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A PAPER ON IMPORTANCE OF STORIES IN ENGLISH VOCABULARY
CONCEPTION

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Abstract

Since ages, people have been using stories to teach diverse lessons not only to the kids but also to the grownups. Story telling is a powerful medium of conveying a message or teaching something effectively. It makes learning interesting for the learners and long lasting. Teaching English language to the English as second language learners through story is a useful method for introducing words and sentences indirectly. Stories provide learners different contexts to acquire new words and a chance to revise the situations and events from the story in their own words which gives them an opportunity to increase fluency. In a way stories teach morals, different concepts as well as enhance language skills without the pupils' knowledge and the learning that takes place is often a lifelong experience. This paper aims at prompting the teachers to employ story-telling as a regular tool of teaching and will discuss the importance and role of story-telling for repetition of ideas and lexis for the better grasp of English language.

Keywords: narration, visualization, context, vocabulary

Introduction

Stories are an inseparable part of any culture across the globe. Most of the moral and religion based teaching has been done through stories and fables to make the lesson impactful and enduring. Stories have the power to send children to the imaginary world of fantasy. Stories not only help in teaching the language, they also aid in teaching various topics like Environmental Studies, Science and Mathematics. Stories are used in the language classrooms to teach grammar and vocabulary as well as fluency and pronunciation of words through different contexts. In fact, stories help in teaching all the four skills of language; reading, writing, listening and speaking. Interesting stories catch the learners' attention and they learn with ease without even knowing that learning is taking place. It is the role to the narrator to tell the stories in such a way that they remain with the students for ever in their memories. Use of stories in classroom teaching can aid the

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learners in improving their pronunciation, voice modulation and fluency which gradually leads to enhancing their fluency and accuracy in the language which in turn builds up the confidence of the speakers. Stories are in fact best weapons to be used while teaching and should always be kept ready in the teachers' arsenal.

Types of Stories

Stories can be short or long. There are various classic fairy tales, moral stories, stories on individuals and families, stories on various topics in the students' textbooks, magazines and novels. There are story books for the beginners which have big descriptive pictures with little text which are easy to read and comprehend as well as there are a plethora of stories for the average and advanced level of readers.

Sources of Stories

Some cultures pass on verbal stories from one generation to the others whereas some old stories can be found in the form of carvings and pictures. Stories are found in different books, novels, magazines, newspapers and there are plenty of stories available on different websites as well in pictorial or written form. If the teachers do not find any story through other resources suitable for the age group of their students or fit for the topics to be taught, they can make their own stories instantly or plan and prepare them beforehand.

Aids for Story Telling

A plethora of teaching aids can be used to tell stories to the students. Aids help

in creating visual image and imparting clarity to the story. Teachers can use pictures, charts, puppets, cutouts, illustrations on the board voice and modulation. Story cartoons available on different websites or through CDs can also be shown to create visual effect.

Different Aspects of Story Telling Language Development

Stories play a major role in developing the learners' language skills. The school language textbooks are full of stories which aid in teaching new vocabulary and grammar topic to the students. They listen to the words and sentences of the story teller it helps them in speaking English with proper pronunciation. Through Stories different words are introduced to the learners and they try to remember the words in context of the situations. Students learn to form their own sentences while telling stories. Students also learn free expression of ideas, emotions and language through story telling. Various aspects of language like noun, pronoun, verbs, conjunction, preposition and articles can be taught to the students through stories. Stories also help in teaching and enhancing the students' vocabulary knowledge of a variety of concepts like synonyms, antonyms, homophones, prefixes and suffixes.

Reading Improvement

Colorful story *books* are perfect for helping little ones start to develop their *phonics* skills, build

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their *reading* confidence and reading skills. Developing reading habits among the learners is a crucial responsibility of the educators and parents. Story books help them in teaching new words and their pronunciation. For the beginners, step by step introduction of the words is important. There are several books available which stress phonic words and repeated phonic patterns, as well as mono syllabic words followed by bi and tri syllabic words so as to make them independent readers. Reading helps in building their spelling knowledge and confidence.

Visualization

Visualization is one of the most impactful methods of teaching language. Stories assist the students in envisaging different people, incidences and transport them to imaginary situations. The details given in the stories about various places, people and things help the learners to visualise and add on to enhance their creative thinking ability and imagination.

Role play and Dramatizations

Involving role plays and dramatization of the stories help the educators to develop the spoken English and fluency of the learners. Voice modulation, stress and intonation can be practiced during narration and role play. The skit and drama presentations help learners to work in coordination with other students which in turn eliminates their stage fear and develops confidence.

Narration, Reproduction and Repetition of the Story

Impactful stories enable the learners to revise and repeat the words orally or while thinking them in the spare time. Repetition of the same story helps them in building their fluency as well as their confidence while speaking English. Reproduction of the stories helps not only in improving spoken English, but also written, reading and aural skills as well.

Learning Words through Different Contexts

Use of words in different contexts helps the students to infer word meanings without actually using a dictionary or asking someone for meaning and this helps them in increasing their vocabulary knowledge. Most of the vocabulary that English language learners acquire is through contexts that they come across while listening or reading.

Learning Different Categories of Words

Stories can be used to teach without making the learning experience monotonous and tedious. As a teacher, I love to teach my students different topics by telling a story during the introduction of the topics. Stories often make the intention and topic clear and help the students in understanding the concept better. For example, if I am teaching them synonyms, I tell them an incidence or a story which includes various synonyms of a single word.

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In the following example, a few simple synonyms of the word ‘small’ have been employed to describe the same word ‘small’.

Today during my morning walk, I saw a small pup on the way. The tiny creature was howling for help. I picked up the little pug and took it to the vet. The young one felt better after getting the treatment.

While narrating stories, the teachers should utter various synonyms or antonyms of the words in the stories. They should also give idea of homophones, homonyms, prefixes and suffixes while telling the stories. This indirect method of vocabulary enhancement helps the students while writing and reading as they have a bigger vocabulary stored in their minds.

Moral Lessons

Stories are not only useful in language building, but also they enhance the communication experience between the educators and learners. I remember that during my childhood, one of our teachers never gave us moral lectures about right or wrong whenever we made any mistakes. Instead, she used to share experiences and incidences happening around and told about good and bad conduct in general through various stories. This not only helped improve our conduct in general, the new words heard through the stories created positive impression the young minds I still remember the teacher fondly and feel that the stories, examples and experiences have

a great impact on us and they have even changed our perspective towards different things and our behaviour during different situations.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be stressed that stories should be an inseparable part of teaching process so as to enable the learners to learn the content in an indirect yet interesting manner. From my personal experience as a teacher, stories help in enhancing students’ all four skills; reading, writing speaking and listening and help in building their confidence. Stories are a useful avenue of conveying an impactful message, expressing ideas clearly as well as augmenting creativity among the learners. Stories can be termed as the most effective medium of teaching the students of all age groups provided that the content is age appropriate. Stories can be instantly concocted or referred from various books or websites and are usually equally effective if narrated with excitement and vigour. The effect of stories on learners’ mind is so influential that even mundane information, when told in the form of a story, becomes interesting. Story telling is a great medium of teaching language and should be stressed on a regular basis in language classes as well as in classes related to different subjects.

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