PERCEPTION

by Dina Merris

Teachers' Perceptions Using Narrative for Teaching English for Young Learners

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Abstract

This article examines the use of narrative as a learning method in English classes for young learners. This study used descriptive qualitative method. It examines the teacher's perspective in using narrative in lesson plans. Interviews were conducted with both novice and experienced teachers in teaching young learners about their preferences and experiences when using narrative-based learning. Research results show that teachers assume narrative-based lessons are very time-consuming so it is not easy to use narratives in learning, so narratives also have a positive impact on the theoretical part could be seen on students and for teaching, 5 out of 7 teachers think coursebooks are not enough for narrative-based learning so they use other sources such as internet and storybooks.

Keywords: *narrative; teachers' perceptions; teaching English for young learners*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language is a process to be able to speak a foreign language well other than the native language (Sari, 2019). The knowledge of the language is intimately attached to a social purpose. It more focuses on the viewpoint of the reader rather than on that of the writer (Sari, 2019). From various things, the narratives is something that we often use in our daily life, whether we realize it or not. (Pink, 2005) argues that we tend to explain things with narratives that are embedded without us even realizing it when we write them ourselves. Telling a story from memories is one of the oldest art forms of all that has been done from prehistoric times, giving each narration interesting characters making narratives very popular today and acceptable to all ages. (Daniel, 2012) explained that narrative is a way for humans to provide information, and storytelling is the most basic way that narratives are communicated. Besides being commonly used in everyday life, the narrative also plays an important role in education. According to (Sari, 2020) current education focuses on creativity, innovation, optimizing information, the internet and technology. She also argues that education functions as a developer of skills, moral values, and attitudes that

can affect life in the future (Sari, 2016). Today's students are required to be able to increase competitiveness, therefore to face the intense global competition students must master foreign language skills through learning at school. (Sari, 2021).

Teaching narrative is important to the students. However, the focus of this article is only on a narrative that is appropriate for younger learners. The main area of interest consists of two elements: selection and delivery. The results of previous research studies (e.g (Gomez, 2010); (Scott, 1990); (Isbell, 2002); (Nelson, 1989); (Berkowitz, 2011); etc.) indicate various different aspects in which the use of narrative to teach foreign languages to young learners. the researchers found that narratives have tremendous potential in encouraging students' emotional intelligence as well as being able to learn about human behavior in depth. but even though it has extraordinary potential as a learning strategy, the narrative itself is very or rarely used by teachers when teaching in class (Fojkar, 2013). However, this article will examine how difficult it is to use narrative by experienced and inexperienced teachers, as well as how to prepare for learning using narratives and keep narrative-based learning interesting for students.

The literature on teaching English to young learners has identified a number of pressing challenges. In Creese's (2010) study teachers complained that there was insufficient funding for the facilities needed for learner-centred teaching. So the purpose of this study is to describe the teachers' perception of suing narrative in teaching english for young learners.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
a. Narrative

People usually assume that story and narrative to be synonymous. However, the definitions, There is a difference between the two terms. The Oxford Dictionary describes that stories are "records of imaginary or real events and people that are retold for entertainment". while the narrative is "a written or oral record of a story that contains connected events". and storytelling is the "activity of writing or telling a story". So, that narrative and storytelling are both ways of telling stories, or rather, ways of presenting stories.

Therefore, it can be understood that a story is a collection of imaginary or actual events, and narrative is a general term used for the term storytelling. although they have the same term, narration and storytelling have slight differences, if storytelling is only presented through oral or written stories, while narration can be presented broadly according to the wishes of the narrator. Several ways can be used in narrating; sounds (songs, recorded narrations, ambient sounds, etc.), static or dynamic images (photographs, sketches, paintings, comic books, movies) animation, movies, etc.), or even through dance and play.

b. Developmental Characteristics of Young Learners

The basic requirement for using narrative as a foreign language teaching strategy is to know who your students are. some scholars (e.g. (Cameron, 2002); (Zigárdyová, 2006); (Scott, 1990); etc.) argue that young students consist of children from the beginning of formal school to the age of eleven to twelve years. According to (Zigárdyová, 2006) despite their young, they tend to have both childlike and adult traits. The following sections describe the developmental features of this particular age group and the symptoms that may occur in an EFL classroom.

Cognitive Development

the most important element when dealing with young learners is their cognitive development. Piaget argued that young learners' learning occurs through problem-solving and regularly interacting with the world around them (Cameron, 2002). when choosing to use stories in teaching young learners, teachers should know that they are learning actively so teachers should avoid using passive methods and using stories or narratives that are repeated. He also claimed that due to the development of abstract thinking, they can easily develop their language and memory through imagination which creates belief (Cameron, 2002).

Child's Learning Process

Other supporting factors that must be prepared when using narratives are through familiarity with the learning process of young students, learning is a process of acquiring new knowledge, experience, skills, behaviors and values. (Scott, 1990)'s previous research emphasized that teaching aids were very important to use in their teaching. Besides that, it is also important to include images, sounds, and feelings so that they can deepen the narrative so that they can stimulate their new knowledge.

c. Teaching Narrative to Young Learners

(Combs, 1994) argues that the human brain is itself a narrative tool. It means, we stor about what we go through, lessons about the world around us; what our friends tell us, what we hear or read; collected in the brain in the form of stories. This will make it easier for us to remember that information later. many researchers (e.g. (Berkowitz, 2011); (Isbell, 2002); (Gomez, 2010); (Paradis, 2009); etc.) agree that narrative has a major impact on language learning as well as fostering imagination and creativity in young learners.

d. Narrative Types

In 2013, the National Literacy Trust published the article "A Guide to Text Types" which listed the following genres: narrative films, adventure listings, myths, science fiction, mysteries, fairy tales, historical fiction, fables, traditional tales fantasy, legends, dilemma stories, contemporary fiction, plays, and

dialogues. All these types have something in common. Most of them start with the introduction of the characters, followed by complication, climax, and final resolution. Except of conveying or simply reading the narrated text, the narrative can be in comics, picture books, pictures without text references, images with oral narratives, recording narration, background sound and/or music together with recorded narration. We can play music with lyrics, a performance, a slide show of certain pictures, dances and even slide shows of cartoons and movies. There may be more options listed.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted through interviews with young students' teachers whose results were analyzed against the theoretical background that has been described on the use of narratives in TEYL. The research consists of; interviews with a group of young student teachers from various schools, about their experiences, while TEYL using narrative. This interview aims to find out how much the teachers agree with the theoretical background that has been described previously, as well as their experiences while using narratives in teaching TEYL. Next, research will be presented, explained and the results will be described.

The interview consisted of 7 teachers who had various backgrounds of teaching experience for young students, some of them had only taught 2 years of teaching experience but some had taught for 12 years. out of all 6 of them are still teaching in primary school while 1 teacher is teaching in junior high but has 5 years teaching experience in primary school. all participants are female and have an average age of 34 years.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The subject of this study used purposive sampling. Two of the seven teachers interviewed (29%) worked with young students under three years old, one (14%) had a career of almost 12 years and four of them (57%) between three and nine years (Figure 1). All the teachers pointed out that they enjoy working with young students and that they found the work very creative and rewarding, although as they say, it can be difficult sometimes.

Three of all teachers spend approximately 60 minutes planning lessons while two teachers spend more than 60 minutes, and others each take 30 to 45 minutes. All respondents agree that the time needed to plan lessons takes more time when they are just starting to work as teachers (Figure 2). One of the less experienced participants said that no matter how many years she worked with young learners, she still considered herself a beginner.
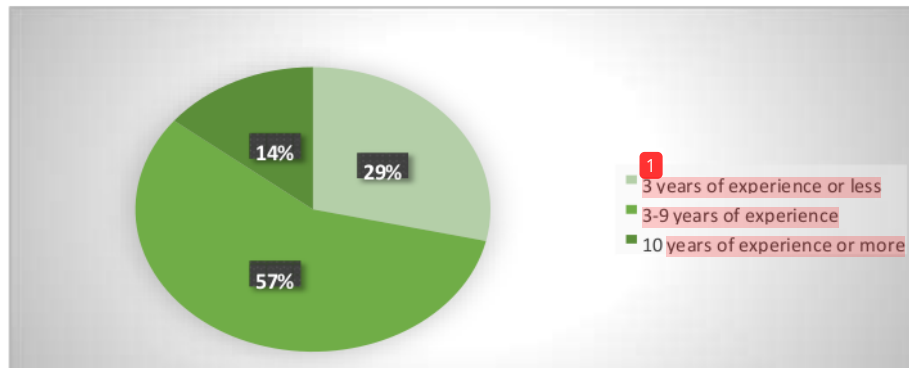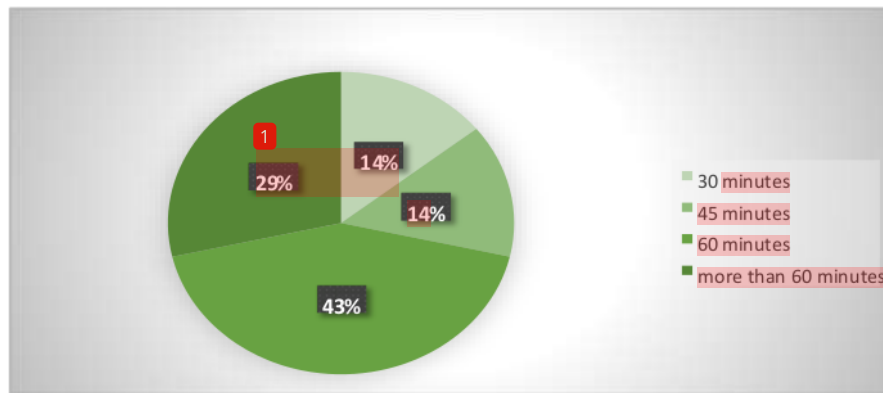
Figure 1. Years of Experience

Figure 2 . Time Needed to Plan a Lesson

All the teachers interviewed used narration and storytelling with young students in class; some of them were common, while others are rare. The three teachers admitted to using storytelling in most other classes. "I think it is very helpful to teach foreign languages because they are very easily entertained if it suits their interests (Participant 1). other participants thought that narration took a lot of time so they didn't use it too often. one of the teachers, "in making lesson plans I can not use narration at all but in the following week I can use narration twice or even three times" (Participant 2). (72%) i.e. five out of seven use narration for 45 minutes to maximize different activities, while one participant (14%) only uses narration for less than one lesson that they already have in mind, and only (14%) one participant strongly recommends using narration in double lessons to complete story. (Figure 3).
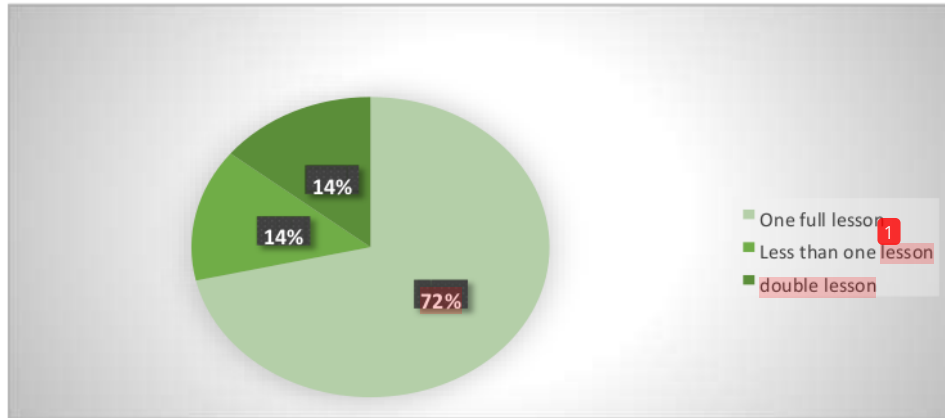
Figure 3. Time spent teaching narratives per lesson

All participants said they wanted to do the same kind of activity as the students. Listening to a CD or a teacher telling a story, reading a story from a textbook, reading a role, understanding a guide, using a puppet to act or play a role, read a manga and draw a picture, make a poster and a cartoon, etc. It is even mentioned. four teachers concluded that children very easily lose concentration and interest when there is no surprise element, and the importance of using activities varies from time to time. they like to role play more than anything. the same as when they like to analyze, and show that they can do things better than other students. However, the teacher must always control the students so that the class is always under control and learning takes place effectively
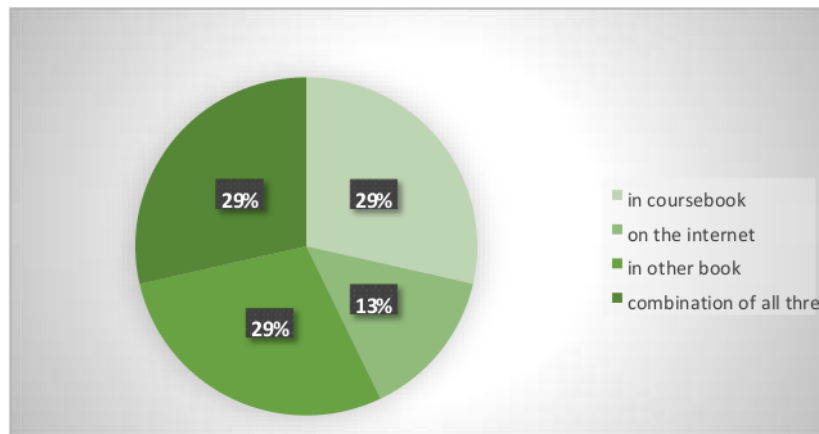
Figure 4. material Resources

Two teachers (29%) use coursebooks with their creativity, the books they use are usually New Building Blocks. Also, five other teachers (71%) think their coursebooks aren't creative enough and need to create their own or find another place if they want the perfect narrative material. only (13%) the teachers use the internet to search for materials, but only look for official websites and well-known authors. and two other teachers (29%) continue to use the other book on the grounds that the author does not have a website as well as a website but charges a fee for each download. the remaining (29%) two teachers prefer to combine various sources from coursebooks, the internet, and other sources so that learning takes place more effectively (Figure 4).

Current research of Creese (2010) is challenging the reflected of assumption that classes should be conducted in English with various sources. Finally, if the teacher is familiar with the subject, she can create her own materials.

5. DISCUSSION

The data obtained during the interview mostly confirmed the initial hypothesis. In the interview, the teacher stated that narrative-based lessons were time-consuming and rather difficult to organize, but even though narrative-based lessons were also beneficial for students, the positive impact of the theoretical part could be seen on students. it is not easy to use narrative frequently in learning, most teachers just incorporate it into the curriculum from time to time. Regarding teaching materials, most teachers think that coursebooks are not enough to provide input for narrative-based lessons, teachers often look for other sources such as other books (stories) and the internet. In choosing the material there are criteria, but it all goes back to the teacher, but there are certain conditions that are universal, the criteria in choosing the material are having to choose age-appropriate material, have clear goals and are also challenging (Kurniaman et al., 2018). Although it takes a lot of time to prepare narrative material during learning, the activeness of young students in the narrative learning process makes it highly recommended. besides that there are also many benefits such as students can develop different skills, they also learn about culture at the same time, and together spend quality time, work together as a team, and learn new things.

Different experiences in teaching have a big impact on the time it takes to plan a narrative-based lessons, the complications of all the difficulties make many teachers avoid using narratives in the classroom, but nevertheless providing narrative-based lessons can be beneficial for both teachers and students.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study confirmed many factors in the use of narrative-based lessons in TEYL, the most important of which is increasing students' awareness of intercultural tolerance, developing their language and

skills, teaching problem solving, and how to become social and classroom role models. The story presented in the narrative makes students feel familiar with the new situations described in the story and makes them concentrate on other things including foreign languages

Based on the research confirms that, the theory is not the most important thing, it is by no means strong in terms of teaching. Practical knowledge takes time and experience. Therefore, teachers who lack experience should not give up if their narrative-based lesson does not go smoothly or does not match what they expected. Teachers can gradually improve mastery of the material with age and experience and there will always be room for improvement.

Finally, due to the limits of the study in terms of the number of participants, this study may not be completely reliable. Therefore, it may be helpful to repeat this research with more experienced teachers in the future. Understanding students will enable researchers to obtain more realistic results. Some suggestions for further research include creating narrative-based lesson materials, using narrative when TEYL, use technology, etc.

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