



Readiness of Novice Early Childhood Education Student Teachers in Employing Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) for Enhancing Children's Oral Language Development: Basis for a Proposed Intervention Program

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Abstract

Background and Aim: Language in early childhood education is a key part of children's literacy, communication, and thinking. The Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) has been identified as an effective method of supporting young learners' oral language development, but there has been little research to explore novice Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECED) student teachers' preparedness for using it in community-based learning settings. The study measured the readiness of BECED student teachers from Tubod College to apply DBBSM in cultivating the oral language skills of kindergarten children and provided the ground for an intervention program.

Materials and Methods: The group of participants in the study consisted of 40 BECED student teacher-trainees who were obtained by total enumeration sampling. The study used a quantitative descriptive research design with 30 BECED student teacher-trainees obtained by total enumeration sampling. A researcher-developed and expert-validated questionnaire composed of four parts: socio-demographic, pedagogical readiness, pedagogical competencies, and perceived impact of DBBSM on children's oral language development was used to collect data. The data were analyzed by frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation.

Results: Based on the findings, the respondents were generally found to be ready in the areas of content knowledge, instructional planning, pedagogical skills, and professional preparedness in implementing DBBSM. The strengths that the student teachers exhibited were: facilitating learner participation, incorporating oral language objectives, using illustrations from storybooks, and reflective practice. But there were areas in which voice modulation and the formulation of guide questions needed to be improved. The respondents also had a positive perception of the high effectiveness of DBBSM in fostering vocabulary learning, speaking fluency, and understanding of language, expressive language, and interactive communication of kindergarten students, which shows the potential of DBBSM in strengthening the ability of children to develop their oral language in kindergarten.

Conclusion: The results indicate that the socio-economic and resource-related challenges are not barriers to the readiness of novice BECED student teachers in implementing Dialogic Big Book Storytelling. DBBSM was thought to be a good pedagogical method for developing oral language skills for kindergarten students. The following targeted training is recommended to enhance the effectiveness of implementation and teacher readiness for community extension programs: questioning skills, voice modulation, and instructional scaffolding skills.

Keywords: Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method, Teacher Readiness, Oral Language Development, Early Childhood Education, Kindergarten Learners, Community Extension Program

Introduction

The development of oral language is essential to early childhood education as it is the basis for communication, literacy, cognition, and social interaction. Growing up with well-developed oral language skills will increase children's chances of being better prepared for school and succeeding academically. The interactive and language-rich learning environments that actively engage children in meaningful communication are therefore continued to be a priority in educational institutions and early childhood programs (UNESCO, 2022; OECD, 2023). Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) is one of the methods that is well known for its ability to foster oral language development. Dialogic storytelling is not a traditional style of storytelling, but rather it requires children to be active players in learning by posing questions, making predictions, discussing, and verbally playing. These experiences include opportunities for children to build their vocabulary, to deepen their understanding of words, to enhance their fluency, and to grow in their ability to express themselves in speaking. Research in recent years has shown that dialogic and interactive storytelling techniques play a critical





role in language development and motivation of young children (Laird-Gentle et al., 2023). However, teachers who facilitate learning are key to the successful implementation of DBBSM. Teacher readiness includes content knowledge, pedagogical skills, planning skills, and confidence in the teacher to deliver developmentally appropriate practices. Although these skills are being acquired over time in teacher education programs, novice student teachers may experience difficulties in putting theory into practice in classroom settings with little experience and limited exposure to classroom settings (OECD, 2023). The challenges can be more salient when student teachers are expected to apply instructional strategies in real community contexts in which learners' needs, resources, and instructional contexts are very diverse. This is especially true of Tubod College's Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECed) Program extension work with the community. First-year student teachers in BECed are involved in the implementation of their extension services, such as Dialogic Big Book Storytelling (DBBS) activities with kindergarten children in selected public elementary schools in Tubod, Lanao del Norte. This is important because first-year student teachers have not yet had enough time to build their professional preparation and have received less formal pedagogical training and supervised teaching practice. Meanwhile, the capacity of many public schools located in provincial and rural communities to provide instructional support and the language experience of children are constrained, creating a need for effective language intervention strategies to become more meaningful. Such situations indicate the need to investigate the preparedness of novice student teachers to implement DBBSM and help children develop their oral language skills in community-based education environments. While a number of studies have shown the benefits of dialogic storytelling on children's language learning, scarce research has been conducted to assess novice early childhood education student teachers' preparedness to employ such a technique in community extension programs, especially in the provincial setting. There is a significant body of literature that has mainly concentrated on learner outcomes, and little work has been done on the readiness of future teachers, the facilitators of these interventions. It is crucial to fill this gap to bolster teacher preparation programs and successful implementation of evidence-based language development strategies. Hence, the purpose of this study was to determine novice early childhood education student teachers' readiness in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method in the oral language development of kindergarten students in the community extension program of Tubod College. Specifically, the study aimed to explore the preparedness of the student teachers to implement the approach and the perceived effect of the approach on the children's oral language development. Findings should be reported and provide empirical evidence to inform the implementation of targeted intervention and capacity-building programs aimed at improving teachers' readiness and improving the provision of opportunities for oral language development for children in kindergarten.

Objectives

The objective of this study was to determine the level of readiness of the novice student-teachers from the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECed) program of Tubod College in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) for the purpose of supporting the oral language development of kindergarten students in selected public elementary schools in Tubod, Lanao del Norte. In particular, the study aimed to:

1. Describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, sex, year level, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, exposure to storytelling activities, and availability of books or reading materials at home.
2. Assess the readiness of novice Early Childhood Education student teachers in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method in terms of: *a. content knowledge; b. pedagogical skills; c. planning of instruction; and d. personal-professional readiness.*
3. Determine the perceived contribution of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method to the oral language development of kindergarten learners in terms of: *a. vocabulary development; b. speaking fluency; c. comprehension + response; and d. expressive language skills; and e. Skills in interaction and interpersonal communication.*
4. Identify the strengths and areas for improvement in the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method among novice Early Childhood Education student teachers.





5. Propose recommendations and design an intervention plan to improve the readiness of novice Early Childhood Education student teachers in the area of instruction, and to improve the oral language development of kindergarten children using the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method.

Hypotheses

In alignment with the descriptive research design of this study, no statistical hypotheses were formulated or tested. The study did not use any inferential statistical techniques like correlation, regression, or experimental comparison, but descriptive statistical techniques were employed to describe the socio-demographic characteristics, assess the readiness of novice Early Childhood Education student teachers, and determine the perceived outcomes of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method. The questions posed in the research thus led the analysis and interpretation of the data instead of null or alternative hypotheses. This approach is consistent with descriptive quantitative studies, which aim to describe and interpret data observed without the focus being on testing causal or predictive relationships.

Literature review

Early childhood education places special focus on oral language as a basic skill for communication, literacy learning, cognition, and social interaction. In this context, teacher readiness has become an increasingly important factor for early literacy instruction, as the quality of the instructional materials is only part of the equation, while the ability of the teacher to provide meaningful, interactive, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences is more important. The study is grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which states that the development of language is a process of social construction and that more knowledgeable other people are important to child language development. Learning takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where scaffolding and guided participation, as well as dialogic interaction, allow children to perform beyond what they can do on their own. Vygotsky's scaffolding process is implemented in dialogic storytelling practices, including the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) in reading sessions between teachers and children. Teachers engage prior knowledge at the pre-reading stage, which is achieved by questioning and prediction. When reading, scaffolding is realized by prompts, modeling of language structures, and purposeful questioning (what, why, and how questions) that draw out the responses of children. Post-reading interaction further enhances learning by having children retell, enrich concepts, and develop meaning through group interaction. In this way, DBBSM turns passive listening into interactive language co-construction, which is a connection between theory and instruction.

Teacher Readiness and Oral Language Development: Thematic Perspectives

Based on the literature, it is concluded that, across the literature, the interdependency of teacher readiness and children's oral language development has always been seen in early childhood education. Teacher competencies are not simply related to dialogic interactions, but are actually directly related to the quality of the dialogic interaction, which then relates to the growth of children's vocabularies, their comprehension, their fluency, and their expressive language and communication skills. Existing studies, however, tend to focus on the constructs separately, so there is limited knowledge on the interaction among various aspects of teacher readiness and how they affect language outcomes. There are four interrelated dimensions of teacher readiness in early childhood education: content knowledge, pedagogical skills, instructional planning, and personal-professional readiness. Content knowledge, in turn, can give teachers a sense of early language development and literacy concepts, which can help them choose texts and facilitate meaning-making. Pedagogical skills are those the teacher uses to stimulate interaction through questioning, scaffolding, and responding. Instructional planning provides for age-appropriate, learning objective-driven storytelling sessions. Personal-professional readiness is the positive self-efficacy, motivation, and confidence that teachers have in the use of interactive teaching strategies. While these dimensions have been considered individually, there is recent empirical research that shows that they are most effective when they are used in an interactive manner rather than standalone, especially in the context of dialogic literacy instruction (Dixon & Oakhill 2024). Research with pre-service teachers and novice teachers has shown that although they may have a theoretical





understanding of literacy instruction, they may not have the ability to make this theoretical understanding actual in the classroom when teaching literacy. Low to moderate confidence in using dialogic reading strategies is attributed to limited practicum experiences and limited authentic teaching experiences. As a result, novice teachers often provide more teacher-dominated instruction, thereby limiting the amount of sustained children's interaction, critical for oral language learning (Cabell et al., 2024).

Early Childhood, Children's Oral Language Development

Oral language development is the ability to understand and express thoughts and ideas in oral language. It involves vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension and response, expressive language skills, and interactive communication skills. Time and again, studies have shown that early oral language skills have been shown to be a strong predictor of later literacy skills, achievement, and academic success (Rowe & Snow, 2020). Vocabulary is supported by repeated exposure and exposure to meaningful language in context, especially during interactive storytelling experiences (Swanson, 2024). Children's fluency and comprehension skills are enhanced through guided conversation that helps them make meaning and interpret (Bayat & Erlindawaty, 2025). Children are encouraged to retell stories and make up their own stories (Ulusoy et al., 2026) to develop expressive language skills. The same goes for interactive communication skills, which are developed when children can engage in a dialogue and negotiate meaning with others (Wang et al., 2025). There are still some differences in language outcomes, however, especially in disadvantaged communities, where access to literacy-rich environments is limited (Cabell et al., 2024).

Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM)

The Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method is a teaching method based on dialogic reading theories with a focus on listening with interaction instead of listening passively. Uses large books to facilitate visual engagement and shared meaning-making by teachers and children. The approach fosters, scaffolds, and enables intentional questioning and child participation in storytelling sessions. The empirical studies indicate that the use of dialogic storytelling has a significant impact on the improvement of vocabulary, listening comprehension, and narrative skills of young learners (Dogan 2025). More recent studies also underscore that intentional questioning strategies and sustained interaction by teachers can be used to facilitate improvement in expressive language and communication as a result of structured storytelling interventions (Buckley et al., 2023). In spite of these advantages, however, pre-service education is not always well-equipped for novice teachers to make use of DBBSM as they wish to do because they lack experience with dialogic instructional training (Zhang et al., 2025).

Relationship Between Teacher Readiness and Oral Language Development

Studies have shown that teacher instructional readiness has a significant correlation with children's oral language development. The more pedagogically competent and confident teachers are in facilitating language-intensive, interactive classrooms to support vocabulary development and comprehension, the more likely they are to do so (Vigo 2026). On the other hand, low readiness could lead to a low level of scaffolding provided and/or fewer opportunities for the child's involvement in meaningful activities. While there is a theoretical basis for the use of dialogic storytelling, it is dependent on the teacher's capacity to put it into practice consistently and appropriately in real classroom settings. New teachers' problems, especially in terms of questioning, classroom interaction management, and so on, may limit children's oral language activities (Neuman & Powers, 2022). Although it is indeed an effective pedagogical approach based on both theory and practice, there is a dearth of research that specifically addresses novice early childhood education student teachers who are implementing DBBSM in community-based programs, especially in the Philippine context of public elementary schools.

Research Gap and Study Contribution

The literature yields three gaps that are identified as key. First, the theory of the interaction of dimensions of teacher readiness and their effect on oral language development in dialogic storytelling situations remains a gap in the knowledge. Second, the methodological gap is that the majority of studies have been done in a controlled or classroom setting, which is less complex than extension settings in





the community. Third, the population gap because little research has specifically examined student teachers who are novice teachers in ECE as the main implementers of dialogic literacy strategies in the real-life of teaching. This study seeks to address these gaps by analyzing novice BECED student teachers' preparedness in the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method, and the perception of the novice BECED student teachers about the contribution of this method to the oral language development of kindergarten children in the community extension program of Tubod, Lanao del Norte. The findings will be used to inform teacher education by enhancing the pre-service training in dialogic literacy strategies and developing intervention programs to enhance instructional readiness and early language outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

This study is based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which focuses on the importance of children's language learning occurring as a result of guided participation and authentic communication between children and more knowledgeable persons. In this view, learning takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), that is, the range of language skills that can be achieved through teacher scaffolding that goes beyond the child's current independent performance. In early childhood education, teachers play the role of mediators of learning and engage in conversations with children, demonstrate the use of language, and organize learning activities and playtime to foster their oral language development. In the scope of this theoretical framework, the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) is considered to be a scaffolding-based instructional method, which is a structured storytelling interaction based on Vygotsky's principles. Teachers facilitate children's learning with purposeful questioning, prompting, and meaning-making during implementation. These dialogic exchanges serve as scaffolds that progressively transfer responsibility from teacher to child, thus increasing the amount of vocabulary input, understanding, and output of the child, fostering fluency and interactive communication skills. This study is built on a framework that assumes that novices' readiness in the field of early childhood education affects the quality of the implementation of DBBSM in kindergarten and the quality of the oral language development of kindergarten learners. Teacher readiness is considered an independent construct and operationalized in terms of the four interrelated dimensions: content knowledge, pedagogical skill, instructional planning, and personal-professional readiness. These dimensions don't act independently, but they act interactively while teaching. Content knowledge aids in understanding language development and the appropriate selection of story materials. Pedagogical skills help to implement scaffolding techniques, including questioning, providing prompts, and using facilitation dialogue. Instructional planning provides for developmentally appropriate, structured, and goal-oriented activities for storytelling. Personal-professional readiness enhances the teacher's confidence and eagerness to engage interactively with the story in the storytelling session. Together, these dimensions help to define the effectiveness of the implementation of DBBSM in classroom and community extension formats. Socio-demographic factors of the students were also identified as background factors that could indirectly affect the readiness of the teachers, such as age, sex, year level, family monthly income, mother's and father's educational attainment, exposure to storytelling, and the presence of reading materials in the home. These variables are not considered a cause of the outcomes, but they are seen as contextual variables that affect the learning resources and prior literacy experiences of students, as well as opportunities for academic and pedagogical exposure. For example, books might not be readily available in the home, and exposure to stories might be limited, which can impact early literacy experiences and confidence and competence in the use of dialogic instructional practices. In a similar way, socio-economic factors, including the income of the family, can also affect the educational support, learning opportunities, and educational preparedness for community-based practice. Children's oral language development is a dependent construct in the framework, including vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension and response, expressive language skills, and interactive communication skills. These indicators are intended to show the measurable language outcomes that will show improvement as a result of regular practice of dialogic storytelling with well-prepared student teachers. Lastly, the study has a descriptive conceptual approach. The intervention program is not considered to be an experimental variable, but is an output



of the study. It is designed to build upon the strengths and gaps identified in teachers' readiness and as a foundation to assist in capacity-building and instructional improvement for community-based extension programs in Early Childhood Education. In general, the framework explains the relationship between teacher preparedness and children's oral language development in a theoretically grounded manner and emphasizes the contribution of the scaffolded dialogic interaction between teachers and children mediated by teachers' competence to early language learning outcomes.

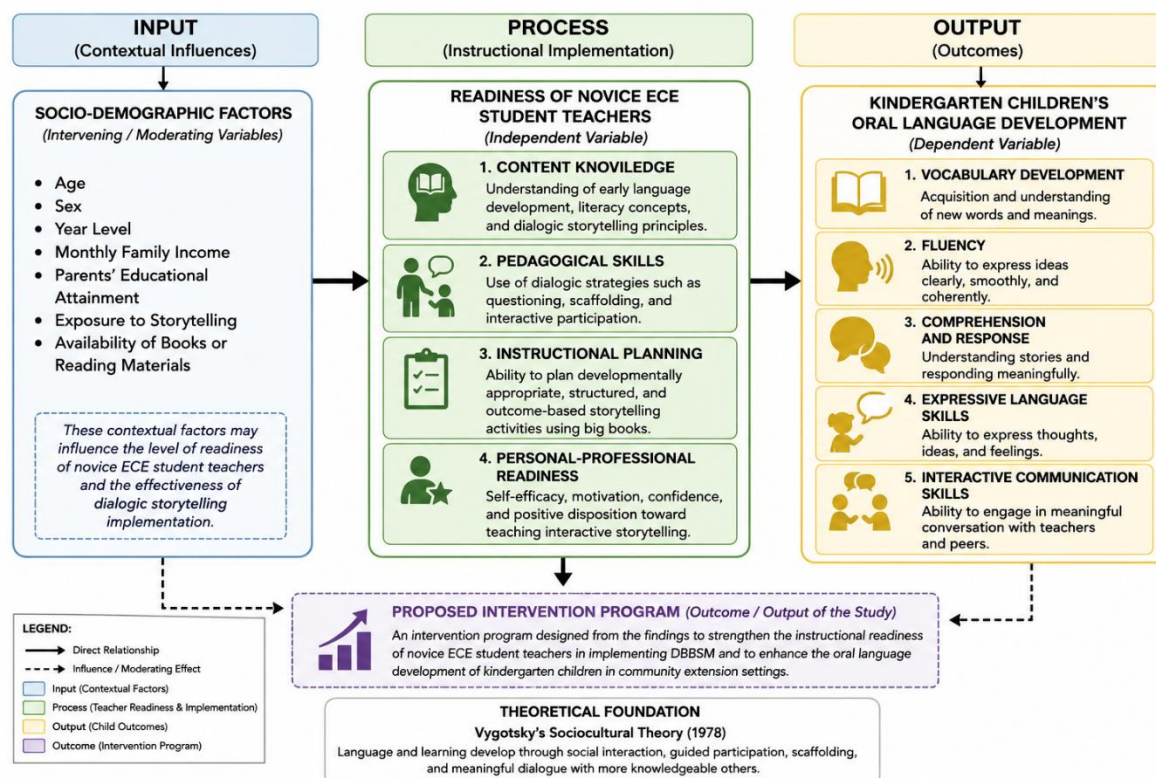


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

The study used a quantitative descriptive research design to determine the readiness of the novice Early Childhood Education (ECE) student teachers in the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) and to describe their perception about the oral language development of kindergarten learners in the community extension program in selected public elementary schools of Tubod, Lanao del Norte. The descriptive research design was considered suitable for this study as it involves describing a condition, characteristic, or perception that exists without manipulation of the variables or control of natural settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). As the study was of a descriptive type, neither experimental treatment nor a pretest-posttest procedure was used, nor were hypothesis testing and causal inference used. Data were gathered at one time after the DBBSM activities were implemented. The results, therefore, reflect the perceptions of the student teachers after implementation of their level of readiness for instruction and the observed oral language behaviors of the children in the storytelling situation. The conceptual framework of the study guided the investigation which involved three major variables: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents; (*age, sex, year level, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, exposure to storytelling activities, and availability of books or reading materials at home*), Readiness of Novice ECE Student Teachers for implementing DBBSM in terms of: (*Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Skills, Instructional Planning, Personal-Professional Readiness*), Kindergarten children's oral language development was perceived in terms of: (*Vocabulary Development, Fluency, Comprehension and Response, Expressive Language Skills, Interactive Communication Skills*).



The findings were interpreted in the framework of the Sociocultural Theory of Lev Vygotsky (1978), which states that children's language development occurs through social interaction, scaffolding, and guided participation. In this context, the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method is a dialogic teaching method that provides for interaction between the teacher and the child that aids in language learning. However, this study was descriptive and did not try to make causal inferences among the variables.

All weighted mean calculations were made using the following uniform interpretation scale:

Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
3.26–4.00	Very High
2.51–3.25	High
1.76–2.50	Low
1.00–1.75	Very Low

The scale intervals were selected based on equal class intervals generally recommended in the field of educational research for 4-point Likert-type instruments and were also employed in the methodology and results sections.

Population and Sampling Technique

Thirty (30) Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECed) student teachers from Tubod College who actively implemented the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method for the community extension program of the college served as the respondents of the study. The respondents comprised 16 first-year student teachers (53.33%) and 14 third-year student teachers (46.67%). The two groups were classified as novice student teachers because neither had full professional teaching preparation nor had a lot of experience in the classroom. All students in both groups engaged in the same community extension activities and had very little hands-on experience in implementing structured dialogic storytelling instruction.

A purposive total enumeration sampling technique was used. The following inclusion criteria were used to select respondents: 1.) *Officially enrolled in the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education program*; 2.) *Considered novice student teachers with limited teaching experience*; 3.) *Actively participated in the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method during the community extension program*; 4.) *Voluntarily took part in the study*. The study excluded students who did not do storytelling extension activities. The sample size was deemed to be sufficient for program description and baseline evaluation. The results must be considered in the context of the study environment, and extrapolations to other groups than those studied should be done with care.

Research Instrument

The data were collected through the researcher-made structured questionnaire to measure the readiness and perception of oral language development of children after implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method in teaching. The instrument was content-validated by three (3) Early Childhood Education, literacy instruction, and educational research experts before administration. The instrument was evaluated by the validators on: *Content relevance, Clarity of wording, Appropriateness of indicators, Alignment with research objectives, and construct representation*. Before pilot testing and data collection, their recommendations were used in the finalization of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part I: Socio-Demographic Profile

This section collected data on: *age, sex, year level, monthly family income, parents' educational attainment, exposure to storytelling activities, and availability of books or reading materials at home*. The following variables were considered contextual factors that may impact differences in instructional readiness related to literacy exposure and educational opportunities.

Part II: Readiness of Novice ECE Student Teachers

This section evaluated the respondents' readiness for implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method in four aspects: *Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Skills, Instructional Planning,*





and Personal-Professional Readiness. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from:

4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, 1 – Strongly Disagree.

Part III. Kindergarten children's oral language development

This section assessed the perception of the respondents regarding the oral language achievement of kindergarten learners after the implementation of DBBSM with respect to: *Vocabulary Development, Fluency, Comprehension and Response, Expressive Language Skills, and Interactive Communication Skills*. In this section, student teachers' perceptions were measured by what they observed students doing when they were used in storytelling activities, and this is important. The kindergarten learners were not assessed in direct language or standardized tests, nor observed on a formal assessment protocol. Thus, the results of oral language development should be interpreted as perceived results of children's language performance, not as objective results.

Validity, Pilot Testing, and Reliability

The instrument was first content-validated and pilot tested before conducting the main study. Content validation was carried out by three (3) expert validators who checked the questionnaire for relevance, clarity, appropriateness, and suitability of the study purpose. The recommendations they provided helped to refine questionnaire items. After the experts' validation, a pilot test was performed with a sample of forty (40) respondents who had similar characteristics to the respondents in the final study sample but were not part of it. The pilot testing process was conducted to test the clarity, readability, understandability, and consistency of the items. The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient as follows:

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
Content Knowledge	$\alpha = 0.83$
Pedagogical Skills	$\alpha = 0.85$
Instructional Planning	$\alpha = 0.84$
Personal-Professional Readiness	$\alpha = 0.86$
Oral Language Development Scale	$\alpha = 0.88$

These coefficients are satisfactory to very satisfactory and are sufficient to show that the instrument was sufficiently reliable for the study.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted during the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method under the community extension program of Tubod College. The storytelling activities were conducted for a period of four weeks in April 2026 in selected public elementary schools in Tubod, Lanao del Norte. Before data gathering, permission was secured from the appropriate school administrators and program coordinators. The purpose, procedure, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of the study were explained to the respondents. Following the completion of the storytelling activities, questionnaires were administered to the participating student teachers. The instrument was filled out by the respondents themselves and returned right after completion. For Part III of the questionnaire, the student teachers themselves provided ratings based on their observations and perceptions of the kindergarten learners' oral language behaviors exhibited during the storytelling sessions. No external research or evaluation of children was carried out. All completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before data encoding and analysis.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical techniques were employed in analyzing the data, and these included: *Frequency Count, Percentage Distribution, Weighted Mean, and Standard Deviation*. Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The teacher readiness and perceived oral language development were measured using weighted means. Standard deviation values were used to measure how much the ratings of the respondents vary or are consistent. The standard deviations were lower, the more the respondents agreed, and higher, the more they disagreed. The following standardized interpretation scale was used:





Scale Range	Interpretation
3.26–4.00	Very High
2.51–3.25	High
1.76–2.50	Low
1.00–1.75	Very Low

In line with the descriptive research design, there were no inferential statistical procedures, hypothesis testing, correlational analyses, or causal analyses conducted. The purpose of the analysis was to describe the characteristics of the respondents, their readiness, and their oral language development outcomes to provide baseline evidence that would inform instructional improvement and intervention planning.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical guidelines and standards were followed meticulously during the study. Respondents' participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. The anonymity of the respondents and their responses was assured to them, and responses were only used for academic and research purposes. The study did not reveal any personally identifiable information that was reported or published. Data are reported in a summarized manner to anonymize and protect the anonymity and privacy of the respondents. Additionally, the respondents' academic position and participation in the community extension program were not different as a function of participation or non-participation in this study.

Results

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile is used to give background information to understand the readiness of novice Early Childhood Education student teachers in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM). The majority of the respondents are female, in the early years, and from low-income families with limited opportunities to access literacy-rich environments.

Table 1. Demographic Statistics of Respondents (n = 30)

Characteristic	Profile	Frequency	%
Age	14–18 years old	8	26.67%
	19–20 years old	11	36.67%
	21–22 years old	7	23.33%
	23–30 years old	4	13.33%
Sex	Male	5	16.67%
	Female	25	83.33%
Year Level	1st Year BECEd	16	53.33%
	3rd Year BECEd	14	46.67%
Monthly Family Income	Below PHP 10,000	22	73.33%
	PHP 11,000–20,000	2	6.67%
	PHP 21,000–30,000	6	20.00%
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	Elementary	17	56.67%
	High School	10	33.33%
	College	3	10.00%
Access to Learning Resources at Home	Very Limited	4	13.33%
	Limited	18	60.00%
	Adequate	7	23.33%





Characteristic	Profile	Frequency	%
Exposure to Storytelling	Highly Adequate	1	3.33%
	Rarely	15	50.00%
Availability of Books/Reading Materials	Sometimes	9	30.00%
	Often	6	20.00%
	Few	19	63.33%
	Moderate	8	26.67%
	Many	3	10.00%

Interpretation

Most of the respondents come from low-income families, where access to books and exposure to stories is low. This means that there were limited literacy contexts before students' formal education. Nevertheless, subsequent research reveals a uniformly high degree of preparedness, implying that intentional teacher preparation has a strong compensating effect on the acquisition of teaching skills.

Table 2. Scoring Procedure and Interpretation

Scale	Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.26 – 4.00	Very High
3	2.51 – 3.25	High
2	1.76 – 2.50	Low
1	1.00 – 1.75	Very Low

Interpretation

The table presents the interpretation guide used in analyzing the weighted mean scores of the study. Scores within 3.26–4.00 were interpreted as “Very High,” while scores within 2.51–3.25 were interpreted as “High.” This scale served as the basis for evaluating the readiness of novice ECE student teachers and the oral language development of children.

Novice Student Teachers' Readiness

Table 3. Content Knowledge. The table below shows the respondents' level of readiness regarding knowledge and understanding of the principles and importance of Dialogic Big Book Storytelling.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I understand the principles of Big Book storytelling.	3.10	High
I can identify developmentally appropriate Big Books for children.	3.67	Very High
I understand story structure (beginning, middle, end).	3.20	High
I recognize how illustrations support children's understanding.	3.83	Very High
I understand how storytelling enhances oral language development.	3.13	High
General Weighted Mean	3.39	High
Interpretation		





Content knowledge is evident in the responding, particularly with the use of suitable Big Books and identification of illustrations. However, there is a lesser conceptual understanding of the principles of storytelling, which suggests a greater dependence on visual and material aspects than theory.

Table 4. Pedagogical Skills: The table indicates the level of preparedness of the respondents in using suitable teaching strategies and interactive storytelling techniques in storytelling sessions.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I use appropriate voice modulation (tone, pitch, pacing).	2.90	High
I use gestures and facial expressions effectively.	3.13	High
I ask recall, inferential, and predictive questions.	3.33	High
I encourage children's participation during storytelling.	3.67	Very High
I manage storytelling flow smoothly.	3.33	High
General Weighted Mean	3.27	High

Interpretation

Although overall readiness is high, voice modulation is the weakest area. Questioning skills are also relatively low as compared with engagement skills, meaning that respondents are more skilled at the management of classroom participation than at dialogic language facilitation.

Table 5. Instructional Planning: The table shows the respondents' readiness to organize and plan storytelling activities that are in accordance with the learning objectives of oral language.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I plan storytelling aligned with learning objectives.	3.10	High
I select appropriate materials and strategies.	3.27	High
I prepare guide questions before storytelling.	2.97	High
I organize storytelling activities logically.	3.13	High
I integrate oral language goals into storytelling.	3.37	High
General Weighted Mean	3.17	High

Interpretation

The weakest part was in the preparation of guide questions, which refers to the difficulty in developing structured dialogic questions needed to implement DBBSM.

Table 6. Personal and Professional Readiness. The table shows the level of respondents' confidence, enthusiasm, preparation, and commitment in carrying out storytelling activities.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I feel confident in delivering storytelling sessions.	3.17	High
I show enthusiasm during storytelling.	3.37	High
I actively engage children in storytelling activities.	3.47	High





Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I prepare adequately before storytelling sessions.	3.37	High
I reflect on and improve my storytelling practices.	3.73	Very High
General Weighted Mean	3.42	High

Interpretation
 Respondents demonstrate reflective practice and are metacognitively ready. But there is a gap between reflection and the realization of the dialogic teaching strategy.

Table 7. Cross-Tabulated Relationship Between Socio-Demographic Factors and Readiness

Group	Content Knowledge WM	Pedagogical Skills WM	Instructional Planning WM
Low Income (<₱10,000)	3.33	3.21	3.12
Higher Income (≥₱11,000)	3.45	3.32	3.22
Limited Resources	3.31	3.20	3.10
Adequate Resources	3.48	3.35	3.28
Rare Storytelling Exposure	3.29	3.18	3.11
Frequent Exposure	3.52	3.40	3.30

Interpretation
 The cross-tabulated results show a consistent trend: those who are more socio-economically advantaged and have more literacy exposure show slightly higher readiness scores in each domain. However, all groups stay in the “High” category, reflecting background differences that are offset by institutional training. Sociological factors affect the refinement of the skills that teachers use, especially their dialogic skills and their planning skills.

Children’s Oral Language Development (Teacher Perception Data)

Table 8. Vocabulary Development. The table shows the opinions of the respondents about the level of vocabulary development of children in storytelling activities.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children use new words introduced during storytelling.	3.60	Very High
Children understand the meaning of new words.	3.40	High
Children use descriptive words when speaking.	3.40	High
Children expand their vocabulary during interactions.	3.67	Very High
General Weighted Mean	3.52	Very High

Table 9. Fluency

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children speak clearly and audibly.	3.13	High
Children use complete or developing sentences.	3.23	High
Children express ideas smoothly.	3.27	High





Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children participate verbally without hesitation.	3.30	High
General Weighted Mean	3.23	High

Table 10. Comprehension and Response

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children answer story-related questions correctly.	3.40	High
Children retell parts of the story in sequence.	3.33	High
Children identify characters, settings, and events.	3.37	High
Children show understanding through verbal responses.	3.40	High
General Weighted Mean	3.38	High

Table 11. Expressive Language Skills

The table shows the respondents' evaluation of the ability of children to express their ideas, feelings, and experiences in the storytelling activity.

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children answer story-related questions correctly.	3.40	High
Children retell parts of the story in sequence.	3.33	High
Children identify characters, settings, and events.	3.37	High
Children show understanding through verbal responses.	3.40	High
General Weighted Mean	3.38	High

Table 12. Interactive Communication Skills

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Children engage in conversations with peers and the teacher.	3.53	Very High
Children respond appropriately in discussions.	3.30	High
Children take turns when speaking.	3.37	High
Children build on others' ideas during interaction.	3.37	High
General Weighted Mean	3.39	High

Interpretation

Vocabulary and interactive communication skills are children's strongest areas of growth. But it takes longer for fluency to build, and acquiring new vocabulary does not translate into speaking fluently. Importantly, the results of this study are based on the teachers' perception and must be considered as indirect or "crucial" measures of language proficiency.

Synthesis of the Study

The study shows that the novice ECE student teachers are very ready to implement the DBBSM in terms of engagement, reflection, and material selection. There are, however, continuing deficits in voice





modulation, Dialogic questioning design, and Higher-order questioning skills. The cross-tabulation analysis reveals that the degree of pedagogical refinement is affected, but not the overall level of readiness, by the socio-economic background and by the exposure to literacy. The oral language development of children is seen positively, particularly in vocabulary and interaction, and the results should be interpreted with caution because it is based on teacher perception.

Discussion

This study's results offer a comprehensive view of the readiness of novice ECE student teachers in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) and the impact of this method on children's oral language development. The discussion is guided by constructivist and sociocultural learning concepts and teacher self-efficacy theory and draws on the latest empirical studies in early childhood education.

The socio-demographic characteristics and institutional compensation effect

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents gives the impression that the majority of novice ECE student teachers are from low-income families, where they are not exposed to literacy-rich environments. International research demonstrates that early introduction to print, storytelling, and language interaction has significant effects on later literacy and pedagogical development (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2021). Despite the drawbacks, participants were consistently motivated toward teaching in all areas. This implies that teacher training is compensatory in nature to lessen the impact of socio-economic inequity in teacher preparation. This result is in line with OECD (2023) findings that structured pre-service teacher education has a positive effect on training teachers' competence in teaching regardless of their socio-economic status. Likewise, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) showed that there was a significant improvement in classroom readiness and instructional effectiveness, even for learners from "disadvantaged contexts" when preparation programs are of high quality.

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Instructional Readiness

Respondents showed high levels of confidence, enthusiasm, and reflective practice; this can be attributed to Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which emphasizes mastery experiences and guided feedback as key factors in the development of confidence in teaching (Bandura, 1997). This is confirmed by empirical research. Practice-based teacher education with structure can significantly enhance pre-service teachers' instructional self-efficacy (Fairbrother et al., 2025). Similarly, Bosman et al. (2021) reported that teacher self-efficacy is significantly related to instructional engagement, classroom management, and reflective practice. In this study, students' professional readiness is found to be strong, which may be caused by the repeated practice of guided storytelling in teacher education, collaboration with peers, and modeling by the teacher.

Instructional Competence and Dialogic Teaching Skills

Content knowledge, instructional planning, learner engagement, and reflection were strong across the respondents, similar to the international standards for early childhood teacher preparation (NAEYC, 2022). However, there were some areas of weakness noted in voice modulation and dialogic questioning strategies. This is congruent with Hamida and Siham (2025), who noted that novices tend to have problems with oral scaffolding and dialogic interaction because there is an inadequate opportunity for extended practice in expressive approaches to teaching. The same applies to OECD (2023), which highlights that pre-service teachers' engagement skills are generally good, but they are not usually proficient in using advanced discourse strategies needed for effective dialogic instruction.

Children's Oral Language Development: Measurement Limitations

The results show overall positive perceptions in the areas of vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, expressive language, and interactive communication. These findings are, however, based on teachers' perceptions. This can create potential observer bias and expectancy effects that may impact teachers' interpretation of children's performance (OECD, 2023). The results must be interpreted as language gains as perceived by the participants rather than as actual gains. Moreover, the study was descriptive, and the weighted mean analysis was used. No inferences were made using statistical methods (such as correlation, regression, or group comparison). Therefore, no causal conclusions can be made between DBBSM and oral language development.





Vocabulary Development and Empirical Support

The most strongly perceived outcome was with regard to vocabulary development. The results are in line with the results of Soleimani et al. (2022), who showed that interactive questioning and repeated reading were effective in the improvement of children's vocabulary acquisition. Likewise, Kogan (2024) demonstrated that using a structured storytelling format and dialogic interaction greatly improves expressive vocabulary and oral participation in early childhood classrooms. However, because of the descriptive nature of the study, DBBSM is best seen as being correlated with better vocabulary exposure and usage, rather than as being causal to vocabulary growth.

Fluency, Comprehension, and Developmental Progression

The level of fluency was judged below that of the acquisition of vocabulary, consistent with developmental language acquisition theory that suggests that the process of vocabulary acquisition is prior to the acquisition of fluent language expression (Lasekan et al., 2025). Comprehension and expressive language outcomes indicate that DBBSM facilitates meaning-making and communicative participation in a guided interaction manner. This is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural approach in which language acquisition is mediated by social interaction and scaffolding in the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Strengthened Methodological Limitations

The study is descriptive, cross-sectional, and is limited in the sense that it does not have the capability to make inferences and predictions. Findings are based on frequency and weighted mean analyses and are not the subject of inferential statistical tests – correlation, regression, experimental comparison. Also, there were no standardized child language assessment tools used to evaluate children's oral language development, simply relying on teachers' perceptions. This may lead to response bias, social desirability bias, and observer expectancy effects, influencing the accuracy of reported outcomes (OECD, 2023). Furthermore, the lack of a control group decreases the power to conclude only about the effects of the DBBSM intervention. Future research should make use of a quasi-experimental or longitudinal design and direct child assessment tools to enhance the internal validity and draw causal conclusions.

Synthesis of Findings

The results showed that the ECE student teachers who are novices in the profession are high in the level of their instructional readiness and high in the level of their self-efficacy development, which were obtained from the structured teacher education program. Gaps in the use of dialogic instructional skills, however, continue with respect to voice modulation and questioning strategies, which means there is a need for pedagogical training in specific oral discourse skills. The results of the perceived language outcome of the children are favorable, but should be taken with a pinch of salt as a result of methodological drawbacks and subjective teacher assessment. This paper aims to provide implications for teacher education. The results indicate that teacher education programs need to be reinforced in the following areas: *Intensive training in dialogic storytelling strategies, Development of voice modulation and expressive oral delivery skills, Practice in higher-order questioning strategies, and increased supervised teaching and reflective feedback sessions*. These recommendations are consistent with OECD (2023) and NAEYC (2022), which highlight the importance of ongoing, practice-based learning and mentoring in the discourse of teaching and learning in early childhood.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, novice Early Childhood Education student teachers have a high level of instructional readiness for the implementation of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method (DBBSM) in the aspects of content knowledge, pedagogical skills, instructional planning, and professional readiness. This readiness is found even among the socio-economic constraints, indicating that there might be scope for developing the competency of pre-service teachers through structured teacher education programs and experiential learning. Results also show specific areas for improvement in dialogic instructional techniques, including voice modulation and questioning techniques. They have been identified as significant issues in the teaching and learning process that need to be further developed in teacher education. In terms of the development of oral language skills in children, the





results show overall positive perceptions of the outcomes of vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension, expressive language, and interactive communication skills. The results, however, are subjective in nature and descriptive in nature, which are to be interpreted strictly as measures of instruction and not as objective or causal measures of language development. In general, the study underlines the need for well-structured teacher preparation and hands-on training to help novices prepare to use dialogic storytelling methods in the early childhood education setting.

Recommendation

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the readiness level of novice ECE student teachers in implementing the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method and to support the enhancement of Oral Language learning experiences for kindergarten students. The recommendations are to inform teacher education institutions, field-based training institutions, policymakers, and future researchers in enhancing the instructional preparation and pedagogical use of stories.

1. Teacher Education Institutions

Pre-service teacher training should develop structured modules on dialogic storytelling practices to strengthen pre-service teachers' training. These should encompass techniques of oral delivery (modulation of voice, pace, and expression), systematic development of higher-order questioning skills (recall, inferential, predictive questions), and explicit instruction. Micro-teaching sessions and simulation-based activities also need to be highlighted to improve the fluency of teaching and communication skills in the classroom.

2. Field-Based Training & Community Extension Programs

Community-based and field immersion programs need to be maintained and continued to offer authentic teaching experiences for novice teachers. There is a need to institutionalize structured supervision and feedback systems by cooperating teachers and mentors to facilitate reflective practice and continuous improvement of storytelling implementation.

3. Policymakers and Curriculum Developers

Policymakers and curriculum developers in the field of early childhood education should take into account incorporating dialogic storytelling skills into the standards for early childhood teacher preparation. Policy support is also required to ensure that teacher preparation programs give a balanced emphasis on the theoretical underpinnings and the practical training in teaching, especially oral language development strategies.

4. Further studies.

Research in the future could test the effects of the Dialogic Big Book Storytelling Method on children's oral language development using a quasi-experimental or randomized controlled design to have higher internal validity. Longitudinal studies are also suggested with storytelling interventions to evaluate the long-term effects. Also, mixed methods that include direct child language assessment as well as teacher observations are encouraged to avoid relying heavily on perception-based data and to enhance the validity of the measure.

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