

**The Effectiveness of Teaching English to Young  
Learners (TEYL) Program on Fostering Early  
Primary EFL Teachers' Storytelling Performance**

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## **The Effectiveness of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) Program on Fostering Early Primary EFL Teachers' Storytelling Performance**

**Dr. Manal Mahmoud Lofty Kabesh \***

### **Abstract**

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of implementing a TEYL program to foster early primary EFL teachers' performance in storytelling of a group of 17 primary teachers from one of Cairo language schools. The quasi-experimental design called the one experimental group design was employed in the present study . A pre-post TEYL methodology test was given to the experimental group before and after the treatment. The results revealed that the experimental group post-test after the treatment outperformed the pre-test in the TEYL methodology test and in the teachers' performance observation in storytelling in favor of the post observation. This proved that the program developed participants' performance in storytelling.

**Keywords:** TEYL, Teachers' Performance, Storytelling , Primary stage

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## **Introduction**

There is a tinge of magic to stories because they engage the visual mind, the creative faculties, and language abilities. Stories conjure the sheer power of young learners' imaginations. Not only are stories intriguing, but they also have the capacity to teach the function of words in a larger context, and increase the students' ability to interpret the meaning of text. Successful storytelling is an integral ability that requires a multitude of different skills. In the introductory phase, students learn to comprehend the new vocabulary by mimicking associated gestures, the teacher shifts to the use of mini-situations to teach new vocabulary and practice previously learned words in novel combinations. Each word or phrase is linked to a hand gesture and a word association. It is critical that teachers are given the opportunity to learn that "Real success depends on having the right story for the linguistic and cognitive ability and interests of the children in order to maximize their enjoyment, involvement and learning"(Ellis, 20118, 84).

### **The pilot study:**

As a researcher in the National Center for Educational Research and Development, Curriculum Development and Teaching Methods Department, the researcher participated in various studies, visited many schools and observed different EFL primary teachers performance in the young learners( YL) classrooms. The researcher performed a pilot study and interviewed 10 early primary English language teachers and supervisors. The interviews aimed at identifying the TEYL methods and strategies currently employed in teachers' performance in storytelling among early primary teachers. Moreover, the researcher asked 6 EFL early primary teachers to tell stories. The results of the pilot study revealed that most English early primary teachers lack the adequate TEYL competencies and have poor mastery in the storytelling performance, which may be due to the prevailing traditional method of storytelling skills in the primary stage. The dominant model of storytelling, particularly for primary stage students, had been to read the story, and ask students questions.

Also, EFL early primary teachers need to be trained and prepared to develop their TEYL competencies and storytelling skills. These results were consistent with the results of several studies which assured that little attention is given to teacher training and preparation (Badawi, 2022; Tealib& Sheir, 2021; Sarhan, 2020, Basyouni, 2020; Masoud, 2018; Alhazmi, 2017; Alwahibee, 2016; and Abdel-Halim, 2008). Furthermore, teachers main aims were to work within the confines of the exam and just prepare students for the exam by helping them understand the basic skills and memorize the answers. Based on the above, it can be concluded that there is teachers' poor mastery of the storytelling skills. This might be attributed to the methods of teaching adopted in storytelling at the early primary stage . Therefore, the present study tries to develop the EFL early primary teachers 'storytelling performance and skills.

### **Statement of the problem**

The study problem can be stated in early primary teachers' poor storytelling performance. This might be attributed to many factors such as the traditional methods of teaching storytelling still adopted by most EFL primary stage teachers and lack of theoretical and pedagogical knowledge about YLs teaching methods.

### **Questions of the study**

The current study attempted to provide answers to the following main question:

**"What is the effectiveness of using the TEYL program based on developing early primary English language teachers' storytelling performance and skills?"**.

The following sub-questions were derived from this main question:

- 1- What are the storytelling skills necessary for early primary English language students?
- 2- How far is the TEYL program effective in developing the early primary teachers' storytelling performance ?

### **Significance of the study**

The present study is significant in constructing a program particularly directed to early primary in-service EFL teachers to enhance their storytelling performance and skills. It attempts to investigate the impact of using a TEYL program on developing EFL

early primary teachers' performance in storytelling. The findings could be theoretically and practically significant for EFL teachers, curriculum designers and researchers.

### **Delimitations of the study:**

#### **This study was confined to:**

- 1) Developing storytelling skills necessary for EFL early primary teachers:
  - Story content. -Tone of voice variation
  - Language. -Pacing.
  - Using gestures, facial expressions , and eye contact.
  - Audio/Visual support and illustration.
  - Students' interaction and motivation.
- 2) One experimental group of 17 EFL early primary teachers in a Language School in Cairo governorate.

### **Teaching English to Young Learners and Storytelling**

Stories, apart from being every young child's bedtime, can become every young learner's school time treasure. Storybooks can enrich the pupils' learning experiences . Stories are motivating , fun and can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language. Stories exercise the imagination and are a useful tool in linking fantasy and imagination with the child's real world. Listening to stories in class is a shared social experience. Children enjoy listening to stories over and over again . This repetition allows language items to be acquired and reinforced. In fact, listening to stories develops the child's listening and concentrating skills.

Children have already formed their schema of what a story is since early childhood. Within the family environment children have had numerous opportunities to listen to stories being read to them, to 'decode' the letters and sounds until they make sense to them as words and sentences. Teachers can choose from a wide range of storybooks of this kind: traditional stories and fairy tales which are common in most European cultures( Snow White or Little Red Riding Hood for example); fantasy stories. Alternatively, many authentic storybooks written for English speaking children are suitable for use in an EFL classroom. The advantage is that they bring the 'real; world

in the classroom and they are an excellent opportunity for providing our students with example of authentic language use. The activities designed for each story at the exploitation of the rich material in the story itself are very important (Loukia, 2006). Bland(2019) maintains that, to be able to make effective use of children's literature, teachers need in-depth guidance in extending their own literacy competence, their own visual literacy, critical literacy and response to multimodal texts, in order to learn how to support, scaffold and reformulate young learners' responses to pictures. Teachers are often unsure how best to steer the classroom discourse around the pages of a book, which must surely be considered a fundamental competence of teachers in TEYL.

Stories are memorable, as the language is repeated. This recycling of patterns incites students to predict what is coming next in the story and , at the same time, exercises their imagination. The pictures are closely related to the text, sometimes they even structure the text. This can support the learners' understanding. The strategy of inferring meaning of words from the text is also supported by the illustrations. The colors, the simple shapes and figures do not distract the learners but rather guide them to key points of the texts. The stories are expected to motivate the learners and arouse their curiosity about the target language and its culture. Various teacher education programs have been implemented in order to prepare EYL teachers. Although the proportions of teachers completing EYL teacher education programs have increased significantly, research consistently suggest the quality of teaching is still inadequate and fails to meet the demands of EYL pedagogy (e. g. Zein, 2016; Butler, 2015; Copland et al. , 2014 and Emery, 2012). Consequently, calls have been made to conduct research into the pedagogy that is appropriate to young learners in the EYL classroom.

Any approach to language teaching needs to be firmly grounded in the nature of second language learning. Every classroom activity that teachers make use of is a reflection of knowledge and assumptions about how learners learn and how the teachers utilize the knowledge and assumptions in teaching. Enever (2014, 241) highlights that “an urgent need to substantially increase the provision and availability of in-service courses and workshops for teachers if

quality is to be improved and sustained” . Badawi et al. (2022) investigate the effect of using digital storytelling strategy on developing primary school students' English –speaking skills. Results showed that the experimental group pupils' oral performance increased after exposing them to different storytelling, pupils are encouraged to join in repetitive sentences and have the opportunity to suggest variations in certain elements and aspects of the story.

According to Bland(2015, 2), ”creative teacher talk” is an important teacher skill for TEYL, for oral storytelling, picture book read alouds and classroom discourse generally. Creative teacher talk is interactive, highly repetitive and with chant-like routines and expressive prosodic features, including carefully modulated pitch, tempo , volume and rhythm to attract attention and underline meanings. Depending on the topic, the YL teacher may make use of dramatic pauses and exuberant intonation. In addition, creative teacher talk is accompanied by the scaffolding of gestures and facial expressions, elaboration, a slower speech rate, additional contextual cues and realia as well as comprehension checks. The teacher extends and recasts children's incomplete responses, and maintains teacher-to-learner eye contact, shaping the talk to the audience, for we cannot expect children to adapt to the teacher.

Among the factors that affect the way the brain processes language is " automaticity" which refers to the 'feel' for a language that fluent speakers exhibit when they no longer have to think about what they are hearing or saying, but simply comprehend or produce( Brown, 2001, 56). This is one of the main goals of storytelling, students are exposed to a flood of input that is made comprehensible through a variety of means. This encourages students to simply understand the language as it comes, rather than stopping to translate every word into their native language (Brune, 2004).

### **Rationale for using the Storytelling in fostering early primary teachers' performance**

Storytelling is an effective pedagogical strategy that can be interwoven into instruction to increase students' competencies in all areas and promote reading comprehension skills. Stories have the

potential to increase learners' enthusiasm toward language learning, foster creativity and create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere in which learners do not feel afraid of language learning tasks and enjoy their learning experience (Harmer, 2000).

One of the most perplexing predicaments of teacher education is the lack of preparation to work with young learners that most teachers have upon entering the classroom. Incorporating stories in language classrooms provides much comprehensible input that can contribute to more effective acquisition of the target language. Several studies have been conducted regarding the effectiveness of the use of storytelling as a pedagogical strategy. Isabell et al. (2004) studied the impact of storytelling and reading stories on the development of language and comprehension of children ages three to five. The results showed that the storytelling group was more able to identify the setting, the moral of the story, and the characters from the stories. According to the researches, storytellers tend to use more repetition, sounds, and gestures than a person merely reading a story. They also suggest that storytelling requires a greater use of the visual imagination than in story reading as there are no pictures to share in storytelling. In addition, storytelling is considered a more personal experience as the listener frequently has greater levels of eye contact with the teller as compared to listening to a story read from a book. They reported that storytelling is considered an effective strategy for developing listening skills and keeping students engaged.

According to Scott Ytreberg (1990, 4), and among the general characteristics of students in elementary school are as follows: they love to play and they learn better when they enjoy themselves. They are enthusiastic and positive about learning. They rely on the spoken word as well as on the physical world to convey and understand meaning. They enjoy working with others and learning from others. Their concentration works for a short period of time. They use their body parts to play and learn through. Klein (2005) argues that teaching young learners is different from teaching adults. Young learners tend to change their mood every other minute, and they find it difficult to sit still. On the other hand, children show greater motivation than adults to do things that appeal to them.

Harmer(2007) stressed the importance of presenting the language that the children can understand. Abstract words or phrases are sometimes difficult to be represented or explained. Therefore, with the appropriate storytelling performance, the words can be comprehended as they are represented through action. This is because the brain searches the meaning through patterning( Curtain&Dahlberg, 2004).

Zein (2017) investigated the perspectives of (26) teachers on the appropriate pedagogy needed to teach in the EYL classroom. The findings demonstrate that in the EYL classroom larger emphasis needs to be given to the young learners rather than the language, and that developing a child-friendly pedagogy in the EYL classroom is of vital importance ; it is at the core of EYL pedagogy. This brings implications for TESOL teacher education at pre-service levels in the sense that TESOL teacher educators need to design courses aimed to foster child-friendly-pedagogy.

Davidheiser( 2002) examined the impact of using gestures with speech by employing Blaine Ray's TPRS model. TPRS is repetitive, physically engaging, and often considered fun by students. Also, Davidheiser (2001) finds that particularly in the first few years of language instruction, TPRS improves pronunciation and vocabulary memory, reduces anxiety, is a natural way to learn language, promotes active learning, and is good for different types of learners. Curtain and Dahlberg (2009) indicated that children use many senses in the acquisition process. Implementing TPRS with primary students maximizes the use of senses. When the teacher uses gestures and actions to make the words comprehensible to the students, they listen and repeat the action, which involves auditory, sight and touch (tactile learning). Hence, incorporating as much senses into the lesson will help the input to be comprehensible.

Ray(2000)developed a method that is based on stories for language instruction. The idea of storytelling can be a powerful tool because it enables remember events and later retell it in their own words. Use of the story creates a mental scene that enhances the aural, visual, and sensory associations for the student. This form of instruction accesses the student's right brain and kinesthetic sensory.

(Werstler, 2002, 3)referred to this as muscle learning. He suggested that, 'perhaps most importantly, the telling of stories creates personal, entertaining experiences for the learner what leads to greater internalization of the language. After all, most of language is storytelling'

Joshi et al. , (2002)proved that in their one-year study of first graders, they found that multisensory teaching techniques that combined all three modalities-auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, first-grade students made significant gains in phonological awareness, decoding, and reading comprehension. Pennycuff (2008) addressed how storytelling can be used as a pedagogical strategy in the classroom to enhance literacy learning. Engaging in storytelling activities is a way to motivate even the reluctant reader or writer. Because storytelling relies on both the listener and the teller, this strategy utilizes the social element of language. Literacy instruction is most effective when developed through social interaction and collaboration with others. This pedagogical strategy capitalizes on students' desire to talk and interact with others.

Al-Mansour and Al -Shorman (2011, 6-7)investigated teachers' storytelling aloud on the reading comprehension of Saudi elementary stage students. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the measure. The researches demonstrated that the difference in the achievement of the students was attributed to using storytelling aloud in English language instruction. Storytelling to elementary stage students does have a positive impact on their performance. It built interest in the reading process, stimulated discussion, and enhanced self-confidence in the participants.

A variety of studies have been conducted to improve teachers' technical competencies and the value of in-service teacher training services. Prospective EFL teachers do not always have the opportunity to observe real young learner classrooms until their final year or graduation, which creates a big gap between theoretical considerations and the realities of the teaching practice. Teacher education needs to be geared toward providing tasks and activities that would help increase EYL teachers' creativity and versatility in designing

engaging materials and well-integrated lessons that would work for best for children. EYL teachers need to receive training on how to select, adapt, and design materials, they also need to learn to sharpen their creativity, when adapting or producing materials. The use of engaging materials will contribute to the creation of enjoyable and interesting tools and activities.

One of the greatest concerns has been the shortage of qualified teachers who can adequately carry out the policy at the pedagogic level. Samson & Collins(2012, 8) noted, “ Clearly, teachers of ELL students need the appropriate training to be able to facilitate academic growth, yet most teachers lack this training”. Camlibel-Acar(2016) aimed to explore in her study the extent to which pre-service EFL teachers in their third year were influenced by observations in young learner classrooms. As part of their training in faculties of education, all pre-service teachers of English in Turkey are provided with one or two courses on Teaching English to Young Learners, yet do not always have the opportunity to observe real young learners classrooms until their final year or graduation. Findings reflect the pre-service teachers' perceived strengths and weaknesses in relation to teaching English to young learners, and how they were affected by the course that they took and the young learner classes that they participated in.

Alhazmi (2017) investigated the effect of the reflective teaching on the classroom performance of English Major student teachers and their attitudes towards it. The main purpose of the study was to develop student teacher's classroom performance by using reflective teaching . Findings at the post-observation showed a noticeable improvement in classroom performance of the experimental group. Statistically significant differences were found in overall classroom performance and in six cores(giving effective instructions, using motivated question techniques, choosing suitable techniques for correcting mistakes, praising the correct answers, systematic handling of the blackboard, and making and using available audio-visual aids, in favor of the experimental group. He concluded that the reflective teaching approach can be used effectively with student teachers

during the practicum period. It was recommended that it should be incorporated in EFL teacher education programs, specifically in RFL methodology course.

Moreover, Badawi et al. (2022) confirmed the effect of using digital storytelling strategy on developing primary school students' English-speaking skills. Results showed that the experimental group pupils' oral performance increased after exposing them to different storytelling activities . In storytelling, pupils are encouraged to join in repetitive sentences and have the opportunity to suggest variations in certain elements and aspects of the story. Mostafa (2007) assessed in her study the impact of a school-based professional development (SPD) program, using the lesson study model on in-service teachers, by comparing SPD and non-SPD-in-service teachers' teaching performances . In lesson study a small group of instructors jointly designs, teaches, studies and refines a single class lesson called a research lesson. The study creates multiple pathways for improving teaching and how the knowledge teachers create can help to advance their teaching practices. Statistical analyses revealed that SPD in-service teachers scored significantly higher than non-SPD teachers on teaching aspects of planning, instruction, management, assessment and reflection.

Since most pre-service English language teaching programs are a mix between teaching students English as a subject and training them to be teachers in the future, which is a worldwide phenomenon, great emphasis is placed on English courses for subjects such as linguistics and literature (Freeman, 2001). Many researches such as Richards(1998) and Johnson(2000), have concluded that student teachers may not teach English very well because they concentrate on discrete knowledge and facts about English and have neglected the practice of teaching. As stated by Zhan(2008, 68), " learning at the university will not automatically transfer to schools in actual teaching practice".

An in-service training program includes activities that prepare teachers to become professionals in the field of teaching English. Such a program is proposed for teachers working in schools to improve their performance. Yan (2011, 553) stated that " Despite the

frequent criticism directed toward them, in-service teacher training programs remain one of the most commonly used approaches for enhancing teachers' professional development. Furthermore, Al Mahlili (2015) indicated that "training programs are essential in providing teachers with professional skills to keep them up-to-date concerning teaching methodology". Teachers should be introduced to new trends and methods in language teaching while learning new skills they might not have developed during their pre-service training. Remarkably, Zuheer (2013) found that teachers who attended service-week training programs have achieved the main goal of the program, which was developing the way they teach in class . He attributed this success to the teachers themselves because they played a major role during the program to develop their skills in class. He found out that when teachers collaborated and exchanged their experiences during the in-service program, their performance improved. Also, Chou (2008) observed and interviewed elementary school English teachers and found that a good in-service training program will produce an effective EFL context.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

**Hypothesis one:** There is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance of 0. 05 between the pre and post applications of the TEYL methodology test on the research sample of teachers in favor of the post application of the test.

**Hypothesis two:** There is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance of 0. 05 between the pre and post applications of the storytelling skills observation checklist on the research sample of teachers in favor of the post application of the checklist.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

A group of (17) early primary teachers were selected from one of Cairo language schools, in the year 2022 - 2023 .

### **Research Design**

The quasi-experimental design called the pre-test/post-test one group design was employed in the present study. A pre/post TEYL methodology test was given to the group before and after the

treatment. Teachers' performance was observed by the researcher using an observation checklist before and after the treatment. Seventeen in-service English early primary teachers were submitted to an intensive TEYL program. Teachers were trained to use storytelling skills and implement the TEYL theoretical knowledge they learned. The independent variable was the TEYL program, and the dependent variables were the pre-posttest, and the teachers' storytelling performance observation checklist.

### **Measures:**

#### **The present study made use of two main instruments:**

- A pre-post TEYL methodology test.
- A pre-post observation checklist of teachers' storytelling performance .

#### **a- The storytelling skills checklist**

The checklist was meant to determine the most important storytelling skills necessary for early primary teachers. It was designed in light of the objectives included in the Ministry of Education document and the previous literature and related studies concerned with developing storytelling skills at this stage for ESL/EFL teachers, the checklist was submitted to a panel of jury in the field of TEYL methods of teaching to determine the degree of importance of each skill.

**The storytelling skills selected by the study according to their high percentages were as follows:**

#### **a- The storytelling skills:**

##### **-Story Content:**

Story is developmentally appropriate for the age and grade level of students. Story has a clear beginning, middle, end and is well structured . Provides opportunities for involvement and participation, thinking and interacting, predicting, guessing and repeating.

##### **- Tone of voice variation:**

Always speaks loudly, slowly and clearly. Correct pronunciation explains unfamiliar words . The teacher uses a variety of tones of voice to convey different emotions and to keep the story interesting . The teacher's tone of voice is appropriate for the story and helps to create a sense of atmosphere and emotion. Teacher speaks with confidence.

**- Pacing:**

Story told at the appropriate pace, depending on the story line.

**-Language:**

The language used in the story is appropriate for the age of the students . The language is clear, rich vocabulary, concise, and easy to understand . Contains literary devices : repetition/cumulative content, rhythm/rhyme, question/answer, dialogue/narrator, humour/suspense, predictability/Surprise

**-Using gestures, facial expressions , and eye contact:**

Storyteller looks at all the audience; involves them with questions and pictures. an interesting narrative that holds the student's attention

**Audio/Visual support and illustrations:**

A front and back cover and a title page . A title page with the title of the story, moral , and author/illustrator's name. Text and graphics which are either drawn by hand or computer generated. Neat, clear, large size and colorful illustrations. Uses cut-out figures, masks, real objects, flashcards and sound effects.

**Students' interaction and motivation:** Students are highly engaged and motivated throughout the story The teacher encourages students' interaction and participation in the story and is able to maintain a high level of student engagement throughout the storytelling session.

**Observation checklist validity and reliability:**

To measure the observation checklist content validity, the first version of the test was given to 6 EFL juries to evaluate it in terms of its aims and rewrite it in light of their opinions.

In order to establish the observation checklist reliability the researcher with supervisor observed five teachers from another school, and Cooper's equation was applied, and the result came as shown in the following table:

Teachers	Agreement number	Disagreement number	Reliability
First	6	1	85. 71%
Second	5	2	71. 43%
Third	6	1	85. 71%
Fourth	7	0	100%
Fifth	5	2	71. 43%

The table shows that all reliability coefficient are more than 70% which indicates that the observation checklist is reliable.

### **b-The TEYL methodology test**

#### **Objectives of the test**

A pre/post TEYL test was constructed and administered by the researcher. It was used prior to the program implementation to determine the level of teachers' knowledge of EFL teaching methods of the group before starting the treatment, and hence, the progress achieved by the group would be attributed to the suggested TEYL program they had been exposed to. As a post-test, it was used to investigate the effectiveness of the TEYL program, on developing the teachers' knowledge in EFL teaching methods , pedagogical and theoretical background.

#### **Description of the test**

The pre–post test consisted of a 20 multiple choice questions, it aimed at assessing teachers' theoretical knowledge in EFL teaching methods, rather than their achievement with respect to a certain content.

#### **Test validity and reliability**

To measure the test content validity, the first version of the test was given to 6 EFL supervisors and teachers to evaluate it in terms of content appropriateness, and suitability of the test to the teachers' level.

In order to establish the test reliability, the Kuder-Richardson twenty (KR20) equation was used on a sample of 15 primary teachers from another school to calculate the reliability coefficient which was (0. 86), and which was relatively high.

### **Suggested program based on Storytelling approach**

#### **Learning objectives**

Teachers were expected to master the identified TEYL methodology and storytelling skills by the end of the treatment.

#### **Duration of the program**

The activities based on the Storytelling approach were taught in four weeks. The first session was an introductory one aiming at introducing teachers to the aims of the TEYL program and activities

they were going to practice based the TEYL program and Storytelling performance.

### **The validity of the Program**

Sample activities from the program were given to EFL specialists who approved them, and suggested some modifications. The panel of jury approved the activities as valid and suggested allocating more time to teaching the storytelling activities and implementation by the teachers.

### **Piloting the program activities**

A small pilot study was carried out, 10 teachers were selected from the early primary stage and were asked to tell stories, the pilot study aimed at determining the time taken by the teachers to do the activities and to what extent they enjoyed the activities and were enthusiastic about the storytelling.

### **Description of the TEYL program's activities based on the Storytelling:**

- **Characteristics of Young Learners**(videos, articles and discussions).
- **Teaching the four English language skills to YLs** ( listening, speaking, reading and writing)
- **Turn story into actions**( moving and dancing while singing the story).
- **Using puppets as characters:** finger puppets and toys.
- **Vocabulary games:** to enrich the students with new vocabulary ( synonyms and antonyms).
- **Watching videos** : Students watch a video of the story, for example : (Three Little Fishes, Goldilocks and the Three Bears).
- **Role play and drama** :Teachers dramatize the story.
- **Singing the story** :Choosing a simple tune of popular song like (Happy birthday) and sing the story following the same tune.
- **Missing words activity** :Teachers take out the most 'effective" words in the story, and leave blanks in their place. Students must fill in the blanks. Share their answers, and then share the original.
- **Artwork** :Students cut, color and paste shapes of the animals and characters of the story, they can use them as puppets.

- **Teachers’ storytelling performance utilizing all what they gained and learned** (Theoretical and pedagogical TEYL knowledge and storytelling skills, techniques and strategies).

### Results

**Results of the study are presented in terms of the study hypotheses.**

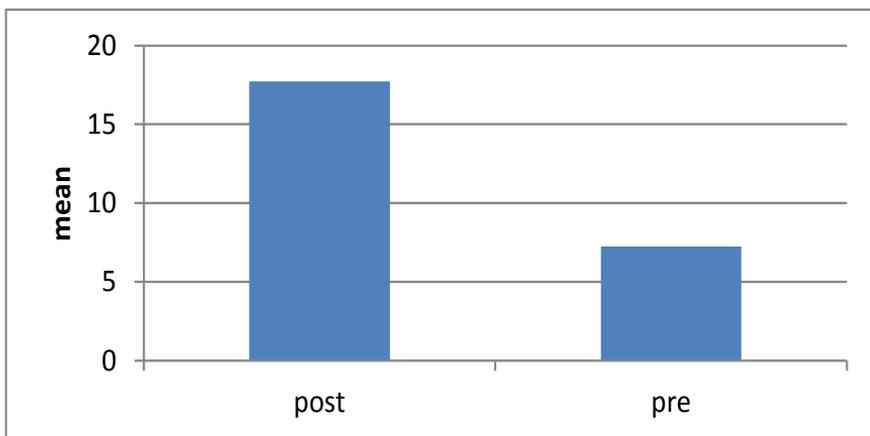
#### Hypothesis one:

To ensure the validity of the first hypothesis, which states: "There is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance of 0. 05 between the pre and post applications of the TEYL methodology test on the research sample of teachers in favor of the post application of the test. "

The Wilcoxon test was used, which is one of the non-parametric statistical methods alternative to the "T" test for two related samples, because the teacher sample consisted of 17 teachers, which is a number less than 30, and its result came as shown in the following table:

Ranks	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Calculated Z value	Tabulated Z value at 0. 05	Significant at 0. 05
Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
Positive	17	9	153			

It is clear from the previous table that the number of negative ranks was zero, which indicates that all teachers' scores in the post-test application were higher than their scores in the pre-application of it. It is also clear from the table that the calculated value of the critical ratio "Z" was greater than its tabulated value, which indicates there is a significant difference between the pre and post applications of the test in favor of the post application at the significance level of 0. 05.



**Hypothesis two:**

To ensure the validity of the second hypothesis, which states: "There is a statistically significant difference at the level of significance of 0. 05 between the pre and post applications of the storytelling skills observation checklist on the research sample of teachers in favor of the post application of the checklist. "

The Wilcoxon test was used, which is one of the non-parametric statistical methods alternative to the "T" test for two related samples, because the teacher sample consisted of 17 teachers, which is a number less than 30, and its result came as shown in the following table:

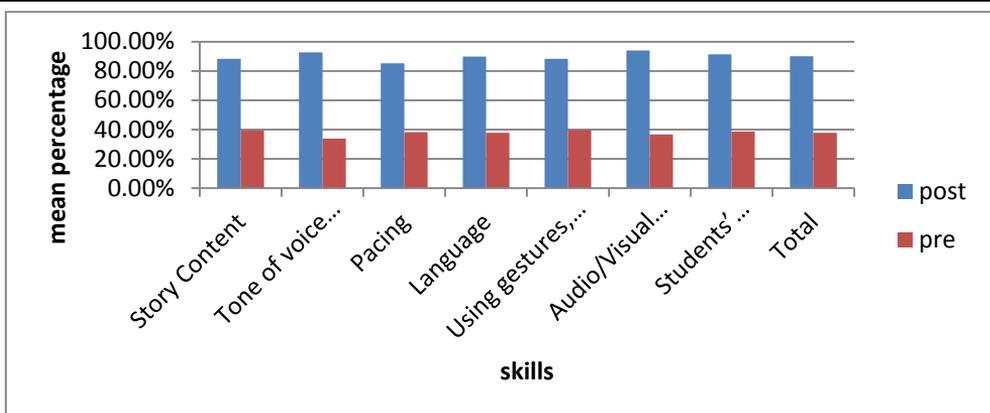
Skills	Ranks	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Calculate d Z value	Tabulated Z value at 0. 05	Significant at 0. 05
Story Content	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Tone of voice variation	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Pacing	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Language	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Using gestures, facial expressions , and eye contact	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Audio/Visual support and illustrations	Negative	0	0	0	3. 636	1. 64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			

Skills	Ranks	N	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	Calculated Z value	Tabulated Z value at 0.05	Significant at 0.05
Students' interaction and motivation	Negative	0	0	0	3.636	1.64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			
Total	Negative	0	0	0	3.636	1.64	Sig.
	Positive	17	9	153			

It is clear from the previous table that the number of negative ranks was zero for each skill and its total, which indicates that all teachers' scores in the post-application of the observation checklist were higher than their scores in the pre-application for each skill and its total. It is also clear from the table that the calculated value of the critical ratio "Z" was greater than its tabulated value, which indicates there is a significant difference between the pre and post applications of the observation checklist in favor of the post application at the level of significance 0.05 for each skill and its total.

This table shows the percentage of the mean for the pre and post measures for observation checklist for each skill:

Skills	degree	pre	%	post	%
Story Content	4	1.57	39.25%	3.53	88.25%
Tone of voice variation	4	1.35	33.75%	3.71	92.75%
Pacing	4	1.53	38.25%	3.41	85.25%
Language	4	1.51	37.75%	3.59	89.75%
Using gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact	4	1.59	39.75%	3.53	88.25%
Audio/Visual support and illustrations	4	1.47	36.75%	3.76	94%
Students' interaction and motivation	4	1.55	38.75%	3.65	91.25%
Total	28	10.57	37.75%	25.18	89.93%



## Discussion

Storytelling taps into to all modalities of learning and is able to appeal to all learning styles. Storytelling allows for all students even weaker language students, to comprehend what they hear and often students are more willing to speak and participate in a friendly class environment that will help students learn. Results indicated that Storytelling is vital to retention in learning new vocabulary. Furthermore, when teachers encourage students take part and are engaged in storytelling activities, they may get more chances to practice. Hence, they may get more feeling of confidence and success which can facilitate their learning, hence, teachers can consider integrating visual and kinesthetic activities to express the meaning of words. Accompanying the words with visuals and body movement and actively engaging our students in these interactive activities will give them a better grasp of the new words. this is consistent with (Harmer, 2007, Munoz &Foreo, 2011, and Davidheiser, 2001; Penycuff, 2008, and Joshi et al. , 2002 ) .

Findings at the post-observation showed a noticeable improvement in teachers' storytelling performance of the experimental group. Statistically significant differences were found in overall classroom performance and the storytelling skills which were reflected clearly in the EFL teachers' storytelling performance which has improved tremendously. EFL Teachers gained knowledge and developed storytelling skills ( Story content, language , pacing, tone of voice variation, using audio and visual support and puppets, facial expressions , gestures and body language, and students' interaction and engagement). Teachers make use of dramatic pauses and exuberant intonation, accompanied by the scaffolding of gestures and facial expressions, elaboration and maintain teacher-to-learner eye contact, which helped not only to keep students' attention, but also conveyed a sense of confidence and truthfulness. There was a very high interaction due to the improvement of teachers performance and students were highly motivated. These results are in line with the results of (Al-Mansour& Al Shoman, 2011;Camlibel-Acar, 2016;Bland, 2015;Isabell et al. , 2004).

Remarkably, teachers benefited from the in-service TEYL program and the implementation of all the techniques and strategies of storytelling that they gained from the program. Storytelling is considered of great significance in the foreign language teaching field because it introduces the language through the use of comprehensible input. This makes a student-centered class in a way that learners are the protagonists, who create their desire to communicate meaningful things in real -life communication. Storytelling aims at producing confident and fluent teachers and learners, who are accurate language users automatically without excessive analysis and translation.

Teachers involved students in the dramatic exploration of stories in a variety of ways, including choral reading, readers' theatre, dance , drama, shared reading, or role play. Activities like role playing, gap-filling, created a challenging classroom situation in which students tried to put, with a competitive spirit, all their available resources in action. They also achieved a dramatic effect created by sound effects and intonation in role-playing and acting out the story. The more a story activates the senses, the memorable it becomes. Anxiety can inhibit language learning, but teachers commented that in storytelling this inhibition is lowered because students are more comfortable in the classroom. This is consistent with (Al Mansour & Al Shman, 2011; Joshi et al. , 2002; Pennycuff, 2008; and Davidheiser, 2001).

It is noteworthy that the teachers provided opportunities for students to have fun in singing and dancing and feel joyful and not bored. Hence, by involving students in such performances and creativity, as well as in the reading and story comprehension, teachers can support the multiple goal of storytelling effectively to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words, and recognizing a stated series of events in the correct sequence.

Remarkably, teachers' storytelling performance and activities are interesting, challenging and motivating, as they managed to change their voices with different characters to bring the characters to life, so almost all the students enjoyed them. Implementing Storytelling relieves students' anxiety, builds up relaxing atmosphere and encourages students to have fun and become interested in learning the English language. Storytelling is fun. Hence, humor makes

learners laugh and promotes better long-term memory and a positive attitude towards their new language. Learners may be likely to forget what they have been taught in class, but they will surely remember the events of a story and its descriptive words to narrate it

There are numerous advantages to Storytelling. The most important one is that students can recall the words as they get enough exposure to them through storytelling, so that they are able to make use of the words in context, and speak the language consequently. Storytelling allows students to pick up the foreign language through listening, reading, visual sources, and actions. Students are able to comprehend the target language through an engaging story that is repetitive and interesting. Since storytelling taps into multiple modes of learning, it may be especially useful for students with learning difficulties.

It is noteworthy that successful teachers' Storytelling performance develops fluency with accuracy. Learners acquire language in an amusing way, which enables them to speak it. In the process, they develop an (ear) for what sounds right. As a result, they learn how to speak the language that way, whether it sounds right or not to them. This process closely resembles that of first language acquisition. Remarkably, it can be concluded that the in-service TEYL program benefited the EFL early primary teachers and developed their theoretical and pedagogical TEYL knowledge and their storytelling performance, this is consistent with the results of (Zuheer, 2013; Camlibel-Acer, 2016; Chou, 2008; and Alhazmi, 2017). Creative teachers can support students deep engagement with content through innovative delivery that taps into the power of storytelling. While the immersive power of a good story to capture a child's heart and mind has long been used as an effective tool to support learning in the domains of language arts, may not be a strategy that comes to mind as quickly in the realm of EFL teacher training in the early primary stage.

**Recommendations and suggestions for further research: and prospective teachers**

- There should be continuous pre-service and in-service TEYL training for EFL teachers to prepare them to deal with young learners both academically and pedagogically .
- Storytelling teaching strategies should be incorporated in EFL teacher education programs.
- Early primary EFL teachers should always have the opportunity to observe real young learner classrooms until their graduation, to overcome the gap between theoretical considerations and the realities of the teaching practice.
- Since creativity is increasingly gaining recognition as a human characteristic that can be (and should be) developed through education, there is the need to make conscious efforts to develop students' creativity and learning through Storytelling. Hence, teachers do not necessarily produce students who would by all means become artists but rather creative students who can transfer the skills they have learnt through storytelling, drama and music to other subject areas and in effect to all other facets of their lives.
- Teachers who deal with young learners must have competence both professionally and pedagogically, and learn how to create an atmosphere that is fun and joyful for the primary students.
- Storytelling activities, used judiciously and integrated with other activities can be both highly motivating and linguistically purposeful. Careful choice of useful and communicative language at beginner level can make storytelling activities entirely valid. Many students respond well to kinesthetic activities and they can genuinely serve as memory aid. Fostering storytelling awareness and developing an artistic sense should be a part of early childhood educators' commitment to helping students move toward using their fullest potential.
- Stories should be repetitive, making regular use of patterns. The story line should lend itself to dramatization and pantomime.

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