

From Tale to Reality to True: Creative Expression Technique (Yantek)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study is to determine the effectiveness of creative narrative technique on students' listening comprehension skills. The current study employed action research. The study group consists of 21 second grade students, six of whom were refugee students, at second grades in the school chosen through convenience sampling. In the study, the activities were conducted through 4 tales from Aesop Tales. It has been observed that creative narrative technique fosters students' listening comprehension skills. Through the technique, students were able to adapt the place, plot, time, characters and topic of the tales they listened into daily life. The technique helps students make interdisciplinary correlations in consistency with the philosophy of constructivist learning and to improve their creative writing skills. It has been concluded that creative narrative technique enhances students' listening and creative writing skills.

Keywords: Creative Narrative Technique, Tale, Listening Skill, Comprehension Skill, Adaptation

INTRODUCTION

The comprehension and narrative skills complement one another. These skills are effective in establishing a proper communication and in becoming socialized in particularly everyday life (Ahn & Kang, 2016; Rahbar & Khodabakhsh, 2013; Batur, 2012; Belet & Yaşar, 2007; Çıfci, 2000). Comprehension process inevitably arises from listening and reading practices principally in educational environments. Individual's psychological, sociological, mental, physiological and physical characteristics may be involved in this process. Consequently, the act of comprehension may be influenced from several factors apart from the individual himself/herself (Massahzadeh & Pourmohammadi, 2018; Gentaz et al., 2013; Roberts, 2011; Gambrell et al., 1980; Berger & Perfetti, 1977; Perfetti, 1974). Numerous factors varying from educational to external environments or vice versa have an impact on this act either positively or negatively. Therefore, it can be said that certain problems concerning reading or listening comprehension emerge. The studies attribute reading comprehension problem to various reasons (Zaccoletti et al., 2020; Navaie, 2018; Erlidawati, 2018; Rosyida & Ghufon, 2018; Dupont, 2018; Salihi et al., 2018; Naderi & Akrami, 2018; Shen & Park, 2018; Park & Kang, 2018; Shang, 2018; Elleman & Compton, 2017; Davidson & Ellis Weismer, 2017; Çıfci, 1998). This problem mainly results from the fact that the books to be read

are inappropriate for the reader's interests and levels. In addition, the fact that those books are not discussed or elaborated from various aspects is considered among other factors. As a result, the pupils' interest and attention towards the book have been considered to diminish. Correspondingly, the pupils' acquiring reading habits is becoming more and more difficult. Another problem is that the pupils have difficulty in narrating what s/he understands from the book. The narrative skill, like comprehension skill, is affected by several factors. Compared to comprehension skill, external factors may become involved to a greater extent in narrative skills. The narrative act encompasses speaking and writing skills (Bristow Evans, 2018; Çıfci, 2001; Doğan, 2009; Kuhlemeier et al., 2002; Motallebzadeh et al., 2018). While a person is talking to another party or is speaking before the public, greater number of factors may play a pivotal role compared to listening and reading skills. Among those factors are omission, excitement, fear and anxiety. The previous studies regarding narrative skills revealed that pupils or adults had problems while conveying the matter to the other party. Certain problems as forgetting the matter to be told due to the excitement or the disruption of subject integrity during narration may emerge. The use of various literary genres has been found to contribute to narrative skills in the resolution of those problems. It has been indicated that pupils' narrative skills are fostered

by having them narrate such genres as tales, novels and jokes. Another component of narration is to convey feelings and ideas through writing. Nonetheless, narrative writing has also certain problems. The writing skill is more complicated and time-consuming compared to other skills. It takes ages to help students acquire this skill and adopt it as a habit. Teacher's attitudes and behaviors towards the pupils are critically important during this period. The teacher is required to follow what the pupils write, to give feedback to them and to correct their mistakes in an organized way. Otherwise, the students' acquisition of writing skill may fail. The student-centred approach entails to be adopted in order to have the pupils acquire both comprehension and narrative skills (Güneş, 2016). It has been acknowledged that tales are effective in enhancing this skill. Tales are one of the most appropriate literary genres for pupils' imaginary world and also for the way they perceive the world. The preternaturalness in this genre fosters not only their imaginary world but also their world of thought (Arıcı, 2016; Bağcı, 2011; Karatay, 2007; Önal, 2002; Şahin, 2011; Yılmaz, 2012). The pupils' creativity may be improved via tales. However, creativity may allow them to generate ideas and make up their own fictions (Davasgil, 1989; Ergen & Akyol, 2012; Gökalp, 2016; Gülerüz, 2004). From this point of view, the tales read by the pupils are narrated through the interpretation based on the environments they live in. By this way, the pupils have been given the opportunity to narrate such elements as place, character, plot, topic and time in the tales by changing them with the ones in their surroundings. Thus, they were requested to retell a story in accordance with their realities by inspiring from the ones they listened or read. The pupil attempted to write his/her own tale with reference to the tale s/he reads during this process. The researchers named this process as 'Creative Narrative Technique.' Creative Narrative Technique in this study refers to the fact that the pupils make up their own tales based on the one they read. Through this technique, the pupils were expected to write or narrate the tale they read by adapting it based on their environments. This technique which enhances basic language skills was also aimed to improve students' narrative skills. The technique particularly contributes to listening and reading skills among comprehension skills. Through the tales, the children are offered the opportunity to enrich their imaginary world. Furthermore, they are encouraged to make up novel and authentic writings based on the tales they listened. Therefore, the tales can be said to promote both their comprehension skills (listening- reading) and narration skills.

Objective

The present study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of Creative Narrative Technique on students' listening comprehension skills. In this regard, answers to the following questions have been sought:

1. What is the effect of Creative Narrative Technique on students' listening comprehension skills?
2. What is the effect of Creative Narrative Technique on the adaptation of the place, plot and time in the tale in students' creative listening skills?
3. What is the effect of Creative Narrative Technique on changing the characters in students' creative writing skills?
4. What is the effect of Creative Narrative Technique on conveying the tale into real life in students' creative writing skills?

METHOD

In the current study where the purpose is to reveal the effectiveness of creative narrative skill on second grade students' listening comprehension skills, qualitative action research has been employed. O' Brein (2003) defines action research as learning by doing to resolve a problem and seeing how successful the efforts made are. The present study utilizes technical/scientific collaborative action research technique. The technical/scientific collaborative mode includes an application with intensive interaction under the researcher guidance. The researcher resolves the problem based on his/her specialty. The main goal of the researcher in technical/scientific/collaborative model is to describe this process. The teacher, as a practitioner, highlighted that students had difficulty in the issues of effective listening and listening comprehension. To this end, s/he sought help from the researchers of the Faculty of Education. Thus, the researchers developed a technique on the basis of teacher's request and the teacher carried out the technique in class. The research data were obtained from the implementation. Therefore, the study was considered to be in accordance with action research.

In the present study, the teacher conducted creative narrative technique activities under researchers' guidance. The researchers provided technical support to teachers. Interviews with 20 teachers working at second grade were conducted on 14 November 2019 and the teachers were asked what kind of stories and tales their students were interested in. During the interview, teachers reported that second grade students were interested in fables. The tales used in the current study were determined based on teachers' opinions. Fables were used in the present study.

The researchers conducted pilot studies at the very beginning of each phase while carrying out the activities. Following this, teachers continued the process. The possible failures during the above-mentioned process were attempted to be reduced through brief preliminary interviews with practitioners. The practitioner explained the problems encountered during the process. The researchers investigated and resolved the problem on site. The researchers and teachers made a joint decision to proceed to the next step. New activities were conducted under suitable conditions.

The Study Group

The population and sample of the study was not specified as the current research concerning the resolution of a problem conveyed by a teacher was based on action research.

Instead, the study group was specified in line with qualitative research.

The study group consisted of 21 students (11 female, 10 male) who were at the second grade and six of whom were students with refugee status attending a school in Uşak in 2019- 2020 academic year. The teacher conveyed the problem to the researchers and was voluntary to participate in the study.

Implementation Process

Interviews with teachers

Interviews were conducted with twenty teachers working at second grades. It was determined that fables were suitable for second grade students as a result of the findings of the interviews. Therefore, fables were decided to be used in listening comprehension activities.

Introduction

In an attempt to close recognize the school where the implementation was to be conducted, school visits were made. The purpose and scope of the study were explained to the school management and the teachers working in the class where the implementation was to be carried out. Transcript approval form was submitted to school management. The information about the class was provided by the teacher. Then, the students in the class where the implementation was to be fulfilled became acquainted with the researchers and they had a conversation. Certain warm-up activities were conducted prior to the study in order to increase their levels of readiness. Thus, the students were aimed to have more positive attitudes towards researchers. An action plan was prepared for the implementation based on the selected tales. With regard to the plan, the instructions were explained to teachers.

The selection of the tales

For the present study, fables in 'Aesop Tales' included in 100 Basic Literary Works list recommended by the Ministry of National Education to be read by second grade students were used. The tales are as follows: The Hen and The Fox, The Lazy Donkey, The Fox and The Grapes, The Goatherd and The Wild Goats and The Two Friends. The appropriateness of fairy tales included in the research was determined based on consensus among the experts in the fields of Guidance and Psychological Counselling, Classroom Teaching, Turkish Language Teaching as well as 21 teachers who were interviewed.

The implementation of activities

1. The study was planned to last for 7 weeks. The plan was included in the Appendix.
2. The activities were carried out by researchers for the first two weeks.
3. In the first phase, the characters in the tale and story were not changed; instead, there were certain changes on the plot, time and place during narration.

4. In the present study, the place in the tale was adapted to the environment students lived in. At this point, such educational approaches as known- to- unknown, near and far transfer and appropriateness for the student were attempted to be applied. For example, the introductory sentence in a tale was 'A fox lives in Kalfa Grove'; in this way, the place near to their school and known by the students was used in the tale. Thus, the plot was tried to be adapted to the environment they lived in and effective listening was attempted to be ensured.
5. At the end of the tales, the students were asked 5 W's and 1 H questions. As the seventh question, the students were requested to write a fairy tale.
6. Following this, the students were requested to make up a new story with reference to the tale they listened.
7. There was no intervention while students were making up a new tale or story.
8. The questions asked by the students were listened by researchers or teachers and quietly answered without disturbing other students. Thus, any interaction between them was prevented. The answers given by them, tales and stories made up were collected and archived by researchers or teachers.
9. In the second phase, place and time in the tale or story were changed, however, characters remained same. Nevertheless, the students also changed characters during creative writing process. The purpose, at this point, was to have them acquire the skill to adapt what they listened into daily life based on the fable or story.

Data Collection Instruments

In the first place, literature review was carried out in order to study on Creative Narrative Technique. The tales and stories to be used in the study were determined. In this regard, focus group interviews were conducted with the teachers working at second and fourth grades. Accordingly, the findings showed that second grade students were interested in fables; however, fourth grades in historical and epic stories and the two genres enhanced listening skills. For the activities, fables in 'Aesop Tales' included in 100 Basic Literary Works list recommended by the Ministry of National Education to be read by second grade students were used. During focus group interviews, Aesop Tales book was given to the teachers. Four tales confirmed by the teachers were employed in the current study.

The opinions of four classroom teachers on the questions concerning listening comprehension were asked. Following each activity, relevant questions were asked to students. The questions regarding listening comprehension were included in the Appendix.

Data Analysis

Pseudonyms for students were used in the present study. The Use of Running Records, developed by Harris and Sipay (1990) and adapted by Akyol (2011), was employed to evaluate the responses to the reading comprehension questions given by students. In this context, each answer given to

the questions of what, where, when and who was valued 1 point; on the other hand, other answers requiring higher level thinking skills such as why and how were valued 3 points. The activities were followed through a structured form for each tale and story. The data obtained were subjected to descriptive analysis.

However, the evaluation of the seventh question was conducted through the following Rubric developed by the researchers. The students' writings were read by one of the researchers and two experts in the fields of classroom teaching and Turkish language teaching who were not included in the research. The consensus among researchers' scoring concerning assessment was determined as %92.

Creative Narrative Technique Assessment

Name-Surname:

Name of the Tale:

Date of the Activity:

The Evaluation Matter	1	2	3
Time	S/he's used the time of the tale.	S/he's used the real time.	S/he's used time transitions.
Place	S/he's used the place of the tale.	S/he's used the real place.	S/he's used imaginary place.
Plot	S/he has been abided by the plot of the tale.	S/he has made certain changes on the plot.	S/he's updated the plot.
Topic	S/he has been abided by the topic of the tale.	S/he has adapted the topic into daily life.	S/he's made up an imaginary topic.
Character	S/he's retained the character.	S/he has partly changed the character.	S/he's mostly changed the character.

Comprehension Questions (5 W's 1 H)

Who: 1 point

What: 1 point

Where: 1 point

When: 1 point

Why: 3 point

How: 3 point

Listening comprehension questions were labelled as 'not understood', 'partially understood' and 'completely understood'. The expert opinion was taken about the fundamentals of scoring. The data obtained on which the experts agreed were included in the findings of the study.

RESULTS

In Table 1, the mean score concerning reading comprehension within the context of the first research question following the first activity was found as 3.66. No student was able to

gain 9 points which was the highest listening comprehension score. The students' mean score regarding changing the time of the tale was 1.42. However, that of changing the place of the tale they listened was found as 1.85. Finally, their mean score concerning changing the plot of the tale was 1.00.

As for the third research question, the characters of the tale in the first activity were a person and an animal (donkey). Four students identified the characters as animal- animal in their creative writings; however, 17 of them identified as animal- person as in the original of the tale.

The students were requested to adapt the tale into daily life within the context of the fourth sub- goal of the present study. In this regard, it was observed that the students were not able to make an adaptation.

In Table 2, the mean score concerning reading comprehension within the context of the first research question following the second activity was found as 5.57. Compared to the previous activity, the listening comprehension score was observed to increase by two points. 3 students were able to gain nine points which is the highest listening comprehension score. The students' mean score regarding changing the time of the tale they listened was found as 2.61. In addition, their mean score concerning changing the plot of the tale was 2.52. However, they were able to obtain the same mean score for changing the topic of the tale. The mean score was revealed to increase considerably compared to the previous activity.

Concerning the third research question, the characters of the tale in the first activity were animals (fox- hen). In the current study, 8 students were indicated to be able to identify the characters as animal- animal as in the original of the tale; however, thirteen students were observed to set the tale over animal- person.

Regarding the fourth sub- goal of the research, the students were expected to adapt the plot of the tale into daily life. With this regard, the students' mean score concerning their ability to adapt the tale into daily life was found as 2.10. A student was seen to be unable to adapt the tale in daily life; nevertheless, the students were able to associate the tale with daily life in the second activity.

In Table 3, the mean score concerning reading comprehension within the context of the first research question following the third activity was found as 7.35. Compared to the previous activity, the listening comprehension score was observed to increase by two points. 3 students were able to gain nine points which is the highest listening comprehension score. The students' mean score regarding changing the time of the tale they listened was found as 2.80. Moreover, their mean score as to changing the place of the tale they listened was indicated to be 2.85. However, their mean scores concerning changing the plot and topic of the tale they listened were found as 2.85 and 2.80 respectively.

Regarding the third research question, in the third activity, the characters of the tale were an animal and a plant (a fox and grape). Fifteen students were revealed to set the characters over animal- person whereas 5 students were seen to set the plot over animal- person in their creative writings.

Table 1. Creative narrative technique activity

Student	Time	Place	Plot	Topic	Comprehension Score	Animal-Animal	Animal-Person	Person-Animal	Person-Person	Adapting the Topic (f)
1	1	3	1	1	6	X*				0
2	0	3	1	0	4	X				0
3	1	1	3	1	6	X				0
4	3	3	3	3	7		X			0
5	0	0	0	0	1	X				0
6	0	3	1	1	4		X			0
7	3	0	3	1	5		X			0
8	3	3	3	0	7		X			0
9	3	0	1	1	3		X			0
10	3	1	1	1	5		X			0
11	3	3	1	0	6		X			0
12	3	3	0	3	5		X			0
13	3	3	1	1	4		X			1
14	0	0	0	0	3		X			0
15	1	1	0	1	3		X			0
16	1	1	0	1	1		X			0
17	1	3	0	1	0		X			0
18	0	2	1	3	1		X			1
19	0	3	0	1	0		X			0
20	1	3	3	1	6		X			0
21	0	0	1	1	0		X			0

* The mark 'X' indicates the change was made. For example, from animal to animal or from human to animal.

Table 2. Creative narrative technique activity 2

Student	Time	Place	Plot	Topic	Comprehension Score	Animal-Animal	Animal-Person	Person-Animal	Person-Person	Adapting the Topic (f)
1	1	1	1	1	9		X*			2
2	1	0	1	1	1	X				1
3	3	3	3	3	7		X			2
4	1	3	3	3	6	X				1
5	1	0	0	0	4	X				0
6	1	0	3	3	3	X				2
7	3	3	3	3	8		X			2
8	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
9	3	3	3	3	9		X			2
10	1	3	3	3	5		X			2
11	3	3	3	3	6		X			3
12	3	3	3	3	8		X			2
13	3	3	3	3	7	X				2
14	3	3	3	3	6		X			2
15	3	3	3	3	8	X				3
16	3	3	3	3	4	X				2
17	3	3	3	3	3	X				2
18	3	3	3	3	2		X			3
19	1	3	1	1	7		X			2
20	3	3	3	3	5		X			3
21	3	3	3	3	8		X			3

* The mark 'X' indicates the change was made. For example, from animal to animal or from human to animal.

Table 3. Creative narrative technique activity 3

Student	Time	Place	Plot	Topic	Comprehension Score	Animal-Animal	Animal-Person	Person-Animal	Person-Person	Adapting the Topic (f)
1	3	3	3	3	8				X*	3
2	3	3	3	3	8				X	3
3	3	3	3	3	9				X	3
4	3	3	3	3	8				X	3
5	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
6	3	3	1	1	7				X	1
7	3	3	3	3	7		X			2
8	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
9	1	2	3	1	8		X			2
10	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
11	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
12	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
13	3	3	2	2	8		X			2
14	3	3	3	3	6		X			2
15	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	3	3	3	3	7		X			2
18	3	3	3	3	6		X			3
19	1	1	1	1	9		X			1
20	3	3	3	3	7		X			3
21	3	3	3	3	8		X			3

* The mark 'X' indicates the change was made. For example, from animal to animal or from human to animal.

Based on the fourth sub- goal of the current study, the students were expected to adapt the tale they listened into daily life. In this regard, their mean score was found as 2.55.

In Table 4, the mean score concerning reading comprehension within the context of the first research question following the fourth activity was found as 8.10. Compared to the previous activity, the listening comprehension score was observed to increase by two points. 3 students were able to gain nine points which is the highest listening comprehension score. The students' mean score regarding changing the time of the tale they listened was found as 2.80. Moreover, their mean score as to changing the place of the tale they listened was indicated to be 2.85. However, their mean scores concerning changing the plot and topic of the tale they listened were found as 2.85. Time, plot, place and topic appeared to have reached a plateau.

As for the third research question, in the fourth activity, the characters of the tale were two animals. 3 students were revealed to set the characters over animal- animal whereas eleven students were seen to set the plot over animal- person in their creative writings. Furthermore, 4 students identified the characters as an animal and a person while they set the plot over person- person. In the fourth activity, it may be concluded that the students showed tendency towards associating the characters with daily life.

Based on the fourth sub- goal of the current study, the students were expected to adapt the tale they listened into daily life. In this regard, their mean score was found as 2.85.

It may be alleged that the students have made progress in associating the tale with their daily lives.

DISCUSSION

Mother tongue education is carried out through the coordination of four main skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing (Bonset & Rijlaarsdam, 2004; Hiew, 2012; Johnson, 1992). Speaking skill plays a pivotal role in education. Through this skill, an individual gains the opportunity to express himself/herself, to utter his/her own thoughts and feelings and to reflect what s/he listens and understands. Therefore, it is vital that the individual improves both comprehension and narrative skills. For this aim, creative narrative technique has been employed in order to foster students' listening comprehension and creative writing skills.

There have been numerous variables showing the students' listening comprehension skills (Çaycı & Demir, 2006; Karasakaloğlu & Bulut, 2012; Melanlıoğlu, 2016). Note- taking during listening and asking questions to the teacher take the first place. Creative narrative technique has been seen to be effective in students' listening comprehension skills. During narration process, it was observed that the students had listened to the tale carefully. Thanks to their careful listening, their scores in each activity have increased considerably. As a result, creative narrative techniques have been concluded to foster students' listening comprehension skills. This finding is in accordance with certain studies

Table 4. Creative narrative technique activity 4

Student	Time	Place	Plot	Topic	Comprehension Score	Animal-Animal	Animal-Person	Person-Animal	Person-Person	Adapting the Topic (f)
1	1	1	1	1	9	X*				2
2	3	3	3	3	9			X		3
3	3	3	3	3	9			X		3
4	3	3	3	3	7			X		3
5	1	1	1	1	5				X	1
6	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
7	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
8	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
9	3	3	3	3	6		X			3
10	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
11	3	3	3	3	7		X			3
12	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
13	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
14	3	3	3	3	9				X	3
15	3	3	3	3	9		X			3
16	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
17	3	3	3	3	7	X				3
18	3	3	3	3	8		X			3
19	3	3	3	3	9			X		3
20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	3	3	3	3	8	X				3

* The mark 'X' indicates the change was made. For example, from animal to animal or from human to animal.

indicating that tales draw children's attention and make contributions to their listening comprehension skills (Ayhan & Arslan, 2014; Yıldız & Savaş, 2019; Duran & Öztürk, 2018; Kurt, 2009).

The plot, place, time and topic of a tale have always drawn the readers' attention in story-telling. Since those elements constitute certain preternaturalness, the readers' attention is nourished all the time. In the present study, the students were requested to change the afore-mentioned elements. This increases students' attention towards listening as well as reflecting their creativity. This finding shows consistency with a study conducted by Metin (2019). The students were observed to change the place and plot of the tale in creative narrative techniques in the current study. However, the main idea of the tale has been adhered to, thereby indicating that students carefully listened and understood the tale. The fact that students changed certain elements of the tale in their creative writings contributed to their creativity. Hence, creative narrative techniques may be asserted to enhance students' creativity.

CONCLUSION

In the present study, the students were expected to adapt the tale they listened since one of the most important teaching principles ensuring permanence of the knowledge is actuality. The students' ability to comprehend what they listen and to transfer what they understand into daily life is vital

in terms of actuality. In the activities, the students were observed to change the characters of the tale and to use new ones in their creative writings. Therefore, it has been determined that students were capable of associating the tale with daily life by transferring the plot of the tale into daily life. For instance, the fox was trying to trick the hens in a tale and the students associated this with, in daily life, the grifters who call people and say that s/he is a prosecutor or police. It may be deduced that students are able to make interdisciplinary correlations in consistency with the philosophy of constructivist learning and to enhance their creative writing skills. As a result, creative narrative techniques have been observed to draw students' interest and attention. It has been concluded that this technique enhances students' listening comprehension, narrative and creative writing skills. Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be made: Creative Narrative Technique may be used to improve students' listening skills at schools. Creative Narrative Technique may be used to foster students' creative writing skills at schools. Creative Narrative Technique may be used at various levels of education. In-service training regarding creative writing may be provided for teachers.

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Appendix

Creative narrative technique activity plan

Weeks	Date	Activities
1	December 4, 2019	The visit to the school where the implementation is to be conducted and informing school management and the concerned teacher.
2	December 11, 2019	The introduction with the students who are to participate in the study and 40-minute game-based activity by the researchers
3	December 18, 2019	40-minute pilot study of creative narrative technique by the researchers
4	December 25, 2019	40-minute implementation of the first activity by the teacher with under researchers' supervision
5	January, 8 2020	40-minute implementation of the second activity by the teacher with under researchers' supervision
6	January 15, 2020	40-minute implementation of the third activity by the teacher with under researchers' supervision
7	January 22, 2020	40-minute implementation of the fourth activity by the teacher with under researchers' supervision