



Research Article

The Effect of Read-Act-Tell Strategy in Early Childhood Care and Development

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This study examined the effectiveness of the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) strategy in enhancing the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of preschool pupils at Sir Arthur E. Cooper Elementary School. The RAT strategy integrates three stages—reading stories, dramatizing events, and retelling narratives—to foster comprehension, creativity, and communication skills. Grounded in Piaget’s Cognitive Development Theory and Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, the strategy emphasizes active, play-based, and socially mediated learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate for young learners. A quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was employed, involving 44 preschool pupils assessed across multiple developmental domains: gross and fine motor skills, self-help skills, receptive and expressive language, cognitive development, and socio-emotional growth. Standardized ECCD checklists and classroom observation tools validated by the Department of Education were used to measure progress. Results revealed significant improvements in language comprehension, expressive communication, and socio-emotional interaction, alongside notable gains in cognitive and motor development. The findings demonstrate that the RAT strategy is an effective pedagogical approach for bridging literacy gaps among preschool learners, particularly those struggling with reading and self-expression despite prior exposure to early childhood programs. By combining storytelling, dramatization, and retelling, the strategy nurtures imagination, confidence, collaboration, and holistic growth. This study underscores the importance of integrating interactive, multimodal strategies into preschool instruction to strengthen literacy foundations, promote school readiness, and support the broader goals of quality early childhood education.

KEYWORDS

At least 3–5 keywords. Arrange in alphabetical order, with the first letter of the word in lowercase except for proper names

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education serves as the cornerstone of lifelong learning, providing young learners with the foundational skills necessary for cognitive, language, social, and emotional development. During the preschool years, children are naturally curious, imaginative, and eager to explore their environment. Because of this, teaching strategies that are interactive, play-based, and learner-centered are essential to ensure meaningful engagement and holistic growth.

Despite continued efforts to strengthen early childhood programs, many preschool children still experience difficulties in reading comprehension, oral communication, creativity, and confidence in self-expression. These challenges highlight the need for developmentally appropriate strategies that actively involve children in the learning process.

The Read-Act-Tell (RAT) strategy has emerged as an effective pedagogical approach that addresses these concerns by combining literacy development with active participation. Through this strategy, children first listen to stories or texts (*Read*), interpret and perform them through dramatization (*Act*), and finally narrate or retell the events in their own words (*Tell*). This cycle not only enhances comprehension and vocabulary but also nurtures imagination, collaboration, problem-solving, and communication skills. By integrating both play and performance, the RAT strategy provides opportunities for children to express themselves freely, thereby fostering creativity, confidence, and positive social interaction.

In the context of the school division, the integration of the RAT strategy into preschool instruction is particularly significant, as it offers a practical, engaging, and developmentally appropriate method to improve learning outcomes. Examining its effects on children's early development may yield valuable insights into how innovative strategies can support literacy, creativity, and overall school readiness. Ultimately, this study seeks to determine the impact of the Read-Act-Tell strategy in promoting early childhood development, contributing both to classroom practice and to the broader goals of delivering quality preschool education.

The problem observed at Sir Arthur E. Cooper Elementary School many of the Kindergarten pupils are still unable to read, identify, or decode words even after attending daycare or early childhood programs. To address this gap, this study was conducted to implement an intervention using the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) strategy and evaluate its effectiveness in supporting early childhood care and development.

METHODS

This study utilized a quasi-experimental research design, specifically the one-group pretest-post-test design, to assess the impact of the Read-Act-Tell Strategy on the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of preschool pupils. This approach was employed to evaluate changes in the pupils' developmental levels by comparing their performance before and after the intervention.

The study focused on preschool pupils enrolled in early childhood education programs at Sir Arthur E. Cooper Elementary School. The participants' developmental progress will be assessed through pre-test and post-intervention measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) Strategy in enhancing their early childhood development. The study will involve a total of 44 learners. Using a take-all sampling method, all eligible pupils from the school will be included, with the study primarily used standardized assessment tools provided by the Department of Education (DepEd), supported by classroom observation guides, to ensure accurate data collection on pupils' early childhood development. The instruments are aligned with the competencies outlined in the DepEd Kindergarten Curriculum Guide, ensuring their validity and consistency with the expected learning outcomes for preschool pupils. The developmental indicators will be evaluated using a 4-point scale, with the options being Very High, High, Low, and Very Low.

The use of standardized assessment tools helped maintain consistency and reliability in evaluating children's progress, ensuring alignment with DepEd's established developmental

milestones (Department of Education, 2024). In addition, classroom observation guides were utilized to gather real-time insights into how learners interact with the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) strategy and other classroom activities. This observational method is widely acknowledged for its effectiveness in capturing genuine, everyday developmental behaviors within natural learning environments (Li et al., 2023; Pham & Nguyen, 2024).

This framework is consistent with the Department of Education’s method of evaluating early childhood growth, which emphasizes both ongoing assessments and observational measures of performance (Department of Education, 2024). As outlined in the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide, these assessment practices enable educators to adjust their teaching strategies to suit each learner’s developmental requirements and deliver immediate feedback on their advancement (Department of Education, 2019). articulation contingent upon obtaining parental consent.

The table below was used as a scoring guide for interpreting pupils’ performance across various domains of development. It provides a clear framework for translating observed behaviors and skills into meaningful levels of performance, helping educators identify each child’s strengths, areas for improvement, and the type of support needed.

Table 1: Scoring Guide For Interpreting Pupils’ Performance

Range	Mean Score	Description	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Very High	The child consistently demonstrates the skill or behavior with confidence and independence. The ability is clear, accurate, and requires little to no assistance.
3	2.51-3.25	High	The child demonstrates the skill or behavior most of the time, with occasional guidance or prompts. The ability is noticeable and developing steadily.
2	1.76-2.50	Low	The child demonstrates the skill or behavior sometimes, but inconsistently. Support and encouragement are often needed for successful performance.
1	1.00-1.75	Very Low	The child rarely demonstrates the skill or behavior, even with support. The ability is emerging or not yet developed and requires focused intervention.

The researcher first sent a letter of request to the Division Superintendent seeking approval to conduct the study. Upon securing approval, a letter of permission was submitted to the District 2 Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS) and the school principal. Once all necessary permissions had been obtained, the researcher administered the pre-test to assess the baseline performance of the pupils.

Following the pre-test, the intervention was implemented. After the intervention, a posttest was conducted to evaluate whether there had been a significant improvement or development in the pupils’ performance on the assigned tasks.

The following intervention plan was implemented after the pretest had been conducted.

- Title of the Intervention** : Enhancing Early Childhood Care and Development through the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) Strategy
- Duration of the Intervention:** 4–6 weeks, conducted 4 sessions per week, with each session lasting 20-30 minutes depending on the learners’ attention span.
- Target Participants** : Preschool pupils enrolled in Sir Arthur E. Cooper Elementary School during SY 2025–2026.

General Objective :
To improve preschool learners’ reading comprehension, oral communication, and socioemotional development through structured implementation of the Read-Act-Tell Strategy.

- Specific Objectives** :
By the end of the intervention, learners are expected to:
1. Demonstrate improved ability to recall and sequence events from a story, reflecting an increase in their cognitive processing and comprehension skills, which are key indicators of the ECCD variables.
 2. Show enhanced vocabulary and comprehension of simple texts, contributing directly to improvements in the reading comprehension component of the ECCD.
 3. Participate actively in dramatization to express ideas creatively, supporting the development of expressive comprehension and cognitive engagement, both measured in the study.
 4. Retell stories in their own words with greater clarity and confidence, indicating growth in narrative comprehension and cognitive organization, essential aspects of the ECCD.
 5. Work cooperatively with peers during group dramatization and actions, demonstrating progress in collaborative comprehension skills and social-cognitive development, which form part of the variables assessed.

Intervention Procedures (Weekly Breakdown) Week

1 Orientation and Baseline Assessment Activities:

1. Introduce RAT Strategy to learners using simple examples.
2. Establish classroom norms for storytelling and acting.
3. Conduct pre-test using ECCD checklist indicators related to: Gross motor domain, Fine motor domain, Self help domain, Receptive language, Expressive language, Cognitive domain, and Socio-emotional domain
4. Choose age-appropriate stories (short fables, picture books).

Expected Output. Learners understand the flow of Read-Act-Tell.

1. Week 2 Read Phase Focus (Building Comprehension)

Activities:

- a) Teacher reads a short story aloud using big books or picture books.
- b) Emphasize vocabulary, characters, and sequence of events.
- c) Use comprehension cues:
 1. Who are the characters?
 2. What happened first?
 3. Where is the setting?

Strategies to be Used:

1. Picture walk
2. Guided questioning
3. Mini-story mapping



Expected Output:

Learners can identify key story elements.

Week 3 – Act Phase Focus (Dramatization and Creative Expression) Activities:

1. Children dramatize the story using simple props (puppets, hats, masks).
2. Teacher assigns simple roles, encourages movement and gestures.
3. Practice in pairs or small groups.
4. Encourage children to use expressive language and actions.

Strategies to be Used:

1. Role-play
2. Puppet play
3. Group acting

Expected Output:

Learners express characters and events through body movement, facial expressions, and simple dialogue.

Week 4 – Tell Phase Focus (Oral Language and Story Retelling) Activities:

Learners retell the story individually or in pairs.

1. Use picture cues or sequencing cards for support.
2. Encourage children to use their own words, not verbatim repetition.
3. Introduce simple sentence starters:
 - a) First...
 - b) Then...
 - c) At the end...

Expected Output:

Learners retell stories with improved sequencing and confidence.

Week 5 – Integration of Read–Act–Tell Cycle Activities:

1. Conduct full RAT cycle several times with new stories.
2. Have groups present short dramatizations and retellings.
3. Teacher provides feedback using observation checklist.

Expected Output:

Learners independently navigate the Read–Act–Tell sequence.

Week 6 – Culminating Activity and Post-Assessment Activities:

1. Final performance: groups dramatize and retell a chosen story.
2. Conduct **post-test** using ECCD developmental checklist.
3. Document improvements in:
 - a) Language skills
 - b) Confidence
 - c) Interaction
 - d) Comprehension

Expected Output:

Comparison of pre- and post-intervention results.

2. 7. Materials Needed

1. Big books or picture books
2. Puppets, masks, simple props
3. Story sequencing cards
4. ECCD checklist
5. Observation forms
6. Flashcards for vocabulary development

8. Monitoring and Evaluation Assessment

Tools:

1. ECCD standardized checklist
2. Teacher-made rubrics for:
 - a) Dramatization
 - b) Story retelling
 - c) Participation

3. Anecdotal records

4. Pre-test and post-test comparison

Indicators:

1. Improvement in expressive/receptive language
2. Better sequencing and comprehension
3. Increased cooperation during group tasks
4. Enhanced confidence in speaking

3. 9. Expected Outcomes

By the end of the intervention, learners are expected to show:

1. Stronger reading comprehension skills
2. Improved oral language and storytelling abilities
3. Greater creativity through dramatization and ability to perform tasks
4. More confidence and engagement
5. Positive socio-emotional interactions with peers

4. Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were essential in the research study to ensure that participants were protected, the research process was transparent, and the results were credible. In the study involving the Read, Act, Tell (RAT) strategy, ethical guidelines were followed to uphold the dignity, rights, and welfare of all participants, particularly when working with children in educational settings.

First, informed consent was a fundamental ethical requirement. The researcher obtained consent from participants, parents, or guardians before conducting the study. Participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, benefits, and potential risks of the study. This ensured that participation was voluntary and that individuals had the right to withdraw at any stage without negative consequences.

Second, confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed. The identities of students, teachers, and schools were protected by using pseudonyms or codes in all data records and reports. All information collected was stored securely and was used solely for academic purposes. Maintaining confidentiality fostered trust between the researcher and participants and ensured compliance with ethical standards in educational research.

Third, the researcher adhered to the principle of non-maleficence, which meant avoiding any form of harm or discomfort to participants. The RAT strategy was implemented in a way that supported learning and engagement without causing stress, embarrassment, or negative labeling among students. The learning activities remained appropriate for the learners' developmental levels and were aligned with the school's curriculum.



Fourth, honesty and integrity were observed throughout the research process. Data were collected, analyzed, and reported truthfully without manipulation or fabrication. Proper citation of sources and acknowledgment of all contributors were also observed to maintain academic integrity and avoid plagiarism.

Finally, respect for participants’ rights and cultural sensitivity guided the researcher’s conduct. Since the RAT strategy involved active participation, the researcher ensured equal opportunities for all learners and respected diversity in abilities, language, and cultural background.

In summary, ethical considerations in the implementation of the Read, Act, Tell strategy ensured that the research was conducted responsibly, respectfully, and in alignment with established academic and professional standards. By securing informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, avoiding harm, upholding honesty, and showing respect for all participants, the researcher promoted both the integrity and credibility of the study.

RESULTS/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

For SOP number 1 which asks on the level of ECCD of the respondents before the intervention the table below was used.

Table 1 Level of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of Preschool Pupils Before the Intervention, as Measured Across Specified Variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
Gross Motor Development	1.5823	.18807	Very Low
Fine Motor Development	1.7045	.25590	Very Low
Self-help Skills	1.6641	.27824	Very Low
Receptive Language	1.9220	.52026	Low
Expressive Language	1.7013	.34943	Very Low
Cognitive Development	1.7476	.26235	Very Low
Socio-emotional Development	1.6929	.26535	Very Low
Mean	1.7164	.10399	Very Low

Scale: 1.0-1.75 (Very Low); 1.76-2.50 (Low); 2.51-3.25 (High); 3.26-4.00 (Very High)

Table 1 The data presented in table 1 indicate that prior to the intervention, preschool pupils exhibited very low levels of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of preschool pupils before the intervention was generally very low, with an overall mean of 1.7164 and a standard deviation of 0.10399. Gross motor development had a mean of 1.5823 (SD = 0.18807) very low that the child rarely demonstrates the skill or behavior, even with support. The ability is emerging or not yet developed and requires focused intervention. Fine motor development posted 1.7045 (SD = 0.25590) very low this means the child rarely demonstrates the skills or behavior, even with support, The ability is emerging or not yet developed and requires focused intervention. and self-help skills registered 1.6641 (SD = 0.27824) the child rarely demonstrates the skill or behavior, even with support. The ability is emerging or not yet developed and requires focused intervention. all interpreted as very low. Receptive language was slightly higher at 1.9220 (SD = 0.52026), falling under the low category this means the child demonstrate the skill or behavior sometimes, but inconsistently. Support and encouragement are often needed for successful performance Meanwhile, expressive language (M = 1.7013, SD = 0.34943), cognitive development (M = 1.7476, SD = 0.26235), and socio-emotional development (M = 1.6929, SD = 0.26535) remained very low this means the child rarely demonstrates the skill or behavior, even with support. The ability is emerging or not yet developed and requires focused intervention.

These findings suggest that prior to the intervention, the pupils exhibited limited developmental abilities across nearly all domains, indicating a strong need for developmental support and targeted intervention.

As to level of ECCD of the preschool pupils after the intervention the table below was used.

Table 2 Level of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of Preschool Pupils After the Intervention, as Measured Across Specified Variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
Gross Motor Development	3.9008	.09768	Very High
Fine Motor Development	3.6800	.34182	Very High
Self-help Skills	3.3985	.50047	Very High
Receptive Language	3.4980	.38558	Very High
Expressive Language	3.4338	.15464	Very High
Cognitive Development	3.4062	.50761	Very High
Socio-emotional Development	3.6058	.21168	Very High
Mean	3.5604	.18355	Very High

The results of Table 2 reveal that after the intervention, the ECCD level of preschool pupils improved substantially to a very high level ($M = 3.5604$, $SD = 0.18355$). All domains showed high mean scores: gross motor ($M = 3.9008$, $SD = 0.09768$) The child consistently demonstrates the skill or behavior with confidence and independence. The ability is clear, accurate, and requires little to no assistance. fine motor ($M = 3.6800$, $SD = 0.34182$), self-help skills ($M = 3.3985$, $SD = 0.50047$), receptive language ($M = 3.4980$, $SD = 0.38558$), expressive language ($M = 3.4338$, $SD = 0.15464$), cognitive development ($M = 3.4062$, $SD = 0.50761$), and socio-emotional development ($M = 3.6058$, $SD = 0.21168$), all interpreted as very high this means the child consistently demonstrate the skill or behavior with confidence and independence. The ability is clear, accurate, and requires little to no assistance. This indicates that the intervention was highly effective in enhancing the pupils' developmental skills, resulting in significant improvements across all areas of ECCD.

When the pre and post intervention means were compared table 3 shows highly significant improvements.

Table 3 Pre and Post-Intervention Differences in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Among Preschool Pupils Across Selected Variables

Variables	Pre-test	Post Test	t	p	Interpretation
Gross Motor Development	1.5823	3.9008	57.28	.000	Highly Significant
Fine Motor Development	1.7045	3.6800	20.12	.000	Highly Significant
Self-help Skills	1.6641	3.3985	18.98	.000	Highly Significant
Receptive Language	1.9220	3.4980	15.52	.000	Highly Significant
Expressive Language	1.7013	3.4338	17.04	.000	Highly Significant
Cognitive Development	1.7476	3.4062	17.50	.000	Highly Significant
Socio-emotional Development	1.6929	3.6058	34.37	.000	Highly Significant
Mean	1.6444	3.4876	38.20	.000	Highly Significant

Significant

Table 3 presents the differences between pre-test and post-test results, highlighting significant gains across all ECCD variables. The overall mean increased from 1.6444 to 3.4876, with a t-value of 38.20 and a p-value of .000, indicating a highly significant difference. All domains—gross motor ($t = 57.28, p = .000$), fine motor ($t = 20.12, p = .000$), self-help skills ($t = 18.98, p = .000$), receptive language ($t = 15.52, p = .000$), expressive language ($t = 17.04, p = .000$), cognitive development ($t = 17.50, p = .000$), and socio-emotional development ($t = 34.37, p = .000$) demonstrated highly significant improvements, confirming the strong positive effect of the intervention.

The significant differences between pre-test and post-test results confirm that the intervention had a strong and statistically significant impact on improving the ECCD of preschool pupils across all developmental domains.

The findings of the present study are strongly supported by existing literature on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), which emphasizes the effectiveness of early interventions in improving children's developmental outcomes.

The very low ECCD levels before the intervention, as shown in Table 1, indicate that preschool pupils initially had limited skills across motor, language, cognitive, and socio-emotional domains. This condition aligns with the observations of UNICEF, which notes that children who lack access to quality early childhood programs often demonstrate delays in multiple areas of development. UNICEF stresses that without proper stimulation and structured learning experiences, children are less likely to reach their full developmental potential.

CONCLUSION/IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The level of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) of preschool pupils before the intervention was generally very low across all developmental domains, particularly in gross motor, fine motor, self-help, expressive language, cognitive, and socio-emotional skills, while receptive language was slightly higher but still low. This indicated that the pupils had limited developmental abilities and required immediate support.
2. After the implementation of the intervention, the ECCD level of the preschool pupils significantly improved to a very high level in all domains. This demonstrated that the intervention effectively enhanced the pupils' developmental skills, including motor, language, cognitive, and socio-emotional competencies.
3. The comparison between pre-test and post-test results revealed highly significant differences across all variables. The substantial increase in mean scores and statistically significant t-values confirmed that the intervention had a strong positive effect on the pupils' overall development.
4. The findings validated that structured and targeted intervention strategies, such as the implemented approach, are highly effective in improving Early Childhood Care and Development among preschool learners.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this research carry several important implications for early childhood education and development:

1. **Classroom Practice**

The significant improvements observed across developmental domains suggest that the Read-Act-Tell (RAT) strategy can serve as a powerful instructional tool in preschool classrooms. By integrating reading, dramatization, and retelling, teachers can foster literacy, communication, creativity, and socio-emotional growth in ways that traditional phonics-based methods alone may not achieve.

2. School Administration and Policy

The study implies that RAT can be formally adopted as part of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) curriculum. School leaders and policymakers may consider investing in teacher training and resource development to support drama-based and multimodal pedagogies. This aligns with DepEd's emphasis on play-based, learner-centered approaches and contributes to the broader goal of delivering quality early learning experiences.

3. Parental Involvement

The results highlight the potential of RAT activities to extend beyond the classroom. Parents can replicate shared reading, role-play, and storytelling at home, thereby reinforcing literacy development and strengthening the home-school partnership. This implication underscores the importance of cultivating a literacy-rich environment both in school and at home.

4. Learner Development

For preschool learners, the RAT strategy nurtures confidence, imagination, and collaboration while enhancing comprehension and expressive language. These skills are foundational not only for academic success but also for lifelong learning and social interaction. The study implies that RAT can help bridge early literacy gaps and prepare children more effectively for formal schooling.

5. Future Research

The study opens avenues for further investigation into the long-term effects of RAT on literacy retention and academic achievement. Comparative studies with other interventions, may provide deeper insights into its relative effectiveness.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a. **For Teachers.** Preschool teachers are encouraged to adopt and integrate structured intervention strategies, such as the Read, Act, Tell (RAT) approach, into their daily instruction to enhance pupils' developmental skills across all domains.
- b. **For School Administrators.** School heads should support the implementation of early childhood intervention programs by providing necessary resources, training, and monitoring to ensure effective delivery in classrooms.
- c. **For Parents and Guardians.** Parents should be actively involved in their children's development by reinforcing learning activities at home, particularly those that promote language, motor, and socio-emotional skills.
- d. **For Curriculum Planners and Policymakers.** Educational authorities may consider incorporating similar intervention strategies into the early childhood curriculum to address developmental gaps and improve learning outcomes among preschool pupils.
- e. **For Future Researchers.** Future studies may explore the long-term effects of the intervention, include larger sample sizes, or investigate other innovative strategies that can further enhance ECCD among young learners.

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