

## The Impact of Storytelling on Young Ages

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### Abstract

The present study aims at determining the influence of stories read or told on psychological and linguistic development of young school children. Although pupils are required to gain skills of listening in order to go through story-telling classes, it was observed that this very basic skill could also be enhanced by story-telling sessions as well. Stories are essential elements of child development as it helps in both native and second language acquisitions. Young age pupils are very fond of stories and familiar with narrations as they may have heard from their parents when they were younger which they seem to enjoy very much and have great pleasure in predicting next events that may occur in coming chapters indicating cognitive involvement as well. As for second language acquisition literature proves that it helps in memorizing new vocabulary and new phrases. The present article aims at providing a general viewpoint on psychological and linguistic development of young school children through the influences of story-telling. By doing so, it is also aimed to emphasize the importance and key role of story-telling on child rearing.

**Keywords:** story-telling, linguistic development, child rearing, language acquisition, psychological development

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Stories have long been part of our lives not only when we were young children but also when we grow up and become adults. One may tell the fact simply by figuring the rates of TV and cinema views in our daily lives as the modern methods of story-telling. At early ages, children start to get under influence of story-telling as they have their parents the first story-tellers in their lives which have life-span impact on their development. In this regard, stories are not only necessary for young aged children but also for teenagers and adults as well.

Physical and psychological well-beings of children are also well established when they are gone through story-telling at early ages. One of the other key roles of the story-telling is on second language acquisition. Curriculum designers, government entities, policy makers in education and eventually teachers should give importance to story-telling and have it properly involved in educational system.

Together with development of technology, e-learning, online learning, multimedia involvement in education, 3D integrated media platforms etc. can be used in providing the necessary elements of today's instructional means in education. Most importantly, teachers should encourage students to get more involved in the classroom activities by providing elements from their daily lives, interests and experiences to make the content more realistic and closer to their grasp. By doing so, they would also be able to avoid abstract learning and help students get constructive feedback through above mentioned instructional methodology (Harmer, 2005:5).

### 2. METHODOLOGY

The main sources of the present study were articles written on the topic of storytelling and its impact on psychological development of young school children. Nevertheless, primary sources like teacher and student surveys were partially included within the analysis and conclusion parts of the article. Following authors and articles were mainly used as secondary data to support the analysis and interpretations: Harmer (2005): "The Practice of English Language Teaching", Ellis and Brewster (2002): "Tell it Again!", White, Rodney M. (1993). "Teaching History Using the Short Story" Apart from above mentioned sources the present article aimed at providing an insight through interpretations of psychological development of children in regard with the impact of storytelling on young ages.

### 3. DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND STORIES

According to psychologists, stories are one of the essential needs for children. Stories are very much related with their cognitive endeavors as well as in coping with problematic situations. Stories enhance their fantasy world and help them find solutions for their problems. Stories also help children to become part of their social surroundings. Although there are many elements in stories that are far from realities of the world we live in, they still help them in great deal by forcing the limits of their cognitive comprehensions.

Children's inner deep feelings are also very much influenced from stories like fairy tales as they help them find different solutions and strategies for overcoming the problems they face with. One of the effects of the fairy tales is that it helps them understand the difference and existence of both good and evil as they are given with concrete divisions through villains and heroes. The cutting edge division between the villains and heroes makes things easier for children to grasp at early stages as they are not developed enough to comprehend more abstract scenarios. Identification is much easier at this stage, and it helps the child to make some simple associations like if he wants to achieve something in his life he/she should be like the hero/heroine of the story and if he/she does not behave well, the end will always be bad.

Psychologists determine the development through different stages according to which mental development also goes through some certain stages. In each period, we are required to gain some certain skills to cope with problems in our lives which help us to jump to the next stages of our lives. If we can successfully complete the previous stages we can better be prepared for the next one. Erikson, in this regard, divided our lives into eight periods. First year goes through gaining basic confidence, until age three; we try to gain autonomy which is related with motor skills mostly. At pre-school period, we try to gain equilibrium of being guilty and giving up or gaining senses of initiation. Before we hit puberty, we are in between the senses of inferiority and persistency. In adolescent times we try to figure out our identities; building relations with primary people, intimacy feelings etc. When we are at middle ages, we concentrate on growing our own children. And eventually, by old age, we complete our stages and gain satisfaction our failure feelings depending on the past periods.

### 4. THE ROLE OF STORIES IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

One of the essential elements of language learning especially if it's the second language is repetition as children learn by repeating and practicing what they have learned in their short memories. This fact makes stories even more important as they include lots of repetition and they provide essential elements of practice as well as feedback opportunities for teachers. "*Repetition also encourages participation in the narrative*" (Ellis and Brewster, 2002:2) indicates the role of stories as they involve repetition as well.

As one of the Indian proverbs states: "*Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me the truth and I'll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.*" (White, 1993: 305-306) that mentions the essential role of storytelling and its impact on learning as it helps in building memory skills and contextualization of the new language.

Since stories have great impact on children as they find them challenging, funny, motivating as well as entertaining, they can help them build positive outcomes in regard with second language as well. Stories help teachers to better teach new vocabulary, revise new phrases, sentence structures, memorize new phrases, gain familiarity with new contexts etc. when they listen to stories, children also learn how to follow rhythm, stresses, punctuations of the second language. "*Learning English through stories can lay the foundations for secondary school in terms of learning basic language functions and structures, vocabulary and language learning skills*" (Ellis and Brewster, 2002:2).

On the other hand, we are living at the age of technology which makes it a must for teachers to involve technological instruments in teaching languages as well. Teacher is forcibly obliged to find methods and strategies to teach stories and the language of the stories which is called e-learning by researchers. The usage of technology is about the usage of computer as Welsh et al. (2003:245) stated: "*the use of computer network technology, primarily over or through the Internet, to deliver information and instruction to individuals*". However Labra Gayo, et. al. (2003) thinks that e-learning conveys all types of web technologies that are used throughout the process of education. It is worth to mention that Ellis, G., & Brewster, J. (2014), in this regard stated as follows: "*It is any kind of system that allows you to learn a skill through the computer and basically, the Internet, an interactive software or text notes; text notes would be the worst case scenario*

*and some kind of an interactive software that would give you results and test questions and so on....pick and choose kind of thing, so you can actually see if you are taking the right decisions."*

## 5. TEACHING STORIES THROUGH DIVISIONS OF ACTIVITIES

When teachers make daily plans, syllabus or any type of studies to prepare for the class, they need to have an opinion on how and through what aim are they going to teach that class. In this regard, they need to arrange the timing with some certain divisions as many scholars suggest. They should organize the class activities with warming up, introduction to the topic, pre-activities, during activities and post-activities. In relation with storytelling these activities would be pre-reading\listening, while reading\listening and post-reading\listening.

Warming up activities are essential in making students ready through a smooth way as they would not even feel that they have started the class. Some concern raising questions, an informal chatting of an everyday experience related with the topic or some interesting pictures could do the job of warm up session.

Activities for pre-reading\listening are also important as they help the teacher to introduce the topic in general; they help for motivation and prepare students for profound thinking and involvement to the class activity. Their mindsets are prepared to grasp the material in an enhanced way.

After having students involved to the storytelling activity via pre-activities, teachers may start the listening or reading session that would be could while reading\listening activities which determine the style, content, and other instructional elements.

After reading\listening activities are important because it gives the sense that there is a follow up, which makes students more motivated and more participants: *"Stories may bridge the gap between language study and language use and also to link classroom learning with the world outside. Some of the activities do not always have a very large language element but are nevertheless important in creating a feeling among the pupils that learning English means fun, activity, creativity and enjoyment"*. (Ellis and Brewster 2002: 17).

## 6. CONCLUSION

Storytelling is one of traditional methods but also one of today's modern devices in teaching as they not only help us learn a language or have good time, they also guide us in our lifetime experiences as they help young aged school children to develop a better psychological and physical well-beings and individuals that can be part of the society they live in. Thus, storytelling is not only for learning our mother tongues but also for second languages as they help in memorizing new phrases through repetitions, raising interest, enjoyable pastime etc. Language acquisition becomes much easier as children absorb the new material in a quicker and smoother way. The usage of e-learning methodologies would also help students' involvement, comprehension through the means they are familiar with as in internet, movies etc.

The psychological developments of children are also worth to mention as their cognitive skills are much more enhanced through storytelling activities. Imitational learning, impersonating, determining the differences between good and evil and such other factors help children for their personality developments as well as fostering their developments that goes through different stages as mentioned earlier.

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