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| Research Article

Folk Tale Instructional Strategy and the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency amongst the French Speaking Student Teachers in Some Bilingual Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon

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Abstract: There is an increasing necessity to integrate traditional teaching methods in ELT classrooms in order to enhance the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers in Cameroonian teacher training colleges. This study aims to examine the impact of the folk tale instructional strategy on the enhancement of English language speaking proficiency amongst the French speaking student-teachers in some Bilingual Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon. This research is grounded on the theories of; Second Language Acquisition, Social Constructivism and the theory of critical pedagogy. Survey research design was employed to gather data from a sample population of 260 individuals selected from a broader target population of 725. Two working hypotheses were emitted and data collected from the respondents using a carefully design questionnaire and experimental research design. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The findings related to all the two research hypotheses indicated that: folk tale narration and dramatisation can significantly provide a safe laboratory for students to sharpen their speaking skills. The study advocates for the incorporation of folk tale narration and dramatisation in ELT classrooms. This approach aims to enable student teachers to achieve fluency while also enhancing their pronunciation, grammatical accuracy and vocabulary usage in authentic real life context.

Keywords: Folk Tale Instructional Strategy, folk tale dramatisation, folk tale narration and English language speaking proficiency.

Introduction

As English language teaching (ELT) becomes increasingly globalized, instructors recognise the importance of incorporating cultural instructional strategies into their practices to enhance the

development of English language speaking proficiency of learners. In language classrooms in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in Cameroon, today, there is an increasing awareness in language teachers, that no matter the method or combination of methods a teacher chooses for his teaching, the essential requirement is for him to provide a truly stimulating educational environment where the students can learn both consciously and unconsciously. This can be attained by varying instructional strategies according to the language needs of learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. One of these strategies, Corson (1983) observes, is the folk tale instructional strategy which can be used as a pedagogical springboard to help students' from diverse socio cultural backgrounds develop skills in using the English language to make critical or imaginative responses, and to explore language and culture simultaneously. Folk tales with familiar themes or similar types of characters and events from diverse cultures can motivate learners to make comparisons, highlight similarities and differences, provide critical responses and justify opinions. In addition, folk tale narration sessions can build in learners, self-confidence for future classroom learning activities. As Corson (1988:33) observes, 'teachers need to place value on the oral contribution of the learners--- need to move away from center stage more often and become listeners… need to give them something to talk about and to develop an atmosphere of trust and respect that encourage talk'

Also writing on folk tales,Ahmed (2019) observes that tales from any culture can be useful for students to learn language features through words, phrases, expressions, grammar and grammatical patterns that are used. As Taylor (2001) reiterates, when folktales are used, the cultural elements in the folk tales help to bridge the gap between cultures and at the same time bring out differences between the cultures. Folk tales therefore, can be adapted to the needs of the learners in an English language classroom. And as Talla (1989) confirms, different societies may have various versions of the tale but, the skeleton remains the same irrespective of the society. He goes on to say that folk tales may stimulate discussion and activity among learners in a language classroom. This is very important because during story telling sessions students are brought closer for the teacher to identify their language problems.

Importance of Folk Tales Instructional Strategy

According to Cameron (2001), the use of folk tales in ELT classroom has enormous benefits. First, folk tales are enjoyable and engaging to language learners thereby, making the foreign language learning, fun and motivating for learners. It provides wonderful opportunities for language teachers to design activities which do not only engage learners but also creates a stress-free, non-threatening environment for learning to occur. Cameron (2001) further observes that, folk tales can also provide meaningful, authentic comprehensible input towards meaningful communicative activities.

In addition, folk tales often provide a good source of cultural information given that, teaching language involves teaching culture. As an intrinsic part of everyday life, folk stories can be used to facilitate cross-cultural understandings because teachers need to address the culture of those who speak the language (Kaminski, 2002). According to Worthy & Bloodgood (1992), folk tales are even more important as a medium for cultural knowledge especially in situations where the foreign language teacher is not a member of the culture of the learners. Worthy & Bloodgood (1992) further state that, folk tales can be tools to put culture back into the heart of the language curriculum. Thus, folk tales can be an excellent source for illustrating both the uniqueness and the commonalities between cultures.

Another role of folk tales is the accommodation of a variety of engaging language activities and learning styles. Folk tales, typically carry two levels of meaning. At the surface level, it is often a literal story about people or a person. Hidden in the literal story is often a moral or a second metaphorical story that provides a window into the cultural origins of the literal story. These two

levels allow teachers to utilize the story and lead students into a deeper understanding of how to read for meaning, to scaffold an appreciation for figurative thought and to acknowledge the nature of different cultures.

Mantra et al., (2018) also believe that, folk tales instructional strategy encourages imagination and creative thinking in language learners as they find new solutions to problems presented in the story or to make predictions about what will happen next in the story. This is possible given that, folk tales offer a whole imaginary world with miracles, mythical and magical animals and many different surprises from which language learners can both enjoy the magical, amazing world while learning language at the same time. Learners' experiences with folk tales map subconsciously on to their real world experiences and become a kind of script for life. This state of affairs provides opportunities for learners to make sense of metaphors and metaphoric language, something difficult to achieve within conventional teaching practice without input from stories. Accordingly, as learners develop the ability to interpret figurative language, they not only expand their capabilities for creative thought and communication, they also acquire insights into expressive forms of language, allowing them to comprehend both text and speech on a deeper and more meaningful level.

Writing on folk tales, Bean (1999) points out that, carefully selected or modified folk tales have features such as parallelism and meaningful, natural and rhythmic repetition of language and thus, can enhance learners' abilities to learn the language informally. Folk tales therefore, allow the creation of a wide range of engaging activities which respond to the different learning styles prevalent among the young age group. Folk tales can also promote children's imagination and creative thinking in learning the language and broaden their knowledge about other people living in different countries. Listening to or reading folk tales is not just the literal story that is made accessible to language learners but understanding of the literal story also allows language learners to develop imagination and creative thinking about a world. Learners do have their own hypotheses about what can happen and why it happens in the story. They can have their own opinions and explanations for the series of events presented in the folk tale. They can also form their own opinions and make judgments about the characters in the story.

Folk tale narration technique and the development of English language speaking proficiency

It is generally accepted by many cognitive theorists that, the success of learning and learning activity depends very much on the degree of motivation of the learners and that students learn better in situations that are lively and relevant to them. Since folk tales are quite entertaining, they can possibly provide a conducive learning context in which students could be inspired to learn. It is in this perspective that Tosam (1997:35) states, "folk tales incite and sustain the attention of the listener both emotionally and psychologically" .This implies that, students' arousals, may likely depend on their interests in what is taught and on the correlation of their interests with their learning needs. One would normally experience a high level of involvement in activities amongst learners if they are interested. Thus, in a language classroom, learners do not only narrate stories, but, can be motivated to learn the rules of the language. This view is supported by Fromkin (1983:333) who points out that students "learn to produce correct sentences because they are positively reinforced when they say something right and negatively reinforced when the say something wrong".Folk tale narration therefore provides teachers with wonderful opportunities to identify and later on correct learners mistakes as they narrate folk tales. In so doing, learners gradually demonstrate expertise with language and storytelling with a significant improvement on their level English language proficiency.

Writing on folk tales, Laing (1992) notes that, during classroom story narration sessions, the teacher as well as students use as much direct speech as possible, varying the pace and pitch of the

speech to suit the mood of the story and avoiding looking at notes. During folk tale narration teachers should ensure that students exchange roles; encourage audience to participate actively to help narrators who are in trouble during narration session; give students from diverse cultural backgrounds equal opportunities as well as take cognizant of cultural aspects embedded in the tales.

Tosam (2016) reiterates that during folk tale narration sessions, teachers should provide students from diverse cultural backgrounds, equal opportunities to take part by actively exchanging ideas based on their cultural backgrounds as well as helping narrators who are in trouble as well as taking cognizance of cultural aspects embedded in the tales. Whatever the case, teachers must not try to over correct the students especially at the beginning of each exercise, but should concentrate on making suggestions towards improving their language proficiency. Language errors can be noted down and discussed in the later part of the lesson. Lack of ability on certain areas of the language can suggest future lessons for the other classes.

Perhaps, Parvis (2008) provides more appropriate techniques on how language teachers can incorporate folk tales into language classes. First, language teachers can choose age-appropriate stories and in accordance with the language structure to be taught. Second, teachers can provide context in order to help students fully appreciate the cultural and historical significance of the folk tale. This might involve discussing the cultural traditions from which the story originates or providing some historical background on the period in which the story was created. Third, teachers can encourage critical thinking by encouraging students to analyse the characters, plot, and themes of the story and consider how these elements relate to the social and cultural context in which the story was created. Fourth, promotion of empathy and understanding could be encouraged. By exploring stories from different cultures and traditions, students can gain a deeper appreciation for the diversity of human experiences and develop greater empathy for people who may be different from each other. Furthermore, teachers can also incorporate creative and kinesthetic activities.

Mariah (2007) shares similar views like Parvis (2008) but proposes other techniques such as: supplied-content story, clued story, endless story, and collaborative story. First, through supplied technique, the teacher provides the content of the story. Students can be asked to write their own stories or modifying the existing ones. Second, through clued story technique, teachers can provide some clues for students to narrate folk tales. The clues may be some words, phrases, pictures, or charts and if possible, teachers may include the characters involved in the folk tale. The students then follow the frame to do the narration. Another way of doing clued story is by giving students two or three archetypal characters and having them narrate the folk tale by using the characters provided. It is also possible to have students prepare cards with various characters, setting, and plot. The cards, then, are placed in boxes that are labelled "character", "setting", and "plot". After that, the teacher may have students choose a card from each box and make up a story incorporating various ideas (Hamilton and Weiss 1990). The last technique Mariah (2007) proposes is the endless story. In endless story, the students are free to tell the stories to whatever direction they prefer. The procedure is simple. First, teachers must select one student to begin their stories. After that, the student may point out another student to continue the story. At this stage, the student who is pointed out has to begin their story by continuing the previous story told by the first student. After a certain extent, they may direct the story to whatever they want.

Teach Verb Tenses through folk tale narration

Writing on word classes, Palmer (1975) cited in Tosam (2016), argues that, the two most important classes of words in English language are nouns and verbs. Tenses, for instance, are very important in language learning. If a learner can use and understand different forms of tenses in English, he will be able to communicate effectively in any situation. If a learner of a language is

unable to find the correct form of a tense needed to express an idea, it could be a frustrating experience in speaking that language. Folk tale instructional strategy, therefore, can be aptly used in teaching speaking skills with respect to use of tenses in a second and foreign language classroom. Writing on folk tales, Cameron (2001) notes that, simplified versions of folk tales often makes use of the simple present tense for narrative because, in language learner EFL curriculum, the present tense is seen as being simpler and is taught first. If a story is told through pictures, the present continuous tense is often used. Teachers using folk tales expose language learners to both types of narrative and dialogue discourse and to the use of both indirect and direct speech.

As mentioned earlier Talla (1989) notes that, "folk tales may be set in any time and any place" Glaring in this stand point is the issue of time. Time determines which tense a speaker can employ when talking about an action.Though folk tales are narrated dominantly in the past tense, they are often interspersed with dialogue which employs all the three major time frames, namely, the present, the past and the future. Folk tales teaching strategy, therefore, can be used to teach the different forms of tenses in English language.

Folk tale dramatisation technique and the development of English language speaking proficiency

Dramatisation of folk tales provides rich, authentic vocabulary in cultural responsive ELT classroom as it stimulates discussion and activity among students. With natural dialogue, language learners have the chance to acquire various genres and hear natural speech. Depending on the language focus, teachers can modify the original story by turning some narrative part into dialogue. This is very important because during folk tale dramatisation sessions, students are brought closer for the teacher to identify challenges in their speaking skills. This view is supported by chukwuma (1981:21) who states that, "the oral tale narration far transcends ordinary verbal communication, it is a dramatic performance".It can be inferred from above assertion that, dramatization of folk tales, stimulates participation as learners, listen, watch, smile, laugh, frown, enjoy, dance, give opinions and above dramatise their own tales. In so doing, they discover knowledge for themselves. Tosam (1997) complements this view by stating that, dramatization of folk tales makes use of learners' ideas, invites voluntary participation, stimulates interest and above all recognizes the different interest of learners and their spans of concentration. Dramatisation of folk tales thus, encourages the interactive approach which is in line with Vygotsky's concept of mediation as cited in Tosam (1997) .Thus, dramatization of folk tales in ELT classrooms can effectively increase students' motivation to speak fluently and contextually using new vocabulary.

Also interested in dramatization of folk tales, Phillips (2007) notes that, dramatisation offers oral practice of foreign and second language by learners through role play, physical action, repetition, creativity, emotional involvement and personalisation. Folk tales performed as group work and cooperative activity, provides opportunities for different levels of linguistic development by settling individual differences and using the strengths of each member of the group. Phillips also observes that, folk tales appeal to all kinds of cultural learning styles. For instance, aural learners benefit from rehearsal and production stages, visual from script writing and preparing masks, props and costumes, while kinaesthetic learners learn through non-verbal communication, like miming, facial expressions and body movement.

Moreover, dramatizing a folk tale is enjoyable and motivating and relieves learners of their inhibitions caused by shyness and embarrassment at speaking a foreign language. It is sometimes the shyest students who show greatest potential in drama activities (Lee (2005). In addition, dramatization of folk tales enables learners to use English in context. Instead of using isolated words, students practice whole phrases and language 'chunks', structures and functions. Language

is used for communication between drama characters, which stresses the communicative aspect of dramatization. Listening and speaking can serve as a powerful tool to provide practice in specific grammatical, lexical, functional and phonological areas.

Teach vocabulary through folk tale dramatisation

Using folk tales as media in teaching vocabulary is an alternative way to create pleasure and minimum pressures in ELT classroom. In teaching vocabulary, the teacher must ensure that, the learner understands, retain and recall information relating to what is taught. The degree of recalling or remembering taking place depends to an extent, on the motivational strategies used during the learning process (Mbangwana, 1983). In a similar perspective in Lee (2005), argues that in any learning situation, the vocabulary to be learnt could constitute an important asset to memory reinforcement. If the vocabulary has meaning for the learner, he remembers it more readily than if it does not have. The effort to make sense out of something greatly influences a person's ability to remember it. A good teaching strategy that promotes learning may therefore, make remembering easier. Thus, the pleasurable nature of folk tales reinforces understanding of the new words thereby, enabling students to attain acceptable level mastery and use of vocabulary when speaking. Folk tale dramatisation is based on a kind of hidden repetition of certain words, sentences, actions of the tale or retelling the tales. In this way, the desired language skills could be developed. Writing on the importance of repetition of vocabulary items, Lee (2005) reiterates that, "repetition is basic to language learning, but not the repetition of mechanical drills…. but, it seems to be repetition of successful and interesting communication which counts and which has the most encouraging language advancing and motivation effect'. It could be deduced from the above stand point that repetition is to ensure understanding and to fill in information gaps but not for memorization and rote learning.

Based on the views of various researchers, it is evident that, folk tales are a valuable tool in teaching English as a foreign language to student teachers in Cameroonian TTCs given that, folk tales provide authentic, rich, meaningful input and facilitate the process of acquiring the target language. The folk tale instructional strategy helps students to: develop a heightened interest in the English language; process new vocabulary in a fun way; strengthen essential grammar when retelling or dramatising folk tales; visualize unknown objects, figure and describe them creatively**;** develop fluency and coherence in thought and speech**;** lay the foundation for advanced language use in the future; develop listening accuracy; get interested in stories from around the world and develop confidence while learning to retell or dramatise stories. Folk tale instructional strategy is therefore, a remarkable teaching strategy for helping students develop speaking and listening skills. When students learn to tell or dramatise tales, they take their speaking skills to a whole new level and learn to speak more clearly, with intention and care for their audience. And when they work in small groups, they learn to support each other with attentive listening. The use of the folk tales in teaching English language can truly measure how well a student can integrate the three dimensions of academic literacy (linguistic, cognitive, socio cultural) as well as the four language skills needed to be proficient in speaking skills.

Speaking Proficiency

According to Cloud et al. (2000), speaking proficiency refers to the ability to communicate orally and comprehend forms in a variety of settings using language accurately and appropriately in its oral and written forms. A student who is proficient in a particular language can use the language appropriately in real-life interactions in both written and oral form, spontaneously. Students who are good at speaking English are described as fluent, universal, disarming, wise, privileged, and hardworking. They are able to fulfill the demands of speaking tasks with sustained, coherent discourse, and a demonstration of an effective use of grammar and vocabulary. Students who

speak English fluently have a well-paced flow of speech that is clear and intelligible, with minor lapses in areas such as; grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or intonation patterns.

Characteristics of Speaking Proficiency

One of the goals of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to develop language proficiency. According to Abbaspour (2016), cited in Tosam & Kibinkiri (2024), there are several factors that characterize speaking proficiency such as; grammar, accuracy, fluency and comprehension. Mastering the speaking skill, requires learners to know not only linguistic knowledge, but also the culturally acceptable ways of interacting with others in various situations and relationships.

Being grammatically accurate according to Harmer (2001) cited in Tosam & Kibinkiri (2024), means, using the right grammatical structuring appropriately in terms of length and the complexity of the sentences as well as the ability to use the subordinating clauses. Student teachers can be able to speak effectively if they master the grammatical structures of English language in order to use grammatical structures accurately when speaking. For instance, the use of wrong tenses can lead to the inappropriate meaning. Abbaspour (2016) shares similar views and goes further to reiterate that, grammar presupposes grammatical competence which also means mastering, grammar, vocabulary, and sounds of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation and stress.

Schmitt (2010) on his part notes that, vocabulary has long been recognized as a vital component and a good indicator of language proficiency and that vocabulary occupies an important position in learning to listen, speak, read and write. Writing on the importance of vocabulary, Nation (1990) notes that, vocabulary can increase learners' language use and provide a strong base for the development of the four language skills and that, vocabulary is both passive and active in nature.

Another characteristic of speaking proficiency is pronunciation. Learners are expected to practice pronunciation repetitively to ease the flow of speech, including segmental articulation, rhythm, phrasing and intonation, in addition to paralinguistic for instant gestures, body language and eye contact.

Furthermore, speaking proficiency is also characterised by fluency. Fluency refers to the ability to express oneself in an understandable, accurate and reasonable way without too much hesitation, otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest. It is natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and on-going communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence. Hedge further explains that, fluency relates to the production and it is normally reserved for speech.

Speaking proficiency is equally characterised by accuracy which in simple terms refers to the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences. According to Abbaspour (2016), accuracy requires that, learners focus on a number of things in their production of the spoken language, such as the grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation. Without structuring accurate speech, speakers may be ambiguous and the listeners may lose interest if they perform incorrect utterances during communication. Activities that focus on accuracy include; classroom use of language, formation of correct examples of language, practice language, practice out of context and practice with small samples of language that do not require meaningful communication control choice of language.

Theoretical Background

First of all, the Vygotskian's social constructivist theory to language learning is used in the article because it emphasizes the importance of culture and context in the process of knowledge

construction and accumulation. According to Vygotsky, (1981) cited in Kibinkiri & Tieme (2022) social constructivism focuses on the development of cognitive skills and patterns of thinking in learners as products of activities practiced in a socio-cultural environment in which the individual grows up.

The second theory used is Krashen's second language acquisition theory. According to Krashen (1988), second language learning is very similar to the process children acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction and communication in the new language during which speakers are concerned with the messages they are conveying and understanding and not only with the grammatical form of the language. Krashen believes that social communication, in a natural setting is the optimal way to learn a second language and that the ideal situation for teaching, according to the second language acquisition-learning hypothesis, is to put students in situations that are as authentic as possible to enable them acquire language naturally instead of learning a language through grammar rules or repeating sentences

Another theory exploited is the theory of Critical Pedagogy by Freire (1998 which represents both a philosophy of education and a social movement. Theory seeks to awaken students to the social, cultural, political, and economic milieu in which dominant forms of knowledge are constructed and through which power functions to enable learners understand how injustice manifested and reproduced during the teaching and learning process

General Research Hypothesis of the Study

The use of folk tale instructional strategy in an ELT classroom contributes to the development of English language speaking proficiency amongst French speaking student teachers in government teacher training colleges in Cameroon.The above research questions were transformed into two specific research hypotheses.

Specific Research Hypotheses

In order to operationalise the general hypothesis, it was transformed into specific research hypotheses.

1. The use of folk tale narration strategy contributes to the development of English language speaking proficiency amongst French speaking student teachers in teacher training colleges in Cameroon.

2. The use of folk tale dramatisation strategy contributes to the development of English language speaking proficiency amongst the French speaking student teachers in teacher training colleges in Cameroon.

Methodology of the study

A mixed methods research was used for the study. First of all, an exploratory sequential design was used to collect quantiitative data first, followed by qualitative data. This study was carried out in the four major sociocultural ecological zones in Cameroon, namely: The Grass field cultural zone, the Sudano-Sahelien cultural zone, the Sawa cultural zone and the Fang Beti cultural zone.

The population of this study comprised French speaking student teachers for the 2023-2024 school year in Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon. The target population for this study consisted of the 725 Francophone student teacher of examination classes in the eleven Bilingual Teacher Training Colleges in the four major cultural zones in Cameroon for the school year 2023-2024. The following GBTTCs constituted the target population. The choice of these teacher

training colleges was inspired by the fact that, Regional head-quarters are characterised by influx of people from diverse cultural backgrounds in search of better living conditions, jobs or displaced by socio political crises. The choice of the final year student teachers was inspired by the fact that the syllabus for English language is expected to be completely covered in the final year classes.

The sample population for this study consisted of 260 Francophone student teachers of the examination classes drawn from a target population of 725 French speaking student teachers, namely; GBTTC Bafoussam, GBTTC Yaoundé, GBTTC and GBTTC Maroua. In this study, purposive sampling, or judgmental sampling, a non-probability sampling technique was used to intentionally select participants for the experimental design because the sample had to be constituted by a few from the general sample size with precise knowledge and skills

Instrument used for Data Collection

A questionnaire and quasi-experimental design were used to collect data from four Bilingual Teacher Training Colleges in four major sociocultural ecological zones in Cameroon. In the first place, a questionnaire was addressed to a sample population of 260 Francophone French speaking student teachers of examination classes, drawn from a target population of 725. Secondly, quasi-experimental design was conducted using a sample of 40 student teachers.

Questionnaire to Student Teachers

The questionnaire addressed to student teachers comprised closed ended questions, intended to collect factual information and to investigate the use of multicultural pedagogy and development of English language speaking proficiency of French speaking student teachers in Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon. The questionnaire was addressed only to those in the examination classes. The choice of examination classes was inspired by the fact that the syllabus for English language is expected to be completely covered in the examination classes. The first part of the questionnaire sought to survey the students' academic and professional qualifications and longevity of service as well as their opinion on the subject under study. The second part sought out information on how the use of folk tale narration strategy in a multicultural classroom may contribute to the development of English language speaking proficiency of French speaking student teachers in TTCs in Cameroon. The third part sought to investigate the extent to which folk tale dramatisation could contribute to the development of speaking proficiency of student teachers and the fourth sought to investigate the extent to which folk tale narration could contribute to the development of speaking proficiency.

Table 01: Questionnaires to student-teachers

Distributed	Returned	Returned rate	Incomplete	Complete	Adjusted return Rate
260	260	100	00	260	100

Quasi-Experimental Design: Pre-Test/Post-Test, Non-Equivalent Group Design

The quasi experimental design used for the study was the non-equivalent group pre-test and post-test. In this design, the researcher assigned the subjects to two groups. To establish if the two groups were initially different on the outcome measure, the two groups were pre tested on the outcome measure. The treatment was then given to one of the groups (experimental group) and not to the other group (the control group). At the end of the treatment, a post test was given to the two groups. The purpose of this design was to determine the effects of the experimental treatment relative to the comparison treatment. GBTTC Yaoundé was selected for the experimental design. The choice of the school was motivated by the fact that, it is located in the political capital of Cameroon. Given the cosmopolitan nature of the town, the school represents a significant multicultural setting with student teachers from diverse socio cultural and linguistic backgrounds congruent with the four major cultural zones of Cameroon.

Prior to start of the research treatment, two classes of 20 students each were selected. A pre-test was prepared and conducted to the two groups to investigate the prior knowledge of the students' speaking ability before the treatment. After the administration of the pre-test, the two classes were taught, one using folk tale dramatization/ narration and the other without. A well designed and carefully prepared post test was conducted with the help and support of colleagues of English language department. The results were collected and data was analysed through SPSS statistical tool which enabled the researcher to come to the conclusion and recommendations. This study was conducted from 22nd and 23rd May 2024.

Treatments

The treatments were conducted in two meetings, during which the experimental group was taught regular past simple tense using folk tale narration/drammatisation instructional strategies and the control group taught without.

Post-test

Post-test was given to the two groups researchers after treatments. The objective of post-test was to find out whether there was any improvement or not in the students' speaking ability.

Developing a culturally multicultural pedagogic Lesson Plan for the Experimental Group

To develop a lesson, plan for the folk tale instructional strategy, it was important to consider the following: The extent to which folk tale dramatization strategy and folk tale narration strategies contribute to the development of English language speaking proficiency of French speaking student teachers in TTCs in Cameroon.

To assess the expected learning outcomes of the experimental group, the researcher employed individualized assessment technique in order to meet up with the needs of the students and expected learning outcomes as prescribed by the official curricular. Assessment was carried out in the following domains: Accurate, fluent and contextual use of vocabulary and accurate use of the simple past tense in real life situation. To score the various competencies, the various scoring criterion were used. First, the level of accuracy on the use of the past simple tense and comprehensiveness were scored on 5 and interpreted as very good, if the speaking activity had only two or three minor grammatical and lexical errors and if pronunciation was very slightly influenced by the mother tongue. In addition, accuracy was scored on 4 and interpreted as good, if pronunciation was still moderately influenced by the mother tongue with a few minor grammatical and lexical errors. Moreover, the level of accuracy was scored on 3 and interpreted as average, if pronunciation was seriously influenced by the mother tongue but with few serious phonological errors and several grammatical and lexical errors as well as with two or more errors causing confusion. Also, the level of accuracy was scored on 2 and interpreted as poor, if pronunciation was seriously influenced by the mother tongue with the error causing a breakdown in communication as well as with many basic grammatical and lexical errors. Lastly, the level of accuracy was scored on1 and interpreted as very poor, when serious pronunciation errors as well as many basic grammatical and lexical errors were made as well as complete absence of mastery of any of the language skills.

Second, the level of fluency and contextual use of vocabulary was scored on five and interpreted as very good, when the respondent spoke without too great effort with wide range of expression or searches for word occasionally but with only one or two unnatural pauses. Furthermore, fluency and context use of vocabulary were scored 4 and interpreted as good, when the respondent made an effort at times to search for words but with a smooth delivery on the whole and only a few unnatural pauses. Moreover, the level fluency and context use of vocabulary were scored on 3 and interpreted as average, when the respondent made an effort at times and search for words with few

unnatural pauses. But occasionally and fragmental halting delivery but success in conveying the general meaning Additionally, fluency and context use of vocabulary were scored on two and interpreted as poor, when the respondent used long pauses while searching for the desired meaning as well as frequently, fragmentally, halting delivery. Lastly, fluency and context use of vocabulary were scored on one and interpreted as very poor, when the respondent fragmentally spoke and at times gave up making any efforts.

Third, the level of compressibility was scored on five and interpreted as very good, when it was easy for the listener to understand the speakers' intention and general meaning. Very few interruption or clarification was required. By the same token, compressibility was scored on four and interpreted as good, when the respondents' intention and general meaning were fairly clear with limited interruptions by the listener for the sake or clarifications. Besides, the level of compressibility was scored on three and interpreted as average, when most of what the speaker said was easy to follow. The attention was always clear but several interruptions were made to help him convey the message or to seek for clarification. The speaker made more complex or longer sentences.

Besides, the level of fluency was scored on two and interpreted as poor, when the respondent made only short sentences and phrases that can be understood with considerable effort by someone who had been used to listening to them. Lastly, the level of compressibility was scored on 1 and interpreted as very poor, when anything said by the respondent was hardly understood, even when the listener made a great effort, but, the speaker was unable to clarify anything.

Analyses of results

Distribution of Respondents' Opinions on folk tale narration strategy

Table 02 below presents the distribution of the opinions of the respondents on folk tale narration strategy. From the results in the table, we observe that student-teachers attach value to the narration of folk tales during ELT lessons because narration enables them to unconsciously use grammatical structures such as adjectives when speaking (M=2,51). Also, folk tales instructional strategy by both, the teacher and student teachers during ELT lessons, enables them to speak more fluently and accurately (M=2,47). Likewise, the use of folk tales as reading comprehension passages during ELT lessons enables the student-teachers to unconsciously use new words when speaking (M=2,36). Similarly, the narration of folk tales during ELT lessons helps student teachers to improve on their pronunciation when speaking (M=2, 26).

Based on the experiences of student-teachers, related to cultural themes in their daily life, folk tale narration strategy can enable them to unconsciously use new words when speaking (M=2,23). Furthermore, when they narrate folktales during ELT lessons, it enables them to use tenses accurately when speaking (M=2, 17).

Table 02: Distribution of Respondents' Opinions on the use of folk tale narration Strategy to propel students into speaking activities

Respondents' Opinions on the use of folk tale narration Strategy to propel students into speaking activities	Mean	Std. Deviation
Narration of folk tales by the teacher during ELT lessons, enables me to speak more fluently and accurately	2.47	1.08
When I narrate folk tales during ELT lessons, it enables me to use tenses accurately when speaking.	2.17	1.15
Narration of folk tales during ELT lessons enables me to unconsciously use grammatical structures such as adjectives when speaking.	2.51	1.22
I use folk tales as reading comprehension passages during ELT lessons	2.36	1.20

enables me to unconsciously use new words when speaking.		
The poetic narration of folk tales during ELT lessons helps to improve my pronunciation when speaking.	2.26	1.27
Relating cultural themes with my daily life during folk tale narration enables me to unconsciously use new words when speaking.	2.23	1.15
Folk tale instructional strategy	2.33	.73
N = 286		

Distribution of the Respondents' Opinions on the use of Folk Tale Dramatization Strategy to Foster the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency

Table 03 below provides the distribution of the respondents' opinions on the use of folk tale dramatization strategy to foster the development of English language speaking proficiency. The results on the table reveal that student-teachers can speak English fluently while applying grammatical rules as they dramatise folk tales (M = 2.63). This signifies that they can use English words contextually with respect to various cultures (M=2.49). In that same line, many respondents agreed that they can practice to be fluent by dramatizing folk tales texts aloud (M = 2.30). This signifies that many respondents declare that they can use parts of speech such as verbs, adjectives, adverbs accurately, when they speak during lessons (M = 2.24). Also, when they don't remember a word, they can replace it with another word from either French or their mother tongue (M = 2.24). Likewise, the student-teachers are usually excited when the teacher asks students to figure out grammatical rules from a discussion with classmates (M = 2.23). Similarly, they can practice using new words/expressions while speaking (M = 2.17). Equally, the student-teachers can improve on their pronunciation when corrected by their teacher or more proficient classmates (M =2.02). That is why, they can also use the English dictionary to improve their pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary (M =3.23); and they can use their cultural background knowledge to develop their vocabulary when speaking (M =3.23).

Table 03: Distribution of the Respondent's Opinions on speaking Skills' Development

Respondent's Opinions on speaking Skills' Development	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
I can dramatise folk tales to develop my vocabulary when speaking.	2.14	1.21
When I don't remember a word, I replace it with another word from either French or my mother tongue.	2.24	1.25
I can practice using new words/expressions while dramatising.	2.17	1.11
I can use English words contextually with respect to various cultures.	2.49	1.20
I can improve on my pronunciation when corrected by my teacher or more proficient classmates when performing folk tales.	2.02	1.24
I can use the English dictionary to improve my pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary after dramatisation .	1.91	1.18
I can use parts of speech such as verbs, adjectives, adverbs accurately, when I speak during lessons.	2.24	1.14
I am excited when the teacher asks students to figure out grammatical rules dramatization of folk tale.	2.23	1.15
I can speak English fluently while applying grammatical rules.	2.63	1.28
I can practice to be fluent by dramatizing folk tales.	2.30	1.30
The Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency	2.24	.76
Valid N (listwise)		

Folk tale instructional strategy and the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency (RH1)

Folk tale instructional strategy (FTNS) play a key role in the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP). That is why the second research hypothesis (RH1) claims that there is a significant relationship between folk tale dramatisation strategy (FTNT) and the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP). The shape of scatter plot in figure 4.18 displays the direction of the relationship showing the relationship between culturally responsive instructional strategies (CRIS) and the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP).

Figure 1: Folk tale instructional (dramatization) strategy and the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency
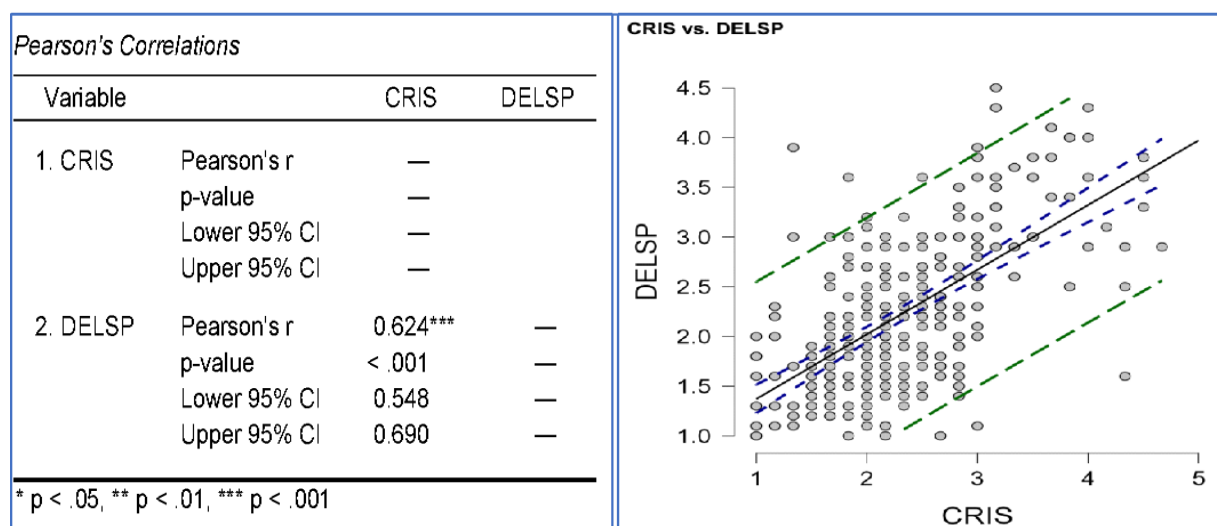
Figure 01: Coefficient of correlation and scatter plot showing the correlation between folk tale narration strategy (FTNS) and the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP)

Presentation of Experiment Data Analysis

In this section, we will test the effect of folk tale dramatisation on the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers. To do this, we performed a mixed-design analysis of variances with the development of English language speaking proficiency (accuracy, fluency and comprehensive) as the dependent variable (measure), and experimental condition (Control group and Treatment group) and testing condition (pretest and posttest) as the independent variables. A mixed-design analysis of variance protocol (experimental condition * testing condition * measure) was used to explore the effects of the two independent variables on the development of English language speaking proficiency among student-teachers. The data processing was carried out using SPSS software (SPSS 28.0 for Windows), as presented in the following table and figures.

Table 04 displays the means and standard deviations of the measure of the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers. It appears from the results that the measure of the development of English language speaking proficiency varies across testing condition (pre-test and post-test) and experimental condition (Control group and Treatment group).

Table 04: Means and standard deviations of the measure of the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers

|	Control Group (CG)		Experimental Group (EG)	
	Pretest	*Posttest*	*Pretest*	*Posttest*

Measure	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Accuracy	9.70	1.34	9.60	2.01	9.70	1.17	13.10	3.06
Fluency	9.30	2.27	9.80	2.04	9.30	2.27	13.45	2.78
Comprehensive	9.70	1.86	10.70	1.86	10.50	2.24	13.45	3.56

The findings above demonstrated that there was a significant main effect of folk tale narration strategy on the development of English language speaking proficiency by student-teachers, $F(2, 76) = 40.668$, p2 = 0.52. Contrasts revealed that accuracy were significantly more improved than comprehension, $F(1, 38) = 59.03$, p2 = 0.61, and fluency were significantly less improved than comprehension, $F(1, 38) = 23.65$, p2 = 0.90. There was a no significant main effect of the testing condition on the development of English language speaking proficiency by student-teachers, $F(1, 38) = 3.80$, p2 = 0.59. There was a significant effect of group, indicating that overall the intervention using folk tale narration strategy was substantially higher for the experimental group compare to the control group, revealing a significant development of English language speaking proficiency by student-teachers, $F(1, 38) = 10.534$, p = 0.002, p2 = 0.22.

Table 05: Mixed-Model Analysis of Variances of the Effect of Folk tale dramatisation strategy on the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency of Student-teachers

| Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Measure	221.033	1.750	126.309	40.668	.000	.517
Measure*Groups	106.433	1.750	60.821	19.583	.000	.340
Error (Measure)	206.533	66.498	3.106			
Condition	11.267	1.000	11.267	3.800	.059	.091
Condition * Groups	5.400	1.000	5.400	1.821	.185	.046
Error (Condition)	112.667	38.000	2.965			
Measure * Condition	27.233	1.721	15.828	5.218	.011	.121
Measure * Condition * Groups	35.100	1.721	20.401	6.725	.003	.150
Error (Measure *Condition)	198.333	65.380	3.034			

There was a significant interaction effect between the measure of English language speaking proficiency and the experimental group, $F(1.75, 66.50) = 19.583$, p2 = 0.34. This effect indicates that the measure of different modalities of English language speaking proficiency differed significantly from control group to experimental group. Contrasts compared each measure of speaking proficiency to other, across experimental group. These contrasts revealed significant interactions when comparing the accuracy of student-teachers and their comprehension when developing English language speaking proficiency, compare to the control and experimental group, $F(1, 38) = 27.36$, p < 0.001, p2 = 0.42, and their fluency compare to their comprehension, $F(1, 38) = 5.15$, p = 0.029, p2p = 0.12. The interaction plot shows that although English language speaking proficiency increased as group changed regardless of the experimental condition, this increase was more pronounced for the student-teachers in the experimental group.
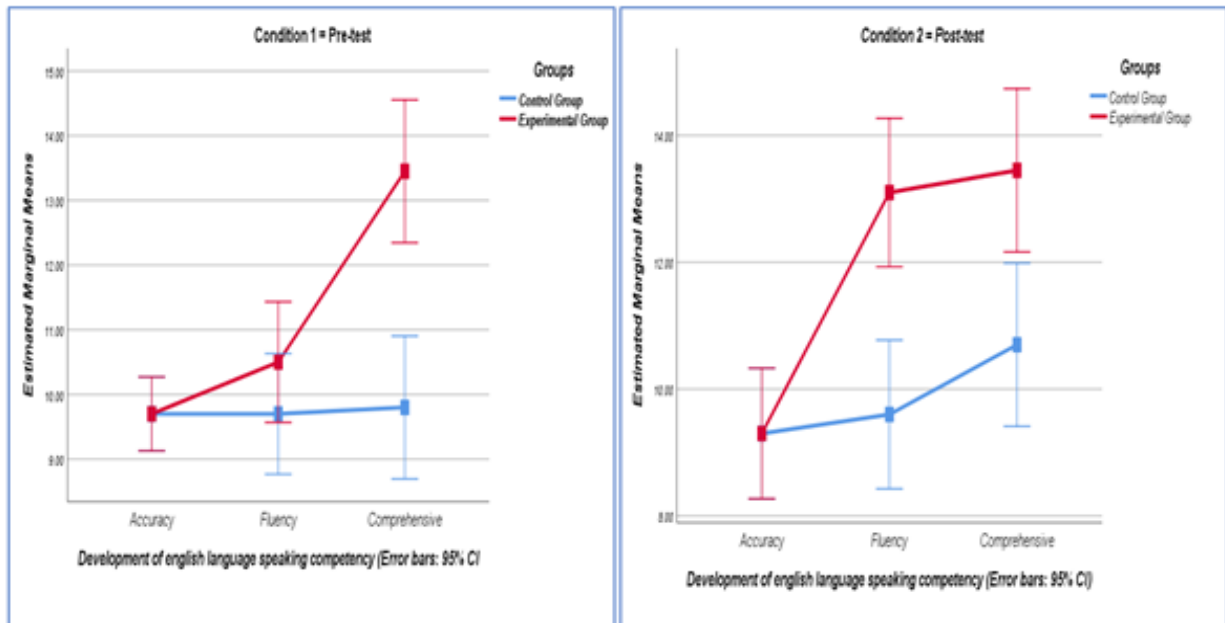
Figure 02: The interaction plot showing how English language speaking proficiency increased as group changed regardless of the experimental condition

There was no significant interaction effect between the level of testing condition and the experimental condition, $F(1, 38) = 1.82$, $p = 0.185$, $p2 = 0.046$, indicating that the measure of English language speaking proficiency did not differ according to of testing condition and the experimental condition.

There was a significant measure English language speaking proficiency and testing condition interaction, $F(1.721, 65.38) = 5.22$, $p = 0.011$, $p2 = 0.121$, indicating that the measure of English language speaking proficiency significantly differed according to testing condition and the experimental condition. Contrasts compared each measure of speaking proficiency to other, across experimental condition. These contrasts revealed a non-significant interactions when comparing the accuracy of student-teachers and their comprehension when developing English language speaking proficiency, compare to the control and experimental group, $F(1, 38) = 2.30$, $p = 0.137$, $p2 = 0.057$, and their fluency compare to their comprehension, $F(1, 38) = 4.11$, $p = 0.050$, $p2 = 0.098$. The interaction plot shows that although English language speaking proficiency increased as group changed regardless of the testing condition, this increase was more pronounced for the student-teachers in the experimental condition.
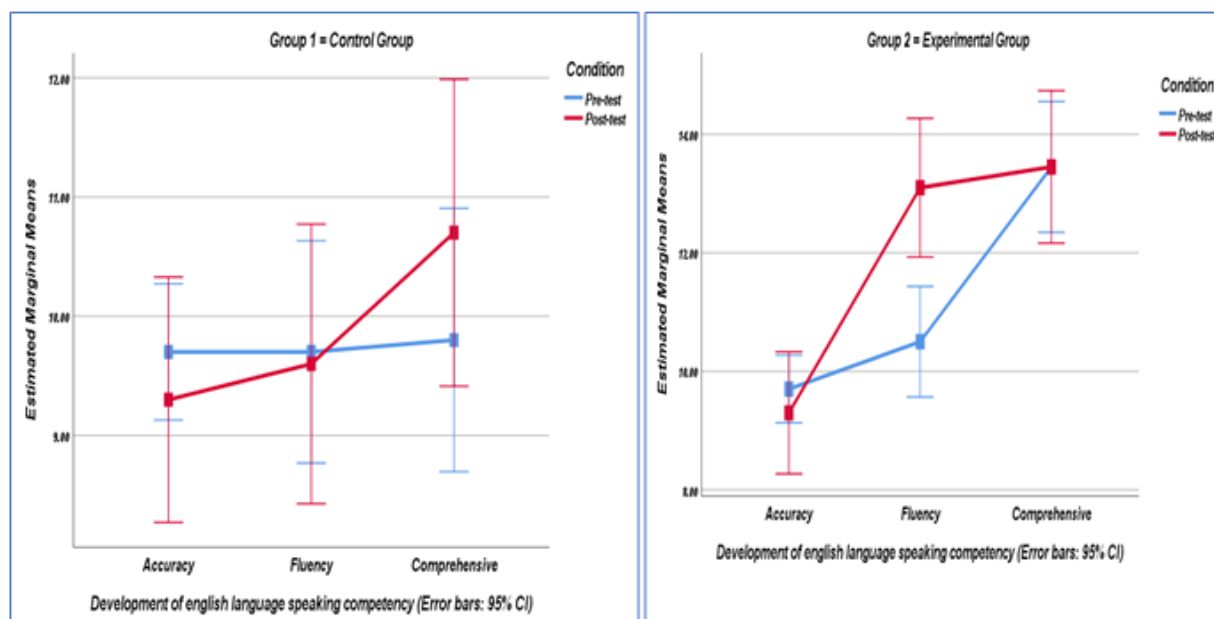
Figure 03: The interaction plot showing how English language speaking proficiency increased as group changed regardless of the testing condition.

Finally, the measure English language speaking proficiency and testing condition and experimental condition interaction was significant, $F(1.721, 65.38) = 6.725$, $p = 0.003$, p2 = 0.15. The final contrast looked at the effect of folk tale narration strategy when contrasting measure English language speaking proficiency between pre-test and posttest for control group and experimental group, $F(1, 38) = 20.80$, $p < 0.001$, p2 = 0.354. This effect suggests that regardless of whether dates played to get, as physical attractiveness increased, the increase in interest in dates with average charisma was significantly greater than for low-charisma dates.

Table 06: Summary of findings

Hypotheses	Analysis' tools	Results	Decision	Observations
Research hypotheses				
RH1	Pearson's correlation	r (284) = .624 [0.548, 0.690] (p < .001)	$r^2 =$ 0.3894	It means that 38.94% of the variability of the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP) is explained by folk tale narration strategy (FTNS)
RH2	Pearson's correlation	r (284) = .696 [0.631, 0.752] (p < .001)	$r^2 =$ 0.4844	It means that 48.44% of the variability of the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP) is explained by folk tale dramatisation strategy (FTDS)

Discussions of Results of Findings on folk tale dramatisation strategy and the Development of English Language Speaking Proficiency amongst the French Speaking Student Teachers

The first hypothesis which states that, the use of folk tale narration strategy contributes to the development of English language speaking proficiency amongst the Francophone student teachers in government teacher training colleges in the country. The findings indicated that, folk tale narration significantly influences the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP). The test-value gave a coefficient of determination of 0.3894, meaning

that 38.94% of the variability of the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers (DELSP) is explained by culturally responsive instructional strategies (CRIS). The findings complement those of the focus group discussions and the survey which indicated that, the use of folk tales during ELT lessons provides student teachers with rich, authentic vocabulary that can help them develop their English language proficiency given that when students narrate tales they smile, laugh, frown, enjoy, dance, give opinions and above all expressed themselves orally in English language.

These findings complements those of Mantra et al, (2018) who conducted a study on the implementation of Folk tales narration in the classroom to improve the EFL learners' speaking skill and found out that Folktales can be used to educate, inspire and engage the students in various speaking activities and that, students really enjoyed in learning speaking through folktales based dramatistion. The results of the findings also complement earlier findings by Phillips (2007) who found out that, narration of folk tales offers oral practice to foreign and second language learners through role play, physical action, repetition, creativity, emotional involvement and personalization.

Similarly, earlier studies on the use of folk tales carried out by Fromkin & Rodam (1983) found out that,in a language classroom, learners do not only narrate stories, but, are motivated to learn the rules of the language by learning to produce correct sentences because they are positively reinforced when they say something right and negatively reinforced when the say something wrong. During such instances, more experienced peers and the teacher identify and later on correct learners' mistakes as they narrate the folk tales. In so doing, learners gradually demonstrate expertise with oral skills and storytelling with a significant improvement on their level English language proficiency. Thus, the more frequent folk tales are dramatized or narrated by student teachers in ELT lessons, the higher faster the development of their oral communication skills with respect to grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation proficiencies.

In spite of the convergence of findings by (Phillips ,2007; Fromkin & Rodam,1983), the findings of this study go further by demonstrating that, folk tale narration strategy could positively impact learners to overcome speaking challenges such as; fear of making mistakes, shyness, anxiety, lack confidence, lack motivation as well as lack adequate vocabulary when speaking.

The findings are backed by the theory of communicative competence which is based on the ability to achieve communicative goals in a socially appropriate manner. In the communicative model of language teaching, teachers actually help their students develop body of knowledge by providing authentic practices that prepare students for real-life communication situations. Teachers help their students develop the ability to produce grammatically correct and logically connected sentences that are appropriate to specific contexts, and to do so using acceptable pronunciation. In a language classroom, learners do not only narrate stories, but, could be motivated to learn the rules of the language. As pointed out by Fromkin &Rodam (1983), when dramatising folk tales, students learn to produce correct sentences because they are positively reinforced when they say something right and negatively reinforced when the say something wrong. Language teachers could identify and later on correct learner's mistakes as they narrate or dramatise their tales. In so doing, learners gradually demonstrate expertise with language and storytelling with a significant improvement on their level English language proficiency.

The second hypothesis which focuses on the extent to which folk tale dramatisation strategy contributes to the development of English language speaking proficiency amongst Francophone student teachers in teacher training colleges in Cameroon was confirmed. The findings indicated that folk tale dramatisation strategy significantly influences the development of English language speaking proficiency of student-teachers. This test-value gave a coefficient of determination of 0.4844, meaning that 48.44% of the variability of the development of English language speaking

proficiency of student-teachers is explained by folk tale dramatisation strategy. This simply means that the use of dramatisation strategy to teach grammar, accuracy fluency and contextual use of new words that reflect the diverse experiences motivates students to take active part in speaking activities.

Accordingly, the content analysis of the research questions revealed that, the use of culturally diverse materials such as folk tales from diverse cultural backgrounds in ELT multicultural classroom creates inclusive learning environments represented by diverse range of voices, cultures, and perspectives. This state of affairs significantly enables learners to improve on their fluency, accuracy in the use of grammar and vocabulary. These findings, therefore, emphasize the significance of actively integrating culturally diverse materials into ELT multicultural classroom.

These findings are congruent with earlier research carried out Kiss & Weninger (2017) who demonstrated that the use of dramatisation of cultural experiences of students in a diverse classroom, improves oral proficiency of language learners given that, life performances stimulate and motivate students' interest especially learners to actively take part in speaking activities.

These findings are anchored on Vygotsky's concept of mediation and ZPD. The teacher's role during folk tale dramatisation is that of a guide to scaffold the development of speaking skills of student teachers. Accordingly, more capable peers are paired with less capable ones. In this scenario, the former can be able to promote the latter's ability and knowledge in language learning. This joint problem-solving context would lead to cognitive development of the learner through the use of problem-solving activities. The findings of this study are also pinned down on Krashen's acquisition learning hypothesis in which students acquire language unconsciously. The learner is usually not aware of acquisition taking place or the result s of it. Acquisition occurs as a result of participating in natural communication where the focus is on meaning (Schütz, 2019). Dramatisation of folk tales enables language learners to unconsciously acquire an acceptable level speaking proficiency during folk tale narration sessions.

Conclusion

From the findings, it is clear that, folk tale instructional strategy, could constitutes a significant foundation upon which authentic English language speaking proficiency can be built. It is therefore, recommended that, English language teachers should use language teachers should use i folk tale instructional strategy to provide their students with increased opportunities to engage in oral activities when they narrate and dramatize folk tales from diverse sociocultural backgrounds during ELT lessons. Again, students' self-esteem are strengthened to practice oral skills, when they narrate/dramatise their own stories without being afraid of making mistakes related to grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary.

Recommendations

While acknowledging the efforts and measures already taken by the Ministry of Secondary Education and English language teacher trainers to improve on English language speaking proficiency of French speaking student teachers in the Teacher Training Colleges in Cameroon, it is recommended that language teachers should use Folk tale instructional strategy in LT classrooms to provide their students with increased opportunities to engage in oral activities when they narrate or dramatize folk tales from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Again, students' self-esteems are strengthened to practice oral skills, when they narrate or dramatise their own folk tales without being afraid of making mistakes related to grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Language teachers can;

Organise folk tale narration sessions in such a way that, student take active parts in narrating their own stories and consequently are propelled into oral communicative activities;

Narrate folk tales using probes, prompts teaching/learning aids, direct speech, varying pace and pitch of the speech to suit the mood of the story in order to heighten the meaning of language structure being taught;

Ensure that students exchange roles; encourage audience to participate actively to help narrators who are in trouble to overcome anxiety during narration session;

Dramatise folk tales to stimulate oral discussions, activity and to identify challenges in speaking skills related to the language structure being taught;

Dramatise folk tales to enable student teachers speak in context and to provide practice in specific language structure being taught such as; pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary and accuracy.

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