Implementing Tales As Warm Up Process At Reading Lessons

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is developed through activating and adding to students' background knowledge, offering explicit teacher-led comprehension strategy instruction, and by helping students coordinate a set or family of comprehension strategies to construct meaning through rich discussions and interactions around a variety of text structures, genres and tales. Finally, families and communities can read and discuss appropriately challenging themed books of interest as found pupil's background knowledge and develop their abilities to think and talk about a variety of texts.

KEY WORDS: tales, reading comprehension, storytelling, subliminal grammar input, gestures, body language, facial expressions, varied intonation, pace and tone.

INTRODUCTION

Research over the past 30 years has contributed greatly to our understanding of the thinking processes involved in reading comprehension. Surprisingly, however, little research has focused on the development of young children's comprehension (Reutzel, Smith, & Fawson, 2005).

Pressley (2000) describes the development of reading comprehension as a twostage process, beginning with "lower processes" focused at the word level— such as word recognition (phonics, sight words), fl uency (rate, accuracy, and expression), and vocabulary (word meanings). The second stage of reading comprehension development focuses on higher-order thinking—relating prior knowledge to text content and consciously learning, selecting, and controlling the use of several cognitive strategies for remembering and learning from text.

Reading tales aloud attracts the learner's interest in language and books. Fairytelling is a positive motivating activity, which helps them to develop the habit of reading from a very young age. It helps learner to become better readers, writers and users of language in the future.

METHODOLOGY

Many critics claim that the environment, which is created in class for the fairytelling, is important. It must be relaxing. According to several critics, there are a number of reasons why teachers implement fairy tales in the lessons:

- Tales are motivating and fun creating a desire to communicate. They develop positive attitudes and help children to keep on learning. Positive affective factors facilitate acquiring a second language. Children will learn better if they have a positive attitude towards what they are doing.

- Tales exercise the imagination. Learners imagine sceneries, characters and so on about a story.

- Listening to tales in class is a shared social experience. Storytelling provokes a response of laughter, sadness, excitement and anticipation, which can encourage the child's social and emotional development. In addition, there is always a sort of interaction between the reader and his listeners so s/he can ask for the listeners' collaboration to say what happens next, for instance. Listening to stories and tales is a natural way of acquiring language. The pupil learns to deduce what happens next, to deduce the meaning of words from the context or visual aids. This helps to build their confidence. Moreover, learners need to develop a series of characteristics to enable them to fit into the society they live in, to become aware of themselves in relation to others, to share and co-operate.

- Their meanings are contextualized and can be inferred from the pictures or teacher's gestures. Moreover, the teacher usually reads slowly and gives them time to think about the meaning and look at the pictures. Many traditional tales

abound with powerfully repeated phrases such as Goldilocks– *Who's been sitting on my chair? And who's broken it? Added baby bear... Who's been sleeping in my bed? Baby bear adds: and who's still sleeping there now?–* These examples can be used as an almost subliminal grammar input (Morgan and Rinvolucri 1983: 2).

On the other hand, a teacher's storytelling skills are very important. There are a number of techniques s/he can use in order to make the experience more enjoyable and successful. The teacher must notice if the pupils are accustomed to storytelling or not. If they are unfamiliar with story telling the teacher should begin with short sessions that do not demand too much from them and over-extend their concentration span which is quite short. Many critics agree on the importance of storytelling and give some ideas in order to improve the storytelling techniques.

• If possible, the children should sit on the floor around the teacher. This is a way of attracting pupils' attention. They are going to do something different to what they usually do. That is why they sit on the floor. Then the teacher makes sury everyone can see both his/her face and the illustrations in the story.

• The teacher reads slowly and clearly, giving his/her pupils time to think, ask questions, look at pictures and make comments.

• The teacher sometimes makes comments about the illustrations as well. When s/he says a word s/he also points to the illustration at the same time to make him/herself understood. Besides, s/he involves his/her pupils by asking them to point to the illustration and so on.

• The teacher encourages his/her pupils to take part in the story telling by repeating key vocabulary items and phrases. He pauses and looks at them and puts his/her hand to his/her ear to indicate that s/he is waiting for them to join in.

• Using gestures, body language, facial expressions, varied intonation, pace and tone, disguising his/her voice for different characters as much as possible to help convey meaning. This keeps the pupils' attention and stresses important words. S/He can involve his/her learners by asking them what is going to happen next while s/he is making the gesture or miming to let them know. So the teacher holds their attention.

• S/He can also use the CD and the DVD to allow pupils to listen to the story or watch it, whenever they wish and to reinforce the learning of slower pupils.

The teacher can also assess his/her own skills as a storyteller in a number of different ways:

✓ Using CDs, when possible, to provide him/her with a model he can copy and try to rehearse with.

✓ Familiarizing with the book, the story and illustrations. Deciding where to stop his story telling in order to invite the pupils to join in, which vocabulary to stress and so on.

✓ Making the story come alive through the use of intonation, gesture, body language and so on.

Tales and Stories are a way of getting children to learn for themselves. That is the case with the following:

• Reinforcing thinking strategies (comparing, classifying, predicting, planning etc.)

• Developing strategies for learning English (guessing the meaning of new words, training the memory etc.)

• Developing study skills (understanding and interpreting charts and graphs, organizing work and so on.).

Tales must be chosen depending on the age and the linguistic level of the pupils. Moreover, there must be a particular purpose when selecting a tale so

that it will carry the ideas the teacher wishes to focus on. Another important question to think about is whether to use simplified or authentic storybooks for the learner. There are many Uzbek national tale books written both Uzbek and English, which are also suitable for those learning English. Moreover, authentic storybooks are full of examples of real language although simplified stories can be easier for the Primary Education pupils(Ellis and Brewstwer 1991: 9).

CONCLUSION

Taking all above mentioned information into consideration, it can be established that learners sometimes already know the tale the teacher is going to tell. For instance, Uzbek pupils know "Zumrad and Qimmat", "Ur To'qmoq", "Three Heros" and etc. even in detail. The teacher has to grade the input the children receive by means of stories from less complicated to more complicated ones. If the story is very difficult to understand the teacher can modify or simplify it. The teacher must check the clarity of the text and the vocabulary. Consequently, it may be necessary to substitute familiar words or expressions for more unfamiliar ones. That is usually the case with idioms. They are difficult to understand for learners so the teacher will change them for easier words. It is also interesting to check the word order, as it can be difficult to understand. The teacher can sometimes perform actions to make the meaning more explicit. S/He will also check the grammar. It is better to avoid too many tenses or complicated structures. The teacher must check the sentence (its length and complexity), as it is easier to understand a short sentence. So a long sentence can be split into two sentences. Moreover, the teacher must also check how ideas are explained so that learners understand them. If the number of ideas is excessive the teacher can also leave out some of them to reduce the length of the story without spoiling the overall effect.

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