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Teachers' perception on the role of storytelling in young learners' EFL development

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ABSTRACT

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This paper investigates the perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers on the role of storytelling in their classrooms. Using a quantitative research approach, teachers were given a 12-question survey that was adapted from Seng Swee Hoon Connie's (2017) study. A quantitative approach was used and the data was gathered with a survey consisting of structured questions and it was implemented on 40 EFL teachers. The results highlighted storytelling as a strong tool that may enhance vocabulary, critical thinking, and EFL development as a whole. Teachers emphasize the ability of storytelling as a creative tool, and it may help students to better understand and communicate. However, implementational barriers such as limited time and insufficient resources can be counted as some of the obstacles to making use of storytelling. This study supports the importance of storytelling in EFL classrooms and its applications, not just as a teaching technique, but also as a way to make learning a meaningful and joyful journey. Applying storytelling and making use of its full potential may help to make the learners more engaged. Thus, we might need to prioritize storytelling in the curricula and provide teachers with the pieces of training to make it more effectively used. This could enrich the learners' experience of language and make it more inspiring for both teachers and learners.

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Introduction

Stories have always been in children's lives from the early years of their language learning journey as an inseparable item for them to learn real life. That is why, it has always been an important part of humanity by means of transmitting traditions, knowledge, and values. Due to that reason, to make profit of its useful and nurturing nature, it was brought to the field of language education. In the educational field, storytelling is recognized not only for its cultural significance but also for its engaging aspects, which makes it a powerful and pedagogical tool for learning. In this context, it can be said that storytelling may have a crucial role in enhancing language acquisition, critical thinking, and socio-emotional development. In EFL classrooms, learners may face numerous challenges, especially in young learner classrooms, in their language development. That is because of their natural need for engagement. At this point, traditional approaches are not enough to maintain enthusiasm, especially in exam-oriented educational systems. Storytelling here helps engage learners and with its interactive nature, offers a solution for this problem in a meaningful context by developing vocabulary, comprehension, and communicative abilities effectively. In this study, a survey consisting of 12 questions is conducted with 40 EFL teachers through a quantitative method to gain insights into the benefits, obstacles, and practical applications of storytelling in EFL classrooms. Finally, this study stresses its potential to make EFL education a more dynamic and meaningful experience for young learners. This study aims to evaluate EFL teachers' perception of using storytelling as an approach and its benefits in young learners' EFL development.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language has its own difficulties, especially when it comes to young learners. Keeping the learners motivated, engaged, and interested is not something that can be achieved with traditional teaching methods that generally focus on rote memorization in unreal learning environments. As a consequence of this, students may suffer in retaining vocabulary, comprehending complex structures, or developing a will to communicate effectively. Presenting language in a meaningful and engaging context boosts the potential storytelling has and enhances vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, and critical thinking skills as well. Adding to these, it may also have a positive impact on learners' socio-emotional development by fostering creativity, empathy, and collaborative learning. Despite all the advantages, implementing storytelling in EFL contexts might have inhibitions, such as lack of knowledge, insufficient application time, and exam-oriented curriculums. Teachers may face these challenges and thus, they need to overcome these barriers for holistic language development. The literature review highlights the theoretical background and benefits of storytelling. However, further research is needed as the research searching for both benefits and challenges is limited. It is crucial to understand the perception of teachers on the role of storytelling in EFL settings but to be able to measure this, more holistic research needs to be done. Identifying the possible challenges and drawbacks to support the effective use of storytelling is also crucial. This study points to this problem by surveying 40 EFL teachers' perceptions on the role of storytelling in young learner classes, seeking valuable insights on this topic. The benefits of using storytelling, challenges that might be encountered, and its applicability in EFL classrooms is investigated in this study.

Literature Review

Storytelling has long been recognized as a powerful teaching tool, especially in fostering young learners' foreign language development. This research indicates that storytelling has both linguistic benefits and cognitive, motivational, and socio-emotional advantages, making it a holistic approach to language learning. In this section, recent studies, emphasizing the major contributions and challenges of using storytelling in EFL environments are studied. Bala (2015) claims that storytelling offers a meaningful and engaging setting in which students can increase their vocabulary through repetition and engaging activities. The approach offers a dynamic atmosphere that fosters language acquisition naturally. In a comparable manner, Kalantari and Hashemian (2016) emphasize that storytelling greatly improves young EFL learners' vocabulary retention and understanding. The authors underline the value of creating a realistic, linguistically rich experience, that storytelling naturally offers. Seng (2017) and Chen (2024) highlighted, especially in classrooms where students struggle with traditional, test-centered instructions, storytelling may enhance student motivation and engagement.

Moreover, it can be said that storytelling stimulates higher-order thinking in addition to language acquisition development. According to Pham and Pham (2021) interactive storytelling activities can foster critical thinking by motivating students to evaluate, understand, and analyze the content to be covered. These tasks provide students with an opportunity to interact creatively with stories while improving their problem-solving abilities, which later can be result in learner autonomy and a factor effecting motivation.

Yahya et al. (2018) demonstrated how storytelling may enhance EFL classes and keep students engaged by developing cognitive and analytical skills. Recent studies continue to emphasize that storytelling does more than support vocabulary acquisition. According to Yıldız (2018), techniques like Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) have shown measurable improvements in oral performance among young learners. Indicating that using storytelling in young learner classrooms may greatly improve oral proficiency and teachers may benefit from it. Moreover, with its integration to other teaching strategies, a more inclusive and diverse learning environment can also be achieved.

In addition to its many linguistic and cognitive benefits, storytelling may also promote motivation and socio-emotional development. Seng (2017) emphasizes how storytelling may help learners build a love of learning and strong socioemotional interactions. The collaboration and interaction properties of storytelling may ensure growth in the classroom environment promoting peer interaction and active engagement. It can be said that storytelling can cause socio-emotional improvements with group work and circle time activities. Similar to this, Chen (2024) argues that exposing young students to storytelling increases their motivation and engagement.

Although applying storytelling in young learner classrooms has its many benefits, there are also a few disadvantages that may happen when it comes to implementations. Yahya et al. (2018) underlined some of them as, test-focused curriculum, limited time for application, and lack of opportunity. These disadvantages of applying storytelling in young learner classrooms

often prevent teachers from making the most of storytelling as a tool for instruction and they might have hesitations to use it. Seng (2017) underlines the gap between instructors' positive evaluations of storytelling and their real-world teaching methods, pointing to a lack of trust and support as major barriers. To be able to use storytelling effectively, barriers need to be overcome first.

There are other recent studies that show using storytelling in EFL contexts influences the language development of students. Research in 2025 has shown that teacher-led storytelling applications in classroom contexts are significantly important when it comes to EFL speaking proficiency. Usmani et al. (2025) underlined the strong gains in fluency, accuracy, and communicative confidence that storytelling provides through related activities. Likely, a small qualitative study in Indonesia also found that applying storytelling in EFL context enhances speaking proficiency and learner engagement (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Adding to that, motivational gains of storytelling applications further promote proficiency development (Temel & Yilmaz, 2025).

Research Questions

RQ1: What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the role of storytelling in young learners' English language development?

RQ2: What benefits do EFL teachers associate with using storytelling in the classroom (e.g., vocabulary, critical thinking, engagement)?

RQ3: What challenges or obstacles do EFL teachers face when implementing storytelling in EFL classrooms?

RQ4: How do EFL teachers view the practicality and applicability of storytelling within existing curricula and teaching environments?

Methodology

The study aims to gain insights of teachers on the role of applying storytelling in young learners' EFL classrooms. A quantitative research design was implemented to gather data on the perceptions of the role of storytelling in EFL young learners' classrooms, teachers' attitudes toward the implementation of storytelling, and the effectiveness of it in EFL young learners' classrooms. The study employs a survey-based approach with the help of a structured questionnaire taken from Seng Swee Hoon Connie's (2017) study with an agreement scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and adapted according to the Turkish EFL context. The study is followed by a descriptive quantitative research design allowing the deeper analysis of the perspectives of teachers that was questionnaire implemented on. A total of 40 EFL teachers specialized in working with young learners were selected as a convenient sample targeting the aimed background. The questionnaire aimed to cover addressing potential drawbacks, effectiveness in language development in skills, motivational impact, and pedagogical value. The survey was distributed digitally to make sure of the high rates of attended participants. Consent and anonymity were assured before gathering responses at the beginning of the survey and the participants were informed about the survey content. The survey questions mainly looked for answers on storytelling's role on motivation and engagement, effectiveness on reading habits, the dynamics in EFL classrooms, its effect on

cognitive growth, how storytelling helps students develop characters, and the practical difficulties of using it in EFL context.

Instrument

A structured questionnaire was adapted from Seng Swee Hoon Connie's (2017) research through which the data was collected. The survey included 12 close-ended questions to measure and evaluate the agreement of teachers with a Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, allowing participants to express their level of agreement. The survey was designed to evaluate the applicability and how it was perceived among students from multiple perspectives; such as motivational value, classroom dynamics, language development, cognitive benefits, and implementation challenges.

Participants

Forty English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers were selected through convenience sampling, especially teachers who are working or experienced in a young learner classroom to make sure all the teaching backgrounds are meaningful and has context-specific insights related to the research questions. All participants voluntarily took part in the research. Privacy and anonymity were assured to create a secure environment for honest answers. Participants were selected from different institutions which allows us a wider perspective on the implementation of storytelling.

Data Collection and Analysis

The survey was conducted on Google Forms to reach as many young learner classroom teachers as possible. The link of the survey was shared via online platforms and WhatsApp primary school groups. The aim here was to make sure that the participants were relaxed and they take their time to read and appropriately answer the questions by heart. In addition, their motivation to answer the questions in a stress-free environment was taken into consideration. The answers were collected through Google Forms and accordingly, the data set was created. The descriptive statistics were run.

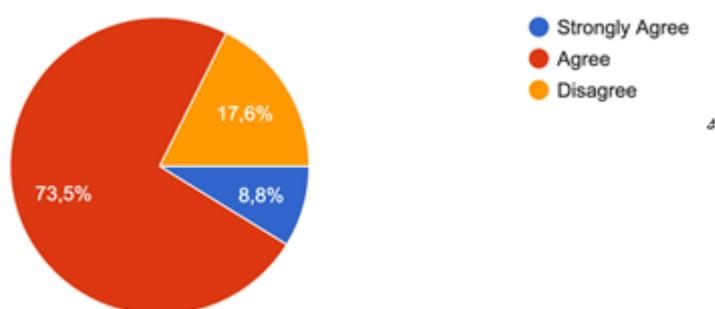
Findings

The results of the survey provide information about how EFL teachers view storytelling and its importance for the language development of young students. Despite the fact that a few challenges were mentioned and identified, which reflected the difficulties of applying storytelling in the classroom, the findings showed a generally positive attitude towards the use of storytelling as an effective educational method. In this section, how teachers perceive using storytelling in young learner EFL classrooms from negative and positive aspects can be seen. The survey questions are grouped according to their content. These subgroups are: Motivation and engagement, reading and motivation, dynamics in classroom, cognitive growth, developing characters and practical difficulties. In the motivation and engagement subgroup, 2 statements are rated. These statements are "It helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted" and "Stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories.". The next section is about reading and motivation. This section asked again two statements which are "Listening to stories instills the love of language in

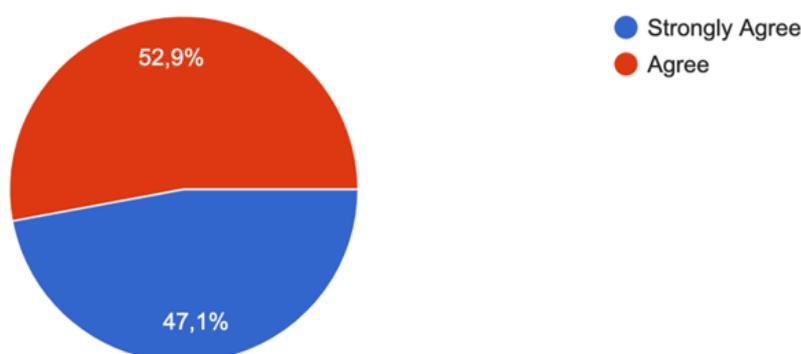
students and motivates them to read.” and “Through storytelling, teachers can instill in pupils a love for reading.” In the dynamics in the classroom subgroup only one statement is rated, that is “It is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils’ interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games”. To evaluate the cognitive growth perceptions, EFL teachers rated the “Storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation.” Statement and “Storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories, and it is hoped that they may apply this knowledge to their own storytelling”. Developing characters subgroup looked for opinions on first “Through storytelling, teachers can inculcate values for character development.”, then for “It is a tool to help teachers convey abstract concepts such as filial piety and honesty.” statements. Lastly, in the practical difficulties subgroup, the survey takers are asked to rate three statements, “It is very time consuming to tell stories.”, “It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling.”, and “Literature or research on storytelling only focuses on successful cases.”

Figure 1

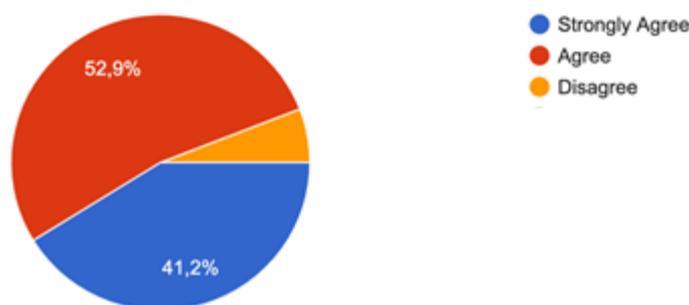
Classroom Management



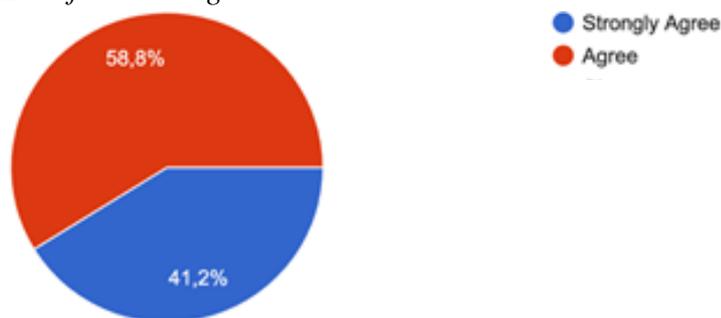
According to the survey results, in Figure 1, we can see that 73.5 % of the participants agree with the statement that it helps in classroom management – students become more attentive, and are less distracted. However, 17.6% perceive that it does not have an effect on student motivation and 8.8% of the participants strongly agreed on that storytelling has an effect on motivation and engagement. Many people believe that storytelling is an effective teaching method to keep students engaged and make them have fun. Storytelling can keep students entertained and engaged during lessons, according to the majority of teachers who took the survey. Many of the teachers supported the power of conveying abstract meanings easily through storytelling.

Figure 2*Motivation and Engagement*

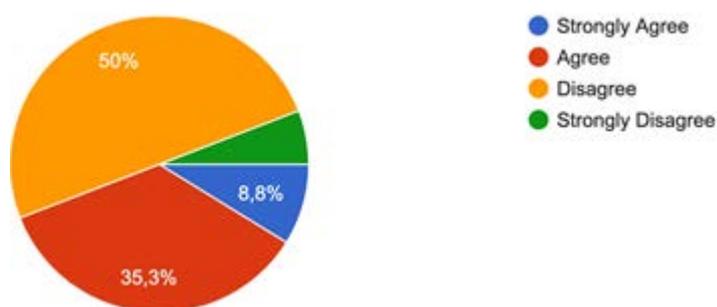
According to Figure 2, we can clearly see that majority of the survey takers agree that stories are highly engaging for young learners and stories are able to captivate children's interest because they love to listen to stories. More than half of the participants (52.9%) perceive stories as a useful tool to raise student's interest and agree with the statement that they love listening stories. The rest of the participants strongly agree with the statement and we can see that almost every participant agrees that utilizing storytelling in young learner EFL classrooms engages learners and they enjoy listening stories.

Figure 3*Reading Habit and Motivation*

Survey results show us that the 52.9 % of the participants believe that listening to stories instills the love of language in students and motivates them to read. The majority of the participants agree that listening to stories instills the love of language in students and motivates them to read. Adding to that 41.2% of the survey takers strongly agrees with the statement. A large number of participants highlighted the power of storytelling as a stimulant. Teachers reported that reading stories to their students usually motivates them to read on their own, fostering a love of language and literature. This drive is thought to be crucial for creating an ongoing passion for learning English. A very small percentage of the participants believes that it is not useful to create reading habits and it does not motivate the learners.

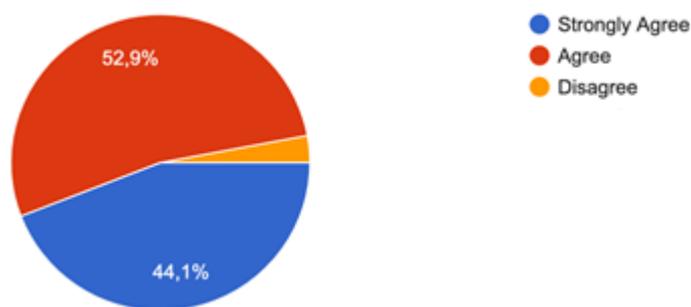
Figure 4*Love for Reading*

According to Figure 4, a large number of participants agrees on the statement that through storytelling, teachers can instill in pupils a love for reading. This indicates that 58.8% of the survey takers perceive storytelling as a useful technique to grow reading habits and motivate learners to read more and become autonomous learners. The other half of the participants, again with a high percentage (41.2%), strongly agrees with the statement. No participants strongly disagree or disagree with the statement. Therefore, we can understand that storytelling in young learners EFL classrooms can be used to motivate students to encourage reading habit.

Figure 5*Dynamics in the Classroom*

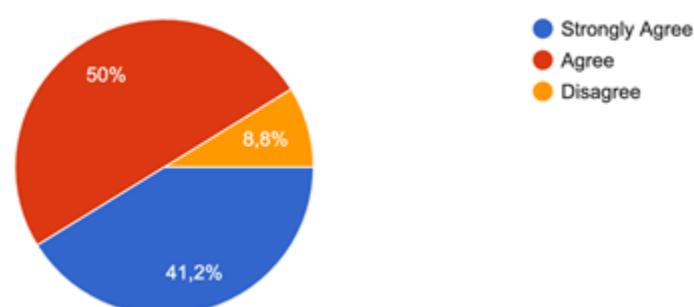
Half of the participants disagree that it is easier and less time consuming to arouse pupils' interest in a lesson with storytelling than playing games. Which means that time and extra cautions need to be taken into consideration when utilizing storytelling in EFL classrooms. According to the survey feedback, 50% of the participants disagree that the classroom dynamics are highly affected by storytelling. According to the questionnaire results, 35.3% of the survey takers agree with the statement while 8.8% of them strongly agree with the statement. Instructors have found that narratives increase focus and reduces distractions, creating a more structured learning environment. The natural rhythm and flow of the stories enable students to become completely engaged in the story, later on, it reduces issues in the classroom and promotes active engagement. A very small percentage of the participants strongly disagrees with the statements, indicating that applying storytelling somehow creates a relaxing and engaging environment in young learner EFL classrooms.

Figure 6
Cognitive Growth



Majority of the survey takers (52.9%) agree that storytelling promotes critical and higher order thinking such as analysis and evaluation. It indicates that utilizing storytelling in young learner EFL classrooms might be useful for learners to awaken different feelings and results in a development in their cognition. Almost half of the survey takers (44.1%) strongly agree with the statement and this can make sure that storytelling is perceived as a very useful technique when it comes to cognitive growth. Storytelling has been identified as an effective approach for fostering cognitive development in addition to language learning. Teachers stated that logical thinking is improved by storytelling, which helps students comprehend better story sequences and use this ability to tell their own stories. According to the teachers, applications of storytelling in classrooms also promote critical and higher-order thinking which helps in general cognitive growth and problem-solving skills. Only 3% of the survey takers disagree with the statement. We can evaluate it as a mild result which can be caused by personal reasons or various limitations.

Figure 7
Cognitive Development

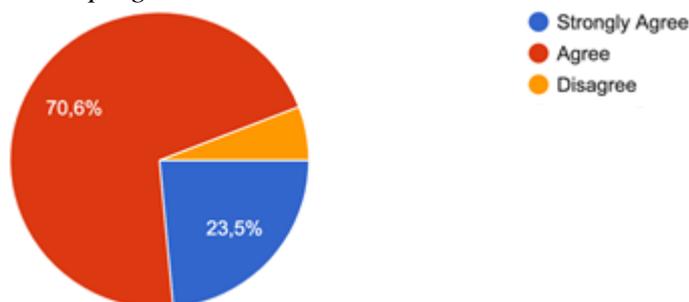


Based on Figure 7, it can be seen that half of the survey takers agree on the statement. So, we can say that storytelling encourages children to see that there is a logical sequence in stories and with the help of these sequences, they may apply and integrate this knowledge in their lives. To make learners make use of this, teacher has a great responsibility, of course. This might be the reason why 8.8% of the participants disagree with the statement. Thus, we can assume that yes, a great number of the teachers who answered the questions perceive storytelling as a useful tool to encourage cognitive development, although some perceive the

opposite. Reason for that might be the teacher assistance needed or students' personal barriers. However, 41.2% of the participants still strongly agree with the statement.

Figure 8

Developing Characters



Survey results show that through storytelling, according to 70.6% of the participants, teachers can inculcate values for character development. The majority of the participants agree with the statement, which can imply that utilizing storytelling in young learner EFL classrooms can be highly useful when it comes to developing characters. Due to the fact that stories include different characters and background information, stories can be highly effective for young learners' character development and ethical-moral teaching and learning. Almost the rest of the participants (23.5%) strongly agrees with the statement, showing us only a small percentage of the survey takers perceives storytelling as a not very useful technique to develop characters among young learners. The socio-emotional advantages of storytelling were also emphasized by teachers. Many people stated that moral principles, empathy, and cultural awareness are all imparted through stories.

Figure 9

Conveying Abstract Concepts

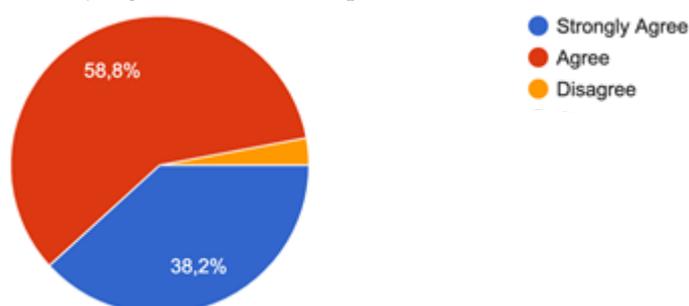
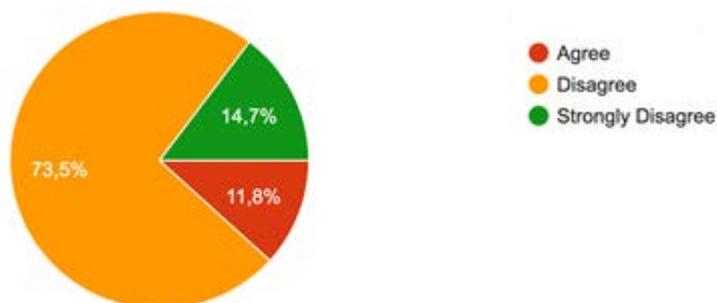


Figure 9 shows us that with 58.8%, a great number of participants agree on the statement. Thus, we can say that many teachers perceive storytelling as a useful tool to convey abstract concepts such as honesty or moral education. Especially for young learners, it is essential to teach those subjects slowly but surely to make sure that they are also capable of understanding their emotions and others' as well. With the flow of stories, and their engaging nature, storytelling is perceived as an effective way of teaching mentioned topics. Moreover, 38.2% of the participants strongly agrees with the statement. Lastly, the minority of the participants perceive

storytelling as a not so useful educational tool with the percentage of three. We can assume that these teachers again might have their own reasons to perceive it this way.

Figure 10

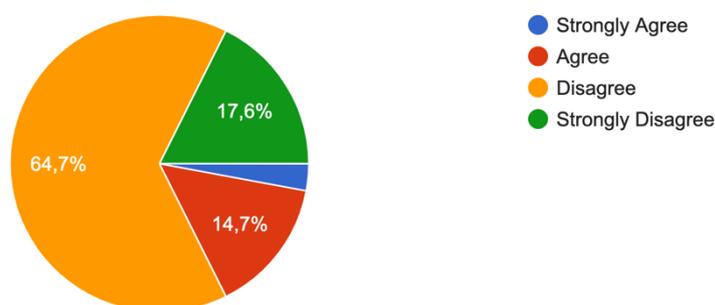
Practical Difficulties



According to the majority of the participants (73.5%), it is very time consuming to tell stories. This can be as a result of personal reasons or curricular issues. There were different opinions on how much time storytelling necessitates. Some of the teachers considered it hard to spend enough time on, however, others thought it was a perfect fit for their lesson plans. Some teachers found using storytelling in their classrooms for EFL development challenging in terms of implementation. However, 14.7% of the survey takers strongly disagree with the statement, which can be interpreted as that they can spare the time needed or invest enough time and effort without having difficulties. Some of the teachers believe it is challenging to teach language skills through storytelling. Moreover, 11.8% of the participants agree with the statement. Therefore, we can still say that most of the young learner EFL classroom teacher participants perceive utilizing storytelling in their classrooms as a time-consuming technique or they cannot invest the time needed due to curricular issues.

Figure 11

Teaching Skills

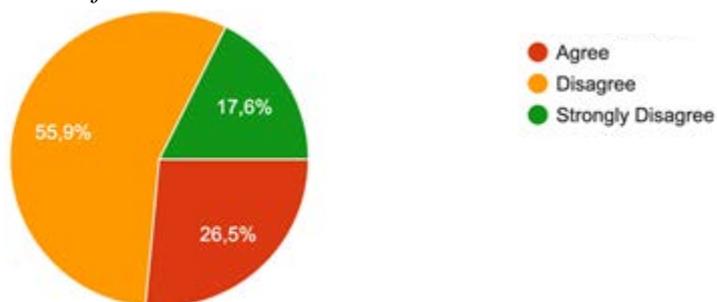


In Figure 11, it can be said that majority of the participants (64.7%) disagreed on that it is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling, showing us that most of the survey takers perceive storytelling as a useful technique when it comes to teaching skills in their classrooms. Adding to that, some of the participants (14.7%) perceive storytelling as a useful technique to teach skills and as a not so difficult to implement one and agreed with the statement. However, 17.6% of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement and

perceived storytelling as a difficult to implement technique. According to the participants, it is not difficult to teach skills through storytelling. There might be different reasons for this, such as time limitations or curriculum restraints. Connecting storytelling with the curriculum proved to be hard sometimes for some teachers, while others think it is a useful technique. The number of participants who strongly agree with the statement is relatively small which might be caused by personal issues, applicational barriers or institutional problems.

Figure 12

Successful Cases



In the Figure 12, we can see that the results vary from agree to strongly disagree. However, most of the participants agree with statement. More than half of the survey takers disagree with the statement. According to the numbers, literature or research on storytelling does not only focus on successful cases. In fact, 26.5% of the teachers that took the questionnaire perceive it the opposite. With this question, we can understand that a considerable number of teachers believe that storytelling research in the literature only focuses on the successful cases. However, 17.6% of the survey takers strongly disagree with the statement. Therefore, we can say that in general, teachers perceive it the opposite way; however, a number of teachers have a disagreement on this subject. As this question requires subjective opinions of teachers, we can add that more and further research is needed on this topic.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate the importance of storytelling and its valuable place in young learners' EFL classrooms, with its capacity to develop cognitive, socio-emotional, and linguistic abilities. According to the survey results, we can say that the majority of the participants agree that storytelling has a great impact on young learner's language learning journey. However, the results also indicate that, without overcoming various difficulties, it may not be possible to achieve a successful application in schools. In this section, the perception of English teachers on the role of storytelling in EFL young learner classrooms and the consequences of the findings are analyzed in a structured way.

Storytelling is considered to be one of the effective ways of teaching English to young learners in a meaningful context for its engaging nature. Its ability to capture learners' interest is highly accepted by the teachers. Also, with the help of storytelling's stimulating nature, the significant positive impact cannot be ignored. These results are consistent with earlier studies (Bala, 2015; Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016), which highlight the ability of storytelling to engage students in

rich language situations, hence promoting comprehension and vocabulary retention. One reason why teachers perceive storytelling as a powerful tool could be that it connects language with real life experiences. Especially for younger classes, this makes lessons more meaningful and keeps them engaged. Also, the teachers in the study disagree with the statement “It is difficult to teach English language skills through storytelling”, meaning that they perceive storytelling as a useful technique to teach skills better. The report also emphasizes how storytelling can foster a love for reading, which may result in lifelong learning habits for young learners. In addition to its linguistic benefits, positive effects of storytelling on reading and motivation were underlined for its engaging nature in fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills among young learners. Analyzing and interpreting stories requires cognitive engagement, which helps students to think critically and creatively in a natural order. In this sense, Pham (2021) emphasizes the value of storytelling in helping young students acquire higher-order cognitive abilities. Moreover, its impact on the socio-cultural skills of the students and its role in building empathy and moral values were agreed on by the teachers in line with Seng’s (2017) observations about storytelling’s holistic impact.

In spite of the fact that it's highly effective, implementational challenges of storytelling are highlighted by some of the teachers. For instance, limited time, lack of training, and strict curricula to be followed can be counted as some of the key barriers to integrating storytelling effectively. These findings echo those of Yahya et al. (2018), who noted that systemic issues often hinder the use of innovative teaching methods. This highlights the need for balanced and context-sensitive studies. In addition, the survey findings support the need for additional improvements on the effectiveness of storytelling when it comes to its implementation in young learners’ EFL classrooms.

It is important here to underline the teachers’ assistance, as many teachers perceive it as a useful technique when the barriers and limitations are overcome, we can make use of the technique with the highest profit. Adding to that, teachers perceive storytelling as a useful technique improving students' language and cognitive abilities, according to the survey findings. Moreover, teachers also agree that storytelling motivates students and promotes their emotional and social growth. According to the survey results, to ensure storytelling’s effectiveness in EFL contexts, it must be successfully applied and involved in EFL classrooms. Fundamental problems such as the lack of training among teachers and the support needed to manage it must be overcome. Thus, teachers require a full understanding of the opportunity of implementing storytelling into their teaching contexts and making language acquisition more efficient, engaging, and useful for young learners by making professional development and curriculum adjustments a priority. This study confirms that using storytelling in ELF young learner classrooms as a tool is a very useful pedagogical way of enhancing vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, and socio-emotional growth while motivating students in meaningful contexts. However, for storytelling to reach its potential efficiency, there are systematic elements to be applied and changed. These include providing professional development opportunities for teachers. As teachers have their own daily workload in their workplaces or schools, they either need to spare some private time or institutions need to arrange trainings for them. Moreover, designing flexible curricula that allow time for creative teaching methods,

and conducting research that addresses both the benefits and practical challenges of storytelling are also needed. By eliciting these challenges, teachers may make use of storytelling to its maximum capacity, making EFL classrooms more engaging, inclusive, and effective. Because of the fact that storytelling is recognized more and more as a valuable teaching strategy every day, for future steps, further research on creating supportive environments that empower teachers to use this method creatively and confidently needs to be taken into consideration. This will ensure that young learners not only acquire language skills but also develop critical thinking, empathy, and a lifelong love for learning.

Concerns about current research on storytelling were highlighted by a few of the teachers. This data shows that more independent and further research is needed that evaluates both the advantages and disadvantages of using storytelling as a teaching method. In a nutshell, the survey findings highlight various benefits of storytelling in EFL classes, such as its power to engage students, encourage character development, and advance cognitive improvements. However, to benefited it at its maximum, there are some real-world challenges to overcome, including time restraints, curriculum restrictions, and the requirement for teacher preparation. These results draw attention to the need for systemic support and additional study, while also highlighting the potential of narrative to revolutionize EFL instruction.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights toward the role of storytelling in young learners' classrooms and how teachers perceive it. It shows that storytelling is not just an enjoyable activity but also an effective tool to enhance language development through which learners can develop language skills. To be able to maximize the effectiveness of storytelling and for it to reach its potential, teachers need support and practical training from institutions and more flexible curricula that provide them with spare time to use their creativity to find ways to apply it. There are a few challenges when it comes to applying storytelling in EFL contexts, stated by the participants such as lack of sources, time constraints, or curricular issues. By addressing these challenges, schools can turn storytelling into a routine practice and benefit from most of its effectiveness and improve not only language outcomes but also nurture a love for learning in young learner classrooms. Adding to that, it is stated by the participants that in exam-oriented systems, teachers are influenced by the pressure of tests which leads them to prioritize other teaching practices rather than storytelling. This suggests that the assessment culture may limit the use of storytelling as teachers have other responsibilities such as exam preparation. For further research, combining assessment with storytelling can be studied to shed light on the relationship between them and whether it is a viable way to assess students' progress through storytelling. Exploring how storytelling can be aligned with assessment frameworks, for instance, by using story-based tasks and evaluating different skills in authentic ways, is a more than open to research topic.

There are several limitations to this study that must be acknowledged. To start with, as the sample size was limited to 40 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers who are working in young learner classrooms selected through convenience sampling, the generalizability of the study might also be limited. This restriction might be overcome with the help of a wider range

of participants. The fact that participants were selected from similar educational settings and contexts might result in a limitation that hinders the diversity of the answers. Again, with a wider range of participants, this barrier can also be overcome. Instead of limiting the diversity of experiences, raising the participant number and the diversity of backgrounds of teachers, the research environment can be broadened to a better one, and can result in a diversity of experiences being represented. Secondly, only one questionnaire was implemented in this study. With a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, it is possible to come up with a more holistic view of the topic as a mixed methods study. Finally, as a quantitative study, it lacks the depth and nuance that qualitative data such as interviews or classroom observations can provide. For this reason, to increase the studies' depth and to make sure that the participants may have additional perspectives, and to be able to include fully accurate insights of teachers, continuing with a mixed-methods research design might be a good idea. For future studies, it is recommended to do a mixed methods research and combine quantitative surveys with interviews to give deeper understanding of how storytelling can be utilized. To summarize, with a larger sample size and with a different method design, this study can be improved, or further research needs can be met.

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No, there are no conflicting interests.

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