

METHODOLOGY OF ORGANIZING NATIVE LANGUAGE LITERACY LESSONS AIMED AT DEVELOPING SPEAKING COMPETENCIES

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Abstract

This article examines the methodology of organizing native language literacy lessons with a specific focus on developing learners' speaking competencies in primary education. Native language literacy instruction has traditionally emphasized reading and writing mechanics, often leaving oral communication skills underdeveloped despite their foundational role in overall language proficiency. The study analyzes pedagogical approaches, instructional strategies, and classroom techniques that integrate speaking-oriented activities into native language literacy lessons, including dialogic reading, structured discussion, storytelling, role-play, and communicative exercises. Drawing on theoretical frameworks of communicative competence and constructivist learning, the article proposes a methodological model for lesson organization that balances literacy acquisition with oral language development. The research employed a combination of pedagogical observation, comparative analysis of lesson structures, and evaluation of learner outcomes in primary school settings. Findings indicate that lessons structured around interactive, learner-centered speaking tasks significantly improve vocabulary use, fluency, and confidence in oral expression while simultaneously reinforcing literacy skills. The article concludes with practical recommendations for teachers and curriculum designers seeking to strengthen the speaking dimension of native language literacy education.

Keywords: Native language literacy, speaking competence, primary education, communicative approach, oral language development, lesson methodology, learner-centered instruction.

Introduction

Language education in the early years of schooling occupies a central place in shaping a child's cognitive, social, and communicative development. Among the four fundamental language skills — listening, speaking, reading, and writing — speaking is often regarded as the most immediate and socially consequential, since it is through spoken language that learners first negotiate meaning, express identity, and participate in classroom life. Nevertheless, in many educational systems, native language literacy lessons continue to prioritize the mechanics of reading and writing, treating speaking as a secondary or incidental outcome rather than a deliberately cultivated competence. This imbalance is particularly evident in primary education, where the foundations of literacy are laid and where the habits of language use formed in early grades tend to persist throughout a learner's academic trajectory.

The relevance of this study stems from the recognition that literacy and orality are not separate domains but mutually reinforcing dimensions of language competence. A learner who reads fluently but cannot articulate thoughts coherently, or who writes correctly but hesitates to speak in class, has not achieved full linguistic competence. Consequently, there is a growing pedagogical consensus that native language literacy lessons should be reorganized methodologically to give speaking activities an equal, structurally embedded role alongside reading and writing tasks.

The purpose of this article is to investigate and systematize the methodological principles, techniques, and organizational forms that allow native language literacy lessons to function simultaneously as a means of literacy acquisition and as a platform for developing speaking competence. The article addresses the following research questions: (1) What theoretical principles justify the integration of speaking-focused activities into native language literacy instruction? (2) What methodological models and classroom techniques most effectively combine literacy development with oral competence building? (3) What organizational and evaluative recommendations can be offered to primary school teachers to implement this integration successfully?

2. Literature Review

The theoretical foundation of speaking-oriented literacy pedagogy draws on several interrelated strands of language education research. The communicative approach to language teaching, which emerged prominently in the late twentieth century and continued to develop through the early 2000s, emphasizes that language is best

learned through meaningful use rather than through isolated drills of grammar or decoding. Within this framework, literacy is understood not merely as the technical ability to decode print but as a socially situated practice in which reading, writing, listening, and speaking function together to construct and communicate meaning.

Sociocultural theories of learning, rooted in the work of Vygotsky and subsequently elaborated by numerous scholars of language pedagogy, provide a further justification for integrating speaking into literacy instruction. According to this perspective, language development occurs through social interaction, and the classroom functions as a zone of proximal development in which structured dialogue between teacher and learner, and among learners themselves, accelerates linguistic and cognitive growth. Native language literacy lessons that incorporate discussion, retelling, and collaborative talk therefore align closely with the interactive nature of language acquisition described in this body of research.

Research on emergent literacy also underscores the interdependence of oral language and literacy skills. Studies conducted in the early 2000s and later demonstrated that children's oral vocabulary, narrative competence, and phonological awareness are strong predictors of later reading comprehension and writing quality. This finding has direct methodological implications: literacy lessons that deliberately cultivate oral vocabulary and narrative skill through speaking tasks are likely to produce stronger literacy outcomes than lessons that isolate reading and writing from spoken interaction.

In the specific context of native language instruction, scholars have argued that the mother tongue classroom carries a particular responsibility for developing not only technical literacy but also cultural and communicative fluency, since the native language serves as the primary medium through which learners construct identity and participate in community life. This has led to the development of pedagogical models that combine traditional literacy exercises — reading aloud, dictation, grammar analysis — with communicative tasks such as structured dialogue, dramatization, debate, and oral storytelling.

Despite this substantial body of theoretical and empirical support, practical implementation in many primary school settings remains inconsistent. Curriculum materials often allocate limited time to speaking activities, and teacher training programs frequently emphasize reading and writing assessment over oral competence evaluation. This gap between theory and classroom practice constitutes the central

problem addressed by the present article, which seeks to translate the theoretical principles reviewed above into a concrete, implementable lesson methodology.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining pedagogical observation, comparative lesson analysis, and qualitative evaluation of learner performance. The research was conducted in primary school classrooms where native language literacy lessons were delivered to learners in the early grades of general education. Two groups of lessons were compared over the course of an academic term: a control group following a conventional literacy lesson structure focused primarily on reading and writing exercises, and an experimental group in which lessons were reorganized according to a speaking-integrated methodological model developed for this study.

The experimental methodological model was structured around four organizational stages within each lesson: (1) an oral warm-up stage, in which learners engaged in brief guided conversation, vocabulary recall, or question-and-answer exchanges related to the lesson topic; (2) a literacy-input stage, in which new reading material, text, or literacy concept was introduced through teacher-guided reading and explanation; (3) a speaking-application stage, in which learners used the newly acquired vocabulary and content in structured oral tasks such as retelling, role-play, paired dialogue, or small-group discussion; and (4) a reflective closing stage, in which learners summarized what they had learned orally, either individually or collectively, reinforcing both content retention and speaking fluency.

Data collection instruments included structured classroom observation checklists, audio recordings of learner speech samples during speaking-application activities, and teacher reflection journals. Observation focused on indicators such as frequency and length of learner utterances, vocabulary range, willingness to participate voluntarily, coherence of oral responses, and peer interaction quality. Speech samples were analyzed for lexical variety, grammatical accuracy in spoken form, and narrative coherence. Teacher journals provided qualitative insight into classroom dynamics, learner engagement, and practical challenges encountered during implementation of the speaking-integrated model.

The comparative analysis was designed not as a strict experimental trial with statistical hypothesis testing but as a pedagogical case study intended to identify methodological patterns and practical recommendations applicable to native language

literacy instruction more broadly. This approach reflects the exploratory and applied nature of the research, which prioritizes actionable classroom guidance over generalizable statistical claims.

4. Results and Discussion

Observation of the experimental group's lessons revealed a marked increase in the frequency and length of learner-initiated speech compared to the control group. In lessons following the conventional structure, oral participation was largely limited to short, teacher-elicited responses such as single-word answers or brief phrase completions. By contrast, in lessons following the speaking-integrated model, learners produced longer, more elaborated utterances during the speaking-application stage, particularly during paired dialogue and retelling tasks, where they were required to reconstruct narrative content in their own words.

Analysis of recorded speech samples indicated that learners in the experimental group demonstrated a wider range of vocabulary drawn directly from the literacy texts studied in class, suggesting that the deliberate transfer of written vocabulary into oral tasks reinforced both comprehension and productive language use. Grammatical accuracy in spontaneous speech also showed gradual improvement over the course of the term, particularly in the use of connective words and sentence-linking devices that learners had encountered in reading passages and subsequently practiced in structured discussion.

A further notable finding concerned learner confidence and willingness to participate. Teacher reflection journals consistently noted that learners who were initially reluctant to speak in front of the class became progressively more willing to volunteer responses as the speaking-integrated lessons became a routine part of classroom practice. This shift appears to be linked to the structured, low-stakes nature of the oral warm-up and closing stages, which provided repeated, predictable opportunities for low-pressure speaking practice before learners were asked to perform more demanding tasks such as role-play or group discussion.

The results also highlighted the pedagogical value of role-play and dramatization techniques in particular. When learners acted out short scenes based on the literacy text — for example, reenacting a dialogue between characters in a story — they demonstrated not only improved fluency but also greater attentiveness to intonation,

expressiveness, and communicative appropriateness, elements of spoken competence that are rarely addressed through traditional reading and writing exercises alone.

At the same time, the study identified several practical challenges in implementing the speaking-integrated methodology. Teachers reported that structured speaking activities require more classroom time than conventional literacy exercises, creating tension with curriculum pacing requirements. Larger class sizes also posed a challenge, since ensuring that every learner had adequate speaking opportunities within a single lesson period demanded careful time management and the use of small-group or pair-work formats rather than whole-class question-and-answer routines.

These findings suggest that the successful integration of speaking competence development into native language literacy lessons depends not only on selecting appropriate activities but also on restructuring lesson time allocation, classroom organizational formats, and assessment criteria to give oral performance a recognized and systematically cultivated place within the literacy curriculum.

5. Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings discussed above, the following recommendations are proposed for teachers and curriculum designers seeking to strengthen the speaking dimension of native language literacy instruction.

First, every literacy lesson should include a dedicated, clearly delineated stage for oral language practice, rather than treating speaking as an incidental byproduct of reading or writing tasks. Even brief warm-up and closing stages of five to seven minutes each can accumulate significant cumulative benefit over an academic term.

Second, teachers should systematically design tasks that require learners to transform written or read content into spoken output, such as retelling stories in their own words, summarizing texts orally, or converting narrative text into dialogue for role-play. This transformation process reinforces comprehension while simultaneously exercising productive oral skills.

Third, pair and small-group work should be used more extensively than whole-class question-and-answer formats, since smaller groupings substantially increase each learner's individual speaking time and reduce the anxiety associated with speaking before the entire class.

Fourth, assessment practices should be expanded to include oral performance criteria — such as fluency, coherence, vocabulary range, and communicative appropriateness — alongside traditional reading and writing assessments, so that speaking development is formally recognized and incentivized within the literacy curriculum. Fifth, teacher training and methodological support materials should provide concrete lesson templates and activity banks for speaking-integrated literacy instruction, reducing the planning burden on individual teachers and promoting consistent implementation across classrooms.

6. Conclusion

This article has examined the methodology of organizing native language literacy lessons in a manner that deliberately develops learners' speaking competencies alongside traditional reading and writing skills. The theoretical review demonstrated that speaking and literacy are interdependent dimensions of language competence, supported by communicative, sociocultural, and emergent literacy research. The proposed four-stage methodological model — oral warm-up, literacy input, speaking application, and reflective closing — was shown through comparative classroom analysis to increase learner speech production, vocabulary range, grammatical accuracy in spoken form, and overall confidence in oral communication.

The study confirms that the deliberate, structured integration of speaking activities into native language literacy lessons produces measurable pedagogical benefits without displacing the core literacy objectives of the lesson. Rather, speaking and literacy development were found to reinforce one another, with oral tasks strengthening comprehension and retention of literacy content, and literacy content in turn providing rich material for meaningful oral expression.

Future research should explore the long-term effects of speaking-integrated literacy methodology across multiple academic years, as well as its adaptability to different native language contexts, class sizes, and levels of teacher preparedness. Nonetheless, the present findings offer a practical and theoretically grounded foundation for primary school teachers and curriculum designers seeking to elevate the role of speaking competence within native language literacy education.

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