The use of storytelling in EFL and EMI

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Introduction

Heider and Simmel experiment (1944).
Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTNmLt7QX8E
[1:32 mins]
Why storytelling?

“Storytelling is a biological imperative for human beings, the psychological mechanism by which they can capture the coherent perceptions of an unknowably complex world required for survival.”

(Baskin, 2005)
Bloom’s revised taxonomy

- Remember
- Understand
- Apply
- Analyse
- Evaluate
- Create

HOTS

LOTS
Definitions of “storytelling”

1. “an ordered sequence of events from which meaning can be derived” (Cambridge Dictionary)
2. “a description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events” (McNett, 2016)
3. “the art of narrating a tale from memory rather than reading it" (Mauro, 2006)
4. Story – “See MYTH, NARRATIVE, NARRATIVE STRUCTURE, PICARESQUE, PLOT.” (Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms)

A story is a narration of a connected series of events involving the listener in four main ways: by instructing, educating, emoting and entertaining. (ABC Education)
Research
Research

- Mirror neurons (Rizzolatti and Craighero, 2004)
- Brain connectivity (Stephens, Silbert and Hasson, 2010)
Research

“A good story is one that makes an emotional connection. Learning is enhanced when students are emotionally engaged.”

(Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007)
Research

“Stories act as cognitive flight simulators that help us practice navigating human and social life.”

(Gottschalk, 2012)
Storytelling and teaching

- TBL and PBL
- 21st century skills
- Motivation
The Snowgirl

A tale from Russia

- Linguistic outcomes:
  - Vocabulary about senses (smell, sound, mental images, touch)

- "The co-creative nature of storytelling has a positive impact on students' language learning." (Heathfield, 2014)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXWwvc84STo
Connecting a lesson to a personal story (McNett, 2016)

Storytelling in Science: DNA story

My dear Michel,

Jim Watson and I have probably made a most important discovery, but have built a model for the structure of DNA — a molecule — called deoxyribonucleic acid. Our structure is very beautiful. DNA.

D.N.A. is a very beautiful molecule. The molecule has a double helix, with the two strands wound around each other. Each strand is made up of nucleotides, which are the basic units of DNA.

The nucleotides are linked together by phosphodiester bonds, forming a long chain. These chains are complementary, meaning that they can pair up with each other. The pairing is determined by base互补性, with A pairing with T (thymine) and C (cytosine) pairing with G (guanine).

The double helix structure is important because it allows for the copying of DNA, a process known as replication. The two strands of the helix separate, and each strand serves as a template for the synthesis of a new complementary strand. This process is essential for the transmission of genetic information from one generation to the next.

But DNA is not just about replication. It also plays a crucial role in the expression of genes, a process called transcription. The information encoded in DNA is read and transcribed into RNA, which then serves as a blueprint for the synthesis of proteins.

Our discovery of DNA's structure has opened up a whole new world of possibilities. It has allowed us to understand how life itself is programmed and how it can be altered.

Jim Watson and I shared the 1962 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for this discovery of the molecular structure of DNA. Our work has had a profound impact on the fields of biology, medicine, and biotechnology.

With kindest wishes,

James D. Watson
Concept Stories

Once there was a lonely rajma bean [red kidney bean] buried just beneath the soil. The bean waited patiently until one day he felt cool rainwater touch his skin. The ground became warm and the bean’s internal temperature started to rise. Suddenly he burst open and began to push his roots deep into the soil. Then he slowly stretched his shoot towards the sunlight. Finally, he broke through the darkness to reach the warmth of the Sun at the surface.

TessIndia (n.d.). *Elementary Science - Unit 10: Using stories and storytelling to teach environmental issues*. Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike licence: [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).

Concept Stories

Procidis (1987) *Once upon a time... Life - The vaccination* (3 of 3) [video file].

Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geu3d1khdQM [min 1-2]
Your turn!

Think of a 1-minute beginning for each of these options. What would you have to change?

- The 3 Little Pigs
  • Tell the story as if it were the transmission of a football match.

- Snow White
  • Snow White has just received and Oscar. Write her acceptance speech.

- The Ugly Duckling
  • The Ugly Duckling tells his story to his psychiatrist.

- Hansel and Gretel
  Hansel and Gretel have to declare as eye-witnesses in court.

- Little Red Ridinghood
  • Prepare a news report for the late evening news.
The Hero’s Journey

Author: Harris, G. Retrieved from https://hvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/TheHero'sJourney
The Hero’s Journey


[4:33]

Applications in EMI/EFL

- learner autonomy
- cooperation
- authenticity
- differentiation
Conclusion

“It is better to travel well than to arrive.”

Buddha
References

- All images, unless otherwise indicated, are retrieved from www.pixabay.com.
- All graphs and charts have been designed by the authors.

List of references and recommended readings:


Heider and Simmel experiment (1944). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTNmLt7QX8E


Procidis (1987). Once upon a time... Life - The vaccination (3 of 3) [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geu3d1khdQM [min 1-2]

References continued


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Recommended reading by age group

FOR CHILDREN


FOR TEENAGERS AND ADULTS


Webliography

• https://darwinawards.com/
  Darwin Awards (accessed February 20, 2019)

• http://www.aaronshep.com/
  Storyteller's Website including notes on stories
  (accessed February 20, 2019)

• http://www.eldrbarry.net/
  Teller Barry McWilliams's site. Older site but with useful resources
  (accessed February 20, 2019)

• http://www.timsheppard.co.uk/story/
  Site of British teller, Tim Sheppard, some links out of date (accessed February 20, 2019)