, the research questions, objectives as well as a short explanation of what the problem is about.

The second chapter focuses on some important concepts related to speaking such as its definition and its importance in the teaching area with young learners. The storytelling concept is described and its advantages with young learners are remarked.

The third chapter is devoted to the methodology of this study. It involves a description of the Action Research design, how the problem was identified and understood, the data collection techniques used, how the data was verified, and the outcome of the initial research. Besides, it contains the action plan including its rationale, and the implementation.

The fourth chapter presents the findings after the implementation of the plan of action, as well as the data collection techniques that were used to gather this information. At the end of this chapter the findings and their analysis are examined and described.

Finally, in chapter five a review of the whole process, conclusions, including the implications, limitations of the study and possible changes next time around are addressed. Also it gives suggestions for possible future work based on this research as well as the ways forward and a proposal of a possible second action research cycle to continue this study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Communication is a vital process which involves people conveying and receiving a message in diverse milieus with diverse purposes such as to persuade, express opinions and so forth.

Teaching young learners to communicate in English as a foreign language is not an easy task since there are many elements which may hinder the process of learning a second language. This is the reason why teachers must seek a technique, method or strategy to engage children, given that some of them may learn phrases or words which they do not
understand possibly because these are out of context. Thus there may not be an internalization due to the fact that the pieces of information may not have sense for them. Storytelling is a strategy that may bring several advantages to develop not only the speaking but also the other three skills in the EFL classroom. This technique is not used isolated because teachers can use many other materials and resources to complement the class.

2.1 Teaching ESL

ESL teachers are in charge of a difficult task which, as Paulo Freire (1998, p. 30) affirmed, “…to teach is not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge”. Teaching is a vivid process the aim of which may be to improve any issue regarding the education of the students. According to Wrigley and Guth (1992, p. 102), teaching is about “supporting learners with little English and little formal education in their efforts to understand and use English in its many forms”. In other words, teaching means to use the tools we have to achieve the purpose that is students learn this language. Nowadays there is a plenty of options which teachers can utilize to avoid teaching a boring lesson. For students to learn a word it must mean something for them. Meaningful learning may be more beneficial than just memorization. However, those resources must be suitable to the students’ level, age, etc.

2.2 The concept of speaking

Smith (2002, p. 121) claims that “speaking is many things, it is thinking of what one wishes to say, choosing the right words from our vocabulary, putting the words in the proper grammatical frame work, communicating the feelings we have and so on”. Consequently, speaking is not a simple process, it does not imply the mere fact of producing utterances; these must have sense and meaning for the other person to comprehend it.

Speaking is a creative process in which an interaction is established between the listener and the speaker. There is an exchange of emotions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, etc. (Underwood, 1997). This may be a reason why it is difficult to use a foreign language properly since learners must verbalize what they think or feel and get a message across in a clear way.
2.3 Teaching speaking

Speaking is a vital skill. However,

“For many years teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. Yet, today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because, only in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance” (Febriyanti, 2010, p. 03).

It is of paramount importance to bear in mind that children may learn a word or phrase better if they use it. In the context of this action research, some participants have some limitations. For instance, not all of them have access to internet. Hence, they may not receive more input than the one they get in the classroom.

It is important to point out that according to Nunan (2003), teaching speaking involves teaching EFL learners to:

- Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns
- Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.
- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject-matter.
- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.
- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.
- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency.

These points show that teaching speaking in a foreign language is not an easy task. To achieve it, it may be necessary that “EFL teachers create a classroom environment where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that promote oral language. This can occur when students collaborate in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task” (Nunan, 2003, p. 112). With the fifth grade elementary students this may be difficult since it is a large group where the speaking activities sometimes are not implemented and supervised by the teacher in an effective way.
2.4 Speaking skill in young learners

Teachers sometimes may underestimate the fact that for children it is not very difficult to develop the speaking skills in a foreign language. Due to this, some of them may not pay attention on how they plan and develop a class. Read (2007, p.114) states “whatever the children’s age, it is important to provide frameworks for speaking activities which encourage them to use English for real purposes which they can communicate in the real world”. Children may be reluctant to learn something which they think will not be useful for them given that children learn not just through drilling, copying from the whiteboard and sitting all the time, but by using and manipulating the language they possess to interact with their classmates (Anderson, 2005).

Teachers must choose the speaking activities or task they implement in the class very carefully since

“Young language learners need to learn to listen, to speak, to read, and to write in a new language, often without exposure to English outside school. Because language is an interactive process, children learning a language need ample opportunity to interact in a meaningful, interesting context and play with the language while developing vocabulary and structures.” (Dujmovic, 2006, p.75).

This is the reason why storytelling may be helpful for children to develop a vocabulary repertoire in an interesting and appealing way.

2.5 The concept of storytelling

Storytelling may sound like an old tool, but it is still used nowadays. Through telling stories people have transmitted values, ideas, and so forth. Also, it serves as a way of preserving the customs of certain cultures. Young people learn about history through listening to old people narrating stories of past experiences.

In the following paragraphs are cited some definitions of storytelling which can help to understand or have a better perspective of what this concept is about.

Cameron (2001, p.160) defines storytelling as “an oral activity, and stories that have the shape they do because they are designed to be listened to and in many situations, participated in”.
Haven (2006, p. 11), an educator and professional storyteller, provides this definition: “Storytelling is the art of using language, vocalization, and/or physical movement and gesture to reveal the elements and images of a story to a specific, live audience”. In other words, storytelling includes many other elements as facial expressions which we can use to convey a message.

“Storytelling is the art through which a teller conveys a message, truths, information, knowledge, or wisdom to an audience – often subliminally – in an entertaining way, using whatever skills, (musical, artistic, creative) or props he chooses, to enhance the audience’s enjoyment, retention and understanding of the message conveyed. Stories are sometimes told purely for joy and delight”. (Dudley, 1997, p.3).

Ellis and Brewster (1991, p.33) state that

“Vocabularies in story are presented in vivid and clear context and illustration help to convey meaning. Both, the context and amusing situation can make the vocabulary easy to remember, and that storytelling is defined as the process whereby teachers present texts in the form of telling stories to facilitate comprehension or students retell texts in a new construction to develop integrative skills”.

The definitions cited above contain some key words that are vital to bear in mind, for instance, gesture and images or illustrations, vivid context, as well as collaborative and supportive classroom climate. There are students who are visual learners, then storytelling may be an effective tool for them to remember new vocabulary. Besides storytelling may be worked in tandem with the four skills.

2.6 Storytelling and its advantages

Storytelling may bring some benefits in developing speaking skills. There is an endless number of stories of all kinds which may be adapted to learners’ speaking activities. There are also many genres such as fables, myths, humor, classical tales, and so forth. All may work with learners even if they are adults given that stories offer a vast range of words based on different topics and themes.

Adjahoe (2012, p. 18) affirms that “storytelling encourages learners to learn to maintain communication to entertain their audience (e.g. use of gestures) despite limitations in their language knowledge”. Pupils may try to tell a story utilizing the words and phrases
they possess and they may mix English and Spanish but they will seek a way to be understood.

Besides, by using this method, young learners can also improve pronunciation, enlarge vocabulary, learn new structures and develop fluency in a specific content (Indramawan, 2013). As it can be seen, storytelling may offer some advantages for speaking skills development and grammar.

Moreover, Sánchez (2014, p. 5) asserts,

“Carefully chosen children’s literature allows children to develop their receptive language in an entertaining, meaningful context and naturally invites them to repeat many of the predictable words and phrases, which they gradually take ownership of and add to their receptive and productive language”.

In other words, storytelling may allow pupils to construct their knowledge of language in a contextualized and personalized way.

One advantage of teaching young learners is that they may be motivated and

“most children when they start to learn a second language they want immediate results and even after their first lesson, they will want to show friends or family that they can speak some English. It has been proved that students are motivated when they begin to learn a new language. It is important to maintain those high levels of motivation and a way of achieving it is through storytelling” (Sánchez, 2014, p. 19).

In my experience in working with elementary students, I have seen that most of my pupils really like the idea of speaking a new language. They seem willing to learn new words. It is essential, as Sánchez (2014) mentions, to preserve students’ eagerness in discovering and playing with a foreign language and one way may be through stories.

2.7 Advantages of using storytelling with young learners

Apart from the advantages storytelling can bring to the EFL classroom, with young learners, it may foster children’s creativity. Ellis and Brewster (1991, p. 5) add “stories are a useful tool in linking fantasy and the imagination with the child’s real world. They provide a way of enabling children to make sense of their everyday life and forge links between home and school”. Fantasy and imagination are crucial elements to create a meaningful
learning. Nevertheless, sometimes they are not taken into account when planning a lesson.

In addition, storytelling has the power of fostering emotional intelligence, promoting language learning vocabulary and structures, as well as providing a low anxiety climate to make their learning easier (Yang, 2011). Students may feel relaxed when listening to a story or even feel identified with the characters which may make the process of retrieving information more effective. Almost all the pupils like to tell stories in their mother tongue, such as funny or unusual experiences; hence, they may like to do that in English as they are eager to speak.

Weller (2000, p. 03) affirms “when a storyteller uses multicultural folk tales, fairy tales and myths children are exposed to the abundant richness of vocabulary and complexities of language”. Sometimes teachers may be afraid of using material which will require more effort from our students, yet it may be advisable to go a little beyond and challenge them; we must not underestimate their learning capacities.

Stories offers a

“Natural, relevant and enjoyable context for exposure to language and an opportunity to familiarize children with the sounds, rhythm and intonation of English and children also develop learning strategies and thinking skills. As children increasingly develop their ability to understand, retell, act out, and/or create their own stories in English, this also has a positive effect on their motivation, confidence and self-esteem” (Read, 2007, p. 114).

If teachers complement stories with acting it may be a fun class for children where they may learn while they enjoy it. Moreover, EFL teachers may use fables to transmit values to students since these contain moral issues which lead to self-reflection and personal growth in learners (Weller, 2000). It is advisable to help students apply social values inside the classroom in order to build a calm climate and establish good rapport with classmates and the teacher.

There are many other advantages of using storytelling, the one I consider most important is that it does not require any resources other than the teacher’s or student’s voice, it is not essential to have expensive equipment or any other device.
2.8 Previous research

One previous work was Indramawan's (2013) action research with her 25 college students of semester 1A. Indramawan (2013) used observations, interviews, documentation and questionnaires. Also she applied a pre- and a post- test to know the students' speaking ability before and after teaching speaking using storytelling. Based on the result of her research, she proposed that storytelling can improve students’ speaking competence. When storytelling was implemented in teaching speaking, it could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content. Indramawan (2013) supported her findings with the results she obtained in a pre-test and a post- test where:

a. The students' grammar improved. Some sentences from storytelling helped them in making good sentences.

b. The students' vocabulary improved. Some words from storytelling enriched their vocabulary. By practicing the storytelling, the students used the appropriate vocabulary.

c. The students' pronunciation improved. In pre-test some students could not pronounce some words that use letter ‘r’ like September, server, driver but after the post-test they were able to do it.

d. The students' fluency improved. Because the students were free to express their ideas, they could tell the story fluently.

Another research related to storytelling was carried out by Adjahoe (2012). Adjahoe’s main purpose was to determine how storytelling may be adapted as a communicative strategy focused on teaching to help adolescents in the ninth and tenth grades of Iceland’s lower secondary school improve their English writing and speaking skills. He developed his study over six weeks. He used individual and group work activities in which students created their own fantasy story. Adjahoe (2012) found that story writing fosters natural communication in English language classrooms by allowing students to experience and experiment with authentic use of English language. Furthermore, with storytelling students were surrounded by English in the classroom and that made it easy to use the language. He contends that his research served to demonstrate that storytelling as a teaching strategy in a language class enhances communicative teaching.
Hsu (2015) carried out a study about using storytelling to teach EFL kindergarten students in Taiwan. The learning materials incorporated a variety of methods, such as pretend play, picture books, paint and other art materials, and other class toys such as pegboards, and puzzles. Six teachers all majors in Applied Foreign Languages (AFL) made up a study group; they were trained in the storytelling technique and reinforced children’s creative ideas as well as English speaking skills in every activity. After all the lessons were taught, questionnaires were completed by all the participants. Hsu’s (2015) overall implications were: 1. Storytelling provides opportunities for children to engage in the lesson. 2. Extended group learning activities also increase children’s attention. 3. Children are able to retell and/or create their own stories based on their own imagination. Hsu (2015) found that storytelling seems to develop and motivate learners’ interests; “pre-school students seem eager to play the roles highlighted in the stories and be part of the stories” (Hsu, 2015, p. 11).

All of the above-mentioned researchers obtained beneficial results which suggest that storytelling may be a suitable tool to develop the speaking skills not only in young learners but also in older students. In addition, storytelling may help contribute to the process of learning vocabulary and grammatical structures.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the characteristics of action research and the reasons why this methodology was chosen are described. The data collection techniques used in this process are defined. The actions developed and the motives why they were selected to be included in the implementation phase are addressed as well.

1. Research design

The method used is action research which is an investigation approach where the researcher centers his/her attention on an issue that students or the teachers struggle with. Thus, there is a search of information, a plan, an implementation and an evaluation of the action, this will produce results that will be analyzed (Macintyre, 2000, p. 01).

This is one of the reasons I decided to use action research, it is a process which includes stages that function in tandem. Besides, it is a practical method in which the researcher
may be able to identify a problem in his/her teaching practice. Burns (2010, p. 2) affirms that action research:

"Is related to the ideas of 'reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher'. AR involves taking a self-reflective, critical (taking a questioning and 'problematising' stance towards your teaching), and systematic approach to exploring your own teaching contexts. The term problematising means taking an area you feel could be done better, subjecting it to questioning, and then developing new ideas and alternatives".

Consequently, action research takes into account a self-reflection over teachers' techniques. If something is not working as desired, we need to search and find the probable causes of it. It leads to students' learning strategies exploration and their performance in class in order to adapt the future lesson planning to them and offer a quality class.

In the field of education action research involves enthusiasm by the teacher searching for the appropriate tools for the enhancement of a problem (Creswell, 2008). Therefore, action research fits in this context and it enables an interactive development where not just the teacher is the center of the cycle but also the learners.
This action research followed the action research spiral based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, as cited in Burns, 2010, p.09). Despite the criticism that it does not seem to be very flexible, this is the best known and useful model as it summarizes very concisely the essential phases of action research (Burns, 2010).

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, as cited in Burns, 2010, p. 09), action research typically involves four broad phases in a cycle of research which are:

1. Planning. Involves the identification of a problem or issue and the development of a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. Here, the following issues should be considered: I) what kind of investigation is possible within the realities and constraints of a certain teaching situation; and II) what potential improvements are possible.

2. Action. The plan is carefully considered bearing in mind a certain number of interventions into the teaching situation over a period of time. The interventions are
critically informed as you question your assumptions about the current situation and plan new and alternative ways of doing things.

3. Observation. This phase involves the researcher’s observation of the effects of the action in a systematical way and at the same time documenting the context, actions and opinions of those involved. It is a data collection phase where ‘open-eyed’ and ‘open-minded’ tools are required to collect information about what is happening.

4. Reflection. At this point, there is a reflection and the researcher evaluates and describes the effects of the action with the purpose of making sense of what has happened to understand the issue that has been explored more clearly. The researcher may decide to do further cycles of action research to improve the situation even more, or to share the ‘story’ of the research with others as part of an ongoing professional development. (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, as cited in Burns, 2010, p. 8).

These four steps explain in a detailed way the typical cycle in which action research is conducted. As it was mentioned before, action plan is a suitable method which teachers may use to reflect on their teaching practice, plan the most viable solutions and implement them, all this with the purpose of bring changing and improvements in the classroom.

**1.1 Type of action research**

The approach chosen for this research is qualitative due to the fact that it is practical and can be more adaptable in a limited time framework (Davies & Hughes, 2007, p. 11).

Denzin and Lincoln (2003, as cited in Brett, 2007, p. 11) define qualitative research as:

“A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.”

In other words, qualitative researchers study a given situation in its natural context in order to interpret it and discover how this affects people immersed on it.

**2. Identifying and understanding the problem**

This action research sought for solutions and improvements in both the teachers and students’ learning process, focusing on some weaknesses in students’ speaking skill. To
confirm the problem and discover its characteristics, initial research was carried out with the aid of four instruments: questionnaire, journal or diary, learning logs and oral pre-test and post-test.

Through informal observations I noticed that my students lacked speaking skills given that they could not express in English in an accurate and fluent way. My students used formulaic language which is defined by Ellis and Brewster (1991, p. 37) as “the type of English children produce in the early stages of language learning. This consists of routines or patterns that children memorise and that enables them to communicate with a minimum of linguistic competence”. As this type of language is repeated regularly, children learn it quickly. Such language consists of:

- Simple greetings: ‘Hello!’ ‘How are you?’/‘I’m fine, thank you.’ ‘And you?’
- Social English: ‘Have a nice weekend!’
- Routines: ‘What’s the date?’/‘What’s the weather like today?’
- Classroom language: ‘Listen!’/‘Repeat!’/‘Sit down!’ ‘Work in pairs! Good!’ / ‘It’s your turn!’/‘Be quiet!’
- Asking permission: ‘May I go to the toilet?’/‘May I clean the board?’ etc.

I decided to use the storytelling strategy considering that it may have several advantages that promote the development of the speaking skills in elementary students. One of these benefits is that it can be complemented with many other strategies to create meaningful learning.

2.1 Data collection techniques and verification of data

As it was mentioned above, the instruments that were utilized were questionnaire, journal or diary, learning logs and oral pre-test and post-test. The journals or diaries were used to analyze the children’s performance in the class and check the level of language they possessed as well as their performance in the speaking skill in the activities and tasks related to the stories. Besides, journals served as “an important venue to document reflections and experiences of participants or the researcher” (Mora & Goodwin, 2012, p. 14). Journals were recorded a week before the implementation until the end of it. They were written at the end of each class with the purpose of not losing vital information or
significant events. Thus, this instrument does not consist in just writing but it encompasses the process of reflecting in a deep way about what happens inside a classroom.

Regarding the questionnaire which was administered before the intervention, the day of its application just one participant was absent, consequently there were 23 children. The questionnaires were applied before the class started in order for participants to have enough time to answer it. The instructions and questions were read and explained before they responded them. It is significant to point out that the questions were written in Spanish due to the fact that the participants were beginners; otherwise it would have been hard for them to answer them in English.

The questionnaires served to collect data about the participants’ interests, likes, dislikes, suggestions and their preference for developing skills. Ten questions were designed to obtain objective information and to get students’ opinions and views over the English subject.

I decided to use questionnaires due to the fact that they “are printed forms for data collection which include questions or statements to which the subject is expected to respond, often anonymously” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 172). Seliger and Shohamy (1989) mention an important point here: anonymously. If participants know they do not have to write their names on the sheet they may respond and will give their opinions freely. In other words, students may express their thoughts and ideas without pressure and fear of being criticized or even punished.

Another reason I used questionnaires is because “in second language research, questionnaires are used mostly to collect data on phenomena which are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self-concepts” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 172). This quote reinforces what was previously pointed out; through questionnaires students may provide information over a certain topic.

Regarding the questions there was a combination of structured and unstructured questions. The first type has a small grade of explicitness which at the same time includes “… open questions to which the subject will be expected to respond in a descriptive
manner” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 172). An example of this is question 5 ¿Qué actividades te aburren en la clase de inglés? (appendix 1) where the participants must answer according to their own opinion.

The other category belongs to structured questions that “… may require the subject to mark responses, to check agreements or disagreements, or to select among a number of alternatives” (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 173), such as question number 1 (appendix 1). Question 1 also belongs to the closed type in which “… the respondent may be asked to choose from a limited range of possible answers” (Wallace, 1998, p. 104). The advantage of this type is that it is more efficient than open ones. As Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p. 173) point out, closed questions are easier to quantify and represent in graphs activity, which saves time.

The third instrument used were students’ learning logs (appendix 2) which were designed by the researcher and can be defined as

“Diaries students keep that record their reflections about what they are learning and how they are going about learning it. Learning Logs are useful because they promote metacognition. They are also useful tools for teachers because they can reveal students’ perceptions (and misperceptions) of the information, as well as reveal how they are reacting to the way the material is being taught”. (Davies & Hughes, 2007, p. 55).

For this research, there were two students' learning logs which participants wrote at the end of the class, it is important to state that these were written in Spanish for participants to express in an easier way. The first learning log was written by the participants in the fifth week and its aim was to know how they felt and what they learnt with the storytelling technique which was something new for them. The second log was kept at the end of the implementation and it provided information about what they thought of the stories, what they had learnt throughout the implementation of the plan as well as a reflection on it.

An oral pre-test (appendix 3) which was compound by six questions was also designed. Tests are considered part of the non-observation methods for action research. Exams are documents through which students' performance in relation to language skills could be measured. The first oral test was applied on the 27th of August, before the implementation
started, and had the purpose of having a reference about participants' difficulties in the speaking skill as well as their lack of vocabulary repertoire.

The six questions were related to basic vocabulary; for instance, parts of the house, animals, clothes, and so forth. The day of its application I chose six participants at random. They were asked question by question and recorded at the same time. I decided to interview just six participants. Due to the fact that they were 24 participants in total, it would have been time-consuming to interview all of them. Furthermore, it would have been hard to transcribe all the recordings for their analysis and further interpretation.

The oral post-test was applied on October the 1st. The same six questions were asked to the six participants chosen for the pre-test to see if those participants had improved in their speaking skills and to what extend after the presentation of the activities that were part of the storytelling technique.

Table 1 shows by colors the above-mentioned data collection techniques used throughout the implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection method</th>
<th>Week 1 August</th>
<th>Week 2 Sept</th>
<th>Week 3 Sept</th>
<th>Week 4 Sept</th>
<th>Week 5 Sept</th>
<th>Week 6 Sept/Oct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral pre-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st students' learning log</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd students' learning log</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral post-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Application of data collection methods.

**2.2 Outcome of initial research**

After analyzing participants' responses from the questionnaire, it was found that all of them considered learning English important. Besides, 21 out of 23 said they liked the English and the activities the teacher used in class. The kinds of activities participants enjoyed were drawing, games, pronouncing, speaking, listening and reading. This valuable information was taken into consideration to complement storytelling tasks in the action plan.
The answers to question number 7 suggest that that participants wanted to develop the speaking skill although almost nobody gave the reasons why. Participants could choose more than one option. This is the reason why in the graph 1 below it can be seen that the sum of responses is more than 24.

Graph 1. Question number 7

Regarding question number 8 (graph 2), what it is important to mention is that 20 participants out of 23 had not read and had not been read stories in English.

Graph 2. Question number 8.
In the case of question number 9 (graph 3), 21 students out of 23 said they would like to read stories or tales in English. This is a vital finding that supported the idea of implementing storytelling in the classroom to develop speaking skills.

Developing the initial research, I discovered that children seemed eager to learn English and they were interested in speaking this language. Most of them had not read or listened to a story in English, thus storytelling technique may have been a new and useful experience for them

3. Action Plan

The intervention was planned to be developed during a four-week period. However, it was necessary to take a week before applying the questionnaire and the first oral pre-test, and an extra week after that, since there were some days in which participants had other events to attend therefore it was not possible to have English classes. Thus, the implementation started on September 1st and concluded on October 1st.

Four stories were chosen, each one belongs to a different type of genre: fable, modern stories, suspense stories and a song. I decided to expose students to four kinds of genres as there was the possibility that they might be bored if they worked on four similar stories. The action plan was implemented in eight sessions of 60 minutes each one. Two sessions were needed to execute the planned tasks and activities. For the listening activity and the
song, it was necessary to bring a lap top since there was no equipment available in the school. In all of the planned lessons there was a presentation of vocabulary in order for pupils to become familiar with it, its contextualization in the story and as well as for its future use.

In one lesson, I decided to use realia given that “these can add an air of authenticity to the story and are one of the easiest ways of making the details of a story accessible to all children” Ellis and Brewster (1991:48). Realia was used with the purpose of attracting the participants’ attention to the story as well as the new vocabulary and establishing a link between them.

In the lesson where a song was used, participants were asked to invent rhymes since children learn through imitation. Repeating rhymes and songs contributes to an ideal context where the pronunciation practice of the new language is consolidated and introduced to develop memory skills (Ellis & Brewster: 1991). Children liked this class because they enjoy singing and being aware they were talking English in one way or another. This motivated them and made them participate by repeating the sounds of some words.

There was a total of 8 lessons of 60 minutes each. These were divided into three parts: pre-, while-, and after- storytelling stage. Students worked one story in two classes. In the first class, the new vocabulary was presented and the story was read, and in the following class, they worked on the vocabulary with a handout and the evaluation in which students did a speaking activity connected to the story.

3.1 Rationale

The most important aim of this action research was to develop speaking skills as well as increase the vocabulary repertoire in elementary students from the fifth grade. To use a new strategy for students may appear a challenging task; however, one advantage that must be taken into consideration is that the children seemed interested and zealous to learn English.

Each activity was designed with the purpose of fostering pupils’ imagination and creativity. As Sanchez (2014, p. 16) states
“Young learners learn English in a non-meaningful way. In exchange, stories are motivating and fun, they exercise imagination, listening to stories may encourage social and emotional development and so on but what is most important: pupils learn English through English. It is a way of confirming that language is something you actually learn and use ‘for real’.”

In other words, students may learn better when they are in contact with the second language through stories which may be appealing for them. The selection of stories was made taking into consideration the participants’ interests.

Storytelling may bring many advantages not just with speaking skills but with reading, writing and listening. This strategy may bring advantages for students learning a second language. However, teachers must not neglect the other skills and focus on just one.

3.2 Implementation

In the first lesson, I read and explained a definition of story and I enlisted the different and more common genres that exist. For most of the participants this was the first time they listened to a story in English; thus, I selected an easy and short one. *Elephants and Friends* is a fable with a moral at the end, participants were familiar with this genre since they had read fables in their Spanish class.

In some lessons the time planned for each activity had to be shorter given that others took more time. Nevertheless, speaking activities were given priority since the lesson’s principal aim was to develop this skill. An overview of the classroom activities or tasks, stories used and evaluation is summarized in the table number 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Intervention (activities/tasks procedure)</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Elephant and Friends</td>
<td>Fable</td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> animals&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pre-storytelling stage:</strong> presentation of vocabulary through images. &lt;br&gt;<strong>While-storytelling stage:</strong> 1. participants predict what the story will be about by reading the title. 2. Teacher reads the story making use of mimicry and gestures. &lt;br&gt;<strong>After-storytelling stage:</strong> Participants try to remember the story and enlist the animals mentioned in it.</td>
<td>The participants individually draw their favorite part of the story and be ready to be chosen to describe it to their classmates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Modern Cinderella</td>
<td>Fairy tale</td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> clothes&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pre-storytelling stage:</strong> Show pictures from the story and have participants guess what the story is about. &lt;br&gt;<strong>While-storytelling stage:</strong> 1. Teacher reads the story using the pictures. 2. Participants describe the clothes of the story characters. &lt;br&gt;<strong>After storytelling stage:</strong> Participants describe one classmate and the others guess who the person is.</td>
<td>In pairs participants create new characters as well as the ending of the story and tell it to their classmates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Down by the Bay</td>
<td>Silly story - song</td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> fruits and verbs&lt;br&gt;<strong>Pre-storytelling stage:</strong> The teacher had participants relate plastic fruits and their names. &lt;br&gt;<strong>While-storytelling stage:</strong> 1. Teacher uses realia to show the new words participants will listen in the song. 2. Participants work on a handout with some verbs in present progressive and vocabulary. &lt;br&gt;<strong>After storytelling stage:</strong> The participants individually create new rhymes for the song and sing it to their classmates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In teams, participants describe an image to their classmates using the vocabulary seen.

| 4 | Pink Jellybean Story | Suspense | **Vocabulary**: parts of the house  
**Pre-storytelling stage**: The teacher gives participants the story in pieces of paper and they have to arrange it by listening to it.  
**While-storytelling stage**: 1. Participants relate each paragraph of the story with an image. 2. In pairs students describe by turns an image of a house and at the end check differences.  
**After storytelling stage**: in teams, participants invent a review from a suspense movie. | In teams, participants create a poster of their suspense movie to present it to the others and invite them to watch the movie. |

Table 2. Overview of the action plan implementation.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In this chapter the outcomes from the intervention are presented. The first step for the analysis of the data collected was to separate the different instruments. Each of the instruments was analyzed in order to have a general overview. Subsequently, the information gathered with each of the instruments was organized and the most important was selected to support the findings with evidence. The instruments are presented in the same order as they were administered to the participants during the five-week period of the investigation:

4.1 Oral pre-test

It is important to emphasize that only 6 participants’ answers were taken to be analyzed. The data from the oral pre-test which was implemented before the intervention and whose aim was to identify students’ weaknesses and strengths in the speaking skill produced significant results. In order to have a clearer idea of the answers from the six students in the oral pre-test, their answers are shown in table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
<th>Student 4</th>
<th>Student 5</th>
<th>Student 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What’s your favorite animal?</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td>Tigre</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>Mouse</td>
<td>Este, el dog</td>
<td>Jirafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are you wearing today?</td>
<td>Mmmm</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>¿Jaguar?</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How many rooms are there in your house?</td>
<td>No. No sé</td>
<td>¿Blusa?</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé.</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me their names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you know a story?</td>
<td>No, no sé.</td>
<td>Ahora si no.</td>
<td>Paso</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What is the story about?</td>
<td>Yes. No sé.</td>
<td>¿Tele?</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>Yes. No sé</td>
<td>No sé</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Participants’ answers in the oral pre-test.
As it can be seen in question number 1 three students out of six gave a correct answer. Two of them did it in Spanish, which means that they understood the question. As for the second question, none of them could answer. All of them just said “mmm”, “no sé”, “¿jaguar?”. In the following question, the six students responded “No sé”. The same responses were given to the last two questions. Overall, the pre-test confirms that participants did not have enough vocabulary repertoire and they needed improvement in their speaking skill.

4.2 Teacher’s journal

The teacher’s description of the classes and reflections were written at the end of the class. The activities and the students’ performance in the class were reported in detail drawing special attention to the oral activities implemented.

Regarding the participants’ behavior, my entry in the teacher’s journal shows that, when working with the first story, the children were excited when I was reading the story using gestures and movements, they were attentive. They used their imagination and seemed to enjoy the oral activity where they described their favorite part of the story. The majority was eager to pass to the front and describe it. It seems children had a good time and learnt when listening to the story given that their attitudes towards the activities were productive.

For the evaluation of the second story in week 2, I noted down in the journal that the majority of the participants were enthusiastic in creating a different ending of the story. The teams were very creative and liked the activity. They had some mistakes in pronunciation but this did not hinder the message. The children used the words learned in the story.

In the third week, learners made creative rhymes, they were cooperative and willing to sing their sentences to the others. I noticed that children were not ashamed of making mistakes this is why they may like to participate and talk in another language.

In the fourth week, the activity where students had to create a review took more time than expected. However, they did a great job. I could see their creativity and imagination in their reviews and posters. They were impatient to present their review to their classmates. They made use of the words they learned in the previous week.
4.3 First students’ learning log

Once the activities were done, at the end of the class participants were asked to complete a learning log in Spanish in which they had to reflect mainly on whether they liked or not the activities, how they felt and what they learnt. Their responses indicate that what they liked the most were: “inventar rimas”, “escuchar una canción”, “el cuento”, “rimas y la canción”, “las rimas que escribimos en clase”, “escribir palabras que rimen”. The participants enjoyed the song that was used in class. As Ellis and Brewster (1991) state, songs are useful tools for pupils to improve their pronunciation and retention of vocabulary. Besides, they liked the rhymes they invented. There was a use of their imagination which is one of the most significant purposes that storytelling has.

In relation to the phrases or words they had learnt in English, they answered they had learnt to ask: what are you wearing? what’s your favorite animal?; some verbs such as eating, cooking, driving, hiding, playing, drinking and swimming. Some names of animals such as mouse, snake, parrot, dog, cat and bee; some names of clothes, e.g. jeans, jacket, pants, and dress and blouse. The participants’ responses may indicate they learned some words and phrases which are related to the stories they read. The verbs that students mentioned were seen in the song I chose on the third week.

4.4 Second students’ learning log

The participants reported that they preferred the suspense story and in question number 8 (appendix 3) they wrote what the story was about. They remembered the main aspects of the story. This may indicate they understood it even though they do not possess a high level of English. One of the participants described: “la historia que más me gusto fue Pink Jelly Bean y trata de una casa donde hay un ático y ahí encuentran un chest y había un dulce adentro, había un camino largo y oscuro, habían puertas y escaleras y subías al ático y encontrabas una caja black y un chest”. Another one said: “Elephant and Friends me gustó mucho y trata de un elephant se encontró con un animal y no quisieron ser sus friends por ser tan tall y fat”. It can be observed that some participants used some words in English even when they were required to answer in Spanish. This may be a signal that they learnt vocabulary correlated to the story.
4.5 Oral post-test

The six participants’ responses are shown in the table 4 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Karen</th>
<th>Juan</th>
<th>Erika</th>
<th>Pablo</th>
<th>Diana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. How many rooms are there in your house? Tell me their names</td>
<td>“Three. One kitchen, one bathroom and two bedrooms”</td>
<td>“cinco cuartos y dos baños”</td>
<td>“One bathroom and one kitchen.”</td>
<td>“Este kitchen, bedroom y bathroom.”</td>
<td>“One bathroom”</td>
<td>“Un bathroom, living room, mmm este un kitchen.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you know a story?</td>
<td>“Yes. Pink jellybean”</td>
<td>“Pink jellybean”</td>
<td>“yes, pink jellybean”</td>
<td>“Yes, animals and friends”</td>
<td>“Yes. Pink jellybean”</td>
<td>“Yes. Pink jellybean.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What is the story about?</td>
<td>“In a house there was a chest and inside there was a candy.”</td>
<td>“There was a house and a long road, stairs and a black box, inside there was a pink jellybean.”</td>
<td>“Una casa embrujada donde había un chest y adentro estaba un pink jellybean”</td>
<td>“An elephant wanted to have friends but the others do not wanted them, he was tall y hasta el final si hizo friends.”</td>
<td>“Trata de una casa y un camino muy largo. Al final del camino hay una casa abandonada entra a la casa y encuentra unos escalones secretos s, sube, ahí hay un baúl, adentro del baúl hay un dulce.”</td>
<td>“A house, a door, its attic, chest, box, mmm pink jelly bean.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In question number 1 (table 4), the six participants answered correctly although two of them made mistakes in pronunciation. They said the words as they are spelt; nevertheless, they tried to convey the message. In question number 2, participants used the vocabulary studied in the process of the implementation; however, two of them did not use the adjective before the noun. For instance, Pablo said “sweater blue”. In question number 3, Karen replied in Spanish, which means that she understood the question but she could not give an answer in English. Erika and Diana mixed English and Spanish; nonetheless, they produced the vocabulary they needed. In question number 4, 5 out of 6 participants expressed their preference for the suspense story. Three participants uttered one or two sentences to say what the story was about, as it is shown in question number 5. Diana did not structure a whole sentence but she knew the key words of the story. Juan also mixed English and Spanish. Finally, Pablo responded in Spanish. Then again, this means that he understood the story seen in the implementation process.

After analyzing the responses from the six pupils, it can be appreciated there was an improvement in students speaking skills and use of vocabulary after the implementation of the activities throughout the six weeks. Students showed the use of vocabulary they learned and their answers were more elaborated in comparison to the ones provided in the first oral test. Although they mispronounced some words, they seemed to have learned.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS

In this final chapter, I present information related to the implications of the outcomes followed by a description of the limitations which emerged during the implementation phase and the possible and future changes that could be made. Next, the conclusion is presented as well as a possible second action research cycle in this subject matter.

This project was undertaken to promote speaking skills in elementary students who were studying English as a Foreign Language. By means of storytelling students accomplished this goal. Additionally, they increased their range of words. To accomplish this, an action plan was designed to get the participants familiar with stories. To keep track of the main objective of this investigation, different activities and tasks were elaborated. During this process, learners gradually assimilated new words which were presented in context. Apparently, most of the participants benefitted from the implementation of this technique, given that they expressed they enjoyed listening stories. Also, they improved their speaking skills and vocabulary repertoire which may be supported by the data collection.

2. Implications

Through the implementation of this intervention plan, I learned that it is worthy investing time in reading interesting stories. This may bring to the classroom a new perspective of the language. There is a wide variety of stories of many types for all ages, levels, likes and so forth. Moreover, stories can be complemented with diverse tasks, activities and exercises which may make students learn and work in a different way in each session. After having analyzed the results, it could be perceived that students improved their speaking skills after working with the four stories. Students did not need to achieve a high level of proficiency in English in order to participate and understand the stories.

Another implication is that, as there was a lack of equipment, the activities had to be adjusted and a previous preparation of material such as printed images, copies and so forth was essential. However, the lack of commitment of some students may have impacted the achievement of positive results.
3. Limitations of this study
Some constraints were encountered during this action research and the implementation of the action plan. First, the English level of the students, because they did not speak enough, hence it was challenging to make learners comprehend the story they were listening to. Second, some students tended to read their sentences when they presented their results of the projects such as the poster. Third, as this research was carried out to promote mainly the speaking skills it isn’t known if it will have positive results with other skills. Fourth, this action plan was designed for this specific group of students in this context, therefore findings cannot be generalized, and it cannot be state that if it will work in other circumstances, in other words, the final outcome may vary according to the context and participants in which storytelling technique is applied. This technique may or may not work as desired.

4. Changes next time around
For further implementation, it may be necessary to consider more weeks and more than two sessions to work on one story since there are several activities which may be developed in class. This action plan just focused on the speaking skills, but storytelling can be used to develop or foster the other skills.

A well-designed syllabus for English class for the primary students from the school where this action research was carried out may be vital as English is not an official subject thus, there is no program for the teachers to follow.

Besides, it would be necessary to search for strategies to motivate shy and uncommitted students. There are multiple genres which may be interesting for all types of learners.

5. Conclusions
In conclusion, regarding this research process, the two objectives were accomplished to a certain extent. The first one was to help primary school students to develop speaking skills by means of storytelling which included the use of tasks and activities to practice and produce language through entertaining and interesting stories. Since participants lacked training consequently they could not establish a fluent conversation in English. The second was to expand vocabulary; due to the fact that in stories new terms are encompassed and contextualized, vocabulary may be acquired effectively.
Additionally, students engaged in communication and meaningful activities which were designed with the purpose of increasing interest, motivation and learning. As they were elementary students who by nature may be eager to learn something new in another language, it was necessary to plan the lessons with appealing material and types of stories which were appropriated with their ages.

After doing this action research, I discovered that it is possible to transform knowledge, new experience and data collected into something significant and useful for my teaching strategies, methods, and planning. This action research may make a small contribution to the new or existing perspectives of how English may be taught to young EFL learners.

6. Ways forward
Future research should therefore concentrate on activities in which students improve their pronunciation. Besides I think it is necessary to work more on the participants’ reading skills since, in the process of the implementation, these were not developed.
References


Appendix 1
La información que proporciones es muy importante para mi trabajo de investigación.

POR FAVOR CONTESTA LAS SIGUIENTES PREGUNTAS:

1. ¿Consideras que es importante aprender inglés?  
   SI  NO  ¿Por qué?

2. ¿Te gusta la materia de inglés?  
   SI  NO  ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Te gustan las actividades que realiza la maestra en clase para enseñarte inglés?  
   SI  NO  ¿Por qué?

4. ¿Has aprendido inglés con las clases que te ha dado la maestra?

5. ¿Qué actividades te aburren en la clase de inglés?

6. ¿Qué actividades te gustan en la clase de inglés?

7. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes habilidades te gustaría desarrollar en el idioma inglés y por qué?  
   Hablar  Leer  Escuchar  Escribir

8. ¿Alguna vez has leído o te han leído un cuento en inglés?

9. ¿Te gustaría leer cuentos o historias en inglés?

10. ¿Qué temas te gustaría ver en la clase de inglés?

¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!
Appendix 2

Learning log

POR FAVOR CONTESTA CON SINCERIDAD LAS SIGUIENTES PREGUNTAS:

1. ¿Te gusto la clase de hoy?   Si       No
   ¿Por qué?
2. Las actividades que más me gustaron fueron:
3. Las actividades que menos me gustaron fueron:
4. En la clase de hoy me sentí:
5. Lo que se me hizo difícil fue:
6. Lo que se me hizo fácil fue:
7. El título de la historia que más me gusto fue:
8. La historia trata de:
9. Las frases o pablaras que aprendí en inglés fueron:
   Gracias 😊

Oral pre- and post-test

1. What's your favorite animal?
2. What are you wearing today?
3. How many rooms are there in your house? Tell me the names.
4. What are their names?
5. Do you know a story?
6. What is the story about?
Appendix 3
Sample of the first story used in the action plan
Elephant and Friends

One day an elephant wandered into a forest in search of friends.
He saw a monkey on a tree.
“Will you be my friend?” asked the elephant.
Replied the monkey, “You are too big. You cannot swing from trees like me.”
Next, the elephant met a rabbit. He asked him to be his friends.
But the rabbit said, “You are too big to play in my burrow!”
Then the elephant met a frog.
“Will you be my friend? He asked.
“How can I?” asked the frog.
“You are too big to leap about like me.”
The elephant was upset. He met a fox next.
“Will you be my friend?” he asked the fox.
The fox said, “Sorry, sir, you are too big.”
The next day, the elephant saw all the animals in the forest running for their lives.
The elephant asked them what the matter was.
The bear replied, “There is a tiger in the forest. He’s trying to gobble us all up!”
The animals all ran away to hide.
The elephant wondered what he could do to solve everyone in the forest.
Meanwhile, the tiger kept eating up whoever he could find.
The elephant walked up to the tiger and said, “Please, Mr. Tiger, do not eat up these poor animals.”
“Mind your own business!” growled the tiger.
The elephant has no choice but to give the tiger a hefty kick.
The frightened tiger ran for his life.
The elephant ambled back into the forest to announce the good news to everyone.
All the animals thanked the elephant.
They said, “You are just the right size to be our friend.”
Appendix 4
Samples of some participants’ ended products

My favorite part was when the elephant stepped on the floor and the tiger frightened and ran.

Excellent!
Title: The lost house
Length: 90 min
Genre: Horror
Directors: Yasmin, Diego, Luis, Maria, Fernandez, Zoe
Stars: Gerardo, Andrea, Jose, Yasmin, Alexis, Daniela
Review: Bays go for a walk but suddenly they find a house in each. A couple gets into a room. They hear hoises and a boy looks for a girl but he found something horrible.
Appendix 5

Samples of participants’ learning logs

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{What did you learn about?} Talking about the stories of the house and the experiences.
\item \textbf{What did you like in class?} When we applied the exam and the words and sentences.
\item \textbf{What did you not like?} I only like.
\item \textbf{What story did you like the most?} It’s Cinderella.
\item \textbf{What does this story talk about?} Cinderella marries William and he gives her money, but William later terms her into being a maid and she has to go to Las Vegas and work in a house and at the casino.
\item \textbf{What English words did you learn?} Elephant, bed, house, cat, table, washing machine, sofa, cinderella, bedroom, bathroom, living room, garage, garden, is, estudiar, me, my, gabinete de baño, y a don totos.
\item \textbf{What did you read today about?} Thanksgiving.
\item \textbf{What did you like in class?} The questions.
\item \textbf{What was the story that you liked the most?} Pink jellybean.
\item \textbf{In the story, what was there?} There was a long camera, and a chest with a pink jellybean.
\item \textbf{What did you find?} A black cat and it had a chest and a pink jellybean.
\item \textbf{What did you do?} Open the pink chest, house garage, bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, living room, washing machine.
\end{itemize}
Appendix 6

Samples of journal's notes

First day after holidays

28/08/15

Los niños ya están en 6º grado.

Llegaron al grupo de nuevo todos los niños y las niñas son felices por volver a clase. Se cambiaron de uniforme y revisaron los uniformes. En total son 24 niños. Empezamos el día con la escuela y los niños se alteraron mucho. Al principio, todos los niños y niñas se alteraron y se dijeron en español. Al final, se preguntaron a todos. Las niñas y los niños se alteraron a la vez. La mayoría de las niñas y los niños se alteraron. Al final, se preguntaron a todos. Al final, se alteraron a todos. Las niñas y los niños se alteraron a la vez. La mayoría de las niñas y los niños se alteraron.